

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SIXTH ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FIRST PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7th, 1925, AT 11 A.M.

Duplicate

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1. — OPENING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

M. Paul Painlevé, delegate of France, Acting President of the Council, took the Chair.

The Chairman :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen—It is upon France that to-day the signal honour devolves of opening the great international assembly which has, every year since 1920, discussed all the questions upon which the peace of the world and the future of humanity depend.

My first duty as Chairman—an office which, even though I hold it but for a day, I shall never forget—is to extend a most cordial welcome to all the distinguished representatives of the fifty-four nations assembled in this hall to collaborate wholeheartedly in the most noble enterprise ever undertaken by man.

May I also be allowed on this occasion to express my regret at not seeing amongst us the tall figure of that great servant of humanity, M. Branting, whom, alas ! we shall never see again. You will also join with me in associating with this memory that of two other colleagues who are no more, M. Meierovics and M. Chagas. I would also like to present my respectful greeting to the lady who bears the great name of Woodrow Wilson, who is gracing this inaugural assembly with her presence.

There are certain persons who consider themselves superior to their fellows because, in their pessimism, they delight in disparaging and predicting the failure of any concerted efforts to combat the

evils from which the peoples of the world are suffering and, particularly, the worst of all evils—war. They take what theologians call a morbid delight in doing so, as if blind mistrust were not even more dangerous than blind confidence, as if—to quote the words of M. Motta, when he opened the first Assembly—hatred itself were not a curse. They mistake for exceptional clearness of vision what is really shortsightedness, which magnifies the obstacles immediately before their eyes and blinds them to the full view of the road that was trodden yesterday and the road you will tread to-morrow.

Because you can only by degrees fulfil the high hopes which the world has placed in you, and which inspire and fortify you in your task ; because you have not overcome at one blow the formidable destructive forces which are convulsing the Old World, they proclaim, with malignant joy, the death of the League of Nations. Ah ! gentlemen, how often—this every week even—have I heard them doom you to an ignoble death ! But can we not now reply to them—to quote a classic phrase—that “les gens qu'ils tuent se portent assez bien” ? In proof of this, I point not merely to the number but to the character of your delegations. Both the strongest nations and those nations which are most threatened with the possibility of conflicts are represented by Cabinet Ministers, by men who were Ministers yesterday or will be to-morrow.

It is no idle purpose that would call together an assembly such as this, and when the French Government decided that its head should, despite the many urgent calls upon his time, come and preside at your first meeting, it was not for the purpose of affording help to the French delegation ; it does not require help, as you already know, for you have seen it at work. No, to-day, when the duty of inaugurating your work falls upon France, the French Government has taken this step because it wishes solemnly to affirm before the whole world its respect for the League of Nations, its faith in the League's work and in the beneficence of the League's acts.

In point of fact, if any impartial observer, were asked to give his sincere and unbiassed opinion of the work you have done in five years, he would be struck, above all, by your steadily increasing authority.

When, at the close of the great struggle, the League of Nations was born, it was, as it were, a tiny flame of hope, flickering still, as if the least breath would extinguish it; but this flame has now been fed with the enthusiastic ardour of every nation.

The League has stood firm, it has become active, it has faced and overcome formidable difficulties. But its mission is not merely to arbitrate on disputes, or to draft conventions so logical and precise as to call forth the admiration of jurists; it must also create a new international soul, a new international morality. It has fulfilled this two-fold mission courageously, knowing the exact measure of its strength, going to the extreme verge of the possible, but without making the fatal mistake of attempting the impossible. Day by day it has had to anticipate and lead public opinion, while at the same time it has had to avoid alarming this same opinion to such an extent as to alienate it. It had to oppose projects of violence, but, at the same time, it had to avoid coming into conflict with forces too great for its still undeveloped strength. This firmness, this moderation, this calm self-possession, have made of the weakling of 1920 the strong League of 1925. Emboldened by success, it has each time ventured a step further and has increased its prestige in the eyes of the world. One by one its discussions have helped to clear the atmosphere of international mistrust and have led the best elements and the youth of all nations along the path of the future. Enterprises which yesterday seemed fantastic have to-day become feasible, because you have greatly dared.

In particular, you can look back with pride to the work accomplished in the course of the past year — work which will mark an epoch in the history of the League. During this period, your activities have been so manifold and so varied that I cannot think of even enumerating, much less describing, them. In widely different fields — politics, economics, finance, health, and so on — the Council of the League, its Committees, its Secretariat and the Permanent Court of International Justice have worked together ceaselessly to bring peace to the world. With this calmness of mind and impartiality of method you have solved the most complex and embittered controversies, problems which have aroused the angry passions of neighbouring peoples, and smaller problems too — smaller, but nevertheless vital for the prosperity and welfare of the weaker nations — problems connected with customs, trade, transit, unemployment, the abolition of slavery, the white-slave traffic, the protection of women and children, and many others. I can only refer briefly to the most important of all these activities.

In the first place, there are the detailed amendments to the Covenant, that firm and unshakable basis on which the League and, indeed, the peace of the world are founded. These minor amendments do not modify any of the obligations incumbent upon Members of the League, but they define the judicial regulations governing international disputes, while maintaining intact the penalties consequent upon any failure to observe the Covenant.

Again, the last Assembly, acting in the spirit of the Covenant, decided that the task of codifying public and private international law should

be undertaken under the Presidency of Mr. Hammarskjöld and with the help of some of the most celebrated jurists in the world. A Committee has been formed and is to receive the able co-operation of the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law, which was founded through the generous initiative of the Italian Government.

One of the most effective methods of dispelling misunderstandings between peoples is to increase relations and intercourse in the worlds of art, literature and science, and to promote education and the spread of scientific knowledge from country to country.

The International Institute for Intellectual Co-operation, which has been founded at the instance and with the co-operation of the French Government, will pursue this noble aim in close co-operation with your Committee, the able Chairman of which is that great apostle of human thought, M. Bergson.

More difficult, and more tragic too, are the problems which the war has left us — economic problems and racial problems, all of which call for immediate settlement.

Then there are the Russian and Armenian refugees to be helped; this work has been taken in hand by Dr. Nansen and the International Labour Office, with a zeal which calls for the gratitude of the League. There are the Greek refugees, who have to be assisted by the Refugees Settlement Commission which your Council has established, and by means of a loan of £12,300,000, for which the League's Financial Committee is responsible. There is the question of the exchange of Greek and Turkish populations, which you have placed in the hands of a Mixed Commission. There are the starving Albanians whom you have fed. As a result of disasters involving whole nations — an eventuality of which the world believed it had seen the last — Senator Ciracolo conceived a magnificent scheme, which to-day is well on the way towards realisation, the International Federation for the Mutual Relief of Peoples Overtaken by Disaster.

It has been difficult, as you are aware, to establish the economic equilibrium of the new States, and some of them came to the very brink of disaster. Austria and Hungary appealed to the League for help. The efforts of both countries and the administration of the two Commissioners-General which the League placed at their head proved so satisfactory that the financial restoration of those countries was accomplished earlier than had been hoped. The question which faces Austria to-day is whether the supervision to which she is subject should not soon be discontinued. In view of these successes, Albania and Esthonia also appealed in different ways for the help of the League's financial organisation.

But it is the settlement of disputes arising between neighbouring States as a result of the war which has taxed the League's authority to the utmost. If proof positive of the extreme adaptability of the League's organisations were required, we need only instance the innumerable disputes between Poland and the Free City of Danzig and the happy settlement found for them, thanks to the able efforts of M. Quiñones de León. The representatives of Poland and Danzig have accepted the new procedure, and consider it so just that they have given an undertaking to the Council to refrain, in future, from direct action or even passive resistance of any kind.

The Council and the Committees of the League showed the same resourcefulness and the same complete impartiality in settling the still more difficult and dangerous disputes caused by the minorities question.

Whenever disputes liable to endanger peace have arisen in any part of the world, more particularly in the Balkans and the Near East, you have applied your impartial methods to them and have brought to bear upon them the knowledge and experience of your Technical Committees and the courage and untiring zeal of the missions you have sent, often far afield. Thus, for example, the League has found a peaceful settlement for the dispute caused by the expulsion of the Ecumenical Patriarch from Constantinople.

Among all these thorny problems there is one on which the anxious eyes of the world were, and are still, fixed. I refer to the delimitation of the frontiers of Iraq and the Mosul question. The Council is at present discussing the conclusions of its special Commission of Enquiry, which carried out its task on the spot.

But all these questions, however grave, and whatever their effect upon the world at large, pale before the supreme problem of security.

That the Covenant on which the League of Nations is based was conceived, not in the midst of a period of peace but at a time when the clash of arms was still resounding and the earth was still warm with the blood that had been shed and with all the conflagrations that had been kindled—that, gentlemen, is a fact which is unexampled in history and which peremptorily calls upon us to do our duty.

The Covenant was not imposed by the wise and far-seeing few upon the multitude drunk with carnage. It is the embodiment in legal form of the heartfelt desires of the masses and, above all, of the combatants. It was because humanity had plumbed the depths of horror that all were alike desirous of avoiding a recurrence of such a catastrophe—and most of all those who had known its lowest depths. It was this longing for a peace founded on justice, for a world no longer ruled by violence, which inspired the Covenant of the League of Nations, and, in particular, the essential parts of it, Articles 14, 15 and 16. But in order to make it possible to apply these articles effectively in every possible contingency; in order to complete a text which necessarily could be little more than an outline; in order to define the details of the general provisions and give them full executive force, supplementary Conventions had to be drawn up; and ever since the foundation of the League the constant endeavour of its most distinguished members has been to conclude such Conventions—clear, binding and consonant with national sovereignty. In 1922 we have Resolution 14, jointly drawn up by Lord Robert Cecil and M. Henry de Jouvenel; in 1923 the Pact of Mutual Guarantee, the corollary of Resolution 14; finally, in October 1924, we have the Geneva Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes. Superficially minded people may compare this work to Penelope's weaving, but the comparison is false. These efforts have been cumulative, not mutually destructive; each marks a definite step along a path strewn with obstacles which are formidable, it is true, but which will be overcome one by one.

None of you can have forgotten the stirring, impassioned, lofty discussions which took place last year; the magnificent speeches of the British and French Prime Ministers, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and M. Edouard Herriot, setting forth the French and British points of view, which at first were in opposition and were finally combined in those three fundamental terms, which are severally as indispensable as is the sequence in which they come—arbitration, security, disarmament. None of you can have forgotten the careful preparation of the Protocol, in which your Legal and Disarmament Committees endeavoured to leave

no loophole for violence; nor the legal definition of the aggressor, who was declared thereby to be the enemy of the human race; nor the detailed enumeration of the duties imposed on the Members of the League; nor the economic and military sanctions to be taken in the case of failure to carry out the terms of the Covenant.

In a final speech, in which the logic of his arguments was only equalled by the beauty of his style, and which was acclaimed by the whole Assembly, M. Paul-Boncour summed up the work which had been done by stating emphatically that the Protocol was not a modification but a development of the Covenant, a living commentary on it. "The Protocol", he said, "is to the Covenant what the rules of public administration are to the law".

The authors of the Protocol counted upon obtaining the immediate approval of their Governments, but months have passed and their hopes have not been fulfilled. Unanimously adopted by the first delegates of the fifty-four nations represented, and then submitted to the various Governments for ratification, the Protocol failed to obtain the number of adhesions required to enable it to come into force.

This should neither surprise nor discourage us. A scheme so daring, so original, and so far-reaching as that laid before your Council and Assembly, a scheme destined completely to transform relations between the countries of the world, can only be carried into effect in the course of time and by patient and constant endeavour. In the history of such a scheme there are bound to be moments of enthusiasm—creative moments, without which there would be nought but stagnation and inertia—followed by less brilliant but equally useful periods of adaptation and adjustment.

Speeches and conventions may cast their glamour over a gathering of men, but, however persuasive or legally sound, they cannot immediately convince all the nations of the world and the Governments which rule those nations' destinies. The object of your discussions is not, by progressive attempts, simply to draw up the final and perfected text of a great international law; your discussions are also intended to bring into being that new international morality to which I referred at the beginning of my speech, and without which the most perfect law in the world must remain a dead letter. But, if we are to attain so noble an object, we shall need to do much more than appease hatreds, rancours and long-standing rivalries. We shall have to create among the nations a state of mutual understanding. We must do more than conciliate conflicting interests and ambitions, we must eliminate the clash of different mental outlooks.

It is to these differences of mental outlook that the resistance to the Protocol is mainly due. The Protocol's universality, the severe and unbending logic of its obligations, were framed to please the Latin mentality, which delights in starting from abstract principles and passing from generalities to details. The Anglo-Saxon mentality, on the other hand, prefers to proceed from individual concrete cases to generalisations, and is averse, when it cannot discern the facts on which they are based, to principles which are too wide in scope. Yet the Latin and Anglo-Saxon races both ardently desire, as indeed you all do, to attain the same goal, namely, peace. They will therefore meet again if only they persevere after traversing different paths which a philosopher would term respectively the analytical and the synthetical. I am not indulging in mere ready-made optimism. If we dispassionately consider the facts we shall

hearts of many grounds for hope, and can credit the League of Nations with successes but for which the world might already have been plunged in disaster?

If I were not afraid that such a desire would exceed my short-lived powers, I might express a wish that the work of this Assembly should be guided and inspired by the unwritten epigraph: "Hope, venture, persevere."

I declare the sixth Assembly of the League of Nations open.

2. — ELECTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE CREDENTIALS OF DELEGATES.

The Chairman :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen—In accordance with Article 5 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, the Committee to report on the credentials of delegates should be elected by the Assembly in order that it may submit its report without delay.

This Committee should consist of eight members.

M. Veverka (Czechoslovakia) :

Translation : Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen—I have the honour to propose to the Assembly a list of eight members to form the Committee to report on the credentials of delegates.

I venture to make this suggestion, after discussion with some of my colleagues. By adopting the complete list now, we shall accelerate the progress of our work.

I accordingly venture to submit the following list to the Assembly :

M. PFLUGL (Austria).
M. WANG TSENG-SZE (China).
M. DE AGUERO Y BETHANCOURT (Cuba).
H. H. the Maharaja DHIRAJ OF PATIALA (India).
Baron LEHMAN (Liberia).
M. D. ZAUNTUS (Lithuania).
M. CABALLERO (Paraguay).
M. P. COMNÈNE (Roumania).

The Chairman :

Translation : Are there any observations in regard to this proposal? Does any member wish to propose any other candidate? Does anyone wish to speak? If there is no opposition I declare the proposal adopted.

The Committee to report on the credentials of delegates will therefore consist of the members proposed by the delegate for Czechoslovakia.

The list proposed by M. Veverka was adopted.

The Chairman :

Translation : The Committee on the Credentials of Delegates which has just been elected will meet at 2.30 p.m. to-day at the offices of the Secretariat.

The next meeting of the Assembly will take place at 4 o'clock this afternoon.

The Assembly rose at 12 o'clock noon.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SIXTH ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SECOND PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7th, 1925, AT 4 P.M.

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10. AGENDA.
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3. — CREDENTIALS OF DELEGATES : REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS.

M. Painlevé, delegate of France, Acting President of the Council, in the Chair.

The Chairman :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the report of the Committee on Credentials.

I call upon M. de Aguero y Bethancourt to read his report.

M. de Aguero y Bethancourt (Cuba), Chairman and Rapporteur of the Committee on Credentials :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Committee entrusted by the Assembly with the duty of reporting on the credentials of delegates met to-day at 2.30 p.m. at the Secretariat of the League of Nations. I was elected Chairman and

was entrusted with the duty of drawing up the report.

The Committee examined the documents transmitted to it by the Secretary-General and found that the following States are represented by delegates who are in possession either of letters of credentials from heads of States, or letters from Ministers for Foreign Affairs, or telegrams from the same source, or letters from the representatives on the Council or from permanent representatives accredited to the League of Nations :

Abyssinia, Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, British Empire, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, India, Irish Free State, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Norway, New Zealand, Panama, Paraguay, Persia, Poland, Portugal, Roumania, Salvador, Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Siam, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Uruguay, Venezuela.

The Committee considers that the representatives of these States Members are duly accredited.

The Government of the Dominican Republic has notified the appointment of a delegate to the sixth Assembly of the League of Nations, but no document accrediting him has been transmitted.

The Committee also found that the following States Members have not presented any documents regarding their representation at the sixth Assembly of the League of Nations :

The Argentine Republic, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras and Peru.

The Chairman :

Translation : Has anyone any observations to make on the conclusions of the report ?

Does anyone wish a vote to be taken ?

The conclusions of the report were adopted.

4. — ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE SIXTH ASSEMBLY.

The Chairman :

Translation. The next item on the agenda is the election of the President of the sixth Assembly.

In conformity with the Rules of Procedure, voting will be by secret ballot.

I call upon two former Presidents, M. Motta, delegate of Switzerland, and M. Hymans, delegate of Belgium, to act as tellers.

The votes of the delegations were taken in turn by secret ballot.

The Chairman :

Translation : The result of the voting is as follows :

Number of States voting : 47.

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|--------------------------------|----------|
| M. DANDURAND (Canada) received | 41 votes |
| M. ZAHLÉ (Denmark) | 2 votes |
| M. ADATCI (Japan) | 1 vote |
| M. PRABHA KARAWONGSE (Siam) | 1 vote |
| M. PAINLEVÉ (France) | 1 vote |

Blank voting paper : 1.

I have therefore the honour, according to the Rules of Procedure, to announce that M. Dandurand, first delegate of Canada, is elected President of the Assembly.

I am sure that all the delegations will be greatly pleased at the choice made by the Assembly.

All of us here know and appreciate M. Dandurand's high qualities. His profound knowledge of law and economics, his experience of national and international affairs, and, I would add, his very great courtesy, were much appreciated by the Assembly last year.

Allow me to add that the French delegation—and I am sure that our British colleagues will take no umbrage at this—is especially glad of this election.

Canada, which M. Dandurand represents, is a country where the British and French civilisations at one period of history came into dire conflict; yet to-day they live there united in a common brotherhood.

This morning I pointed to the historic example of the United States. I could also have mentioned Canada, which offers us an example of a particularly happy solution of the minorities problem.

I am sure that such a President, possessing the qualities I have mentioned and also, I may add, so profound a knowledge of the two languages used in this assembly, will prove a sure guide in our work, which, I am certain, is destined to bear good fruit. I am also glad, whilst offering him my congratulations, to pay a personal tribute to our deep and long-standing friendship.

I call upon the President, M. Dandurand, to take the Chair of the Assembly.

M. Dandurand took the Presidential Chair.

5. — PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

M. Dandurand (Canada), President of the Assembly :

I have no illusions, ladies and gentlemen, as to the real meaning of your votes and of your applause. It is not my humble self, but Canada, that you desire to honour.

I have been deeply touched by the words, too kind indeed, which have been addressed to me by the statesman who is both President of the Council

of the League of Nations and Prime Minister of France. As a descendant of the heroic Frenchmen who were the pioneers of civilisation throughout the North American continent, I am profoundly moved at being received in this assembly by the representative of a country the traditions and language of which have remained those of the racial group to which I belong.

Your act has clearly shown your friendship for the young nation that I represent. May I express my feelings of pride and gratitude? Canada will not be alone in appreciating your generosity and good-will. Her sister nations, which are under the same crown, will feel justly proud.

We have only just appeared in international circles. You will understand that in our youth we are extremely glad that you have conferred so high a dignity upon us.

Our appearance in international life was hardly noticed. Our rapid development was recognised by our signature to the Treaty of Versailles. Our political status perhaps was received abroad with some surprise and possibly yet is not generally understood. History had never hitherto shown an example of six countries, equal among themselves, having autonomous political institutions, and through their respective Governments advising one and the same King, in whose name they speak and act both at home and abroad.

Within the last five years, the League of Nations has made great progress; none can deny it. The most sceptical have been forced to admit that it has achieved results of far-reaching benefit for mankind.

Every year my distinguished predecessors have reviewed the work already accomplished and have surveyed the ground still to be covered. At the close of the last session, M. Motta, the honoured President of the Assembly, gave an account of the "sublime endeavour... to substitute the moral force of right for the material force of arms".

It was in order to bring about the reign of justice that the Scheme for Mutual Assistance and the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes were conceived and studied. It was in order to establish peace through justice that the study of the problem of arbitration, security, and disarmament was undertaken. It is in order to bring about the triumph of the ideal of brotherhood, moderation and good-will that we are once more met in this hospitable Helvetian Republic.

Is it not an excellent and most reassuring sight, to see delegates coming regularly every year from the four corners of the earth? Does it not show that both our minds and our hearts are being directed into new channels?

I am convinced that the enlightened collaboration of statesmen and of legal and technical experts, gathered together in this atmosphere of devotion to the well-being of humanity, will contribute effectively to the establishment of peace founded on justice.

We shall doubtless experience hesitations, difficulties, misunderstandings. But these difficulties, these disappointments, which are inevitable in any work of reconstruction, will only stimulate our zeal and increase our energy. The endeavours and the experiences of the past give us faith in the successful issue of our future deliberations.

6. — TRIBUTE TO THE LATE M. RENÉ VIVIANI.

The President: Ladies and gentlemen—a telegram has just reached us informing us of the death of M. René Viviani, former President of the Council of Ministers of the French Republic, who, on numerous occasions, represented his Government with

unusual ability both at the Assembly and on the Council of the League of Nations.

It is fitting, therefore, to recall with what devotion M. Viviani presided over the deliberations of the Temporary Mixed Commission for the Reduction of Armaments. His name will long be remembered in connection with the work of the League.

I am sure that I interpret your feelings in expressing to the French delegation our deepest sympathy in its great loss.

M. Painlevé (France) :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen—I have nothing to add to the moving words which you have just heard. The sad news which your President has just communicated to the Assembly goes straight to the heart of all the members of the French delegation. I merely wish in their name to thank the President and all the delegates for their kind expression of sympathy.

The President : I propose that the Assembly adjourn for a few moments.

If there is no opposition, the Assembly is adjourned.

The Assembly was adjourned from 5 until 5.10 p.m.

The President : The meeting is resumed.

7. — AGENDA : EXAMINATION AND ADOPTION.

The President : In order to save time, and if none of the delegations ask for a vote, I propose that the Assembly adopt the agenda *en bloc*, that is to say, the questions contained in the document distributed to the Assembly. There are twenty-two of these questions.

With regard to the supplementary list of items circulated after May 1st, 1925, I propose that the Assembly should take a separate decision in each case :

I. Creation of a Conciliation Commission attached to the Permanent Court of International Justice : Proposal by the Danish Government.

If there is no objection to the inclusion of this question, it will be entered as Item 23 of the agenda. (*Assent.*)

II. Slavery : Report submitted in accordance with the Resolutions of the Fourth and Fifth Assemblies.

If there is no objection to the inclusion of this question, it will be entered as Item 24 of the agenda. (*Assent.*)

III. Staff Provident Fund : Amendments to the Regulations provisionally made by the Council.

If there is no objection to the inclusion of this question, it will be entered as Item 25 of the agenda. (*Assent.*)

If there is no objection, I shall consider the agenda of the sixth session of the Assembly as adopted in the form proposed. (*Assent.*)

The Assembly will have seen from the note distributed by the Secretariat that the Council has decided to ask the Assembly to include the following questions on its agenda :

(1) Protection of Women and Children in the Near East.

(2) Opium : Commission of Enquiry in certain opium-producing countries : Resolution adopted by the Second Opium Conference.

(3) International Relief Union : Report of the Preparatory Committee and Draft Statute of the Union.

The Assembly will doubtless wish to refer these items to the Agenda Committee and request the Committee to report on them as soon as possible. If there is no objection, I shall consider this procedure adopted. (*Adopted.*)

8. — CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES.

The President : In accordance with precedent, the first matter to be decided by the Assembly is the constitution of its Committees. Before the General Committee of the Assembly can be established, the Committees must first have elected their Chairmen, as the Chairmen of the Committees, together with the six Vice-Presidents elected by the Assembly, form the General Committee of the Assembly.

The sixth Assembly will probably wish to follow the procedure adopted by previous Assemblies and form six Committees—the first to deal with constitutional and legal questions, the second with the work of the Technical Organisations, the third with the reduction of armaments, the fourth with budgetary and financial questions, the fifth with social questions, and the sixth with political questions.

In the light of experience gained at previous Assemblies, I would suggest that the meetings of the Committees should be arranged so as to alternate as follows : the First, Second, and Sixth Committees would meet at the same time, as would the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Committees.

If the Assembly accepts this suggestion, the Secretariat will supply the delegations with forms on which to enter the names of their delegates and substitutes to sit on each Committee. As soon as these lists have been collected, each Committee will meet to elect its Chairman and Vice-Chairman. The Assembly will thus know at its next meeting the names of the Chairmen of the Committees and can proceed to elect the six Vice-Presidents.

If no one wishes to speak, I shall consider this procedure adopted. (*Adopted.*)

9. — AGENDA COMMITTEE : APPOINTMENT.

The President : As was done at the last Assembly, I would suggest that a small Committee of seven members should be appointed to examine the question of the inscription of new items on the agenda. If the Assembly agrees, and if there are no proposals by delegations concerning the names of the members of this Committee, I would venture to put forward the following list :

Sir Joseph COOK (Australia) ;
M. KALFOFF (Bulgaria) ;
M. BELLO-CODESIDO (Chile) ;
M. IDMAN (Finland) ;
Count SKRZYNSKI (Poland) ;
H. E. PRABHA KARAWONGSE (Siam) ;
M. DE PALACIOS (Spain).

If no one has any objections to raise, I shall consider the list adopted. (*Assent.*)

10. — AGENDA : DISTRIBUTION OF ITEMS AMONG THE COMMITTEES.

The President : As regards the distribution of the items on the agenda among the Committees, I venture to make a few suggestions in order to expedite our work.

Items 7, 8 and 23 might be dealt with by the First Committee; Items 10, 11, 14, 15, 16 and 19 by the Second Committee; Items 12, 20, 21 and 25 by the Fourth Committee; Items 9, 17 and 18 by the Fifth Committee; and Item 24 by the Sixth Committee.

With regard to the Third Committee, I think I shall be interpreting the opinion of the Assembly in proposing that the allocation of such questions as might appear to be within its competence should be reserved. The Assembly will doubtless wish to await the conclusion of its debate on the report on the work of the Council before taking a decision regarding the allocation of question 13 to a Committee.

If the Assembly accepts my proposals, the various items will be distributed among the Committees as follows :

First Committee : Items 7, 8 and 23.
Second Committee : Items 10, 11, 14, 15, 16 and 19.
Third Committee : Reserved.
Fourth Committee : Items 12, 20, 21 and 25.
Fifth Committee : Items 9, 17 and 18.
Sixth Committee : Item 24.

Do any delegations wish to make observations on the distribution of work which I have proposed? If there is no objection, the arrangement is adopted. (*Assent.*)

In order that the Committees may proceed without delay to the election of their respective Chairmen, I would propose that they should meet to-morrow morning at the Salle de la Réformation in the following order :

First Committee, 10 a.m.; Second Committee, 10.20 a.m.; Third Committee 10.40 a.m.; Fourth Committee 11 a.m.; Fifth Committee 11.20 a.m.; Sixth Committee 11.40 a.m.

We have exhausted the agenda and will adjourn the Assembly until to-morrow at noon; we will then proceed with the announcement of the Chairmen of the Committees, together with the election of the Vice-Presidents of the Assembly and the constitution of the General Committee.

The Assembly rose at 5.30 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE
SIXTH ASSEMBLY
OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

THIRD PLENARY MEETING

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8th, 1925, AT 12 NOON.

CONTENTS :

11. CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.
Announcement of Chairmen.
12. VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE ASSEMBLY.
Election of six Vice-Presidents.
13. REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT.
Proposals of the President regarding the Discussion of the Report.
14. PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY AND ITS COMMITTEES.
Communication by the President.

President : MR. DANDURAND.

11. — CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES : ANNOUNCEMENT OF CHAIRMEN.

The President : The following is a list of the Chairmen elected this morning by the Committees :

| Committees | Chairmen |
|------------|--|
| No I. | Senator SCIALOJA (Italy). |
| No. II. | M. VAN EYSINGA (Netherlands). |
| No. III. | M. NINTCHITCH (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes). |
| No. IV. | M. DA COSTA (Portugal). |
| No. V. | M. MOWINCKEL (Norway). |
| No. VI. | M. GUERRERO (Salvador). |

12. — ELECTION OF THE SIX VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President : Under Rule 7, paragraph 1, of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, the agenda includes the election of the six Vice-Presidents.

Under Rule 21, paragraph 3, of the Rules of Procedure, this election takes place by secret ballot.

I call upon M. Fernandez y Medina (Uruguay) and M. Osusky (Czechoslovakia) to be good enough to act as tellers.

The votes of the delegations were taken in turn by secret ballot.

The President : Ladies and gentlemen — The result of the ballot is as follows :

Number of States voting : 47.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Voting papers null and void . . . | 1 |
| Voting papers valid | 46 |
| Majority required | 24 |

The analysis of the voting is as follows :

| | |
|---|----------|
| Viscount ISHII (Japan) | 45 votes |
| M. BRIAND (France) | 43 votes |
| M. ZUMETA (Venezuela) | 43 votes |
| Mr. Austen CHAMBERLAIN (British Empire) | 42 votes |
| Prince ARFA (Persia) | 41 votes |
| M. DUCA (Roumania) | 39 votes |

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure, I have the honour to declare these delegates Vice-Presidents of the Assembly.

13. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : PROPOSALS OF THE PRESIDENT REGARDING THE DISCUSSION OF THE REPORT.

The President : In accordance with the recommendations made by the Assembly last year (the printed text of which will be found at the end of the Rules of Procedure), we might open our meeting to-morrow at 11 a.m. with the consideration of the Report on the Work of the Council and of the Secretariat. In accordance with the recommendations made by the Assembly last year, delegates who wish to speak on the

work of the Council are requested to hand in their names as soon as possible and state whether they wish to engage in the general debate on the report or to make observations on specific subjects. By this means, the President will be able to conduct the debates with greater clearness.

I suggest that the meeting should be devoted to the general discussion. Is this agreed? (*Assent.*)

**14. — PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY AND ITS COMMITTEES :
COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.**

In order to avoid loss of time, I propose that the Committees should meet this afternoon, at the offices of the Secretariat, in the following order :

The First, Second and Sixth Committees at 3 p.m.

The Third, Fourth and Fifth Committees at 4.30 p.m.

The Committees will thus be able to appoint their bureaux and study their agendas, so as to begin the discussion of the questions submitted to them at their next meeting.

The order we are adopting this year is the same as that of former years. Should any delegates desire, however, to sit on two Committees which, under the proposed scheme, would meet simultaneously, the General Committee will consider what can be done, in time to enable any necessary change to be made before the next meeting of the Committees.

Finally, I suggest that the General Committee should meet at 10 o'clock to-morrow morning in the President's room at the Salle de la Réformation.

As we have now come to the end of the agenda, I will close the meeting.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE SIXTH ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FOURTH PLENARY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9th, 1925, AT 11 A.M.

CONTENTS :

15. APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE AS A MEMBER OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

Communication by the President.

16. TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF M. VIVIANI, M. MEIEROVICS, M. CHAGAS AND M. BRANTING.

17. REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT.

Speech by M. Zahle (Denmark).

President : MR. DANDURAND.

15. — APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE AS A MEMBER OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY : COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

Translation : The meeting is open.

At its meeting this morning the General Committee decided to propose that the Assembly should appoint the Chairman of the Agenda Committee as a member of the General Committee.

If no one has any objection, I shall regard the proposal as approved by the Assembly.

The proposal was adopted.

16. — TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF M. RENÉ VIVIANI, M. MEIEROVICS, M. CHAGAS AND M. BRANTING.

The President :

Translation : M. de Mello-Franco, first delegate of Brazil, will address the Assembly.

M. de Mello-Franco (Brazil) :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — It is a tradition in all Assemblies that a tribute should be paid to the memory of those who have collaborated with us in our common task. It symbolises not

merely the pious tribute paid to comrades who have fallen before the journey's end but also the hope of attaining, by the union of past and future efforts, the triumphant realisation of our ideal.

The religious and mystical sentiment which gave rise to ancestor-worship, created household gods, and, thousands of years ago, brought into being the city, in no way differs from the civic sentiment of organised nations, which inculcate into the new generations respect for the memory of their great men, thereby nurturing them in their love of the mother-country.

The union of past and present is a manifestation of the fundamental principle of human co-operation — a principle which has passed beyond the territorial frontiers of individual States, has ceased to be a mere force making for internal cohesion and progress, and has become the corner-stone of the future edifice of international organisation.

The League of Nations, in which, more than anywhere, it is essential to appeal to this community of feeling between its Members, cannot but render homage to the memory of those who, faithful to its ideals and full of confidence in its future, have devoted to its work their supreme gifts of heart and intellect.

Among our collaborators of yesterday who have already passed into the mysterious shadows—the undiscovered country—whence they can exercise their enlightening influence only by the example of their virtues and qualities, are those three colleagues to whose memory M. Painlevé, interpreting the feeling of this Assembly, has already paid tribute.

It is not for me, after the poignant words uttered by the distinguished head of the French Government, to seek to give expression to your grief.

The premature and unexpected death of M. Meierovics has not only plunged his own country into mourning; it is a source of great sorrow for all of us, who thus find ourselves suddenly deprived of one from whose aid the ideals of justice and of peace had still much to hope.

As Acting President of the Council, I have already had occasion to pay the tribute of my admiration and profound respect to the noble memory of the great Swedish statesman, M. Branting. Our happy recollections of that great man are associated with another more impersonal feeling — our esteem for those high qualities of rectitude and loyalty which inspired his contemporaries with such confidence.

His example will remain with us and his great figure will always serve as a model for those engaged in the crusade for peace through justice.

Now that we are about to open the discussion on the annual report on the work of the League, reasons of racial and historic affinity lead me to turn to the noble figure of that other colleague whom we have lost, João Pinheiro Chagas, who on more than one occasion represented Portugal as first delegate to the Assembly. His participation in the work of the League looms large in the annals of this Assembly and in the Minutes of the many Committees and technical organisations on which he served.

Upon me, by every right, devolves the sad duty of interpreting the general sorrow felt at the loss of a trusty and courageous friend. Not only did João Chagas honour me with his esteem and confidence, but I could regard him as my fellow-countryman because he was born in the town of Rio de Janeiro and because Portugal and Brazil, despite the ocean which separates them, constitute, for us Brazilians, one single country.

While still quite young, João Chagas left Brazil for Portugal and settled in the town of Oporto. It was in this town, which became the cradle of the liberal traditions of the Portuguese people, that he embarked on his long journalistic campaign on behalf of democratic ideals and the establishment in his country of a new political regime more suited to the social condition of the nation and better adapted to the utilisation of its material and moral assets.

As chief editor of the paper *Republica Portuguesa*, João Chagas was one of the leaders of the first Republican Revolution in Portugal, which broke out in 1891 in the historic town of Oporto. On the suppression of this revolutionary movement, João Chagas was condemned to exile and imprisonment in Africa, from which, however, he succeeded in escaping; he then found sanctuary in the generous land of France, which sheltered him for many years as a political refugee.

His activities as a journalist and pamphleteer were wide, productive and inspired, and were successful both in Portugal and in Brazil. The vigorous pages of his *Cartas Politicas* were like so many battering-rams, helping to break down the institutions of the old Portuguese regime and to pave the way for the coming of the Republic in 1910.

He was a distinguished man of letters and belonged to the vigorous generation which produced the youthful nationalism of the third phase of Portuguese romanticism, the phase enriched by great and brilliant minds such as Ramalho Ortigão, Eça de Queiroz, Guerra Junqueiro and other writers and poets, whose work was produced between 1870 and 1890.

He was Portuguese Minister in Paris for thirteen years, after having held in the first Constitutional Republican Government of his own country the post of Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs.

In the exercise of his important duties he was among those who, in those tragic and terrible years at the memory of which we still shudder, did most to induce his country to share in the work of fertilising and tilling the soil over which the

great tree of international peace and concord will one day spread its shady branches.

The last years of this noble life were devoted to the work of reconstructing the Old World, which had failed to find a way of preventing the dire disaster of war, and to the work of preparing a better world based on the inviolable rule of right and justice — an ideal now materialising in the great institution of which this Assembly is the guiding power.

Devoid of political fanaticism, but firmly intent upon the purpose which his sound judgment and his ideals of beauty and perfection had conceived, João Chagas was a pioneer of the new movement.

It is fitting, therefore, that our grief at his loss and the regret felt by those who had the good fortune to know him, should be recorded in the annals of this Assembly.

The President :

Translation : His Excellency Dr. Affonso Augusto da Costa, first delegate of Portugal, will address the Assembly.

Dr. da Costa (Portugal) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — It is with the deepest emotion, yet with the most profound gratitude, that I mount this platform.

Not having been associated with the work of the Assembly of the League of Nations for the last five years, I never thought that to me would fall the sad duty of speaking to you, as I now must, of a former companion who shared in our toil and struggles. My deep grief is not devoid of solace, however. Only when we see that our sorrows are shared do we realise how beneficent is the general sympathy felt for us in our distress. This general sympathy I find here.

I desire to express my deep gratitude to the Brazilian Ambassador for his words in memory of João Chagas. That great Brazilian citizen and friend of Portugal, M. de Mello-Franco, has interpreted in this high Assembly the feelings of his country, feelings which he himself shares, for the great loss which we have suffered. I would also express to the whole Assembly my profound gratitude for the way in which it has received those words.

I speak on behalf of my country, on behalf of the Portuguese delegation, and also on my own behalf.

In the brief but clear account which he gave, the Brazilian Ambassador dwelt upon my fellow-countryman's qualities and described the stages of his career and his activities.

It is not for me to enlarge before this world-wide Assembly upon his untiring energy, which now, alas! has been stayed for ever. This energy he devoted mainly to national problems and the strengthening of our ties with France, the country in which he so ably represented us for thirteen years. When, however, such energy is unswervingly devoted to a lofty purpose, it constitutes in itself an example worthy of note. To fight, from early youth under one flag, to defend the same doctrines against all and sundry, and to suffer for them, constitute a legacy which our poet, Sá de Miranda, has so well defined as :

"But one ideal, one thought, one heart."

He wished to see his country powerful and respected, and he never wavered in his self-appointed task.

Inspired by a patriotic ideal, he always remembered that a country cannot remain isolated. He stepped into the arena at a time when there were two opposing schools of thought. He did not hesitate, from the outset, to proclaim his opinion and fight

for its acceptance. Events have proved that he was right, and later, when the Assembly first met in 1920, he pleaded before you for the just principle of the universality of the League of Nations, a principle which is surely essential for the complete success of our task. Guided by these principles, he set out to defend the legitimate ambitions of the nations which were proclaimed independent after the war.

I will not dwell further on my private feelings towards one who has gone from our midst; but after the condolence expressed by this Assembly, after the tributes offered to his memory, I cannot hide my emotion.

How can I respond to the heartfelt sympathy of M. de Mello-Franco, the representative of that Brazilian nation which we regard as part of the wider Portuguese motherland, where all our deepest joys and sorrows mingle! Indeed, the mighty ocean which lies between us does but intensify our mutual sympathies, which re-unite and are welded into one.

Such is the lesson we may learn from the words of the Brazilian Ambassador.

So, too, all that the great Brazilian nation has at heart forms part also of our own patrimony of ideals.

Prince Arfa (Persia):

Translation: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I desire on behalf of Persia to associate myself especially with the tribute which has just been rendered to the memory of that great man, Hjalmar Branting.

We have all had occasion, here and in the Council, to appreciate his perfect loyalty, his courage, his spirit of justice and his impartiality towards all nations, small and great.

Sweden's sorrow is deep and to that noble country we express our profound sympathy.

Hjalmar Branting was not only a good Swede but a great citizen of the world, and in him all humanity has lost a loyal friend.

With deepest sorrow also we mourn the loss of our two respected colleagues, M. Chagas and M. Meierovics, with whom we have so often worked in unison. Their memory will live for ever in our minds.

The President: I now call upon Viscount Cecil of Chelwood to speak.

Viscount Cecil of Chelwood (British Empire): Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I desire, on behalf of my Government, to occupy your attention for a very few moments by referring to the very grievous losses that the League of Nations has suffered during the past year.

As regards the deaths of M. Chagas and M. Meierovics, I will not attempt to add anything to the eloquent tributes which have already been paid to the memory of those colleagues. On behalf of the British Government, I desire to associate myself with everything that has been said by those who have already spoken, to express our deep regret at the death of our eminent colleagues and to tender our respectful sympathy to the countries which have lost their services and their citizenship.

There are two others whose loss we have to deplore, René Viviani and Hjalmar Branting. It would be impossible to say which of them is the greater loss to the Council of the League. They represented in a very remarkable way perhaps the most opposite types of human nature. M. Viviani, born under the warm sun of Algiers, preserved until the end, until his last appearance in this Assembly, the warmth, the enthusiasm, the impetuosity which

belong to the country of his birth. M. Branting was of a very different type, not less valuable, representing all that was sound and sensible and essential for the fair and just judgment of questions that came before us, typical perhaps of the climate of the country which gave him birth and presenting a contrast which only enhances the merits of such a type as M. Viviani, without detracting in any way from the great value of his own presence and his own collaboration.

Of M. Viviani's eloquence it is unnecessary to speak. Many of those present here have heard him speak from this platform. He excelled in every kind of oratory. I remember particularly three speeches of his, among many others. The first was delivered in one of our Committees when he was suddenly called upon to deal with a complicated report (I think the subject of it was armaments) which he had not, I think, seen before it was put into his hands at the meeting. He made a most logical and valuable criticism of that report, arranged in perfect artistic symmetry, each argument having its place in the general scheme. If an ordinary man had thought for a week he would not have been able to present to the Committee a more complete study of the question.

We all remember his splendid bursts of eloquence which we have heard from this platform, and there probably lingers more particularly in our minds a magnificent speech which he made, also on the spur of the moment, in defence of the position and policy of his country. I also have a very vivid recollection of another great speech in which he welcomed the reappearance of Poland amongst the independent nations of the world, when he thrilled us all with the deeply eloquent testimony which he gave to that country and its history and characteristics.

One other characteristic of M. Viviani I may perhaps venture to mention. He was, I think, one of the most ardent patriots who have ever attended this Assembly. He had a profound belief in his own country, and was deeply devoted to its prosperity. His ardent patriotism, however, in no way impaired his conviction of the value and importance of the work of the League of Nations, and he showed that a man may be, as he was, an ardent patriot and, at the same time, a convinced internationalist.

With regard to M. Branting, I will only say that he was one of the pillars of the League of Nations. His moderation, his straightforwardness, his courage, his clearness of vision were valued by every member of this Assembly. When any difficult matter arose, one of the first questions we asked was: "What is M. Branting thinking on this subject?" We referred to him as a kind of embodiment of the commonsense and judgment of the world, and when he had spoken we felt very sure that his opinion was not far from the truth as regards the question before us.

These two great figures, contrasted and yet comparable, as different as a mountain torrent from a slow-moving river, were both of great value to this Assembly; their loss is one which we all deplore, and we tender, with the greatest respect, our deep regret for their loss and our profound sympathy with their respective countries.

The President:

Translation: I call upon M. Undén, first delegate of Sweden.

M. Undén (Sweden):

Translation: Mr. President — Permit me, on behalf of the Swedish delegation, to express our sincere thanks to the delegates of Brazil, Persia

and the British Empire for their words of sympathy in memory of Branting, that great Swedish statesman who was so convinced a partisan of the League of Nations and its deals and who took so important a part in its work.

Their words have moved us deeply and will find a grateful echo in my country.

M. Schumans (Latvia) :

Translation : On behalf of my country, I desire to thank the previous speakers for the kind and friendly words we have just heard. For a small country such as mine there is no greater honour than that the memory of one of its statesmen should be involved in a great conference such as this. I would express my heartfelt gratitude to the whole Assembly for the sympathy it has displayed towards my country, stricken as it is by the tragic death of my chief, M. Meierovics, the Latvian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The President :

Translation : I believe that I interpret the feelings of all the members of this Assembly in associating myself with the tribute paid to the memory of those statesmen whose loss has plunged into mourning not only their own countries but also the League of Nations and the whole world.

17. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT.

According to the decision taken yesterday, the next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Report to the sixth Assembly 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. 7. and 7(a), Annexes 2, 2(a) and 2(b).

M. Zahle, first delegate of Denmark, will address the Assembly.

M. Zahle (Denmark) :

Translation : The Danish Government has followed with the very greatest interest the work accomplished by the League of Nations during the past year.

We see in the report before us, which has been prepared by the Secretariat with its habitual care and clearness, that the Council, in conformity with the resolutions of the Assembly of 1924, has examined a number of questions of the greatest importance and that the Conferences held under the auspices of the League have attempted, and not without success, to settle various problems which concern the whole world.

We cannot, it is true, do everything at once, and in view of the extent and complexity of these problems, our wisest course is to have patience. Our League is still in its youth, and only Hercules could kill serpents in his cradle. We cannot therefore expect our youthful League already to have the strength to destroy all evils at one blow and solve problems so vast as those of disarmament, the control of the trade in and manufacture of arms, and the abuse of narcotics. Until we can solve these problems, therefore, we must, before all things, collaborate wholeheartedly in the work of the League by aiding it in its untiring efforts to attain its goal.

On one point at least I feel we shall all be in agreement : the League of Nations has left behind it the realm of dreams and fiction. It is now a political reality. It may change; it may adapt itself to diverse and complex needs; but it is not—

as I have heard it said — in the throes of death. It lives, and will continue to live. Some idea of its task and of the work accomplished by it is beginning to penetrate the minds of the masses, and — more important still — the younger generation itself seems to be taking a greater interest in the League's activities, in response to the eloquent appeal recently addressed to it here by the head of the French Government.

In this connection, I can assure you that Denmark has taken steps to acquaint the pupils of secondary schools with the work of the League, and on the very day of the opening of the Assembly at Geneva teachers in all the primary schools explained to their pupils the League's aim and mission.

After these general remarks, I will now turn to certain sections of the report submitted to us.

In 1921 the Assembly adopted several amendments to the Covenant, but up to now only those amendments which relate to Articles 6, 12, 13 and 15 have come into force. It is unfortunate that the amendments to Articles 4, 16 and 26, are not yet in force, although they have been ratified by a number of countries.

As regards Article 16, the Assembly in 1921 adopted a draft amendment simplifying the application of this article and sought at the same time to mitigate its too severe effects. Denmark attaches special importance to this amendment, because she considers that Article 16 in its present form — not merely from the point of view of certain countries — is too rigid. I do not propose to go into the interesting details of the origin of this article brought out by the enquiry of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the United States Senate. I will simply remind you that the original draft of this article was based on the assumption that a state of war existed between the Covenant-breaking State and all other Members of the League. Mr. Wilson's advisers nevertheless pointed out to him that this rule was dangerous. Thereupon the article was so drawn up that a breach of the Covenant was considered as an act of war which might indeed authorise, but would not compel, the other Members to declare war. The application of sanctions, therefore, did not *ipso facto* pre-suppose a state of war, and they can, in principle, be quite well reconciled with the neutrality of Members. But although the main basis of the international situation referred to in Article 16 was thus modified, no modification was then made in the definite and special provisions of the article. While thus granting rights and imposing obligations on Members, as if they were in a state of war, it was nevertheless claimed that no state of war existed. That was a somewhat striking anomaly, which was further accentuated by the fact that there are great and powerful military, economic and industrial States which still remain outside the League, and would perhaps not respect the provisions of Article 16, which are contrary to the traditional rights of war and neutrality.

It was in order to obviate this difficulty and place the application of Article 16 upon a firmer basis that the 1921 Assembly adopted a series of recommendations and a number of draft amendments to this article.

I need only refer here to the speeches made in the 1921 Assembly, and I repeat that my Government still considers it of the highest importance for the future of the League that a sufficient number of States should ratify these amendments so that they may come into force.

As regards Article 4, the Danish delegation has already more than once stated its opinion that

definite rules must be laid down for the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council.

I need not, I think, repeat our observations, for I hope it will be possible, as soon as circumstances permit, to reach a solution satisfactory to all.

As regards the question of the allocation of expenses, the competent Committee has proposed a scale which I hope this Assembly will see its way to adopt. As it is not possible to establish a final scale, we readily agree to the Committee's proposal that the new scale should be applied for three years. By adopting this scale we shall avoid the discussion of this important question every year.

I now come to the question of the codification of international law. In accordance with its instructions, the Committee has endeavoured to draw up a list of special problems which have not yet been solved, and which could with advantage be examined more thoroughly on scientific lines. Apart from this most useful work, it would perhaps be interesting to endeavour to carry out a short general codification of international law as a whole, that is to say, all the questions regarding which the rules at present in force are clear and generally recognised. We might perhaps take as our model the "American Codification of International Law", drawn up in 1925 at the instance of the Pan-American Union.

I now come to the really fundamental matter—the great and important question of the Geneva Protocol of 1924, and the problem of disarmament and arbitration. This document, the main result of our deliberations last year, has been sharply criticised in various quarters. The Danish Government is among those which desire first and foremost to maintain the great progress achieved by the Protocol, and the encouragement given by the 1924 Assembly in unanimously recommending the Members of the League of adhere to that Protocol. A Danish poet once said that a great idea cannot die until it has given birth to an even better and greater idea. Thus the sequel to our discussions of 1923 was the draft Protocol submitted to our Assembly last year, which marks considerable progress, since it declares all wars of aggression to be contrary to law, whereas the Covenant admits the possibility of legal warfare.

The Geneva Protocol introduces an almost unconditional obligation to settle international disputes by peaceful methods. The Danish Government wholeheartedly approves this noble endeavour, and we are certain that the Geneva Protocol, duly modified and adapted to the interests of the various States, will not die. On the contrary, we feel sure that the work which, in 1924, was approved in principle by every Member of this Assembly will from the basis of our efforts to bring to a successful issue the task which it is our duty to accomplish, and which the whole world expects us to accomplish.

I shall not go into details here. I wish only to emphasise that, as far as we are concerned, we are less interested in the question of responsibility for war than in knowing who, in any concrete case, is the aggressor. We consider it far more important to prevent and to combat war in general, and to see that the resolutions adopted by the Assembly in 1921 with regard to the application of the League's sanctions should remain in force.

The Danish Government regrets, as indeed we all regret, that during the past year circumstances have prevented steps being taken to prepare for a Disarmament Conference.

We were very glad to hear the head of the French Government express the hope that this Assembly would be able to adopt a resolution again inviting

the Council to make preparations for a Disarmament Conference.

As we know, certain States hold that disarmament cannot be achieved unless and until the establishment of a system of conventions has increased the national feeling of security, whereas other nations believe that they can disarm, relying upon the security already afforded by the Covenant.

We believe, however, that in the meantime we should make proper preparation for disarmament by carrying out an exhaustive study of all the concomitant problems.

I venture to remind you of the resolution on this subject passed by the Inter-Parliamentary Conference of the four countries of Northern Europe at Helsingfors in August last. We hope that the present Assembly will adopt resolutions enabling this preparatory work to be undertaken in the immediate future.

As regards the question of the pacific settlement of international disputes, Denmark has concluded various arbitration conventions in conformity with the resolution adopted by the Assembly in 1922.

That Assembly recommended the Members of the League, subject to the rights and obligations mentioned in Article 15 of the Covenant, to conclude conventions with the object of laying their disputes before Conciliation Commissions formed by themselves. It also recommended a model to serve as a basis for these conventions.

The Danish Government accordingly entered into negotiations with the Governments of Finland, Sweden, Norway and Switzerland, and these negotiations have resulted in the conclusion of the Convention of June 27th, 1924, between the Scandinavian countries, and that of June 6th, 1924, between Denmark and Switzerland. The ratifications were exchanged on May 18th and August 30th of this year respectively, and the Conventions have been published in the *Treaties Series* of the League.

Under these conventions the parties undertake to submit any dispute, without exception, to a special Conciliation Commission, unless, in virtue of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice or of any other convention concluded between the parties, such disputes are subject to judicial settlement.

The Danish Government considers it most desirable that inter-State conventions of this kind should be concluded, and is itself prepared to sign such conventions with those countries which so desire.

My Government has submitted a proposal which will form the basis of discussion regarding the formation of a Conciliation Commission attached to the Permanent Court of International Justice; this proposal has been placed on the agenda of the present Assembly. It should be regarded as initiating a discussion of principles.

Such are the considerations and observations which I have to submit to you on behalf of my Government. I have given expression to these wishes because my country has placed high hopes in the League and desires to see it develop and progress from strength to strength.

We think that the League is the only organisation which will enable us to make international solidarity an accomplished fact, and all efforts directed towards this end should, as far as possible, be centralised and placed under the League's direction.

In days of old, men sought to build a tower which should reach to the heavens. But an evil day came when they found they could no longer understand each other, and had to abandon their project because they spoke different tongues.

To-day we have begun by learning the language of international understanding, and in building up the League of Nations we are taking in hand once more the erection of that gigantic edifice. Let us work unitedly and wholeheartedly to

build up this edifice of the League until it pierces the clouds of international discord and rears its lofty pinnacles to the skies.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE
SIXTH ASSEMBLY
OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FIFTH PLENARY MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10th, 1925, AT 10.30 A.M.

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The President:

Translation: The Agenda Committee has met and has elected as Chairman Count Skrzynski, delegate for Poland.

The Assembly has before it the first report of the Agenda Committee, which reads as follows:

"The Committee held its first meeting in the Salle de la Réformation on September 9th, 1925, at 10.30 a.m.

"Present:

Sir Joseph COOK (Australia);
M. KALFOFF (Bulgaria);
M. BELLO-CODENIDO (Chile);
M. E. DE PALACTOS (Spain);
M. K. IDMAN (Finland);
M. SKRZYNSKI (Poland);
M. PRABHA KARAWONGSE (Siam).

"M. Skrzynski was unanimously elected Chairman.

"The following questions were on the agenda:

- "1. The Protection of Women and Children in the Near East.
- "2. Opium: Commission of Enquiry in certain Opium-producing Countries: Resolution adopted by the Second Opium Conference.
- "3. International Relief Union: Preparatory Committee's Report and Draft Statutes of the Union.

"Reports on these three questions have been submitted to the Council at its present session, and it has decided to request the sixth Assembly to place them on its agenda.

"The Committee was of opinion that all these proposals were deserving of consideration. The reports on each subject have been carefully drawn up. Nevertheless, the short time (less than a week) that has elapsed since these reports were submitted may be considered as an exceptional circumstance which will enable the Assembly, in accordance with Article 4, paragraph 4, of its Rules of Procedure, to place these questions on its agenda and refer them to the competent Committees for consideration.

"The Committee therefore proposes that they be placed on the agenda of the Assembly and referred to Committees as follows:

"To the Second Committee :

"The question of the International Union for the Relief of Populations Overtaken by Disaster.

"To the Fifth Committee :

"(a) The question of the Protection of Women and Children in the Near East ;

"(b) The question of a Commission of Enquiry in certain Opium-producing Countries.

"These Committees may ask the advice of the Fourth Committee, should the questions before them involve financial interests.

(Signed) AL. SKRZYNSKI,
Chairman of the Committee."

I would ask the Assembly to give an opinion on the conclusions of the report.

If no one wishes to speak, I shall regard the conclusions of the report as adopted and the questions mentioned as referred to the various Committees.

The report was adopted.

I should like to remind the Assembly that the Chairman of the Agenda Committee, Count Skrzyński, has been invited to sit on the General Committee of the Assembly, in accordance with the proposal approved by the Assembly at its meeting yesterday morning.

19. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the discussion on the report to the sixth Assembly on the work of the Council, the work of the Secretariat, and the measures taken to execute the decisions of the Assembly.

The first speaker on the list, Dr. Caballero, delegate of Paraguay, will address the Assembly.

Dr. R. V. Caballero (Paraguay) :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — Paraguay joined the League of Nations with full confidence in it and with an earnest desire that the new organisation, the defects of which she fully realised, should be perfected. Who, indeed, could fail at once to perceive those defects, the most serious of which was that resort to arbitration was not imposed in all cases. Certain disputes were left for Members of the League to settle according to their discretion. Last year this defect was remedied : the fifth Assembly made arbitration compulsory instead of merely optional. Whereas the Covenant admitted certain cases in which war was, as it were, authorised, we decided, in the Protocol, that war could never be tolerated except in legitimate self-defence. In future, no State would have the right both to judge and be a party to a dispute in which its interests were involved.

There was, nevertheless, another defect — the absence of sanctions which would be brought to bear in any and every contingency against a State guilty of violating the Covenant. To this end the Assembly of 1924 defined the conditions which should govern intervention by the military, naval or air forces as provided for in Article 16 of the Covenant. It made provision, among other matters, for the preparation, in advance, of a joint economic and military plan of action.

We should strive to render the principle of international law so sacred, to confer on it such active powers and far-reaching prestige, that anyone tempted to revolt against it would be forced, by the preventive action of the penalty imposed, to renounce his purpose.

Our own traditions and national temperament will not allow us to remain indifferent to any act whatever intended to reduce the sum of evil in the world. Paraguay has no reason to stand aloof in this era of universal pacifism : her Continental policy has always been governed by the desire to promote an ever-closer understanding between the peoples. Paraguay has always given her support to international institutions the object of which is mutual enlightenment, concord or conciliation. Without going further back into the past, let me remind you of the work done by the delegation sent by Paraguay to the last Pan-American Conference at Santiago in Chile in 1923.

M. Gandra, former President of the Republic of Paraguay, who was once at the head of that delegation, has endeavoured to bring about a Convention of wide scope for the prevention of all conflicts between the States of the American Continent. We are fully justified to-day in regarding this Convention as the first rough draft of a great international pact of peace. The Convention relied on international loyalty, and more particularly on the calming influence of the pre-determined period which would intervene between the outbreak of a conflict and the date on which the Conciliation Commission appointed to examine the dispute would deliver its award. This Convention was ratified, in particular, by the United States, Brazil and Paraguay.

How did such a project come to be conceived in the minds of American statesmen ? The explanation lies in our common political organisation, our sense of equality and fraternity. As Renan said, democracy neither desires nor understands war. The American Republics are agreed in making international law a basic law. They do not differentiate between individual and national liberty.

From our distant point of vantage we cannot discern the special questions raised by the problem of the organisation of peace ; we only perceive the general and eternal questions which dominate them. The most important question for us is the reconciliation of the nations of Europe. It is essential for the progress of humanity that Europe should continue to play the part it has always hitherto played in the history of the world. Our main concern is to offer our humble aid in bringing about a pact of peace. Could we not endeavour to reach this end by means similar to those which were used in America ?

It is essential not to allow ourselves to be misled by the enthusiasm to which the work of the fifth Assembly gave rise throughout the world. As has been rightly pointed out, the Protocol in itself was not sufficient to prevent all possibility of war. It offers remedies for symptoms rather than for causes. The solution it proposes for the organisation of peace is too purely political. For, although the Protocol might have imposed universal arbitration and disarmament, a nation which depended on another nation for all its necessities would still possess no means of defence, however just its cause. But, so long as respect for the basic principles of the Covenant has not been enforced, it will not be possible to deal usefully with the problem of preventing war.

We cannot make solid progress even in our work at Geneva unless we succeed in organising a world peace on an economic basis. At the present time, political problems cannot be kept apart from

technical problems. There are certain economic questions which cannot be solved unless they are treated internationally. They are so closely interconnected and inter-dependent that it is impossible to provide an individual solution for each one of them.

Salvation does not lie either in absolute protection or absolute free trade. Individual interests must necessarily give place to an international conception of economics.

The most powerful factor for the promotion of peace is public opinion. We must therefore bring public opinion in every country to realise the need for a common economic and financial policy. Indeed, a movement in this direction is already beginning. Any attempt to ignore it will be useless; we had far better take steps to prepare for it. The reign of empiricism is past.

The work accomplished by the League in Austria and Hungary gives us much ground for hope. We can therefore trust the League. It alone can establish the conditions of an economic equilibrium just to all. We must, as far as possible, ensure the independent economic existence of the small nations as well as of the nations whose general conditions of existence are often precarious. We must make it possible for every nation to work in the full light of day, without fear of perishing either by starvation or surfeit. This is the price of peace, a just peace, a peace organised and assured, the real peace of the future. As yet, it is true, peace is merely a distant glimmer; but we shall never despair of attaining it, because we shall always cling to the belief that we can attain it.

The work accomplished by the League contains an imperishable leaven which will react beneficially upon the future. There is one moral law which invariably proves to be true, and it is a source of comfort and consolation for all who have faith in the development of an international code of ethics: no effort is ever wasted; sooner or later it will bear fruit. Men are loath to yield the ground they have gained. Despite temporary and sometimes unavoidable checks, we still press on. We must desire, we must believe, before we can accomplish. We believe, then, that our efforts will not be in vain; we believe that what we have done will serve some useful purpose; we believe in our ideal. Peace is an act of faith, and we hold that if humanity does not of itself take the right road it is our duty to urge it, to strive to persuade it, to do so. Belief in the moral regeneration of the world is not so fantastic as is generally thought. The ideal often leads to and strengthens the act.

The President:

Translation: Mr. Austen Chamberlain, delegate of the British Empire, will address the Assembly.

The Rt. Hon. Austen Chamberlain (British Empire): Mr. President, I hope that I may be permitted to offer you the congratulations of the British delegation on the high honour which this Assembly has done to you, and to you, ladies and gentlemen, may I express the thanks of the delegations of the whole British Empire for the honour which you have done to it in choosing one of our distinguished citizens to take the Chair at this Assembly.

I rejoice with other speakers who have preceded me to see not merely the growth of interest in the proceedings of the League of Nations but the growth of its authority and influence as its work proceeds. My own country has desired to mark its respect for your Council and for your Assembly by deputing me, since I have held my present office, to represent it at each session of the Council and to be a member of its delegation to this Assembly. A more practical and a more significant proof of our admiration for the Assembly, of our

confidence in the Council and in its justice, is our ready acceptance of the Council as arbitrator and judge in the unfortunate difference of opinion which has arisen between us and the Turkish Republic and which we have been unable to settle amicably without your help. No greater proof of the influence which the League has gained or of the confidence with which the Government of a great nation may justly submit its cause to the decision of the Council, can be offered than by the action which my Government has taken in connection with the difference concerning Mosul.

I have no intention of attempting to repeat the eloquent survey of the manifold activities of the League of Nations which was made by the Prime Minister of France from the Chair at our opening meeting. My theme is a more restricted one, but since it fell to me on behalf of my Government to make the first public declaration of the reasons for which it was unable to accept the Protocol, I would ask you to permit me to say a few words upon that subject to-day and to indicate to you briefly by what spirit we are inspired, what objects we are pursuing and, broadly, even the methods by which we think those objects can most readily be attained. I believe that if you will do me the honour to consider calmly what I say, you will find that though there have been, and though there yet may be, differences of opinion in this Assembly as to the best means of attaining the objects that we have in view, there is no difference of opinion here as to what those objects themselves should be.

I hope that I may assume that you are familiar with the statement that I made on behalf of my Government to the Council and which has been distributed to you. I do not propose to cover all the ground that was covered in that statement. I wish only to present to you two or three broad considerations.

I was struck by an observation made yesterday by the honourable delegate of Denmark. Speaking of the aims of the League of Nations, he said: "It is not our purpose to punish the aggressor; it is our object to prevent aggression". That seems to me to be a fundamental principle which we are always bound to keep before us: Punishment of international crime may be, and indeed is, necessary, just as punishment of individual crime is necessary. But the object which all legislators should have before them is not to punish the criminal but to prevent the commission of the offence. Now it seemed to my Government that that distinction, that principle, had been somewhat lost to view in the framing of the Protocol of last year. We felt, if I may repeat the words which I used to the Council, that the additions which the Protocol made to the Covenant in some sort changed the spirit of the Covenant and obscured the original purpose which inspired the creation of the League itself.

These additions, I said, destroy the balance of the Covenant and alter its spirit. The fresh emphasis laid upon sanctions, the new occasions discovered for their employment, the elaboration of military procedure, insensibly suggest the idea that the vital business of the League is not so much to promote friendly co-operation and reasoned harmony in the management of international affairs as to preserve peace by organising war, and it may be war upon the largest scale.

Do not let us lose sight of the fact that if the only result of our efforts is to punish war and not to prevent it we have failed in the achievement of the very purpose which we were created to pursue, and that it is only in so far as we prevent war that we can justify the hopes which humanity sets upon this great international society.

Now may I make a further general observation? We represent here a multitude of nations scattered over the face of the whole world belonging to every race and every clime and to every creed, with every possible diversity of political institutions, of social characteristics, of domestic law and of past history. To frame an instrument precise in every detail, logical in every line, which is to deal with the multiple affairs of so vast and so diverse a conglomeration of communities, to frame it with logical precision, and so that every possible case is foreseen and provided for, may well be beyond the wits with which humanity is endowed. Indeed, ladies and gentlemen, is it not somewhat as if some enterprising but idealistic tailor undertook to fit all the personages of this great Assembly with a common suit of clothes?

To me it seems, and to my Government it seems, that if this Assembly is to work smoothly, if the League of Nations is to exercise full authority and, above all, a healing and conciliatory influence, you must allow for this great diversity among our conditions. I can well believe that the Protocol fitted exactly the circumstances of some nations, though, as I know from communications which I have received since I made my statement to the Council in the month of March, there are not a few Governments, small as well as great, which shared the doubt and hesitation felt by the British Government itself.

Our attitude, however, is perhaps a consequence of those characteristics of the Anglo-Saxon mind upon which the Chairman at our opening meeting dwelt in an interesting and striking passage of his speech. It is, I think, natural, as he said, to the Latin mind first to fix certain abstract principles, to settle general rules, and then to proceed to apply them to detailed cases. Our history has taken a different course, and it has indelibly impressed its mark upon our outlook on public affairs. We are prone to eschew the general, we are fearful of these logical conclusions pushed to the extreme, because, in fact, human nature being what it is, logic plays but a small part in our everyday life. We are actuated by tradition, by affection, by prejudice, by moments of emotion and sentiment. In the face of any great problem we are seldom really guided by the stern logic of the philosopher or the historian who, removed from all the turmoil of daily life, works in the studious calm of his surroundings.

May I invite the Assembly for one moment to look at the history of my country? We have had no revolutionary disturbance for 250 years. Immense changes have taken place in that period in every aspect of our life. At no single moment have we formulated large general principles with a logical precision; on the contrary, nearly every vital decision that we have taken has been illogical, and, for that reason, all the more adapted to reconcile conflicting interests, to find the middle path, and to lead on by slow and gradual means to the desired end.

Take the relations of the various great communities of the British Empire among themselves. What was the Protocol? Something like a single code of law, a single constitution for all the States represented in this great Assembly. More than once at the gatherings of Ministers of the British Empire we have considered whether we might not, whether we ought not, to endeavour to put into black and white the constitution of the British Empire not as it is written but as it is practised to-day, and, every time, and with unanimity, representatives of those different Governments have decided that, in the very elasticity which our want of logic and our want of precise defini-

tion afforded us, lay the secret of our unity and our concord.

If these ideas be strange to other nations differently situated, at least you can see how this historical development of the British Constitution and of the British Empire must influence the outlook on these great questions of the representatives who speak to you in her name. It has been our practice, therefore, to eschew these large declarations of general principle, to avoid attempting to define exactly what should be done, and how it should be done in every possible contingency that we can contemplate, knowing, as we do, that even if we provided satisfactorily for every contingency that we could contemplate, it is quite as likely as not that the event which would actually happen would not conform to the exact detail of any of those which we had anticipated. We have proceeded from the particular to the general instead of from the general to the particular. We have been content to deal at any one moment with the evil of the day and to provide the remedy which that evil required. It is not out of a logical system proceeding from general hypotheses that our freedom, our liberties, our safety have grown. It is from the wise spirit of compromise which has inspired all British parties in critical moments and from our careful concentration upon the immediate problems which required a solution at the moment.

It is, therefore, inspired by all our history, by habits of mind that are inbred in us as a consequence of that history, that we approach the consideration of these great international problems. We were part authors of the original Covenant. We pledge again — though that, indeed, is not needed — our loyalty to the League and to the Covenant. We share your desire to see a sense of security give rest and peace to the peoples of this world, and if we think that the methods which the last Assembly chose are not best adapted to that end, if we think that, proceeding more modestly and at first attempting less, we may eventually achieve more, I beg you to believe that we act always in the spirit which inspired those who in successive years have sought to give to the Covenant a greater completeness and perfection.

Our ultimate aim, our only aim, like that of other members of the Assembly, is to promote peace, to establish peace firmly, to abolish war, if you can, and, if not, to do everything to render it difficult to make war, to give time for the friends of peace to make their influence felt, and for the moral feeling of the world to pronounce a judgment on the attitude of the disputants and to indicate where justice lies. Ah, ladies and gentlemen, much of the attention of the last Assembly and of its Committees was directed to the physical sanctions to be applied against flagrant aggressors. I do not underrate their importance. I do not deny their necessity. But I say to you with profound conviction that the moral sanctions are as influential as the sanctions of force, and that the moral sanctions act earlier, act more surely, and in the long run — and history is there to prove it — decide the issue of the combat.

Our object is not merely that there should be peace, but that all should feel that peace is secure. Disarmament through security, security through arbitration — arbitration, security, disarmament are the common platform of the whole League of Nations. But there is another disarmament which is not less important, which indeed, is more urgent, for it is a necessary preliminary to the physical disarmament of nations. It is the moral disarmament of the world. It is, as the Chairman said, to us in his opening speech, the need of creating a new

international soul and a new international morality. Unless we find some method to allay the distrust, to remove the suspicions, to take away those fears which now brood over not merely Government offices and Councils of Ministers but the mansions of the rich and the cottages of the poor in the lands which have been devastated by war or the populations of which have paid their toll in blood and sacrifice—unless we can do that we shall never succeed in achieving the great programme which we have set before us.

It has seemed to my Government, therefore, that the greatest contribution we could make was to seek in that region with which we are most intimately associated, a region which has too often been the origin and the theatre of war, and to secure, in the first place by mutual agreement amongst all those whose interests were immediately affected, a guarantee for the peace of that district, and that if we could achieve that, we made no small contribution to the peace of the world.

By the instructions of my Government, I put our object before the Council in words which again, I hope, you will allow me to repeat: Our object is "to supplement the Covenant by making special arrangements in order to meet special needs. That these arrangements should be purely defensive in character, that they should be framed in the spirit of the Covenant, working in close harmony with the League and under its guidance, is manifest. And, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, these objects can best be attained by knitting together the nations most immediately concerned, and whose differences might lead to a renewal of strife, by means of treaties framed with the sole object of maintaining, as between themselves, an unbroken peace."

What is the work in which some of the Governments here represented are now engaged? We seek no fresh alliance directed against some other party. We do not seek to continue the suspicions, the passions, the animosities of the past. Our object is to bring rest to our peoples and peace to the world, and if we succeed by such mutual agreements, not confined, I hope, to one narrow region, but finding, in suitable form, their application in other menaced spots, then indeed, ladies and gentlemen, I hope we shall have the sympathy and approval of the League of Nations, for we shall bring to the League great support, a great increase of its authority and influence and the largest contribution that it is in our power to make to the preservation of the peace of the world.

The President:

Translation: M. Undén, Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, will address the Assembly.

M. Undén (Sweden):

Translation: Several of the distinguished speakers who have already addressed you have referred to the fate of the Geneva Protocol.

The unanimous hope of the last Assembly that a complete system of arbitration, security and disarmament would be established forthwith has not been realised. Only a very small number of States have responded to the Assembly's recommendation by signing the so-called optional clause of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice. We cannot, however, deny the great importance of the effort made last year to influence public opinion in favour of compulsory arbitration. The resolutions adopted by the Assembly of 1924 should therefore encourage the League of Nations to persevere along the lines indicated.

From the outset, public opinion throughout the world has shown a special interest in the principles contained in the Geneva Protocol. There have been many indications that the League is expected to pursue its untiring efforts to establish a more perfect peace organisation.

Allow me to cite, for example, the resolutions passed by the northern group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union at its meeting at Helsingfors, and those recently passed by the Socialist International at its Congress at Marseilles.

The negotiations now taking place between certain Powers concerning a pact of security, combined with arbitration treaties—negotiations which are intended to carry into effect in part the principles of the Geneva Protocol—have naturally been closely followed by the public. We are eagerly awaiting the results of these negotiations.

I venture to hope that they will soon terminate in an agreement between the Powers concerned, conceived within the terms of the Covenant, and that, at the same time, a further step towards the universality of the League will be taken by the inclusion of Germany amongst its Members. In this way, one of the essential conditions for the application of Article 8 of the Covenant concerning disarmament would be realised.

The principle of arbitration has, on the whole, made considerable progress during the past year. A large number of partial arbitration treaties have been concluded or are in course of preparation between various States.

In these circumstances, we may perhaps question the desirability of proceeding further with the idea of a general treaty and ask ourselves whether it would not be wiser to abandon it in the hope that general compulsory arbitration will be realised by means of partial treaties alone.

Although the conclusion of these partial arbitration treaties is most satisfactory, the League should not, I submit, be content to play a merely passive role and leave the initiative entirely to individual States. It is true that we cannot ignore the difficulties which stand in the way of a collective and general treaty. But would it not be desirable to strive to diminish these difficulties by "adaptation and adjustment", to cite the expression used by M. Painlevé in his very able opening speech?

Two kinds of difficulties—chiefly matters of form, it is true—occur in connection with the enforcement of the arbitration clauses of the Geneva Protocol, and both arise from the obligatory nature of these clauses. In the first place, they contemplate the possibility of amendments to the Covenant, and we have, already, alas! had sufficient experience of the difficulties which prevent the ratification of such amendments. In the second place, the Protocol requires the adhesion of States without reservation. Would it not, in present circumstances, be easier to reach the desired goal if we adopted more elastic methods? Could not a general convention be drawn up, independent of the Covenant, to which countries could adhere, under reservations if they considered these necessary? They cannot do so if compulsory arbitration clauses are to form part of the Covenant. The latter already alludes to arbitration treaties which go further than its own provisions and states what measures are necessary to ensure the execution of arbitral awards given under an arbitration treaty.

Many countries, I am certain, will not make use of the facility thus provided of exempting certain kinds of disputes from compulsory arbitration, but there are other States which, for special reasons, cannot at once accept compulsory

arbitration for all legal and political questions. On the other hand, the Geneva Protocol contained important exceptions to the principle of compulsory arbitration, without, however, admitting other exceptions than those expressly mentioned.

It is in my opinion most important to examine, before the next Assembly, the possibility of carrying into effect, one by one, in the way I have just outlined, the principles of compulsory arbitration. I should like, therefore, to submit to the Assembly the following draft resolution :

"The Assembly :

"Considering that it is important that the principle of compulsory arbitration for the settlement of international disputes should be accepted by all the Powers ;

"Requests the Council, with a view to facilitating the realisation of this aim, to submit the provisions relating to this subject contained in the Protocol recommended by the fifth Assembly for further examination by a Committee of Experts."

The President :

Translation : A draft resolution has been laid before the Assembly by M. Undén, delegate for Sweden.

This resolution will be submitted and distributed to the Members of the Assembly, who will be invited to give their opinions after the closure of the general discussion

20. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT: PROPOSAL BY THE PRESIDENT CONCERNING THE CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : Before we rise, I wish to announce to the Assembly my proposals regarding the continuation of the discussion on the report on the work of the Council.

The discussion will now be adjourned until to-morrow at 10.30 a.m. There will be two plenary meetings to-morrow (Friday) and two plenary meetings on Saturday.

The President hopes that these four meetings will suffice for the conclusion of the discussion, and that it can be closed on Saturday afternoon.

My suggestions will, I trust, meet with the approval of the Assembly. If no one has any objections, I shall consider these proposals adopted. (*Assent.*)

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SIXTH ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SIXTH PLENARY MEETING

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11th, 1925, AT 10.30 A.M.

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Speeches by, M. Motta (Switzerland), Count Skrzynski (Poland), M. Chao-Hsin Chu (China), and M. Mowinkel (Norway).

President : MR. DANDURAND.

21. REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the continuation of the discussion on the report of the work of the Council and of the Secretariat. M. Motta, first delegate of Switzerland, will address the Assembly.

M. Motta (Switzerland) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — No one can mount this platform without a certain sense of fear and some emotion, because the echo of our words spreads further from this tribune than from any other. On the one hand, we are supposed to represent the opinions of the Governments which sent us here and, on the other, to interpret public opinion in our country : this must give us a very keen sense of our responsibilities.

Further, when we come to consider the work of the Council, a vast domain opens out before us — a domain which lies within the competence both of the Council and of the Assembly, without any very definite lines of demarcation.

The Council is not a Government nor any similar institution, nor is the Assembly a Parliament ; as an Assembly, therefore, we have no actual right of control and the legal responsibilities of the two bodies must be kept separate.

That does not prevent the Council and Assembly from being organs of the same international organisation, nor, despite the absence of any legal co-responsibility, does it preclude the existence of a certain moral solidarity between the two.

The League of Nations was born of the very war itself. If that war had not taken place, we should probably have had no League to-day. It was only natural, therefore, that the first manifestations of this great institution should bear some traces of its origin. It was a common saying that the League of Nations was an alliance of the victors against the vanquished. It was inevitable that the spirit of alliances born of the fire and blood of war should sometimes find itself, at all events to a certain extent, in opposition to the calm and magnanimous spirit of the League.

I am glad to see that the Council has on many occasions shown itself capable of rising to the highest plane of justice. I note this fact with gratitude, and I have no hesitation in expressing my confidence that this determination to attain complete impartiality, even in the application of the peace treaties, will become increasingly manifest.

Some of us here have had the honour of representing our countries since the first day on which the Assembly met, that is to say, for six years ; we have been present at every phase of the gradual progress of pacification ; and truth bids us proclaim that that progress has been considerable, I would even say immense.

The moving factor in this work of transforming mind and conscience is the League.

We sometimes hear it said that this year's Assembly will be uneventful and even dull. That, I think, is not necessarily a matter for regret. The meetings of the Council and Assembly need not always be sensational. The League must bear in mind that its most useful work in the future will consist, not in suppressing or even in settling disputes, but in creating conditions which will prevent the occurrence of disputes.

I do not propose to discuss, in detail, the question of the Geneva Protocol, which has been the principal theme of the eloquent speeches we have heard these last few days. There are two reasons for my silence. The first is that I had the signal if unmerited honour of presiding over the Assembly at which that work was brought to a conclusion; the second is based upon the peculiar position of my country as a Member of the League, a position due to its permanent neutrality recognised by international law and solemnly confirmed in the Declaration of London in 1920.

I merely desire to correct one mistake which is, I think, rather frequently made. It is often said that the Protocol was adopted by last year's Assembly because of the fact that the delegations voted unanimously in favour of all its provisions. This, however, is incorrect: the Assembly simply sent the Protocol to all the Governments, recommending them to give it their earnest attention. If, last year, the delegations had been required to bind themselves in any way beyond the terms of this recommendation, some of them would most certainly have abstained from voting, or would even have voted against the motion.

It is better, in the very interests of the future of the League, to look the facts in the face, to dispel illusions and reveal the true state of affairs.

I listened yesterday with the closest interest to the lucid and discriminating speech of the first delegate of the British Empire. Even if I cannot fully subscribe to certain of the opinions expressed by that eminent statesman, I think that no one can dispute the importance and the solemnity of the occasion when the Minister for Foreign Affairs of one of the greatest countries in the world appears before forty-seven assembled delegations to give a loyal and reasoned explanation of his attitude.

Any person who before the war had dreamt of the Minister of a great State explaining the policy of his country to an Assembly in which great and small nations met on equal terms would have been called a visionary born before his time.

We believe that the vital part of the Protocol is that which concerns compulsory arbitration, because arbitration — even unaccompanied by material sanctions, if reinforced by moral sanctions, that is, by the sovereign power of public opinion — constitutes a pledge of peace which is of incalculable value. I shall always maintain that arbitration forms the corner-stone of our edifice. This idea, even without the fuller definitions of the Protocol, already underlies the Covenant.

The creation of the Permanent Court of International Justice at The Hague is the most decisive event in the recent history of international law. This institution will acquire an even wider range of action when — and I most earnestly hope that the day may not be far distant — the United States of America also give their adhesion to that Court. There can be no State where there are no law courts. We are accustomed, in examining the nature of our several States and the State as an abstract, to regard law courts and State as inseparable ideas. It is impossible to conceive, within a State, a tribunal not possessing compulsory jurisdiction. The day will come, I think, when a truth that holds good for each State will be seen to hold good in international relations also. Moreover, setting aside the question of the Protocol as a whole, those chapters which refer to arbitration are already, and inevitably, producing their effect. The proof lies in the negotiations for the Security Pact between Germany and her former enemies, for arbitration is regarded in that Pact as one of the means of realising the Contracting Parties' aim.

Shall I give you a further proof of this truth which I have just enunciated? Shall I give you a proof drawn from the policy of my own country?

In 1920 Switzerland, Denmark and Portugal were the first countries to accept the optional clause in the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice providing for compulsory jurisdiction. Since then the Confederation has entered into engagements with several States which have also adhered to that clause. Let me quote by way of example the Northern European countries, the Netherlands and Austria. I might add several more. After giving our adhesion to the optional clause we concluded a number of separate treaties of arbitration and conciliation. I will only refer to one which is of special importance — the Treaty concluded by the Confederation with Germany in 1921.

Last year, on September 20th, when the Assembly was actually sitting, we signed with Italy a treaty the importance of which cannot be over-emphasised, because it is the most signal triumph of the principle of arbitration between neighbouring States, one of which is a great Power. Since that date, and since the important discussions on the Protocol — indeed to a certain extent under the influence of those discussions — the Confederation has signed further treaties with France, Belgium and Poland. The treaty with France is also an example of this type. In my view, it reflects even greater honour on the French Republic than on the Swiss Confederation, for I do not forget that the French Republic is a great Power and that Switzerland is a small State. The Swiss Confederation will shortly sign a similar treaty with Spain. Other negotiations are in progress. In all probability, but for the impulse given by the discussions on the Geneva Protocol, these arbitration treaties would never have been signed. If treaties of the same kind were concluded between groups of neighbouring States, there would soon exist a system of arbitration treaties covering the whole world, and, in particular, the whole of Europe.

Proceeding from the particular to the general, by easy but regular stages, the principle of compulsory arbitration will ultimately prevail.

The Swiss Government has authorised me to declare before this Assembly that it is prepared to renew its adhesion to the compulsory jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice for a further period of ten years immediately on the expiration of the first period of five years. I trust that those other States which have already accepted the clause providing for the compulsory jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice will be ready to do the same. I even intend, before the end of this Assembly, to express the hope that those States which have accepted the compulsory jurisdiction of the Permanent Court will renew their undertaking.

In principle, the Swiss delegation is in favour of any effort made in the direction I have just indicated. It heartily welcomes, though with reservations as regards the drafting, the proposal submitted yesterday by the Swedish delegation.

I should be happy if, when I left this platform, I had succeeded in showing you that Switzerland — the seat of the League of Nations — has remained faithful to its origins, its history and its political ideals and has ceaselessly endeavoured to strengthen — as far as a small country can — not only the foundations of its own security but those of universal peace.

M. Skrzynski (Poland) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — When I last had the honour of addressing this Assembly, a year ago, I stated from this platform

that I was about to sign, on my Government's behalf, the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes. Never have I experienced a more profound emotion than when signing that document, because I realised that through that instrument, which corresponds with all her wants and needs and with her ideal of peace, Poland associated herself with the common and universal desire for peace voiced by so many countries throughout the world.

That document was not destined to become the common charter of international law. Was this because it was too complete, too precise, too absolute in its conception, too rigid in its application, too inflexible in its logic? It would seem so.

Life, political life, which, like all other forms of life, demands variety and abhors uniformity, has rejected that document. In that very feature which is its inherent evil lies also its majesty and strength — its superabundance of lofty ideas, which, invoking the one principle of common right and justice, place all laws and all duties alike upon a single plane.

The Protocol, though it has not become law, nevertheless remains the noblest and purest manifestation of the spirit which animates, guides and dominates, which inspires and vivifies this Assembly — the spirit of the League.

Before the great war the world was based upon the balance of power; but history has taught us that the greater the weight and counter-weight of power the more surely the merest trembling of the scales suffices to upset that balance and bring about disaster.

Thus the new world has come to seek its security in the balance not of material but of moral forces. It is greatly to the honour of the Powers that, though they come to this Assembly possessing, and conscious of possessing, vast material resources, they yet join with us all in seeking for security by a common and united effort. They add to the wealth of their resources a dignity which is new to history, for it requires great moral courage to discover and determine the limits of our strength, above all when we know that it is very great, feel that it is all-powerful, and believe it inexhaustible.

This Assembly is a striking proof, an instance unique in history, of the common will calling into being a common organisation in face of a common danger.

We still have to evolve our methods of work, and this will be a complex and difficult task: if it is true, in the world of science, that an invention has to be made several times, it is even more true in political life.

We have, however, reached the essential point on the path of progress. That essential is this: we know that security — and I mean the security which can bring moral disarmament and render material disarmament possible — can only be attained here, and that the world cannot safely revert to pre-war usages, whereby stability lay but in rivalry, balance of power was but tension, and security lay only in defiance.

What point have we reached to-day, what turning, what milestone? It is clearly useless to talk dogma, or to indulge in barren recriminations.

It is useless to look back; we must look forward. We must talk politics. Politics is nothing but the art of creation; otherwise it would not even be a profession. We have before us a carefully prepared plan; we are on fairly clear ground: and we are already unanimously agreed upon the main outlines of the edifice we are to build.

Now is the time for each State, in accordance with its size and strength and responsibilities, to bring its wrought stone, which, joined and cemented to the others, will form the future edifice. In order

that the finished work may be harmonious, that there should be no departure from the general plan, the part contributed by each nation must be clear and recognisable. This is our contribution: The fifth Assembly recommended the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes "to the earnest attention of all the Members of the League". My Government has given it its earnest attention, since it has signed it, and that with conviction. Our efforts will now be directed towards carrying out, in our relations with other countries, the great principles which are embodied in it. My Government accepted these in the belief that they would become the common weal of us all, but, since this is not to be, it declares that it still remains faithful to them.

I think I may express the hope that the Protocol will remain, for all, the authoritative interpretation of the Covenant of the League. I understand it to mean that those States which, for important reasons, cannot see their way to bind themselves by the Protocol, will at least recognise that it will form the sole solid basis for future relations and individual agreements between other countries and the sole means of supplying what was omitted — and intentionally omitted — from the Covenant.

Agreements concluded under these terms can never be suspect as regards an intentional transgression or distortion of the real meaning of the Covenant. In other words, I take it that the supplementary agreements which already, in virtue of Resolution 14 adopted by the Assembly in 1922, come within the four corners of the Covenant must in future be made to accord with the principles of the Protocol.

It is thus that I regard the continuity of all our past work up to the present time. It is thus that I interpret the moral engagements which devolve upon us through the signing of the Protocol even though the Protocol itself is not to become our law; it is thus that I understand that the problem of security, though it cannot be solved by means of one uniform and binding instrument, has nevertheless, in its main principles, been brought to maturity here in the League, and the proposed solution has been submitted to the judgment of the nations.

More especially do I desire to say that we regard war as a crime, that we desire to conclude arbitration treaties and to submit to arbitration all disputes, without, however, infringing treaties which constitute the immovable and changeless law of nations. We desire justice based upon lawful right, for to seek justice in despite of it — and this I said last year — is revolution.

Arbitration involves the definition of the aggressor. This definition must be simple, clear, automatic as far as possible and devoid of ambiguity, for ambiguity in such a matter gives an advantage to the aggressor.

Along this path, in this direction, on these lines, we shall collaborate with all our strength, convinced that in serving our own interests we are serving the great common cause of peace.

What I have said is no empty phrase: it is not a mere deduction, a metaphysical speculation, but a truth that can be proved by experiment from any of the events of the past ten years. Had we been a free country in 1914, the terrible storm which devastated the world and shook it to its foundations would never have arisen or would never have lasted so long. In 1914 there was one guarantee of peace missing — Poland.

The President:

Translation: M. Chao-Hsin Chu, delegate for China, will address the Assembly.

M. Chao-Hsin Chū (China): First of all, in the name of the Chinese delegation and on behalf of the Chinese Government, I wish to express our appreciation and admiration of the work accomplished by the Council and the Secretariat during the past year. The League deserves to be congratulated upon its progress and success.

Owing to the non-observance of the geographical principle in the election of non-permanent Members to the Council, China has not yet been able to obtain her seat on the Council since 1923, and the Chinese people have not known whether the League still has its eye on the continent of Asia. But I can assure you that the attitude of the Chinese Government as a supporter of the League remains unchanged. Moreover, there are in China many warm well-wishers of the League. Chinese public opinion on matters of international interest runs very high to-day. What China most expects from the League is that her international position and the privileges to which she is entitled shall be fully recognised.

In view of her ancient civilisation, her large population and her magnificent land with unlimited natural resources, China regards her membership of the League as an important contribution towards the attainment of the object for which the League has been created.

We Chinese have full confidence in the Covenant of the League as an effective instrument in bringing about close relations and a better understanding between the nations. The League, though in its infancy, has indeed justified its existence as an international organisation which is able from year to year to settle international disputes. It has become an indispensable part of the new order of international life.

For these reasons, permit me to call your attention to China's appeal for the reconsideration of her Treaty relations with other Powers. I bring this question before the Assembly because it falls within the letter and spirit of the Covenant of the League, particularly Article 19. Let me read that article to you.

"The Assembly may from time to time advise the reconsideration by Members of the League of treaties which have become inapplicable and the consideration of international conditions whose continuance might endanger the peace of the world."

It has been generally admitted that the treaties now in force between China and other Powers which were entered into in the old days are regarded as having become inapplicable and as not being in harmony with international conditions in respect of China's position in the family of nations. It is therefore the opinion of the Chinese people that, in justice to China, as well as in the interests of the foreign Powers concerned, there should be a readjustment of the existing treaties in order to bring them more into line with the generally accepted conceptions of international law and equity and more in conformity with the present conditions in China.

As a matter of fact, many of these treaties were negotiated in circumstances which hardly permitted the formulation, by full and free discussion, of principles which should permanently regulate normal intercourse between China and the foreign Powers.

These treaties were really concluded in the old days as *modus operandi*, but, unfortunately, they have been allowed to remain in force till now, when, the situation having greatly changed, the further indefinite continuance of extraordinary political and economic privileges and immunities conferred by those treaties upon foreigners seem

hardly warranted by circumstances. As a result, mutual inconveniences and disadvantages have been experienced. So long as these inequalities exist, there will always remain causes of dissatisfaction which are apt to produce friction and disturb cordial relations and good understanding between China and the foreign Powers.

Allow me to point out that, as a result of the great war, all the defeated nations have given up their old treaty rights, but those Powers with whom China associated herself in the war are still enjoying extraordinary privileges and immunities in China. China has ground to complain that her international status is in some respects even inferior to that of the defeated nations, for in none of them do we find extra-territorial courts, foreign concessions, leased territories, and externally imposed conventional tariffs.

Perhaps some of the members of the audience would not know or would not even believe that, according to the existing treaties, China's tariff is limited to 5 per cent. only; in other words, China cannot raise her import duty on foreign goods higher than 5 per cent. This limitation is applied not only to necessities but to luxuries as well. You can smoke the very best cigars and drink the finest champagne in Chinese territory at a very low price because of the treaty rights. The tariff limitation has been regarded as being responsible for financial difficulties in China, and therefore China can by no means reorganise her national finances on a sound basis without insisting upon the restoration of tariff autonomy. Moreover, foreigners of those Powers having old treaty relations with China are not at all subjected to Chinese jurisdiction. Extra-territoriality in China has therefore caused great obstacles to the governmental machinery and interfered with the sovereignty and integrity of the country.

In view of these facts, the Chinese Government has, on repeated occasions, approached the foreign Powers concerned for a re-adjustment of her treaty relations. Questions requiring re-adjustment were submitted by China to the Paris Peace Conference, which, while fully recognising the importance of the questions raised, did not consider that such questions came within its province. A similar effort was made by the Chinese Government at the time of the Washington Conference, which, though more disposed to consider China's request, could not agree to effect a fundamental re-adjustment, so that, so far as substantial results are concerned, very little progress has yet been made.

More recently, the Chinese Government, in obedience to public opinion, has addressed notes to the foreign Powers concerned asking for a revision of the existing treaties on an equitable basis. There has been a general manifestation by the Nationalist movement against the inequalities provided in the treaties. This movement has been misunderstood and has been considered by some foreign observers as anti-foreign. But in fact this is not the case. Some even thought that the elements of young China had gone to the extreme.

The Chinese have been historically known as the most conservative people in the world. We possess nothing in common with the extremists. We have been patient enough to allow the unequal treaties to remain for many decades. If you study the Chinese mentality, you will feel that the stipulations against China contained in the existing treaties are almost intolerable to the Chinese as a whole. We are now appealing for an amicable re-adjustment. The Chinese Government and the Chinese people have great faith in the Covenant of the League. It will interest you to know that the Powers concerned have already given China an encouraging response to her proposal as to the

reconsideration of the treaties which have become inapplicable. The League should be congratulated upon this, since Article 19 of the Covenant is for the first time being carried out in respect of China.

We Chinese are looking forward to the creation of a new international morality. I admire the inspiring speech made by the French Premier, M. Painlevé, who said: "Without a new international morality, the most perfect law in the world must remain a dead letter".

I am laying stress on these points to-day, but I am not asking for a passage of any resolution. But I do ask, however, that the members of the Assembly will bear in mind the appeal of China and do what they can to assist in liberating China from the yoke and in placing her upon an equal footing with any sovereign Power in the world. A sympathetic atmosphere created towards China on this subject at this great international gathering will certainly give a good impression and inspiration to the Powers concerned and pave the way towards a satisfactory solution of the questions at the forthcoming Tariff Conference at Peking on October 26th, or at a subsequent time when the whole question of revising the treaties is to be brought up for reconsideration.

I heard yesterday with great admiration the eloquent remarks made by the British Foreign Secretary, Mr. Chamberlain, who advocated the principle of preventing war. We are taught by history that war has been generally created by inequality. The most influential weapon, therefore, for preventing war is to change inequality into equality. That is the reason why China has asked for immediate revision of these unequal treaties.

We can be well assured that re-adjustment of the unequal treaties will not only make international relations more cordial on the part of China, but foreign trade and commerce will be more rapidly and greatly developed to mutual advantage. Moreover, it will bring about an assurance of the permanent peace of the Far East, in particular, and of the world in general, which will be an outcome of the great aims of the League of Nations.

M. Mowinkel (Norway):

Translation: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—Speaking to-day for the first time in this Assembly in my capacity as Head of the Norwegian delegation, I desire first to express my sincere admiration for the noble work so zealously undertaken by the League, and for the remarkable results obtained during its short period of existence.

The Norwegian Government is of opinion that the steadfast purpose displayed by the League and the whole spirit underlying its activities are most encouraging auguries of its future success.

There is one question on the agenda of the Assembly with regard to which I desire to say a few words to-day. It is a question of supreme importance from the point of view of world peace; I refer to the question of arbitration, security and disarmament.

I will not disguise the fact that the Protocol of October 2nd, 1924, caused my Government and public opinion in Norway some anxiety, particularly those provisions which concern the possible obligation upon Members of the League to participate in military sanctions. I do not propose to refer in detail to the causes of that anxiety, or the legal objections which could be made to certain provisions of the Protocol. The Norwegian Government has not yet defined its attitude towards the Geneva Protocol as it now exists, and in view of the situation created by the decisions taken by the Council on March 13th, 1925, the question is not one which calls for immediate solution.

Norway, however, heartily approves the aims of the Protocol. In my Government's opinion, it is of primary importance that as many States as possible shall undertake, so far as is feasible, to submit all disputes between them and other States to pacific settlement by judicial or other means.

In this connection, I heartily support the Swiss Minister for Foreign Affairs, M. Motta, in his admirable speech to-day, when he expressed the hope that more and more States would adhere to the optional clause in the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice. Norway, it goes without saying, will renew her adherence to that clause.

It was with the greatest satisfaction that I listened to the remarks made a few days ago by M. Painlevé, Prime Minister of France, on the question of arbitration in his very notable speech at the opening of this Assembly. M. Painlevé's declaration that M. Herriot spoke in the name of France when, last September, he solemnly agreed to compulsory arbitration for all disputes without distinction should still further strengthen our confidence in the future.

Clearly, then, if the problem of arbitration is to be conceived as I have just defined it, Norway will heartily approve the draft resolution submitted to the Assembly yesterday by our able colleague M. Undén, Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, and will support this proposal.

The Norwegian Government fully understands the efforts which certain countries are making to obtain greater security, and takes a keen interest in the international negotiations now being conducted with a view to fulfilling the ideals of arbitration and security.

The Norwegian Government is of opinion that the agreements which will be concluded in this connection might be so drawn up as not to contravene either the letter or the spirit of the Covenant; I was therefore very glad to hear the British Foreign Minister, the Rt. Hon. Austen Chamberlain, declare that the agreements to be concluded will be framed in the spirit of the Covenant and carried out in complete harmony with, and under the auspices of, the League of Nations.

In my opinion, the question of disarmament is of particular importance, and it should be the desire and endeavour of all friends of peace to make some practical progress in the near future towards transferring this problem from the realm of visions to that of facts. I hope, indeed, that the present Assembly will help to do so. In this connection, it would, of course, be a very great step forward if the efforts now being made to obtain increased security could be brought to a successful conclusion.

The important, even leading, part which the League of Nations is taking in international affairs, and which is continually increasing, serves to show, in the opinion of my Government, how necessary it is to give all the Members of the League an opportunity of participating in turn in the important work of the Council. It is therefore most desirable that the unanimous recommendation made by the Assembly of 1922 concerning the adoption of organic rules for the election of non-permanent Members to the Council should be borne in mind.

To this recommendation that rules, which would be satisfactory to all the Members of the League, should be laid down for the election of the Members of the Council, I would add a further wish, which is, I think, shared by us all, namely, that the League should become truly indispensable and that, in the near future, it will be able to make some real progress towards the attainment of this ideal.

The Norwegian people are undoubtedly among the most ardent and loyal supporters of the League. Norway desires that the internal administration of the League may be organised on so sound and universal a basis that Members will realise how advantageous and profitable it is to collaborate in its work. Norway confidently hopes that, by the policy which it adopts, the League will redouble its force and prestige, so that it may become an insuperable barrier between peace and war.

The League of Nations is in truth, as President Wilson said, the only hope for the future of humanity

and civilisation. It is the surest and perhaps the only means at our disposal for dispelling the clouds of doubt, mistrust and fear which still, unfortunately, darken the relations between States, and which, if not dispersed, will lead to world-wide catastrophe.

When all the States and all the peoples of the world collaborate in mutual confidence for the maintenance of international peace and friendship, then success is as certain as the fact that mankind is not falling back but progressing.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SIXTH ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11th, 1925, AT 3.45 P.M.

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President: MR. DANDURAND.

22. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT: CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President:

Translation: Our agenda to-day is the continuation of the discussion of the report on the work of the Council and of the Secretariat, and the steps taken to carry out the decisions of the Assembly.

I call upon Jonkheer Loudon, delegate of the Netherlands, to address the Assembly.

Jonkheer Loudon (Netherlands):

Translation: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I desire, first of all, to associate myself with the praise rightly bestowed upon the Council for the manner in which it has once again carried out its ever-growing task. The report we are discussing is proof of this increasing activity, and, as delegate of a State not represented on the Council, I am glad to take this opportunity of paying a public tribute to that "Areopagus", and also to the great ability and indefatigable zeal shown by the Secretariat, the Committees and the various organisations of the League.

The Council's task bristles with difficulties. We need only take note of such delicate problems as those of Mosul or Danzig, or the Minorities questions, to perceive that, in dealing with all of these

problems, the Council has acted with undeniable tact.

One item in the report which I especially note is the mandates question, and, in particular, the work of the Permanent Mandates Commission. The Council has very rightly expressed once more its satisfaction in finding that the mandated territories are being administered in conformity with the spirit and letter of Article 22 of the Covenant and in conformity with the terms of the mandates.

The Permanent Mandates Commission is one of the most praiseworthy organisations of the League. Its reports and the Minutes of its meetings clearly show the care with which its very able members supervise the execution of the mandates.

Its work is public, and even when, occasionally, as at its last session, it meets in private in order to settle questions of detail, the Minutes are published. The Commission's reports are evidence of the zeal and good faith of the mandatory Powers. It goes without saying that neither the mandatory Powers, however conscientious their efforts, nor the Commission, however careful its supervision, is infallible, and an old colonial Power, such as that which I represent, fully recognises this. Nevertheless, I think I may say that the criticisms which have recently appeared in the Press are for the most part devoid of all foundation.

It is unfortunate, of course, that in many of the mandated territories there are not enough qualified teachers and doctors, and that the mandatory Powers should not allow foreigners to fill these vacancies. In connection with these two professions, however, the reports hardly mention the large amount of work done by the numerous religious missions with their well-known and praiseworthy zeal.

It is true that the development of several of the mandated territories suffers from lack of financial resources; but, in the opinion of the Permanent Mandates Commission, there is an undoubted desire to promote the economic development of these territories and the well-being of the native populations, and, although the amounts

shown in the Customs returns are smaller than in pre-war days, the fault lies not with the administration but with the general disorganisation caused by the war.

On the whole, the League can certainly congratulate itself upon the institution of territorial mandates. They fulfil the aim of the Covenant and are by no means, as has been alleged, "camouflaged annexations".

The report of the Council contains the welcome news of the coming into force of the amendments to Articles 12, 13 and 15 of the Covenant with reference to the additions necessitated by the establishment of the Permanent Court of International Justice. I am sorry, however, that we are told nothing yet of a much more important matter—the ratification of several amendments unanimously adopted four years ago. The first delegate for Denmark called our attention the day before yesterday to this deplorable state of affairs, and I must endorse his remarks. We have reached the year 1925, but no rule has yet been laid down, despite the unanimous vote of 1921 regarding the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council. The same remark applies to the amendments to Articles 16 and 26 of the Covenant. What, in these circumstances, is the value of discussion and of the unanimous vote on the amendments of the Covenant?

The report of the Council cannot be discussed without touching upon the all-important question of the Protocol. The *Journal de Genève* said recently: "We do not expect a Parliament to perform miracles every session". The unanimous agreement reached last year regarding the Protocol was a wonderful thing and, despite the sceptics, undoubtedly electrified the whole civilised world. Nevertheless, speaking from this very platform, I at the time said: "We must be ready for disappointments; we must prepare the world for them, and, above all, we must not let the world believe that the ideal to which we aspire is attained. We are still only at the first stage. In the question of principle, however, what has been done cannot be undone."

M. Painlevé's brilliant speech confirmed my view. The Protocol is not dead; it is most certainly not buried; it but slumbers. It need not necessarily be adopted in its present form. Do not let us seek now to remodel or to perfect it; rather let it rest. Its essential principles remain, as M. Paul-Boncour has so well said, but the Protocol itself, being a work of man, is susceptible of improvement.

We now know from M. Painlevé's words that our work of last year was not in vain.

We know that the Powers most interested in the establishment of peace are seeking to conclude an agreement upon the basis of the Covenant, and that negotiations would not have been begun in this spirit but for the work done last year in this very place. This work has been a powerful factor in convincing Governments that it is their duty to settle international disputes by pacific means. It has contributed, as, for that matter, all the work accomplished in Geneva has contributed, to prepare the moral disarmament of which the first delegate of the British Empire spoke so well.

Let this suffice for us, while we await the day—which I hope is at hand—when we shall all realise that, if we are to attain world peace, regional interests must be merged in the general interest.

If we agree not to deal with the Protocol, it does not follow that the work begun should be laid aside. The first delegate for Sweden, in his interesting proposal yesterday regarding compulsory arbitration, has pointed out to us one of the paths to follow.

If, on the one hand, the paramount problem of

the reduction of armaments is to remain under examination, the proposal for a Disarmament Conference stands and the preparations for the Conference must on no account be neglected, however difficult they may appear. The possible delay in calling this Conference—to which the first delegate of France referred—must in no way prevent these immediate preparations.

I shall therefore venture to submit to you a draft resolution on this subject.

A special body of a permanent character is indispensable for the preparatory work, which will probably be lengthy. The Third Committee could at once begin to consider the composition of that special body.

As regards disarmament in the wider sense, new and far-reaching ideas are growing up, and they deserve our most careful attention. I have in mind the suggestions put forward by Professor Shotwell, that distinguished American savant, to whom we are chiefly indebted for the definition of the aggressor contained in the Protocol, and who, in the *Journal de Genève* of September 7th, pointed out that, besides the problem of armaments itself, there was the problem of war-time supplies—a problem which, during the great war, gave rise to such considerable difficulties for neutral countries—and also the problem of the dangers of chemical and scientific warfare.

The League of Nations will further have to study the economic factors, the importance of which was so strikingly pointed out by M. Jouhaux last year. It will probably have to make provision for an economic organisation like that which M. Painlevé recommended. I am very glad to learn that M. Loucheur declared yesterday in the Second Committee that the French delegation intended to submit a definite proposal to this effect.

It cannot be stated too often that we have no reason to be discouraged, either as regards the fate of the trilogy: arbitration, security, disarmament—Mr. Chamberlain showed this in his admirable speech yesterday—or as regards the work of the League in general.

Is it not true that the League has aroused the Governments in an unprecedented degree to a feeling of their responsibilities towards mankind as a whole? Are not Governments, as I pointed out just now, becoming more and more drawn to settle their differences by peaceful means? Does not the feeling grow that no peaceful settlement can be reached without compromise and mutual concessions?

You may say that these are imponderable factors; and yet are not the factors which we call imponderable the main factors in human activity, whether it be the activity of individuals, Governments or nations?

Nothing this year has struck me so profoundly as the increasing number of countries represented by their Prime Ministers or their Foreign Ministers. There could be no greater proof of their confidence in the future of the League. Personal contact plays a most important part in the relations between Governments, and never in all history has so favourable an opportunity been offered for meeting and discussing the various questions which concern them, in an atmosphere of calm, without any danger of public opinion becoming alarmed. Were it only by reason of this meeting together, the gathering at Geneva would be of benefit to our countries.

I will conclude by reiterating once more my faith in the great work undertaken at the instance of President Wilson. Whether sceptics recognise the fact or not, the League of Nations is acquiring added vitality every day. Its influence is gradually

increasing, and, the more unostentatious its work, the more it will accomplish.

May I venture to read the draft resolution to which I have already referred :

“Considering the importance of proceeding without delay with the preparation of a general programme covering the whole question of the reduction and limitation of armaments, with a view to convening, at an opportune moment, a general and international Conference :

“The Assembly begs the Council to study this problem, particularly with the object of setting up a special organism entrusted with the duty of preparing a draft for the above-mentioned programme.”

The President :

Translation : The Assembly has before it a new draft resolution, submitted by Jonkherr Loudon, first delegate of the Netherlands. This resolution will be printed and distributed without delay to the members of the Assembly.

The Assembly will be asked to give its opinion as to the action to be taken on the draft resolution at the conclusion of the discussion on the report on the work of the Council and of the Secretariat.

Dr. Urrutia, first delegate of Colombia, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Urrutia (Colombia) :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — The report on the work of the Council and of the Secretariat, which we are now considering, reveals the variety and intensity of the activities undertaken by the League since the fifth Assembly, more particularly in connection with the work of its technical organisations.

As regards international politics, the action taken by the League, although still very limited by reason of circumstances beyond its control, has nevertheless been valuable from the point of view of the general interests of justice and peace throughout the world.

The report on the work of the Council will certainly be examined closely both by the Assembly and by the Committees, and will be of great assistance in our present work.

There are, however, questions with which the report, being an administrative document, cannot deal, and these questions, which concern the vital interests of the League, cannot be omitted from our present discussions. Among them, the following are, in my opinion, the most important :

What is the opinion of the civilised world as a whole, and, more particularly, of the nations Members of the League, regarding the League itself ?

What tendencies are most marked within the League and outside it ?

What reforms does the world expect the League to undertake ?

The work actually done by the League during the six years which have elapsed since its foundation is enough to show what it is and what it is capable of becoming. The expressions of world opinion, particularly during the present year, may therefore be regarded as having been given with full knowledge of the facts. That the League has won itself a position in the world's regard is incontestable. That its existence either in its present or in some other form is almost universally held to be essential to the maintenance of peace, also admits of no dispute.

It is equally clear that the League, like the International Labour Office, is pursuing a work of peace and justice in the field of international and social problems. The fact that the League is

taking a leading part in the affairs which have occupied the world's attention ever since the war is proved by the interest — I may even say, the enthusiasm — which this institution arouses and with which the problems are discussed. It occupies the attention not only of public speakers and the Press, of Parliaments, learned institutions, political, social and scientific associations, but even — and rightly so — of religious associations and conferences. Moreover, special associations have been and are still being formed, the object of which is to support the League and to promote the acceptance of the principles for which it stands.

The League came into being devoid of material force : it has always been, and probably will always be, first and foremost a great moral force. Requiring as it does the moral support of the Governments, and more particularly of the peoples themselves, it is destined primarily to accomplish work of a moral character.

I venture to say that the fact that the majority of mankind has already rallied to the League is due less to its work in the domain of international politics or its technical activities — extensive though they may be — than to the work it has accomplished in fortifying the conscience of the world and the principles of justice and peace. The results already achieved are not, perhaps, the outcome of positive acts, world-wide in effect, since such acts always require long and laborious preparation, but they are none the less beneficial. Positive acts will doubtless follow in the wake of the moral evolution now taking place in the conscience of peoples and of individuals. The chief stages laid down in the Covenant for the development of the League — the constitution of the Permanent Court of International Justice, arbitration, the reduction of armaments, and so on — cannot be completed in a day, and can only come with the progressive transformation of men's minds and the gradual evolution of ideas. The progress of thought is slow, difficult and sometimes painful, and the development of international life cannot escape this law, which governs all efforts towards the advancement of mankind.

Yet each stage along this road represents a splendid achievement, above all, if it includes a closer application of the principles of guardianship exercised by the League. The League has taken a big step forward and has undoubtedly made progress in the moral domain. Beside the old maxim, *Si vis pacem para bellum*, the League has inscribed, in the international spirit, the new principle which is in itself evidence of progress along the right lines, *Si vis pacem para justitiam*.

The declaration made in the fifth Assembly by the representatives of over fifty States, who proclaimed the principle of compulsory arbitration as the keystone of international law, is one of the outstanding features of contemporary history.

What matter the future vicissitudes in store for the instrument in which this proclamation was formulated ? It has left so deep a mark on the spirit of the peoples that it would be morally impossible for any nation to-day to abjure the principles that have thus been adopted, and to refuse arbitration in the case of an international dispute.

The Geneva Protocol, which, on account of its legal perfection, was perhaps ahead of its day, may or may not live: but there will remain indelibly graven in the heart of man the words : “A war of aggression is an international crime, and every State which rejects arbitration in a dispute liable to lead to war must be branded as the aggressor and incur the moral stigma of the civilised world”.

This unanimous and solemn declaration in favour of compulsory arbitration has been cast like fertile

seed upon the conscience of the world. Since its adoption by the fifth Assembly and, above all, since that day when Switzerland and Italy consecrated it in a pact which may worthily serve as a model and an example, the conception of the scope of arbitration has been considerably enlarged, and it may now be said that the lofty aspiration of the Assembly of 1924 is being realised by the very force of circumstances.

Amongst the promoters of this movement, a place of honour must be reserved for Switzerland, which has succeeded, as the natural outcome of her age-long and democratic policy of justice and peace, in placing the principle of arbitration upon a height as lofty and as crystal-pure as the snow-peaks of her mountains.

But, although world opinion is already practically unanimous in recognising the necessity of the League's existence as the great organ of international peace, there are divided counsels as to its actual methods of work. Even within the associations founded in its support, certain movements and aspirations have been revealed which cannot be ignored, particularly where they reflect the national sentiments of the States Members of the League.

In order to satisfy these aspirations it is not even necessary to amend the Covenant. All that is needed is to apply it in its broad and liberal spirit, since it was so drawn up that the very flexibility of some of its articles makes it possible to set down in black and white sound and wise interpretations of it which will keep it always a living thing.

This remark applies, above all, to the necessity, so often urged in the most authoritative quarters, of introducing into the life and development of the League a wide and democratic spirit.

You are, of course, aware of the results of the competition called "The European Peace Competition", organised by an eminent philanthropist of Boston, and of the peace competition instituted in the United States by Senator Bok.

The importance of these two competitions as an expression of world opinion on the great international questions of to-day can be judged by the fact that, for the European competition, 37,000 manuscripts were sent in, which were examined by special juries and were the work of men of recognised authority.

In glancing through the conclusions of the French juries after they had examined the 5,319 essays submitted to them, we may observe that the passage referring to the question of the League of Nations, and which is in practical agreement with that of the other juries, is summed up as follows: "French opinion desires that the League of Nations should be made universal and democratic".

The desire thus evinced, together with the resolutions adopted by the Peace Congress, by the League of Nations Associations and by other authoritative bodies corresponds, I am certain, to the desire of many of the countries represented here.

With regard to the country which I have the honour to represent, I can assure you that its attachment and devotion to the League will be strengthened by every step the League takes to conform more closely with the liberal and democratic spirit which presided over its birth.

It is only natural, indeed, that countries which are profoundly democratic in spirit and in their laws, and which observe the principle of the absolute legal equality of States in their councils and international meetings, should follow with profound interest all that may tend to render the League more democratic.

And now, what are the most practical means of attaining this desired democratisation without overstepping the bounds of the Covenant or disturbing the smooth working of its machinery?

One suggestion is the election of delegates by the Parliaments of each country and by electoral bodies constituted *ad hoc*; but such a system, though it possesses certain advantages, is also open to serious objections, and would, nevertheless, always be subject to the sovereign right of each State to appoint its delegates according to its constitutional laws.

But the Covenant itself provides effective means for the democratisation of the League. The chief of these, in my opinion, consists in giving the League powers, as wide as the Covenant will permit, to enable it to express its desires by real resolutions and not by mere recommendations or requests addressed to the Council.

Once invested with these powers, the Assembly would itself enact the Statutes of the principal technical bodies of the League—such as the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, for example—according to the procedure adopted by the Barcelona Conference in regard to the organisation of communications and transit.

In the same way, the Assembly would in future possess the right to nominate the members of these bodies, which would then have the weight of its authority, and the Council would be relieved of a very complex part of its work, which, however, it carries out most conscientiously.

By a practical and liberal application—I might even say a more equitable application—of certain other articles of the Covenant, by the more constant and real participation of all States Members in the conduct of business of common interest to all Members, the League would best show its desire not to depart from the principles of the Covenant; and by so doing it would develop along more distinctly liberal lines than it has ever yet followed since the first Assembly.

One of the most valuable results of the democratisation of the League would be to hasten the day when it will include all the nations of the world and particularly those American States whose absence we still deplore.

At the last Conference of Santiago, these States made a unanimous effort, which was crowned with success, for the more complete democratisation of the Pan-American Union. Thus, while once again proclaiming their devotion to liberty and peace, they have become a powerful moral force for the defence of democracy and of justice, and for the maintenance of peace throughout the whole world.

I fear that I should be taxing your patience too much were I to dwell longer on these questions, but I hope you will give kind consideration to my words, and that you will see in them no more than the expression of my sincere and convinced attachment to the League of Nations, as witnessed by my presence here for the sixth time.

Allow me, before I conclude, to join in the tribute already paid to the memory of those four eminent fellow-workers who have died since the last Assembly, MM. Branting, Chagas, Meirovics and Vjivank. The words of Grotius might be applied to these illustrious dead: *Veri pacis sacerdotes*, in memory of their zealous love of peace and justice.

Just as on the field of battle warriors surround the fallen heroes, let us who fight for the right join hands around our dead comrades. The common gratitude of all to those who have rendered signal service to the cause of humanity is one of the noblest forms of international co-operation.

M. Paul-Boncour (France) :

Translation : M. Motta, the first delegate of the noble country now giving us hospitality, made a very sound remark this morning which reminded me of a French proverb that must, I am sure, have its counterpart in every language, since it expresses an everyday thought. It is this : "Les jours se suivent et ne se ressemblent pas". The same is true of the Assemblies, and because we no longer hear the echoes of the impassioned debates of last year's Assembly — debates which leave to those who took part in them an indelible memory of the cordiality uniting even those who were opponents — because of this, I say, lovers of the sensational are dissatisfied with a session at which we simply deal with Austria and Mosul. Superficial minds which cannot realise the amount and the difficulty of the work we are doing here, and even the powers of evil, the forces of war that still haunt the League, rejoice to think that we may yet fail the nations whose eyes are still upon us.

And yet I am here to say, not lightly, but from the bottom of my heart, not merely on my own behalf, but on behalf of that great country whose name I am honoured by the first French delegate to speak to-day — I am here to say that France still has the fullest and the most implicit confidence in the League of Nations, and not merely in its future destiny but in its present work.

This confidence I do not derive from our own wishes or ideas, but from a dispassionate examination of the international political situation of the moment.

Even if, as its detractors state, the League of Nations has been only a debating society expressing platonic desires, the best proof that it has become the mainspring, the controlling spirit, of international politics is that it is necessarily affected by the delays, the pauses and also the decisions of that policy. But the League has never been a mere debating society. The French Prime Minister, in his inaugural speech which opened this Assembly, said so in unmistakable terms. The League of Nations, he said, was not the dream-child of a few idealists — a vision dwelling in a sphere far removed from the living world. It was founded in a land shaken with the tread of armies, still smoking with the ruins of war, still red with the blood of its sons.

The only wishes we must strive to fulfil here are the wishes of the dead — of those who have fallen in the war to end war. These wishes the League has interpreted to the last letter, in a treaty of the new kind, a treaty of the new alliance, but a treaty which differs from the rest only in that it is wider in scope and which, like all other treaties, binds in honour those who have signed it. I refer to the Covenant, the basis of the League, to which, therefore, all who enter by its door — and that door stands wide open — have bound themselves.

The Covenant already contains all the obligations which we have endeavoured — though, of course, it was a most difficult task — to define in detail, and, let me add, only to define. These efforts, which were necessary because the Covenant applied to, and linked together, all the nations of the world, and because the formulas adopted had to remain elastic and somewhat vague, necessary, too, in order to arrive at that definition of the provisions of the Covenant which make it possible to apply them — these efforts have, as you know, always received the warm support of France.

At the third Assembly Resolution XIV was adopted, which was the happy result of an agreement between Viscount Cecil and Henry de Jouvenel. This resolution already attempts to connect two parts of the problem which still lies before us

unsolved, and makes the reduction of armaments, which, under the terms of Article 8 of the Covenant, is the fundamental basis of the League, conditional upon the establishment of a state of security necessary to enable this disarmament to become an accomplished fact.

Then there is the work of the Temporary Mixed Commission, based on Resolution XIV, and the drafting of the Treaty of Mutual Assistance, in which work a leading part was taken on behalf of our country by that most eminent representative of labour organisations, M. Jouhaux, and by the former Prime Minister who held office in the tragic moments of August 1914 — that colleague to whose memory we paid a sorrowful tribute at the opening of our Assembly, in which his voice has so often been heard.

France gave her full adhesion to the Treaty of Mutual Assistance. Not only her intellectuals, not only her politicians, but also her military leaders, her Chiefs of the Military and Naval staffs, meeting in the Commission d'Etudes of the Supreme Council for National Defence, realised that here was the new formula for mutual defence which was necessary to all States.

There were grave objections, however, the full weight of which was felt by our country, which prevented any possibility of the Treaty of Mutual Assistance coming into force. Two objections were advanced against it, each of which increased the importance of the other factor of the problem — arbitration.

It was said, on the one hand, by concentrating unduly on penalties, we have lost sight of the moral and legal elements of the problem. The material elements had, as it were, upset the balance of the scheme; what was wanted was to develop the idea of arbitration which already existed in the Covenant.

On the other hand, it was said, the terrible system of penalties, which become more serious as they become more precise, can only be brought into play if the aggressor is ascertained beyond all possibility of doubt; and the fact that, for purely material and practical reasons, it is often impossible to determine the aggressor, revealed the necessity for arbitration; and arbitration was, I repeat, at the very basis of the League. The Covenant defines it in Articles 12, 13, 14 and 15, and the League, during its first Assembly in 1920, made its meaning still clearer by instituting the Permanent Court of International Justice and inviting the States to adhere to Article 36 of the Statute of the Court, whereby they agree to submit their disputes to arbitration.

Such was the position last year, at the opening of the fifth Assembly, the memory of which is still fresh in our minds and hearts. Some of us are bent on founding international peace on general and compulsory arbitration, amending, completing and defining that which may still be incomplete, imperfect, or vague in the articles of the Covenant. Others remind us that an arbitral award, like any other judicial decision, is valueless unless there is a binding force attached to it. They tell us that arbitration would be fatally imperilled if we risked calling it into play in vain, since the defaulting State which had agreed to arbitration would not, after all, suffer the full penalties laid down by the Contracting States, and would accordingly place in a position of inferiority the State which, in view of its international undertakings, had submitted to arbitration.

Arbitration, security and disarmament, then, become the three terms of the formula defined last year by M. Herriot, and repeated this year by M. Painlevé, who insisted that these three terms are inseparable and form a logical sequence

— first, arbitration; next, penalties ensuring security; and, last of all, the final goal — disarmament.

It was upon this basis that slowly, minutely, yet fervently — for there was not one of us but realised the interests involved — we built up the Protocol of 1924.

This Protocol introduces nothing that does not already exist in the Covenant: it simply defines the provisions of the Covenant so as to bring them in touch with the realities of international life. The Protocol is to the Covenant—to quote an expression which I once used upon this platform and which has frequently been repeated since — what the rules of public administration are to the law. These rules possess in themselves no binding force other than that derived from the law for which they serve as a commentary and which they interpret and help to apply; but without these regulations the law would be merely a statement of principle that would often remain outside the field of practical reality.

This Protocol imposes no obligation or penalty not already laid down in the Covenant. In Articles 10 and 11 it provides that all the Contracting States shall come to the assistance of the State attacked and place their resources at its disposal as against the aggressor. Article 16, which forms the fundamental basis of the Covenant, defines and determines the various categories of sanctions. It defines those that are compulsory and uniform for all States, irrespective of their geographical position, their place in history or their military power. These are the economic and financial penalties, and there is no State, whatever its place in the world, whatever its standing, whatever its geographical position, which cannot offer its economic and financial support to a State which is the victim of aggression and withdraw all such support from the State responsible for the act of aggression.

Military, naval and air sanctions cannot be put into uniform operation or constitute a uniform obligation, because certain States, whether on account of their geographical situation or the scale of their armaments, or because their history has long since removed the difficulties with which other States still have to cope, cannot be compelled to substitute, for the relative degree of disarmament they have already attained, an armament which would be contrary and paradoxical to and, as it were, the negation of the very aims which the League of Nations pursues.

Article 16 of the Covenant, therefore, judiciously notifies the compulsory nature of some of the sanctions, while as regards the others it makes recommendations.

Study the Protocol, study Articles 11, 12 and 13, which define these sanctions, and I defy anyone to find in them anything which adds to the obligations imposed by the Covenant or makes compulsory anything not already contained in Article 16 of the Covenant.

These articles of the Protocol, with their great practical flexibility, simply make the operation of these sanctions more definite, more easy, more practical and more rapid; they certainly add nothing to them.

As regards economic and financial sanctions, which, under Article 16 of the Covenant, are compulsory for all, obligations which all present or future Members of the League have accepted or will accept, it adds nothing, but prepares them, solely on the basis of preconceived plans, in such a way that, when the time comes, as little as possible shall be left to chance, and in such a way that chance, which in itself creates a feeling of insecurity, will not prevent States from yielding

to the atmosphere of peace which we desire should reign throughout the world.

As regards the military, naval and air sanctions, the Protocol maintains their optional character, but particularly lays down that, in order to remain within the spirit of the Covenant, assistance must be measured according to capacity, each State giving what it has, all that it has, and only what it has, and — in Article 11 — making provisions for those nations which, through their geographical situation or the state of their armaments, cannot assist in the application of military sanctions.

Then, as in the case of economic and financial sanctions, the Protocol has been planned with due allowance for practical realities. Article 13 lays down that States must determine in advance the effective forces which, if necessary, and in certain concrete cases, they could bring to the assistance of the victim of aggression. And, to carry this elasticity and flexibility further, Article 13 makes provision for partial and regional agreements between nations which find themselves faced with more definite and pressing problems, and desire to obtain a clearer definition of the forces they would place at the service of the Contracting State attacked. The Assembly has certainly not forgotten that these regional agreements were very keenly discussed by the Third Committee, and I can at least assure the first delegate for the British Empire that, even at that time, the French delegation had already adopted all the practical advice he gave us yesterday.

I will not labour this point. The whole of this text is still fresh in your memory. As you see, it is not based on any theoretical or symmetrical idea. Its aim was rather to bring the somewhat theoretical provisions of the corresponding articles of the Covenant into line with the realities, the variety and the many-sidedness of life.

The Protocol is here; it is ever-present. Only an Assembly has the right to destroy what a preceding Assembly has built up. The register is open. On its empty page the first delegate of France, M. Briand, placed his country's signature. The Foreign Affairs Committee of the French Chamber unanimously ratified it. I merely point to this fact to prove, by this unanimous agreement, my country's desire for peace.

Other nations have not seen their way to give their adhesion. The Protocol has not received the necessary number of signatures. I will not say that neither has it received signatures of sufficient weight, because I hold that there are no great or small nations but only nations equal in the eyes of justice. What I mean is that it did not receive the signature of nations which by their importance, by the part they play in the world as well as by their devotion to the cause of peace, ought to have a decisive influence upon the application of the Protocol. And why did these States not sign? I think it would not be suitable for me to analyse their reasons; it would be, as it were, an encroachment upon the sovereignty of States, a principle which lies at the very foundation of the League. I simply note the fact and deplore it. For, indeed, if it stood alone, it would be a very serious setback to the work to this session.

If it stood alone! But note the facts of international politics. Side by side, parallel with us, on planes which must remain separate but which are in the immediate vicinity, in the very atmosphere of the League, partial agreements are in course of negotiation. I speak of them freely, because I know no more about them than you yourselves. But there is something which, in my opinion, tells us more than any document. It is the word of the first delegate of the British Empire; it is his solemn affirmation that nothing

in these pacts is contrary to the spirit of the League. And then the Press, as you know, is so wide awake — for it shares the aversion of the people to secret diplomacy — that negotiations, however discreet, inevitably become all but public in the end.

Let us think over the facts we already possess.

Are these treaties of the old kind? Outworn formulas of the old diplomacy, which in the course of centuries has, I admit, given us periods of transient security? Security, yes, but, with group constantly opposed to group, always containing a hidden venom and a menace of war! This is so true that the peoples of the world have held these treaties responsible in part for all the blood which has been shed.

From the fragmentary rumours that reach us from the hushed precincts of the chancelleries, we perceive the fundamental difference between these old treaties and the pacts that have been negotiated since last year. Against what enemies are these pacts directed? They bear no ethnical or geographical name. It is the future enemy, whoever he may be, who will provide the name, and that name will be held up to the reprobation of the world.

The enemy in these pacts is the aggressor.

But who is to determine the aggressor if the act of aggression itself does not do so as, for instance, if one of the demilitarised zones referred to in Article 13 of the Protocol were violated? Will it be one of the Contracting Parties? Or a group of Contracting Parties?

No; it will be arbitration.

And who is to be the arbiter if, finally, the arbitration provided for in these pacts proves inadequate to settle a dispute?

It will be the League of Nations. And not until the aggressor is revealed, either through the act itself — which will, of course, be determined by the League — or by arbitration, will the guarantees provided in these pacts be brought into play in the form of military sanctions.

Aggressor? Arbitration? League of Nations? Control, in consequence, by the League? Responsibility of the League for the operation of these pacts?

Surely we have heard of these before. These are the very words we used in our discussions last September.

Arbitration? And security also, I think, which is to be the final term, the product of the first two. But — I speak in hushed tones, or, at any rate, in tones as hushed as can be used on this world-wide platform — these three terms constitute the very principles of the Protocol itself, and of the Protocol undismembered, un mutilated, just as if we were yielding to the — as I think — reprehensible temptation of removing from it some of its terms, instead of leaving it as it should be — an undivided whole. Each of the pacts now under discussion is in itself a partial Protocol, yet consistent with each other, and the essential principles of the Protocol have been retained.

To be exact, this is the application of the principles of the Protocol to concrete and definite cases, cases for which the States concerned felt urgently bound to make provision; but, although they are limited as regards application, although they apply to concrete cases, the principles involved are still those of the Protocol that you drew up last September. You may well be proud of your work, therefore; you may well be confident.

Arbitration, definition of the aggressor, security! Surely these are your own ideas which are penetrating the hushed precincts of the chancelleries.

And yet, must the League of Nations, robbed of its offspring by reason of its very success, look

on inactive, unconcerned, while such great events are passing? Surely not. And so I find myself unavoidably drawn into a controversy, courteous indeed — nay, more, fraternal, since it is taking place between States which are pursuing the same ends, though by different means — and I must call into question some of the statements made from this platform by the first delegate of the British Empire.

Mr. Chamberlain gave us a most eloquent and stirring account of the history of his own country; his analysis revealed both his own cultured mind and the strong political tradition to which he is attached. His account glowed with that pride which is shared by all of us here; even when we are working to create a wider organisation, we still cling to the deep-rooted traditions of our own past.

Mr. Chamberlain cited the history of his own country as example. He showed us that the British Empire, which was the first to establish the institutions of freedom and parliamentary institutions, has for 250 years been free from any violent upheaval. He showed us how, as a result of this settled condition and the solidity of its institutions, the British Empire has extended its power to the four corners of the earth. He said to us: "Let the League remember that all this has been accomplished without a previous plan, by empirical methods, and by an endeavour to reach a suitable solution in each particular case". He pushed his illustration to a logical extreme, if I may say so, in his endeavour to prove the fundamental illogicality underlying these particular cases.

There we cannot follow him, for where the British statesman who spoke on this platform sees illogicality we ourselves see only the splendid continuity of English history. Yes, there is a profound sense of reality, a sound experience, a methodical desire always to solve on its own merits any problem which arises; but the solutions reached form a regular sequence of events when viewed in the light of the underlying basis of the British Empire's institutions and its requirements. All that is a story which the great British author, Kipling, has rightly called "the finest story in the world".

And for the League of Nations, this other great fatherland that we are establishing by bringing to it, each of us, some of the wealth of our own nations, by endowing it with all the experience acquired from our national temperaments and our national histories — for the League of Nations we ask the same continuity. We do not want it, year after year, to have to return to the same old problem by putting forward solutions which are merely rejected on the morrow.

We remember that Penelope herself, at long last, saw the prow of Ulysses' vessel approaching her over the glittering sea, and I really think that in his wanderings around the Mediterranean, Ulysses is the prototype of the great maritime Powers.

Since we are all bringing to the League the fruit of our experience, the wealth of our national histories, let us draw from this object-lesson and from English history all the truths that they convey. Let us seek to solve each problem as it is laid before us, inspired by vast idealistic conceptions and taking due account of the setbacks we shall inevitably encounter. Above all, we must on no account be discouraged if it happens that, as a result of these setbacks, events take a different course from that which we had intended. But, despite this, we must also link each problem to the next. We must follow up each agreement by another agreement if it is by a system of individual agreements that we are to erect an edifice which, if you will allow me to say so, will be uncommonly

like the Protocol which the first British delegate has condemned. In spite of this, however, let us try to keep before us the aim of universality, which, I assure you, is not a mere arbitrary concept of our minds, but is simply an accurate reflection of what happens in a world-war — in the late war as well as the war which will break out to-morrow if we do not succeed in the work we have come here to do.

We have seen — and Europe cannot forget the lessons it has learnt — that the first shell fired in a world which has not thought upon the morrow produces effects which are felt to the uttermost bounds of that world. How do we know that in this Europe of ours, this small continent to which ultimately all the nations in the world came and fought in its quarrels, peace may not be overthrown by a gun fired on some distant ocean!

Universality, alas! is not a mere arbitrary concept of the mind. Through the very interdependence of all nations, and through the fact that modern warfare must inevitably be waged on a large scale, it has become an inescapable reality for us in our endeavour to abolish war.

We still believe — we should be insincere were we to say otherwise, and I wish to be as frank as was the British delegate the other day — that, in view of the world-wide extent of the danger, we must surely employ world-wide measures of prevention. We believe that some day it will be found that the Protocol was a vital necessity for the peace of the world.

But since, for the time being, events have taken another turn, since the States which are most immediately menaced have adopted the method of partial agreements — which, as I have shown, are in accordance with the principles of the Protocol itself — the League should at any rate exert every means in its power to increase the number of these agreements, at the same time taking care to see that they are in accordance with the essential principles of the Covenant and the Protocol.

A single pact is not enough. Already we have learnt through the investigations of the Press that there is more than one pact, or, at any rate, that the signature of one particular pact in Western Europe is conditional upon the signing of a similar pact in Eastern Europe. The inevitable interdependence of Western and Eastern Europe has already become an accomplished fact through these partial agreements.

Do you think, does the League think, that these two pacts will suffice? If this is to be the path chosen by our diplomats, do you imagine that, both in view of the experience gained through these partial agreements — and this is the great lesson which I wish to draw from what the first delegate of the British Empire said — and also because there will necessarily be other agreements arising out of these — since it will be dangerous for any nation to remain outside these pacts without concluding others to meet its own needs — do you imagine that we shall not find these agreements concluded in large numbers in order to meet equally numerous requirements? It must be so; the League of Nations must exert its influence to this end. Then, when there are a large number of these agreements, when they cover, in every part of the world, the risk of the conflicts which each group of nations considers to be most imminent, do you imagine that these agreements will not require to be adjusted and co-ordinated?

And, then, what body will be qualified to do so but the League of Nations?

Moreover, these pacts will ultimately bring into

action all the machinery of the League. They are — I ask your pardon for repeating the expression, but it adequately expresses my idea — they are pervaded by the atmosphere of the League, they apply its principles unaltered, they are only limited in time and space, and they are therefore experiments which may lead to others.

What, then, is the League's immediate duty in regard to these pacts? The League has asked for work; its energies demand some outlet. Do you not think that through its technical organisations and committees the League ought at once to prepare for the great and multifarious duties which it may have to fulfil to-morrow?

To take only two examples: From what we hear, these agreements will organise arbitration, apart, of course, from clear cases of aggression, such as the violation of a demilitarised zone, and, in many cases, arbitration will ultimately lead to arbitration by the League itself.

Yet remember that last year, when we sought to strengthen arbitration in order to ensure a clear definition of the aggressor — and I know that my colleagues on the First Committee will have a particularly vivid recollection of this — we found that the articles of the Covenant which provide for arbitration were incomplete. In the first place, the Council's decision must be unanimous, and, in the second, one of the disputant States may take refuge behind its domestic laws. We saw that there were gaps through which some day, under the pressure of the forces let loose by war — popular passion, economic needs and so on — the whole flood of war might pour forth once more.

It was one of the most difficult and complex, and one of the most essential, tasks of the First Committee to draw up in detail those articles of the Protocol which were intended to fill the existing gaps.

Do you not think that, if it is called upon one day — as we have every reason to suppose it will be — to intervene in cases of arbitration arising under these pacts, the League should consider how the gaps we found last year can be filled? And as there cannot be two practical solutions for one and the same problem, I think that the only possible solution is one which is remarkably like the first part of the Protocol.

But the idea of arbitration contains something more — it has its dangers. The idea fascinates us, and rightly so. It is the right basis on which to found peace, because it is the only means of determining the aggressor which all nations accept without demur. But unorganised arbitration involves great dangers. As we know only too well from the difficulties which in recent years — indeed even this year, and even now — the Council of the League has had to solve, arbitration is bound to entail lengthy investigations and researches and there are moments of hesitation and uncertainty; meanwhile the time passes.

Remember that the Covenant even prescribes a period of nine months. Nine months! That is much longer than thoroughly equipped nations require to prepare for war if they secretly intend not to submit to arbitration. That is why the Protocol contains a passage — and a vital passage — referring to measures to preserve the *status quo* in the case of arbitration. No provision, however, is made for these measures in the general Covenant of the League. I do not know whether such a stipulation exists in the partial agreements, for we are building upon texts we have never seen. But, whatever the stipulations of the pacts, when

the time comes to impose measures of this nature, involving investigations, upon States between which the spectre of war has arisen, I know of only one institution of such high standing and such impartiality as to be acceptable to both parties, and that is the League of Nations.

Do you imagine there is no immediate need to lay down a procedure for measures to preserve the *status quo*, as is done in the Protocol?

I might give many more instances, but I have already kept you longer than I intended, and I must thank you for your kindness in listening to me. I will not burden you with more examples. I will stop here.

One last word, however. What is the third term of the problem, the third aim that we have inscribed above the portal of our edifice—or rather which we have laid down as a part of the foundation on which to build up the texts that are to define the Covenant? This third term has perhaps, more than any other, awakened hope in the soul of the nations. It is perhaps principally for the sake of this word that the peoples have fixed their hopes upon us, and as we know how infinitely difficult and complex a problem it is, as we know that it can only be an end and not a beginning, it is for us to tranquillise, if I may say so, the hopes that the peoples are placing in us. None the less it was for the sake of this ultimately inevitable third term that the League was founded. It is the message which gleamed in the eyes of the dying, as the eye of a murdered man reflects the image of his murderer—that third term is “disarmament”.

Until we have achieved this, we have achieved nothing.

Can we have disarmament before security? Impossible! France says so, for she will enter into no engagement which she cannot keep.

Can we have disarmament after security? Can we summon a Disarmament Conference, a Conference for the reduction of armaments, as soon as the League has ascertained that a state of security exists? After M. Painlevé's speech I think I am not exceeding my Government's intentions in saying that, when that day comes, France will answer the call.

Through its very universality the Protocol has made it possible for our aim to be attained. It linked up that aim closely with the general body of its provisions. It was laid down that the Conference for the reduction of armaments could not be held until the Protocol had received a number of signatures sufficient to render it operative, and at the same time, in order to ensure that the contracting nations would submit to such provisions as the Conference might agree upon, it was laid down that the Protocol itself should become inoperative in respect of any Powers that refused to stand by the undertakings given at the Conference on the reduction of armaments.

The terms of the problem were firmly welded together, and formed a solid structure. And now, what is to take its place?

In view of the turn which events have taken, in view of these separate pacts inspired by the principles of the Protocol, each of which represents a partial and limited fulfilment of the Protocol idea, is the great hope of reducing armaments destined to perish?

It is the duty of the League to grapple with this problem. If, by concluding more of these pacts, and by concluding them in harmony with the principles of the Protocol — if, by this devious

and broken road, we really succeed in establishing a state of security approximating to that which the Protocol would have established, then I think it would be the duty of the Council, when it is convinced that such a state of security exists, to exercise the powers assigned to it in the Protocol by summoning a Conference on the reduction of armaments.

But if you wish all to be in readiness for this Conference when the time comes, it is necessary to make immediately the technical preparations. It would surely be well to instruct the technical bodies to begin this work, for we cannot but realise — and the world which is watching us must also be made to realise — that this is a highly delicate, difficult and complex task; the weapons will not fall from the hands of men or nations at the first sound of the magic word.

These reductions of armaments will have to be measured by the needs of each country, and those needs must be weighed not only against the extent of the country's territory, but against what we may call — since modern warfare is waged as much by means of industry as by armies — its “potential mobilisation strength”. It is essential that our technical organisations should go to the root of the problem, lest when the time comes, if it does come — and come it must — this Conference on the reduction of armaments should dash our hopes, and prove the death-blow of the League of Nations.

I have said my say, and I must crave your pardon for the length at which I have spoken. By brief examples — some inadequately sketched, since the problems at issue are so vast — I have endeavoured, not only for myself but for my country, to express before this Assembly my profound convictions. My earnest hope is either that, some day, custom, aided by the operation of the separate pacts which are now in course of negotiation, will show us that these incomplete experiments justify the wider and more comprehensive experiment of the Protocol, or else that, by the very multiplication of these pacts applying the principles of the Protocol, we shall reach a position approximating to that which the Protocol itself would have created. However that may be, we must link this year's problems with last year's work, which was itself but the culmination of a series of earlier efforts — continuous, as I have tried to show, since all were alike inspired by the desire not to add to, but to explain, the Covenant.

The time has not yet come, then, for us to fling over the Protocol that gold and purple pall beneath which the dead gods sleep. The structure we once built on the shore of this lake is still there, firm and unshaken. The passing wave may distort and dim its image, but its essential features form once again in the passing river. The fragmentary structures in which diplomacies must perforce put their faith can only be built upon the plan which we have drawn.

The President: I turn at this moment to the English-speaking delegations and I draw their attention to the fact that this brilliant speech to which we have listened is hardly translatable, and that it is much beyond the force and strength and ingenuity of any interpreter to translate that speech on the spur of the moment. I therefore suggest — but it is for you to say — that the speech should not be interpreted. It will of course be carefully translated and in due time distributed to the members of the English-speaking delegations. If it is agreeable to you we might dispense with the oral translation. But should any protest be raised

against this procedure, and if any English-speaking member insists on the translation being made now, it will of course be done.

The Rt. Hon. Austen Chamberlain (British Empire): I do not raise any objection to the suggestion which you have made, Sir. It would be doubly ungracious to do so because I had the good fortune to understand and enjoy the speech in the

language in which it was delivered. But in accepting the proposition on this occasion I must assert the claim of the English language to equality in this Assembly and must ask that the course which you have proposed should be treated as wholly exceptional and not as a precedent on future occasions.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SIXTH ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12th, 1925, AT 10.30 A.M.

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President: MR. DANDURAND.

23. — OPTIONAL CLAUSE OF THE STATUTE OF THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE: DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE SWISS DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : The Swiss delegation has submitted the following draft resolution :

"The Assembly,

"Noting with satisfaction the fact that seventeen States have accepted, up to the present, the optional clause of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice concerning the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court, "Recommends that those States which have assumed this obligation for a period which will shortly terminate should take the necessary steps in order to renew, in due course, their undertakings."

This resolution will be printed and distributed to the members of the Assembly, and at the end of the present discussion the Assembly will be invited to give its opinion upon that resolution.

24. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT: CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the discussion on the report on the work of the Council and of the Secretariat, and the measures taken to execute the decisions of the Assembly.

Prince Arfa, first delegate for Persia, will address the Assembly.

Prince Arfa (Persia) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — It is my pleasant duty publicly to express my thanks to the Council and the Secretariat for their activities of the past year. The Conferences of the League of Nations have become so frequent that many of us have passed the greater part of the winter here at Geneva, and have been able to appreciate anew the great abilities and devotion of the Secretary-General and his loyal collaborators.

Persia was specially interested in the Conference on the Trade in Arms which met in the spring. She sincerely hoped that she would be able to co-operate in the necessary control over an illegal traffic, the dangers of which she well knows. She deeply regrets her inability to adhere to the Convention, on account of a clause which made the Persian Gulf a prohibited zone and which, if we had accepted it, would have placed Persian vessels upon the same basis as the native boats of colonies or mandated territories.

She was prepared herself to exercise, in collaboration with the other contracting parties, the most stringent supervision, and even to organise later a special maritime police. But it is of course clear that Persia cannot, any more than any other Member of the League, allow the warships of another Power to stop, on the high seas, vessels flying her flag and to treat them as if they were craft belonging to a colonial or mandated people.

The Covenant does not allow any special group of Members of the League to decree measures

affecting the sovereignty of another Member without that Member's formal consent. I am therefore quite certain that none of the nations represented here would wish to depart from that principle of justice, which is the very foundation of international law as recognised by us all.

In our ardent desire to maintain the best possible relations with our powerful neighbour, the British Empire, we have left the door open for an agreement.

Seeing that genuine good-will exists on both sides, I hope the two Governments will soon discover a solution capable of safeguarding the rights and equality of both countries, a condition which is indispensable to every agreement, whether general or partial.

The great difference between the old international relations and the new, the latter being based on the League of Nations, should lie precisely in respect for the equality of all States, great and small. If the prestige of the League has somewhat increased in the East during the last two years, it is in direct proportion to the increase in the influence of the smaller countries.

The election of six non-permanent Members of the Council instead of four has made a good impression. We must continue along that path. Popular confidence in the real value of the League will depend more and more upon such a policy. The confidence of the masses will be won if we prove to them that the mighty are no longer supreme, and that the voice of the weakest receives equal consideration in the Councils and Assemblies at Geneva.

During the five years of its existence, the League of Nations has rendered splendid service to the peace of the world and to humanity.

From the creation of the world down to the present time, force has often held right in thrall; the stronger has attacked the weaker and the latter's voice was never heard. The weak had to tolerate every kind of injustice, without even the consolation of making their complaints heard.

The League has already provided the weak and oppressed with the means of bringing their grievances and complaints before the tribunal of the nations. This is progress indeed.

We must press steadfastly on. With courage and tenacity there is nothing we cannot do. If the League is given the real support it requires, there will be no more oppressed peoples in the world to come here and lay their grievances before you.

The Persian delegation has heard the Swedish proposal regarding compulsory arbitration with the deepest interest, and requests the Assembly to instruct the First and Third Committees to examine it next week.

The President :

Translation : M. Bello-Codesido, first delegate for Chile, will address the Assembly.

M. Bello-Codesido (Chile) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The interest with which the countries of Latin America, and more especially Chile, regard the activities of the League increases every day. After having crowned its work of peaceful development at home with a new political constitution inspired by the highest ideals of democracy, after having settled our sole remaining international problem by arbitration and of our own accord, my country now proposes to collaborate with ever-renewed enthusiasm and constant loyalty in the splendid peace work undertaken by the League.

The League's power for securing the peace of the world is greater than is generally admitted.

Its supporters, and particularly its adversaries, are often inclined to ignore all but its more essentially political activities. But the economic and intellectual ties which the League is endeavouring to strengthen, the care of the world's health, the encouragement by the League of contact between the younger generation of different countries, the improvement of travelling facilities for these young people, the total or gradual removal of the scourges which threaten them, and also the activities of the International Labour Organisation, are as effective a contribution to world peace as direct political action, because they create the state of mind and the material well-being essential to real peace.

Chile therefore takes an enthusiastic interest in the success of the League's present and future work for the realisation of these aims. It attaches great value to the work of the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, the scope of which has been greatly enlarged thanks to the generous help given by the French Government in founding in Paris an important International Institute. The increase in the number of national committees on intellectual co-operation and the satisfactory progress of the Committee's work for the development of inter-university relations, the instruction of youth in the ideals of the League and the exchange of professors and students — all these are most hopeful signs. The reform of education, the aim of which is to draw the peoples of the world closer together, is a question to which special attention should be given. The Assembly knows of the great progress already made in Latin America in this connection, and it is the South American members of the Committee who are responsible for the increased activity in this field and the new orientation given to this work.

There is no need for me to emphasise the importance of the League's economic and financial work, in which Chile co-operates with very keen interest. By its work in connection with the financial reconstruction of two European countries — work which at first sight seems of only restricted importance but is really of world-wide concern, and, which, too, is a model of organisation and foresight — and by its general efforts to improve economic conditions, to bring about uniformity in legislation, to simplify formalities, and to encourage fairness in the world of commerce, the League of Nations is undoubtedly preparing the advent of an era of peace which can only be reached by setting the whole economy of the world in order.

As regards the direct political action taken by the League, the triple peace formula: "Arbitration, security, reduction of armaments", adopted by the fifth Assembly, combines a wide application of the principle of compulsory arbitration with the factors of guarantee and disarmament, which complete the system of organising peace by common and united action on the part of all Members of the League. The Protocol, the further examination of which is included in the agenda of this Assembly, has given concrete form to the fundamental principle of a general agreement for the creation of an active force which will compel respect, ensure the execution of international engagements, eliminate the causes of war, inaugurate the triumph of right over violence, and establish the ideal of justice.

Although objections to this agreement have been raised, on account of the difficulty of applying the methods provided for with a view to attaining the desired end, these objections do not refer to the groundwork of the peace organisation conceived by the Protocol.

Arbitration, security and disarmament have not and cannot be replaced by other means or by better or more effective methods. Their scope must, however, be strictly defined, and their characteristics in the different parts of the world must be examined in order that their general and compulsory application may be made acceptable to all States.

The nature of the objections which the examination of the Protocol has suggested to some Powers has not merely thrown light upon the problem; it has led to preparatory action, including international negotiations of the highest importance for the rapid settlement of urgent outstanding questions between the countries which took part in the great war. Nay, more, the way is being cleared for the general agreements which will contribute, within the League, to the establishment of universal peace.

Great Britain's point of view is in keeping with this new aspect of the problem. Her declarations show that if the League is called upon to settle disputes which concern certain nations or groups of nations more directly than others, the best solution is to supplement the Covenant by special agreements designed to meet special needs. These agreements, which would be purely defensive and would be concluded in the spirit of the Covenant and under the auspices of the League, would bind together the nations more directly concerned, whose differences might give rise to further conflict.

This system of partial agreements has reached the stage of practical application and will have a predominant influence on the further action taken by this Assembly with regard to the various points and, indeed, the fundamental principles of the Protocol which have again come up for consideration on account of the objections and criticisms which have been made.

The Chilean delegation, on behalf of its Government, signed the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes adopted by the fifth Assembly. It gave its adhesion to the principles of international peace and the policy of co-operation on which the Protocol is based — principles fully in accordance with those which my country has constantly advocated. We were all the more anxious to sign that document, because the Report, which is inseparable from the Protocol, lays down the maxim, which my country also upholds, that the pacific procedure shall only be applied to disputes relating to the revision of existing treaties or involving the present territorial integrity of the signatory States. Chile, however, fully recognises the weight and importance of the objections to final acceptance of the Protocol, and the difficulties which stand in the way of a general agreement.

Arbitration and guarantees are necessary factors in any plan for the organisation of peace, and are inseparable from any system designed to prevent the risk of war, but they cannot be introduced without taking into account the limitations and the differentiation which are unavoidable in order to respect the sovereignty of States, their means and powers of co-operation, and their more or less direct interest in the settlement of such disputes as may arise.

As regards arbitration, Chile is proud of having employed this peaceful and equitable means for the settlement of all her international difficulties. She cannot fail to recognise the supreme importance of arbitration in the international life of nations, or the expediency, nay, the necessity, of extending, by means of special pacts, its compulsory application in the pacific settlement of questions relating to specific countries. A world pact of arbitration is an entirely different matter. By reason of its very

comprehensiveness, it cannot be made compulsory in every case. Even if the principle were generally accepted, it could only be made workable in practice by admitting certain reservations enabling every country to adopt it.

Article 36 of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice provides for the jurisdiction of the Court in four cases of compulsory arbitration covering legal disputes concerning: (a) The interpretation of a treaty; (b) any question of International Law; (c) the existence of any fact which, if established, would constitute a breach of an international obligation; and (d) the nature or extent of the reparation to be made for the breach of an international obligation.

A general pact of compulsory arbitration might, in our opinion, conform to the provisions of the Statute of the Court in this respect, omitting the clause providing for arbitration on any question of international law — a formula which is too wide and too vague. The revision of treaties actually in force would, it need hardly be said, be excluded.

Compulsory arbitration, thus rendered consonant with national sovereignty and existing treaties, would play a large and essential part in the proposed system with a view to achieving the noble purpose of consolidating peace in international relations.

The American continent has taken an important step, of which it may be useful to remind you, with the object of resorting to all possible means for the pacific settlement of international disputes, by first obtaining the moral disarmament referred to by the eminent representative of the British Empire on this very platform, when he declared that this purpose must take precedence of the fixing of penalties.

The Convention approved by the Pan-American Conference at Santiago, at the proposal of the representative of Paraguay, lays down the obligation to submit to Commissions of Enquiry all controversies between the signatory Powers which have not already been submitted to arbitration in accordance with existing Treaties. These Commissions are required to make a preliminary report on the causes and nature of the dispute; the parties to the case undertake, in the meantime, not to mobilise, not to begin concentration of their forces, nor to engage in any hostile acts or preparations for hostilities. Even after the report has been presented, a period of six months must elapse, during which negotiations are to be re-opened in order to bring about a settlement of the difficulty in view of the findings of this report.

This pacific procedure, which is supplementary to arbitration, is already embodied in one continental agreement, and should, in our opinion, be taken into consideration by the League as a contribution from the American continent to the world work of peace, which is the foremost object of the League's activities.

As regards the system of guarantees laid down in the Geneva Protocol for the benefit of certain States, it should be noted that it applies more particularly to European countries. This aspect of the peace problem does not directly affect the American countries, since none of them has reason to fear the loss of its independence or needs to have it guaranteed by any other State. These countries therefore cannot undertake, on equal terms, the obligations and responsibilities involved by guarantees to safeguard the security and territorial integrity of countries in another continent.

Logically, the guarantee and the security required in view of the particular position of certain States should be established beforehand, as was proposed in the British Government's declaration, by means of partial defensive agreements

to be concluded between the countries directly concerned and to be placed under the control of the League.

If a dispute threatens the peace of the world and is so serious as to require the intervention of all the signatory Powers, the obligations and burdens involved by the guarantee should fall primarily on the countries directly concerned and bound by special pacts, next upon the countries of the continent in which the dispute has arisen and, lastly, upon all the other countries bound by a general pact of security.

This system of guarantees, which is both logical and equitable, would be in keeping with the historical facts of the great war and corresponds with the manner in which the various countries successively entered the war. It would also be adapted to the powers and resources of countries situated far from the centre of military operations and having no direct and immediate interest in the dispute.

In view of these general considerations, the Chilean delegation feels that the work hitherto accomplished by the League has not been unfruitful, and that an examination of the methods to be employed for consolidating, supplementing and reinforcing it by means of fresh agreements, engaging the loyal and unconditional support of every State in its turn, will create, in the near future, a great moral body of international opinion definitely bent upon the attainment of peace, concord and solidarity.

The President :

Translation : I call upon Viscount Ishii, first delegate of Japan, to address the Assembly.

Viscount Ishii (Japan) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Since the great discussions of the fifth Assembly, the Government of Japan, inspired by the peaceful sentiments which actuated the Japanese delegation when the Protocol was being discussed, has examined that important document not only with the sympathy it merits by reason of its lofty aims, but also with a profound sense of the political responsibility it involves. My Government has closely studied the details as well as the basic principles of the problem; it has taken into consideration not only the official documents but also the powerful currents of public opinion which exist in the various countries. It finds that, after all its vicissitudes, the Protocol has failed to obtain the unanimous approval of the Members of the League. Such unanimity, however, is the basis of the decisions of the League, which is a free association of free nations. It is the essential condition for the effective working and practical application of the Protocol.

All Governments are, of course, in agreement as to the principles of the Protocol. They disagree only as regards the method of applying those principles. They are not opposed to the noble ideals which inspired last year's agreement, but they have found that the world is not yet ready for its application, which has accordingly been postponed. We therefore think it would be wiser for the present not to press for it to be put into force.

The experience we have gained from the Protocol shows us that at present it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to strengthen the Covenant in such a way as to ensure its general application in all parts of the world. Indeed, every community, every nation is subject to its own special conditions. The Covenant itself had had to take account of geographical situations and special political

circumstances. From the point of view of security and disarmament the requirements of each continent are different.

For some years now, efforts have been made to elaborate a general system of arbitration, security and disarmament. These efforts led last year to the preparation of the Protocol, which received the unanimous approval of all the delegations. But when it was no longer a question of discussion at Geneva, but within the individual States, this general scheme encountered serious obstacles. Governments, Parliaments and public opinion in every country are inevitably influenced by the situation in their own country. They see things from their own angle and shape their work accordingly. Reason as well as experience seem, therefore, to prove that the best method is to start from the individual case and work gradually and methodically towards the general.

If we are to accomplish something practical and enduring we must, while conforming to the spirit of the Covenant, base our work on the historical, political and geographical conditions obtaining in the various parts of the world. In this field there is an urgent need for regional agreements corresponding to the desire of neighbouring nations for security and peace.

The legitimacy of regional agreements has sometimes been contested on the ground that they are likely to lead to the creation of antagonistic groups within the League itself, thus restoring the pre-war system of unstable and uncertain balances of power. But if these agreements are devoid of hostile intent and are not directed against anyone, if their fundamental object is to prevent an armed conflict between the Contracting Parties and to forestall, as far as possible, the outbreak of war between them; if, moreover, with this end in view, provision is made for arbitration and conciliation procedure calculated to facilitate the peaceful settlement of any disputes which may arise, the objections formerly raised to partial agreements disappear.

The new partial agreements, so drawn up, will be in conformity with the letter and the spirit of the Covenant. They will leave the Covenant unchanged, but they will come within its general framework. They will thus strengthen the League's work and will make it easier to apply the Covenant, when the need is felt to strengthen the guarantees of security and peace.

If the number of such agreements is increased throughout the world, we shall finally obtain a result similar to that aimed at by the general Protocol.

I am quite convinced that since the League of Nations heralded to the suffering world the dawn of a new era of peace, an evolution has taken place in the mentality of the various peoples of the world. This has been crystallised, as it were, in the formula, "arbitration, security, disarmament". It has been duly noted not only by Governments but also by public opinion, which sees in these words a trinity of inseparable terms. No one of these conditions can be fulfilled unless the others are also fulfilled; but no solid or lasting progress can be made except through the slow evolution of ideas and a steady adaptation to facts. If the question of the Protocol cannot as yet be solved at a stroke, we may place our hopes, above all, in conciliation. The idea, long upheld by the Scandinavian nations, of setting up a special organisation to deal with conciliation, may very profitably be applied here.

Doubtless the system of conciliation will not entirely meet the desires of all nations for justice. But until the ideal of arbitration, security and disarmament has become an accomplished fact,

we think that conciliation constitutes the most appropriate method for the peaceful settlement of international disputes. This does not mean that we desire to belittle the high authority of the Permanent Court of International Justice or of arbitration tribunals. It merely marks our belief that many international disputes might be satisfactorily settled by conciliatory procedure applied by wise and experienced men fully acquainted with the facts of present-day politics.

My colleagues will doubtless remember that at the third Assembly a recommendation in favour of conciliation commissions was adopted. Since that date the world has been able to judge the advantages of this system, and many States have embodied it in their special agreements. It is for us, then, to perfect it in the light of recent developments both of theory and practice. We must begin our work, and continue it methodically. Japan will be the first to give her whole-hearted support to all efforts in favour of peace and concord.

The President: I call upon M. Hymans, first delegate of Belgium, to address the Assembly.

M. Hymans (Belgium):

Translation: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — After this lengthy and brilliant discussion, and after listening to such remarkable speeches, I must apologise for mounting this platform. I have really nothing new to tell you nor to reveal, but I thought it my duty to say a few words. It would be inconceivable indeed that, in a discussion on the question of security, the voice of Belgium should not be heard; but it is also my duty to be brief, and I shall endeavour to fulfil this duty to the letter.

First of all, however, may I re-assert my confidence in the future of the League of Nations and its spirit? I am one of the oldest collaborators in its work. This is the sixth Assembly at which I have been present. I have always been optimistic, and at the opening of this sixth Assembly there are many signs which confirm my optimism.

In the first place, I should like to observe that, in the whole course of this lengthy discussion, I have never heard — and I, personally, am rather proud of it — a single criticism of the Council's work, despite the fact that this work has been constantly increasing and deals with ever more numerous and complex questions. International life grows in volume and continually flows on, while we strive to direct, encourage and organise it.

A second reason for confidence is the way in which the public is attracted towards this Assembly, which has become a rallying-ground for thinkers, and gives an impression of calm strength and unity of thought.

Then, again, speeches are shorter than they used to be. There is a gradual tendency to abandon general formulas and what I venture to call "the metaphysics of peace", and to seek more for concrete and positive solutions.

In this connection may I refer — and M. Paul-Boncour spoke of the matter yesterday — to two important decisions, taken three days ago by the Council of the League, which may possibly have escaped the notice of the public, namely, its confirmation of the admirable work that has culminated in the financial and economic restoration of Austria and of Hungary?

This is the League's own work. The League initiated it. We have saved two nations and brought back to them life and hope. Such a success should not be allowed to pass unobserved. It is a positive proof of our power, and shows that the

League can, whenever it wishes, accomplish great things in the economic sphere.

And now, since I am to be as brief as possible, I will pass at once to the question of security, the Protocol and regional agreements.

Last year the Assembly made a great and noble effort to establish a general system for the pacific settlement of international disputes.

At the 1924 Assembly the Belgian delegation voted for the Protocol, and three months later I signed it on behalf of my Government. But our hope of seeing it put into force has not been realised. We ourselves remain faithful to its principles, which, we believe, fulfil the aspirations of mankind.

Wars of aggression are a crime, disputes must be settled by justice and not by violence.

The expression "Arbitration, security, disarmament", in which the system of the Protocol has been summed up, still holds good. It is graven on our minds.

The idea of arbitration is making steady progress; the Assembly and all the peoples of the world approve it. The day has not yet come when the political situation and the public mind and conscience make it possible to apply the Protocol in full, but in the meantime partial treaties of arbitration increase and multiply. We are very glad to see this, and I thank M. Motta for his reference to the treaty which Belgium recently concluded with Switzerland.

But now that I am on the subject of arbitration I should like to give expression to a thought which constitutes a reply to the various arguments advanced by some of the distinguished delegates who have spoken from this platform.

The system of arbitration can only provide real security if it is strengthened by a series of practical sanctions and guarantees of execution ensuring respect for justice. Moral sanctions are powerful, but human history and experience show that they are not enough.

M. Politis last year brought us convincing evidence of the fact in the eloquent speech which he made at the beginning of the session. He concluded with this striking illustration: "It is not sufficient that the splendid tower of peace which we are one and all working with eager hearts to erect should be given the good and solid foundations of justice. It is necessary, in order that it may bear the weight of that burden of armaments which one day we shall place upon the summit, that the walls should be strongly built of the granite stone of security".

The impossibility at present of putting the Protocol into force is bound to lead nations to seek by regional agreements and partial arrangements to guarantee their security and to maintain and safeguard peace.

The pacts of mutual security which are at present being negotiated, and to which various speakers have alluded, are not military alliances organised by certain nations against others. They are not weapons pointed against a definite enemy. The enemy, as M. Paul-Boncour said yesterday, will be the aggressor. These treaties are protective alliances founded on mutual obligations. They closely associate arbitration and guarantees. They are destined to become forces making for general security and will contribute to the peace of the world.

The germ of these regional arrangements is to be found in the Covenant of the League. It will also be found in the draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance of 1923 and the Protocol of 1924. Special agreements would, in my opinion, be indispensable even under the universal system of the Protocol. They would constitute the pillars

upon which a universal system of arbitration and security would repose.

A few months ago M. Benes, Rapporteur for the Protocol, directed the Council's attention to the practical value of regional agreements, and pointed out that if these agreements were increased and were gradually combined and co-ordinated, a system would be evolved which would be remarkably similar to that of the Protocol itself.

The pacts under preparation which fall within the framework of the League are imbued with the spirit of the Protocol; it may be said, in fact, that they actually form a partial application of its principles. They help to create an atmosphere favourable to the growth of the ideal of peace.

Such is the character of the schemes now being carried into effect. My brief account of them is taken from the statements made by Mr. Austen Chamberlain to the Council last March, and of M. Paul Painlevé in his opening speech, and also from the brilliant account of them given us yesterday by M. Paul-Boncour.

What they have told us shows that they have a common idea, and with that idea my Government associates itself; it is evidence of a close understanding — which Belgium welcomes — between two great peoples whose friendship is vital for the safety of the world and of civilisation.

We have always held that disarmament will be the natural consequence of security. It cannot precede; it must follow. Nations cannot neglect the precautions which self-preservation impels them to take until they have acquired confidence and feel themselves protected. But Belgium is prepared forthwith to take her share in the preliminary work of collecting the material required for a Conference on disarmament, to be convened by the League of Nations as soon as circumstances make it possible and desirable.

I have felt it my duty to say these few words on behalf of the Belgian Government, and in the name of Belgium, whose independence is essential to the political stability of Western Europe. All of us, to whatever party we belong, believe in Right, and in international affairs we have no other ambition than to collaborate in the pacification of the world, and to place our country beyond the machinations of violence and the agony and suffering of war.

It was in order to give expression to this thought, which the whole Belgian nation shares, that I desired to address this Assembly, in which Belgium, after the terrible trials which she bore with such stoicism, has found so cordial and so fraternal a sympathy.

I conclude, as I began, with an affirmation of confidence and hope. The work of the League goes on. There is no stopping, no going back. We move forward slowly, step by step, towards justice and peace. Let us endure to the end.

The President :

Translation : M. Quiñones de León, first delegate for Spain, will address the Assembly.

M. Quiñones de León (Spain) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — It was in any case my intention to be brief, but, in view of the lateness of the hour, I shall be even briefer. I could repeat to-day, without altering a single word, all that I had the honour to say last year, on behalf of my country, during the solemn discussion of the Protocol which was to maintain and develop the constitutional principles inscribed in the Covenant of the League of Nations.

Since then, Spain has in no way changed her opinions regarding either the ideal of universal peace which we all share, or the means of realising

this ideal so far as the limits of human nature allow.

Inspired by the glorious traditions of her jurists in the past, who foresaw the problems of international law before that branch of the legal encyclopædia had even been defined; inspired also by the efforts of the League itself in affirming, by its acts, the principle of arbitration and the definition of aggression, Spain still favours the solutions set out in the Protocol.

We therefore voted for the recommendations which it contained and, conscious of their importance and of the benefits they would bring, we have come to affix our signature thereto.

I therefore repeat, in the name of Spain, all that I said last year.

I said then that my country's long history had fully convinced it that institutions, whether national or international, require time to reach maturity and must take into account the realities of life.

The partial agreements which the League has been offered this year are not, I feel, so wide in character as the scheme of settlement formulated last year; but they are pregnant with the ideas embodied in the Protocol, and in essence they correspond to the principles — born of a sincere desire for peace — which underlie the Covenant of the League.

We must often perforce abandon the immediate attainment of an ideal and reach it only by gradual stages.

We know now what the problem is, and it is, I submit, the Assembly's duty to take up the partial solutions proposed and apply their benefits to the whole world; it must work ceaselessly and untrudgingly for universal peace.

Faithful to Spain's ideal, but recognising nature's law that ideals can only be attained slowly and gradually, I venture to submit for the consideration of the Assembly certain proposals which, I think, combine the ideas expressed by the majority of the delegates who have already spoken, and which, without departing from the spirit and intention of the admirable proposal submitted by M. Loudon, widen that proposal in such a way as to cover the whole problem.

I have therefore the honour to submit to the Assembly the following draft resolution :

"The Assembly, profoundly attached to the cause of peace, and convinced that the most urgent need of the present time is the re-establishment of mutual confidence between nations,

"Declaring afresh that a war of aggression constitutes an international crime,

"Taking note of the declarations submitted to the Council and the Assembly of the League of Nations in respect of the Protocol for the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes and of the fact that the said Protocol has not up to the present received the ratifications necessary for putting it into operation immediately,

"Regards favourably the effort made by certain nations to advance these questions by concluding treaties of mutual security conceived in the spirit of the Covenant of the League of Nations and in harmony with the principles of the Protocol (arbitration, security, disarmament),

"Records the fact that such agreements need not be restricted to a limited area but may be applied to the whole world,

"Recommends that, after these agreements have been deposited with the League of Nations, the Council should examine them in order to

report to the seventh Assembly on the progress in general security brought about by such agreements.

“Undertakes again to work for the establishment of peace by the sure method of arbitration, security and disarmament,

• “And requests the Council to make preparatory arrangements for a Conference on the reduction of armaments as soon as, in its opinion, satisfactory conditions have been achieved from the point of view of general security as provided for in Resolution XIV of the third Assembly.”

• The President :

Translation : The Assembly has before it a new draft resolution, submitted by the first delegate of Spain. This draft will be printed and communicated to members without delay.

At the conclusion of this discussion, the Assembly will be called upon to vote on this draft and on the other draft resolutions which have been submitted to it.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SIXTH ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

NINTH PLENARY MEETING

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12th, 1925, AT 3.30 P.M.

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Draft resolution submitted by the Chinese delegation.

President : MR. DANDURAND.

25. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the continuation of the debate on the report of the Work of the Council and of the Secretariat.

Dr. Nansen, delegate for Norway, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Nansen (Norway) : Mr. President, I desire on the present occasion to confine my remarks on the report made by the Secretary-General almost exclusively to one single item, namely, the action of the League and the International Labour Office on behalf of refugees.

Before I take up that subject, however, I may in a few words bring some other points before the Assembly. First of all, I desire to move, without elaborate comment, a resolution referring to the Sixth Committee for consideration the report of the Permanent Mandates Commission and the annual reports of the various mandatory Powers which that Commission has received this year. This item, as you may have noticed, does not yet appear on the agenda, but in moving my resolution

— in conformity with what has been done on several previous occasions—I know that I am only giving expression to a sentiment shared by the whole of the Assembly as to the importance of the annual discussions on the mandates system. Anyone who follows the current of international affairs cannot fail to be aware that the relations between the advanced and the backward peoples of the world are assuming every year a greater and greater importance. There are many in the Assembly who believe that in this mandates system there will be found the means by which perhaps the gravest of the problems resulting from the contact of civilised and primitive peoples may in the long run be solved.

I therefore beg to move the following resolution :

“The Assembly, following the precedent already established in previous years, decides to refer to the Sixth Committee the annual reports of the mandatory Powers, the reports of the Permanent Mandates Commission, and all other relevant documents on the mandates question which have been distributed to the Members of the League since the fifth Assembly.”

Secondly, I desire to move another resolution referring to the Fifth Committee the report of the International Labour Office and the High Commissioner on the work on behalf of the Russian refugees. This report contains a new and hopeful proposal which may lead to a great development in the near future, as any member of the Assembly who has read Colonel Proctor's valuable report will agree.

I therefore move the following resolution :

“The Assembly decides to place on its agenda the question of Russian refugees and to refer to the Fifth Committee for consideration the reports of the International Labour Office and of the High Commissioner on this subject.”

The third matter on which I may say a word relates to the question of the protection of

minorities. I do not desire to enter into any general consideration on the working of the system of protection of minority rights — a system which is being gradually built up under the auspices of the League. I have always been one of those who believe that the peaceful settlement of minority problems is of vital importance to the welfare and progress of Europe, and it is only by the cautious, persistent and courageous development of the system of protection that acute problems can be dealt with.

To-day I only want just to mention once more a detailed question which I understand has been brought to the attention of the Secretary-General. Some months ago a petition was made to him by certain Armenian refugees alleging that European banks had withheld from them bank deposits which they had made before their departure from Smyrna in 1922, and their legal claim to which they believed to be properly established. My Government, in accordance with the rules of procedure, received at its request a copy of this petition, which has been considered in a Council Committee of Three, but which has not yet been formally laid before the Council of the League itself.

As this petition has an obvious connection with the wider subject on which I will speak in a moment, I venture to suggest that the facts put forward in that petition are sufficiently well established to justify its formal consideration by the Council. I therefore express the hope that the Council may without delay be seized of the matter by one of its members and that it will take whatever measures it may deem to be just or necessary, whether by seeking an advisory opinion from the Permanent Court or in other ways, to secure a right settlement of this important question.

I now come to the main business with which I desire to detain the Assembly to-day, the proposal of a definite scheme for the settlement in agricultural enterprise of a large number of Armenian refugees. It is a scheme which, if it is to succeed, must involve a loan made by those who control capital in Europe to the new Republic of Armenia. It is a scheme similar in nature, though less in scale, to that which has been successfully carried through for the settlement of Greek refugees on the vacant lands of Greece. Some members of the Assembly have already expressed to me their amazement that I should come before you to-day with what they hold to be an impracticable if not a fantastic scheme.

It is almost three years since I went on behalf of the Assembly to Greece and Turkey to examine the situation created by the great influx of refugees from Asia Minor into the lands of ancient Greece. Within a few weeks of leaving Geneva I came to the conclusion that the only possible solution for the vital problem raised in the Balkan Peninsula by the influx of those refugees lay in the floating of an international loan for their settlement in the new homes in the mother-country to which they had returned.

At that time, when I first put forward the proposal, although it received the immediate and ardent support of the Government of Greece, there were a few persons who considered that there was one chance in a thousand of its being carried into practical effect. It required a year — a year of patient endeavour, of careful investigation and persistent effort — before the Council and the Financial Committee of the League were able to evolve a scheme which could command the confidence of the world. Yet that scheme was evolved: the great loan for which we then asked was raised, and the reports which are now before you show that the results have surpassed our most hopeful expectations.

There may be some who think that the proposal that I make to-day is less hopeful and has less chance of practical success than the proposal for the Greek loan. I do not share that view. I have no hesitation in saying that the proposition that I make to-day is far more hopeful from every point of view than any proposal which could have been made in 1922 on behalf of the refugees of Greece. I have no doubt in my own mind that the difficulties of the scheme which I ask the Assembly to consider, whether they be economic or financial or, I will add, political, are far less than the difficulties which the Greek Government and the Council and the Financial Committee had to meet three years ago.

I make this proposal therefore, not only with confidence strengthened by the success of the League in all the great reconstruction schemes which it has carried through, but also with confidence founded on the facts of the situation such as I know them to be from my investigation this year. I do not doubt that in the coming weeks we shall have days of difficulty and it may be of discouragement, but I am certain that sooner or later — and I believe sooner rather than later — we shall carry this thing through to the successful conclusion which has attended every other effort of this character which the League has made.

I make no apology for laying this matter before the Assembly to-day. It is nothing less than my duty to do so. I need hardly remind you of the resolution of the last Assembly which invited the International Labour Office in collaboration with myself to institute an enquiry. These are the words of the resolution :

“To institute an enquiry with a view to studying the possibility of settling a substantial number of Armenian refugees in the Caucasus or elsewhere.”

In carrying out the enquiry which we have made, we were therefore fulfilling the instructions of the fifth Assembly, and in view of that fact I beg to lay before the Assembly the following resolution :

“The Assembly, bearing in mind the resolution concerning Armenian refugees adopted by the fifth Assembly on September 25th and 29th, 1924, and, in particular, the invitation which was then addressed to the International Labour Office to institute an enquiry with a view to studying the possibility of settling a substantial number of Armenian refugees in the Caucasus or elsewhere,

“Decides to place on the agenda of the Assembly the question of Armenian refugees and to refer to the Fifth Committee for consideration the report submitted by the High Commissioner on the results of the said enquiry.”

I ask the members of the different delegations here assembled to note the words of the resolution adopted a year ago. Our task was to discover some means which would permit of the settlement of “a substantial number of Armenian refugees in the Caucasus or elsewhere”. The first problem which we had to consider, therefore, was to find a place where such an establishment might be carried through, where there were possibilities of economic development which would permit an imported population to support itself by its own work.

We examined all the possibilities and we came to the conclusion, unanimously and without any doubt that we were right, that the only place where a large body — I emphasise a *large* body — of the destitute Armenian refugees now in Europe can be settled is in the Armenian Republic of Erivan.

If the Assembly reflects on the matter for a moment, I think it will agree that we are right. Where else can room be found for a large body of refugees? Ask any Government if it can take a great new body of refugees. Ask the Government of Greece, whose generosity to the Armenians is one of the bright spots in the history of recent years. Ask the Government of Egypt; ask the Government of Turkey; ask the Government of Syria; ask the Government of Palestine if they can receive thousands upon thousands of destitute men, women and children seeking new homes and the means to live.

There is this other important fact to consider, namely, that the Armenian refugees themselves wish to go to Armenia and to go nowhere else. They wish to go and make a national home. There can be no doubt that if the scheme which the fifth Assembly recommended is to be carried through, it must be done in the Republic of Erivan or nowhere.

The enquiries were made by a Commission formed by the International Labour Office and myself. This Commission consisted of three experts, namely, M. Carle, an agricultural expert of French nationality recommended for his expert knowledge and high personal position by the French Minister of Agriculture; M. Dupuis, an Englishman until lately a Counsellor of the Ministry of Public Works of the Egyptian Government, and a distinguished expert on irrigation and agricultural work; and M. Lo Savio, proposed by the Italian Government, a Commissioner for emigration and an expert on agriculture and emigration. M. Quisling, a Norwegian who has spent a long time in Russia, acted as secretary of the Commission, of which I was the fifth member.

Some months ago we went to Armenia and spent there a prolonged period examining the whole question. We went there, all of us — myself no less than the experts who accompanied me — full of doubt as to whether anything practical could be carried through. We came away unanimously convinced of the fact that there was an opening for a new economic venture of great importance, for a work of irrigation and drainage which would open up means of absorbing not only some of the many refugees already present on the soil of Armenia but also a great number of those who are still wandering over the face of the earth.

We examined on the spot, and in great detail, a number of different schemes proposed to us by the Armenian Government and by other persons acquainted with the country; and our detailed conclusions on these various schemes will be found in the report which I have made to the Assembly. We have chosen from them those which seemed to us to be the easiest to carry through for the expenditure of a small sum of money. We have chosen, as a modest beginning, two works of irrigation and drainage, in part, which will open up for settlement an area amounting to 33,000 desyatins, or practically 34,000 hectares, or very nearly 90,000 acres. We calculate that on this land there can be settled, and settled within a period of two or three years, not less than 25,000 or 30,000 people, and ultimately it may be many more. Of those 30,000 people, the Armenian Government has agreed that at least 15,000 shall be refugees from Europe.

The number of 15,000 may seem trivial compared with the vast number of Armenians who are still poverty-stricken or living with great difficulty in different places, but, after careful investigations made in Greece and in Constantinople and in other places, I came to the conclusion that if we could send 15,000 refugees to Armenia we should be able to solve the most urgent problems of Armenian

suffering and destitution which still confront us in Europe. Much would still remain to be done, but I for one am firmly convinced that, if this beginning is successfully carried through, much more can be done. However this may be, the settlement of 15,000 refugees would, in itself, solve the problems which now most urgently demand solution.

I will not trouble the Assembly with the details of the proposal. My Commission has suggested in its report that money should be provided by means of which irrigation and drainage works could be carried out for the watering and, in parts, draining of land which is at present unfit for cultivation.

My Commission proposes that in this work, which it believes would take from one to two years, a great number of the refugees in Europe would find employment. When the work has been done, the refugees could be given houses, ploughs, oxen and seed; within a few months, or at most a year or two, they would become self-supporting, and more than that they would be able to contribute what is needed for the repayment of the loan within a reasonable time.

My technical experts had no hesitation whatever in making this prediction. They were able to observe the successful results of other similar irrigation works in Armenia which have been carried through in the last few years. They were able to observe that the irrigation of this land gives an agricultural return which is absolutely certain, because it makes the cultivator practically independent of the weather. They were able to observe that, among the crops which could be successfully raised, cotton stood pre-eminent, that cotton of very good quality, now in immense demand for all the markets of the world, could be produced in quantities per acre that promises a certain and high return. They had, therefore, no hesitation in saying that any loan raised for the carrying out of this scheme could be financed from the revenues of the land thus brought into cultivation, that a considerable rate of interest could be paid, and that, in a short period of years — ten or fifteen years at the most — the capital debt could be paid off.

The Commission is able, therefore, to present the Assembly with a scheme which, in the opinion of highly qualified experts, is economically sound and financially feasible. We lay before you this definite proposal, together with the definite promise of the Armenian Government to receive and settle at least 15,000 refugees from Greece and Constantinople, and to make the arrangements which may be required for the raising of the loan. For of course, as the Assembly by now cannot have failed to perceive, the essence of this scheme is the proposal for a loan of the same kind which was raised under the auspices of the League for the refugees in Greece.

This is not the time nor is it the place to explain the details of the financial arrangements which I believe could be made for raising such a loan. I was in no position, even if I had had the competence, to enter into detailed negotiations with the Armenian Government on this subject. But this I can say, that, so far as I discussed the matter with that Government, I have every reason to believe that a scheme could be prepared which would give to European investors in the loan which we propose all the material guarantees which they require. So strongly am I convinced of this that I believe that the loan can be made and carried through on the same basis as the loan for Greece, that is to say, without the guarantee of any European Government behind it. If, however, this hope should be deceived, if it were necessary to give a guarantee by European Governments for

this loan, I should not hesitate to make a confident appeal to them to give that guarantee, and, if it should be necessary to do so, my hopes would be strengthened by the proposal made by the present Prime Minister of Great Britain barely a year ago on behalf of this very scheme which I now propose.

Writing to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, then Prime Minister of Great Britain, Mr. Baldwin, together with Mr. Asquith, made this appeal to the Government of the British Empire, and I beg my colleagues of the British Empire to weigh every word of that appeal. It is the "Proposal of a Grant for the Final Liquidation of Armenian Questions arising out of the War". It says, "What can be done? We recognise with deep regret that it is impossible now to fulfil our pledges to the Armenians; for these pledges involved political and territorial rearrangements now beyond our power to achieve. But there is open to us another method of expressing our sense of responsibility and of relieving the desperate plight of the scattered remnants of the Turkish Armenians. The most appropriate territory for their settlement would be surely in Russian Armenia. Facilities are offered by the local government. In September 1923 the Council of the League of Nations approved a scheme for the land settlement of 50,000 Armenian refugees in the little Republic of (Soviet) Armenia in the Russian Caucasus. The Armenian leaders in Europe approve this plan. The Council passed a resolution that an appeal should be made to its members to give financial support to this constructive scheme, and the Council would be prepared to give assistance through its technical organisations. This resolution was distributed to the fifty-four States Members of the League with an invitation for assistance as stated above.

It is, in our opinion, the duty of Great Britain to give substantial support to this scheme. We desire to express our view that, as some compensation for unfulfilled pledges is morally due to the Armenians, the British Government should forthwith make an important grant."

That letter is signed by H. H. Asquith and Stanley Baldwin.

I believe that with such support we should not appeal in vain if Government guarantees were required for the scheme which we propose; but again I say that I hope that when the Financial Committee comes to deal with the matter it will find that its task can be carried through without such complications.

Mr. President, I will not say more of the details of the scheme which I propose. I will wait for an opportunity before the Fifth Committee of the Assembly to clear up the doubts and misunderstandings which I suspect some delegates may entertain. I will ask the experts who went with me to give to that Committee any technical information which it may require.

I will there endeavour, with the assistance of these experts, to make plain to the Committee that the present Government of the Armenian Republic is a good Government, a Government which has brought peace and order and a measure of prosperity to a country where, three or four years ago, there was chaos and misery and famine. I will endeavour to make plain that this Government, whatever its relations with the other parts of the political union to which it belongs may be, is financially entirely independent and is in a position to make loans, to grant concessions, to carry out in full freedom both now and for the future whatever economic or financial arrangements it may desire to make. I will endeavour to convince the Committee that the Government

of the Armenian Republic is a Government which lives in peace and security, which is not threatened by military attack from without; those therefore who lend it money have not to fear a great or present risk of international war.

I will endeavour to convince the Committee that the Armenian people — which has been so badly treated, and has suffered so much, that certainly no people in modern history has experienced anything to be compared with it — that this people is highly cultivated, gifted, and exceptionally clever, that it is an industrious and hard-working people, which really, during the last three years, has done marvels in developing their country from the misery of only a few years ago, when every day cartloads of dead children and adults were brought in from the streets of their towns.

Lastly, I will endeavour to convince the Committee that the Republic of Erivan is a real Armenia, that its population is 95 per cent Armenians, that its Government and its Government departments are exclusively Armenian in personnel, and that the only official language used or tolerated is Armenian, that its technical services, agricultural and otherwise — the work of which we have seen and know to be of value — are likewise Armenian from top to bottom.

There is, in fact, in this little Republic a national home for the Armenians at last, and I ask the members of the Assembly to put to their consciences the question whether they sincerely and earnestly believe that any other national home can be hoped for. I believe that I know the answer which their consciences will give, and I appeal to the Assembly to approve this one effort to carry out all the promises which have been made in the past concerning a national home for the Armenian nation.

If this sixth Assembly could launch this scheme, I believe that, by that alone, it would live in history, for it would have made a first move to right what everyone in this Chamber believes to be a great international wrong.

Let us cast back our minds to our debates in previous Assemblies. Year by year we have made promises of a national home; year by year we have recognised the pledges of our Governments to secure justice for a maltreated and abandoned people, and year by year with sympathetic words upon our lips we have watched the slow history of a long martyrdom. Now there opens before us an opportunity to act. Now there is a scheme which we know to be economically sound, financially practicable and politically desirable. If we can but carry it out we shall alleviate the sufferings of countless refugees. We shall help to build up and strengthen the only stable Armenian Government there has been in recent history, and, above all, we shall forge another link in the fabric of peace which the League is creating throughout the world.

Let me remind you of the fact that recently a big battleship was launched in a great European country, and, according to the statements of the Ministry of Marine, the cost of that battleship was £7,000,000 sterling, and the cost of the annual upkeep is close upon half a million pounds sterling. Two years of that battleship is more than sufficient to cover the loan we are asking for. The money spent on this engine of war disappears, leaving no betterment behind it. The loan is reproductive, builds up human homes and happiness, and adds to the general prosperity of the world. The battleship is an insurance against the risks of war and at this moment it may be inevitable, but is not a great work of peace likewise an insurance against war? Are we sure that it is not a better and a cheaper insurance by such a scheme as this to

remove misunderstandings between peoples and create new bonds between them ?

If we can but carry through this small beginning, it will inevitably lead to greater things. Other schemes independent and self-contained but similar in kind and leading to even greater results will be adopted. I appeal to the Assembly not to lose this chance. Too often in our day the Armenian tragedy is forgotten or passed off with some indifferent or cruel jest.

I appeal to the members of every delegation to think again what this tragedy has been. But, still more urgently, I appeal to the Governments of the three great nations of Europe for their support. England, France and Italy have played a great part in shaping the course of history and the destiny of peoples in these latter years. Indirectly they have played their part in the tragedy of the Armenian people. I beg them now to take a hand once more and to create on the ruins of the failure of the past a brighter future for a stricken nation.

I speak to the delegations of the British Empire, of France and of Italy and I say that the name of Armenia has, here and elsewhere, been often on the lips of your leaders, that the sorrows of Armenia have for long been in the hearts of your peoples, that the remnants of the Armenian nation look now to you for help, and I beseech you that they shall not look in vain.

The President :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen, Dr. Nansen has submitted a draft resolution to the Assembly. This resolution will be printed and distributed to the members of the Assembly, who will be invited to give their opinion at the conclusion of the debate.

His Excellency M. Benes, Minister for Foreign Affairs for Czechoslovakia, will address the Assembly.

M. Benes (Czechoslovakia) :

Translation : Mr. President, gentlemen — M. Quiñones de León, first delegate for Spain, has submitted to the Assembly a resolution the importance of which will be realised by us all. For some it will mean the maintenance and confirmation of the great principles of our Protocol of last year ; others will probably, or at any rate may possibly, regard it as meaning the end of the Protocol.

I do not wish to prolong unduly the debate on the Protocol, though this debate may one day be considered as one of the most significant records of European and even world politics since 1914. But I should be lacking in my duty to the Assembly if I did not state briefly my opinion on the subject. I do not wish to seem like a deserter during the battle.

I was the Rapporteur of the Third Committee, and I upheld the cause of the Protocol in the Assembly before the memorable vote was taken last year. You will remember the scene of enthusiasm in this hall then ; you remembered it yesterday when you heard the admirable speech of my friend M. Paul-Boncour.

As former Rapporteur of the Third Committee, I had the honour of taking part in the debate, side by side with my colleagues of the Council, and I outlined my arguments in defence of the Protocol.

In the belief that I was expressing the feelings of a great number of my colleagues, especially those representing the smaller States, I laid stress, before the Council, on the need felt by those States for the evolution of a general system which will protect them all and provide the benefits of security by arbitration and disarmament.

I do not propose to repeat all these arguments

We are faced by a definite fact : the Protocol has not received the necessary number of ratifications. It will not come into force in the near future. We must therefore seek other means to obtain security for individual States and the fulfilment of the Covenant's provisions regarding disarmament. That is the position.

In his eloquent, shrewd and logical, yet persuasive and delightful, speech, M. Paul-Boncour tried to console us for this misfortune. With admirable clearness he showed us the close connection between the pacts of guarantee which are now being negotiated, and by which my country is also bound — indirectly, it is true, but still quite measurably — and the provisions of the Protocol, by demonstrating that, though our aim cannot be reached at one stroke by a general and universal instrument such as the Protocol, gradual progress towards it will nevertheless be made by the opposite route, that is, by proceeding from individual cases and limited measures to general solutions, until we reach the complete system contained in the Protocol.

I hasten to add that, as representative of Czechoslovakia. I associate myself in present circumstances with these negotiations, which, I think, represent a very great advance. I do not propose, therefore, to re-examine the two methods, which have been so clearly defined, in particular, by Mr. Austen Chamberlain, the first delegate for the British Empire.

Both methods are good in theory, and the first is not *a priori* better than the second. It all depends on the results obtained.

From this point of view, and despite what M. Paul-Boncour has said, we cannot help feeling some regret that our work of last year has not been crowned with success. In its boldness, its general structure, its magnificent universality, which gives expression to the essential and intrinsic idea of the League, the Protocol, in its broad lines, held much that is grand and beautiful. It embodied rules of international equity hitherto unknown in international politics. Its severest critics cannot deny that.

Another reason for the regret we inevitably feel lies in the new method itself which is to replace the old.

I am all in favour of a practical policy, but I foresee that it will be long before the slow and gradual evolution of regional agreements brings us final success. There is strong reason to suppose that many a year will pass before we possess a Protocol, or anything resembling it, which will give security to the whole world.

Finally, we come to the last and most serious objection. M. Quiñones de León very rightly states in his resolution — and I fully agree — that the Disarmament Conference can be called as soon as satisfactory conditions have been achieved from the point of view of general security. But do you not think that it will inevitably be found to be very difficult in the near future to apply the disarmament clauses of Article 8 of the Covenant ? And do you not think that, by separating thus the different spheres and regions one from the other, we shall find next year, or later, when we are asked to take the first step towards disarmament, that there will always be a large number of important States which will say that they are not sure of security ; and they will probably be right, judged by the standards laid down and adopted here, unless we can follow the example of the Western Pact now being negotiated, by concluding similar agreements, and that within a very short space of time. For the new circumstances are in some respects, even perhaps

inherently, antagonistic to our work in the field of security and disarmament.

Doubtless there are differences between the Anglo-Saxon and the Latin mentalities. There are also differences in the general conditions obtaining in different countries. But in my opinion it is by no means a matter of logic, or at any rate not of logic alone. The League is by its nature, by its structure as laid down in the Covenant, and in its very essence, a universal institution. As such, it tends always and inevitably to work on general lines and by means of general measures. Herein lies its strength. Accordingly, we feel the need of including the other States which are not yet Members; they must be brought within the fold. But herein also lies, in certain cases, its weakness. When it encounters practical impossibilities it is obliged, despite its universal character, to compromise and to admit partial solutions entirely contrary to its true spirit. It must compromise, despite its duty to legislate for the whole of mankind. It must thus be content with measures which do not make provision for the majority of its Members.

These are the moments when the adversaries of the League fasten upon its every act, and strive to prove its bankruptcy. Its friends and champions tremble lest it should end by vacillating between half-measures on the one hand and, on the other, vast, wide and ambitious schemes far beyond its powers. Such a situation would cause it to fail at the critical moment, and would result in its utter collapse. In this dilemma its friends and champions wonder whether it would not now be opportune to re-examine the constitution of the League so as to make provision within it for the differences to which we have alluded, by carrying out a kind of decentralisation on the lines of the great federalist States. I merely raise this point. I do not propose to follow it up, because it is an extremely important political question which cannot be answered off-hand.

I will endeavour to make my argument clear. Sooner or later we shall be obliged either to amend the Covenant along the lines I have indicated or else to bring forward and adopt general measures in conformity with the spirit of the present Covenant.

I am prepared to accept whichever of these two methods practical necessities render desirable, but I tremble for the League if it has to carry on its difficult task in face of the incongruities which at present are, as it were, inherent in its constitution.

In my opinion it is neither the Latin nor the Anglo-Saxon mentality which is at the root of our difficulty; it is the nature of the League itself, its universality, which hinders our work and yet is the secret of our strength. Until the League becomes entirely universal, we shall always be fighting for or against general measures, for or against universal measures. That is one of my practical arguments on behalf of the Protocol. That is why I am convinced that the Protocol, either in its present or in a new form, is not dead, and will not die. Next year, indeed, when we come once more to discuss disarmament, there will still be States which will say at once that no provision has been made for their security. The question of general measures may then come up again, for disarmament—as you yourselves have often said—can only succeed if it is general. If you turn to any other question connected with the Protocol—arbitration, the aggressor, chemical or scientific warfare, control of disarmament, economic sanctions—in every case you will come back to the consideration of general measures, because the universality of the League will not allow of

partial measures, which are bound to fail at the critical moment and may in the long run sully our high ideal.

These, then, are my reasons for confidence in the future, and this is why, in spite of all, I have a profound confidence in the League of Nations.

At a meeting yesterday I was greatly moved at the eloquent words of Viscount Cecil on the vitality of the League, on the salient fact that its existence, work and activity are present before us like the rock against which, one by one, all the struggles, all the relics of the past are being shattered. I will add that, in proportion as Europe is becoming stabilised, the League is also becoming stabilised. It gains new vitality and new features, it strengthens our mutual ties, and imposes upon us new obligations and, above all, moral obligations. We all of us feel that we are now more truly Members of the League than we were some time ago, and our actions are, I think you will admit, less unfettered than they were at the beginning.

As long, therefore, as the League exists in its present form, we are bound, I think, for the reasons I have stated, to strive steadfastly to promote general measures.

We do not know in what circumstances we shall meet again next year, but I am convinced that when disarmament and security come to be discussed I shall once again mount this platform in defence of general measures, for the self-same reasons as those I have already advanced; and I believe, too, that we shall not pass lightly over this subject.

These, I repeat, are the reasons why I do not believe that the Protocol is dead. Though it may not be carried out and applied to present-day politics, I feel sure it will give more signs of life than we suspect, in public opinion, at international public meetings, in the private studies of responsible statesmen, and, I venture to say, in the hearts of all here present. M. Quiñones de León's resolution points to this, for we all realise the great force of the idea, which, once launched, will pursue its irresistible course throughout the whole world.

I have another reason for believing in the vitality of this general plan. M. Quiñones de León's resolution is extremely characteristic. It contains all the ideas and principles of the Protocol: a war of aggression is a crime; treaties must only be concluded in conformity with the Protocol; a general system is regarded as a future possibility; the connection of the three principles: "Arbitration, security, disarmament", is accepted and the convening of a Conference on disarmament is requested.

If we vote for this resolution—and I shall be the first to do so—we shall show that we are by no means afraid to accept the essential ideas of the Protocol. We merely defer the welding of its principles into a system of practical politics. It seems to me that this in itself is an important sign of confidence in the future, because if we ask ourselves why we are rather shy of a close and rigid system, the answer will be that we cannot at present foresee the exact consequences which such a system will entail.

Just think how often, during the six years we have worked together here, we have had to change our minds.

I remember that, two years ago, in the Third Committee, the idea of regional agreements was argued and discussed with our honourable colleague, Lord Robert Cecil. Last year, again, we had a difficult fight to secure the adoption of this idea by our colleague, Mr. Henderson. You will also remember that two years ago, when one of our colleagues—M. Lange, I believe—suggested that the principle of arbitration should be embodied

in the Treaty of Mutual Assistance, nearly all of us thought this proposal novel and impracticable. Yet you see how we regard the idea of arbitration to-day.

This is not due to the fact that we have suddenly changed our minds; it is because during the last three or four years the world has made immense progress. It is not only due to the fact that certain countries have changed their Governments, and that the ideas of the new men who have come into power are radically opposed to the tenets of their predecessors. I see among us some who, during the struggle about the Protocol a year ago, were far from convinced — nay, they even opposed the Protocol. Yet to-day they rise in its defence! It is not because they have changed their minds. It is simply because, through the maze of the international situation, they could not at once see its ultimate consequences. Yesterday they saw it from one angle; to-day they see it from another. They foresaw how it would operate in the then existing political conditions, but these have since been profoundly changed, and changed not by the will of man. That is another and a further reason which convinces me that the League will eventually adopt some such general measures in a form similar to the Protocol. Indeed, general measures, I think, have always possessed this characteristic; actuated by circumstances which change and fluctuate and are beyond human control, they benefit now one and now another section of the community. And therein, in my opinion, lies their fundamental justness.

I am inclined to think that ere long most of those who hesitate to-day will, in the light of new world-events, regard the Protocol from our standpoint and not until then will all its vital and universally human elements be understood.

I therefore cling to the ideas which I championed at last year's Assembly, though I fully recognise, as I did last year, that certain of the articles of the Protocol must be modified to suit circumstances. The Government of Czechoslovakia has signed the Protocol and ratified it. It is following the policy of the Protocol and will continue to do so. It realises the necessity of negotiating a limited system of guarantees, such as is, at present, outlined in the Pact of Guarantee. It associated itself with the Pact from the outset, and, when the German Government initiated negotiations, the Czechoslovak Government took part in them in so far as it was concerned therein. This is the attitude it will maintain, and it will always have in view the need for a fuller realisation of the principles we adopted here last year.

My Government considers the present negotiations as a step forward. They may, if they succeed, render considerable service to peace and to the task of the League.

I have constantly defended regional pacts in this Assembly, and will be the last to deny the great and immediate benefits of arrangements of this nature. I shall not lose heart if we can only capture the fortress inch by inch. It is rare indeed for a great and splendid enterprise to be crowned with immediate success. But, for reasons which I have already explained, I believe that the battle for the general provisions of the Protocol will continue. It is for these reasons that I have every hope of the future.

We often give undue rein to imagination. We dream too long of unattainable ideals; but, as M. Painlevé said in his opening speech, it is much more serious to err on the side of over-scepticism, over-incredulity, baseless suspicion.

The League of Nations would perish if it were directed and administered by visionaries having no sense of the reality of things. Worse still, it

would lead but a struggling existence if it were directed and administered by sceptics and unbelievers. We all agree that these two dangerous extremes must be avoided.

Czechoslovakia, like you all, looks to the future with every hope and confidence. She is certain that neither her confidence nor yours will be betrayed and it is in this spirit that I support and shall vote for M. Quiñones de León's resolution.

The President :

Translation : Baron Lehmann, delegate for Liberia, will now address the Assembly.

Baron Lehmann (Liberia) :

Translation : Liberia, a member of the League from the beginning, has always been legitimately proud of being able to collaborate, on terms of equality, in the work for peace, progress and justice which is being done at Geneva, thanks to the efforts made by the Council and the Secretariat of the League.

I wish, as briefly as possible, to draw the attention of the Assembly to one special matter.

On July 30th last I addressed a note to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations, in which, acting under instructions from my Government, I drew the attention of the Members of the League, and of the States non-Members of the League, to the fact that the Republic of Liberia, in the full exercise of its sovereign rights, undertakes, in so far as concerns its own territory, to put into force all regulations which may be necessary to comply with the provisions of Articles 12 to 18 inclusive of the Convention of June 17th of this year, relating to the exportation, importation and transportation of arms, ammunition and war materials.

Although Liberia adheres to this Convention, it is my duty to refer again to the deep impression made upon my Government by the decision taken by the Conference for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War in June last, to the effect that the territory of the Republic of Liberia should be included among the special zones.

This Conference, by a vote in which there were 36 abstentions out of the 42 delegations represented, decided that Liberia, a sovereign and independent State, a Member of the League of Nations since its foundation, a co-signatory to the Treaty of Versailles, should be placed in the category of countries subject to a protectorate or a mandate, and it is only through the compromise suggested at the session of June 11th, by the delegate for the United States of America, that the Republic was able to adhere to this Convention.

The legal international status of the Republic of Liberia is perfectly clear, and cannot be different from that of other sovereign States Members of the League. No consideration either political or legal could diminish the full value of its sovereign rights or cause them to be disregarded. In these circumstances, the Conference would, under common law, have been compelled to accord to this independent country, which has fulfilled all the essential conditions required of Members of the League of Nations, all the rights appertaining to it as an international entity.

The general legal principles involved were put forward by the delegate of Nicaragua, and later by M. Urrutia, the Colombian delegate; the arguments put forward by the delegate for Colombia were so clear and so just that they have never been seriously questioned. During the course of the same session, the Geographical Committee referred to the Conference of Brussels, as if certain

stipulations in the Decree of July 2nd, 1890, were applicable to the case of Liberia.

Article (1) of this international document, which aims at the abolition of the slave trade, defines the right and the duty of the protecting State as well as those of the occupying State, in order to assure to any African territory placed under the protectorate of civilised nations a progressive, administrative and legal organisation, etc. Therefore, it is plain that no connection can be established between the articles of this Convention and the case we are considering.

In the same way, the Treaties of the Berlin Conference of 1885 and the Convention of St. Germain of September 10th, 1919, are inapplicable to a sovereign and independent State, for Liberia has been placed neither under what may be called an international protectorate nor under a protectorate under international law, nor under a colonial protectorate, in the sense of the Treaties mentioned above.

After carefully studying the record of the twenty-third and the twenty-fourth meetings of the Conference, we have arrived at the following definite conclusions :

No principle of international law, no treaty or convention, no rule or custom recognised by international law can be cited to justify the prohibition imposed on the importation of arms, ammunition and implements of war into Liberia. I may also add that the neighbouring countries have never reported any smuggling of arms and ammunition from Liberia into their respective territories. There is, therefore, no justification for the request on the part of the Geographical Committee that the territory of Liberia should be included in the special zones.

Further, the reasons for imposing a convention such as the Convention for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War on the Republic of Liberia are as valid for that country as for any other European Power possessing territory in West Africa. Long before the idea of this Convention arose, Liberia possessed municipal legislation — which is still in force — regulating and restricting the importation and sale of arms and ammunition. Under this legislation my Government exercised its supervision over the trade in arms and ammunition in as effective a manner as any other Government in West Africa, and no one can import arms, ammunition, etc., into Liberia without having obtained (1) an import licence; (2) a licence issued by the War Department authorising the Customs authorities to allow the import of the arms and ammunition in question.

Persons residing in Liberia and wishing to purchase arms and ammunition are obliged to obtain (1) a purchase licence from the War Department; (2) an arms registration certificate, in accordance with Article 13 of the Firearms Traffic Act, also issued by the War Department.

In order to show how strict is the supervision of the trade in arms and ammunition, it is sufficient to add that the validity of the registration certificates for arms and ammunition expires on October 31st each year. On this date, the certificates must be renewed by the interested parties, either at the office of the War Department or at the offices of the Commissioners in the interior. Moreover, in order to import arms and ammunition into the interior, a special licence is required stating the name and occupation of the interested party and the name of the province, town or village into which the arms and ammunition are imported.

In the same manner as in the neighbouring colonies and protectorates, the Government of Liberia must maintain order in the country and

protect foreign subjects residing in its territory. The Government of Liberia adhered to the Convention for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War only from a feeling of international solidarity and from a wish to co-operate in a work which it regarded as useful and expedient, and this attitude must not be permitted to have the slightest effect on the sovereign independence of the Republic, as compared with that of the other States, whether Members or not of the League of Nations.

The legal equality of all countries is a principle underlying the very constitution of the League of Nations, and any infringement of this principle is prejudicial to the League and gives rise to misapprehensions calculated to destroy confidence in the work of peace and justice, which it is the League's task to develop and strengthen.

The President :

Translation : Dr. Gustavo Guerrero, delegate for Salvador, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Guerrero (Salvador) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — It is only right and proper that I should pay tribute here to the valuable work done by the League, the Council and the Secretariat.

Those who have preceded me on this platform have already paid this tribute, but they have passed over in silence the most conspicuous act of the present year, the act which by itself constitutes one of the greatest pages in the opening history of the League.

I refer to the work done at the Conference for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War.

Pursuing its mission of peace and desirous of marking a first stage in the campaign for the limitation of armaments, the League prepared, by the method of which it alone possesses the secret, the material to serve as a basis for the discussions of the Conference for the supervision of the trade in arms.

Forty-four States answered the Council's invitation, including Germany, the United States and Turkey, which are not yet Members of the League.

Responding readily to the spirit of conciliation and solidarity which invariably governs the proceedings of the League, the representatives of these States vied in generous rivalry with the other States in their endeavour to find formulas which should smooth away the inevitable difficulties occasioned by the conflicting interests of different States.

After long and interesting discussions, we succeeded in setting up machinery which it would perhaps have been impossible to construct without the valuable assistance of the League and without that atmosphere which, from its very foundation, the League has always been able to create. This machinery consists in the establishment of restrictions designed to prevent the illicit trade in arms, thus minimising the use of implements of war.

Other results of the greatest importance were also obtained, chief among them being the prohibition of chemical and bacteriological warfare.

I now come to the real question which explains my presence on this platform.

The report submitted to the Assembly by the Council gives an account of the work done by the Conference for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms, Ammunition and in Implements of War.

It directs your attention to the declaration inserted in the Final Act and signed by almost all the States represented at that Conference. This declaration reads as follows :

"That the Convention of to-day's date must be considered as an important step towards a general system of international agreements regarding arms and ammunition and implements of war, and that it is desirable that the international aspect of the manufacture of such arms, ammunition and implements of war should receive early consideration by the different Governments."

The results of this Conference do not, strictly speaking, constitute an important stage of this work, they simply mark the opening of a stage which is still little more than begun. It is for the Assembly to trace the path along which the States will travel to attain their goal.

The declaration to which I refer expresses the view of the forty-four States represented at the Conference as to the urgent need of completing the work begun by the League with such wisdom and impartiality in preparation for the limitation of armaments, which is the earnest desire of all.

I had the honour to take a considerable share in the work of the Conference, and I can assure you that this declaration was no isolated expression of the conviction of these forty-four States as to the necessity of co-ordinating, by means of international agreements, the two questions of the supervision of the trade in arms and the supervision of the manufacture of arms.

Throughout those memorable discussions, in which the loftiest sentiments were expressed and shared by the representatives of every continent, one single thought dominated every mind—the conviction that the work begun could only be completed by a fresh Conference regulating the private manufacture of arms.

Imagine, then, the enthusiasm which hailed the declaration of the United States delegate when he announced that his country was prepared to take this question in hand without delay.

Other manifestations of the same nature marked the proceedings. We even expressed our surprise that the Conference on the Trade in Arms should not have been preceded by a conference on the private manufacture of arms, a procedure which would assuredly have been much more logical.

What was the League's real object in preparing and convening the Conference on the international trade in arms? Why did it desire to draw up regulations on armaments and to obtain accurate statistics of the trade in arms? Was it not in order to bring about, in the near future, the reduction and limitation of arms and to remove the most serious obstacle to universal peace and the economic recovery of the world?

In order, however, to attain the result at which the League and all countries are aiming, it is not enough to impose certain restrictions on countries which import arms; it is absolutely essential that these restrictions should also apply to States which manufacture arms.

Export statistics alone would be useless for the League's purpose. If they are to be really effective and help to prepare a system of universal security based on the application of lawful right, it is essential that the statistics to which we refer should be supplemented by further information, which can only be obtained by the complete supervision of the manufacture of war material.

In order to indicate what still remained to be done, the Conference for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms signed the Final

Act containing the declaration to which the Council of the League referred again in its report.

Moreover, disarmament appears on the agenda of the Assembly under two distinct heads :

1. Under Item No. 13 : "Arbitration, Security and Reduction of Armaments";
2. In Chapter 3 of the Report and Chapter 4 of the Supplementary Report to the Assembly on the Work of the Council.

As regards the first item, no decision should be taken by the Assembly until discussion has revealed the general opinion on the subject.

This does not apply to the other questions in the Council's two reports, most of which can be examined at once by the Third Committee.

I have the honour, therefore, to submit to the Assembly the following draft resolution :

"The Assembly refers to the Third Committee the examination of the following questions which appear in Chapter 3 of the Report and Chapter 4 of the Supplementary Report to the Assembly on the Work of the Council, on the work of the Secretariat and on the measures taken to execute the decisions of the Assembly :

- "Statistical enquiry on the trade in arms, munitions and implements of war ;
- "Private manufacture of arms, munitions and implements of war."

The President :

Translation : The Assembly has before it a new draft resolution, submitted by M. Guerrero, first delegate for Salvador. This resolution will be printed and distributed without delay.

The Assembly will vote on the draft resolution at the close of the present discussion.

M. Scialoja, first delegate for Italy, will address the Assembly.

M. Scialoja (Italy) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — After the numerous speeches in which such eminent representatives have stated their personal views and the views of their Governments, I cannot hope to say anything new or unexpected. The shortness of my speech must be my apology for speaking at all to-day. Italy could not be silent in this important discussion. The world is moving, and every country must publicly take its place in the march of events.

Nearly all the speakers who preceded me dealt with the fate of the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes, which was approved by the fifth Assembly amidst general enthusiasm, but which has not been ratified by many States or even by those primarily responsible for it.

Have we awakened from a glorious dream only to find ourselves in the workaday world? And is that world as bad as some have thought? If our dream has borne us to an ideal world, has enabled us to give shape to great moral and juridical aspirations — if it has been the vision of a future approaching more nearly to what is truly human and divine — let us not regret that we have dreamed. The ideal is often but the image of future reality, but we must not forget that present reality is the outcome of historical necessity, and that history is often a better taskmaster than any mere theory, or even — and I speak as a jurist — than the juridical conception of any single epoch.

In the observations which I had the honour to submit last year to the First Committee of the Assembly, I pointed out several defects in the Protocol, both in the part concerning arbitration — where the fault lies perhaps in the undue

importance attached to purely juridical perfection — and in the part relating to penalties, which proved a most serious difficulty.

The chief obstacle to the acceptance of the Protocol, however, was that it was premature, and was founded on a rather one-sided idea of the preservation of peace.

Men's loathing of war and its attendant horrors naturally leads them to think that it must be prevented at all costs, but an impartial examination of history shows that, although in a certain number of cases war has broken out without legitimate reason as the result of unbridled ambition and the instinct for violence, yet in other and no less important cases nations have gone to war for deep-seated reasons of social necessity.

War, it has been said, is an international crime; let us not forget that it is also a disease. Abolition is not everything; we must also think of cure and prevention. Peace is a sacred institution, but the life of nations and of civilisation in general is no less sacred. The League can never become the guardian of world peace unless it succeeds, by inculcating a spirit of international brotherhood, in eliminating the root causes of war. Then, and until then, will law — *ius* — govern not merely the outward form but the substance of international relations. The difficulty of the task must not prevent us from facing it, from attacking it and finding a solution. This, I think, is why conventional arbitration, even to-day, stands more chance of success than the purely juridical general settlement of international disputes. Arbitration will serve to supplement and perfect law, which has not yet reached a sufficiently advanced stage of evolution to be binding in every dispute of a moral, demographical or economic nature.

The delegate for the British Empire, speaking with all the weight of his authority, explained his opposition to the fifth Assembly's findings by the essential difference between the British mentality, which prefers to proceed from the particular to the general, and the Latin mind, which prefers general conceptions and logical results.

I do not know if his predecessor would have spoken in the same strain, or if this antithesis would have been unreservedly accepted by those intellectuals, astronomers, naturalists and leading physicists and chemists who are an honour to England and to the human race and have contributed to science so many great truths and theories. Nor does it seem to me that the learned authors of Roman law have followed a path different from that which leads us from the particular to the general. We Latins, it is true, have inherited from our ancestors a system of private law which had reached a high degree of perfection through the slow and laborious work of some ten centuries, and we frequently apply the general principles thus handed down to us; nevertheless, we are fully alive to the danger of regarding historical principles as eternal and unchallengeable truths.

We can advance, then, side by side, without fear of clashing. We will beware of indulging in dreams too frail to stand the stern test of experience, but we will not reject the ideal which should light us on our way.

By her resort to arbitration and international justice, Italy has already travelled far along

this glorious path. The last Assembly welcomed the Treaty concluded between Italy and Switzerland, which, in its comprehensiveness, might serve as a model.

Penalties will replace judgments, but the causes of disputes must still be ascertained. We must not imagine that history can, as it were, be cut-and-dried.

In the meantime let us endeavour to solve the problems submitted to us.

It is customary, at our annual Assemblies, to pause in the general discussion and show the world at large why the League of Nations is so necessary. I do not know if this is a good custom; it might be thought that we had doubts on the point. What we can show by deeds rather than by words is that the League really knows what is its duty. I personally am convinced that the League is before all a powerful organ created by the human conscience, and that, for that reason above all others, its creation confers a benefit upon civilisation as a whole. It has often been the means, through its wisdom and moral power, of preventing grave conflicts; it has enabled every country to do its share towards solving all kinds of questions of importance to all. Year by year we place on record fresh proofs of its beneficent work. We have all welcomed the success of our efforts to promote the economic and financial recovery of Hungary and Austria. I am happy to state that Italy, once their enemy, has already given, and will continue to give, this work her most zealous support.

We have before us many other problems. Even nations which have not yet joined the League have asked it to solve difficulties which would probably be unsurmountable without its help. To all those who look to us with doubting eyes we can surely reply: Behold our good works! It is for this that we live. Let us persevere!

26. — ELECTION OF THE SIX NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL: DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE CHINESE DELEGATION.

The President: *Translation*: The Chinese delegation has submitted the following resolution to the President of the Assembly:

"The Assembly reiterates the following recommendation adopted unanimously by the Assemblies of 1922, 1923 and 1924:

"It is desirable that the Assembly, in electing the six non-permanent Members of the Council, should make its choice with due consideration for the main geographical divisions of the world, the great ethnical groups, the different religious divisions, the various types of civilisation and the chief sources of wealth."

This draft resolution, like those already submitted, will be printed without delay and distributed to the members of the Assembly.

At the close of the present discussion the Assembly will vote on the action to be taken on this draft resolution.

The meeting rose at 7.10 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SIXTH ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

TENTH PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14th, 1925, AT 10.30 A.M.

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• Amendment to the draft resolution proposed by the delegation of Salvador on September 12th, 1925.

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27. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT: CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

• The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the continuation of the discussion on the work of the Council and of the Secretariat.

I call upon M. J. A. Buero, delegate of Uruguay to address the Assembly.

M. J. A. Buero (Uruguay) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Uruguay has followed with deep interest all the efforts which have been made to obtain the settlement of international disputes by arbitration. Obligatory and unlimited arbitration is the very basis of her international policy. This principle even forms part of the Uruguayan constitution, which makes formal provision for such procedure.

We could give a long list of treaties, based on this principle, which we have concluded with the

great European Powers and with our sister Republics in Latin America.

Hence we most readily concur in the excellent suggestions made by M. Motta, the distinguished delegate of Switzerland, and the draft resolution submitted by M. Unden, delegate of Sweden, to the effect that it would be desirable to examine the provisions concerning the principle of compulsory arbitration contained in the Protocol recommended by the fifth Assembly.

From the Uruguayan point of view, compulsory arbitration is the very heart and essence of the Geneva Protocol. The problems of armaments and security are only of indirect concern to most Latin-American States, but arbitration has formed the subject of important discussions in Pan-American conferences, particularly in the fifth held at Santiago, at which Uruguay declared that she unreservedly supported compulsory arbitration.

In this connection I may remind you that the countries of Latin America are mutually bound by treaties of arbitration which are absolutely in keeping with the principles of the Geneva Protocol. Consequently we are entitled to hope that the systematic increase of regional arbitration treaties may enable us to reach the goal which we sought to attain through the general Protocol.

In this sense we may justifiably say that the international policy of Latin-American countries may be regarded as a continental application of the principles of the Geneva Protocol, or, in other words, the principles of the Covenant of the League, which Uruguay signed in 1919 as an original Member of the League.

But treaties of arbitration, however perfect and however numerous, will not of themselves suffice to complete the juridical organisation of international life. No State can exist otherwise than on a juridical basis, and it is difficult to conceive an international organisation without international justice. In this connection, no one will venture to deny the ever-increasing importance of the Permanent Court of International Justice.

This Court has already given striking proof of its capacities, and all are agreed that it constitutes one of the most important constructive legal efforts ever made. Its decisions, which have been numerous, and are all inspired by the highest principles of international law, display a wide understanding of the true interests of the international community, and have conferred upon the Court a universal authority which cannot be too highly commended. A Court universally respected, international public opinion sufficiently enlightened by acquaintance with international discussions and disputes, international law codified as far as possible with due regard for the legal particularities of nations, should, we think, provide the basic elements for an international organisation in which we may place unlimited hopes for the future of mankind.

Meanwhile we must persevere in our endeavours to obtain the adhesion of a large number of States to the Permanent Court of International Justice and the clause regarding compulsory jurisdiction. May I venture to remind you that Uruguay has already given her adhesion? At the present time she is, indeed, the only State of Latin America which has approved the Statute of the Court and the optional clause in the widest form adopted by the Members of the League.

We are, however, aware that the Statute of the Court, which has now been in existence for several years, can be so adapted as to render it more in keeping with the real international situation. It is therefore very desirable to assist in making universal a Court which is destined to represent the legal conscience of mankind. I may state that in parliamentary and scientific circles, in which the Court enjoys high esteem, amendments and adaptations have been suggested with a view to facilitating new adhesions. The Uruguayan delegation therefore has the honour to submit to the sixth Assembly the following draft resolution:

"The Assembly requests the Council to undertake a detailed examination of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice, taking into account the work and experience of the Court and the views expressed in Parliaments and scientific and other circles, with a view to the jurisdiction of the Court being more widely adopted."

In conclusion, I should like to express our entire confidence in the work and future of the League.

I was personally present at its birth six years ago. I heard the dire forebodings which were uttered when it came into being. But the facts are there — the work has begun. I consider that success is certain if we are but firmly resolved to strive towards the goal.

You are aware that the States of Latin America owe a sacred debt to Europe. Europe gave them its civilisation, its culture, its political, social and even its artistic institutions. But we can repay our debt, loyally, nobly and in full, by helping Europe in this international work of co-operation, which has one supreme object in view — the final establishment of human peace, security and happiness in all the dignity of peaceful work.

The President :

Translation : M. Buero, delegate for Uruguay, has submitted a new draft resolution.

This resolution will be printed and distributed as soon as possible to the members of the Assembly.

The Assembly will be invited to give its opinion on this resolution at the close of the discussion on the report on the work of the Council and of the Secretariat.

Count Apponyi, first delegate for Hungary, will address the Assembly.

Count Apponyi (Hungary) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — If I venture, at so late a stage, to take part in this discussion, on the most serious problems which have ever been submitted to the League, it is because I feel that these who are on the other side of the line — since there is a line — should be heard, and because I consider that they are not only entitled, but in fact bound, to endeavour to throw light upon the situation as a whole. This can only be done if all points of view are expressed.

I need scarcely say that the few observations I have to offer mainly concern the problem which is not only the burning question of the day, but an epitome of the whole task of the League. I refer to the Protocol, unanimously adopted by the Assembly last year and now brought once more into prominence by subsequent events.

But before coming to my main point, I venture to offer a few general remarks upon two other subjects, one of which is a bright spot on the horizon — at any rate, from our point of view — whilst the other constitutes one of the great difficulties with which we have to contend, one of the grave threats to the friendship and general unity of the nations and one of the great obstacles to that moral disarmament of which the British delegate spoke so eloquently; I refer to the question of minorities.

The first matter, with which I will deal briefly, as one of my colleagues more competent than myself will perhaps deal with the question at greater length, is the financial reconstruction of Hungary.

You know that important results have been obtained through the able collaboration of the Financial Committee and the Council and the sympathy displayed by the whole Assembly. The extraordinary success achieved may be summed up by stating that instead of a deficit of 100 million gold crowns, for which provision had been made in the Financial Committee's scheme, we have a surplus of 60 million gold crowns.

I must add, however, that this success is not wholly due to the collaboration of the able and distinguished men who have helped us with their advice — including above all that eminent American statesman, Mr. Smith, the League's Commissioner-General, who, from legal controller, has become also a friend and adviser; this success is also due — if the representative of Hungary may be permitted to say so — to the collaboration of the Hungarian people themselves.

The good-will, devotion and spirit of sacrifice with which the Hungarian taxpayer has submitted to the relatively heavy burdens necessarily imposed upon him is a fact which, I think, adds to the glory of my people, because it shows, better than any words, our ardent patriotism and our resolute will. Just as after the war a monument in memory of an unknown warrior is raised beside the monuments erected to perpetuate the glory of victorious generals, so in this work of the financial reconstruction of Hungary the unknown taxpayer deserves to have a monument dedicated to him, or at least he deserves a few words to commemorate his efforts.

Let us now review, as briefly as possible, the question of minorities. I will say, in the first place, that this year, as last year, this is still a burning question. In the few words I said on this subject at the last Assembly, I did not mention any particular case, or make any specific accusation. This year my procedure will be the same. Indeed,

to act otherwise would be quite useless, as it would merely envenom an atmosphere which it is our duty to keep as pure as possible, and free from any spirit of antagonism or criticism.

If, in the matter of minorities, the work of the League and the Council has not yet produced the results for which we had hoped, if it has not yet succeeded in fully reassuring the 40 million citizens who compose these minorities, it is not due to lack of good-will or capacity on the part of eminent members of the Council. I think it is due rather to defects in procedure, and, since the Council has been kind enough to submit to us a report setting out and enumerating all the changes in procedure which have been made since it first considered the question, I think we are well within our rights in offering a few observations on this subject.

To be brief, it appears to me that the Council's procedure needs to be amended on three points. It is not I who have invented these points; the International Federation of League of Nations Societies has defined them in a resolution which was unanimously adopted by representatives of public opinion in almost all the countries of Europe.

The first amendment, the first usage, the new provision which I should like to see introduced into the Council's regulations with regard to minorities would be this: When petitions emanate from certain sources, from supreme ecclesiastical organisations or the cultural and economic institutions of the different countries, they could and should be considered as documents to be laid before the Council without further examination. There is no need to explain in detail the reasons for this suggestion. It seems to me that simply to reject such petitions, without further examination, would be regarded by the minorities in question as a kind of insult, and would disturb—even seriously disturb—their sense of security and might shake their belief that their cause was receiving serious consideration, a matter as relevant and almost as important as the justice of the decisions themselves.

The second recommendation which I venture to make is this — that at all stages of the procedure representatives of petitioners should have the right to be heard and should be allowed to state their case and reply to objections, as in an ordinary lawsuit.

You may perhaps reply that the Council is always free to hear these representatives whenever it thinks fit, and I am sure the Council makes use of this right whenever such a course appears necessary. In such a case, however, the Council merely exercises discretionary powers, and the use of discretionary powers only inspires confidence amongst the limited number of those who know the persons to whom the discretionary power has been granted. The great mass of the people concerned can only have confidence when there is a fixed legal rule determining and defining their rights.

The third observation I should like to make is this: Whenever a point of law is raised at the request of one of the parties, reference to the Permanent Court of International Justice for an advisory opinion should be obligatory. This does not imply lack of confidence. I am bound to reiterate this point, because last year a similar expression of opinion offended certain susceptibilities. I am not proposing a vote of no confidence. I am not criticising the distinguished members of the Council. I am merely enouncing a principle which is recognised by the whole world. The settlement of points of law is work not for political assemblies, but for courts of law. It is work for the Courts specially set up to decide litigious questions.

I should like to offer one further observation of a general nature.

I have said that there can be no question of a vote of no confidence. Similarly, to press the question of the fate of minorities does not imply any hostile feeling towards those countries which have large minorities.

On the contrary, I think it is as much to their interest — from the point of view of national consolidation — as it is to the interest of peace and tranquillity in general that minorities should not only enjoy all the rights which treaties accord them, but should also be assured that in case of dispute these questions will be judged from a legal and not a political angle. In these matters, the psychological aspect of the question is as important as the decision itself.

I now come to the most serious and the most important subject under discussion — the Protocol.

Most of us shared last year in that great movement of enthusiasm which led to the unanimous adoption by the Assembly of the Protocol. I personally played my humble part in preparing it, throughout its various stages, since I had the honour to be appointed a member of the Legal Sub-Committee, and I count those three laborious weeks, during which I had the privilege of working with the most eminent personalities of the legal world and the highest authorities in international law, amongst the most interesting and happiest memories of my long political life.

We all know the change which has occurred in the situation. I gave my adhesion to the Protocol, but only in a personal capacity, as I had not been empowered by my Government to speak in its name. Nevertheless, I said that I regarded my personal adhesion as a moral engagement to do all I could to bring about the acceptance of the Protocol by the Government and Parliament of my country.

I have devoted myself to this task, and the Hungarian Government was engaged in examining the Protocol when the change in the British Government, and the attitude of the present British Government, modified the whole situation.

Before the change the Protocol represented the unanimous will of the Great Powers, or at least of their representatives in this Assembly. After the change no such unanimity existed. In these circumstances my Government held — and I think its attitude was fully justified — that Hungary, occupying but a modest position in the family of nations, could not take sides in a debate between the Great Powers of the world.

We have heard these differences of opinion stated, and the effect has been, I will not say to eclipse the Protocol, but, at any rate, to render it a mere theoretical instrument which cannot for the moment be put into force.

We have listened to the discussion; we have not only heard authoritative and highly interesting definitions of the difference between the British and French mentalities, but we have had the rare privilege of seeing these theoretical differences confirmed and illustrated by typical representatives of each — the first delegate for the British Empire, Mr. Chamberlain, on the one hand, and M. Paul-Boncour on the other. I think that the truest or sincerest compliment I can pay them is to say that they represent two national individualities, each of which is as great as the other, each of which has played an equally great rôle in the development of humanity, and each of which is indispensable to the future progress of humanity; and that they are both typical representatives, true representatives, the most personal representatives of the individuality of their respective nations.

If it were merely a question of being present at an intellectual feast of the finest order, the present discussion would have been enthralling and interesting. But it is more than that.

A disagreement exists, and scarcely any suggestion has been made as to how it is to be smoothed over. I shall revert to this point later. We have heard M. Paul-Boncour, in his memorable speech, which I whole-heartedly applauded, and that not merely because it was a work of art. We have seen him make a very ingenious attempt to adopt the analytical methods followed by the British. He explained that if we ultimately succeeded, by means of special agreements and by following a devious path, in obtaining a general agreement, the result would still be a general and world-wide agreement like the Protocol, since special agreements would be of no value unless welded into one whole and so made universal.

I already foresee the British reply to this argument: "We quite agree", they will say; "we too desire finally to obtain an agreement which will include the whole civilised world; but we wish to obtain it, not by enunciating a general theory based on general principles — which would probably receive a different application in different States — but by taking, as you suggest, the *terra firma* for our basis and by concluding partial agreements which, being more readily adaptable to circumstances, will provide better guarantees than a general agreement based on a universal theory." This appears quite plausible.

After this reply, however — which, though not actually made, was in the minds of all — M. Benes addressed us. In a speech which I admire for its profound political wisdom, he said: "We do not object to this method, but I warn you that it will take long to apply. It will be long before these partial arrangements are concluded, and when their number is sufficiently large and they have been co-ordinated — which is absolutely necessary — they will in the end give us a system very much the same as the Protocol."

This is perfectly true. I will even go further and say, with that frankness which I have always endeavoured to maintain, particularly in this Assembly, that I cannot to-day see any possibility of concluding, in that part of Europe to which I belong, such regional arrangements embracing all nations. I need not give reasons for this. I will again quote M. Paul-Boncour — not his speech, but something he said in a private conversation, and I acknowledge his authorship because I do not wish to steal another's thoughts. "The psychological difficulties", he said, "are so many and so formidable that it may in practice prove easier to conclude a general agreement than to conclude partial agreements." Where there are still latent antagonisms, to which it is better not to shut one's eyes, which it is better to admit than to palliate, agreement can be reached within a general framework. But we can hardly expect hostile nations to conclude regional and special arrangements amongst themselves. M. Benes, who belongs to the same European group as myself, who is on the other side of the trench but who sees the trench as well as I do, realises this. He says that the task will be difficult and long. I myself, without going so far as to say that it is impossible, would add that, by this devious route, the attainment of a universal pact of security made up of a number of partial agreements — if indeed we ever do attain it — will not only be difficult, but desperately slow.

We shall reach our goal so late and after so many difficulties that if we adopt this expedient and maintain our present policy, public opinion in

Europe will find the question of disarmament postponed "to the Greek Kalends", and that would be disastrous for the credit of the League.

The situation is made clear by the proposal which the first delegate of Spain, M. Quiñones de León, has laid before the Assembly. I do not blame him for what he has done — on the contrary. The last part of the resolution of which he is the author, the part which refers to arbitration, is what I would venture to describe as a temporising proposal, one of those proposals which are made when the author really believes that it is impossible to say anything definite and decided, and yet feels bound to say something:

"And requests the Council to make preparatory arrangements for a Conference on the reduction of armaments, as soon as, in its opinion, satisfactory conditions have been achieved from the point of view of general security as provided for in Resolution XIV of the third Assembly."

On these lines we shall accomplish nothing at all. I can assure you that we have reached a critical point in the evolution of the League and the development of the influence which it ought to exercise in the world.

I will tell you quite frankly that last year I supported the Protocol, partly because it paved the way for the general Conference on Disarmament. But I had other reasons too; the grandeur of the plan cast its spell over me. Indeed, the Protocol does not merely aim at supplying certain omissions in the Covenant. There is between the Protocol and the Covenant a radical difference which cannot be over-emphasised.

The Covenant admits the legality of war in certain cases. It provides for certain interim periods, during which passions could often be allayed and better counsels prevail; but if, at the end of the period, the contending nations are not agreed that arbitration would lead to a satisfactory settlement, war, according to the Covenant, is permissible, is indeed declared to be legitimate.

The Protocol, on the other hand, undertakes an immense and formidable task, which might not immediately have led to practical results, but which is great if only because of the immensity of the idea it embodies — the task of abolishing war, once for all, because war, according to the Protocol, would be armed intervention to ensure the application of its provisions, the intervention of an international police force, and not the resort to arms by a party seeking to obtain justice by its own efforts.

This, then, is the radical difference between the Protocol and the Covenant, and now, as I say, we find ourselves faced with a conflict of opinions. It is not for me to take sides. It is not for me or my country to give an opinion when two nations for which it professes an equal regard disagree upon a point of European policy.

I will not say that we are the disciples of one or the other of these nations. We have evolved on entirely independent lines. Nevertheless, everybody knows that our constitutional evolution resembles, on a smaller scale, that of Great Britain; so much so indeed that all our instincts, all our sympathies, attract us to the country which has shown the world, on a grand scale, that which we ourselves have reproduced in a smaller way, but with striking similarity and, as I said, quite independently.

Our first constitutional document, the Golden Bull of King André, dates only seven years later than the Magna Carta of England. This was not a constitutional charter dictated by the King; it

was, like all the constitutional documents of England, a record of liberties and principles which already existed, but which had been violated. In our evolution we proceeded in the same way, by stages, always showing a firm front to every abuse as it occurred. There is not in Hungary, any more than in England, a document which can be called the Hungarian constitution. The constitution has developed by means of individual laws and of precedents.

The British delegate said that no revolutionary movement has occurred in his country for 250 years. We can say that never throughout its whole history has Hungary known a revolution. We have sometimes taken up arms in defence of our rights when they have been trampled upon, but of revolution, of any attempt to break with the past and reconstruct the future upon a purely rational basis, no trace will be found in the history of Hungary. Our constitutional development is characterised by its continuity throughout ten centuries and down to the present time.

We regard the British Empire, its constitutional evolution and its mentality, as the great model. It is a curious coincidence that this great nation should show the world, in the grand and imposing drama of its history, developments similar to those which have taken place on a smaller scale in Hungary.

On the other side, we see in France the glorious vanguard of all liberty and human progress; she has never hesitated herself to venture into the unknown in order to give humanity a new impulse, a new principle of universal emancipation.

Thus, divided in our sentiments, divided in our admiration, we cannot pronounce in favour of either side; but what I am anxious above all to prevent is our entering a blind alley and despairing of ever accomplishing anything in the way of disarmament.

You will remember the frequent applause with which M. Paul-Boncour's speech was greeted, but at no point of his discourse was the applause so long and so loud as when he uttered the magic word "disarmament".

There is no need for me to repeat what general disarmament means for us, who are regionally disarmed, disarmed under a unilateral system of disarmament! For us the general reduction of armaments would mean the end of an intolerable situation, bringing daily humiliations. For us it is not a case of security preceding disarmament; it is only disarmament which will give us security, for we are defenceless while all around us are armed.

Therefore what I seek, what I shall do my utmost to obtain, is that some further efforts shall be made to assure the world that the Assembly, that the League of Nations, is expending on the problem of disarmament something more than words, empty, futile words.

A wag said to me one day — I apologise for quoting him, but I really think his remark is witty, though it may not be in perfect good taste — that the activity of the League of Nations strangely resembled the efforts described in the French quatrain :

*A l'ombre d'un clocher,
L'ombre d'un cocher,
De l'ombre d'une brosse,
Frottait l'ombre d'un carrosse.*

We must not allow that. We must have no more of phantoms.

Since we cannot obtain disarmament without first obtaining security, since we cannot and must not call a general Conference on disarmament which would inevitably fail, only one thing remains,

and that is to begin the preparatory work at once, so that when the time for the Disarmament Conference arrives, it will be able to attack the problem boldly and with a full knowledge of the facts, treat the problem on a general basis and reach a decision without delay.

I therefore venture to lay before you an amendment to the draft resolution of M. Quiñones de León, and I beg the Assembly to forward my amendment to the Committee which will examine the resolution submitted by the Spanish delegate. I ask you to substitute the following text for the last paragraph of the resolution proposed by the Spanish delegate :

"And invites the Council to consider forthwith plans for a general reduction of armaments in accordance with Article 8 of the Covenant, and, at the same time, to make preparatory arrangements for a Conference on the reduction of armaments, such Conference to meet and to begin its work without delay, as soon as, in the opinion of the Council or of the Assembly, those conditions of security are fulfilled on which the success of the Conference must depend.

"The Council is invited to report to the seventh Assembly on the progress of the work undertaken in execution of the present resolution."

You will perceive the difference. According to M. Quiñones de León's recommendation, nothing is to be done for the present. The Council and Assembly will await events with folded arms, and when, after a certain time, the question is reviewed from the point of view of security, the whole operation will have to be repeated from A to Z. But although there may be cogent reasons for not proceeding with disarmament until certain guarantees have been secured, there is no reason why we should not begin the preparatory work forthwith.

A resolution to the effect that the preparatory work should be begun at once will prove to the public opinion of Europe that we really desire to bring about disarmament and intend to secure tangible results.

Allow me, ladies and gentlemen, to add a few general remarks.

The first delegate for the British Empire expressed in eloquent phrases his faith in the power of moral forces. He also told us that the main task, the task upon which the effect of material disarmament depends, is moral disarmament.

I entirely agree. All my life I have proclaimed my respect for moral forces. I sincerely believe in them, but they must be operative, and at a stage when no formula can be found to embody them it is to be feared that they are not operative, that their effect is retrogressive; for moral forces can be destructive as well as constructive, and that is one of the chief perils in the present situation of the civilised world.

We have all arrived — or, at least, I hope so — at the stage of evolution where we desire the reign of right and not might. Indeed, the League was instituted for that purpose. We wish to establish the reign of justice, and to found peace upon justice, because these two terms, justice and peace, are correlative and inseparable. Justice is always imperilled when it is handed over to the chances of war, because there is no correlation between armed force and the justice of a cause.

Moreover, durable peace can only be founded upon justice; it cannot be based upon the toleration of injustice. The great danger of this work, the great danger of the present situation — a danger to which humanity is exposed at all troubled

periods — is this : though theoretically we are agreed as to bringing about the reign of justice, a profound disagreement exists among various countries of Europe as to what justice is. Moral disarmament, moral guarantees, the power of moral forces to secure peace will only become facts when this disagreement has been overcome, when it has, as the English say, been "bridged over". That is a result which can be obtained neither by force nor by mere preaching. Force can determine material facts, but has no power over the soul. On the other hand, preaching alone is powerless in the face of organic and psychological forces as deep-lying as those which are now at work in the various countries. What, then, is to be done ?

We must allow time for this psychological evolution gradually to remove or gloss over our differences. It requires time, and that is why I gave my adhesion to the Protocol.

It requires time, and meanwhile we must strengthen existing positive law and protect it from all violation. Those who, like myself, are convinced that the present law must be modified, realise, if they have had any experience of history, that tottering and menaced institutions are the very ones which cling most tenaciously to their existence, and that we cannot alter a building unless its foundations are sound.

That is why, in the face of a large section of public opinion in my country, I adhered to that part of the Protocol which provides positive guarantees, although I was not at all enthusiastic about it. On the other hand, we must remove all lesser sources of friction; I therefore insist that both the problem of minorities and the general problem of disarmament must be dealt with. In fact, the one-sided disarmament to which we have been subjected is a great obstacle to racial reconciliation, because it inflicts upon the countries which are its victims a humiliation which is intolerable for countries possessing any national pride. If we desire to secure a lasting peace, we must remove all legal distinctions between the status of different nations. So long as there exists one law for certain nations and another law for others, we have not peace but an armistice. What we desire is peace, and not a truce. We desire a peace based upon the spontaneous adhesion, the real, sincere, permanent adhesion, of all men, to whichever side they may belong.

That is why I insist on our taking such action, in order to assist the healing influence of moral forces. The greatest of these moral forces, devotion to justice, can be directed along the path to disaster if there is perpetual disagreement as to the conception of justice itself. This moral force must be directed towards peace, towards moral disarmament. Confidence in the work of the League must be increased, because, frankly, that confidence is at present in a very parlous condition.

All this is necessary if we are to obtain the benefits of moral disarmament.

I now conclude. As the representative of a small country, I have perhaps been extremely outspoken, but I have always held that we do not come here to pay each other compliments; we come to throw light upon the situation, and in this all must assist by speaking with absolute frankness. Moreover, I am convinced that when we are speaking to those who are more powerful than ourselves, adulation and reticence are an insult, free and manly speech is homage.

The President :

Translation : Count Apponyi, first delegate for Hungary, has submitted a new draft resolution to the Assembly which constitutes an amendment

to the draft resolution proposed by the Spanish delegation.

This resolution will be printed and communicated to the members of the Assembly as soon as possible,

The Assembly will be invited to give its opinion on it at the close of the debate on the Work of the Council and of the Secretariat.

M. Galvanauskas, first delegate of Lithuania, will address the Assembly.

M. Galvanauskas (Lithuania) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I have no intention of examining in detail the various features of the remarkable work accomplished by the League last year. I will merely draw your special attention to one of the most important questions of the day—the Protection of Minorities.

The present system, despite the splendid services it has rendered to humanity, suffers from a defect which it would be extremely dangerous to ignore any longer. This system limits the sovereignty of a certain number of States, whilst justice demands that the noble cause of the protection of minorities should confer the same rights upon, and require the same duties on the part of, all the Members of the League.

The question of minorities is a question of domestic public law submitted to the control and guarantee of the League. Though Lithuania entirely agrees that this branch of domestic public law needs such control and guarantee, she is also firmly convinced that neither is permissible unless exercised in the case of all the States Members of the League.

The inequality in the position of the different Members of the League in this respect is a drawback both from the political and moral points of view. Moral unity between Members of the League is impossible so long as the sovereignty of some is restricted by higher interests whilst others are under no such restraint.

That is why it appears to me desirable that the League should make a general statement regarding the protection of minorities, imposing the same rights and duties upon all the States Members of the League in respect of their racial, religious and linguistic minorities.

In making this proposal I believe that I am voicing the public opinion of the world. First of all, I will remind you of the resolution passed by the third Assembly, on September 21st, 1922. It states :

"The Assembly expresses the hope that the States which are not bound by any legal obligations to the League with respect to minorities will nevertheless observe in the treatment of their own racial, religious or linguistic minorities at least as high a standard of justice and toleration as is required by any of the treaties and by the regular action of the Council."

This is a first step along the path I recommend; but the world's opinion is no longer satisfied with a recommendation. It demands *vincula juris* from all.

The twenty-first Conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which met at Copenhagen in 1923, has already prepared a declaration of the rights and duties of minorities. I will read you Resolution No. 1, annexed to this Declaration :

"In view of the desirability of bringing about the adoption, as principles recognised by international law and by the constitutional law of States, with a representative system of

government, of the fundamental rights and duties of minorities of race or religion,

"The twenty-first Inter-Parliamentary Conference asks the groups to lay before their respective Governments the accompanying Declaration of the rights and duties of minorities, "And requests the Inter-Parliamentary Bureau to transmit the said Declaration to the League of Nations, with a view to the drafting of a General Convention between the States, on the basis of the principles set forth in the Declaration."

I propose that we should give due recognition to the spirit of universality manifested in this resolution, and that a special committee be appointed to draft a general Convention for all Members of the League, laying down their common rights and duties towards minorities. The Lithuanian delegation has therefore the honour to propose that the sixth Assembly of the League should set up a special Committee to prepare a draft general Convention to include all the States Members of the League of Nations, and setting forth their common rights and duties in regard to minorities.

After so many remarkable speeches it is very difficult for me to add anything new on the question of international peace. No institution, indeed, is better qualified than the League to do this work. The guarantees demanded by the small nations are not peculiar to this or that Latin or Anglo-Saxon idea. The small nations will always support any attempt to achieve a just peace. And I emphasise the word "just". Without justice there can never be moral disarmament, and consequently there can never be a durable peace.

Justice must be the basis of moral peace. Nothing can prevail against justice. Nothing in comparison with justice is immovable or immutable. Our ideal should be, not peace alone, but peace based upon justice.

The President :

Translation : M. Galvanauskas, first delegate for Lithuania, has submitted a draft resolution to the Assembly.

This resolution will be printed and communicated to the Assembly later, and at the close of this discussion the Assembly will be invited to give its opinion on it.

M. Kalfoff, Minister for Foreign Affairs and first delegate of Bulgaria, will address the Assembly.

M. Kalfoff (Bulgaria) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The long and detailed report on the work of the Council and Secretariat, which we have been discussing for the last few days, clearly shows how varied and also productive their work has been in combating all the evils which afflict mankind, in unifying the peoples of the world and bringing them security and peace. The Bulgarian Government wishes to add its sincere tribute of gratitude to the Council and to our devoted Secretary-General and all his collaborators.

This year, once again, the grave questions of disarmament and security constitute the central point of our discussions. Speakers far more able than myself have preceded me upon this platform and have with great authority examined these problems and recommended the best methods for their solution. May I, too, be allowed to explain my country's views on these problems? I speak in the name of a people which has passed through terrible periods of suffering and whose one aim is to live in peace and harmony with all, and so be

free to devote itself to the task of regeneration; and this fact emboldens me to address this Assembly of illustrious statesmen, eminent politicians and distinguished jurists.

I need not, then, assure you that Bulgaria, inspired by these sentiments, associates herself whole-heartedly with the League's work for the attainment of security and disarmament.

The Bulgarian Government is of opinion that the Geneva Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes provides a satisfactory solution for these great questions. We do not mean, of course, that this Assembly cannot find other methods which would be equally satisfactory and would avoid existing difficulties, and we will not withhold such help as we can render towards the accomplishment of this task. Nevertheless, the Bulgarian Government definitely prefers a general pact which, by guaranteeing security through compulsory arbitration, will soonest enable us to attain that disarmament which is the goal of suffering humanity.

For these reasons the Bulgarian delegation approves the draft resolutions submitted, and I think I may also say that my Government will renew its adherence to the optional clause regarding the compulsory jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice.

We believe that these aims can only be attained upon a basis of international solidarity. It is true that the Peace Treaties also provide a solution for these problems, but the solution they offer would seem to be far from ideal, otherwise the nations would not still be seeking a solution to-day. This is not surprising; the peace treaties, like all other works of man, are not perfect. Nevertheless, they at least laid the foundation-stone of international solidarity by creating that great institution, the League of Nations. It is the League that must take in hand the noble but heavy task of bringing concord to the world.

International solidarity will come, but it will only come when all the peoples feel that they have an equal right to a free and happy existence. On that day the souls of the nations will be freed from their sufferings, and peace in the true sense will have become a reality. The problems of security and disarmament will solve themselves, and all the nations, united in true fraternity, will pay a grateful tribute to the League of Nations.

I speak for a young nation which puts its faith in international solidarity and which believes in the League, and I should be lacking in my duty if I did not refer also to the hopes which it places in the League.

Completely disarmed, having forces hardly sufficient to ensure internal order, my country hopes that its security will be guaranteed and that the other nations will feel bound in honour to fulfil, by themselves disarming, the engagements they have solemnly assumed.

Bulgaria also hopes that she will be granted access to the sea, which has been formally promised, and which is a vital necessity for her economic prosperity. She also earnestly hopes that another solemn promise given in the Peace Treaties—the rights of minorities—will be fulfilled. This is a burning problem for many other nations, but we speak of it more and oftener because we are profoundly convinced of the necessity of finding a solution which will eradicate the dangers it presents to international peace.

This solution will be found by granting the political and religious minorities a system guaranteeing them a life of free citizenship. The authors of the Peace Treaties have carefully and fully defined this system and have made it binding upon the Governments. It is also placed under

the guarantee of the League, and what more powerful or more impartial protection could be found for it ?

We gratefully accepted this system, believing that it would ensure the freedom of the minorities and would permanently remove any possibility of international friction arising from this cause.

Our war-weary people looked forward to a future of peace. Yet I am sorrowfully forced to recognise that our hopes have been deceived. To-day, seven years after the conclusion of treaties which guaranteed the rights of minorities, we are still no further than when we started. Indeed, we have gone back, since no real step has been taken to improve their lot.

We do not wish to belittle what the League has done. We are aware of the noble aims of the Council and the good-will of the Secretariat, but the results are woefully small. Last year our delegation and that of our neighbour Greece were deeply moved at this unfortunate and perilous state of affairs, and jointly came to the Council's assistance. Our common efforts, aided by the Council and the Secretariat, resulted in the preparation of two Protocols for the protection of minorities in Greece and Bulgaria. These Protocols were intended to transform the supine system provided by the Treaties into a living reality, and were unanimously welcomed and approved.

But Greece did not wish this system to be retained. I need not descant upon our bitter disappointment at the Greek Government's act, which, moreover, is hardly calculated to help our Government in its efforts on behalf of the Greek minority in Bulgaria.

We are therefore forced to an inevitable conclusion. We are convinced — and we have frequently told the Assembly so — that the rights of minorities will not be safeguarded until the Council stretches forth its arm to protect them.

The Bulgarian Government and the Bulgarian nation hope that that day is at hand, because we are loath to believe that the rights of hundreds of thousands of people to a better lot will be flouted, and that the profound faith of millions of others in the League of Nations will be shaken.

Despite all, we still hope, for to despair would be to despair of justice, to despair of a brighter future, to despair of international peace.

28. — YEAR BOOK OF GENERAL AND STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON THE ARMAMENTS OF THE DIFFERENT COUNTRIES: AMENDMENT TO THE DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE DELEGATION OF SALVADOR ON SEPTEMBER 12th, 1925.

The President :

Translation : I have received the following letter from M. Guerrero :

"I have the honour to request you to add the following amendment to the draft resolution which I submitted, and which has been distributed as Document A 57 :

"Add at the end the following paragraph :

"'Year book of general and statistical information on the armaments of the different countries.'"

This addition to the draft resolution submitted by M. Guerrero, first delegate for Salvador, is laid before the Assembly. It will be printed and distributed to the members of the Assembly as soon as possible, and you will be invited to give an opinion on it at the close of the present discussion.

29. — SITUATION IN CHINA: DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE CHINESE DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : The Chinese delegation has submitted the following draft resolution :

"The Assembly,

"Having heard with keen interest the Chinese delegation's suggestion regarding the applicability of Article 19 of the Covenant to the existing situation in China,

"Having learned with satisfaction that a Conference of the interested States is soon to take place in China to consider the questions involved,

"Expresses the hope that a satisfactory solution may be found at an early date." • •

This new draft resolution, which will be printed and communicated without delay, is submitted to the Assembly, which will be invited to give its opinion on it at the close of the present discussion.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE
SIXTH ASSEMBLY
OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

ELEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15th, 1925, AT 10.45 A.M.

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Report of the General Committee of the Assembly.

President : MR. DANDURAND.

30. → SECOND REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the second report by the Committee on the Credentials of Delegates.

I call upon M. de Aguero y Bethancourt to read his report.

M. de Aguero y Bethancourt (Cuba), President and Rapporteur of the Committee on Credentials.

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Committee on Credentials has examined a telegram from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic, stating that M. Angel Morales, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the Republic in France, Belgium, Switzerland and Italy, has been appointed delegate to the sixth Assembly of the League of Nations.

The Committee has also received a letter from the Minister of the Republic of Haiti in Paris, informing the Secretary-General of the League that M. Frederick Doret, engineer of the Ecole Supérieure des Mines, Paris, has been appointed delegate of the Republic to the sixth Assembly of the League of Nations.

In the opinion of the Committee the communications to which I have just referred are fully in conformity with Article 5, paragraph 1, of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly. The Committee therefore considers that the representatives of the Dominican Republic and Haiti to the sixth Assembly are duly accredited.

The President :

Translation : I thank the Chairman of the Committee on Credentials for his report. Does anyone wish to speak on the report? If no one wishes to speak, I declare the report adopted.

The report was adopted.

31. REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the debate on the Report on the Work of the Council and of the Secretariat.

M. Idman, Minister for Foreign Affairs and first delegate of Finland, will address the Assembly.

M. Idman (Finland) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Before taking part in the debate upon the report on the work of the Council, I wish, in the first place, to tell the Assembly how highly Finland appreciates the importance of the League of Nations, and secondly, on behalf of my Government, to congratulate the various organisations of the League on the results they have achieved.

It is with reference to the splendid work of the fifth Assembly, which still remains incomplete, that I think it desirable to say a few words.

At a meeting of the Council last March, M. Briand, the eminent representative of France, reminded us of the enthusiasm with which the nations represented at the fifth Assembly had voted, through their delegates, in favour of the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes. The Finnish delegation entirely concurred in this unanimous decision, which was so sincere and of such hopeful augury for the future, and it regarded the result as the greatest step yet taken towards securing world peace.

The Finnish delegation therefore unhesitatingly recommended its Government to sign the Protocol, and the latter, after careful examination, decided to sign it. My Government considered it a satisfactory instrument, which adequately met the essential international needs of the day.

The Protocol doubtless contains certain imperfections, and some of its provisions are too vague. The Finnish Government mentioned some of these points in its declaration of December 18th, 1924, setting forth its views on the interpretation of parts of the Protocol. It is only natural that so comprehensive an instrument as the Geneva Protocol could hardly claim to be perfect. The Protocol is, and is bound to be, the result of compromises and concessions; consequently, every State is sure to find some provisions which do not entirely coincide with its views. Let us even admit that the Protocol contains provisions which might in the interests of all be clearer, more precise, more elastic and more adaptable. Does that mean that the whole work prepared at the cost of so much labour should be cast aside like the Treaty of Mutual Assistance? There are certainly many States which are opposed to such action.

We can, of course, continue to revise the Protocol and remodel it, but, apart from other considerations, this is surely a case to which we can apply the maxim: "Leave well alone".

As we have said, then, an instrument like the Geneva Protocol, which is the result of compromise, can never, by its very nature, attain absolute perfection. However desirable it may be that its terms should be as uncontroversial as possible, it must not indulge in mere hair-splitting. There are questions of detail which must be left for subsequent interpretation; clauses the application of which will depend, in part at least, on the needs of the moment.

Finland remains faithful to the principles of the Protocol, as the basis of a more solid and equitable international organisation, less influenced by incalculable political factors at variance with all notions of right. She is convinced that even though the Protocol in its original form may never come into force, its principles can never be abandoned.

The reception accorded to the Protocol by the various Governments has shown that it is hardly possible to reach immediate agreement on a general pact of guarantee. At the Council session in March the representative of the British Empire, Mr. Chamberlain, pointed out that "the best solution" would be to complete the Covenant in co-operation with the League, by concluding special mutual agreements adapted to meet special needs. In the splendid speech which he made last Thursday he gave further details, indicating the conditions which such special agreements should fulfil.

Similarly, M. Painlevé, the French Prime Minister, referred in his opening speech to the conclusion of regional agreements, and he divided these agreements into two categories: alliances between

States the interests of which are identical and alliances of States between whom disputes might arise.

We must not forget, however, that special situations might arise in which the rules laid down in the special agreements could not immediately be applied.

In certain cases it will, I think, be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to conclude such agreements. There are countries which sincerely desire always to live in peace, but which feel they cannot trust their security to special agreements in the strict sense of the term, because, on account of their geographical situation, or for other reasons, they are exposed to dangers due to the vicissitudes of international politics. They are forced, pending guarantees of security which the League alone can provide, to make heavy sacrifices in order to organise their national defence.

Accordingly, the organisations of the League especially emphasised, in Resolution XIV of 1922, the necessity of adopting special measures to safeguard these States.

Finland hopes, not only in her own interests, but in the interests of world peace, that the general agreement interpreting and defining the application of the principles of the Covenant has only been adjourned. In the meantime, she feels it her duty to observe a policy in strict keeping with the doctrines of the Geneva Protocol. She has concluded agreements of conciliation and arbitration with eight neighbouring countries, and she hopes to increase this number. My country asks nothing better than to contribute, in proportion to her strength, to the realisation of the aims of the League, in whose future she has complete confidence.

The President :

Translation : M. Morales, first delegate of the Dominican Republic, will address the Assembly.

M. Morales (Dominican Republic) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Dominican Republic, which I have the honour to represent in this Assembly, though a young nation with less than a century of independence behind it, has passed through many vicissitudes in its courageous struggle for existence as a free and sovereign State with solid and stable foundations.

Every page of my country's history bears witness to her heroic attempts to attain her undoubted right of self-determination, and prove to the world her unwavering adhesion to the eternal conception of justice and liberty.

But I have not come to tell you of our gallant struggles and past misfortunes. I only wish to say that to-day the Dominican Republic in the full enjoyment of her sovereign rights, and despite her small territory, feels herself great in being mistress of her own destiny, in the sovereign power she exercises for the well-being and happiness of her people, and, as far as she is able, for the realisation of peace and progress in international relations.

My country has emerged from her infancy; to-day, adult in reason and in conscience, she has crossed the threshold of a youth filled with the brightest hope.

Assured of the stability of her democratic institutions, and firm in her faith in the universal power of right and justice as the creative force of all real human progress, my country is developing her natural resources fully and unreservedly, and is devoting special attention to the encouragement of friendly international relations.

With all her youthful enthusiasm she has embraced the cause of the League of Nations,

because she believes that this institution will make the greatest efforts ever witnessed to establish world peace as a living and lasting reality, based on mutual confidence and respect for the moral and material interests of each and every State. Definite progress, I am glad to find, is being made towards the attainment of this goal. All the signs of the times point to the fact that an agreement conciliating all divergent points of view and satisfying all just claims will eventually be reached. As regards the fulfilment of their destinies, the sincere and unanimous desire of the peoples of the world to bequeath to future humanity an era of happiness and glory which has been denied to past and present generations, creates a favourable atmosphere for the conception and fulfilment of those ideas which the delegation of the Dominican Republic hopes will soon materialise.

The principles which form the foundation of the majestic edifice that we are raising are in themselves solid enough to bear the weight of the structure they will have to support. When arbitration has been raised to the status of a compulsory rule for the settlement of international difficulties, when every nation is free to devote itself to the development of its vital energies in an atmosphere of moral peace, based on security, when confidence in the effective application of justice has confirmed these principles and led to the necessary reduction of armaments, then the world will have removed the obstacles which have hitherto stood so obstinately in the path of progress and happiness.

The Dominican Republic, though but a small American State, openly avows before this Assembly her ardent desire to see the settlement of the dispute which has arisen among the European nations, and feels sincere admiration for the new and advanced international political methods which it is hoped to establish in order to prevent in the future all causes of dispute or conflict between nations. Convinced of the efficacy of arbitration for the settlement of international disputes in a manner fully consonant with right and equity, the Dominican nation has raised this principle to the status of a constitutional law, and has undertaken to include it as a compulsory clause in all its international treaties.

Accordingly we have always pressed for settlement by arbitration in the case of our frontier problem with the neighbouring Republic of Haiti, the sole international dispute which at present occupies the minds of our statesmen. In the hope of strengthening the friendship between the two nations which share the sovereignty of this island, and improving still further the cordial relations and the sympathy which unite them, I venture upon this solemn occasion to express a fervent desire for a prompt and satisfactory solution of the dispute.

Another movement now taking definite shape and destined to prepare the way for an era of definite peace — a movement which we should do our utmost to promote — is the codification of international law. Serious difficulties are inherent in every attempt to unify regulations and laws which are essentially abstract, and which nevertheless have to be applied to existing situations of every conceivable kind and in every country. Doubtless these difficulties stand in the way of success, but we are bound eventually to succeed, because we have on our side spiritual forces and vital energies, far more potent than these obstacles themselves.

By codifying international law we shall render its precepts clearer and more precise, we shall reduce its vagueness, which up to now has allowed it to be dangerously misinterpreted and has caused regrettable disturbances of the international equilibrium.

The Dominican delegation is happy to declare that its Government will always be willing to offer its humble but sincere co-operation in realising any progress calculated to ensure world peace. Once more it voices its enthusiasm for the cause of the League; it reiterates its unshakable confidence in the triumph of the League's cause, and transmits an expression of cordial good-will to all the delegations assembled here.

The President :

Translation : M. Loucheur, delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. Loucheur (France) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—The French delegation has the honour to submit to the Assembly a draft resolution which I will now read :

“The Assembly,

“Being resolved to examine every method of promoting peace throughout the world ;

“Being convinced that economic peace will contribute largely to ensuring the security of peoples ;

“Invites the Council to set up on the widest basis a preparatory committee for the purpose of preparing for the work of an International Economic Conference, with the help of the Technical Organisations of the League and of the International Labour Office.

“A decision regarding the convening of this Conference under the auspices of the League of Nations should be taken later by the Council.

“The purpose of this Conference should be to examine the economic difficulties which stand in the way of the restoration of general prosperity and to discover the best methods of surmounting these difficulties and of avoiding disputes.”

I will explain briefly the reasons for which France has submitted this resolution to the Assembly.

We shall soon have concluded a long and interesting discussion, in which the question of security has dominated all others. The close attention with which the Assembly has followed the discussion has shown to the peoples of the world, whose eyes are turned towards Geneva, that you are determined to give them security.

But as our distinguished colleague, M. Scialoja, told us the other day in a speech which was enriched with all the treasures of his long experience, and in which a touch of scepticism was concealed amid some very sound advice—as M. Scialoja told us, it is the hidden causes of war which we must discover and destroy. It is not enough merely to cure the attack or the illness once it has broken out ; you must try to prevent it.

Such is our aim in laying our proposal before you.

The causes of war are undoubtedly manifold. They are often political, sometimes ethnical. But I think everyone in this Assembly will agree that one of the most frequent causes of the scourge of war in the past has been the economic struggle between different countries. I could find many examples of this in recent history, but I desire to avoid any discussion which might be painful, any allusion which might wound our feelings. The statesmen assembled here will know what I mean from their own experience.

All of us here are aware of the serious unrest which now prevails and has prevailed throughout the whole world, and especially in Europe, ever since the end of the war. The causes of this unrest are many, and lie perhaps in the pre-war situation. I wonder, then, whether the world had sufficiently

realised the profound changes which had taken place during the last century. Consider the evolution of those peoples who once were almost exclusively engaged in agriculture, and who, dragged gradually into the industrial whirlpool, have perceived the social dangers which were growing up simultaneously with the increased difficulty of trading.

Diplomats, who, it is said, are, often behind the times, had perhaps not followed the movement closely enough, and had not quite clearly perceived the dangers of these economic conflicts.

Then came the war, complicating the situation still further. To-day, what with new frontiers and the alteration of Customs tariffs, what with the system of import and export prohibitions, the difficulties in connection with transit and communications, and above all, to be quite frank, the monetary disturbances which have completely charged the system of commercial exchanges, the whole world is now plunged into a state of economic unrest.

Does this mean that nothing has been done during the last few years to remedy this situation? That would be to ignore the efforts both of the Governments and of the League.

Improvements, indeed, have already been accomplished. Many nations, for example, have succeeded in restoring a sound monetary system. But at the same time something has occurred to which, I think, sufficient attention has not been given. At the very time when great efforts were being made here to attain international co-ordination, a drastic policy of economic nationalism was being pursued in every country, with the paradoxical result that at the very moment when we, assembled at Geneva, were leaving no stone unturned to promote the security of the world, there was, in your own countries — in mine as well as yours — a manifest desire to bar imports as far as possible, and live under a sort of self-contained industrial system which may, I think, in the future lead to very serious trouble.

And now, having rapidly reviewed the existing unrest and its causes, let us consider the possible remedies.

First of all, does this question come within the competence of the League? I am not a jurist. It is not for me to discuss the Covenant. Still, I have read it, and I remember Article 23, paragraph (e), which was not inserted without good cause, and which, in fact, refers to the economic task we ask you to undertake.

Recently, you rendered assistance to certain nations, and the other day, when M. Scialoja — I apologise to him for quoting him again — reminded you of the League's task, when he told you that you have done magnificent work in the financial restoration of Austria and Hungary, he traced the same path which we are now asking you to follow. That work is a splendid reply to those who are criticising the activities of the League, and I myself, speaking as a practical man — which is quite compatible with idealism — am astounded at the magnificent results you have so speedily obtained. Four years ago at the Paris and London Conferences, Great Britain and France jointly began to attack the difficult problem of Austria. That problem was submitted to you in 1922, and to-day the financial part of the problem is solved. In a few days you will also have occasion to applaud a similar success in the case of Hungary. Yet the Covenant did not explicitly provide for intervention by the League in such financial questions. Do not these encouraging results, combined with the programme laid down in Article 23, paragraph (e), give you the right — which, in my opinion is indisputable — to undertake the great task of

economic reconstruction, which is the aim of our resolution?

You will ask me, how, and for what purpose?

I am perfectly aware of all the objections to an international economic conference. I would even undertake to make from this platform a far longer speech against it than for it, but that is what always happens in life. I have often found that, on the whole, it is easier to destroy than to construct; yet I appeal to you to undertake a work of construction.

What States would be invited to take part in this International Economic Conference? What would be its programme?

We do not claim to lay this programme before you. We merely ask you to authorise, or, more exactly, to invite your Council to call a preparatory committee to prepare the programme for this Conference. The difficulty will perhaps lie not in stating what the programme should include, but rather what it should not. Economic questions are so vast that clearly, if we attempt to go too far in certain directions, if we attempt to draw up too comprehensive a programme, we shall almost certainly fail, and the Conference will degenerate into a purely academic debating society.

But I would not have you suppose that this Conference will result in real international conventions. To think so would be a great mistake. The Conference would enunciate a number of principles. It would seek some method of international co-operation to apply them, and as a result — this, in my opinion, is the most important point — it should be possible, in respect of certain branches of production which are easier to examine and analyse than others, to draw up a number of Conventions between nations, or rather between producers in those nations under the control of the Governments. Such conventions, apart from the Conference itself, will lead, for a time, to stability of production and consumption.

That is what I desired to say concerning the object of our proposal.

I repeat that we could develop this programme at great length, but in so doing we should show a lack of respect for the Second Committee, to which we ask that our resolution shall be referred, and we should also be exposing ourselves prematurely to certain criticisms which I can already foresee. I will not dwell on these objections for the moment, because we shall have an opportunity of replying to them either in the Second Committee or during the final meetings of this Assembly.

In taking the initiative in this matter, and submitting to you this resolution, which you must all realise is of great importance for every one of the countries that has sent you to Geneva, France is not acting in her own interest. In point of fact, after all her suffering during the war, France has regained, during the last three years, a certain measure of prosperity more apparent, perhaps, than real. This is partly owing to the mildness of her climate and the fertility of her soil, and partly to the fact that she is not so highly industrialised as other countries, and in short has been able to maintain an equilibrium between her agricultural and industrial production.

France, therefore, has no direct interest in proposing the resolution I have submitted to you. She feels it her duty to do so because, like all of you, she is deeply attached to the cause of peace — that is to say, security. Security is the theme on which I will conclude what I have to say. You have met together here, you have shown the world the magnificent example of an Assembly determined to continue the work begun last year,

of an Assembly where standpoints which are widely divergent in appearance—but mainly in appearance—have come into conflict, you have done this because you intend not only to maintain your programme, but to carry it out, adhering strictly to the principles of arbitration, security and disarmament.

Your prolonged debates have shown all those who are watching you that, without desiring uselessly to prolong the discussion, you firmly intend to solve the problem. You have reached a stage when you can no longer delay your decision till to-morrow—a morrow which never dawns.

The task which France ventures to propose to you is the normal and logical outcome of the effort to obtain security by seeking to effect a radical cure of the evil you are combating.

Believe me, ladies and gentlemen, this task is in keeping with the ideals of justice and of peace on which you have set your hearts. The nations of the world are longing for its achievement. It is worthy of the nations you represent.

The President :

Translation : M. Raul Fernandes, delegate of Brazil, will address the Assembly.

M. Raul Fernandes (Brazil) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Before the close of this discussion, which has been largely occupied by the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes, may I be allowed, on behalf of the Brazilian delegation, to proclaim my faith and confidence, and to make a statement which is especially necessary, since my country, and indeed other Latin-American countries, might be somewhat discouraged by most of the speeches made at this Assembly.

We shall find it difficult to share M. Paul-Boncour's sturdy optimism concerning regional pacts of arbitration and security. The eloquent delegate of France is confident that they will increase, will develop side by side, and will ultimately become correlated under the auspices of the League.

I agree that that is a fairly accurate forecast of the future awaiting the system of security described by M. Painlevé as "analytical". Nor do I doubt that the principles laid down in the Protocol will henceforth form the foundation of this diplomatic machinery, and that consequently very great moral progress will be made. In this sense, the failure of to-day may contain the germ of future success. Nevertheless, in our distant countries on the other side of the Atlantic, we might feel we were playing the part of Lazarus at the feast. We have no concern with regional pacts of security, for the peace of our continent is based upon unshakable moral foundations, and is the outcome not of exceptional political foresight, but of the geographical and economic causes determining our history. On the other hand, we have urgent need of inter-continental pacts, for there is a constantly increasing influx of foreign labour and foreign capital. Both are coming, or have already come, from populous and wealthy regions — largely from Europe, and, to an extent which may become very considerable, from the Far East.

Any international disputes in which we may be concerned will therefore be the outcome of these inter-continental relations and will, by reason of their very origin, be legal rather than political in character. Our security thus requires that such legal disputes should be settled by judicial means, either by compulsory arbitration or, preferably, through the Hague Court. This is more especially necessary since we may be involved in quarrels over acts coming wholly within the domestic

jurisdiction, and such cases, which must be rigidly excluded from the internationalisation of quarrels, require an impartial judge to settle them by pacific means.

It is only too obvious that in the system of regional pacts room can hardly be found for the inter-continental agreements upon which our peace depends. There is, of course, an indirect way out of the difficulty — a means we employed before the existence of the League: I refer to partial arbitration treaties. But these conventions are independent of the League and do not include all the guarantees given under the Covenant.

Need I say that, if we fail in our purpose, if we are left to rely upon these inadequate means, the League of Nations, which aims at universality and desires to increase its prestige, will gain nothing thereby? My purpose in offering this criticism is to forestall the man in the street, who would be sure to make it, and to declare that we still have reason to rejoice, since the rejection of the Geneva Protocol will result in the conclusion of certain European pacts designed to ensure peace in that part of the old continent which is most exposed to risk of war. If the Protocol had served this purpose alone, it would have been of the greatest value to Brazil, and, no doubt, to Latin America in general; for European peace is vital to our progress and prosperity. Half our foreign trade is with Europe and — an even more important point — it would be an irreparable blow to our growing culture if fresh wars should break out and enfeeble that fruitful source of civilisation from which we obtain enlightenment, encouragement and all that makes life beautiful.

Let us do justice to Great Britain, on whom the whole onus of responsibility for the failure of the Protocol has been unjustly laid; let us acknowledge that, while safeguarding what she regarded as her chief interests, she had the courage to take a step from which not only Europe but all the nations which are bent on peace and European civilisation must benefit.

While on the subject of compulsory justice and arbitration, may I be permitted, in passing, to correct a statement in the eloquent speech delivered on this platform yesterday by my honourable colleague, the delegate of Uruguay? He said that his country was the only one which up to the present had ratified the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice and the compulsory jurisdiction clause. Brazil has also ratified the Statute of the Court and given her adhesion to the optional clause. Her ratification, it is true, was subject to a suspensory condition; she stipulated that this clause should not apply to her until two of the Powers having permanent seats on the Council of the League also gave their adhesion.

M. Motta referred in complimentary terms to Brazil's ratification.

I should like to take this opportunity of giving an explanation. When the Statute of the Court was drawn up — and this part of the Hague scheme was accepted by the Assembly — the jurists, whose work I followed and with whom I was associated at the generous suggestion of my colleagues and the Council, were divided upon the fundamental point as to the manner in which the Court should be set up.

All finally agreed that the Council must be given as important a rôle as the Assembly, a rôle which would allow the Great Powers the main voice in the composition of the Court. We agreed to this procedure because we were convinced by the evident soundness of the arguments advanced by Mr. Root, who made so valuable a contribution to our work.

He said: "Take care; the Great Powers have not the same need of a Court as the small States. They

are strong enough to defend themselves. If they are to descend from their lofty pinnacle of force and put themselves on a level with the rest of the world, even the smallest States, by submitting their disputes to the Court, they will obviously want a water-tight guarantee as to the composition of the Court, for those are the only terms on which they will submit to its jurisdiction."

That argument convinced us; and that is why so important a rôle in the composition of the Court is played by the Council, and, in consequence, by those Powers which are permanent Members of it.

There was another clause in the Statute which may be said to have been unanimously accepted by the Hague Committee of Jurists, but which was nevertheless amended by the Council—and the Assembly has had to consent to the amendment. I refer to the clause concerning compulsory jurisdiction.

This clause counterbalanced all the concessions made in regard to the actual composition of the Court. It was deleted at the suggestion of the Council and we were forced to acquiesce.

But when I returned to my country, when I reported on our work and gave my Government my opinion, I said: I think it only right that, by adhering to the clause concerning the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court, we should emphasise that, over and above the legal and political necessities, the great Powers which have a preponderating voice in establishing the composition of that Court are morally bound to set the example of submitting to its jurisdiction.

That is why, when we adhered to this clause, we stipulated that it should not come into operation in respect of our country until it had been ratified by two of the Powers permanently represented on the Council of the League.

After this digression, I now return to the main thread of my speech.

Speaking, as I do, towards the end of the present discussion, I am somewhat in the position of a beggar who is allowed to glean where others have already reaped and gathered in the harvest. M. Scialoja will, I am sure, let me take what his skilled hand has missed.

In his opinion the Protocol was premature. War, he said, is often a disease which must be gradually cured and not eradicated at a stroke, and it would be the height of folly to subject future events to legal regulation by means of compulsory adjudication or arbitration, instead of making law conform to historical development by means of optional or special arbitration.

His argument appears to me disquietingly far-reaching; if it were really sound, the Protocol would remain premature to the end of time. Nations, like individuals, have to reckon with the inconstancy of fortune; the *beati possidentes* of to-day are the *non-possidentes* of to-morrow, and if justice based upon law were premature for the latter, its advent in international affairs would always be vetoed on the ground that it was premature.

I understand what is at the back of my colleague's mind; I fully concur in his view that the nations will only submit to law in so far as it is just, and that, if it is to be just, co-operation must be made obligatory by means of covenants concluded loyally and on equitable terms. I have said more than once, and I say again, that the foundations of peace are to be found in the principles of Article 23 of the Covenant, and there alone. But, granting this, I think that the policy of adapting law to historical evolution by means of arbitration as and when required, as the eminent delegate of Italy proposes, might easily be made a cloak for a policy of force; while, on the other hand, compulsory

arbitration, on the basis of constructive legal practice, would have the direct effect of adapting law to the vital requirements of international relations. The sooner we resort to judicial methods and the legal practice evolved therefrom, the sooner we shall come within measurable distance of a system of law bearing some relation to the necessities of international life. That is why I think it can never be too soon for the jurisdiction of the Permanent Court to become compulsory.

The Italian thesis is, in reality, not simply calculated to delay the legal and judicial organisation of international life; it is tantamount to a refusal which would be unvarying, though the reasons for it might change. In formulating such an objection, M. Scialoja has discarded his customary Florentine rapier for a club.

I merely wish to point out this move to those who claim—and I am one of them—that the Protocol still survives as a powerful moral force. To those champions who are better equipped than I am to defend it, I will simply say that, if the great work of the fifth Assembly were really dead, its remains, too vast for a world already surfeited with misery and violence, would pollute the whole earth.

The President :

Translation : M. Rentis, Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs, will address the Assembly.

M. Rentis (Greece) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—May I be allowed first to fulfil an agreeable duty and to express the profound satisfaction and admiration I feel for the work accomplished by your Council during this last year. Greece submitted to it for settlement and arbitration several questions referred to in the report now before us.

Quite recently this conciliatory procedure was employed in regard to the establishment of Greek refugees. In all the questions dealt with the solutions reached have been practical, just and impartial, and reflect the greatest honour both on the members of the Council, individually and collectively, and on the Secretariat, which in its work of preparation and documentation has given evidence of exceptional activity and competence.

As regards the question of minorities, I have no desire to enter into a fresh controversy with the Bulgarian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

I must, however, remind you of one all-important fact: the Report on the work of your Council during this last year mentions the settlement of the question raised by the supplementary Protocols to the Treaty relating to the so-called Bulgarian minorities in Greece and the so-called Greek minorities in Bulgaria. The refusal on the part of Greece to apply the Protocol which concerned her was fully upheld by the Council. I am convinced, moreover, that when the Græco-Bulgarian Convention on exchanges of population has been applied we shall have eliminated yet another source of friction between the two countries.

Greece, desirous that the Treaties should be scrupulously carried out, has no objection to the settlement of the question of an economic outlet for Bulgaria on the Aegean Sea. The relevant article of the Treaty of Neuilly will be applied in a manner satisfactory to both countries—an arrangement which Greece for her part has always urged and been ready to facilitate. I desire to re-affirm this now, and to add that, in order that this question may be settled, the Greek Government is prepared to apply to the League, whose intervention is, moreover, provided for in the Treaty itself.

It would be rash for the Government which I have the honour to represent at this Assembly

to define its attitude, in what might be called a purely formal discussion, on the Protocol on arbitration, security and disarmament. The unanimous desire proclaimed by this Assembly to solve the problem of the organisation of international peace and concord fills me with optimism as to the achievement of the work in which we are engaged. I am confident that the good-will of all will succeed in finding a solution. In this connection, I respectfully beg to differ from the first delegate of Hungary as to the difficulties of regional agreements between neighbouring countries. I am, of course, only expressing an opinion concerning Greece and her neighbours, who, I am certain, will fully justify the genuine optimism I feel in regard to this matter.

I desire therefore to give my unqualified support both to the proposal for the establishment of a Committee of conciliation and to the draft resolution submitted by M. Quiñones de León, and, at the same, to express my earnest hope that the great work on which all our energies and aspirations are set may be accomplished, if not at one stroke, at all events step by step.

32. — REFERENCE TO ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES OF ITEM 13 OF THE AGENDA AND OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED DURING THE DISCUSSION OF THE REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : REPORT OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : In order to expedite the work of the Committees, the General Committee has decided to propose to the Assembly that the draft resolutions submitted during the discussion of the report on the work of the Council should be allocated to the various Committees at once.

The General Committee therefore proposes that these resolutions should be distributed as follows :

1. To the First and Third Committees :

Item 13 of the agenda, which reads as follows :

“13. Arbitration, Security and Reduction of Armaments :

• “The Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes ;

• “Declarations by the Members of the Council made at its Session in March 1925, and any other declarations communicated by the Members of the League.”

2. To the First Committee :

(a) The Spanish delegation's draft resolution concerning the establishment of peace through arbitration, security and disarmament and the preparation of a Conference for the reduction of armaments ;

(b) The Swedish delegation's draft resolution concerning compulsory arbitration for the settlement of international disputes ;

(c) The Swiss delegation's draft resolution concerning the optional clause of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice ;

(d) The Uruguayan delegation's draft resolution concerning the jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice.

3. To the Third Committee :

(a) The Spanish delegation's draft resolution concerning the establishment of peace through arbitration, security and disarmament and the preparation of a Conference for the reduction of armaments. This resolution will also be referred to the First Committee ;

(b) The Netherlands delegation's draft resolution concerning the reduction and limitation of armaments ;

(c) The draft resolution submitted by the delegation of Salvador concerning certain technical questions relating to disarmament ;

(d) The draft resolution submitted by the delegation of Salvador amending its earlier resolution (c) ;

(e) The Hungarian delegation's draft resolution on the Disarmament Conference. This resolution may perhaps involve the amendment of the Spanish delegation's draft resolution.

It is understood—and this is not a decision taken by the General Committee but simply an observation of my own on the duties of these Committees—that the Chairmen of the First and Third Committees will be free to decide, after consultation with one another, what proposals shall be submitted to these Committees concerning the division between them of questions raised in certain of these draft resolutions. They can also decide between themselves as to the most suitable procedure for the independent or joint examination of these questions.

4. To the Fifth Committee :

(a) The Norwegian delegation's draft resolution concerning Armenian refugees ;

(b) The Norwegian delegation's draft resolution concerning Russian refugees.

5. To the Sixth Committee :

(a) The Norwegian delegation's draft resolution concerning mandates ;

(b) The Lithuanian delegation's resolution concerning minorities.

6. To the Agenda Committee :

(a) The Chinese delegation's draft resolution concerning the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council ;

(b) The Chinese delegation's draft resolution expressing the hope that the Conference convened to study Chinese affairs may arrive at a satisfactory solution.

Does any member wish to speak on the proposals made by the General Committee ?

The proposals were adopted.

In order to expedite proceedings, I shall submit to the Assembly, at the close of the discussion, proposals for the reference to the various Committees of the draft resolutions which have been submitted since the meeting of the General Committee and any which may be submitted before the end of the general discussion.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE SIXTH ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

TWELFTH PLENARY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16th, 1925, AT 10.30 A.M.

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President : MR. DANDURAND.

33. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the continuation of the debate on the report on the Work of the Council and of the Secretariat.

M. Duca, Minister for Foreign Affairs and first delegate of Roumania, will address the Assembly.

M. Duca (Roumania) :

Translation : I think no impartial person can read the report on the work of the Council without feeling an increased confidence in the future of the League.

The League of Nations has already rendered most valuable assistance in a wide range of

questions of the highest importance to the world. I need scarcely tell you, therefore, that I approve the report submitted to us and shall vote for it without reservation.

I should like, however, to say a few words on the question of minorities.

Firstly, I share the Assembly's view that minorities should be ensured just and generous treatment, not only for the sake of justice, not only for the sake of the treaties which some of us have signed, not only for the sake of consolidating that world peace which is our supreme goal, but for the sake of the States themselves which possess such minorities.

I therefore desire to state, on behalf of my country, that we are determined to apply to our minorities the most liberal policy possible.

Secondly, as regards Roumania -- and I think that this point of view ought to be shared by the whole Assembly -- the question of minorities has a twofold aspect.

Governments are bound to afford protection to minorities, but the engagement must be reciprocal; the minorities on their side have a duty of loyalty towards the State of which they form a part.

Unless these two conditions are fulfilled, there can be no genuine moral disarmament. There can be no real consolidation of peace such as we desire and are striving to obtain.

Thirdly, we do not think that the true way to protect minorities is to occupy ourselves with details of procedure. Consequently, as far as we are concerned, we have absolute confidence in the spirit of justice and impartiality displayed in the work of the Council.

We have this absolute confidence in the Council of the League for the very reason that we know it regards the problem of minorities from the two points of view to which I have referred, and that it will therefore never allow the minorities question to degenerate into a source of constant obligation, on the one hand, and a pretext for selfish agitation on the other. We know that the Council of the League will do all in its power to avoid a situation

which would be as inadmissible as it would be paradoxical.

Fourthly, reference has recently been made in the Assembly to the necessity of modifying the status of minorities. If such a necessity exists, we think that the modifications should be made on the lines indicated in the resolution submitted by our colleague, M. Galvanauskas, first delegate of Lithuania. It is not the first time that Roumania has expressed this opinion.

When, at the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, it was first proposed to introduce clauses relative to the protection of minorities, Roumania declared that she had no objection, provided these clauses were of a general nature, since otherwise the world would find itself divided into countries with absolute sovereignty and countries with only limited sovereignty, a result quite incompatible with the democratic principles now governing the world.

I will also venture to offer a few brief observations on that burning problem which has formed the theme of all our discussions during the last few days — the Geneva Protocol.

I must say, first of all, that whatever decision is reached, and in spite of the differences of opinion which now divide us, Roumania is determined to adhere to the principles of the Geneva Protocol — Arbitration, Security, Disarmament. These are the three factors which, in my country's opinion, are inseparable and indispensable to the final triumph of peace.

Since the first condition of modern diplomacy is frankness, I venture to say that Roumania would have been in favour of a draft Protocol containing obligations more definitely compulsory than those laid down in the Geneva Protocol. If you consider the geographical situation of my country, you will, I think, understand the reasons for this preference. But we quite appreciate the difficulties which certain countries experience in admitting definite obligations. This year, the difficulty of admitting even the limited obligations contained in last year's Protocol has been brought home to us. In these circumstances you will understand that we cannot sacrifice present political possibilities to the desire to obtain something more.

We are therefore waiting. We shall wait until the Geneva Protocol and its principles are accepted. We await that hour with confidence, but we feel that it is not enough merely to wait. We cannot remain inactive. Until the Protocol has been accepted, we must all, according to our means, work for the consolidation of peace.

Allow me to indicate very briefly the manner in which we in Roumania think that the intervening period should be employed.

First of all, we think that regional agreements must be concluded. These have been mentioned during the last few days. I will add that Roumania has already concluded agreements of this kind, and will endeavour to conclude others in the future.

On the other hand, the idea of arbitration is becoming more and more firmly established in public opinion throughout the world.

Whenever, therefore, we find it possible to conclude a treaty of arbitration, we shall do so, and I am happy to be able to announce that at this very moment Roumania is engaged in negotiating such treaties with a number of States.

In order to demonstrate Roumania's peaceful intentions in the most effective and practical manner possible, we offer to conclude with all neighbouring States, without exception, permanent pacts of non-aggression. We are ready to sign such conventions with all our neighbours, because nowhere on any of our frontiers do we intend, either

now or at any time, to commit the crime of aggression.

In general, I should like the League to know that wherever a problem relating to peace may arise, wherever anything can be done to promote international peace, there, ladies and gentlemen, you will find us on your side, ready to collaborate with you, and, in the measure of our strength, ready to assist this policy in every way we can.

In thus preparing the final triumph of the principle contained in the Geneva Protocol, we have the satisfaction of collaborating in a splendid work, which must one day be completed, and at the same time we are conscious of fulfilling our whole duty towards ourselves, towards the League of Nations, and towards the highest aspirations of humanity.

34. — PROTECTION AND WELFARE OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS : DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE SWISS DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : The Swiss delegation has submitted the following draft resolution to the President of the Assembly :

"The sixth Assembly of the League of Nations requests the Council to be good enough to transmit to the Advisory Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young Persons, for any action that may be necessary, the recommendations and resolutions of the first general Congress on Child Welfare."

This draft resolution will be printed without delay and distributed to the members of the Assembly. In order to prevent loss of time I shall make a proposal, at the close of the present meeting, regarding the reference of the draft resolution to one of the Committees.

35. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : We will now continue the discussion on the Report on the Work of the Council and of the Secretariat.

M. Doret, delegate of the Republic of Haiti, will address the Assembly.

M. Doret (Haiti) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — May I beg your indulgence while I say a few words on that part of the report on the Work of the Council and of the Secretariat which concerns the instruction of children and youth. You will forgive me if I deal with this question, when so many other questions of urgent importance are claiming our attention.

As a former Minister of Education and as one who has had much to do with text-books, I know how powerful an influence these have upon the minds of the young, and how greatly they can contribute — indirectly, but not less surely — towards the attainment of the objects of the League.

The little Republic of Haiti, I need hardly say, has perfect confidence in the future development of the League, and earnestly hopes that this newly founded institution, which has already displayed such activity, will one day succeed in establishing the reign of peace through the wider application of international justice.

We are here, ladies and gentlemen, to seek together all possible means, great and small — none of which is negligible — of hastening the advent of peace. Among these means the report by the Secretariat mentions the instruction of children and youth in the existence and aims of the League, and advocates the revision of history books with a view to their adaptation to modern ideas on international relations. I would like something more, something to reinforce this teaching. While instructing young people in the aims of the League, I would at the same time take steps to eradicate certain prejudices which prevent the realisation of those aims. What are the toys given to a boy as soon as he learns to walk? A trumpet and a drum. That is easily understood, when the only object is his parents' peace and quiet. But after the trumpet and the drum there comes a gun. The gun is for sport, of course. But it is also — and on a far vaster scale — an implement of war. Armed with his gun the boy plays at "soldiers" with his companions. Is it any exaggeration to say that his initiation begins almost as soon as his babyhood ends? When, later on, he learns history, 70 per cent of the pages of his history manuals — these are last year's statistics for the United States — relate to wars. I might find examples in other subjects also.

I had occasion, in the Sixth Committee of the first Assembly, to submit a resolution on moral disarmament. One of my colleagues expressed the opinion that the first effect of my resolution, if it were adopted, would be to make every history manual out of date. My resolution was converted into a recommendation. Far be it from me to advocate any revolutionary upheaval. All I urge is that we should begin the work which we shall one day have to undertake — the elimination of anything which instils into children a taste for war.

As moral disarmament has several times been mentioned on this platform, I have the honour to submit to the Assembly the following draft resolution :

"With a view to moral disarmament, the League of Nations invites its Members to undertake, as far as possible, the revision of their history manuals, so as gradually to reduce the number of pages devoted to military events and especially those passages in which wars of conquest are justified and held up for admiration."

The President :

Translation : The Assembly has before it a new draft resolution submitted by M. Doret, delegate of the Republic of Haiti. This draft resolution will be printed and distributed without delay to the members of the Assembly. In order to prevent any loss of time, I shall submit proposals, at the close of the present meeting, for the reference of this draft resolution to one of the Committees.

Mr. Hewitt Bostock, President of the Canadian Senate, will address the Assembly.

The Honourable Hewitt Bostock (Canada) : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I have listened with great interest and appreciation to the most eloquent speeches which have been made by the distinguished representatives who have taken part in this discussion on the work of the Council.

This being the first occasion on which I have had the honour of appearing before this Assembly, I do not intend to ask for your attention for any length of time. I think, however, that it is important to state clearly and briefly the position of Canada in regard to the problem of Arbitration, Security and Disarmament.

It is true that Canada did not consider it possible to ratify the Protocol, but she accepted in a general way the principles of compulsory arbitration and of reduction of armaments. Her peculiar situation made it impossible for her to accept in its entirety the document as it was submitted to the Government for ratification. Nevertheless, being in complete accord with the aims and objects of the League of Nations, Canada has endorsed all the principles of universal interest contained in this document.

Early in March of this year the Prime Minister of Canada communicated to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations the conclusions of his Government, which were summarised as follows :

1. That Canada should continue to give whole-hearted support to the League of Nations and particularly to its work of conciliation, co-operation and publicity.

2. That we do not consider it in the interests of Canada, of the British Empire, or of the League itself to recommend to Parliament adherence to the Protocol and particularly to its rigid provisions for application of economic and military sanctions in practically every future war. Among the grounds for this conclusion is the consideration of the effect of the non-participation of the United States upon attempts to enforce the sanctions, and particularly so in the case of a contiguous country like Canada.

3. That, as Canada believes firmly in the submission of international disputes to joint enquiry or arbitration and has shared in certain notable undertakings in this field, we would be prepared to consider acceptance of the compulsory jurisdiction of the Permanent Court in justiciable disputes, with certain reservations, and to consider methods of supplementing the provision of the Covenant for settlement of non-justiciable issues, including the method of joint investigation, reserving ultimate decision in domestic issues and without undertaking further obligations to enforce decisions in case of other States.

4. That Canada would be prepared to take part in any general Conference on Reduction of Armaments which did not involve prior acceptance of the Protocol.

Canada has been criticised in some quarters for not assuming all the obligations of the Protocol. Canada, however, is realising to-day, more intensely than she did at the time of the great war, what it has cost her; she therefore naturally hesitates to undertake in advance rigid obligations which would render her liable to intervene in conflicts so far removed from her shores.

Canada has complete confidence in the future of the League of Nations, and realises that it is now firmly established in the hearts and minds of the peoples. Undoubtedly, the rising generation will more and more come to appreciate the value of its work for the peace and well-being of mankind.

The President :

Translation : The last speaker on my list is M. Yañez, delegate for Chile.

M. Yañez (Chile) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I venture to ask for your kind attention for a few moments while I refer briefly to a matter which, in my opinion, will make for the realisation,

n an efficient, rapid and practical manner, of the high ideals which are the origin and the object of the League of Nations.

I am now speaking, not only in my own name and in that of the Chilean delegation, but also as the representative of a far country in the midst of democratic evolution, which, small in population, military forces and strength, is great in courage, glorious traditions and activities, and has the same mentality, the same manner of understanding life, right and justice as have all the Latin peoples.

I am not proposing to make a speech; the hour for that has passed. The general debate is nearly at an end and the Committees must be given the necessary time in which to complete their work.

Nevertheless, I desire to say that America, on account of its situation, traditions and distance from Europe, and on account of its special problems, has certain interests which are peculiarly its own. That is why the American States are not all represented here.

This fact, however, should not alienate us from the ideal of world fraternity, nor weaken our will to help in the work of peace and universal solidarity.

Without mentioning any European countries not represented here, I must specially regret the absence of the United States, Mexico, the Argentine Republic and Ecuador from this Assembly; their absence prevents the unity and weakens the confidence which we need, and emphasises the necessity for a spirit of co-operation and harmony between the peoples of America and the whole world.

The United States persist in their refusal to participate in our work, doubtless because they fear that by taking an interest in European affairs they might incur responsibilities, and also because they fear the interference of Europe in American affairs.

These circumstances create for the other countries of the continent a special situation which we cannot afford to ignore.

The situation must be changed; interests which are vital must be reconciled, and certain nations not represented here must not be allowed to enjoy a situation of exceptional independence with regard to international questions which may affect the security of the world.

To avoid such a state of affairs, it is not enough to bring pressure to bear upon Governments and their most enlightened representatives; we must also create amongst the masses that new spirit to which the great war gave birth, and which the League is striving to disseminate throughout the whole world.

M. Painlevé stated in his able opening speech — and several speakers have followed him in his idea — that the League's discussions are helping to create a new international morality through mutual understanding. But the result would be small indeed if we rely solely on our discussions, and no result at all will be obtained by mere diplomatic instruments.

We must work for the evolution of the human spirit; we must form a new mentality, so as to bring about the conciliation of the varied intellectual characteristics which distinguish each nation.

If we desire to achieve permanent success, we must not merely seek formulas and words; we must appeal straight to the masses and devote ourselves to the organisation and education of new democracies, for it is there that racial feeling, passions, interests and the traditions which thousands of years have bred in the hearts of the nations are to be found in all their fulness

*The equality of nations upon purely legal grounds; peace and right; fraternity in the sphere of ideas; pacific idealism, are not sufficient to conciliate interests and create a feeling of universal peace and harmony. That is why, in my opinion, the work of the League appears somewhat slow and somewhat unreal; that is why it does not attain the noble ideals of international right and justice, though we are painfully and perseveringly striving to attain them.

It has been rightly said that faith moves mountains. Well, the heaviest of all must be moved that of apathy and indifference.

I can conceive no more effective method of forming this new spirit than by influencing the minds of peoples through the Press and moulding the future generations in the schools.

I shall deal with this last point in the Second Committee, and I propose to invite the Council to examine attentively the replies already received by the Secretariat with regard to the instruction of youth in the principles of peace and the ideal of the League, with a view to calling a Conference of teachers to study the best possible means of creating the spirit of universal concord in schools.

With regard to the Press, I suggest for your consideration the idea of unifying its directive action on public opinion and its moral influence over Governments.

Journalism has in every country but one meaning in its spirit and in its essence because it is and should be the reflection of the ideas of liberty, progress and morality.

A universal bond of feeling unites all men and all peoples on the question of peace and the welfare of the working classes. The Press is the vanguard of these ideas, and that is why I submit the following draft resolution to the Assembly:

"The Assembly,

"Being profoundly convinced of the necessity of creating a new sense of international concord in the world;

"Considering that the Press constitutes the surest and 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 in the different continents, with a view to determining by what means the Press may contribute towards the work of disarmament and the organisation of peace:

"(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 in their opinion be conducive to the tranquillisation of public opinion in the various countries."

I wonder if this idea can be considered as coming within the scope of the action and mission of the League. Can the League call upon the Press of the entire world to collaborate in the work of world-fraternity, in that powerful intellectual movement which will be the best guarantee of security, disarmament and arbitration? I believe it can.

If the League of Nations is not legally entitled to do so, it at least possesses the moral authority to take this step, and I think it should do so.

The President :

Translation : Does any member still wish to speak on the Work of the Council and the Secretariat ?

If no one wishes to speak, I declare the discussion closed.

36. — REFERENCE TO ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES OF FURTHER DRAFT RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED DURING THE DISCUSSION OF THE REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

Translation . I will now read to the Assembly the Agenda Committee's report, which has just been transmitted to me. It reads as follows :

The Committee met on Wednesday, September 16th, at 10.15 a.m., in the Salle de la Réformation.

The Committee decided that, in the absence of M. Skrzynski, the chair should be taken by M. F. Sokal, delegate of Poland.

The following were the items on the agenda :

1. *Draft resolution submitted by the Chinese delegation concerning the election of the six non-permanent Members of the Council :*

"The Assembly reiterates the following recommendation, adopted unanimously by the Assemblies of 1922, 1923 and 1924 :

"It is desirable that the Assembly, in electing the six non-permanent Members of the Council, should make its choice with due consideration for the main geographical divisions of the world, the great ethnical groups, the different religious divisions, the various types of civilisation and the chief sources of wealth."

The Committee was of opinion :

That, the Assembly having already on several occasions given a unanimous opinion on this recommendation, it was not necessary to submit these proposals again to one of the permanent Committees for preliminary examination, but that the recommendation should be referred direct to the Assembly.

The Agenda Committee decided therefore, following the precedent of last year's decisions, to suggest that the Chinese delegation's proposal should be submitted direct to the Assembly.

2. *Draft resolution submitted by the Chinese delegation concerning the situation in China.*

The Committee received notice from the Chinese delegation that the latter desired to introduce a slight amendment into the text submitted to the Assembly on September 14th, 1925.

The text now submitted to the Assembly is as follows :

RECOMMENDATION.

"The Assembly,

"Having heard with keen interest the statement of the Chinese delegation regarding the reconsideration of China's treaties which, in the opinion of the Chinese delegation, have become inapplicable;

"Having learned with satisfaction that a Conference of the States concerned is soon to take place in China to consider the questions involved;

"Considering that the purpose of this Conference corresponds to the spirit of the Covenant, particularly to that of Article 19,

"Expresses the hope that a satisfactory solution may be found at an early date."

The Committee was of opinion that, as this was a recommendation upon which the Assembly would have to take a vote, but which involved no question of principle, it should be submitted direct to the Assembly.

For the Committee :

(Signed) VAN HAMEL,

Director of the Legal Section
of the Secretariat.

If no one wishes to speak on the se proposals, I shall consider them as adopted.

The proposals were adopted.

With the object of expediting the work of the Committees, as I announced at yesterday's meeting, I have now framed proposals for the immediate reference to the various Committees concerned of the draft resolutions submitted to the Assembly since the meeting of the General Committee yesterday morning.

This more expeditious method is in conformity with the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly. It is also justified by our unanimous desire to avoid all loss of time.

Since the distribution of the draft resolutions which was decided upon at yesterday's meeting, five new drafts have been submitted to the Assembly :

1. The French delegation's draft resolution concerning the examination of economic difficulties which stand in the way of the restoration of general prosperity;

2. The Chilian delegation's draft resolution concerning the collaboration of the Press in the work of disarmament;

3. The Swiss delegation's draft resolution concerning the protection and welfare of children and young persons ;

4. The draft resolution submitted by the delegation of Haiti concerning the influence of teaching on the work of moral disarmament;

5. The Chilian delegation's draft resolution concerning instruction in schools in the principles of peace.

I propose that the Assembly should refer the French delegation's draft resolution at once to the Second Committee.

I also propose that the Chilian delegation's first draft resolution be referred to the Agenda Committee.

As no plenary meeting will be held for some days, I ask the Assembly's sanction for the immediate execution of any proposals which the Agenda Committee may make for the reference of the Chilian delegation's draft resolution to one of the Committees of the Assembly.

I propose that the Swiss delegation's draft resolution be referred to the Fifth Committee, that the draft resolution presented by the delegation of Haiti be referred to the Second Committee, and, lastly, that the Chilian delegation's second draft resolution be referred to the Second Committee.

If no one has any observations to make, I shall consider these proposals adopted.

The proposals were adopted.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE
SIXTH ASSEMBLY
OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

THIRTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21st, 1925, AT 10.30 A.M.

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President : Mr. DANDURAND.

37. — CREDENTIALS OF M. ENRIQUE BUERO, DELEGATE OF URUGUAY: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS.

The President :

Translation : M. de Aguero y Bethancourt will address the Assembly.

M. de Aguero y Bethancourt, Chairman of the Committee on Credentials :

Translation : The Committee on Credentials has received a cablegram from His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uruguay stating that His Excellency M. Enrique Buero, Uruguayan Minister at Berne, has been accredited delegate for the Republic in place of M. Juan Antonio Buero.

In the Committee's opinion, this communication fully conforms with Article 5, paragraph 1, of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly.

The Committee therefore considers M. Enrique Buero duly accredited.

The President :

Translation : The communication which has just been made is duly noted.

38.— SIGNATURE BY THE POLISH GOVERNMENT OF THE PROTOCOL CONTAINING THE AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 16 OF THE COVENANT ADOPTED BY THE FIFTH ASSEMBLY: COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

Translation : I have received a letter from the Polish delegation to the Sixth Assembly stating that the Polish Government, with a view to increasing the prestige and authority of the League, attaches great importance to the articles of the Covenant relating to preventive measures against

war, and to sanctions, and has decided to accept the amendment to Article 16 voted by the Fifth Assembly in order to assist in bringing it into force.

In execution of this decision M. Skrzynski, Minister for Foreign Affairs and first delegate for Poland, signed the amendment in question on the 15th of this month.

39. — SITUATION IN CHINA : POSTPONEMENT OF THE DISCUSSION OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE CHINESE DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda, which has been communicated to members of the Assembly, is the draft resolution of the Chinese delegation relative to the situation in China. The Chinese delegation has notified me, however, that it wishes to examine this draft resolution again, and I therefore think it preferable to postpone the discussion of this question to our next meeting.

The delegations will have received the definite text of the draft resolution by to-morrow, and the question will be included in the agenda, for Tuesday morning's meeting.

40. — WORK OF THE HEALTH ORGANISATION : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion on the work of the Health Organisation.

I invite the Rapporteur, M. Velghe, delegate for Belgium, and the Chairman of the Second Committee, Jonkheer van Eysinga, to take their places on the platform.

(Jonkheer van Eysinga and M. Velghe, took their places on the platform.)

M. Velghe (Belgium), Rapporteur, gave the following summary of the report of the Second Committee (Annex Doc. A. 79. 1925. III) :

Encouraged by the approval of the Fifth Assembly last year, the Health Organisation has continued its work in a manner which deserves the approval of the Second Committee.

The Epidemiological Intelligence Service, the great value of which is appreciated by the health administrations, has continued to publish its monthly report. In view of the necessity of accelerating the transmission of information regarding certain diseases, the Governments of several countries on the Mediterranean and Black Sea decided to notify Geneva by telegraph at their own expense of the first appearance of plague or cholera cases in any of their ports. This represents a considerable step forward, for if all prophylaxis is based upon the notification of the outbreak of contagious diseases, the speed and efficacy of such prophylaxis varies directly with the promptitude of the notification.

Further, the proposed Epidemiological Intelligence Bureau in the Far East has been established at Singapore and has been at work since March 1st last, thanks to the far-sighted generosity of the International Health Board of the Rockefeller Foundation. This Bureau is now in communication with forty-six of the principal ports of Asia, Australia and East Africa. It co-ordinates the information received and transmits it weekly by wireless to the interested health services in the Far East and also to the Health Section of the Secretariat, which in turn transmits

it to the health administrations of the Members of the League. The establishment of the Singapore Bureau and the addition to this Bureau of a Commission composed of delegates of the Far Eastern Health Administrations and of representatives of the Health Organisation of the League are evidence of the special importance which the Health Committee attaches to the improvement of the health situation in Far Eastern countries, and constitute an assurance that the Committee will endeavour to extend its work in that part of the world.

The services rendered by the Singapore Bureau since its recent foundation have induced the French delegation to propose the establishment of a similar bureau on the West Coast of Africa.

This office would in its opinion be of great service, not only to the African countries but also to the countries with which they have relations, especially the South American States.

The Health Organisation has undertaken a series of investigations with the object of ensuring that official morbidity and mortality statistics shall be drawn up on a comparable basis. The researches for a standard definition of still-birth have been concluded, and the report of the Health Committee has been forwarded by the Council's instructions to the various Governments.

As regards the standardisation of biological products, the investigations are so advanced that it has been possible to hold another international conference at Geneva.

The investigations in connection with sera in respect of which standardisation is possible in the present state of knowledge are so far advanced that there is some prospect of resolutions being adopted next year which will be submitted to the Governments for ratification.

The experience acquired by the Malaria Commission continues to be appreciated by the administrations concerned. At the invitation of the Spanish Government, the Commission has visited certain malarial regions in Spain. One of its members has visited the health administration of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes at the request of the Government of that country. The French Government has asked the Commission to conduct an investigation in Corsica, and a similar request has lately been received from the Turkish Government.

There are also other matters in connection with which Governments have appealed to the Health Organisation. Thus, at the request of Persia, a delegate of the Health Section proceeded to that country to study the possibilities for organising measures against epidemics. The Union of Socialist Soviet Republics has also recently solicited the co-operation of the Health Organisation in investigating the causes of the persistence of endemic plague in certain parts of Eastern Siberia bordering upon Manchuria.

On the suggestion of the Health Committee, which was transmitted, in accordance with a decision of the Council, to all Governments having possessions in Central Africa, a Conference met in London last May to consider the campaign against sleeping-sickness and tuberculosis in those regions. This Conference made various recommendations and proposed, in particular, that an international commission should be asked to study in East Africa, along certain definite lines, a series of problems relating to the epidemiology of sleeping-sickness.

Interchanges of public health officials, organised in part by means of funds placed for this purpose at the disposal of the Health section by the Rockefeller Foundation, took place this year in Great Britain, Belgium and the Kingdom of the

Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Sixty-five officials belonging to thirty-six different countries participated. In addition, three interchanges of specialists took place, one of which was organised in conjunction with the International Labour Office for medical inspectors of labour. A special interchange was arranged for the health officers of Latin-American countries, whilst another is being arranged for the sanitary officials of Eastern countries.

As it is difficult for Public Health officers of the British Dominions to take part in these collective tours, health experts from Australia and New Zealand have been charged with individual study missions in Europe. Similarly, a Canadian tuberculosis expert has had the opportunity of investigating thoroughly the methods in use in different European countries for combating tuberculosis.

These interchanges of officials are intended to develop the scientific and technical knowledge of those who take part; to give them an insight into the institutions and organisations of the countries they visit and to enable them to appreciate the efficiency of the methods in use for combating disease and for improving the hygienic conditions of the population. The relations which result from the interchange of health experts of the various countries serve to promote mutual understanding, a desire for collaboration, and a spirit of emulation which cannot fail to be of value, both to those who take part in the interchanges and to the sanitary administrations to which they belong.

The Fifth Assembly asked the Health Committee to institute an enquiry into the value of the measures taken against tuberculosis in different countries.

In carrying out this decision, the Health Committee decided, as a preliminary measure, to prepare a report dealing with the decline of mortality from tuberculosis in the various countries from a statistical point of view.

This report having demonstrated that there was a real decline of mortality from this cause in certain countries, and having brought to light the probable reasons, a Committee was formed to continue the work and to study the effect of industrial labour, of housing and food supplies generally, and of milk consumption in particular, upon the prevalence of tuberculosis.

We appreciate the methodical character of the proposed investigations, and we realise the important part they will play in strengthening our defences against tuberculosis. Let us therefore hope that they will shortly be productive of satisfactory results.

Last year the Assembly was pleased to recognise that the work accomplished by the Health Organisation had been kept within the limits of the mission entrusted to the League of Nations under Article 23, paragraph (f) of the Covenant and was likely to promote valuable co-operation in health matters.

The Second Committee would also emphasise the fact mentioned by the Health Committee in its report — that the greater part of the work of the Health Organisation has been done not so much upon its own initiative as at the request of Governments, of national public health authorities, of the Council or of the Assembly.

As the investigations of the Health Organisation are given a wide publicity, they are of value to the local and central health authorities in all countries. Even when the Health Organisation, at the request of any particular Government, sends a mission to a given country to investigate its health conditions and discover what remedies are needed to improve them, it does not render service to the public health authorities in that country alone, for all nations

are united in health matters, all benefit by the experience of others, just as all are menaced by the unsatisfactory health conditions of any one of them or by the inadequacy of its sanitary equipment. The League of Nations fully realised this when it established the Health Organisation and approved the methods of work of the Health Committee. By forming permanent or temporary commissions, as the case might be; by appointing the most highly qualified experts in the various countries to be members of these commissions; by the research work entrusted to these experts; by the missions sent to make studies on the spot, in order that they might ascertain the actual state of affairs and might judge in special circumstances of the extent of the evil from which populations are suffering and of the remedies best suited to local conditions, the Health Organisation is in a position to make prompt and useful suggestions to the public health authorities which seek its advice.

In order to show its appreciation of the work done by the Health Organisation, the Second Committee decided to submit to the Assembly the following resolution, which was proposed by the Venezuelan delegation and seconded by the delegations of Belgium, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, France, Italy, Japan, Paraguay, Poland, Roumania, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and Switzerland.

In proposing the following resolution, the Second Committee emphasises that its adoption does not involve any additional expenditure.

The Assembly has examined the report presented by the Health Committee on the activities of the Health Organisation and considers that the work accomplished since the last Assembly has been carried out in accordance with the recommendations of former Assemblies and in conformity with the decisions of the Council.

The Assembly notes with satisfaction that this work, thanks to the research and investigations undertaken for the solution of the problems examined, will be of the greatest value to the public health services of different countries.

The Assembly is glad to note that the Governments are more and more disposed to collaborate with the Health Organisation in matters concerning the prevention of communicable diseases and the improvement of health conditions of the people.

The Assembly requests the Council to refer to the Health Committee and to the Economic Committee for their consideration the proposal submitted by the delegation of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and to the Health Committee the proposals of the delegations of Cuba, Czechoslovakia, France, Italy, Paraguay and Venezuela, on the assumption that these proposals will not involve any expenditure supplementary to the estimates already submitted for 1926.

I put the resolutions to the vote.

(The resolutions were adopted).

41. — WORK OF THE ORGANISATION FOR TRANSIT AND COMMUNICATIONS : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Second Committee's Report on the Organisation for Communications and Transit.

M. Avramovitch, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Avramovitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes), Rapporteur :

Translation : Before presenting my report on the work of the Organisation for Communications and Transit, I trust that I shall be voicing the desire of the whole Assembly in congratulating the British delegation upon the celebrations which took place in London last June on the occasion of the Fourth Railway Congress organised by the British Government in commemoration of the centenary of the opening to public traffic of the first railway from Darlington to Stockton in England in 1825.

This work, which was destined to be of such high importance and was conceived by a great Englishman — George Stephenson — marks a definite stage in the development of civilisation. It is a fitting moment, now that we are discussing the question of communications, to say that George Stephenson deserves the highest gratitude, not only of his own country but of the whole world.

After offering these few observations, as it was my duty to do, I turn to the question on the agenda.

I will not take up your time with the report of the Second Committee (Annex, A.SI.1925.VIII), which you already have, as we all wish to finish the work of the Sixth Assembly as rapidly as possible.

The questions for which I have the honour to act as Rapporteur are neither controversial nor very interesting to the public. I venture to say, however, that few questions are of greater importance, few questions are of wider interest in the whole field of human activity. I will not dwell upon this point — indeed, before such an Assembly as this it would be out of place to do so — but, bearing in mind the progress that has been made, not merely in the last century but in the last twenty years, I cannot help pointing out that, but for this improvement in communications and transit, even the great principles and noble ideas of the League would be less easily disseminated throughout the world, and the advance of scientific knowledge and material and moral progress would be impossible.

Means of communication have been a great spur to progress, even in the most abstract domains. Without them, certain transcendent principles of international law and international relationships would never have seen the light. Owing to its means of communication the world now forms a single material, intellectual and moral entity, which is rapidly destroyed as soon as these communications are broken; the best proof of this is to be seen in all the different crises which have arisen and the unrest which has prevailed throughout the world since the war.

In adopting the resolutions which I am about to read, you will not only be serving the individual interests of your own countries but also the general interests of humanity, and you will be acting in conformity with the fundamental principles of the League.

(M. Avramovitch read the two following draft resolutions submitted by the Second Committee.)

I. The Assembly :

Having taken note of the report of the Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit on the work of the Organisation for Communications and Transit between the Fifth and Sixth Assemblies,

Expresses its gratification at the work undertaken and the results obtained by the Advisory and Technical Committee, its Sub-Committees and the

various persons appointed by the Chairman of the Advisory and Technical Committee to undertake special missions ;

Associating itself with the resolution adopted by the Advisory and Technical Committee at its last session, considers it highly desirable that the Conventions adopted at the last General Conference on Communications and Transit should come into force as early as possible between the greatest possible number of States, draws the attention of the Governments concerned to this fact, and reminds them that, should it seem desirable to any of these Governments to obtain, with a view to facilitating ratification or adherence, any necessary information or particulars as to these Conventions in order to dispel all misunderstandings, the Advisory Committee would be ready to give any assistance which might be required ;

Trusts that the European Conference of the Tonnage Measurement of Vessels employed in Inland Navigation, which is to meet on November 20th next, will obtain the complete success which can be already expected as a result of the excellent preparatory work of the Advisory and Technical Committee carried out with the full co-operation of the European States not Members of the League ;

Draws the attention of all the Governments to the special importance of the Conference on Passports to be held in 1926, which public opinion, particularly in economic circles, undoubtedly expects to take at least a step towards the abolition, to the widest extent possible, of the passport system, and to mitigate considerably the disadvantages and expense which that system entails for the relations between peoples and for international trade facilities ;

Follows with keen interest the work of the Organisation for Communications and Transit which may result in the convening of a Conference on communications and transit of the European States concerned with a view to maintain, preserve and, if necessary, adapt to present circumstances, the unification of private law concerning internal traffic as applicable to international traffic on successive contracts, of the method of presentation of tariffs and of the method of presentation of operation regulations which were all effected before the war between certain railway systems in Central and Eastern Europe ;

In view of the great economic importance which problems relating to the organisation and exploitation of hydro-electric power present for a large number of countries Members of the League of Nations, and in view of the influence which favourable agreements will exercise on the economic reconstruction of Europe and the improvement of the general economic conditions of the world, again draws the attention of Governments and the Organisation for Communications and Transit to these problems, and to the fact that, apart from the question of the ratification of the Conventions concluded at the last General Conference, it is desirable that the competent organs of the League should draw up a definite plan of action for instituting the most practical methods whereby the League of Nations may take as active a part as possible in the solution of these problems ;

Convinced that the Members of the League will further the work of the Organisation in every direction, and, in particular, will assist its efforts to arrange for the technical settlement between States of disputes concerning international communications, of which remarkable examples have been given by the Advisory Committee during the past year :

Invites the Organisation for Communications and Transit to continue its work in the same

spirit and on the same lines, with a view to the improvement of international transport and the development of international law in regard to communications.

II. The Assembly :

Considering that all improvements in railway, telegraphic, radio-telegraphic, telephonic and radio-telephonic communications between the seat of the League of Nations and the States Members or non-Members of the League are of the highest political and practical importance to the working and development of the League ;

And having taken note of the efforts of the Organisation for Communications and Transit to secure improvements in the railway time-tables which affect communications with the seat of the League :

Calls the attention of the Governments concerned to the necessity for further progress accompanied by an improvement in conditions as regards Customs formalities at the frontiers near the seat of the League. These conditions are still giving rise to the delays and inconveniences to which attention was drawn in the discussions of the last Assembly, and the Assembly requests the Organisation for Communications and Transit to continue to co-operate in the endeavour to achieve such progress ;

Associating itself with the resolution adopted by the Advisory and Technical Committee at its last session with reference to the questions raised by the establishment of a new European long-distance telephone system, draws the attention of the Governments concerned to the desirability of treating communications between the seat of the League and the principal European capitals on the same footing as communications between important capitals, when considering the question of priority and urgency for the establishment of different lines ;

Recommends that a resolution proposed by the delegate for Uruguay¹ on the subject of telegraphic facilities for the dissemination of information regarding the work of the League of Nations should be referred to the Organisation for Communications and Transit for consideration and for any action which it may think expedient and possible.

I am certain that in adopting these resolutions and in doing what is necessary to carry out the suggestions they contain, the various Governments will be accomplishing a useful work not only for the League but for their own countries.

Indeed, we shall be greatly helping to strengthen the foundations of the League and to establish international co-operation in every sphere : material and moral disarmament, the security of nations, and universal peace.

I therefore beg the Assembly to adopt the resolutions submitted by the Second Committee, and I beg the Governments Members of the League here represented in the persons of the honourable delegates to do all they can to ensure that these resolutions shall be approved and put into practice.

¹ Draft resolution : "... requests the Conference of the Universal Telegraphic Union, which is now in conference, to consider how far it is possible for the telegraphic administrations to further the work of the League of Nations and assist in bringing it to public notice by affording newspapers and journalists who follow the work of the League the widest facilities in regard to rates, approximating as nearly as possible to uniformity, and by considering the improvement of the telegraphic and radio-telegraphic services, which can and should be utilised for the wider dissemination of information regarding the work of the League of Nations."

The President :

Translation : Does anybody wish to speak on these resolutions ?

I put them to the vote.

The resolutions were adopted.

42. — FINANCIAL RECONSTRUCTION OF HUNGARY: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the debate on the Report of the Second Committee concerning the financial reconstruction of Hungary.

M. Loucheur, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Loucheur, Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — As the report on the financial reconstruction of Hungary has been distributed in both languages (Annex, A.80.1925), I will merely refer to its salient points.

Less than eighteen months after the signature of the agreements providing for the financial reconstruction of Hungary, we are glad to be able to say that, at the end of the financial year 1924-1925, instead of the estimated deficit of 100,000,000 gold crowns we have a surplus totalling 63,000,000 gold crowns. Moreover, the crown has been stable for over a year ; the Bank's resources are sufficient for the needs of the harvest ; its reserves have been tripled in a year ; and the commercial balance has greatly increased. Lastly, the deposits in crowns in the Hungarian banks have increased from 2,600,000 to 78,000,000 gold crowns.

Nevertheless, a number of problems remain to be solved, such as the reduction in the number of officials — a question which is more important in Hungary than elsewhere. To carry this out, the Hungarian Government has planned a complete reorganisation of its public services.

Above all — and this is an essential point to which the attention of the Hungarian Government should be drawn — the commercial negotiations at present in progress, particularly the negotiations with Austria, must be brought to a satisfactory conclusion.

The present fiscal charges, although they constitute 13 to 15 per cent of the national revenue, are not too heavy. Unfortunately, they are raised by methods which should be modified, since about three-quarters of the State revenue is raised by direct taxation. The Hungarian Government has, however, resolutely taken in hand the required reforms.

The economic programme in connection with railways, posts, telegraphs and telephones, and the construction of drainage canals, on which the Financial Committee and the Economic Committee are in agreement, has yet to be completed.

Such, gentlemen, is the work that has been done and the work that remains to be done.

I believe I am interpreting the sentiments of the Committee and of the whole Assembly in congratulating the Hungarian Government upon the great effort it has made, and in thanking and congratulating the Commissioner-General, whose outstanding ability is highly appreciated by the whole Assembly, and who, in co-operation with the Hungarian Government, has succeeded in surmounting the difficulties of this period.

In order to be just also towards the people of Hungary, I venture to second the tribute paid here by Count Apponyi to the Unknown Taxpayer,

who during 1924-1925 bore the burden of this taxation and thus made the restoration of his country possible.

The President :

Translation : Does anybody wish to speak on the resolution submitted by the Second Committee?

The following resolution was put to the vote and adopted :

The Assembly notes with satisfaction the rapid progress made in the financial reconstruction of Hungary. In the first year in which the reconstruction programme has been applied, the budget has been balanced and the accounts relating to the period from July 1924 to June 1925 show a considerable surplus instead of a deficit, which would have had to be covered out of the yield of the international loan. Monetary stability is assured, and there is an improvement in the economic situation.

The Assembly expresses its congratulations to the Hungarian Government and the Commissioner-General. It confidently hopes that the reconstruction programme may be brought to a conclusion within the period provided for by the Protocols.

It notes the Hungarian Government's declarations regarding its proposals for re-organising the administrative departments.

It considers that the measures taken by the Hungarian Government with a view to re-establishing freedom of trade are of a kind to encourage the development of the country ; it would welcome the conclusion of further commercial agreements between Hungary and other countries — particularly the adjoining countries with which negotiations are in progress — which would tend to bring about a progressive reduction of the tariffs in Central Europe and would thus contribute to establishing closer economic relations.

43. — FINANCIAL RECONSTRUCTION OF AUSTRIA : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the debate on the report of the Second Committee on the financial reconstruction of Austria.

I invite M. Michelet, delegate of Norway, Rapporteur, to take his place on the platform and to communicate his report to the Assembly.

M. Michelet (Norway), Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I have pleasure in laying before you the report of the Second Committee on the financial reconstruction of Austria, as we now come to a new stage—a happy and a conclusive stage—in the League's work of reconstruction : the gradual liquidation of international control.

This liquidation is subject to certain conditions, but there is every reason to believe that these conditions will be fulfilled. Though there are still clouds on the Austrian horizon, we all hope that they will soon be dissipated, in order that this noble people may be able to develop and place the whole of its strength at the service of civilisation.

The Second Committee's report has been submitted to you, together with the accompanying resolutions (Annex, Doc. A. 78. 1925). I shall therefore not read it.

Before concluding, I should like to offer two observations in a personal capacity.

It is my duty to thank the Secretariat for the splendid assistance it gave me when I was engaged in investigating this question. I have everywhere met with unparalleled kindness and helpfulness,

and it has been a great pleasure to me to cooperate with men so cultured, so sympathetic, and so engrossed in the questions submitted to them. I offer them my heartiest thanks.

Colonel Rolli (Switzerland) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Swiss delegation desires to associate itself whole-heartedly with the congratulations addressed to Austria on the approaching completion of the work of financial restoration which was only begun a few years ago. Our congratulations are also due to the League, under whose auspices this happy result has been obtained.

For a number of reasons the Swiss nation has always followed with cordial sympathy the progress of the financial restoration of Austria, and Switzerland has endeavoured, within the limits of her modest resources, to afford both material and moral aid.

In the first place, the two nations have long been united by traditional ties of loyal friendship and neighbourly amity. The great river which flows from our mountains and for many miles forms the frontier between Switzerland and Austria has for centuries neither separated nor divided them. Rather has the Rhine united the two nations in a joint effort to safeguard their respective shores and the well-being of the inhabitants.

But in addition to this, and viewing the matter from a more general aspect, the Swiss nation welcomes every effort of the League that bears witness to the active spirit of solidarity on which it is based. With her practical clear-sightedness Switzerland recognises in work such as this, which bears immediate fruit, indications of the progress being made towards great achievements and high ideals. She will always welcome the establishment of secure foundations for the future peace and happiness of humanity.

M. Suvich (Italy) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I do not think I need speak at any great length on the question of the financial restoration of Austria. There are, however, certain aspects of the problem to which the Assembly's attention might, I think, be drawn.

In the first place, we must not lose sight for one moment of the preponderating and decisive part played by the League. It would be going too far, perhaps, to say that but for the League's intervention Austria would have been lost. But it is only fair to say that when Austria was in imminent peril the League intervened and played a decisive part in her affairs.

Before this intervention, however, Austria had received advances and assistance from other Powers, from Great Britain, France, Italy and Czechoslovakia, who had gone to her assistance and given her their generous and fraternal support. Their help, unfortunately, could only have the effect of prolonging the country's agony; the real need was to discover some method of reviving her and endowing her with new vitality.

This method was found, in face of the imminent danger caused by the depreciation of her currency, which complicated the provisioning of the country and made the introduction of sweeping financial and economic reforms a most hazardous venture. The means adopted took the form of a scheme for the reconstruction of Austria drawn up by the League. It was a new scheme, which, if concrete results were to be obtained, demanded, on the one hand, strict but wise and reasonable control, and, on the other, absolute good-will.

These conditions were fulfilled, and that is why the original plan of 1922 — certain points of which were modified in 1924 in the light of the experience obtained during the first two years of the scheme's application — has now brought about the desired result.

Perfect co-operation was essential between all the agents concerned in the execution of the scheme: between the League and its organs, the Commissioner-General, the Board of the National Bank, the Government and the Austrian nation. This co-operation was attained, and the work begun three years ago may be regarded as almost completed to-day. The system is already in operation by which control will eventually cease; it has, indeed, been relaxed since last August in virtue of a decision of the Commissioner-General.

The budget equilibrium is now an accomplished fact. Although the actual expenditure has exceeded the estimates in the agreement reached with the League in September 1924, the revenue during that period has also increased to a corresponding extent. This fact is recorded by the Financial Committee in its report on the work of its nineteenth session,¹ in which, after noting that there was a surplus on the ordinary budget for 1924, it states that a similar result is expected for 1925. Since the drawing-up of the plan of reform the Austrian currency has remained stable.

There is reason, therefore, to believe that the responsible Governments of the Federation and the Austrian nation itself, which has suffered so greatly from inflation, will certainly never venture to disturb the equilibrium of the budget, since to do so would inevitably lead to fresh difficulties and further suffering. Such being the case, it may surely be said that the reservations contained in the scheme for the cessation of control will not hamper Austrian economic activities but will rather serve to maintain confidence in the national finances and, it is to be hoped, make it possible to float at a moderate rate of interest the long-term loans which Austrian production requires if cost prices are to be reduced.

Economic conditions in Austria still bear traces of an acute crisis, the most serious feature of which is unemployment, which as yet shows no signs of decreasing.

Mr. Layton and Professor Rist, the experts who have given us such an admirable account of conditions in Austria in the form of a general summary and a more detailed statement, attribute this crisis to two main factors: first, the cost prices due to the economic organisation of certain undertakings which date back to the period of inflation, and the present high rate of interest; and, secondly, the difficulty in finding outlets for Austrian products owing to the Customs and tariff systems in the Danube countries.

In this connection the experts contemplate the possibility of closer co-operation between Austria and her neighbours in the matter of a commercial and Customs policy. The question is to be studied and has been referred by the Council to the Economic Committee for examination.

Italy desires to state that she is prepared, if this project is taken up, to give it her support, as she is most anxious to promote the economic recovery of Austria in order to complete the very useful work undertaken by the League in this connection. In any case, the interests of third parties should, as far as possible, be safeguarded.

Italy is convinced that no efforts in this direction will be wasted; all will really contribute towards the economic reconstruction of Central and Eastern Europe.

¹ See *Official Journal*, October 1925.

In any case, the work already done towards the reconstruction of Austria, and the work now being undertaken — and already so far advanced — for the recovery of Hungary, represent an enormous contribution towards the maintenance of peace and undeniably reflect lasting credit on the League.

The President :

Translation : I call upon M. Veverka, delegate of Czechoslovakia, to address the Assembly.

M. Veverka (Czechoslovakia) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Czechoslovak delegation desires first to associate itself with the praise so rightly bestowed on the admirable work of the Rapporteur. It also pays tribute to the wisdom of the Council and to all those who have contributed to the success obtained in 1925 in connection with the work begun in 1922 under the auspices of the League. The admirable report of Professor Rist and Mr. Layton had already encouraged us to hope that the great work of financial and economic restoration is nearing its conclusion. The Austrian Government's assurances and the evidence laid before the Council and the Second Committee have converted this hope into a certainty.

If, from this complex mass of facts and arguments I might venture to select the two chief constructive ideas, I would simply quote these two outstanding statements :

1. Austria is able to live.
2. Austria is not suffering from any specific ills.

I would add, in the words employed by M. Loucheur in the Austrian Committee of the Council when he summed up the situation of the country in so clear, able and concise a manner: "Want is at an end, and prosperity is in sight".

The discussions of the competent Technical Committee will show whether it is expedient to adopt special economic means to encourage Austria in this path of prosperity. I am also inclined to think that the general conference which is about to materialise through the action of this Assembly might, as a result of its general economic diagnosis of the present distress, throw sufficient light on the question and suggest a remedy for this concrete case. One thing, however, appears to be already certain: Austria will never be obliged to resort to measures foreign to her natural organic evolution or historic mission in order to ensure her power to live and her national prosperity.

As the representative of the country which is her neighbour and her friend and which is directly interested in her destiny, I hasten to offer her my congratulations.

When I say "neighbour", I use the word in its fullest meaning and particularly in its economic sense. Czechoslovakia, which is in a similar position and is destined to share and experience every reaction produced by the general economic situation, cannot but rejoice at seeing her neighbour emerge from her peril unharmed and strengthened. It is in this spirit that I extend to Austria my best wishes for the future.

The Czechoslovak delegation whole-heartedly seconds the resolution now before us.

The President :

Translation : M. Avramovitch, delegate of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, will address the Assembly.

M. Avramovitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen

— I have the honour, on behalf of the Serb-Croat-Slovene delegation, to congratulate the Rapporteur and the Austrian Government on their contribution towards the work so courageously undertaken and so successfully carried out by the League of Nations.

November 28th, 1921, and September 21st, 1925, will be two red-letter days in the history of the League.

In 1921, the world was distraught by the financial and economic straits to which every country was reduced. Everyone wondered whether a remedy could be found at all.

It was then, if you remember, that M. Ador, as Rapporteur of the Second Committee, indicated the means which appeared best calculated to restore Austria and those other countries whose finances were in an unsatisfactory condition. Following his lead, we declared that their restoration could only be accomplished by the combined efforts of public opinion, the various Governments and the League.

We appealed for international co-operation. We rejoice to find that this co-operation, which developed under the auspices of the League, has led to the most striking results.

The Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Austria's friend and neighbour, is particularly gratified. May I remind you that, since 1918, my country has had very close economic and financial relations with Austria. Moreover, quite recently we have concluded with the Austrian Government a commercial treaty which must contribute both to the financial reconstruction of Austria and to the prosperity of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

As M. Michelet, the Rapporteur, rightly said, the League can congratulate itself on its work in Austria, as can the States which are creditors of that country. The Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes did not hesitate to abandon certain legitimate rights, even though it was itself faced with serious financial and economic difficulties. It willingly made these sacrifices in the hope that it would thereby help towards the reconstruction of Austria and the pacification of the world.

In conclusion, may I again offer the sincere congratulations of the Serb-Croat-Slovene delegation to the Austrian Government, to the League and to the Rapporteur of the Second Committee, who has so admirably voiced the sentiments of every delegation ?

The President :

Translation : M. Mensdorff-Pouilly-Dietrichstein, delegate of Austria, will address the Assembly.

M. Mensdorff-Pouilly-Dietrichstein (Austria) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Rapporteur and several members of this august Assembly, whose interesting and remarkable speeches we have just heard, have revealed the great work done by the League in Austria since the agreements with the Federal Government were concluded here at Geneva during the third Assembly.

I desire to express my deep gratitude to the representative of that noble country which is now offering us hospitality, for the eloquent terms in which he referred to the amicable relations which for centuries past have existed between Switzerland and Austria. His words, which will find a ready echo in my country, touched me profoundly, and I can assure him that his feelings are fully reciprocated.

It fills me with the keenest satisfaction, here on this platform; from which in previous years it

has more than once been my duty to plead the cause of my country, then on the verge of the abyss, to note to-day that the sympathy shown for Austria by the League has never failed. That sympathy has survived unchanged during the long period of effort and sacrifice through which we have passed. I rejoice to find that it remains as strong as ever after the reading of the Second Committee's report to the Assembly on the results obtained in Austria.

This report, like the recent report of the Financial Committee, notes that Austria's currency has been stabilised and her budget balanced. It reproduces the Council resolution contemplating the withdrawal of the League's control in the near future.

Before this stage is reached, however, something still remains to be done. The time specified for the execution of certain conditions in the agreements has not yet elapsed. Again, the Council, with the object of guaranteeing the credits granted to Austria — a vital and indispensable element in her industrial activity — has seen fit to require the Federal Government to agree to certain precautionary measures for which the latter still has to obtain the assent of the Legislative Assembly; namely, the stipulation that the services of a foreign adviser to the National Bank must be retained for three years, and that the control may be re-established if, within the next ten years, budgetary equilibrium should be seriously threatened, or if the securities assigned should prove insufficient to cover the service of the loan. These contingencies, however, are most improbable and, we are convinced, will never actually occur. The necessary laws will be submitted to Parliament, and will mark the last stage in the execution of the complete scheme of financial reconstruction.

May I venture now to speak of one of the chief contributors to this work, who, to my regret, is not present to-day. I refer to the Commissioner-General — M. Zimmermann — for whom my country will always entertain the sincerest feelings of gratitude, and whom it will always regard as a loyal and disinterested friend, as one who was at once our wise and trusted counsellor and the able and loyal executor of the League's recommendations.

May I also pay a tribute to the patience and courage with which the Austrian nation submitted to the trials and sacrifices required of it, confident that those trials and sacrifices would not be in vain and that the League's help would always be forthcoming in the work of financial reconstruction which was then the supreme question of the hour.

Nor must I omit the name of that courageous and far-sighted statesman Monsignor Seipel, who took the first step of all by appealing to the League, and to whom my thoughts turn to-day with sincere respect and admiration.

In thus voicing Austria's profound gratitude towards the League, I must not forget our gratitude to those countries which at the outset guaranteed the loans of which we stood in dire need.

The Council, realising our anxiety as to our economic future, instituted the economic enquiry the outcome of which you know. In their admirable report, the experts — Professor Rist and Mr. Layton — pointed out that the unfavourable economic situation in Austria, which was brought about by the same causes as those existing in many other countries, can be remedied; but the present economic crisis in all parts of Central Europe hits Austria harder than any other country, because she is the weakest. The remedy will be found through the efforts of the Governments concerned which are represented here, and some of which already have possible solutions in mind. I refer more particularly to the important statement

which my distinguished colleague M. Scialoja made on September 11th before the Austrian Committee of the Council.

The members of the Second Committee will also recall the statement made by M. Mataja, our Minister for Foreign Affairs, and I call upon you, gentlemen, who represent here the interests of countries which are Austria's neighbours, to help us to improve our economic position. The Czechoslovak representative has just said that all the Central European countries are faced with the same difficulties. I place my hope in the League, which has achieved so striking a success in financial reconstruction and whose assistance, whose competence and whose far-reaching influence will bring about the restoration of economic prosperity, so that Austria will soon be enabled to exert her powers to the full.

The President :

Translation : Does anyone else wish to speak on the resolutions proposed by the Second Committee which read as follows :

1. *The Assembly desires to express its satisfaction at the progress made by Austria towards the stabilisation of her finances, as shown in the Commissioner-General's reports and in the declaration of the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs. It tenders its congratulations to the Austrian Government and to the Commissioner-General.*

2. *It is happy to see that the work undertaken by the League is approaching its conclusion and notes the resolutions of the Council and the report of the Financial Committee, which contemplate the speedy termination of the control.*

It hopes that the measures which will allow the control to be abolished will soon be realised.

3. *The Assembly has further noted the conclusions embodied in the report of the experts entrusted by the Council with the investigation of the economic situation of Austria.*

It hopes that the enquiry to be carried out by the Economic Committee will soon yield positive results.

• If no one wishes to speak I will put the resolutions to the vote.

The resolutions were put to the vote and adopted.

44. — **PROPOSAL BY THE NETHERLANDS DELEGATION CONCERNING THE REPLIES OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF JURISTS APPOINTED UNDER THE COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION OF SEPTEMBER 28th, 1923 : REPORT OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.**

• **The President :**

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the First Committee's report on the proposal by the Netherlands delegation concerning the replies of the Special Committee of Jurists appointed under the Council's resolution of September 28th, 1923.

I call upon M. Limburg, delegate of the Netherlands, Rapporteur of the First Committee, and M. Scialoja, Chairman of the First Committee, to take their places on the platform.

(M. Scialoja, Chairman of the First Committee, and M. Limburg, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform).

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Limburg (Netherlands), Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — As you are aware, the Council, by its resolution of September 28th, 1923, appointed a Special Committee of Jurists to formulate answers to five questions with regard to certain points concerning the interpretation of the Covenant and other questions of international law.

This Special Committee of Jurists, under the Chairmanship of our eminent colleague M. Adatci, soon formulated its replies. Its report was approved by the Council in March 1924 and was submitted to the Assembly last year.

This Special Committee of Jurists is deserving of our deepest gratitude. We are indebted to it for a work which is of great value from the legal point of view and is most important for the interpretation of the Covenant. It is essential that this work should be continued in the interests of the development of international law, more especially as doubts might arise as to certain of the replies, and even as to the real purport of some of the questions which were asked.

Accordingly, the Netherlands delegation last year proposed the resolution which was referred this year to the First Committee and was examined by the latter.

This resolution was as follows :

The Assembly, having taken note of the replies of the special Committee of Jurists appointed in pursuance of the resolution adopted by the Council on September 28th, 1923, and considering that certain points in these replies require elucidation, requests the First Committee to consider how far such elucidation would be desirable.

The Netherlands delegation, not being especially desirous that the examination in question should take place at present or that it should be undertaken by the First Committee itself, amended its draft resolution.

It seemed to us that a Committee of Experts making in the future an exhaustive study of the question should know in advance the various doubtful points which the States Members of the League might have found in the report of the Special Committee of Jurists. We thought, therefore, that the proper course was to propose that the Council should request the States Members of the League to transmit to it, before a given date, any comments which they might have to make on the report of the Special Committee. Once these points have been communicated to the Council, the latter could refer them to a Committee for examination.

The Netherlands delegation, though it amended its proposal, would have suggested that any doubtful points raised by the States Members of the League should be referred to the same Special Committee of Jurists, if this Committee were still in existence. But the Committee in question had been appointed *ad hoc*. It no longer exists. The Council, therefore, will either have to call it together again or take such steps of a similar character as it may think fit.

The Netherlands delegation accordingly proposed to the First Committee the resolution now submitted to you. The First Committee unanimously accepted this resolution, which I now have the honour, on behalf of the Committee, to submit to you for adoption.

The President :

Translation : Does anyone else wish to speak on the resolution submitted by the First Committee which reads as follows :

The Assembly requests the Council to invite the Governments of States Members of the League

which find in the report of the Special Committee of Jurists appointed under the resolution of the Council of September 28th, 1923, doubtful points which require elucidation, or which may have other comments to make on this report, to forward their observations to the Secretariat of the League of Nations before February 1st, 1926, with a view to a possible examination of the matter by a committee to be appointed by the Council.

If no one wishes to speak I will put the resolution to the vote.

The resolution was put to the vote and adopted.

45. — AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 16 OF THE COVENANT PROPOSED BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT: REPORT OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the First Committee on the British delegation's proposed amendment to Article 16 of the Covenant.

I call upon the Rapporteur, M. Fernandes, delegate of Brazil, to take his place on the platform.

(M. Fernandes, Rapporteur of the First Committee, took his place on the platform.)

M. Fernandes (Brazil), Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The First Committee examined the British amendment to Article 16 of the Covenant, unanimously accepted it, and now proposes that you also should adopt it.

Article 16, as you are aware, begins by defining breaches of the Covenant. The first paragraph defines the powers of the Council in such cases.

At the 1922 and 1924 Assemblies three amendments to Article 16 of the Covenant were adopted, which, when they have been ratified and come into force, will be inserted as paragraphs 1, 2 and 3.

The present paragraph 1 (new paragraph 4) will then become pointless and meaningless, as it defines the powers of the Council concerning contingencies which were previously mentioned.

The British delegation proposed the amendment

in question in order to correct this textual error, which, though apparently trifling in itself, had the serious consequence of depriving of all meaning a very important hypothesis in the Covenant.

I need hardly say that the acceptance of this amendment by the Assembly would be without prejudice to those other amendments which are still in process of ratification. The present amendment is necessary in view of the possible adoption of the others, but it is understood that if the latter are not adopted this amendment also will be dropped.

In view of what might happen if the amendments now in process of ratification were only partially accepted, the First Committee considered whether the simultaneous acceptance or refusal of the amendments could be made, as it were, automatic. It decided that no technical means could be found to link the four amendments, which are in actual fact independent of one another, being submitted under separate proposals.

The Assembly must rely on the wisdom of the Governments concerned, and trust that the amendment it now proposes will only be ratified if the other amendments, and more particularly the amendment concerning the first paragraph, are ratified by the number of States necessary to enable them to come into force.

The President :

Translation : Has anyone any objection to the adoption of the Committee's conclusions, which read as follows :

The Assembly adopts the following resolution, being an amendment to Article 16 of the Covenant :
"The words 'in such case' in the second paragraph of the original text of Article 16 of the Covenant shall be deleted.

This amendment shall be submitted for ratification by the Members of the League.

A Protocol embodying the amendment shall at once be drawn up in accordance with the principles adopted by the Second Assembly for amendments to the Covenant.

I shall therefore consider them adopted.

The conclusions of the First Committee were adopted.

The meeting rose at 1.5 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SIXTH ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FOURTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22nd, 1925, AT 10 A.M.

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46. — QUESTION OF THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF COSTA RICA FROM THE LEAGUE: DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE FRENCH DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : M. Montigny, a member of the French delegation, has asked leave to submit a draft resolution.

I call upon him to address the Assembly.

M. Montigny (France) :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — On behalf of the French delegation I have the honour to submit the following draft resolution :

The Assembly,

Having learnt that the Republic of Costa Rica has expressed its intention of resigning its membership of the League ;

Deeply regrets to note the absence of a Member whose participation in the work of the Assembly has been unanimously and highly appreciated ;

Expresses the hope that the Government of the Republic of Costa Rica may again find it possible to afford the League its valuable co-operation.

I can explain quite briefly the text I have just read.

The settlement by the Assembly of what is a purely administrative matter led the Republic of Costa Rica to think that the League meant to offer it an affront ; and the President of the Republic informed the League Secretariat of his Government's intention to resign its membership.

The Latin-American nations were particularly grieved at this news, and they deeply regret that a sister nation should have taken so serious a step

in consequence of so trifling an incident. They intended to submit to the Assembly a draft resolution of the same tenor as the one I have just read, asking the Government of Costa Rica whether it could not reconsider the question and once again participate in our work. They have, however, conferred upon the French delegation the great honour of asking it to speak on this occasion.

The French delegation is happy to refer this matter to you and feels sure that all States Members will support this fraternal appeal to the Republic of Costa Rica, whose valued co-operation we have greatly appreciated at former sessions.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly has heard the draft resolution submitted by the French delegation, the text of which has been printed and distributed to you.

In view of the urgent nature of this resolution, I think it can be placed on the agenda of one of the next meetings of the Assembly.

Has anybody any observations to make ?

The proposal was adopted.

47. — SITUATION IN CHINA : DRAFT RECOMMENDATION PROPOSED BY THE CHINESE DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the draft recommendation submitted by the Chinese delegation on the situation in China; this question was withdrawn from yesterday's agenda and included in to-day's. As you are aware, the text was submitted to the Agenda Committee, which decided that as this was a special case the question should be referred direct to the Assembly. The form of the recommendation has been slightly modified, the text now being as follows :

The Assembly,

Having heard with deep interest the Chinese delegate's suggestion regarding the possibility of considering, according to the spirit of the Covenant, the existing international conditions of China;

Having learned with satisfaction that a conference of the interested States is soon to take place in China to consider the questions involved :

Expresses the hope that a satisfactory solution may be reached at an early date.

M. Chao-Hsin Chu, delegate for China, will address the Assembly.

M. Chao-Hsin Chu (China) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I put forward this draft resolution for two reasons : In the first place, China looks earnestly to the League of Nations for moral support in accordance with the letter and spirit of Article 19 of the Covenant. Secondly, we all recognise that Article 19 of the Covenant is a remedy for changing international conditions which might endanger the peace of the world. When the application of this article is carried out for the first time in the case of China, it will not only more fully justify the existence of the League but will also convince the whole world of the League's activity and efficiency. I am sure the whole world will have more and more confidence and faith in the League, and will appeal to the League for guidance in all international disputes and for their equitable adjustment.

The draft resolution which is now before the Assembly will, if adopted, create a very good impression in the Special Tariff Conference at Peking on October 26th, and at a subsequent time when the whole question of the revision of China's

treaties with foreign Powers, which have been generally regarded as out of date and inapplicable, will be brought up for reconsideration on the basis of equity and reciprocity. I am sure that all the members of the Assembly will agree with me in expressing the sincere hope that a satisfactory solution in readjusting China's treaty relations with the foreign Powers concerned will be reached at an early date. The Chinese people will be exceedingly grateful to the League for its valuable assistance and moral support.

I beg, therefore, to move the draft resolution in the form in which it has just been read to you by the President.

The President :

Translation : Are there any observations on the draft recommendation which has been submitted ? Since there are no observations, the text is adopted.

The recommendation was adopted.

48. — STATISTICAL INFORMATION REGARDING THE TRAFFIC IN ARMS AND AMMUNITION AND IN IMPLEMENTS OF WAR: REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the report of the Third Committee on statistical information regarding the trade in arms and ammunition and in implements of war.

I invite the Rapporteur, M. Guerrero, delegate for Salvador, and in the absence of the Chairman of the Third Committee, M. Löfgren, I invite the Vice-Chairman, M. de Brouckère, delegate for Belgium, to take their places on the platform.

M. Guerrero, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Guerrero (Salvador), Rapporteur.

Translation : As the report of the Second Committee on statistical information regarding the trade in arms and ammunition and in implements of war has been distributed (Annex, Document A, 82. 1925. IX), I will simply read the resolution at the end :

The Assembly :

Taking into account the provisions of the Convention for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War, signed at Geneva on June 17th, 1925 ;

Considering the advantage to be derived from the standardisation of nomenclature and statistical systems for this trade ;

Considering paragraph 3 of the resolution of the fifth Assembly, dated September 27th, 1924, in virtue of which States Members and non-Members of the League of Nations are invited to transmit to the Secretariat all documents which they may deem likely to be of assistance in the preparation of a collection of statistical data concerning the trade in arms, munitions and implements of war ;

Recommends all States, so soon as they may find it possible, to adopt the models given in Annex I to the said Convention for their national statistics and for the documents they supply to the Secretariat as data for the preparation of the above-mentioned collection.

The President :

Translation : If no member of the Assembly desires to speak on the resolution, I shall consider it adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

49. — ESTABLISHMENT OF A CONCILIATION COMMISSION ATTACHED TO THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE: PROPOSAL OF THE DANISH GOVERNMENT.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the First Committee's report on the proposal of the Danish Government to set up a Conciliation Commission attached to the Permanent Court of International Justice.

I invite the Rapporteur, M. Urrutia, delegate for Colombia, and the Chairman of the First Committee, M. Scialoja, to take their places on the platform.

The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Urrutia (Colombia), Rapporteur :

Translation : The First Committee has studied the proposal which the Danish Government has placed on the Assembly's agenda and which relates to the establishment of a Conciliation Commission attached to the Permanent Court of International Justice.

The Danish delegation submitted to the Committee, as the basis of discussion, a statement of reasons which brought out clearly the objects aimed at by the proposal and its legal foundations. According to this statement, the draft for the establishment of the above-mentioned Commission originated in two different points of views :

The first contemplates that questions susceptible of being settled by the Court may also be submitted to a Conciliation Commission attached to the Court for purposes of conciliation.

The second contemplates centralisation of efforts to secure conciliation in accordance with the resolution of the 1922 Assembly.

It is the first of these points of view which the Danish delegation developed as the principal basis of its proposal.

The First Committee examined the general aspects of the Danish proposal with the interest and attention which it merits. Many members delivered statements which were as conscientious as they were well informed. It appeared from the tenor of these statements that the majority of the Committee feared that it was impossible for the moment to carry out an innovation which might involve making amendments in the Permanent Court's Statute, amendments which would be exposed to not being accepted by all the signatories of the Statute. Other objections were also raised, based on the judicial nature of the Court and on the special conditions, different from those applicable to judges, which mediators in international conflicts ought to satisfy.

On the other hand, the Committee fully realised the importance of the Danish proposal, not merely with regard to the authority of the Government making it but also on account of its lofty inspiration and the significance of the question which it raises. The proposal is in fact directed towards unifying and strengthening those methods of international conciliation which at the present moment occupy a pre-eminent place among contemplated methods for ensuring peace. On all sides, both within the League and in the sphere of public opinion, a constantly increasing interest is being taken in the study of such methods of conciliation.

Having regard, however, to the considerations indicated above, the Committee felt that the better course would be to adjourn consideration of the important Danish proposal for a sufficient period of time to enable Governments to form a

mature opinion on its contents and scope in the light of the views expressed about it in the Committee.

The Danish delegation accepted this solution. In agreement with it, therefore, the First Committee has the honour to propose for adoption by the Assembly the following resolution :

The Assembly decides to adjourn to a subsequent session the consideration of the proposal of the Danish Government as to the establishment of a Conciliation Commission attached to the Permanent Court of International Justice.

The President :

Translation : Does anyone wish to speak on this resolution ?

If no one wishes to speak, I declare the resolution adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

50. — OPTIONAL CLAUSE OF THE STATUTE OF THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE: RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE FIRST COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the draft resolution submitted by the First Committee relative to the Optional Clause of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice.

M. Motta, delegate for Switzerland, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Motta (Switzerland), Rapporteur :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — The First Committee proposes the following draft resolution for adoption :

The Assembly,

Noting with satisfaction the fact that fifteen States have accepted up to the present the optional clause of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice concerning the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court ;

Noting also that some of those States have assumed this obligation for a period which will shortly terminate :

Requests the Secretary-General of the League of Nations to draw the attention of such States to the measures to be taken, if they consider it proper, in order to renew in due course their undertakings.

The First Committee thinks it unnecessary to submit a written report on this draft resolution, as it does not call for much comment. I am asked merely to make a verbal report, and I need only offer a few observations on the subject.

The clause in Article 36 of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice which refers to compulsory jurisdiction has been accepted definitely and unconditionally by fifteen States. Eight other States have also accepted this clause in principle, either subject to ratification by their Parliaments (in some cases this ratification has not yet been given) or subject to some other reservations.

Twenty-three States, therefore, have declared themselves, in principle, in favour of this clause. The majority of those which have bound themselves definitely and unconditionally have done so for a period of five years, subject to reciprocity. For many of these States this period of five years will expire next year. They should accordingly take timely steps to renew their engagements if they desire to do so.

The Swiss proposal, which gave rise to this draft resolution, was merely a recommendation. In the text as now submitted the Secretary-General of the League is requested to undertake the necessary negotiations with the States in question. There is no question of exerting pressure: it is simply a friendly act of encouragement. States which have not accepted compulsory jurisdiction can quite easily and without inconsistency express their satisfaction that other States should have accepted it and vote for this resolution. The vote would in no way imply criticism. The States in question will simply be encouraging those which have already adopted this procedure.

I am particularly glad to find that the prevailing idea in all the debate of the First Committee which I had the honour and pleasure of attending was compulsory jurisdiction with all its consequences, such as, for example, the extension of the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court. All the members of the Committee agreed that it was necessary to encourage States to adopt and practise this method.

Some delegates have stated that their Governments will shortly accept compulsory jurisdiction. It is not for me to give the names of these States; it will be for their representatives to make this solemn declaration at the fitting moment.

I would merely point out that the example of those who have accepted compulsory jurisdiction has already borne fruit, and we can but congratulate ourselves on this fact, for this policy contains an essential element of international peace and mutual confidence. It is by following this path that we shall eventually attain disarmament and security.

The President :

Translation : Does anyone else wish to speak ? I put the resolution submitted by the First Committee to the vote.

The resolution was adopted.

51. — WORK OF THE FINANCIAL COMMITTEE: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the report of the Second Committee on the work of the Financial Committee.

I invite the Rapporteur, Mr. Samuel, delegate for the British Empire, and Jonkheer van Eysinga, Chairman of the Second Committee, to take their places on the platform.

The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

Mr. Samuel (British Empire), Rapporteur :
Ladies and gentlemen—The report of the Second Committee is before you (Annex, Document A. 84, 1925). It is therefore useless for me to read it. This report also contains the resolutions submitted by the Second Committee.

The President :

Translation : Does anyone wish to speak ? I put to the vote the resolutions submitted by the Second Committee, which read as follows :

I. *The Assembly :*

(a) *Has learnt with satisfaction that the scheme which was prepared, and partially put into execution through temporary advances last year, for the settlement of Greek refugees has been realised through the successful issue of a loan, yielding an effective sum of £10,000,000 in Athens,*

London and New York, on the basis of the Protocol signed on September 29th, 1923, and the Additional Act signed on September 19th, 1924 ;

(b) *Notes that, of the 1,200,000 refugees who, on the estimate of the original scheme, required settlement in productive work, over 700,000 have already been settled in agricultural districts or housed in urban settlements near Athens ;*

(c) *Notes with pleasure the reports received that the refugees form an energetic and industrious class, rapidly taking advantage of the opportunities afforded them, and will put to good use the land and materials which it is the work of the Commission to place at their disposal ;*

(d) *Observes that the Settlement Commission thus instituted under the auspices of the League has been able to effect a piece of work which, apart from the benefit to the refugees themselves, should have far-reaching beneficial results for Greece of both an economic and political character ;*

(e) *Expresses the hope that, through close collaboration between the Greek Government and the Settlement Commission, the work may be successfully pursued and brought to a conclusion.*

II. *The Assembly approves the part taken by the Financial Committee and the Council in the issue of a loan for the economic development of Danzig and for the equipment of the port, under conditions which have fully satisfied all those interested.*

III. *The Assembly notes the conclusions which have been formulated by the representatives of the revenue departments of certain European countries on the problems of double taxation and fiscal evasion. It observes with satisfaction that agreement has been reached on certain common principles, which are expressed in these conclusions, and that a further Conference of Experts is to be convoked in 1926, selected on a larger basis. It hopes that this technical Conference, which for the first time undertakes at the request of the Council the study of a financial problem of universal importance, may be able to submit practical proposals.*

IV. *The Assembly has learnt with interest of the new publications which are in course of preparation by the Statistical Branch of the Secretariat for the use of the Financial and Economic Organisation of the League, and considers that they form a useful contribution to the study of economic and financial problems.*

The resolutions were adopted.

52. — WORK OF THE COMMITTEE ON INTELLECTUAL CO-OPERATION : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESO- LUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the report of the Second Committee on the work of the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation.

(At the President's invitation, M. de Agüero y Bethancourt (Cuba), Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

M. de Agüero y Bethancourt gave a summary of his report (Annex, Document A. 83. 1925. XII) and read the resolutions.

The President :

Translation : Does anybody wish to speak ? I put to the vote the resolutions submitted by the Second Committee which read as follows :

1. The Assembly invites the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation to continue its work in the same spirit of prudence and firmness as heretofore; it expresses its satisfaction with the results obtained and, in particular, with the manner in which the International Institute for Intellectual Co-operation has been organised.

It notes with pleasure that the work of the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation is becoming more and more appreciated and that still greater services are expected of it in the future and, it is happy to observe the response made in numerous countries to the appeals which it has issued on behalf of nations, the intellectual position of which is particularly difficult and of students and young people, and also with a view to assisting research workers in their task.

2. The Assembly notes with satisfaction that most of the States Members of the League have acted on the resolutions adopted by the fifth Assembly on the subject of the instruction of youth in the ideals of the League of Nations and the encouragement of contact between young people of different nationalities. It expresses its satisfaction with the report prepared by the Secretary-General on this subject and considers that the report should be regarded as a first stage.

It therefore invites the Council:

(a) To consider the possibility of requesting all States Members of the League of Nations and non-Member States to keep the Secretary-General informed of the progress made in their respective countries as regards the various points mentioned in the report, and to forward to the Secretary-General all publications on this subject as soon as they appear.

(b) To instruct the Secretary-General to collect the information mentioned above. This information should be communicated from time to time to States Members of the League and to other States interested in the question.

(c) To forward the Secretary-General's report, together with the proposals submitted by the Chilean, Haitian, Polish and Uruguayan delegations, to the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation and to request it to consider the possibility of summoning a sub-committee of experts to consider the best methods of co-ordinating all official and non-official efforts designed to familiarise young people throughout the world with the principles and work of the League of Nations and to train the younger generation to regard international co-operation as the normal method of conducting world affairs.

The resolutions were adopted.

53. — PROTECTION OF MINORITIES: REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President:

Translation: The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Sixth Committee on the Protection of Minorities (Annex, Document A.88. 1925).

(At the invitation of the President, M. van Lynden, van Sandenburg (Netherlands), Rapporteur, and M. Guerrero (Salvador), Chairman of the Committee, took their places on the platform.)

The President:

Translation: The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. van Lynden van Sandenburg (Netherlands), Rapporteur:

Translation: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen. — Under the Treaties of Versailles, St. Germain, Trianon and Neuilly, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Roumania and the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and under the Treaty of Lausanne, Greece, all agreed to conclude Treaties containing such provisions as the Principal Allied and Associated Powers might consider necessary to protect the interests of racial, religious and linguistic minorities.

In virtue of this undertaking special "Minority Treaties" were concluded between the Principal Allied and Associated Powers and each of the above-mentioned five States, the provisions of these treaties being guaranteed by the League of Nations.

Under the Treaties of St. Germain, Trianon and Lausanne, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey agreed to similar provisions.

There are, in addition, special conventions which contain provisions relating to the protection of certain minorities, as, for example, the Treaty concluded between Poland and the Free City of Danzig on November 9th, 1920, the Germano-Polish Convention of May 15th, 1922, relating to Upper Silesia and the Convention of May 8th, 1924, concerning Memel.

The question of minorities was dealt with by the first Assembly of the League, more particularly in connection with the admission of new States, and the following resolution was adopted:

"In the event of Albania, the Baltic and Caucasian States being admitted to the League, the Assembly requests that they should take the necessary measures to enforce the principles of the minority treaties, and that they should arrange with the Council the details required to carry this object into effect."

In conformity with this resolution, Albania, Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania, which were admitted as Members of the League by the first and second Assemblies, made declarations before the Council concerning the protection of the minorities in their respective countries.

Finland, after having granted the inhabitants of the Aaland Islands local autonomy in virtue of a Law of May 7th, 1920, gave guarantees, in its declaration to the Council on June 27th, 1921, that this law should be amended, and undertook to inform the Council of the application of the guarantees. In a resolution dated October 2nd, 1921, the Council took note of the information relating to the position of racial, religious and linguistic minorities in Finland furnished by the Finnish representative.

The question came before the third Assembly in virtue of proposals submitted by Professor Gilbert Murray (delegate of South Africa) and Dr. Walters (delegate of Latvia), and a resolution was adopted, paragraph 4 of which reads as follows:

"The Assembly expresses the hope that the States which are not bound by any legal obligations to the League with respect to minorities will nevertheless observe, in the treatment of their own racial, religious or linguistic minorities, at least as high a standard of justice and toleration as is required by any of the treaties and by the regular action of the Council."

Finally, the fourth Assembly dealt with the matter and passed a resolution providing that:

"In accordance with the resolution of the Council dated September 5th, 1923, the communication of minorities petitions shall be restricted to the Members of the Council. By virtue, however, of paragraph V of the Assembly resolution dated September 21st, 1922, the Government of any

Member of the League can request the Secretariat to communicate to it any petition (together with the observations of the Government concerned) which have been communicated to the Council."

The Lithuanian delegation submitted to the present Assembly the following proposal, which was referred to your Sixth Committee :

"The Lithuanian delegation proposes that the sixth Assembly of the League should set up a special committee to prepare a draft general convention to include all the States Members of the League of Nations, and setting forth their common rights and duties in regard to minorities."

In view of the divergence of opinion which arose in the Sixth Committee when the matter was discussed, it was decided, after M. Galvanauskas had withdrawn the Lithuanian proposal, that a draft resolution should be submitted to the Assembly requesting the Secretary-General to communicate to the Council the discussion which took place in the Sixth Committee in this connection.

The Committee also took note of the part of the Report on the Work of the Council which concerns the procedure followed by the Council in minority questions. This procedure has already been frequently discussed by the Council and the Assembly. Resolutions on the subject were adopted by the Council on October 22nd, 1920, June 27th, 1921, and September 5th, 1923, and the question was dealt with by the Second and Third Assemblies. Quite recently, with the object of amending this procedure and facilitating the very difficult and important task of the President of the Council, without, however, modifying the terms of the treaties, the Council considered the matter afresh and decided, in accordance with the conclusions of the report submitted by the representative of Brazil, to adopt the rules which are to be found on pages 18 to 20 of the Supplementary Report on the Work of the Council.

Among these rules, I would mention the following, which relate to the constitution of the "Committee of Three" :

"Any petition submitted and which may be accepted under the terms of the Council resolution of September 5th, 1923, is examined by the President of the Council and by two members appointed by him in each case, neither of whom shall be the representative of the State to which the persons belonging to the minority in question are subject, or the representative of a State neighbouring on that State, or the representative of a State a majority of whose population belongs, from the ethnical point of view, to the same people as the persons in question."

If these conditions apply to the President of the Council, the latter shall be replaced by the Member of the Council who exercised the duties of President immediately before the Acting-President and who is not in the same position.

The sole object of the examination of a minorities petition by this Committee is to establish whether it is advisable or not for members of the Committee to exercise the right of drawing the attention of the Council to the infraction or danger of an infraction which is the subject of the petition, while reserving to other members of the Council the right of initiative which belongs to them under the treaties.

The Committee's resolution adds, therefore, that all the members of the Council shall receive the document for the examination of which the Committee is set up and can, if they take a special interest in the matter, inform themselves, through the Secretariat, of the treatment of the petition in the Committee, and, if necessary, submit to the Committee their own observations.

The Sixth Committee proposes that you should approve that part of the Report on the Work of the Council which relates to this procedure and should consequently adopt the following resolution :

The Assembly takes note of the Sixth Committee's report with regard to the protection of minorities and adopts the following resolution :

"The Assembly approves that part of the Report on the Work of the Council, the Work of the Secretariat and on the Measures taken to execute the Decisions of the Assembly, dealing with the procedure followed with regard to the protection of minorities (paragraph VI of Chapter 7 of the Supplementary Report). The Lithuanian representative having withdrawn the proposal submitted by him on September 14th, 1925, the Assembly requests the Secretary-General to communicate to the Council the discussion which has taken place in the Sixth Committee in this connection."

The President :

Translation : Count Apponyi, delegate of Hungary, will address the Assembly.

Count Apponyi (Hungary) :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — The Hungarian delegation regrets that it is unable to support the conclusions of the report just submitted to you, which expresses unqualified approval of the work of the Council and Secretariat in the matter of minorities.

I simply desire to make this declaration. There is no need for me to revert to the suggestions I made when I addressed the Assembly a few days ago. I said then that I had no intention of criticising or calling into question the competence of those eminent persons who constitute the Council; I stated that I had found defects in the procedure, and I made suggestions for its amendment.

They were simply suggestions and not proposals, because it seemed to me that the Assembly was not qualified to dictate to the Council its method of procedure. Under our Rules of Procedure and under the terms of the Covenant, the Council is autonomous, within the limits of its specific powers. What I desired, and what I still urge, is that the Council should consider my suggestions with a view to their being incorporated in the Rules of Procedure.

Until those suggestions are taken into account, the Hungarian delegation cannot express its formal and unqualified approval of the work of the Council and of the Secretariat in the matter of minorities. I was unfortunately obliged to be absent from Geneva for some days and was unable to take part in the discussions of the Sixth Committee, where my suggestions were the subject of criticism to which I cannot reply here.

The only point I desire to mention is this : one objection advanced against my proposals was that their acceptance would necessitate the amendment of the Minorities Treaties. I do not think that this is so, and I am prepared to prove it whenever there is an opportunity of reopening our discussion. I simply desire to-day to inform you that, in view of the reasons I have just given, the Hungarian delegation greatly regrets that it cannot accept the conclusions of the report submitted on the question of minorities.

I do not ask for a vote by roll-call, but if such a vote were taken, Hungary would be obliged to abstain from voting. The Hungarian delegation reserves the right to raise the question again at the next Assembly.

The President :

Translation : M. Hymans, delegate of Belgium, will address the Assembly.

M. Hymans (Belgium) :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — I do not propose to speak on the protection of minorities in connection with Count Apponyi's remarks. The delegate of Hungary himself did not desire, at the time when the report was examined, to re-open the discussion he raised some days ago.

I merely wish to inform him that the Sixth Committee, which dealt at some length with the Council's work in regard to minorities, examined every aspect of the question, and, in fact, discussed some of the suggestions he made in the Assembly.

The Committee proposed to communicate to the Council the minutes of its discussions on the question ; in this way the Council will be informed of Count Apponyi's views.

The Council, as the Assembly is aware, recently took various measures with a view to improving the procedure for the examination of minorities questions, and I can assure Count Apponyi that it will constantly bear the question in mind and is quite prepared to receive suggestions for the improvement of the present procedure.

The Assembly will feel, I think, that these few words of mine have served some purpose if they have shown Count Apponyi that the Council is only too ready to consider suggestions for the improvement of this intricate and highly important procedure.

M. Henry de Jouvenel (France) :

Translation : I desire to inform the Assembly that in the Sixth Committee, on which every country is represented, the Report on the Work of the Council was unanimously and unreservedly accepted.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will now put to the vote the resolution submitted by the Sixth Committee which reads as follows :

The Assembly takes note of the Sixth Committee's report with regard to the protection of minorities and adopts the following resolution :

- *The Assembly approves that part of the Report on the Work of the Council, the Work of the Secretariat and on the Measures taken to execute the Decisions of the Assembly, dealing with the procedure followed with regard to the protection of minorities (paragraph VI of Chapter 7 of the Supplementary Report). The Lithuanian representative having withdrawn the proposal submitted by him on September 14th, 1925, the Assembly requests the Secretary-General to communicate to the Council the discussion which has taken place in the Sixth Committee in this connection."*

The resolution was adopted.

54. — MANDATES : RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE SIXTH COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the resolution submitted by the Sixth Committee concerning mandates.

(At the invitation of the President, M. Veverka, Rapporteur of the Sixth Committee, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Veverka (Czechoslovakia), Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Sixth Committee yesterday approved a resolution on the question of mandates which

I had the honour to submit at the conclusion of its proceedings. This resolution briefly summarises the Committee's discussion, and, more particularly, the views expressed by Dr. Nansen and the representative of South Africa.

There is no need to enter into a detailed explanation of the first paragraph of the resolution, which is couched in quite general terms. The second paragraph, however, refers to a recommendation made by the Council to the Members of the League. The object of this recommendation, as Dr. Nansen explained to the Committee, is to extend to mandated territories as far as possible the benefits accruing to neighbouring territories belonging to the mandatory Powers through special international conventions.

The resolution which the Sixth Committee submits to the Assembly for approval is as follows :

The Assembly,

Having noted the reports of the Permanent Mandates Commission on its fifth and sixth sessions, and the documents relevant thereto :

(a) *Desires to express its keen interest in, and satisfaction with, the work of the mandatory Powers, the Permanent Mandates Commission and the Council of the League, in fulfilling the duties devolving on them under Article 22 of the Covenant in connection with the application of the mandates system ;*

(b) *Expresses in particular the hope that all the Members of the League of Nations will give effect without delay to the recommendation made by the Council in paragraph II (1) of its resolution of September 15th, 1925, concerning the extension of special international conventions to mandated territories.*

The President :

Translation : Dr. Nansen, delegate for Norway, will address the Assembly.

Dr. F. Nansen (Norway) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I do not desire to detain the Assembly for any length of time ; my only purpose is to move in a few words the adoption of the proposed resolution which has been unanimously adopted by the Sixth Committee. I believe that every delegation in the Assembly agrees with the view that the responsibility of the League of Nations for the territories now administered on its behalf under mandate is of great importance, not only to the inhabitants of those territories but also to the League of Nations itself. It is because of the direct interest and responsibility of every Member of the League and of the League as a whole that it is right for the Assembly to consider the work which has been done by the mandatory Powers and the reports on that work drawn up by them and by the Permanent Mandates Commission.

The Assembly will remember that certain of the mandates were first brought into force at the end of 1920 and that others have been brought into force at various intervals since then. Now that the whole system is in full working order, the Mandates Commission has found it necessary to hold two sessions a year of at least two weeks each—a fact which is only one more proof of the thoroughness with which the Commission does its work and the high standard to which it has conformed.

It is therefore right for us to express, as we do in the resolution now being proposed by the honourable delegate for Czechoslovakia our great interest in and satisfaction with the work which the Mandates Commission has accomplished in pursuance of Article 22 of the Covenant of the League. That resolution similarly expresses the satisfaction of the Assembly with the work of the

mandatory Powers and of the Council, and I think that anyone who reads the reports of the mandatory Powers or who has followed the debates in the Mandates Commission between their representatives and the members of the Commission will agree that this expression of gratitude to them and to the Council is well justified.

In a number of different ways the whole mandates system is making notable progress. May I perhaps draw a comparison, which I ventured to make yesterday in the Sixth Committee, between the events in South-West Africa a few years ago on the occasion of the Bondelswarts rebellion and the events of this year in connection with the disturbance in the Rehoboth community? The disturbance which has taken place among the Rehoboths this year was dealt with without the loss of a single drop of blood and it is very satisfactory to know that, as soon as the disturbance was over, the South African Government sent a special Commission to investigate the problems raised by the troubles in that community. We are glad to feel that we can be certain that the mandatory Power will ensure to the Rehoboths all the rights to which they are entitled.

Another example of the progress of the mandates system may be found in the recent letter from Sir Joseph Cook, in which he states that the Australian Government has decided to exempt the mandated territory of New Guinea from the operation of the coastal trade provisions of the Navigation Act. The Assembly may remember that a year ago the Mandates Commission called attention to a criticism to the effect that the application of this Act to the mandated territory might hamper its economic development; the promptness with which the mandatory Power has acted on the suggestion of the Commission is, I think, only characteristic of the whole spirit of co-operation which exists between the organs of the League and the mandatory Powers—a co-operation upon which the ultimate success of the whole system must plainly depend.

There are, of course, one or two points which have given a certain amount of trouble to the Commission during the last year or two. One of them relates to the question of loans, advances and investments of public and private capital in mandated territories. Only a few days ago the Council adopted a definite resolution on this subject, which was calculated to remove from the minds of investors any doubts concerning the stability of the financial obligations contracted in or for mandated territories, and I think we may confidently hope that this resolution will finally remove the doubts which have hitherto subsisted on this point in the minds of potential investors.

Another troublesome point is concerned with the definition of the liquor traffic. The evils of that traffic among natives have for many years been the subject of international agreement and regulation, and it was hoped that by Article 22 of the Covenant we should definitely stamp out these evils and protect the natives from the consequences which, in the past, have resulted from the unscrupulous conduct of liquor traders. The application of the mandates, however, has been somewhat hampered by the obscure wording of Article 22 of the Covenant and by the fact that there has been no agreed definition of the technical terms employed in that article, in the mandates and in the St. Germain Convention of 1919. We may hope that those Members of the League which have not yet sent to the Mandates Commission an expression of their views on this matter may do so without delay and that the Commission will then be able to reach a definite decision at an early date.

On those points and on others which I could mention, such, for example, as some of the remarks of the Mandates Commission on health conditions and the rate of mortality in connection with certain enterprises in mandated areas in Africa, there is still some cause for anxiety. That is only to be expected. But even when we have made allowance for such matters, it is still possible to say that we can see the mandates system of the League growing in strength year by year. That is a most important fact.

It has been said from this platform, but I venture to say it again, that the relations between the advanced and backward peoples of the world are destined in our century to be of immense importance. It may well be that the peace of the world and the fabric of our civilisation as we know it may depend on finding a solution for some of the problems raised by these relations. The mandates system has made great progress. It is not too much to hope that in the wider application of its principles, and above all of its fundamental principle, that the welfare of backward peoples is a sacred trust of civilisation in which may lie the solution sought to-day by the Governments of the world in connection with this most important matter of human relationship.

I beg to support the resolution proposed by the Sixth Committee.

The President :

Translation : Madame Bugge-Wicksell, delegate of Sweden, will address the Assembly.

Madame Bugge-Wicksell (Sweden) :

Ladies and gentlemen—Will you permit me to say a few words with regard to one of the points raised by Dr. Nansen: namely, the importance of properly restricting the liquor traffic in the mandated territories? This question has been treated by the Mandates Commission in a whole series of meetings, and is considered by the Commission as one of the most essential of those confided to its jurisdiction.

For the time being, one of the most prominent members of the Mandates Commission has agreed to write a special memorandum on this subject; that memorandum will be discussed at the session of the Commission which will take place next month.

The President :

Translation : Does anyone else wish to speak on the following resolutions submitted by the Committee :

The Assembly,

Having noted the reports of the Permanent Mandates Commission on its fifth and sixth sessions, and the documents relevant thereto :

(a) *Desires to express its keen interest in, and satisfaction with, the work of the mandatory Powers, the Permanent Mandates Commission and the Council of the League, in fulfilling the duties devolving on them under Article 22 of the Covenant in connection with the application of the mandates system ;*

(b) *Expresses in particular the hope that all the Members of the League of Nations will give effect without delay to the recommendation made by the Council in paragraph II (1) of its resolution of September 15th, 1925, concerning the extension of special international conventions to mandated territories.*

The resolutions were put to the vote and adopted.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE
SIXTH ASSEMBLY
OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FIFTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24th, 1925, AT 10 A.M.

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President : MR. DANDURAND.

55. — PROTOCOL OF AN AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 16 OF THE COVENANT ADOPTED ON SEPTEMBER 21st, 1925.

The President :

Translation : The Protocol of an amendment to Article 16 (second paragraph of the original text) of the Covenant, adopted by the sixth Assembly on September 21st, 1925, is open for signature by the representatives of Members of the League in Room 68 of the Offices of the Secretariat.

56. — MODIFICATIONS IN THE COMPOSITION OF THE FRENCH, NORWEGIAN, ROUMANIAN AND GREEK DELEGATIONS.

The President :

Translation : I am informed by a letter from the French delegation that M. Réveillaud, expert, has been appointed substitute delegate.

A letter dated September 21st, 1925, from the Norwegian delegation announces that as from that date Dr. Nansen will be head of the Norwegian delegation, and that M. Michelet, hitherto a substitute delegate, has been appointed delegate, in consequence of the departure from Geneva of the Norwegian Minister for Foreign Affairs, who was originally first delegate.

In a letter dated September 21st, 1925, we are informed that, owing to the departure from Geneva of M. Duca and M. Titulesco, the third delegate of the Roumanian delegation has become first delegate, and the first and second substitute delegates are now second and third delegates respectively.

According to a letter dated September 16th, 1925, from the Greek delegation, M. Alexandre Carapanos is now president of that delegation in consequence of the departure of M. Rentis, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

61. — QUESTION OF THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF COSTA RICA FROM THE LEAGUE : ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE FRENCH DELEGATION.

The President.

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the draft resolution submitted by the French delegation concerning the question of the withdrawal of the Republic of Costa Rica from the League.

Members of the Assembly will remember that, when this draft resolution was submitted at the meeting on September 22nd, I reserved the right

to submit it direct to the Assembly for examination at a later meeting.

The draft resolution reads as follows :

The Assembly,

Having learnt that the Republic of Costa Rica has expressed its intention of resigning its membership of the League :

Deeply regrets to note the absence of a Member whose participation in the work of the Assembly has been unanimously and highly appreciated ;

Expresses the hope that the Government of the Republic of Costa Rica may again find it possible to afford the League its valuable co-operation.

M. Guerrero, first delegate of Salvador, will address the Assembly.

M. Guerrero (Salvador) :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen—Although my country is among those which, with France, were instrumental in submitting to the Assembly the draft resolution which has just been read, I desire particularly to associate myself with the statement and the hope it expresses.

The Republics of Costa Rica and Salvador have always stood together throughout the varying fortunes of their common history. They have always worked for the maintenance of peace in Central America and the development of all that was calculated to increase the moral and material well-being of their peoples.

Salvador would therefore be deeply grieved if her sister Republic should sever her connection at the very time when the two countries are called upon to unite in playing an important part and performing a great task.

This task consists in extending their humanitarian influence as peacemakers beyond their natural frontiers ; the part they are called upon to play is that of maintaining the rights of small States, as established for the first time in history by the noble institution with which we are all closely co-operating.

Costa Rica has never failed in this duty, which the Marquis de Peralta has always carried out worthily and with conspicuous ability.

I am voicing the desire of my country in thus associating myself whole-heartedly with the message of good-will which the Assembly transmits to the Republic of Costa Rica.

The President :

Translation : M. de Palacios, delegate of Spain, will address the Assembly.

M. de Palacios (Spain) :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen—The Spanish delegation is most anxious to see the immediate and unanimous adoption of the draft resolution concerning the Republic of Costa Rica.

Directly it learnt of the communication sent by the Government of Costa Rica to the Secretariat of the League, the Spanish Government hastened to urge the Government of Costa Rica to reconsider its attitude and begged it, even though it might reasonably take exception to certain words uttered in the fifth Assembly and despite the right of Members to judge for themselves, not to act hastily.

In heartily supporting the proposal presented to the sixth Assembly, the Spanish delegation is therefore simply reiterating the desire already expressed by the Royal Spanish Government.

The President :

Translation : Does anyone else wish to speak on the draft resolution ?

I shall, therefore put it to the vote.

The resolution was adopted.

58. — ELECTION OF THE SIX NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL : ADOPTION OF THE RECOMMENDATION PRESENTED BY THE CHINESE DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : The second item on the agenda is the recommendation submitted by the Chinese delegation concerning the election of the six non-permanent members of the Council.

This recommendation was, as you know, submitted for examination to the Agenda Committee. The latter was of opinion that, as the Assembly had already on several occasions expressed a unanimous opinion on this recommendation, it would not be necessary to submit the proposal to one of the permanent Committees for further examination and that the recommendation could be referred direct to the Assembly.

The Assembly has therefore to vote on this recommendation, which reads as follows :

The Assembly reiterates the following recommendation adopted unanimously by the Assemblies of 1922, 1923 and 1924 :

"It is desirable that the Assembly, in electing the six non-permanent members of the Council, should make its choice with due consideration for the main geographical divisions of the world, the great ethnical groups, the different religious divisions, the various types of civilisation and the chief sources of wealth."

M. Chao-Hsin Chu, delegate of China, will address the Assembly.

M. Chao-Hsin Chu (China) :

I desire at this stage of our proceedings to place again before the Assembly the views of China with regard to the allocation of non-permanent seats on the Council. The League of Nations was formed to embrace the whole world, and it is the earnest wish of all of us that this hope may, at no very distant date, be realised.

Let us recollect that in the year 1922 it was decided to increase the number of non-permanent members of the Council from four to six with a view to affording universal representation on this executive body of the League. I think I am right in saying that, at any rate at the inception of the League and for the first two or three years of its existence, one main principle was present in the minds of the delegates, namely, that, in electing non-permanent members of the Council, the greatest regard should be had to the dominant geographical divisions and the population, area, wealth and civilisation of the different constituent nationalities.

In the years 1920-1921, when only four non-permanent members of the Council could be elected, the geographical principle was observed. But in subsequent years, notwithstanding that the number of non-permanent members has been increased to six, this principle has been ignored, and of the seats allotted to non-permanent members four go to Europe and two to South America, but none to other parts of the world. In order to have proper and adequate representation of all continents, it is

advisable that steps be taken still further to increase the number of non-permanent members on the Council. I am laying stress on this point not in any selfish spirit so far as China is concerned, but as being worthy of the serious consideration of the Assembly and in the hope that this principle of the division of the seats may tend not only towards upholding the objects of the League, but to the increase of the prestige of the Council and its power to further the objects for which the League has been formed.

Further, I would draw your attention to a resolution which was unanimously adopted at the Ninth Congress of the Federation of League of Nations Societies held at Warsaw in July 1925, endorsing the geographical principle for the election of non-permanent members of the Council and urging its applicability this year in order that the very just aspirations of several hundred million people in the continent of Asia may be fulfilled.

The recommendation now put before the Assembly is by no means new. A similar recommendation has hitherto been passed with unanimity every year. I bring this matter up again in the most earnest hope that the geographical principle will be strictly observed in the forthcoming election of the non-permanent members of the Council so as to increase the prestige of the Council and to fulfil the scope of the League.

M. Lofgren (Sweden) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I think we all recognise the equity of the recommendation proposed by the Chinese delegation and I am convinced that the action of the Assembly will be inspired by its main principle, as far as may be possible. There is, however, a matter closely connected with that raised in the recommendation before us, to which attention has already been drawn from this platform, by the first delegate of Norway, in the general debate, and upon which I desire to dwell for a few moments.

The system of rotation as regards the non-permanent members of the Council has been the object of an amendment to the Covenant and several resolutions on the point have been unanimously accepted by the Assembly. Hitherto, however, such a system has not been put into practice. I desire to declare on behalf of the Swedish Government that it will have the utmost satisfaction in seeing such a system adopted as soon as possible.

I am convinced that the position and influence of the Council in face of public opinion would thereby be considerably strengthened. Such a system can be drawn up in different ways, but I wish to emphasise that, from the point of view of the Swedish Government, the essential thing is that a system of some kind should be approved without much further delay.

The President :

Translation : Prince Arfa, delegate of Persia, will address the Assembly.

Prince Arfa (Persia) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Persian delegation heartily supports the Chinese proposal concerning the geographical factor in the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council. It hopes that this year the Assembly will not be content simply to utter a platonic wish, but that it will act upon its own recommendation.

In Asia, apart from Japan, which has a permanent seat on the Council, there are three States Members of the League — China, Persia and Siam. These three States, which are of considerable importance from the geographical and ethnographical point of view, as well as by reason of their ancient

civilisations, ask that one of the non-permanent seats may be given to one of them. In view of their history and of the fact that their population exceeds 500 million inhabitants, they ask no more than is their due, and we hope the Assembly will be able to meet their views.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak I shall consider this text as adopted in the form of a recommendation.

The text was adopted.

59. — INTERNATIONAL RELIEF UNION (CIRAULO SCHEME) : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the consideration of the report of the Second Committee concerning the International Relief Union (Annex, Document A. 110. 1925. II).

(Jonkheer van Eysinga, Chairman of the Second Committee, and M. Fernandez y Medina, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

M. Fernandez y Medina (Uruguay), Rapporteur :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — The Second Committee has carefully examined the scheme drawn up by the Preparatory Committee appointed under last year's resolution.

In the Second Committee certain very important observations were submitted on the Preparatory Committee's scheme. The Second Committee unanimously agreed upon the resolution now submitted to you.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I shall consider as adopted the resolution of the Second Committee, which reads as follows :

The Assembly,

Having taken note of the report of the Preparatory Committee instructed to draw up concrete proposals regarding Senator Ciraolo's scheme for the creation of an organisation of international solidarity between peoples against the calamities which may befall them;

Noting with great interest the Preparatory Committee's proposal to set up an International Relief Union;

Considering that an international institution such as that contemplated in the present instance, and possibly including among its members States not belonging to the League of Nations, should be constituted by a special agreement between the various Governments; that the fifth Assembly in its resolution of September 26th, 1924, laid down that the different Governments should be consulted; and that it has not yet been possible for this consultation to take place:

Requests the Council to refer the scheme back to the Preparatory Committee in order that the latter may introduce any modifications which may be called for by the observations put forward in the Second Committee of the Assembly;

Requests the Council to submit the statutes thus revised to the Governments of all States, whether Members or not of the League of Nations, for their formal consideration;

Recommends that the Governments should be requested to communicate their views by a date to be fixed by the Council, in order that the Council may, if necessary, proceed to the convocation of a meeting of the duly authorised technical representatives of the aforesaid Governments with a view to the conclusion of the necessary arrangements for the definite establishment of the proposed union, if the Council considers that the replies received are such as to permit the conclusion of an Agreement to this effect.

The resolution was adopted.

60. — WORK OF THE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the consideration of the Second Committee's report on the work of the Economic Committee (Annex, Document A. 92. 1925. II)

(Sir Atul Chandra Chatterjee, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

Sir Atul Chatterjee (India), Rapporteur :

Mr. President, I wish merely to draw your attention to the fact that the report before you does not contain any reference to the very important discussion initiated by the French delegation on the difficult and delicate question of convening an international conference to consider the general economic position in all the countries of the world.

The report now before you deals merely with the work of the Economic Committee of the League during the past year. This work is not spectacular. It does not receive very much attention in the Press or on the platform. At the same time, it involves very patient and laborious investigation and research. It requires great tact and judgment as well as wisdom and foresight.

The Economic Committee has performed its task in an extraordinarily effective and brilliant manner and it is to be hoped that you will endorse the views of the Second Committee in expressing your appreciation of that work. I should just like to remind you that, without the restoration of the economic conditions of different countries in the world, the humanitarian objects of the League can never be accomplished.

I have the honour to propose to the Assembly the following draft resolution, which has been adopted by the Second Committee :

The Assembly :

1. Referring to the resolution of the fifth Assembly regarding import and export prohibitions and restrictions :

Notes the progress achieved by the Economic Committee during the past year in the study of this complex and difficult question ;

Expresses the hope that the draft agreement drawn up by the Economic Committee as a basis of further discussion may receive from the Governments interested all the consideration due to a problem the solution of which would contribute in large measure to the improvement of international commercial relations.

2. Referring to the resolution of the fourth Assembly concerning the treatment of foreign nationals and enterprises :

Declares that the Economic Committee, as a result of the systematic pursuit of its study, has

established a series of principles the application of which would ensure an equitable treatment of foreigners in regard to their admission to the exercise of professions, industries and occupations ;

Expresses the hope that States may be guided by this body of principles both in regard to their national legislation and in the negotiation of bilateral agreements.

3. Notes that the Economic Committee will be represented in an advisory capacity at the Conference summoned by the Netherlands Government for next October at The Hague for the revision of the International Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, and reiterates the hope already expressed by the fifth Assembly that the amendments proposed by the Economic Committee in respect of unfair competition may receive the support of States Members on the occasion of that Conference.

4. With regard to the protection of foreign purchasers against worthless goods :

Expresses the desire that the investigations undertaken by the Economic Section be actively pursued with the help of all data that can be obtained from official sources and also of any data which may be supplied by industrial and commercial organisations, in order that as complete information as possible may be collected and published.

5. Follows with interest the studies of the Economic Committee in regard to the suppression of false Customs declarations and the progressive assimilation of laws relating to bills of exchange, and in regard to the enquiry undertaken in collaboration with the International Labour Organisation and the Financial Committee into the causes of economic crises and of unemployment.

6. With regard to the Convention for the Simplification of Customs Formalities and the Protocol on Arbitration Clauses :

Takes note with satisfaction of such ratifications as have been deposited up to the present ;

Considers at the same time that the adhesion of a larger number of States is desirable in order that the beneficial influence of these two international instruments may operate to the fullest extent.

The President :

Translation : Does anybody wish to speak on these resolutions ?

The resolutions were adopted.

61. — PREPARATIONS FOR AN INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CONFERENCE: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The next item on the agenda is the consideration of the Second Committee's report on the preparation for an International Economic Conference.

(M. Belloni, Rapporteur of the Second Committee, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Belloni (Italy), Rapporteur, read his report (Annex, Document A. 112. 1925. II).

The President :

Translation : M. Jouhau will address the Assembly.

M. Jouhaux (France) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — We cordially welcome the resolution which has just been submitted to us, and we hope it will be unanimously adopted by the Assembly.

The present Assembly will thereby associate itself with the idea embodied by President Wilson in the third of his Fourteen Points, namely, that in order to restore the reign of justice all commercial and industrial barriers must be removed.

You will also be associating yourselves with a labour demonstration made in 1919 at the first Washington Conference. We asked that the great economic problems should be examined from an international standpoint and that an impartial solution on international lines should be found for them.

I may justifiably say now, after studying the situation and considering recent events, that if that labour resolution had been adopted by the International Labour Conference at Washington, where it failed by only one vote to reach a majority, many of the evils from which we have since suffered would have been sensibly lessened.

At that time, when reviewing the situation brought about by the war and the heavy legacy of misfortune and trouble bequeathed to the world, we felt that the only remedy for these problems was complete international collaboration and the co-operation of all the peoples.

We already saw the shadow of the fearful crisis of unemployment which has overtaken one country after another, and from which England is still suffering acutely at this very moment.

We foresaw the continual increase in the cost of living, the cause of that under-feeding which has plunged some countries into the very depths of human misery.

We had all these evils in mind when at Washington we demanded an impartial examination of this question and when, recalling the lines of the French fabulist, we declared that the war had left all peoples more or less infected, more or less blind, more or less paralysed, and that all countries should unite in a combined effort to mitigate their misfortunes.

To-day the Assembly will vote for this resolution, which is the first step along the path we have marked out. It will vote for it with confidence, because the sad experience which we have undergone — and which must never be allowed to occur again — proves to all that the course on which we are embarking is at least *a priori* better than that we have already followed.

You may confidently adopt it, too, because the regeneration which has taken place, the improvement which was heralded, are the result not of measures taken individually by one country against another, but of international measures adopted by the League of Nations and applied by its organs. The measures have been applied too restrictedly, it is true, and on too narrow lines; but despite the limitations to which they have been subject they have, nevertheless, borne fruit.

You may come with confidence to the International Economic Conference. You must not be afraid of the different points of view which your discussion will bring to light, because there is nothing more dangerous than to leave the peoples in ignorance of the evils which surround them and the dangers which threaten them.

If you wish the various peoples to understand the situation, if you wish their knowledge of events to awaken their courage, if you wish the course you have chosen to be understood, then warn them all frankly and sincerely of the dangers that lie before them, and explain to them the efforts they must make in order to overcome their difficulties.

Personally, I believe that from this Conference, from the clash of interests and of discordant views, will emerge a light of reason destined to illumine the whole world. It will show the points of agreement between the peoples, restore confidence in work and tranquillity of mind, and make it possible for us once more to tread the path of peace.

I hope that humanity — just as the traveller, when he has passed the cloud-capped, lightning-crested summit and is descending once more into the sunny plain below, feels a gentle peace around him — will, at last, conscious of the task that lies before it and conscious of the immensity of the work to be done, advance towards its new destiny and lay the foundations of the world upon the resplendent and sublime conception of solidarity.

The President :

Translation : Jonkheer Loudon, delegate of the Netherlands, will address the Assembly.

Jonkheer Loudon (Netherlands) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — There can be no doubt that the problem of security and disarmament is closely bound up with that of the world's economic relations. M. Loucheur very rightly observed, when he submitted his draft resolution, that the most frequent cause of wars seems to be the economic struggle between nations. The delegate for France even emphasised this point before the Second Committee.

The world is becoming so small, and the economic interdependence of peoples so great, that nations must co-operate if they are to avert that economic anarchy which threatens us all. The proposal to prepare an International Economic Conference therefore deserves the League's most serious attention. Governments and nations ought from time to time to take stock of the economic position as a whole. They should draw up a balance-sheet, should verify the progress made and indicate what must be done in the near future.

The necessity is rendered still greater by the fact that it comes entirely within the scope of Article 23 (e) of the Covenant, which lays down that Members of the League will make provision to secure equitable treatment for the commerce of all Members of the League.

It would be idle to convene an International Economic Conference before the financial reconstruction of the world had made some real progress. Financial reconstruction is the basis of economic reconstruction. Happily, however, as M. Loucheur has said, this reconstruction — upon a gold basis — is well on the way to achievement. The financial reconstruction of Austria and that of Hungary, which took place with such marvellous rapidity, thanks to the League of Nations, as also that of Poland, Germany and even Russia, prove that we are not far from general financial restoration.

In 1920, the Brussels Conference drew up a balance-sheet of world economy as it existed immediately after the war. This conference was, perhaps, unable to do all that was expected of it, but its importance as regards the restoration of financial stability is beyond dispute. Even in the economic domain the resolutions and recommendations it adopted were by no means ephemeral.

Since then the Economic and Financial Committees of the League of Nations have worked in a manner which merits the highest praise, though naturally the results they have been able to obtain are limited. How often has the request been made, within the League and elsewhere, that the great international economic problems should be considered from a general point of view ?

I need not enumerate here the suggestions to which I refer. M. Jouhaux gave a detailed summary of them in his admirable speech before the Second Committee — a speech of which I have heard.

The resolution proposed by the French delegation indicates that its aim is merely to examine the economic difficulties which stand in the way of the restoration of general prosperity and to show clearly the most suitable methods of overcoming these difficulties and avoiding disputes. The task of the Conference would therefore be to diagnose the disease and endeavour to find possible remedies. M. Loucheur therefore stated that he did not seek to make the Conference lead directly to international conventions.

Economic reconstruction differs from financial reconstruction in that its success depends primarily on the action of individuals and not on that of Governments. Governments can support or hinder the efforts of individuals or communities of individuals, but they cannot themselves take the initiative. The delegates to the Conference must therefore be truly representative of economic life.

The Council will consider whether it should appoint a Committee to prepare the work of the Conference. The economic difficulties of the world will be discussed at the Conference; the possible limits of international action will perhaps be defined, and world opinion will in any case make itself heard. In my view — though I would not dream of trying to influence its work beforehand — the Conference will collect opinions upon the economic situation in every country, and will discuss the general lines on which it will be possible to promote the economic reconstruction of the world and avert the perils of economic disputes endangering peace.

As in the case of disarmament, the Council will undertake without delay — and after the exchange of views in the Second Committee there can be no doubt on this point — the preparation of this Conference, while reserving the right to decide at what time it should be convened.

Periodical international Conferences are one of the most important parts of the League's machinery. If, side by side with the international Conferences on labour, communications and, we hope, disarmament, we institute, thanks to the French proposal, periodical Economic Conferences, the League will certainly not regret the splendid step forward it will owe to the sixth Assembly.

I am therefore happy to state that my country gladly associates itself with the draft resolution now before you.

The President :

Translation : M. Van Cauwelaert, delegate for Belgium, will address the Assembly.

M. Van Cauwelaert (Belgium) :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — I have the honour — and it is a great pleasure too — to repeat before this Assembly that the entire Belgian delegation accepts the resolution submitted by M. Loucheur and the Second Committee.

Rarely has a suggestion been received with such unanimous approval. Doubtless the influence and authority of its author and the affection with which his country is regarded count for much. But this approval would be inexplicable were it not that the proposal itself meets a general need, a real necessity of the day.

The economic problem has not been raised by artificial means. It is a real problem that we

cannot avoid, because we are all in a state of economic unrest. In front of us lie those disquieting shadows which great social and international upheavals always cast before them.

We have wholeheartedly approved the financial reconstruction of Austria and Hungary. We are thankful whenever we see any advance towards the unification of commercial law, the simplification of Customs formalities and fairness in trade. We are prepared to preach moral disarmament by word and deed, but all work for peace might be vain unless it were founded upon economic peace.

There is no need for me to remind you of the powerful influence of material interests. Daily bread is an imperious need, and not only do economic disturbances lead to internal social unrest, but prolonged economic anæmia may easily lead peoples to lose their political stability. There is no need for me to quote examples, for many will instantly occur to you. The work so laboriously begun and so wisely and patiently continued by the League may one day be shaken to its foundations. For it cannot be denied that the economic world to-day is evolving along lines quite opposed to disarmament, and the task of the League is not merely to readjust or discipline, but to convert.

M. Loucheur fully grasps this aspect of the problem, although he referred to it with great circumspection. He laid special stress on the lack of regulation in general production, but he also noted the serious danger of excessive protection, which brings nations into conflict. As the representative of a small industrial State, I venture to lay stress on the dangers of such protection.

I quite recognise that genuine reasons can be advanced to justify the measures of defence which even traditionally free-trade countries have been obliged to take since the war. But we must above all recognise that exclusive and jealous economic nationalism constitutes an immense danger to the future peace of the world.

I am fully aware of the difficulties. I know that the League must not attempt the impossible, and that we must not let undue rashness endanger ultimate success.

The originator of the proposal has himself limited it to two aspects. He desires to avoid all problems which might lead to disastrous misunderstanding or disagreements between nations, and, secondly, he does not seek to force Governments to accept ready-made formulas or draft conventions.

The aim of the Conference must be to enlighten public opinion, to give a lead, to educate the nations and lend the weight of its authority to public and Parliamentary discussions, which are bound to benefit from the discussions and conclusions of the Economic Conference, just as they did from the Brussels Financial Conference.

If the success of the Conference depends upon the care with which it is prepared, then the Committee acted wisely in deciding to entrust its whole preparation to the Council. We must rely upon the Council's discretion as to the method of preparation, the selection of problems to be considered and the eventual summoning of the Conference.

The Council will perhaps decide that the task we have been invited to carry out is too great to be dealt with by one Conference, and that a series of Economic Conferences will be necessary. We have absolute confidence in the Council. It has shown its mettle. It is helped by technical and economic advisers whose great abilities we appreciate. We hope that the Council, in its action, in its deliberations and in its decisions will be guided by the spirit of faith, which brings to it the appeal of the nations for economic peace.

The President :

Translation : M. Cobián, delegate of Spain, will address the Assembly.

M. Cobián (Spain) :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — I have very great pleasure in informing you that the Spanish delegation now adheres to the resolution submitted by the Second Committee following on the proposals put forward by the French delegate, M. Loucheur, in a brilliant speech which you all applauded.

Let us hope that the application of this resolution will herald a new era, both as regards economic conditions and as regards world peace.

The Spanish delegation is also glad to observe the care with which this draft resolution has been conceived and worded. This care evinces the exceptional importance and gravity of the problem, and will enable all Members of the League to take an active part in the work thus begun.

The Spanish delegation expresses its sincerest hope for the success of the French proposal, which is surely destined to open out a new pathway to universal peace. We shall thus soon be able to put an end to the evils arising from the economic injustices which produce such baneful effects.

If — as I hope — we attain this happy result, posterity will always hold in grateful memory the work accomplished by the sixth Assembly.

The President :

Translation : M. Loucheur will address the Assembly.

M. Loucheur (France) :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — I will endeavour to sum up in a few words the interesting discussion which took place in the Second Committee, and which will be concluded here.

First of all I should like to thank those delegates who, both in the Second Committee and here also, have expressed their approval of the draft submitted by the French delegation. I should also like to thank them for the various interesting suggestions they made.

M. Loudon, on behalf of his country, has confirmed in the Assembly what the distinguished Chairman of the Second Committee, Jonkheer van Eysinga, told that Committee — that his country has accepted our project. May I be allowed to thank Jonkheer van Eysinga for the able manner in which he presided over the work of the Second Committee and for the many helpful suggestions he offered?

But the main reason why I venture to address you once more is to point out that we are no longer at variance as to the objects we are all seeking to attain.

When, a few days ago, you listened so attentively and sympathetically to the explanation I gave on behalf of my country, I particularly urged that the work we were asking you to undertake formed a logical sequence to that which you already had undertaken at Assemblies previous to the fifth Assembly, with the object of endeavouring to give the nations the security they claim. I told you that, in our opinion, the cessation of economic conflicts was one of the principal and fundamental factors of that security.

Not a word was said in the Second Committee in opposition to this statement, which was the starting-point of our discussion. Indeed, several speakers confirmed it. And to-day, by adopting the resolution submitted to you, you are taking the first step.

There has been a certain amount of discussion concerning the procedure to be adopted. Some

delegates would have preferred the Second Committee to have decided the composition of the Preparatory Committee forthwith. Our own view prevailed, and it was agreed that the Council itself should decide on the composition of that Committee.

I should like, however, to assure the members of the Assembly here and now that the apparent difference of opinion which arose between the British delegation and our own has happily disappeared. I say "apparent difference", because we were at one as regards our ultimate aim.

It has been agreed to invite the Council at its coming session in December to decide whether it would be desirable to set up the Preparatory Committee.

The British delegation has also agreed — and the Second Committee has consented to this course — that France may, before December, send to the Secretary-General a scheme for the constitution of the Committee; the Council will thus be able to take a decision also on this matter at the same December session and will so avoid delay.

Further, the French delegation has asked that before the matter comes before the Council, the Technical Committees of the League should be consulted regarding the scheme submitted to the Secretariat by the French Government.

In this connection I should like now to explain frankly the part we think these Technical Committees ought to play. Some of them imagined that we wished to take the matter out of their hands and prevent them continuing the important work on which they had been engaged.

May I offer, on our own behalf, and, I am sure, on behalf of all the delegations here present, a sincere tribute to the work which the Technical Committees of the League have been carrying out day after day with such perseverance, ability, and, if I may say so, perspicacity? It is on them, indeed, that the Preparatory Committee will have to rely.

In its draft resolution the French delegation has been careful to make special reference to the International Labour Office. Is there any need, gentlemen, after the speech of my colleague, M. Jouhaux, to explain the reasons for this?

Surely no one can imagine that the vast problem of the economic organisation of the world can possibly be solved without the active co-operation of the representatives of the working class, without associating labour with our work, and, consequently, without making the International Labour Office, as it were, the corner-stone of our edifice.

The important data which the Labour Office possesses, and its extremely interesting enquiries, the results of which have been communicated to you in recent publications, will enable the Preparatory Committee to avoid all loss of time in making preliminary investigations.

All is ready, thanks to the work accomplished by the International Labour Office and the other Technical Organisations. It is on the work of these organisations, then, that we intend to base our efforts.

It would be a mistake, however, to give the world the impression that the work of these Technical Committees will merely be continued. New blood must be infused into it. Do you not think, for instance, that the representatives of certain nations which are not yet Members of the League should sit on this Preparatory Committee? Would it not be useless to attempt the economic restoration of Europe without inviting Germany to co-operate?

Indeed, we feel that all countries should be asked to take a share in this work. Let all who will join us. We shall endeavour to solve in unison a problem which we all frankly admit to be a very difficult one. The task is a difficult one! It is indeed; but is that any reason why we should flinch from it? Is it not rather one reason more for beginning at once upon work which will take us many years to accomplish?

I will not again go over the causes of the present economic unrest. I have already referred to them in the Second Committee and in this Assembly. Many of our colleagues have confirmed our opinions and have also made important additions to our arguments.

Henceforth it is vital — to quote M. Loudon — that the general interest should not be done to death by the blind conflicts of individual interests. We must realise that it is not enough for nations to pursue a domestic fiscal policy involving a certain Customs policy. They must be brought to realise that the Customs policy must first be examined, quite apart from its fiscal aspect, with a view to economic equilibrium.

Now that a Conference is to be held, many considerations will arise. We might examine, for example, whether consumption among the older nations has increased in proportion to the number of inhabitants. It might be worth while finding out what is happening in the new continents, where home consumption has enormously stimulated production.

The main object is to try to establish equilibrium between home consumption, the number of consumers, and productive capacity. These are the three terms which require to be balanced.

What can I add to the brilliant report of M. Belloni, to whom I should like to pay a heartfelt tribute? He has attempted to summarise in a few pages all the salient points of the discussion in the Committee, and he has succeeded. May I, however, refer to the observations of the Belgian delegate, M. van Cauwelaert, in the Second Committee?

Essaying to elucidate the reasons which had led France to submit her project, he noted that we had kept out of the discussions all points which might have been over-controversial and might have led to unfortunate differences of opinion. I refer to the inter-Allied debts, which must not be included in the programme of the Conference any more than the question of emigration.

He was kind enough to add that France intended to face the problem squarely. He stated finally: "If you undertake this important and difficult work you must do so with faith and confidence", and I for my part would add "enthusiasm" too.

I said the other day that pessimism is destructive and optimism alone is constructive. If there is one problem in which we shall need all our optimism, it is this one.

It is, I repeat, a difficult, almost a superhuman task. No one more than myself sees how great a task it is, how nearly impossible it will be to discover a complete solution. But we shall advance step by step along the road which leads us to peace.

To the world we must tell the truth, for the world expects from us something more than mutual congratulations and assurances of constant agreement. The world might be led to think that we were concealing from it the points on which we disagreed.

What this Assembly should rather do is to convince the world that we are all conscious of the great difficulties we are striving to overcome. Let us attack the problem with courage and sincerity. Let us tell the truth to those who have sent us here, and, since it is the representative of Italy who speaks from this platform on behalf of the Second Committee, I will conclude by repeating the words of the great Leonardo da Vinci, which our colleague quoted the other day: "*Li impedimenti a la verità si conertono in penitenza*".

Gentlemen, let us tell the people the truth; let us not shrink from our task.

The President :

Translation : If no other delegate wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution proposed by the Second Committee, which reads as follows :

The Assembly :

Firmly resolved to seek all possible means of establishing peace throughout the world ;

Convinced that economic peace will largely contribute to security among the nations ;

Persuaded of the necessity of investigating the economic difficulties which stand in the way of the revival of general prosperity and of ascertaining the best means of overcoming these difficulties and of preventing disputes ;

Invites the Council to consider at the earliest possible moment the expediency of constituting on a wide basis a Preparatory Committee which, with the assistance of the Technical Organisations of the League and the International Labour Office, will prepare the work for an International Economic Conference.

The convening of this Conference under the auspices of the League of Nations shall be a matter for subsequent decision by the Council.

The resolution was adopted.

The Assembly rose at 12.20 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE
SIXTH ASSEMBLY
OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SIXTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25th, 1925, AT 10 A.M.

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President : MR. DANDURAND

62. — COMPOSITION OF THE DELEGATION OF FINLAND.

The President :

Translation : In consequence of the departure of the Finnish Minister for Foreign Affairs, the first deputy delegate for Finland becomes full delegate.

63. — ARBITRATION, SECURITY AND REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS : REPORTS OF THE FIRST AND THIRD COMMITTEES.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the question of arbitration, security and reduction of armaments.

This general heading includes :

1. The report of the First Committee (Annex, Document A.115.1925.V).
2. The report of the Third Committee (Annex, Document A.99.1925.IX).
3. The joint draft resolution submitted by the First and Third Committees.

I therefore invite the Rapporteurs of the First and Third Committees, M. Rolin, delegate for

Belgium, and M. Benes, delegate for Czechoslovakia and also the Chairmen of the two Committees, M. Scialoja, delegate for Italy, and M. Nintchitch, delegate for the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, to take their places on the platform.

The Chairmen and the Rapporteurs of the First and Third Committees took their places on the platform.

The President :

Translation : M. Rolin, Rapporteur of the First Committee, will address the Assembly.

M. Rolin (Belgium), Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The First Committee submits the following three draft resolutions :

“ I. The Assembly,

“ Taking note of the declarations submitted to the Council and the Assembly of the League of Nations in respect of the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes and of the fact that the said Protocol has not up to the present received the ratifications necessary for putting it into operation immediately ;

“ Convinced that the most urgent need of the present time is the re-establishment of mutual confidence between nations ;

“ Declaring afresh that a war of aggression should be regarded as an international crime :

“ Regards favourably the effort made by certain nations to attain those objects by concluding arbitration conventions and treaties of mutual security conceived in the spirit of the Covenant of the League of Nations and in harmony with the principles of the Protocol (arbitration, security, disarmament) ;

“ Records the fact that such agreements need not be restricted to a limited area but may be applied to the whole world ;

"Recommends that, after these conventions and treaties have been deposited with the League of Nations, the Council should examine them in order to report to the Seventh Assembly on the progress in general security brought about by such agreements ;

"Undertakes again to work for the establishment of peace by the sure method of arbitration, security and disarmament"

M. Benes has drawn up a report concerning the 1st paragraph.

"II. The Assembly,

"In view of the importance of making a thorough study of the views which have been expressed in the Assembly and the Council on the subject of pacific settlement of international disputes ;

"Convinced that such study will contribute to the development of a system of pacific settlement of international disputes ;

"Requests the Council to submit to careful examination the proposals, declarations and suggestions made at the Assembly and the Council with a view to pacific settlement of international disputes, and to report to the Seventh Assembly upon the progress which can be made in this matter.

"III. The Assembly,

"Reserving the question whether it is at present desirable to embody in a new general Convention the provisions concerning compulsory arbitration contained in the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes ;

"Recalling the guarantees provided in the Covenant of the League of Nations :

"Calls the attention of States Members of the League to the desirability, from the point of view of their security, of concluding particular conventions for arbitration or for the judicial settlement of disputes."

I shall not read to you the report on these resolutions but will merely ask leave to make a few brief comments and indicate the general purport of the resolutions.

Our first meetings were devoted to discussing not the Protocol itself but to summon it forth. Not all the speeches were funeral orations. Some of them which called for a general settlement of the question of arbitration, security and disarmament rather resembled an appeal for a resurrection, a sort of "Lazarus, come forth!"

In any case, one fact is clear even from the speeches which contained reservations to or criticisms of the Protocol, namely, that the problem was correctly stated last year; that disarmament without security is impossible, and security impossible without arbitration. By arbitration, I mean the pacific settlement of all disputes, of whatever kind, without reservation, and the exclusion in all cases of aggressive warfare as a method of settling differences.

The resolution submitted to us notes that the Protocol has been laid aside for the present but that you still adhere to its principles. The second part deals with the present situation. In a resolution already adopted at the suggestion of the Swiss delegation you refer to the progress made last year in regard to the compulsory jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice, which several other States have recently accepted.

The present resolution emphasises the importance of two other new facts which are considered to be specially opportune, the conclusion of conventions of arbitration and the negotiation of pacts of security.

Both of these have already been mentioned to you. I merely point out that they are new and that they constitute an important advance.

Let us, first of all, take conventions of arbitration. You will remember that Article 13 of the Covenant draws a distinction between disputes which are suitable for submission to arbitration or for a juridical settlement and those which are not. It is true that this article enumerates a number of disputes which are considered suitable for submission to arbitration or juridical settlement, but this enumeration is subject to two conditions. The Covenant only gives the list as an enumeration of disputes generally suitable for submission to arbitration or juridical settlement, and leaves each State free to decide whether in actual practice a particular dispute belongs to the class of disputes which can be settled by arbitration or juridical settlement or not.

In a great many arbitration conventions, however, Members of the League have not only renounced this discretionary power but have actually abolished the distinctions drawn in the Covenant, and now regard all disputes without distinction as suitable for submission to arbitration or juridical settlement.

This is a considerable step forward, a step which in itself shows what great progress the League of Nations has made in a few years as regards both the ideals and policies of Governments.

With regard to the pacts of security, these have been called regional agreements. That appellation is partly correct, because the object of these agreements is to maintain peace within the terms of the Covenant, and because they apply to definite regions: but in other respects they are quite different, if only as regards their contents, from the regional agreements which the Assembly approved in former years.

The pacts of security — and in saying this I am not committing any indiscretion, since the first part of the correspondence has already been published in the Press — the pacts of security at present under consideration are the self-same conventions of general arbitration to which I have just referred, plus a guarantee.

I ask the experienced diplomats here present whether in the whole of their long careers they have ever, either before or since the war, met with conventions of this new type.

Your Committee was quite right in noting these two facts, which may in a few years radically change the political face of Europe. It was right when it decided, without offering any direct opinion on treaties with which it is not yet acquainted and which have not been submitted to it, to agree to those treaties in principle. It was right when it pointed out the desirability of spreading and extending this practice and making it general throughout the world. Finally, your Committee was right in proposing that you should ask the Council to watch developments in the matter of these treaties and submit to the next Assembly a report showing how they have modified the European situation.

Such — with the exception of the last paragraph, which deals with disarmament and on which M. Benes will speak — is the tenor of the first draft resolution submitted to you.

The other two draft resolutions also deal with arbitration.

The object of the Swedish delegation's proposal is to request the Council to examine afresh the clauses of the Protocol concerning arbitration. This proposal was based on an idea which we all approved, namely, that arbitration has a value of its own and is a desirable thing in itself.

The Committee nevertheless came to the conclusion that it could not recommend you to adopt this resolution, as there are a number of objections to it, the chief being that it might give rise to misunderstanding and to the belief that the Protocol was prematurely dead.

The essential part of the Swedish suggestion, however, namely, the study — in the light of the conventions at present being concluded throughout the world — of arbitration as a question apart, the study of arbitration as a pacific and general method of settlement desirable for all nations, is also embodied in the Japanese proposal adopted by the First Committee.

In agreement with the Japanese delegation, we propose that you should consider not arbitration only but conciliation as well, and, in view of the extremely important statements which have been made in this Assembly and in the Council and the negotiations now being conducted in Europe in this connection, that you should request the Council to consider the whole problem of the pacific settlement of disputes and make it the subject of a special study before the next Assembly meets.

The third and last draft resolution submitted to you owes its conception to the Belgian delegation and deals with arbitration conventions.

It has repeatedly been said on this platform that there can be no arbitration without penalties. The object of this draft resolution is to remind Members of the League that a convention on compulsory arbitration is at all events made possible *ipso facto* by the general guarantees laid down in the Covenant.

To all those who obtain an arbitral or judicial award in any dispute, the Covenant, in Article 13, guarantees that, "in the event of any failure to carry out such an award or decision, the Council shall propose what steps should be taken to give effect thereto". It also guarantees that the League will intervene in the event of a State resorting to war against a Member of the League which complies with an arbitral award.

The wording of the Covenant itself justifies us in deducing simply that Members of the League need only make sure, by means of conventions, that they can obtain an arbitral or judicial award in the case of any dispute whatever, in order to obtain the minimum guarantee afforded by the Covenant. This is simply the application of the provisions of the Covenant. It was advisable, we thought, to lay stress on this point, in order that full use might be made of it, and that it might be taken as a basis for the policy of the different States.

This, gentlemen, is the substance of the resolutions submitted to you by the First Committee. If you adopt them they will, we think, justify your confidence, provided each one of us takes care that, as far as his own country is concerned, they are understood and put into practice. Then, when you meet again next year, the system of treaties of arbitration and security will have been extended, and the League will, this year once again, have proved deserving of universal gratitude.

The President :

Translation : M. Benes, Rapporteur of the Third Committee, will address the Assembly.

M. Benes (Czechoslovakia), Rapporteur of the Third Committee :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — M. Rolin, delegate of Belgium, has given you a summary of the work of the First Committee. I have to inform you of the work of the Third Committee, so far as it concerns the

resolution relating to the three great problems with which we are dealing more particularly — arbitration, security and disarmament.

By comparison with previous years, the Third Committee has this year somewhat modest results to offer you. Apart from the Protocol of 1924 and the Treaty of Mutual Assistance, which was agreed to in 1923, you will no doubt remember Lord Cecil's important report adopted in 1922, and which contained, *inter alia*, the famous resolution No. XIV, which has hitherto formed the basis of the League's work in execution of Article 8 of the Covenant.

According to the Spanish proposal submitted to this Assembly by M. Quiñones de León on September 12th and referred to the Third Committee, the Assembly, while taking into account the present general political situation and the inter-State negotiations which it is hoped will be begun and carried to a successful issue, and while proclaiming that it still remains faithful to the principles of Resolution XIV and the Protocol, will request the Council to make preparatory arrangements for a Conference on the Reduction of Armaments as soon as, in its opinion, satisfactory conditions have been achieved from the point of view of general security, as provided for in Resolution XIV of the third Assembly.

The draft resolution submitted by the Netherlands delegation at the meeting held on September 11th, 1925, and the amendment submitted on September 14th, 1925, by the Hungarian delegation, which were also referred to the Third Committee, may both be regarded as amendments to the last paragraph of the Spanish resolution. The idea underlying these amendments is that the Assembly should request the Council to consider forthwith a plan for the general reduction and limitation of armaments, and also to make preparatory arrangements for a Conference on the general reduction and limitation of armaments.

In point of fact, the Third Committee only dealt with the last paragraph of the Spanish proposal and the amendments to it. Its report, which you have before you, does, it is true, touch on the political side of the preamble to the Spanish resolution, as re-drafted by the Third Committee, but its main objects are as follows :

1. To inform you of the discussions which took place in the Third Committee and in Subcommittee, with a view to reconciling the divergent opinions expressed on the last paragraphs of the Spanish proposal and the amendments to which I have just referred.

2. To explain the exact meaning of the paragraph which, according to the Third Committee's proposal, will be substituted for the last paragraph of the Spanish draft resolution.

The Third Committee proposes that the following sentence should be substituted for this last paragraph :

"And, in conformity with the spirit of Article 8 of the Covenant, requests the Council to make a preparatory study with a view to a Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments in order that, as soon as satisfactory conditions have been assured from the point of view of general security as provided for in Resolution XIV of the Third Assembly, the said Conference may be convened and a general reduction and limitation of armaments may be realised."

Thus the text proposed :

1. Defines the Council's present field of activity in regard to the reduction and limitation of armaments ;

2. Amends the Spanish proposal as regards the actual time when the Council's action in this matter is to develop:

3. States that it is for the Council to draw up the programme for its action.

The Third Committee suggests that you should adopt yet another resolution regarding the body to which the work in question has been entrusted. The Third Committee has examined the Fifth Assembly's resolution on this subject, and also that passed by the Council on October 3rd, 1924, for the organisation of the Co-ordination Commission which superseded the Temporary Mixed Commission. The report gives the various criticisms of and observations on that body made in the Third Committee and its Sub-Committee.

Whilst appreciating the value of these criticisms and observations, the Third Committee is of opinion that the decision rests with the Council, and accordingly submits to the Assembly the following resolution:

The Assembly:

"Takes note of the Council resolution dated October 3rd, 1924, establishing the Co-ordination Commission;

"And invites the attention of the Council to the suggestions made during the proceedings of the Third Committee, as contained in the report submitted to the Assembly, with regard both to the designation and the composition of that Commission, and also to the necessity of determining its rules of procedure."

These, then, are the concrete proposals which I have to lay before you and the decisions which you are asked to take this year. I should like to make a few brief remarks on this subject.

When comparing the work of the Third Committee this year with that of previous years I mentioned Resolution XIV of 1922, the Treaty of Mutual Assistance of 1923 and the Protocol of 1924. I said — and everyone will, I think, agree — that our work this year is less ambitious.

But the Assembly should not for this reason feel any anxiety or dissatisfaction regarding our work, our aim or our mission. This year's discussions on the Protocol, the Pact of Guarantee, disarmament and indeed several other questions as well have at times during the last three weeks caused anxiety and disappointment both to ourselves and to that section of public opinion which is favourable to the ideas and aims of the League.

In my view this anxiety is quite groundless. In the first place, though in some of the more important questions the action taken by the Assembly has been more restrained than in previous years, we cannot but admit that it has a definite achievement to its credit — the new and solemn consecration, the perpetuation, so to speak, of the inter-connection of the three great principles on which all the League's political activities will turn in the coming years — arbitration, security, disarmament. This was what M. Paul-Boncour and Sir George Grahame asserted and confirmed in the Third Committee the other day.

Last year we had prolonged and heated discussions on this subject. This year even those who are sceptical as to the Protocol accept these three great principles in their entirety. That is something gained. It is a great and positive achievement. We shall soon see what the future has in store for us when the time comes to put these principles into practice.

As regards the second fact which dispels any pessimism we may feel as to the League's future, I venture to repeat what I said from this platform

two years ago when, after the Corfu incident and after the debates, at times both complex and disheartening, on the Treaty of Mutual Guarantee, I laid before the Assembly the Third Committee's report on this Treaty and on disarmament.

"I saw", I said, "a wave of pessimism regarding the League of Nations pass over Geneva. I also saw this wave of pessimism pass through our Committee in the course of our debates on the reduction of armaments. I did not then and I do not now share this pessimism. The great force of an ideal lies in the fact that it can only be attained with difficulty in the midst of disillusionment followed in its turn by success, that it leads in man to the development of the great moral qualities of energy and strength of will. The difficulties which have arisen out of our present disputes should be a new lesson to us.

"We shall, of course, be obliged to compromise still further, but so long as there are men who, while taking due account of the political realities of the moment, can still keep vital principles sacred, and who possess energy, steadfast will and immutable faith in the great principles of the League, then, though these may be momentary halts, the advance is bound to begin again without delay.

"At the end of my report I said that we could leave Geneva profoundly convinced that the struggle between ideals and the realities of present politics is a cruel and a ruthless one, but that during the coming years we should wage that struggle with renewed energy and with still unshaken faith in the ideals underlying the League."

That is what I said two years ago, at a time of temporary despondency, and I venture to repeat my words to-day. After the difficulties of 1923 came the enthusiasm of last year. This year again we halt awhile and strengthen the position we have won. This ebb and flow is the normal law of politics which you all experience every day. In the certainty that the tide will turn, I beg you to vote for this year's resolutions and prepare for a further advance next year.

The President:

Translation: Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, delegate of the British Empire, will address the Assembly.

Viscount Cecil of Chelwood (British Empire):

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—I rise to support the resolutions which have been put before you by the Rapporteurs of the First and Third Committees.

They are four in number, the long resolution which had been called familiarly the Spanish resolution, two resolutions about arbitration, and one about the machinery known as the Co-ordination Committee, which has now received a new name. As to the latter point I do not propose to say anything, because the matter has been referred to the Council and I do not think there is anything which can usefully be added to what is contained in the reports on the subject.

With regard, however, to the other broad general principle, I may perhaps be allowed to recall that it is now several years since I first had the honour of addressing this Assembly on the general question of disarmament and security, and it is a matter of personal gratification that I am able to say that I have nothing to withdraw, and I think I have nothing to modify, in the opinions which I then expressed from this tribune, and

to which I still adhere. I believe now as strongly as ever that disarmament is vital to the world, it is vital to peace and it is vital to prosperity. I believe there is no duty more incumbent on the League of Nations than to work for that object.

It is imposed upon us by Article 8 of the Covenant and we must never allow ourselves to forget it. It is no less imposed on many of us by the preface to the disarmament clauses in the Treaties of Peace that were signed at Paris. I venture to say that in that great cause we can still rely upon the broad principles which the Assembly accepted in 1922. Those principles were two in number, namely, that disarmament to be effective must be general — that I believe is still true — and that security and disarmament must go hand in hand for they are essential to one another. There can be no complete security without disarmament, neither can we hope for disarmament without security. It is because the chief resolution we are considering to-day reaffirms, and reaffirms explicitly, the principles expressed in 1922 that I feel so happy and confident in supporting it from this platform.

Whatever else may be said of the last two or three years of the history of the League of Nations, it is no little gain that after all the storm and stress of the controversies that have gone on during those years, when the whole question has been examined and re-examined by every Government and every people, we still come back to the principles we then established and are able once more, after mature consideration, to reaffirm them in this Assembly.

But the resolution does more than that. I, personally, attach great importance to that paragraph in which aggressive war is formally denounced. I believe that is a most important principle to impress strongly upon the minds of the peoples of the world. Under the old system of international law, war was a right. We are now prepared to say, and to say it with all the authority of this Assembly, that aggressive war is an international crime. Further, it is of no less importance that the negotiations, the proposals for a Pact between certain countries, of which we are all aware, are definitely approved by the resolution which is before us. It is not, perhaps, sufficiently realised, though it has been mentioned, that here too we have returned to the principles of 1922 even as regards methods, for this proposal for a special Pact, which, as we know, it is hoped will lead up to a series of similar Pacts, was one of the methods contemplated in 1922. I will venture to read one sentence from the celebrated Resolution No. XIV: "This reduction" — the reduction of armaments — "could be carried out either by means of a general treaty, which is the most desirable plan, or by means of partial treaties designed to be extended and open to all countries".

I remember very well — my friend M. de Jouvenel will remember equally well — that, at that time, there was a considerable controversy of a very friendly kind as to the method which it was most desirable to pursue. It was my contention that we proceed by way of a general treaty filled up with special treaties, if I may so describe it; and the French contention, represented by M. de Jouvenel, was that we should proceed by special treaties leading up ultimately to a general treaty.

The position is now somewhat reversed. I am not prepared to admit that I was wrong. I still think that, had it been practicable, my plan, if I may so venture to call it, the plan in favour of which I argued in 1922, was the better plan. M. de Jouvenel, however, constantly assured me that, however desirable my plan might be, it would not be practicable, when it came to the point, and that his plan, more modest and more cautious, would

ultimately be found to be the one which was more easily adopted by the peoples of the world.

I congratulate M. de Jouvenel on his superior foresight. But, apart from these little personal recollections, the point is that in our present position and in the policy which is now accepted and approved by this resolution, we are not departing from the basis laid down in 1922; having tried one route in the intervening years, we have now embarked upon the other route which was contemplated in 1922; but to the earlier principles we have added that of arbitration.

I observe sometimes a little criticism of the British attitude towards arbitration. Let me repeat what has been said already in this Assembly — that there is no warmer friend of arbitration among the nations of the world than the British people and the British Government. In practice, it has always had our warmest support. The Mosul case, which has been referred to quite lately, and in which we have been ready and anxious to settle a great international dispute by arbitration, is only one of a long series of incidents of our national policy in which I may say, I think without exaggeration, that whenever we have found ourselves in a serious international dispute we have always urged arbitration. I use the word "arbitration" in the widest possible sense.

Do not let us forget that on the eve of the great war it was the British Minister who urged more insistently than anyone else that the dispute which then existed should be submitted not to arbitration in the smaller sense but to that broad discussion between the peoples which is now contemplated in the Covenant of the League of Nations. It has always been the British policy, in face of the actual crisis, the actual difficulty that may have arisen.

But I must repeat what was so very admirably said by my friend and colleague Mr. Chamberlain — that, deep down in the British nature, there is a distrust of general principles, and though they may be ready and anxious, as they always are when it comes to the point, to have recourse to arbitration, and though the idea of force and violence is utterly alien to the British method of looking at these things, yet the British are nervous and distrustful about accepting wide and general principles, the full extent of which they cannot measure and the full bearing of which on the immense interests entrusted to their charge they cannot appreciate until the time comes.

Let me say that I personally have always believed, and believe still, that, in this great edifice of the peaceful settlement of international disputes, arbitration is not the foundation but the final coping-stone of the structure. It will be the result much more than the cause of that attitude of mind on which the peace of nations really depends. Here, again, let me point out we have an instance at our very doors, the question of Mosul. I trust that the difficulty will be overcome. I need not stay to argue it here. But what is the difficulty that has arisen? It is the doubt whether both parties were really ready to accept arbitration. If there had been no doubt, there would have been no difficulty in connection with arbitration. It is because arbitration cannot be imposed on a nation, but must be the result of the spirit by which the nation is guided, that I have always held that arbitration must be the last rather than the first step in this great enterprise.

Ladies and gentlemen, may I venture to remind you that in saying that I am merely in consonance with what is taught by the history of individual nations. I take as an example my own nation's

history; but it is not different in this respect from other nations. In England the supremacy of the law, the rule that all disputes between individuals must be referred to the legal tribunals for settlement, was not the first step; it was the last. The first step was to put a stop to private war and private violence. The first step was that great step that was taken by our splendid line of Sovereigns, those Sovereigns whom we imported so successfully from France. It was the work of William I, of Henry I, of Henry II, and of Edward I which laid the foundation of the great work done by the last-named king in establishing the principle of the supremacy of the law. It was because we had arrived at a system of internal security, and to some extent, though imperfectly, to internal disarmament, that in civil life the law became the possible arbiter of all disputes.

I myself am satisfied, and I have always been satisfied, that the great thing in international life is to get rid of the conception that war is the natural way of settling international disputes, to establish firmly the principle that security and disarmament must be the rule of international life; then arbitration, the actual machinery of the settlement of disputes, will become so obvious and so inevitable that no difficulties will be found in its way. In saying this, do not let me be misunderstood. I recognise that these three great causes, security, disarmament and arbitration, are interdependent. A little security will bring a little disarmament, a little disarmament will bring more security, more security and more disarmament will undoubtedly produce more arbitration, and the more the arbitration the greater will be the prospects of security and disarmament.

The three causes are interdependent and we must work at all of them. I welcome most heartily that part of the resolution which points out that that is the duty of this Assembly.

I gather from what I have read that impatience is sometimes shown with what is called the British attitude of caution. It has even been suggested, tacitly suggested, that the British are not in earnest in these great causes. Nothing could be more foolish and nothing could be more unjust.

I have been engaged during this Assembly in promoting an effort to establish a new Convention for the abolition of slavery and other practices analogous to slavery. The British Government proposed that that Convention should be signed at this Assembly. It was pointed out to us, perfectly rightly and legitimately, that other nations desire to have an opportunity of considering this matter, and that, though they were quite in favour of our general proposal, they wanted further time, further opportunity for weighing the serious suggestions that were being made. We readily yielded to that representation. I thought it perfectly reasonable and right. I should have despised myself utterly if, because this or that nation had urged a little caution, a little delay, I had concluded that they were less in favour of the abolition of slavery than was the British Government. A desire to march cautiously does not mean a reluctance to march to the end. There is a very well-known Italian proverb, which I will not venture to try to quote in the original language, which points out that if you go slowly you may yet reach the goal of your efforts more certainly than if you try to go too fast.

May I venture with the utmost respect and deference to say this to my friends and colleagues of the Assembly. The League is now growing up. We are no longer in a period of uncertainty or establishment. The League is established. It is the greatest international fact of our day. Its general principles have been well settled. Its

foundations have been completely laid. There is no need for us now to pass resolutions of a theoretical or abstract character. It is our business henceforward to be sternly practical, to consider not only what is desirable but what can be done to forward the great causes we have at heart.

There is an English expression of which I may perhaps remind you without impertinence, because I think that it must be an English idiom as I know of no translation of it into a foreign language. We sometimes speak of "gush", that is, exaggerated expression which has no basis in reality, aspirations which forget that, if they are to be useful, they must also be practical.

There is nothing more easy than to profess the highest sentiments and the most admirable aspirations. There is a danger — do not let us forget it — that in this Assembly we may be sometimes tempted to substitute aspiration for action. That is a grave danger, a danger which besets all parties, and perhaps besets us not less, or even more, than other Assemblies; for we are here without the direct and immediate duty of carrying into effect the principles which we accept. The Assembly as a whole lays down its principles, but it is for the national Governments to carry them into effect. And there is a danger — is there not? — that some of us, especially some perhaps who are not so immediately affected by the resolutions, may pass the warmest and highest-sounding motions, leaving it to the Governments in the respective countries to carry them out as best they can.

I speak plainly, because I do not think I shall be suspected of any lack of warmth for the League of Nations or any lack of affection or belief. I believe in the League profoundly. But I do venture very respectfully to urge on all my colleagues that we have now reached a stage when it is absolutely incumbent upon us to ask, as regards every proposal, every aspiration, would my own countrymen accept this? Would they pass the necessary legislation to carry it out? Unless we are satisfied that we intend that that should be the case, unless we believe that that can in fact be achieved, we have no right to vote for any aspiration, however splendid and however magnificent.

What we need now in the League of Nations is actual, definite, positive advance, even if it is slow. It is far better to gain even an inch, if we really gain it, than to pretend that we have gained a mile when we have made no real advance at all. Therefore I welcome most heartily the proposal which is contained in these resolutions, that we should forthwith submit to careful scientific study those great principles and objects of disarmament and arbitration. It is only by preparing the ground fully and effectively that we can hope really to make an advance which shall be a real advance.

I have heard in these debates a great deal about the principles of the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes and of the principles of the Treaty of Mutual Assistance. I do not myself attach very great importance to the question whether what we are actually doing is more in accordance with one set of principles or the other, or whether they differ or are the same. That is not very important. The great principle is the principle of peace, and, as to that, I am quite sure that we are advancing on the right road.

I heard the other day M. Hymans defending in a Committee a phrase in a report of his about the organisation of peace and saying that he did not mean by that the old organisation of peace on the Roman basis, *Si vis pacem, para bellum*, but rather on the new basis of the League of Nations as enshrined in this resolution, namely,

the re-establishment of confidence between nations. That is what we are trying to do now; that is the principle by which the Pact negotiations of which we have heard are inspired; that is the principle on which we should work. Believe me, there is no nation more convinced of the essential importance of that principle than the nation to which I have the honour to belong. It is very many years since it was laid down that peace is the greatest of British interests. I will venture to add that peace is also the greatest of British duties. We believe that; the British people believe it profoundly. The vastly overwhelming majority of the British people are convinced of the truth of that principle. Governments may come, Governments may go, they may be drawn from the Left or from the Right, they may consist of labourers or of landowners, but, believe me, they will all have to conform to that principle; otherwise, their existence will be short indeed. Speaking, therefore, for the British Government, and through it for the British people, I say, let us go on in this work and prosper. It is a work that is dear to my fellow-countrymen and there is no nation in the world which will so genuinely and from its heart say to you, God be with you.

The President :

Translation : M. de Jouvenel, delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. de Jouvenel (France) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—I trust you will allow me to express on your behalf the unanimous thanks of the Assembly to M. Rolin for his explicit report and to M. Benes, who perhaps prepared his report with less enthusiasm than last year, but with equal clearness.

May I also congratulate the Assembly on the reappearance on this platform of the noble figure of Lord Cecil, to whom the League gladly acknowledges its great indebtedness and whom it greets as it would Lord Balfour and M. Léon Bourgeois, whom it also hopes some day to see again.

No one, indeed, can gauge better than Lord Cecil the progress we have made since 1922, or mark the stages of what both he and I are rather inclined to call a journey which begins and ends with Resolution XIV.

Lord Cecil also pointed out that, as always happens when we go round in a circle, each eventually finds himself in the position of the others; and so he cannot wholly accept the views expressed by the heads of our respective delegations at the opening of this Assembly concerning the psychological history of our nations, since, as far as the Pact is concerned, it is France which has proceeded from the particular to the general and England which has proceeded from the general to the particular. That proves that here, under the auspices of the League, a kind of exchange of temperaments is taking place. This perhaps is not the least advantage of this institution, since nations are often kept apart less by their individual interests than by their education and mentality.

The League's task, however, is not simply to promote intellectual co-operation, for this particular work has been delegated to one of its organs. What it wants is some immediate and tangible success.

How far have we advanced towards that success? M. Quinones de Leon's resolution provides the answer to this question.

I venture to speak on this point with the frank-

ness which we have more than once this year been urged to display. I desire to explain clearly what France's position is and to reveal all the difficulties and weaknesses with which we have to contend.

Lord Cecil has just told you—and I thank him for it—that the League's great weakness has hitherto been the lack of responsibility, the fact—as he also said in the Third Committee—that we could pass resolutions without binding the Government organisations concerned.

I am therefore especially glad to find the British delegation expressing this view, which has always been held by the French delegation.

I remember that, at the time of the discussion on the Treaty of Mutual Guarantee, I gave up my seat on the Committee to my colleague, M. Lebrun, because, as a former Minister for War and Chairman of the Temporary Mixed Commission, he had been able to discuss this question with the responsible military authorities in France. Again, last year M. Herriot's Government sent M. Paul-Boncour here to deal with the disarmament question, not only in compliment to the special privilege of eloquence, but because M. Paul-Boncour had been appointed President of the Committee of the Higher Council of National Defence, and M. Herriot was anxious to send here, for the disarmament question, someone who would not only bind the Government of the day but who could also bind the general military and naval staffs, for whom he was qualified to speak.

I am glad to see that this view is now unanimously held and that the days of irresponsibility are past. Moreover, how could it be otherwise? The Governments are no longer sending various opinions to the League of Nations; they come here themselves. If, therefore, they bind themselves, meaning to evade their obligations, they should at least take the precaution of resigning—a condition they usually try to avoid.

Yet that is not enough, because it is only too clear that, in France, the substitution of the Painlevé Ministry for that of M. Herriot has not changed French foreign policy in the slightest; and, unless I entirely misjudge public opinion in my country, unless I entirely misunderstand the enthusiasm of its youth, the aspirations of its soldiers and the claims of its proletariat, I am certain that henceforth the principles of the League of Nations will be for ever inseparable from those of the French Republic.

It is not only because the Governments themselves have come here that the League's phase of irresponsibility is past. This year we must note a very significant fact to which, perhaps, sufficient attention has not been given, namely, that henceforth the Governments will invite the League of Nations to intervene in their international arrangements.

Has not the League been ever-present at the negotiations which have been carried on since last February? Nay, more; the whole of the negotiations have been held under the aegis of the League, since the British and the French Governments will not sign the Pact or give it executory force until Germany is a Member of the League.

Thus we find this year that the Governments of the States Members of the League cannot conclude a partial pact which is not comprised in the general Covenant of the League.

Even that, however, is not all. There is another thing I should like to say, or rather I will quote M. Quinones de Leon, on whose wisdom we can always rely. What does his resolution say?

"The Assembly,

"Regards favourably the effort made by certain nations to attain those objects by concluding arbitration conventions and treaties of mutual security conceived in the spirit of the Covenant of the League of Nations and in harmony with the principles of the Protocol (arbitration, security, disarmament)."

The partial pact, therefore, is inserted not only in the general Covenant but in the Protocol itself. And here we must pay a well-merited tribute to the noble attitude of Great Britain, who, although she has not signed the Protocol, has nevertheless accepted its principles.

I turn to those sceptics who believe that nothing changes under the sun, because throughout the centuries they have smiled the same unchanging smile of smug satisfaction at understanding nothing, and I ask them: When in the previous history of the world have great nations ever been found to negotiate treaties, prepare them in the secret sanctuary of the chancelleries, and then suddenly throw open the doors and invite all the nations, great and small, to enter and to say: "Before finally concluding the treaties we are about to sign, we can tell you that they are in agreement not only with the Covenant that binds us to you but also with the principles of the Protocol in which, though we have not signed it, all your hopes are embodied"?

To him who, after that, chants the funeral dirge of the Protocol we shall reply: "It is such a living force that it has breathed life into the partial treaties which, sooner or later, and whether they succeed or fail, will go back to it. It is such a living force that henceforth it will be inseparable from the three terms which, as Mr. Chamberlain and M. Painlevé, Sir George Grahame and M. Paul-Boncour have all pointed out, are inevitably linked together. It is such a living force that you are actually beginning to apply it to a part of Europe."

Let us make no mistake. It is not a section of the Protocol, arbitrarily cut off from the other sections; it is the whole spirit of the Protocol which is being applied to the most threatened part of Europe. Thus the events of 1925, far from having dismembered the Protocol, have merely confirmed its unerring logic; and though the League has not succeeded in creating the general Protocol, it has at any rate brought into being a general system to which diplomacy will henceforth conform.

This system — arbitration, security, disarmament — will henceforward be the political system followed by my country. I venture to place arbitration in a different order from that which Viscount Cecil suggested. I place arbitration first, because I am not quite convinced by the example of William the Conqueror. It is true that William the Conqueror came to England before the law, but he has not left behind him a remarkable reputation for peace. We should therefore leave arbitration where we put it.

We have not changed our minds since last year. We still think that, however significant may be the signatures to Article 36 of the Permanent Statute of the Hague Court, this article, cut off from the Protocol, does not afford sufficient protection, for the reason which M. Politis gave us in his report last year, namely, that its elasticity affords a loophole for all kinds of reservations.

Nor have we changed our opinion since last year regarding the necessity of closing the breach in Article 15. As a matter of fact, war could pass through this breach whenever it liked, since if only

one Member of the Council refused to ratify his colleagues' report, all of them would be absolved from obligation and since a Member of the League only needs to have a friend on the Council to be able to declare war at any suitable moment.

It is quite evident, moreover, that this paragraph alone can bring back again all the bargainings, all the diplomatic intrigues, all the secret treaties from which you thought you had freed humanity.

It can send the systems on which you wished to found permanent peace to join the outworn formulas of the concert of Europe, the European balance of power and the other similar catchwords upon which politicians have momentarily based their illusions, and which, after momentarily restraining bloodshed, have eventually increased it from century to century.

But even had we abolished all the reservations in Article 36, had we closed all the doors opened by Article 15, we would still have accomplished nothing, and, indeed, have still further jeopardised the cause of international peace if we had left arbitration without sanctions, and thought that, after putting forward the ideal of justice, we could leave this ideal quite unprotected.

As M. Motta very aptly remarked the other day: "It is impossible to conceive within a State a tribunal not possessing compulsory jurisdiction", and M. Caballero, in a phrase no less happy, completed the idea by speaking of the preventive power of sanctions.

It has often been said in this Assembly, it has even been said this year, that prevention is better than punishment. Quite so! But the majority of national or international crimes are committed because the criminals hope to escape punishment. Whenever punishment is disguised, the temptation to the criminal is doubly strong.

There is one line of reasoning we must guard against. Mere agreement to submit to national or international law is not sufficient. National or international society requires more than that; it requires our wholehearted support. It requires us, if the law is threatened, to sacrifice both our interests and our comfort.

Gentleman, go outside, go into any square in any town, in any country, and every monument will tell you the same story. Look down the vista of history. All the ages will teach you the same lesson, from the time when Athens perished and let Greek civilisation perish because, instead of devoting herself wholeheartedly to the menaced cause of her allies, she merely — as Demosthenes contemptuously told her to her face — sent them a general wish with a decree.

Ah! history is never so young or so old as we think. Not so long ago a fabric similar to our own was once reared. Occupying the whole of Central Europe there was a league of nations containing 300 States, powerful monarchies, feeble principalities, free cities, ecclesiastical governments, duchies, republics. This league of nations like ours possessed its international court of justice; and it possessed what we do not possess — a common army.

What happened? A judgment of the court was not respected and nothing was done. Then two judgments, then three, until the judgments of the court were no longer respected at all. The States became tired of sending their soldiers to the army and their judges to the court, and the dissolving empire itself prepared the day when the God of War came and ground it to dust.

We can, of course, ignore the lessons of history. Because for one or two generations the wars waged were far from our frontiers, because the invasions of the last century gravitated to the right rather than to the left, we can believe that we are

permanently safe. We even, alas! allowed ourselves to slumber during the distant rumble of the guns at Sadowa, but we woke up to the sound of the guns at Sedan! I hope no nation will ever mistake such a fatal truce for peace.

I personally belong to a French generation which would fain hope but dare not dream. We have too many memories! We are convinced — and you yourselves cannot but be convinced also — that to establish arbitration without sanctions would be futile, that by doing so we should simply be adding to the sorrows of the world, because there is something worse than being afraid to say what is the right. It is worse to point it out and say: "Behold, this is the righteous one!" and then abandon him to his Calvary.

Just as arbitration cannot be separated from sanctions, so disarmament forms, with them, one indivisible whole. Indeed, the strength of this method lies in the fact that not only do these three terms constitute an integral and indivisible whole, but each term in itself constitutes a whole, from which we cannot subtract one iota.

It is obvious that continental nations can quite well agree to the disarmament of maritime nations, and *vice versa*. That is a form of international solidarity with which we are already familiar. We may contemplate the necessity of speeding up the disarmament of active armies and encouraging the arming of reserves, so as to place agricultural countries at the mercy of industrial countries and the smaller nations at the mercy of the larger. Lastly, we may regard the League as an institution for the disarmament of others. We may even use disarmament as a pretext to devise new formulas for insecurity, we may permit a new type of butchery by means of the latest inventions, we may allow war according to the latest fashion and, while taking precautions to prevent the invasion of frontiers, take none to prevent the destruction of capitals.

All that is possible, but I hardly think it is in keeping with the ideals of the League, which ought not to be in a position to allow or tolerate either victims of armaments or dupes of disarmament.

• Clearly, there is no problem in connection with which it is more difficult or more dangerous to indulge in hasty expedients than this one, and the last part of the resolution we are about to adopt is admirably framed to protect us against such a risk. Indeed, even if we had had the Protocol, it would have been dangerous to hold a Disarmament Conference without first preparing for it, because it would assuredly have failed. We have not got the Protocol, however, and we are, as Viscount Cecil says, falling back upon Resolution XIV. We shall therefore be obliged to make the extent of the reduction of armaments depend upon the degree of security afforded by partial agreements.

That is the work which the League and its permanent organisations will prepare, since, after all, it must always be the degree of security which we must measure, and in that respect private agreements will clearly not prove adequate for long. We must not merely prevent some particular war; we must prevent all wars. A pact, therefore, is not in itself a policy: it is only the beginning of a policy. I will not, however, press the point too far. I should not like you to think that I am seeking by devious means, through the League, to drag a friendly nation further than it wishes to go. We must come to an understanding, but at the same time we must cling to our national ideals. It is just the varied nature of these ideals that makes for the richness of our common life, and, far from desiring to level out the

differences between the Latin and Anglo-Saxon mentalities to which we have referred, I trust that soon we shall also be receiving the help which the German mentality can give us. We do not come here to score off one another, but to learn to understand one another, and, while respecting the differences in our national ideas, needs and historical traditions, to determine exactly, prudently and sincerely the sum of truth which we hold in common, which will grow from year to year and will draw the bonds of international solidarity ever closer.

The task, of course, is so enormous that it is bound to be difficult. But we should not complain of the difficulties; we should count our gains. This year, not only have the Great Powers accepted the method which you defined last year by establishing the connection between arbitration, security and disarmament; not only are they adopting the policy of concluding pacts which they can insert within the general Covenant of the League; not only have they entered into an undertaking to render these pacts consonant with the principles of the Protocol, but they have given a further undertaking. They have undertaken to bring you these pacts not merely that you may carry out a vague act of registration but that you may become cognisant of them, see how they contribute to the general security, and be able freely and independently to state your opinions on them.

Soon, when this Assembly is over, a Conference of responsible Governments will meet in the moral atmosphere — if I may use such an expression — of the League. The Governments Members of the League will not change merely because they have passed from one portal to another.

They will apply to their discussions the methods which you have laid down. If they fail, they will be bound to come back to you. If they succeed, it is to you that they will bring their work in order that you may decide its future.

The Council will take these texts, place them alongside the military files which you have decided to draw up this year, alongside the economic files which you have decided to open, and this wealth of data, the like of which no country has ever seen, will be brought to you in order that here, where all nations are equal, you may freely give your opinion on them in your full sovereign right.

Such is the net result of this year's work. You need have no hesitation in proclaiming it to the countries which have sent you here. You have not at a single bound brought humanity to the heights of happiness, justice and peace, but you have traced out a pathway, right up to the goal, across frontiers, amid mistrust, and in the face of conservative tradition. You have appointed the goal, defined the methods, and fixed the landmarks so fast that none can ever remove them.

And now you can go your ways. Remember that, when once this pathway has been traced on the ground, it is the pathway that directs human footsteps, and that if you can lay no claim to the bubble reputation of miracle workers, you at least deserve the real and lasting fame of the road-makers whom Aeschylus of old described as having "tamed the earth".

The President. — The discussion is adjourned to the next meeting.

The meeting rose at 1.5 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SIXTH ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SEVENTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25th, 1925, AT 3.30 P.M.

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64. — ARBITRATION, SECURITY AND REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS : CONCLUSION OF THE DISCUSSION OF THE REPORTS OF THE FIRST AND THIRD COMMITTEES : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the continuation of the discussion on the first question: Arbitration, Security and Reduction of Armaments.

I call upon the Chairman and Rapporteurs of the First and Third Committees to take their places on the platform.

M. Sokal, first delegate of Poland, will address the Assembly.

M. Sokal (Poland) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—The draft resolution presented by the Spanish delegation and amended by the First and Third Committees is now submitted for discussion to this Assembly.

After all that has been said in the eloquent speeches we have heard this morning, I shall be very brief.

The Polish delegation, on whose behalf I have the honour to speak, will vote in favour of the text submitted, which it regards as expressing the desire of this Assembly that the League's work should continue without interruption.

Poland, which remains faithful to the ideas and principles of last year's Protocol, would have preferred that these ideas and principles should be incorporated in positive international law; she realises, however, the expediency of proceeding by easy stages, though without losing sight of the final goal towards which every effort of the League should be directed.

This final goal is the realisation of the threefold principle: arbitration, security, disarmament. Although the sixth Assembly has been obliged to

proceed very cautiously, we must admit that it has done useful work. Its positive achievements, which will, I hope, meet with unanimous approval, must not be underestimated. Poland notes the declaration inserted in the resolution before us to the effect that the League "undertakes again to work for the establishment of peace by the sure method of arbitration, security and disarmament".

This is an answer to all those who maintain that, in view of the negotiations which are being carried on outside the League, the latter has washed its hands of the problem of security. On the contrary, we see in this declaration a sure proof that the threefold principle already laid down in the Covenant and carried further in the famous Resolution XIV still remains one of the chief problems before the League.

The reorganisation of the Co-ordination Commission, which the Council will doubtless decide to convert into a Preparatory Committee for the reduction and limitation of armaments and will probably reconstitute with a view to meeting fresh requirements, conclusively proves that the League anticipates that in the not too distant future conditions conducive to general security will be fulfilled. We share the League's conviction.

My country, which has always and at all times co-operated with the League, will gladly avail herself of any further opportunity to evince her deep attachment to the cause of peace and justice.

For these reasons, the Polish delegation will vote for the resolution now submitted to you.

The President :

Translation : M. Coppola, representative of Italy, will address the Assembly.

M. Coppola (Italy) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — You have all read M. Benes' report on the work of the Third Committee.

You have perhaps observed that this report, which M. Benes has drawn up with his habitual perspicacity, contains certain observations made by the Italian delegate.

M. Benes has endeavoured to reproduce the spirit of these observations and has fully succeeded. Nevertheless, I think I should make some explanatory remarks.

What does the Italian delegation desire? In other words, what does Italy desire? She undoubtedly desires what you all desire, what all the nations desire, and what I think they have always desired — peace, and a just peace.

But there are various means of attaining this common aim, and opinions differ perhaps as to these means.

I think we are all in duty bound to place truth before unanimity, constant unanimity at any cost and on every occasion. Unanimity of this kind reminds us of the catch-words broadcast in the days of alliances, of the European balance of power, whenever a meeting was arranged between Sovereigns. On those occasions we used to read that when the Sovereigns met they had only to declare the perfect identity of their views, and you know that sometimes, indeed very often, this official identity shortly afterwards led to war. To-day, when the system of international life has changed, we must not make the same mistakes. Unanimity at any price is always the result of compromise, and compromise in its turn is the result, doubtless, of a certain amount of good-will and a spirit of conciliation; sometimes of much good-will; but also, now and again, of a certain amount of falsehood. And the taint of this falsehood is enough to spoil all the good-will. We cannot build anything durable, anything

just or moral, on a basis which contains even an atom of falsehood.

With regard to the difference of methods which may be considered, you heard from Lord Cecil and M. de Jouvenel this morning, and you will hear from me also, in so far as I am authorised and able to do so, what is the truth from our respective points of view; for each must bring his own individual truth here, in order that we may together seek the common truth, though, indeed, it is doubtful whether, outside religious matters, truth can ever be rigidly determined and defined.

Possibly truth, as Lord Cecil suggested, was concerned solely with disarmament, and it is disarmament which has been the theme of the Third Committee's discussions. It is in connection with disarmament that I had occasion to make certain reservations affecting more particularly the procedure to be employed. I said that any big scheme of enquiry carried out by large organisations specially created for the purpose and which, like all large organisations, would carry on their work automatically and perhaps go beyond the immediate requirements of the case, was in my opinion useless and even possibly dangerous.

I do not propose to repeat now what I said in the Third Committee. I will merely say once more that I regard this procedure as useless, since the field of investigation is immense and covers not only military factors and data but also involves economic factors and political and moral forces.

Among these forces, some can readily be measured, others less readily, while some can only be measured with the utmost difficulty or not at all. I went on to say that our investigations would lead either to incomplete results — in which case, any plan of disarmament based upon them would necessarily be unfair — or else to complete results which would be fair, but, in my opinion, impossible of realisation because they were complete. For these reasons, which I now briefly summarise but which I developed at greater length yesterday, I have come to the conclusion that extensive investigations would be of little use.

I also said that I thought them somewhat dangerous, especially in view of their publicity, since countries not yet Members of the League would thereby obtain full data for estimating our military strength while they themselves would not be bound to accord any such publicity. That, to my mind, constitutes a most serious danger, and one which it is essential that we should bear in mind.

We think that disarmament can only be obtained upon a political basis, or, better still, through the natural tendency of the nations to lessen their huge burden of armaments.

What, in actual fact, are armaments? They are the means whereby nations seek either to ward off dangers which threaten them or to satisfy national aspirations which they think they cannot realise, or at any rate have no hope of realising, without recourse to this *ultima ratio*.

But they are always a burden, a burden which weighs heavily on all nations and tries some beyond their strength.

What, then, in the opinion of this Assembly, is the surest means of reducing armaments?

It is to reduce, in every country, the necessity for armaments, and even to dispel the feeling that armaments are necessary.

If you can bring countries to believe that their security is assured, if you provide them with methods in which they will put their trust, if you can satisfy their national and historical aspirations by peaceful means, they will begin to feel that the need for armaments is decreasing, and they will themselves cast off their burden. Then there

will be automatic and spontaneous disarmament, disarmament effected from within and not imposed from without.

The first of these two methods is surely more in keeping with the natural requirements and spirit of history, and consequently it is most likely to stand the test of time.

We can extend the idea and apply it to the more general question of peace and to the system best calculated to ensure an equitable peace.

I will not venture here to explain the ethics of peace and war, but may I venture to illustrate my idea by a metaphor?

At certain moments in history the balance of international policies — and that other form of equilibrium, the actual balance of the forces, requirements and capacities of the various nations — has been in comparative harmony (for absolute harmony is non-existent). This situation coincides with a period of peace.

Little by little the real equilibrium of forces, capacities and requirements evolves and develops. These elements sometimes increase; at other times remain stationary; they shift and change, while the other form of equilibrium remains constant and unchanged.

What happens then?

Beneath the unchanging surface forces are at work, fissures appear, and little by little the disproportion becomes so great that the whole system collapses. This collapse means war.

What means can we employ, I will not say to abolish war, but at all events to reduce the possibility of war to a minimum?

Two methods naturally occur to us. One of these is to increase and strengthen the external structure of the balance of international politics.

This is the method which has hitherto been advocated at Geneva — not exclusively perhaps, but most frequently. This is the method which found perfect expression, from the mathematical and mechanical point of view, in last year's Protocol. But is it the surest and the wisest?

I venture to doubt it. In making the superficial and official equilibrium as rigid as possible, we may delay breakdowns in the structure — that is to say, war — but we cannot prevent them. What we really do is to increase the disproportion to which I have referred, so that when outbreaks do occur they are all the more violent because they have been repressed, just as when a boiler with a very thick casing suddenly explodes.

The second method, which is not opposed to the first, but is parallel to it, is to render the outer stratum not more rigid but more flexible, so that it can respond to the equilibrium of forces and capacities and adapt itself to them little by little.

That, in my opinion, is the only way, to prevent war.

If we desire to do this, we must be prepared to examine the causes of war and cure them. We must be prepared to seek out a system by which all the causes of war — or if not all, at least those that are most common, those that most easily arise — may be avoided and decreased.

Even if by this method war is not abolished, the number of outbreaks will be diminished and its incidence reduced as far as possible. Consequently, by this method, we shall attain the main object of the League.

Were we to employ rigid or mechanical means, we should fail. Or we might seem, indeed, to have succeeded, when in reality we had been preparing a conflagration all the more violent because it had been delayed. Or else — let us consider this hypothesis in order to complete our *demonstratio ad absurdum* — if the aim were attained, peace would not have been secured, because there is

always a spiritual element in peace. We should have brought about an immutable organisation of the world, an equilibrium which would not be in accordance with the truth of things, an unfair equilibrium — in a word, injustice, which cannot be the aim of the League.

War is an evil; of that there can be no doubt. We know it better than any, we who have taken part in it and seen its vast tragedy. War is the negation of constructive effort; it means sacrifice, it generally ends in misery. War also, we must remember, means the exaltation of heroic and lofty moral sentiments, bought at a price — a heavy price.

War is an evil, but injustice is a greater evil, because if war is a material evil, injustice is a moral evil, and moral evil exceeds material evil as moral life and moral values are more important than material life and material values.

I am therefore in favour of peace in the broader spirit; peace which will be attained primarily by reducing or abolishing the causes of war; a just peace, because it is a just peace alone that the League of Nations can seek.

We none of us believe that the League of Nations is an association for enabling the wealthy to enjoy their possessions in peace. The reason for the justification of the League's existence must be sought for among its moral aims. The essential value of the League must always be in its ethical worth. It is for the sake of its ethical worth that all of you, I am sure, and we, too, are here to-day.

The President :

Translation : M. Hymans, delegate of Belgium, will address the Assembly.

M. Hymans (Belgium) :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — First of all, let me reassure you. I am not going to make a speech. I merely bring you an adhesion and a declaration.

The proposals submitted by the First and Third Committees are entirely in keeping with the views of the Belgian delegation. These views were authoritatively set out this morning by M. Henri Rolin, Rapporteur of the First Committee, M. de Brouckère stated them before the Third Committee, and you may possibly remember that I myself summarised them in our opening discussions.

In our opinion the adoption of this proposal means the consecration of the principles on which we are to base the system of equity and security that we are endeavouring to establish, and it will certainly mark a step forward.

I also see in it a proof of unity and harmony. Clearly, we cannot close our eyes to the fact that at the outset there was a certain divergence of views. But the process we have already witnessed in other Assemblies has again occurred. In the course of our discussions, our ideas, instead of drifting farther apart, have been brought closer together, and on the whole we end with an agreement which was just now referred to as a compromise — and after all is not a compromise an agreement on essentials? — an agreement which is a fresh expression of the spirit of this Assembly. I think I may repeat to-day what I said at the beginning of our opening discussion — there can be no stopping, no going back; the work of the League of Nations continues.

Having explained the reasons for our adhesion without dwelling upon the actual wording of the proposals at present before us, I now have a declaration to make to the Assembly.

I have frequently had occasion to explain to you the Belgian Government's policy. In Belgium, as elsewhere, Governments change. That is a

phenomenon which is not confined to Belgium. But the international policy of Belgium does not change. It is a national policy to which all parties subscribe. We have three parties in Belgium. Sometimes they are in coalition, and sometimes in opposition; but they are in agreement upon the principles of our foreign policy, which remains unchanged.

The Belgian Government profoundly believes in arbitration and in its practical value, and desires to do its share in establishing a system for the pacific settlement of international disputes. I have consequently been instructed to adhere to Clause 36, Paragraph 2, of the Statute of the Court of Justice in the following terms :

"On behalf of the Belgian Government, I recognise 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 fifteen years, in all disputes which may arise 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."

I thought it my duty to inform the Assembly of this resolution, because in my view it is evidence of our faith in the work of justice and of pacification which the League of Nations is pursuing.

The President :

Translation : M. Löfgren, delegate for Sweden, will address the Assembly.

M. Löfgren (Sweden): Speaking on behalf of the Swedish delegation, I wish to begin by expressing our sincere thanks to the First Committee and its distinguished rapporteur, M. Rolin, for the interest and the good-will with which they received our modest initiative with a view to renewed efforts for promoting the principle and application of compulsory arbitration.

I beg to offer a special tribute of gratitude, due to the merits of his case, to His Excellency M. Adatci for his friendly and victorious competition. The Swedish delegation is willing to accept without hesitation the amended and extended scheme proposed by the Japanese delegation and supported by the Committee. We have all the more reason to adopt this attitude since the draft resolution now laid before us has obvious advantages over our own. M. Adatci's amendment represents so entirely the views which have inspired the politics of Sweden as a Member of the League that I make a point of shortly emphasising their importance.

First, the draft resolution proposed by the Japanese delegation and recommended by the Committee aims at fortifying and strengthening the means of conciliation as a method of pacific settlement and is not restricted to compulsory arbitration.

Secondly, the First Committee in its resolution asks for an early report from the Council, and this request must imply that the Council is asked to take immediate steps for submitting the combined problem of conciliation and arbitration to a careful examination.

As regards the method specially suggested in the Swedish proposal with a view to hastening, if possible, a more general adhesion to a uniform system of compulsory arbitration, the resolution before us ensures that it will be carefully examined, without preference but also without prejudice.

The Swedish delegation cannot reasonably claim, and does not ask for, better terms than a fair test of its contribution to an eventual, it may be a temporary, solution of the problem.

To these expressions of rare and precious contentment, I only wish to add a few words. The Rapporteur has raised against the Swedish proposal the criticism that, if accepted in its original form, it might have given rise to misunderstanding. I agree that the wording of the original draft resolution proposed by the Swedish delegation was rather limited and might be misunderstood if not considered in the light of the motives which prompted it.

I hope to remove every possible misunderstanding by stating now that the Swedish delegation desires that the coming examination may be as wide and as extensive as possible. The Geneva Protocol of last year may be taken as the starting-point of the continued efforts of the League for arriving at a final solution of the great problem. But I quite agree with the view that the examination must not be limited to a critical survey of the special provisions of the Protocol concerning arbitration. There are other elements which may be taken into consideration. The French initiative, tending to an international treatment of economic questions, might, for instance, give new and widened prospects even in the field of arbitration, and it is to be hoped that it will lead to successful results.

Let me conclude by making this statement. From the point of view of the small nations, it is an absolute condition of the establishment of any general system for the organisation of a stable peace that arbitration, above all, is the foundation of such a system. It was with a certain feeling of disappointment therefore that I heard of the limits within which Lord Cecil would confine arbitration. Any system which aims at establishing security and disarmament without providing for arbitration would necessarily be founded on shifting sands. Without arbitration the definition of the aggressor would be made very difficult, if not impossible.

Lord Cecil declared with some emphasis that the great country he represents is firmly attached to the principle of arbitration and that Great Britain intended to apply the principle from case to case. It is a great thing when a great country declares its adhesion to the principle; but for a small State not able to enforce its will it is of the most vital importance that arbitration should be applied not only from case to case when the Powers agree thereto but that the small nations can be assured in advance that all disputes, even those concerning the vital interests of the rulers of the world, will be submitted to peaceful settlement.

The essential thing for the small nations, therefore, is that the League of Nations shall not abandon the movement in favour of the development of arbitration. For the present, we cannot do very much for security nor perhaps for disarmament; but we have at least been able to provide for the continued examination of arbitration. The resolutions of this Assembly will not, I think, give reason to complain of too audacious action or exaggerated aspirations; but I hope they will not fail to make their contribution to our progress towards a lasting peace.

The President :

Translation : M. de Palacios, delegate of Spain, will address the Assembly.

M. de Palacios (Spain) :

Translation : The Spanish delegation desires publicly to express its gratitude to all the delegations present at the Assembly, and more particularly

to the Chairmen of the First and Third Committees, to M. de Bronckère, who presided over the Subcommittee of the Third Committee, and, in particular, to the Rapporteurs, M. Benes and M. Rolin, for the zeal they have shown in connection with the proposal submitted by M. Quiñones de León during the general discussion with which the present session opened.

You already know the scope and purport of our proposal. It was not a matter of explaining Spain's view. My Government, in signing the Protocol, publicly proclaimed its attitude. In the opinion of the Spanish Government, the principles of the Protocol point to the right road. During the last Assembly, however, the Spanish delegation, acting on instructions from its Government, had already had occasion to express doubts as to the system of special agreements.

But circumstances now are different. The system of a general agreement is not feasible, but we have considered the possibility of arriving at the same result through special agreements. The proposal submitted by the Spanish delegation, therefore, is an endeavour to express the opinion held by all the delegations here present. Since the introduction of the amendments, for which we have to thank the authors of the various proposals, I think I may say we have attained our object. The system of the trilogy, which I need not explain in detail, since you are all acquainted with it, is once more confirmed in the resolution which I trust the Assembly will unanimously adopt. I venture to hope that such unanimity will not — as one speaker here expressed it — be merely official unanimity. I consider that the proposal, as now drafted, is sufficiently elastic to allow of its adaptation to circumstances and to enable really effective action to be taken by the League.

The amendments — fortunately few in number — which have been embodied in our proposal do not effect its actual substance.

The Spanish Government thought that it might declare a war of aggression to be an international crime, since it made this declaration when signing the Protocol. For reasons of a legal and political character, it was thought advisable to amend the wording of this part of the proposal while leaving the substance intact, and we accepted the formula that a war of aggression should be regarded as an international crime.

The prominence given to the principle of arbitration, which forms the subject of one of the paragraphs of this proposal, is quite in keeping with the Spanish Government's advocacy of these methods; and the amendment — the importance of which I fully realise — in the last paragraph of the Spanish resolution, to the effect that the Assembly, in conformity with the spirit of Article 8 of the Covenant, requests the Council to make a preparatory study with a view to a Conference on the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments, without waiting for the favourable conditions necessary for convening the Conference — this amendment, I say, represents a formula which reconciles and harmonises the different views of various delegations.

I trust that the liberty accorded to the Council to decide when the various preliminary studies shall begin will make it possible to carry on this work for the realisation of peace uninterruptedly, avoiding dangerous side-paths, and adopting methods that will be really satisfactory.

I agree, therefore, with our Chairman M. Hymans, that the sixth Assembly, if it adopts this draft resolution, will neither be at a standstill nor going back; it will be adapting the spirit of the League to the realities of international life.

The President :

Translation : Does any other delegate wish to speak ?

The Assembly has noted the reports submitted by the First and Third Committees, the texts of the draft resolutions submitted by the First Committee, and the joint draft resolution submitted by the First and Third Committees. I call upon the Assembly to vote on these draft resolutions, which read as follows :

The Assembly,

Taking note of the declarations submitted to the Council and the Assembly of the League of Nations in respect of the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes and of the fact that the said Protocol has not up to the present received the ratifications necessary for putting it into operation immediately ;

Convinced that the most urgent need of the present time is the re-establishment of mutual confidence between nations,

Declaring afresh that a war of aggression should be regarded as an international crime,

Regards favourably the effort made by certain nations to attain those objects by concluding arbitration conventions and treaties of mutual security conceived in the spirit of the Covenant of the League of Nations and in harmony with the principles of the Protocol (Arbitration, Security, Disarmament) ;

Records the fact that such agreements need not be restricted to a limited area but may be applied to the whole world ;

Recommends that, after these conventions and treaties have been deposited with the League of Nations, the Council should examine them in order to report to the Seventh Assembly on the progress in general security brought about by such agreements ;

Undertakes again to work for the establishment of peace by the sure method of arbitration, security and disarmament ;

And, in conformity with the spirit of Article 8 of the Covenant, requests the Council to make a preparatory study with a view to a Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments in order that, as soon as satisfactory conditions have been assured from the point of view of general security as provided for in Resolution XIV of the Third Assembly, the said Conference may be convened and a general reduction and limitation of armaments may be realised.

The Assembly,

In view of the importance of making a thorough study of the views which have been expressed in the Assembly and the Council on the subject of pacific settlement of international disputes ;

Convinced that such study will contribute to the development of a system of pacific settlement of international disputes ;

Requests the Council to submit to careful examination the proposals, declarations and suggestions made at the Assembly and the Council with a view to pacific settlement of international disputes, and to report to the Seventh Assembly upon the progress which can be made in this matter.

The Assembly,

Reserving the question whether it is at present desirable to embody in a new general Convention the provisions concerning compulsory arbitration contained in the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes ;

Recalling the guarantees provided in the Covenant of the League of Nations :

Calls the attention of States Members of the League to the desirability, from the point of view of their security, of concluding particular conventions for arbitration or for the judicial settlement of disputes.

The resolutions were adopted.

65. — PROTECTION AND WELFARE OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President:

Translation: The next item on the agenda is the consideration of the report of the Fifth Committee on the protection and welfare of children and young people.

I call upon M. Sugimura, delegate of Japan, Rapporteur, and M. Garay, delegate of Panama, Chairman of the Fifth Committee, to take their places on the platform.

M. Sugimura, delegate of Japan, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Sugimura (Japan):

Translation: Ladies and gentlemen — The report and draft resolution submitted by your Fifth Committee (Annex, Document A. 98. 1925. IV), on the question of the protection and welfare of children and young people are before you, and in order to save time I will not read them, nevertheless, I venture most earnestly to urge the adoption of the report and resolution, and, in order that your hearts and minds may be better attuned to this question, which touches humane and moral issues, may I give you a brief account of its outstanding features?

The social work of the League is sometimes criticised on the ground that it never leads to anything. People go so far as to maintain that the League should be primarily a political organisation and should leave other international institutions or charitable associations to deal with humanitarian questions. Such assertions seem to me to be the outcome of a regrettable ignorance of the great successes already achieved.

Since the League first began its humanitarian work, real and tangible improvements have been made in the systems and policies of civilised States concerning the traffic in women. The isolated measures of individual Governments have been supplemented by loyal and successful co-operation and united action. Idealists are no longer advancing in open formation; they realise that union is strength and that solidarity is necessary to arouse the conscience of the world.

Is not this fully proved by the fact that not only States Members of the League, but other civilised nations — particularly the United States of America — have contributed towards this world-wide work by sending eminent representatives and by granting generous subsidies? It is gratifying to find that so many nations in the different continents — nations of most varied customs, traditions, systems of morality and civilisations — have joined forces, with that sense of the responsibility of the human conscience which is the spiritual treasure of all mankind.

In the Advisory Committee the delegates and assessors have nobly devoted themselves to this common humanitarian work. They have endeavoured to cultivate that spirit of true humanity which rises above nationality, creed or race. Indeed, the moral and spiritual benefits of our work are even greater than its positive and immediate benefits; they herald the dawn of a

new world. This light of conscience will awaken all the peoples of the world to a comprehension of the high ideals of humanity.

The League, in addition to its work in regard to the traffic in women, has recently undertaken other work in connection with the protection and welfare of children and young people. That, to my mind, is a great event. Those who have only witnessed the sufferings of men have seen nothing — let them witness the sufferings of women. But even those who have witnessed the sufferings of women have seen nothing: let them behold the sufferings of children!

This the League has understood. It has a twofold task — that of keeping peace, the peace of to-day, and that of preparing the peace of to-morrow. Parents who neglect their children will never prosper. A nation which does not protect its future generations is bound to fall. The League, too, must watch like a mother over the fate of future generations which to-morrow will decide the fate of the world.

To care for neglected children, to bring up young people in the love of peace and justice, that is one of the League's chief tasks, and just as I look back to our past with real satisfaction, so I look forward to our future with perfect confidence.

The President:

Translation: Mlle. Vacaresco, delegate of Roumania, will address the Assembly.

Mlle. Vacaresco (Roumania):

Translation: Mr. President, my dear colleagues — Since this is an age which demands that our speeches shall be swift — swift as electrical waves in the ether — I shall endeavour for a few moments to borrow the thunderbolt and the lightnings and speak to you on a subject which is very near my heart and which has already, in its main outlines, been defined in this hall.

A woman never likes to mention dates, particularly when they refer to herself, but I must admit that among the women delegates to the Assembly I am one of those who have been here longest.

I was present when the good and the wicked fairies gathered around the cradle of the League. The wicked fairies predicted so much evil for the child that it was sent to live in the healthy air of hospitable Switzerland.

"She shall be deaf", said one fairy; "blind", said another, and they all pronounced a malediction which really went beyond all bounds. "She shall be dumb", they said. But we have given daily and striking proof that they were wrong.

I have, then, seen the gradual rise of the League. I have seen the varying countenance of its annual sessions; a countenance glowing with ardour, merging gradually into a countenance of wisdom; a countenance now betraying anxiety and now suffused with triumph; but always turned towards the breeze that blows from the open sea, towards the winds that are wafted from Heaven.

I assure you that when pessimists and detractors bring their tales to me they find they have made a mistake. I have seen the radiant modern city of our dreams emerge slowly from the mists in which the scepticism of some and the indifference of others sought to plunge it. I have seen its buildings grow in strength and its so-called Utopias rapidly become powerful realities.

Utopias they called our work on opium and our efforts to break up the white slave traffic; and yet we have been able to save so many victims of that baneful drug and to protect so many would-be victims. We have been laughed to scorn; it has been said that we should soon find ourselves drifting like abandoned hulks on an ocean of harmful

liquor or buried under an avalanche of that soft and diabolical snow—cocaine.

A Utopia they called the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, and yet this Committee has already achieved noteworthy results in many parts of the world. In my country—to mention only one instance—where Government help will be so effective, it is through intellectual co-operation, and under the guidance of intellectual co-operation, that the ideals of the League, and a keen desire to see the League's prestige enhanced, are spreading in our schools and training future generations who will understand these ideals and live up to them. Throughout the whole country, from the medical student to the law student, from the public school-boy to the pupil teacher, from the village schoolmaster to the town schoolmaster, all are learning to think in terms of the world, for the welfare of the world in general and human thought in particular, and are teaching others to do so. "Intellectual co-operation!" they sneered, with that irony with which ignorance is wont to obscure the truth. And yet, true to their traditions as the meeting-ground of dreams and deeds, Paris, the City of Light, and Rome, the Eternal, have eagerly accepted and kept aflame the torch which the League of Nations held out to them. Soon, in Paris, housed in a French building, the Institute of Intellectual Co-operation will begin its universal life in an international atmosphere and will enjoy to the full that freedom in taste and that taste for freedom which have always been characteristic of the great French nation.

Further, the League has undertaken, before the world, and I might almost say before Heaven, the magnificent, the sublime task of succouring the unfortunate. When, in all its youthful strength, and bold in its compassion, it came into being, there were eyes that turned to it, the eyes of the masses who with common inspiration were seeking the light of life; the unfortunate set their hopes in the League, and the fortunate—who after all are merely those condemned to a more refined form of suffering—looked to it for sympathy and help.

The poet has said that to be admired is nothing, to be loved is all. It is not as a subtle politician or as a legislator that the League of Nations will be loved. It is—and I trust I shall offend no one in saying so—by the work of your Fifth Committee, your Health Committee and your Committee on Intellectual Co-operation that you will gain the world's affection.

These are the organisations which have earned for you your vast, your marvellous popularity, of which your adversaries, and even many of your friends, are still unaware.

Praise be to the League for these Committees!

In a statement displaying a breadth of view and practical ability admired by all, the British delegate, the Duchess of Atholl, told us of all the thought and care bestowed by the Assembly on this question of the protection of children which the Fifth Committee has had transferred to it, bodily and not without difficulty, from its noble birthplace, Belgium, in order that it may be raised to the high status of a League organisation.

I heartily concur in all the views expressed by the Duchess of Atholl, whose knowledge of Parliamentary procedure and whose prestige as a Minister, combined with her charm and her great ability, have won all our hearts.

We should remember, too, that when the time is ripe, when the right stage has been reached, when fresh needs have arisen, the question of the protection of children, though it will not quit its ancient home, though it will still remain within the province of the Committee where it first saw

the light, must inevitably, and in natural course, be drawn into the sphere of intellectual co-operation. The psychological moment will come when intellectual co-operation will have to take the child in hand, the hour "when stream and rivulet meet", when protection alone will not be enough, when we must teach as well, and this can be done through the intellectual co-operation movement, which keeps in constant touch with schools and institutions in every country.

But to this, we are told, there are two objections. We are told that the Committees may overlap, though that danger, I think, is remote. We are also told that if the investigations are too detailed and the counsels we give are too direct, national sovereignties may be infringed.

Certainly we shall always and in all circumstances defend our own national sovereignty, than which nought is dearer to our hearts. It is true that on all occasions every country, whether a Member of the League or not, is both entitled and bound to oppose any attempt to interfere with this established right, the scope and significance of which are more fully recognised here than in any other centre of human activity. But to erect the danger of its infraction into a barrier to progress would surely be contrary to our unanimous desire that the protection afforded to children should be increased and extended. Frankly, I can see no signs of such a danger.

As regards the first objection, I never remember, during the whole of my six years' apprenticeship here, having found any serious instance of overlapping. On the contrary, I have always admired the sound judgment displayed and the smooth manner in which questions have been transferred from one of these Committees to its sister Committee, whether to be consolidated or to be treated from a new standpoint or to have their character stamped more indelibly upon them.

To return to national sovereignty. I am afraid we are all a little over-sensitive on that point. Safe within the fortress of the Covenant, it is surely so well defended that aircraft themselves could not fly over it without invisible wings. Yet there are regions higher than those into which the boldest aviator would venture—regions to which the League of Nations alone is permitted to soar.

In any case, can it really be called interference in a nation's private affairs if we ask it whether its children are growing up in the way they should go?

Is it impertinent to enquire what are the needs of those poor little ones, those fragile beings who, if they were snatched from vice, from crime or from death, would become good citizens, men and women worthy of the name? Are we abusing the rights which compassion and love of our neighbour give us when we say: We who are wont to look into the heart of things, we call to them, these poor, frail, little ones? We see them drifting aimlessly, with tottering steps, bearing in their veins perhaps some terrible hereditary taint. We hear them weeping bitter tears in the dark night, beside the laughter and the toys in the happy nurseries they have never known.

We meet them, lonely, wan and haggard, in the swarming by-ways of cities, holding out their hands, into which the passer-by places the mite of pity—yes, and also the wages of sin. Tattered, fever-racked, what do they know of life save its bitterness? They cower and tremble: above all, they do not understand. And it is this unconsciousness of the cruelty of fate, this dreadful childlike ignorance of the world, which should wring our hearts and move us to compassion. The child born for the light, born to be surrounded by protectors, the child with its little hands and little feet; it stumbles,

it falls, it is picked up. But what if there is no one there to pick it up, the child, the star-crowned child, hope of our hopes? Are we wrong in watching with heavy hearts for the ills that follow in the wake of the war? Are they not so many that, when we try to remedy them, we know not whither first to turn?

Think, too, of all the problems that stand as lions in our path—economic problems, problems of raw materials, problems, therefore, affecting our daily bread, the problem of maintaining peace and rebuilding hearths and homes.

The whole world, the human soul itself, is simply a vast humming hive of industry. And in the phantom-ridden whirlwind in which we are striving to prevent the shipwreck of the alliance we dream of establishing among the peoples, the races, the nations of the world, are we to forget the child—the child whose fate since the war has become a matter of international duty?

Here the population is too large, there too small. Here child-culture, a science still in its infancy, is unknown; there children are put to work at an age when the frail structure of their limbs is not yet set. This is more particularly a matter for the International Labour Office.

Then there are the child-emigrants of whom the Duchess of Atholl spoke, terrified infants carried away on long mysterious journeys; children abandoned at every milestone, children left sobbing by the frozen wayside where the cross-roads meet, a legion of the lost, sent by their parents to an unknown fate. We are answerable for them all, we are laying up a vast burden of debt to them, and some day they will come and claim their own with usury. They will claim our very souls if we fail to save them, soul and body.

I will say no more. We are not here to while away the hours; idle talkers who never pass to acts. The Assembly furnishes constant proof of the contrary. We implore it to continue and develop this movement for the protection of children. Apart from the weight which its decisions will add to our recommendations, apart from the sums already provided, money is coming in and will continue to come in, and with it good-will and the zealous work of the Advisory Committee is an earnest of still better work. We know the League will not abandon this, the noblest of all its tasks. Not in vain is it set on the shores of a lake through which impetuous waters flow, a lake which is both the image and cradle of the League, hiding under the calm, pure mirror of its surface and eternal current of world unity and world-wide pity, which it mingles with the waves of its own imperishable destiny.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I shall put to the vote the resolutions proposed by the Fifth Committee, which read as follows :

I. *The Assembly expresses its approval of the work accomplished by the Advisory Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People. It desires, at the same time, to emphasise the view expressed in the resolution of the fifth Assembly in regard to child welfare, that "the League can most usefully concern itself with the study of those problems on which the comparison of the methods and experience of different countries, consultation and interchange of views between the officials and experts of different countries and international co-operation may be likely to assist the Governments in dealing with such problems". The Assembly therefore hopes that the Commission will not lose sight of the limits of its competence as thus defined.*

• *The Assembly is also of the opinion that it is desirable that, when collaborating with other organisations of the League of Nations, the Advisory Commission should conform to Resolution 4 of the fifth Assembly on the subject of duplication of work.*

• II. *The Assembly,*

Considering that the Council, in accordance with a resolution of the fifth Assembly, invited the Health Organisation of the League to consider any measures within its competence which it would be desirable and practicable to undertake for the protection of children from the hygienic point of view; and

Convinced of the importance of this form of child welfare work :

Decides to request the Health Organisation to investigate infant mortality from the point of view of feeding in infancy ;

Requests the Council to instruct the Health Committee to undertake this investigation and to enquire into the advisability of constituting a sub-committee which would be able to call upon the co-operation of specialists in various countries in questions concerning child hygiene and which would be requested to initiate the investigation of this and of any other questions connected with child hygiene the consideration of which might be deemed expedient.

The resolutions were adopted.

66. — REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS: MANUFACTURE OF ARMS, OF AMMUNITION AND OF IMPLEMENTS OF WAR: REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on our agenda is the consideration of the report of the Third Committee on the reduction of armaments (manufacture of arms, of ammunition and of implements of war).

(At the invitation of the President, M. Ninichitch, Chairman of the Third Committee, and M. Guerrero, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur, M. Guerrero, delegate of Salvador, will address the Assembly.

M. Guerrero (Salvador), Rapporteur, read his report (Annex, Document A.109.1925.IX).

The President :

Translation : Does anybody wish to speak on the resolution before us, which reads as follows :

The Assembly adopts the declaration inserted in its Final Act by the Conference for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War which met at Geneva in May and June 1925, declaring that the Convention concerning the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War "must be considered as an important step towards a general system of international agreements regarding arms and ammunition and implements of war, and that it is desirable that the international aspect of the manufacture of such arms and ammunition and implements of war receive early consideration by the different Governments";

The Assembly invites the Council to continue the preliminary work on the subject of the control

of the private manufacture of arms, ammunition and implements of war so that a draft Convention may be prepared as speedily as possible and that the Council may summon an international Conference to consider it, if possible, before the next Assembly.

It is of opinion that the co-operation of a representative of the United States Government in the preliminary work for this Convention is indispensable to the success of the Conference and begs the Council to invite the said Government to co-operate as soon as it considers such a step possible.

The resolution was adopted.

67. — REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS: YEAR-BOOK OF GENERAL AND STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON MILITARY, NAVAL AND AIR ARMAMENTS: REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President:

Translation: The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Third Committee's report on the question of general and statistical information on military, naval and air armaments.

The Rapporteur, M. Guerrero, will address the Assembly.

M. Guerrero (Salvador), Rapporteur, read his report (Annex, Document A. 108. 1925. IX).

The President:

Translation: Does anybody wish to speak on the resolution, which reads as follows:

The Assembly declares that the Year-Book of General and Statistical Information regarding the armaments of the various countries is of great assistance in connection with the work for the reduction and limitation of armaments, and it trusts that the Secretary-General will arrange for the continuation and enlargement of this publication on the lines laid down in the resolution of the fifth Assembly.

The resolution was adopted.

68. — PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN THE NEAR EAST: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President:

Translation: The next item on the agenda is the consideration of the Fifth Committee's report on the protection of women and children in the Near East (Annex, Document A. III. 1925. IV).

(At the invitation of the President, M. Garay, delegate of Panama, Chairman of the Fifth Committee, and the Duchess of Atholl, delegate of the British Empire, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President:

Translation: The Duchess of Atholl will address the Assembly.

The Duchess of Atholl (British Empire) (Rapporteur): — Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—The report which I have the honour, in the name of the Fifth Committee, to present to the Assembly has been distributed to the members and I shall ask the Assembly to consider it as having been read. As the report is necessarily somewhat official perhaps some delegates might be inclined to think it a little Anglo-Saxon in its brevity, and I will ask your permission to supplement it with a few words.

First of all with regard to that part of the work of the Committee for the Protection of Women and Children in the Near East which is carried on at Constantinople, I have to report that the Fifth Committee has learned with deep regret that there is a possibility that Dr. Kennedy may not be able to continue the great work which he and Miss Mills have been doing for some years at the League of Nations "Neutral House". Should Dr. Kennedy confirm the resignation which we understand he has offered, the Committee earnestly trusts that this will not affect the continuation of a work which it regards as of great value. The Committee therefore asks the Assembly to vote a sum of 30,000 francs for this work at Constantinople.

With regard to the work carried on by Miss Jeppe at Aleppo, I wish, if I may, to impress upon my fellow delegates the very great interest which is taken in this work by the women of my country, and, I believe, by the women of many other countries as well. A former speaker this afternoon has spoken of the sufferings of women and of children. I wish to say quite frankly that many women in Great Britain know of no women and no children throughout the whole world who have so great a claim on the sympathy of the Members of the League of Nations as these unhappy Armenian women and children whom Miss Jeppe has been trying to help at Aleppo for the past four years. The Fifth Committee therefore regards this work as a very essential and a very valuable one.

Let us admit, however, that this work is difficult — this work of helping to free Armenian women and children who are captive in the homes of another race. Let us admit that it is work which requires to be executed with great tact and discretion. I therefore crave the indulgence of the Assembly while I briefly explain to you some of the principles on the basis of which Miss Jeppe directs this work. She carries it on through agents established in various districts between Aleppo and the Turkish frontier, in any district, so far as the funds at her disposal permits, from which it is to be expected that fugitive women and children may come. The duty of these agents is to assist the fugitives to escape.

The first point that I would like to impress upon the Assembly is that these agents seldom or never cross the Turkish frontier. Their work is carried on within mandated territory. The second point that I would like you to remember is that Miss Jeppe only assists Armenian women and children, not woman and children of any other race. If an Armenian woman comes to the frontier accompanied by her children, children whom she has borne to a Turkish or a Kurdish father, Miss Jeppe refuses to take those children, who are Turkish subjects. The children must go back to their father and the mother must go with them unless she is ready to be separated from her children.

The third point that I would like to ask you to bear in mind is that no Armenian woman is pressed to come. Miss Jeppe only lets it be known, in those mysterious ways in which news percolates in Eastern countries, that at Aleppo there is a home founded and maintained by the League of Nations, a great body that seeks, so far as it can, to be a father to an orphaned people, a home where, if unhappy Armenian women and children can reach it, they will be warmly welcomed and lovingly tended; that they have a very great chance, through this home, of being restored to their relatives from whom they have so long been separated and that if they should unhappily be unable to hear news of their relatives they will not be abandoned but will be helped to earn their own livings.

Those are the three points which I would like to ask members of this Assembly to bear in mind

as to the principles upon which this work is based.

With regard to that last point—that Miss Jeppe never abandons a woman or child who comes to her but seeks, if she cannot restore them to their friends, to give them such training as will enable them to be self-supporting—it was in connection with that aim that Miss Jeppe last year founded an Armenian village.

The Fifth Committee clearly understands that in future all work of that kind, all colonisation, will be done by the mandatory Power, and it relies on the representatives of that Power to allow such of Miss Jeppe's protégés as are not able to rejoin their relatives to earn their livelihood in any such villages or colonies as may be established hereafter, because the Armenian women passionately desire, having recovered their freedom, to live near their own people.

I would like also to urge on the Assembly the great need that the Fifth Committee feels for prosecuting this work as long as possible and for prosecuting it with the greatest vigour possible.

I think we all recognise that this work cannot be carried on for ever. It is ten years since many of these women and children were, in the moving words of a member of the French delegation last year, dragged from their hearths and homes and handed over defenceless to their oppressors. As the years have passed on some of them have died with broken hearts, others have died from lack of care in illness, others again may have become resigned to their fate or hopeless of escape, yet others may have children and may feel that they do not wish to leave them.

On the other hand, as the years have passed, Miss Jeppe's work has become better known, greater confidence is now felt because of the work which she has accomplished in the course of these years in which she has been at work—and this is rather an important point to remember—Miss Jeppe has got into touch with more and more Armenian families scattered throughout the various countries, so that she is to-day in a better position to put the fugitive Armenian woman in touch with her relatives than was the case two years ago. In my view, one of the most successful features of Miss Jeppe's work is that she has been able to restore to their friends about three-fourths of the fugitives who have come to her.

I would remind you that last year Miss Jeppe, in submitting her report to the League, spoke of 5,000 or 10,000 women whom she thought it might be possible to rescue in the next four or five years. To-day Miss Jeppe speaks of a much smaller number. She speaks of 2,000 whom she thinks she could save, though possibly it may take two or three years to accomplish the task. I venture to urge upon the Assembly the necessity for doing everything possible in the coming year to enable Miss Jeppe to get into touch with as many as possible of these 2,000 women who may wish to enter her home. A year or two hence it may be too late, the opportunity may have passed. In any case, 2,000 is but a fraction of the number which Miss Jeppe estimates as living under the conditions of virtual slavery, or of humiliation and outrage.

The Fifth Committee, therefore, earnestly hopes that the Assembly will vote the credit asked for to enable this work to be continued with the greatest possible thoroughness in the coming year, and the Committee relies on the great Power under whose authority this work will be carried on to continue to give to Miss Jeppe the encouragement and support which has been of great assistance to her in the past.

It is unnecessary for me to appeal in this matter to my fellow women delegates. No woman, happy

in her freedom, the freedom to live in her own country, in her own home, surrounded by those whom she loves, can contemplate without a shudder the lot of these women and children. To my fellow men delegates I would only say that I ask them for one moment to compare the lot of these women, these children, with the lot of their own sisters, their own wives, their own daughters, and I have no doubt what their answer will be.

I therefore have the honour, in the name of the Fifth Committee, to submit to the Assembly the following resolutions :

1. *The Assembly approves the reports submitted by Dr. Kennedy and Miss Karen Jeppe. It expresses its high appreciation of the work they and their assistants have accomplished.*

2. *Whereas the Commission for the Protection of Women and Children in the Near East set up in fulfilment of the resolutions adopted by the first and second Assemblies is in practice composed of two distinct missions in Constantinople and in Syria respectively, the Assembly decides that these missions shall be divided and that separate credits shall be voted to Dr. Kennedy for the "Neutral House" at Constantinople and to Miss Jeppe for the protection of women and children in Syria.*

3. *The Assembly decides that the "Neutral House" of the League of Nations at Constantinople shall continue for another year. Should Dr. Kennedy be unable to continue his present appointment, it invites the Council to take all the necessary measures for the continuation of this work.*

4. *The Assembly decides that, under the supreme control of the Power which holds a mandate in Syria under the League of Nations, Miss Jeppe will continue for another year her work for the protection of women and children. It requests the mandatory Power to continue to give its aid and patronage to Miss Jeppe.*

5. *The Assembly decides that the sum of 45,000 francs shall be allocated for the work of Miss Jeppe and the sum of 30,000 francs for the work of Dr. Kennedy during 1926.*

A report on their work will be submitted by them to the seventh Assembly.

The President :

Translation : Does anyone wish to speak ?

I put the resolutions submitted by the Fifth Committee to the vote.

The resolutions were adopted.

69. — ERECTION OF AN ASSEMBLY HALL AND OF ANNEXES FOR THE USE OF THE SECRETARIAT: REPORT OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The net item on the agenda is the discussion of the Fourth Committee's report on the construction of an Assembly Hall and of Annexes for the use of the Secretariat (Annex, Document A. 116. 1925. X).

(At the President's invitation, M. da Costa (Portugal), Chairman of the Fourth Committee, Baron Lehmann (Liberia), Chairman of the Sub-Committee, and M. Réveillaud (France), Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Réveillaud (France), Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — In order to save time, I beg those delegates who are specially interested in the construction of the building kindly to refer to the written report I have submitted on behalf of the Fourth Committee. There they will find full details and also the reasons which prompted the settlement proposed by the Committee for this delicate question.

They will find one point which is somewhat technical to explain to the Assembly. I refer to the arrangement we have made to carry forward the large credits needed for this work over a sufficiently large number of financial periods to avoid placing too large a burden upon our budgets at one time.

Here are the conclusions of the Committee's report: As, in the architects' opinion, the sum voted last year by the Assembly and the land placed at our disposal were not adequate or suitable for the construction of an Assembly Hall, the Committee considered that, in view of the urgent necessity of erecting this Hall in the immediate neighbourhood of the Secretariat, only one site was at present suitable for this purpose, namely, that on the other side of a street which the delegates know very well and along which the tramway passes, the street which ends at the Quai Wilson. This site is thus partly adjacent to the present offices of the Secretariat.

At the end of our report you will find a sketch in which the site in question is shaded.

The frontage of this site upon the Quai Wilson is greater than the present frontage of the Hotel National on the same Quai, even if the Armleder property is included. The site is therefore very suitable for the erection of a building such as we might have in mind.

This property is known locally as the "Château Banquet". It extends from the Lake to the rue de Lausanne and has an area of about 46,000 square meters, whereas the area of the site which is the property of the League is about 13,000 square meters.

In that respect, therefore, we shall be able to cover all possible requirements even in the distant future.

The Committee definitely proposes that you should purchase the site and approve an estimate not exceeding two million francs for the purchase of the site, eight million francs for the erection of the Assembly Hall, and 1,700,000 francs for the necessary extension of the offices of the Secretariat, which, after careful examination, has been approved by the Supervisory Commission.

If you agree to this scheme the arrangement suggested is as follows: The International Jury of Architects which it was decided to form last year will meet immediately after the December session of the Council, that is to say, early in January. This Jury will decide upon the estimates and the conditions of the competition, which will be a great international competition open to all the Members of the League.

From six to eight months will be necessary for the plans to be drawn up, and for plans to reach here from the most distant countries.

By making all possible haste, and barring unforeseen contingencies, you will, I hope, have the satisfaction of being able to conduct your proceedings in your own building by September 1928, but I am afraid not before.

I have given all these details because a section of the Committee—an extremely important section, considering the names and the standing of those

concerned—felt that it would be unwise to take a hasty decision which would prevent us selling the Hotel National or finding a site which would perhaps be more suitable.

Your Committee suggests that, as it is impossible for the Jury of Architects to meet before next January, you should utilise the intervening period to put the Hotel National up for public sale.

In this way, the wishes of those who favour this method of solving the question will be met and the procedure will be as follows: If the Secretariat does not receive an acceptable offer, our main decision will remain, that is to say, the necessary steps will be taken forthwith to begin work on the Pictet site, to which I referred just now.

If, on the other hand, it is found possible to sell, a small Committee, which will be appointed by the Council, and will probably be composed of delegates who have attended this Assembly and therefore know what is wanted, will re-examine the whole problem and will be able to come to a speedy conclusion.

Before concluding, I venture to make two remarks which, I think, are apposite because they explain why we are asking you to vote as the Committee suggests. The first is that the erection of a new hall and its annexes has been greatly advanced by the fact that at the end of 1924 we had a budget surplus of ten million Swiss francs.

Those who have not closely followed the rather technical discussions of our Committee may be inclined to regard this fortunate and perhaps unforeseen circumstance as due to the combined efforts of the Secretariat, to whom I am happy to pay a tribute, the Supervisory Commission, presided over by our eminent colleague, M. Osinsky, and the Fourth Committee as a whole. These efforts have indeed been crowned by success and have ensured the good administration of our finances; two years ago M. Motta paid a high tribute to them, and it is quite right that they should duly be made public.

Nevertheless, this surplus is largely due to the payment by certain States of contributions in arrears. I am convinced that the real significance of these large payments of arrears is that the scepticism of the first year, which affected even the budget, has been succeeded by juster conception of the political and moral value of the League. Hence the general eagerness of the nations to pay their share of the annual expenses, which, though a somewhat materialistic way of expressing what they feel, is nevertheless a welcome token of their confidence in its destinies.

I now come to my second observation, which indeed I made yesterday. Although we of the Fourth Committee usually scrutinise with care even the smallest of the credits we are asked to approve, not a single member questioned the need for a new Conference Hall. There was no suggestion to adjourn the matter, nor was there any question as to the desirability of keeping the permanent seat of our League at Geneva.

Before the estimate of 11,700,000 francs—more than double that granted last year—was passed, it was debated, at great length and point by point, at the numerous meetings of the Sub-Committee, and the competent organs were called upon to submit all the relevant data; but what I specially desire to say now is that in adopting these estimates we rejected everything that was in the nature of a makeshift. The chief concern of most of the delegates was rather that our efforts should lead to the erection of a building worthy of the League.

If the budget specialists themselves, with their dry-as-dust minds, have surrendered, need we seek further proof, or is it too much to conclude that, in the opinion of those who have come and seen,

the League, even without waiting for a house built of stone, has won for itself a sanctuary in the hearts of all?

May I now read the short resolutions with which our report concludes and on which you will be asked to vote :

1. *The Assembly approves the report of its Fourth Committee on the erection of the Assembly Hall and Annexes for the Secretariat, and votes for this purpose a credit of 11,700,000 francs, made up as follows : 8,000,000 for the erection of an Assembly Hall, 2,000,000 for the purchase of the site, and 1,700,000 for the Annex to the present Secretariat building.*

2. *The Assembly invites the Council to appoint a Committee to report to the Council, should the building at present occupied by the Secretariat be sold within the period and under the conditions laid down in the Fourth Committee's report, whether any changes as regards the selection of the site and the arrangement of the various buildings should be made in the decision adopted in paragraph 1 of the present resolution.*

The President :

Translation : M. Motta, first delegate for Switzerland, will address the Assembly.

M. Motta (Switzerland) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—Switzerland, the seat of the League of Nations, is especially glad to see the resolution on which the Assembly is about to vote. I wish to convey to you the gratitude of the Canton and City of Geneva and also of the Swiss Confederation.

I am sure that the solution you have reached takes due account of all the interests involved. I wish to offer my sincere thanks to the Chairman of the Fourth Committee and the Chairman of the Sub-Committee, but I especially desire to mention the distinguished Rapporteur, who has applied himself to the examination and solution of this question with all his sense of justice and equity and his great liberal-mindedness.

My hope is that the new building will prove to be the tangible evidence of the confidence we all share in the prosperity of the League and the great future that lies before it.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak on the draft resolutions submitted to the Committee, I shall consider the resolutions adopted.

The resolutions were adopted.

70. — COLLABORATION OF THE PRESS IN THE ORGANISATION OF PEACE : REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the report of the Sixth Committee on the Collaboration of the Press in the Organisation of Peace (Annex, Document A. 114. 1925. VII).

(At the invitation of the President, the Rapporteur, M. Hymans, delegate for Belgium, and the Chairman of the Sixth Committee, M. Guerrero, took their places on the platform.)

M. Hymans (Belgium) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—I have the honour to be the Rapporteur of the Sixth Committee, which has examined the

Chilian delegation's suggestion that a Committee of experts should be summoned to provide for the co-operation of the Press for the organisation of peace. I will now read the resolution which the Sixth Committee asks you to adopt :

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 organisation 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 tranquillisation of public opinion.”

As you will see, the aim of this resolution is to enable the League to help the Press with a view to perfecting its technical methods, and promoting the work of moral disarmament and the organisation of peace, to which the Press can lend such powerful aid.

From the outset, this proposal was sympathetically received by the Assembly and by the Committee which examined it.

The Press is a great power, which has already, if I may say so, a permanent seat on the League. But like all great powers, it is very jealous of its autonomy and independence. There is therefore no intention of destroying or restricting the freedom of discussion, the freedom to guide opinion, which is characteristic of the Press, and without which it cannot subsist or serve any useful purpose.

It is therefore proposed that the Assembly should simply invite the Council to call together, when it considers it opportune, a Committee of Experts to examine all the steps necessary to introduce improvements in regard to Press information, to co-ordinate its action and to help it in its arrangements with the various Governments for the despatch of news, telegrams, etc.

It is essential that the League should in no way seek to organise a semi-official press for its own propaganda. The Press must remain independent; all we desire is to help it.

With this object the Sixth Committee, of which I have the honour to be the Rapporteur, has adopted the text I have just read, which the Assembly is now asked to ratify. You will understand, I am sure, without further explanations on my part, the idea which your Committee had in mind, and which so fortunately led to the step taken by the Chilian delegation.

The President :

Translation : M. Plaisant, delegate for France, will address the Assembly.

M. Marcel Plaisant (France) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—The French delegation gladly accepts the Chilian delegation's proposal to call together a Committee of Experts with a view to perfecting the organisation of peace by means of work done on behalf of and by the Press.

I must first of all congratulate the author of this brilliant suggestion, the Chilian delegate, and

M. Hymans, who gave it special prominence in his report.

But there is one thought that at once occurs to us : Is it possible that we, who have only existed for a few years as a League of Nations, should already be able to give advice to the Press, with its age-long traditions? At this moment, when it has displayed every solicitude on our behalf, when it is ever striving under diverse circumstances to throw more and more light upon all our work, our first duty is to pay it a tribute of gratitude for the invaluable help it has already afforded on behalf of peace by guiding us and extending to us its warm sympathy.

But the Press to-day makes demands, and has the right to demand even more.

The Press has not only stimulated our work, but is itself a creative force, and has more than once initiated those acts of intrepid daring which are omens of new promise and forerunners of progress.

International in composition, diverse in character, varied in talent, the Press may well be said to delineate the characteristic genius of each individual nation, as revealed in our discussions.

But it must also reveal us in an atmosphere of impartiality and spiritual unity which should show that the League has but a single soul.

The proposal submitted to us will greatly simplify the task of the Press, abolish present difficulties, facilitate its methods of obtaining information and transmitting news, and, lastly, ensure a wider dissemination of the thoughts and ideas which are broadcast here as from the world's most public platform.

In our opinion, if the Chilean proposal leads to a meeting of experts open to all, it will have served a most useful purpose. But do not let us forget that freedom is the very lifeblood of the Press. Our political history is as it were the outcome of all the vicissitudes which have followed upon the victory of the written word.

There is, therefore, no question whatever of this Committee being able to interfere in any way in the affairs of the Press. The Press lives in freedom and must develop in freedom.

But we may hope to remain more faithful to its echo if we possess every means of giving purity and strength to its voice. We shall then be able to say that we have worked with it, just for as long as it has never ceased to work for us.

We are here as delegates of our Governments, and similarly the journalists, who represent public opinion, may be said to be the delegates of the outside world, and by their assiduity and their activity, extending as it does beyond the periods when we meet, they constitute a kind of permanent assembly of the League.

Let us hope that the Committee which is about to meet will give greater resonance to this echo, will extend the scope of its influence, and that the Press, through this vast concourse of minds, will also contribute its share of concord towards the work of peace.

The President :

Translation : I call upon M. Yañez, delegate of Chile, to address the Assembly.

M. Yañez (Chile) :

Translation : On behalf of the Chilean delegation, I accept with great pleasure and profound gratitude M. Hymans' lucid report, which is a model of wisdom.

This report was unanimously accepted by the Sixth Committee after a long and most interesting debate. I am convinced that its adoption by this

Assembly will mean the beginning of a new era for the conscience and ideas of the world.

I have now only to express my thanks to M. Plaisant for the tribute he was kind enough to pay to the Chilean delegation and to myself.

The President :

Translation : If nobody wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution proposed by the Sixth Committee, which reads as follows :

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 organisation 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 tranquillisation of public opinion*

The resolution was adopted

71. — INTERNATIONAL MUNICIPAL CO-OPERATION : REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the consideration of the Fifth Committee's report on international municipal co-operation (Annex, Document A.122.1925.IV).

(At the invitation of the President, the Chairman of the Fifth Committee, M. Garay (Panama) and the Rapporteur, M. Avramovitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes) took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Avramovitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes) will address the Assembly.

M. Avramovitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes) :

Translation : Many important subjects have been discussed during this Assembly. Indeed, the importance of the work, the vitality of the League and the loyalty of the Members are proved by the eagerness of the various delegations to make some contribution, great or small, to the building up of that great edifice, the League, by submitting resolutions, recommendations and suggestions to the Assembly in order that the League's aims and ideals shall be made known.

With this idea the Cuban delegation tabled a proposal before the fifth Assembly for international municipal co-operation, the object of which is to spread from country to country both this ideal and also that of international co-operation in general.

As the report is before you, I shall only give a brief summary of it, trusting that those who have not read the report have been made acquainted with the question by the delegates who took part in the Fifth Committee. The problem is a very complicated one, and formed the subject of long and interesting discussions in the fifth Assembly.

All delegates were in agreement as to the principle involved, but a number of objections were raised, the speakers expressing a fear that the very complexity of the subject might lead to difficulties. Its scope, therefore, had to be limited.

This year the Fifth Committee, which had been instructed to consider the question, noted a resolution adopted by the fifth Assembly to the effect that the matter should be referred to the Secretariat for examination, and asking the Secretary-General to submit a report to the sixth Assembly. The Fifth Committee has studied the Secretariat's report, has subjected the question to further consideration, and has made considerable progress.

During the discussions in the Fifth Committee, certain delegations again expressed their fears that inter-municipal action might possibly lead to encroachments upon the national sovereignty of individual States and might prove objectionable to Governments. Moreover, there is already a certain amount of unofficial co-operation, apart from the work carried out by the technical organisations of the League. It would be better, they said, to co-ordinate this than create new organs or run the risk of overlapping.

While, therefore, approving in principle the motives actuating these suggestions the Committee thought it unnecessary for the present to embody them in too definite a form. It concluded that it would be better merely to submit to the Assembly, in the form of a resolution, a summary of the various principles agreed to by the Committee, laying particular stress on the fact that international co-operation, based upon the co-operation of municipalities in various countries, though a question of the greatest interest should never be allowed to overstep the bounds of national sovereignty.

As I have already said, I think that this new and lofty idea for promoting the well-being of the citizens of the whole world, an idea which is essentially in harmony with the spirit and traditions of the League, is bound to meet with your approval. The Assembly, therefore, will, I trust, approve the following draft resolution, which I now have the honour to submit :

“ The Assembly,

“Endorsing the report on International Municipal Co-operation, submitted by the Secretariat in accordance with the resolution adopted by the fifth Assembly on September 20th, 1924.

“Decides to call the attention of the different Governments to the advantages which close co-operation, national and international, between the municipalities within the strict limits of national sovereignty presents from the point of view of the aims of the League of Nations ;

“And requests the Council to authorise the technical organisations of the League to give favourable consideration, so far as they may find it practicable to do so, to requests for assistance or co-operation addressed to them by the various non-official international organisations which deal with municipal questions.”

This draft resolution, as submitted to you by the Fifth Committee, is, I think perfectly clear, and I hope it will meet the views, both of those who desired to extend the scope of the question and of those who thought it should be restricted.

Some of us may feel that the resolution does not go far enough but it is a mistake to ask for too much at a time and insist upon the immediate acceptance of new ideas, no matter how important they may be.

As Lord Cecil, the British delegate, said this morning, we must always, before submitting and

supporting resolutions, consider whether they are feasible.

There can be no doubt that the sole purpose of any fresh idea zealously advocated here is to serve the cause of the League, but, although I agree with the representative of France that we must attack this question boldly, I would venture to suggest that it also calls for circumspection.

The President :

Translation : M. Lugo Viña, delegate of Cuba, will address the Assembly.

M. Lugo Viña (Cuba) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Cuban delegation desires to repeat the declaration which it made during the discussion in the Fifth Committee on the question of inter-municipality, and to define afresh, and beyond all possibility of doubt, what exactly is the underlying idea and the real scope of its suggestion concerning the much-discussed subject of international municipal relations and co-operation.

I desire, before entering upon the subject, to thank the President of my delegation for appointing me to interpret our views, since I was the promoter of this scheme and its advocate in Europe and America.

Inter-municipality, as described by me in a number of speeches and as defined and advocated by the Cuban delegation, is, in actual fact, simply a kind of supplementary diplomacy which, bound up as it is with one of the organic factors in the constitution of the State, can only come into play as an auxiliary factor in State administration. Inter-municipality, as thus understood, can never be prejudicial to national sovereignty, but is rather calculated to extend it at home and abroad. The Cuban delegation solemnly declares — as it has already declared in discussion in the Committee — that by reason of this very fact such a movement, placed under the guarantee and control of the State, would be quite beyond suspicion, and would certainly not make for disintegration, because, in view of its subordinate character, it can never go outside its proper sphere of action. In the complicated machinery of public administration, inter-municipality is not intended to promote isolated action, which might in some cases be hostile to or at variance with State policy. Its sole purpose is to contribute, in a supplementary and dependent capacity, towards the promotion and development of national activities, always within the natural limits of these activities or in the vast experimental field of international interchanges.

Municipalities, which are the real framework of each nation, reflect within their urban limits practically every aspect of national life. With urban development, which is becoming increasingly complex and intense, there has sprung up a new science, “municipal science”, and a new need, that of studying and where desirable profiting by foreign experience.

These two aspects — the one purely scientific and the other essentially practical — show that municipalities are not simply traditional administrative institutions governed by precedent. They also constitute a powerful factor in national progress and expansion. Some municipalities to-day act as administrators for populations greater than that of whole nations, and, if these nations, in order to maintain their development on a level with that of other countries, need the experience acquired through international contact, naturally these great modern towns are obliged continually to reorganise their methods and municipal procedure.

Inter-municipality, which leads to the interchange of technical information and improvements, is essential to urban and hence to national progress. Such interchange, which is still informal, must in future be properly organised. That, then, is the purpose of inter-municipality, which has no objects outside the limits of administrative life. Therefore, all reservations which may be made, any misgivings which may be felt, are removed by the indisputable fact that inter-municipality, in order to develop, must be a movement collaborating with, and assisting, the State and its sovereignty, which it claims neither to lessen nor deny.

The Cuban delegation, however, is satisfied with the discussions which have taken place concerning its proposal, and I, as author of the proposal, share that satisfaction.

The agreement at which we have arrived, and which is embodied in the present resolution, certainly does not represent the full ideal to which inter-municipality aspires. Inter-municipality, however, is only in its infancy, and it must not and cannot hope to arrive at perfection in a day. The investigations and enquiries to which the Cuban scheme has given rise have served to acquaint nations with the work accomplished by the Union internationale des Villes, which promotes inter-municipality by intercommunal correspondence and the exchange of information at congresses in which the town councils of different countries meet. They have also served to reveal the value of the scheme and will make its realisation practicable in the near future, if, as I hope, the recommendations contained in the draft resolution submitted to this Assembly, after having been approved here, are taken up by the Governments Members of the League. The League is a promoter of reforms, generous ideas and new ideals, and, among these, inter-municipality may one day reach a stage at which it will help to make those experimental international interchanges, which have already begun to be organised on a more satisfactory basis by the League, the surest and most lasting factor in international harmony.

Moreover, the various proposals submitted to this Assembly suggest a means for the universalisation of the League — the logical outcome of its democratic spirit. It must be our object in future carefully to instruct the masses regarding the existence of this legal and social organisation,

in order that they may form a correct estimate of its composition, ideals and purpose, and may support and contribute towards the development of its noble activities.

No organisations can contribute more effectively to the attainment of this object than the municipalities, which form the direct link between the State and the masses, which collect and synthesise their aspirations and determine the general trend of new ideals. Thus guided by the State, the municipalities, in conjunction and in harmony with the League, can pursue a progressive and democratic policy whereby the ideals of the League will be implanted in the very conscience of the masses.

Having thus defined our attitude, it only remains for us to acknowledge the welcome accorded, to our great satisfaction, in three consecutive Assemblies, to the suggestion submitted by Cuba and now placed by the League under the safeguard of the national sovereignty of each of the States represented here.

The President :

Translation : I put to the vote the resolution proposed by the Fifth Committee, which reads as follows :

The Assembly,

Endorsing the report on International Municipal Co-operation, submitted by the Secretariat in accordance with the resolution adopted by the fifth Assembly on September 20th, 1924 :

Decides to call the attention of the different Governments to the advantages which close co-operation, national and international, between the municipalities within the strict limits of national sovereignty presents from the point of view of the aims of the League of Nations ;

And requests the Council to authorise the technical organisations of the League to give favourable consideration, so far as they may find it practicable to do so, to requests for assistance or co-operation addressed to them by the various non-official international organisations which deal with municipal questions.

The resolution was adopted.

The meeting rose at 7.15 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SIXTH ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

EIGHTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26th, 1925, AT 9.30 A.M.

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President : MR. DANDURAND.

72. — ALLOCATION OF EXPENSES OF THE LEAGUE : REPORT OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President : Ladies and gentlemen — I have, up till now, in order to expedite the proceedings of the Assembly, mostly made use of the French language. As a homage to my fellow

members of the British Empire and of the Dominions beyond the Seas, I shall speak this day the language of the majority of my own Canadian compatriots. I stated last year that Canada was the only nation in this Assembly which has the two official languages of the League of Nations.

The first question on the agenda is the consideration of the report of the Fourth Committee on the Allocation of Expenses. (Annex. Doc. A. 125. 1925. II). I call on the Rapporteur, M. Carl Enckell, delegate of Finland, and the Chairman of the Fourth Committee, Dr. da Costa, delegate of Portugal, to take their places on the platform.

(Dr. A. da Costa (Portugal), Chairman, and M. Carl Enckell (Finland), Rapporteur of the Fourth Committee, took their places on the platform.)

The President : I call up on M. Enckell, Rapporteur, to address the Assembly.

M. Enckell (Finland), Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I have the honour, on behalf of the Fourth Committee, to submit to the Assembly the report on the allocation of expenses drawn up by His Excellency M. Adatci, my eminent Japanese colleague, who, to his great regret, is prevented by indisposition from speaking to-day.

In 1924 the fifth Assembly adopted a resolution requesting the Council to ask the Committee on the Allocation of Expenses, presided over by M. Réveillaud, to continue its researches, with the object (in view of the difficulties of drawing up a definitive scale at a time when the exchange fluctuations were so pronounced) of preparing a fresh provisional scale to be submitted to the 1925 Assembly and to come into force as from 1926 for a period to be decided upon.

You know from previous discussions how delicate and difficult has been the task entrusted to the Committee on the Allocation of Expenses. I am glad, therefore, to have this opportunity of

confirming the tribute paid by the Fourth Committee to the conscientious and impartial work done by M. Réveillaud and his colleagues, with the able assistance of the Secretariat.

It has been along these lines that the Allocation Committee, on the request of successive Assemblies, has pursued its work.

The budgets for 1923 of all the 54 Member States have been analysed and all "abnormal items" of expenditure eliminated. Under normal items of expenditure are included: Defence, General Administration, Financial Administration, Justice, Posts and Telegraphs, Colonies, Economic Administration, Public Works, Education, Church, Health, Social Administration, Pensions and miscellaneous items. The various items have been grouped in different ways by the Allocation Committee after converting the national currencies into dollars so as to form a series of indices which could guide the Committee in making its decisions. The Allocation Committee, however, as it indicated in its last report, did not find it possible to employ these indices with any sort of mathematical precision nor claim that they alone constitute by any means an unerring guide of capacity to pay.

M. Réveillaud explained at length to the Sub-Committee the various difficulties with which the Allocation Committee was faced. Thus some States are much more highly socialised than others, with the result that the magnitude of certain items of their expenditure is a measure rather of their social policy than of their national income; in some countries a greater part of the total administration is undertaken by the central and in others by the local governments. To compare the various budgets of a federal with the single budget of a unitary State necessarily involved a number of highly technical problems, some of which are scarcely solvable. Finally, the exchanges of the world are even now by no means stable and were subject to still greater fluctuations in the year 1923, which was the year taken by the Allocation Committee as the basis of its work, so that the conversion of the national currencies into dollars unavoidably entails the possibility of error.

The Allocation Committee endeavoured, therefore, to check the preliminary conclusions to which these budget figures seemed to point, by certain other economic data — the production of cereals and minerals, international trade, etc. The economic data, however, no less than the financial, were found to be open to a number of objections, although no doubt of certain value as a corrective.

But I would remind the Assembly that the Allocation Committee, after so many years of active and patient study, in the possession now of so great and varied a mass of evidence, has acquired an experience and knowledge which enables it to sift its evidence with special skill and to speak with quite exceptional authority.

Some delegations have enquired whether it would not be desirable to publish the data on which the Allocation Committee's conclusions were based; but I think that the Assembly will agree with me, in view of what has just been said, that such a procedure would be more likely to lead to confusion than enlightenment. For it is impossible for the casual reader or even for the careful student of all this mass of data to know the particular weight which should be attached to this or that figure or to apprehend the considerations which induced the Committee, after so many laborious sessions devoted to this subject, to attach particular importance to this or less importance to that set of facts.

I would also remind the Assembly that the scale of allocation now before it is not a rectification of the old scale but is based on quite distinct principles. The reduction which was made, therefore, in the allocation of certain States on account of the devastation which was suffered during the war disappears. That reduction was made on the grounds that the former allocation was based on indices of pre-war wealth, which no longer applied to those countries which had materially suffered during the war. The present allocation, on the other hand, is based, as I have already indicated, on post-war data, which automatically reflect the losses which have been incurred.

The Fourth Committee and its Sub-Committee, in their earnest desire to give satisfaction to all the States Members of the League, went thoroughly into all the arguments submitted by certain delegations. They arrived at the conclusion that the proposed modifications would upset the delicate balance of the scale and would inevitably entail further changes, the fatal result of which, from the point of view of the scale, it was easy to imagine.

This very difficulty is in the opinion of the Committee the best proof of the nicety of the balance which the Allocation Committee has achieved. The Fourth Committee recommends, therefore, that the scale should be adopted without change, and I venture to appeal in its name to the delegations of all States to support that recommendation in the common interest of all the Members of the League.

There is one point in connection with certain of the observations made before the Sub-Committee which I think, however, demands a word of additional explanation. States very naturally tend to compare the contribution demanded from them with that demanded from their immediate neighbours with whose economic conditions they are familiar, and it may happen, as it no doubt does in the case of Lithuania, that the percentage difference between the units ascribed to each is not in proportion to the real difference in capacity to pay. The Fourth Committee is fully conscious of that fact; but unless fractions and minute fractions of units are to be demanded this discrepancy is unavoidable. Nobody claims that countries asked to pay two units are necessarily or presumably twice as rich as those asked to pay one.

A further question remains to be mentioned. The Allocation Committee in its report suggests that the Assembly should put this scale into force for the years 1926, 1927 and 1928. The Fourth Committee ventures to endorse this proposal and suggests that the Allocation Committee should continue to exercise its functions simply with a view to following the economic development, so that it may be in a position to present in 1928 the results of its researches on which a future scale of allocation may be based.

In view of the various considerations which have been set out above, the Fourth Committee ventures to submit the following resolutions for adoption by the Assembly:

"The Assembly,

"I. Requests the Council to ask the Committee on the Allocation of Expenses to follow the economic development of the various Member States with a view to submitting a revised scale to the Assembly of 1928.

"II. Approves for the years 1926, 1927 and 1928 the scale for the allocation of the expenses of the League annexed to the present resolution."

*Scale of Allocation of the Expenses
of the League for 1926, 1927 and 1928.*

| Country | Units |
|--|-------|
| Abyssinia | 2 |
| Albania | 1 |
| Argentina | 29 |
| Australia | 27 |
| Austria | 8 |
| Belgium | 18 |
| Bolivia | 4 |
| Brazil | 29 |
| Bulgaria | 5 |
| Canada | 35 |
| Chile | 14 |
| China | 46 |
| Colombia | 6 |
| Costa Rica | 1 |
| Cuba | 9 |
| Czechoslovakia | 29 |
| Denmark | 12 |
| Dominican Republic | 1 |
| Estonia | 3 |
| Finland | 10 |
| France | 79 |
| Great Britain | 105 |
| Greece | 7 |
| Guatemala | 1 |
| Haiti | 1 |
| Honduras | 1 |
| Hungary | 8 |
| India | 56 |
| Irish Free State | 10 |
| Italy | 60 |
| Japan | 60 |
| Latvia | 3 |
| Liberia | 1 |
| Lithuania | 4 |
| Luxemburg | 1 |
| Netherlands | 23 |
| New Zealand | 10 |
| Nicaragua | 1 |
| Norway | 9 |
| Panama | 1 |
| Paraguay | 1 |
| Persia | 5 |
| Peru | 9 |
| Poland | 32 |
| Portugal | 6 |
| Roumania | 22 |
| Salvador | 1 |
| Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Kingdom of) | 20 |
| Siam | 9 |
| Spain | 40 |
| South Africa (Union of) | 15 |
| Sweden | 18 |
| Switzerland | 17 |
| Uruguay | 7 |
| Venezuela | 5 |
| | 937 |

In conclusion, I feel sure that I shall be carrying out the wishes of all the members of the Assembly by expressing to M. Adatci our sincere thanks for his remarkable report and our warm wishes for his speedy recovery.

The President. — M. Galvanauskas, delegate of Lithuania, will address the Assembly.

In conclusion, I think I shall be interpreting the views of all the members of the Assembly in addressing to our eminent colleague, M. Adatci, our sincere thanks for his admirable report and our best wishes for his speedy recovery.

M. Galvanauskas (Lithuania) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — We have just heard the Rapporteur's statement on the allocation of the expenses of the League for the coming years, more particularly for the year 1926.

I regret that I do not take the same view as the Rapporteur concerning the scale of allocation. It has been said on this platform that we should not simply pay one another compliments, but should speak plainly, in order that improvements may be effected in the general organisation of the League and progress made, especially in budgetary questions.

This Assembly is composed chiefly of eminent persons with wide political and diplomatic experience. All of them, therefore, realise the importance of the budget from the point of view of the State. We all know the discussions and debates which take place before even the smallest items are voted when the cost has to be borne by the inhabitants of the country.

What care is devoted to the study of these questions! What excitement, what passions, are sometimes aroused by the discussion of a budget, before equilibrium can be established and agreement reached on a system of taxation, more or less acceptable to the country!

I do not mean that the League has done nothing in this direction, but I cannot entirely concur in the approval which has been expressed here.

I should like first to remind the Assembly of the past history of our scale of allocation. In 1923, the Assembly instructed a special Committee to lay down sound and scientific bases for the establishment of this scale. This preparatory work has now been going on for years.

The report submitted to the Assembly in 1924 by this Committee on the Allocation of Expenses stated that any scheme for the establishment of the scale on the basis of the actual budgets of the various countries was fraught with difficulties, chief among which was the fact that exchange fluctuations in the various countries were so pronounced.

In any case, even after the question had been studied for two years, no very definite conclusions were arrived at which could serve as an equitable basis for establishing the scale.

To-day, however, the currency has been stabilised in a number of countries, and, even where this is not yet the case, fluctuations are not such as to preclude the possibility of forming an accurate estimate of budget revenue and expenditure, particularly the latter.

Moreover, the Allocation Committee itself declares that, although it analysed the budget of fifty-four countries, it did not find it possible to employ these indices as a guide.

I agree that if the scale is to be established on sound bases it is not enough simply to consider the budget; many other factors must be taken into account.

The most important of these factors is, to my mind, the actual territory of the country. I do not mean that this can be taken as an absolute criterion, but it should at all events be regarded as an essential element in determining the scale.

The second factor is population. I fully realise that in many countries the actual figures for population are not necessarily an index of the financial or economic situation. Population is none the less a most important factor and should be duly estimated in determining the general situation of a country. An industrial country or a country possessing great natural resources may be said, on these lines, to be better off than

one which has neither natural resources nor large industries.

The third factor to be taken into consideration is the national wealth actually accumulated in a country. This has already been assessed in many countries, or had at all events been so before the war. Even if it is not possible at present to ascertain it with mathematical precision, a relatively accurate estimate can be formed.

The fourth factor is the trade of a country, as shown by its export and import returns. This is not an absolute factor but an index of the country's progress and wealth.

Undoubtedly, the most important factor and the one which the Allocation Committee must have considered first of all is the budget. This affords the most accurate index of the economic and financial situation of a country. If you analyse the budget thoroughly, if you take the items occurring under expenditure which are to be found in every State budget for Administration, Defence, Posts and Telegraphs and so on, you will find these a sufficiently sound basis for establishing a more equitable scale than the present one.

In order to show how far removed this present scale is from actual realities—a fact which is self-evident—I should like to give an example. Suppose that there are two countries which are in practically the same geographical position, which are practically equal from the point of view of historical development and economic progress. For them—their budgetary and political positions being equal—the surest index is obviously population.

Take, for example, Lithuania and Poland. Lithuania, I find, pays practically two units as compared with Poland's one unit per million inhabitants.

There appears to be no real justification for this.

If the budgets were compared—I have not got them before me—the result would perhaps be far less overwhelmingly in favour of Poland. The units allocated to Lithuania were fixed when it was hoped that the territory of Vilna—at present under Polish administration—would be restored to Lithuania.

Lithuania at that time, despite the difficulties of her economic, financial and political situation, agreed to accept the four units, since they would have corresponded to her territory and population as determined by her rights and treaties. The territory of Vilna, however, is still occupied by Poland, and Lithuania has continued to pay her four units, although she has more than once drawn the Committee's attention to this point.

I might quote other data, proving that Lithuania pays per million inhabitants practically as much as Great Britain. I do not know the actual statistics which may exist in the Secretariat—indeed, no Government knows them yet, since they have not been published by the Committee—but it is obvious that the wealth of Great Britain per million inhabitants is greater than that of Lithuania.

There are, no doubt, other considerations with which I am unacquainted relating to industrial countries, but, so far as agricultural countries are concerned, I find that Lithuania is paying two units while other countries are only paying one unit per million inhabitants.

We paid our share, however, even during the hardest times. We, too, felt the effects of the fall of the German mark, which was in circulation in our country. We have passed through all kinds of political difficulties the echoes of which have been heard by this Assembly. I have no hesitation in declaring that these difficulties were quite different in character from those encountered by countries to which special facilities were granted.

We paid, I repeat, without demur. The Lithuanian Government has, however, pointed out the anomaly and the injustice of the situation to the Committee responsible for establishing the scale. We have as yet received no satisfaction. My Government is not even in possession of the records of the work of the Allocation Committee. The latter, no doubt, considers that it might be dangerous to publish this report, since those to whom it was communicated might disagree with its conclusions. The Governments to whom it would chiefly be of value, however, have statistical bureaux and experts quite as efficient as those of the League. If these records had been published, all the Governments would have at their disposal a fairly sound basis for calculation, and one which, even if not mathematically precise, would at all events be logical. I have been told that a sounder basis than the one hitherto employed has now been found. But it must be remembered that if only one unit is deducted from the share of any one State the whole scheme collapses.

This being the case, I cannot possibly agree to the Committee's proposals. I cannot accept the new scale for three years any more than I can accept the number of units allocated to my country. The Lithuanian Government will thoroughly examine this scale. Not wishing, however, to take the responsibility of wrecking the League's budget for this year by opposing the Committee's proposals, the Lithuanian delegation will abstain from voting.

The President. — If no other delegate desires to speak, I will put to the vote the resolutions proposed by the Fourth Committee, which read as follows :

The Assembly,

I. Requests the Council to ask the Committee on the Allocation of Expenses to follow the economic development of the various Member States with a view to submitting a revised scale to the Assembly of 1928.

II. Approves for the years 1926, 1927 and 1928 the scale for the allocation of the expenses of the League annexed to the present resolution.

Scale of Allocation of the Expenses of the League for 1926, 1927 and 1928.

| Country | Units |
|---------------------------|-------|
| <i>Abyssinia</i> | 2 |
| <i>Albania</i> | 1 |
| <i>Argentina</i> | 29 |
| <i>Australia</i> | 27 |
| <i>Austria</i> | 8 |
| <i>Belgium</i> | 18 |
| <i>Bolivia</i> | 4 |
| <i>Brazil</i> | 29 |
| <i>Bulgaria</i> | 5 |
| <i>Canada</i> | 38 |
| <i>Chile</i> | 14 |
| <i>China</i> | 46 |
| <i>Colombia</i> | 6 |
| <i>Costa Rica</i> | 1 |
| <i>Cuba</i> | 9 |
| <i>Czechoslovakia</i> | 29 |
| <i>Denmark</i> | 12 |
| <i>Dominican Republic</i> | 1 |
| <i>Estonia</i> | 3 |
| <i>Finland</i> | 10 |
| <i>France</i> | 79 |
| <i>Great Britain</i> | 105 |
| <i>Greece</i> | 7 |
| <i>Guatemala</i> | 1 |
| <i>Haiti</i> | 1 |
| <i>Honduras</i> | 1 |
| <i>Hungary</i> | 8 |

| Country | Units |
|---|-------|
| India | 56 |
| Irish Free State | 10 |
| Italy | 60 |
| Japan | 60 |
| Latvia | 3 |
| Liberia | 1 |
| Lithuania | 4 |
| Luxemburg | 1 |
| Netherlands | 23 |
| New Zealand | 10 |
| Nicaragua | 1 |
| Norway | 9 |
| Panama | 1 |
| Paraguay | 1 |
| Persia | 5 |
| Peru | 9 |
| Poland | 32 |
| Portugal | 6 |
| Roumania | 22 |
| Salvador | 1 |
| Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Kingdom of) | 20 |
| Siam | 9 |
| Spain | 40 |
| South Africa (Union of) | 15 |
| Sweden | 18 |
| Switzerland | 17 |
| Uruguay | 7 |
| Venezuela | 5 |
| | 937 |

M. Galvanauskas (Lithuania) :

Translation : I maintain my former reservation. I do not consider the scale which has been established as binding for my country. My Government retains an open mind on the subject.

The President. — The Lithuanian delegate's statement will be placed in the record of the meeting.

The resolutions were adopted.

73. — AUDITED ACCOUNTS AND BUDGET OF THE LEAGUE, AND OTHER FINANCIAL QUESTIONS : REPORT OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President : The second question on the agenda is the consideration of the report of the Fourth Committee on Financial Questions. I ask M. Cavazzoni (Italy), the Rapporteur, to come to the platform.

(M. Cavazzoni, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Cavazzoni (Italy), Rapporteur.

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — It would ill become me to inflict a long speech upon you, and still less to read to you my report, which is already in your possession. I would merely draw your attention to an observation already made by my predecessor at the last Assembly, and add thereto my own personal point of view.

M. Vasconcellos stated in his report that "the finances of the League of Nations had attained their majority. The sound, healthy and orderly manner in which the finances are managed reflects credit on the entire institution..." The financial year for 1923 closed with a net surplus of 2,774,854 gold francs. But the Rapporteur was careful — and rightly so — to add :

"It must, however, be emphasised that this satisfactory situation was not attained until this year, and then only as the result of prudent and economical administration ; it is absolutely essential that the same policy should be followed, unless the success of the organisation which it has taken such great care and energy to build up should be endangered."

My eminent predecessor's hope has fortunately been realised, chiefly owing to the admirable work done by the responsible organs of the League during the financial year 1924. The following factors also contributed towards this success : (1) the payments effected by the States Members of the League for the financial period 1924, which represented for the first time 83.2 per cent of the sums due (a remarkable increase on the percentage for 1923, which amounted to only 61.7 per cent ; (2) the payment by several States of overdue contributions amounting to over 8 million gold francs out of the sum of almost 13 millions then outstanding.

I would further ask you to note that, thanks to the efforts of the Secretariat, the Supervisory Commission and the Auditor, the administration of the League is at present proceeding on satisfactory lines and in accordance with more definite and soundly established rules.

Finally, we are glad to note that the League's financial position shows a credit balance for the three organisations together amounting to the very considerable sum of 9,395,721.35 gold francs. *The Working Capital Fund*, which is designed to meet deficits due to delays in the payment of contributions, amounted on August 31st to 4,352,423.11 gold francs. Moreover, the purchase of the Hotel National was concluded a year in advance, and it was thus possible to allocate a large item of revenue not included in the budget to the fund for the building of the new League premises.

The brief information I have just laid before you shows what very considerable results have been obtained. We must not stop there, but must continue to pursue the same policy. May I now, before I finish, submit a few purely personal remarks on the work of the Fourth Committee ?

The speeches in that Committee may have appeared this year less animated, less impassioned, than in the past. It might even seem as if the work done by the Committee had been of less importance. What has actually happened is that the fervour of our first efforts, the laborious work of bureaucratic and administrative organisation, the careful preparation of the Technical Organisations and the initial efforts of the early years have happily been succeeded by a period of stabilisation and consolidation. Thus, thorough and exhaustive as our examination has been, our work, and my own task, was comparatively simple.

The work is going on regularly and is just as important as before, although the calmness of the proceedings may make it appear less striking.

The Technical Organisations are dealing regularly with economic and financial questions, with health and social questions and with labour. The consolidation and development of these manifold activities and good works are above criticism and quite beyond dispute.

The Governments of the States Members of the League might perhaps devote closer attention to the studies and work undertaken and results obtained in the matter of the technical questions to which I have just referred.

It is difficult to form any judgment upon individual spheres of activity from the meeting of this or that committee of experts or from the results of a conference. The results should be considered

as a whole. They can lead, I think, to none but favourable conclusions.

Let us consider certain suggestions of general importance which have been submitted in this connection. I might cite as an example the last proposal for the convening of an International Economic Conference, a proposal affecting interests of vital importance, not only from the point of view of economic restoration but also from that of world peace.

I have no real right, during a debate on the budget, to discuss the principles underlying the League's activities, but I am doing so because even the driest figures, if considered in relation to those principles, may help to guide us in the future.

In any case, we have no intention of increasing our expenditure, but we think that, while submitting our budget, it would perhaps be right to emphasise the value of the League's so-called technical activities.

It is the technical aspect of this work that is most apparent, but in actual fact any help given to the nations faced with the greatest difficulties in the work of reconstruction, any assistance in the promotion of health and social questions or the moral and material progress of peoples, any joint effort to find a solution for the difficult problems of transport, economy and finance — all this in actual fact gradually leads up to a frame of mind favourable to the improvement of international relations.

It is by these means that we may hope to procure the success of vaster schemes more purely political in character, and thus help to ensure for the world the benefits of peace.

My task is at an end. It is now for you, ladies and gentlemen, to show that you are satisfied with the results obtained by passing the budget which I now have the honour to present.

The Fourth Committee submits for your approval the following resolutions :

1. *The Assembly of the League of Nations, in virtue of Article 38 of the Regulations for the Financial Administration of the League, finally approves the audited accounts of the League for the sixth financial period, ending December 31st, 1924.*

2. *The Assembly, in virtue of Article 17 of the Regulations for the Financial Administration of the League :*

Approves, for the financial year 1926, the general budget of the League, of the Secretariat and of the Special Organisations of the League, of the International Labour Organisation and of the Permanent Court of International Justice, the total amount of which, including supplementary credits, is 22,980,633 gold francs¹ ;

And decides that the said budgets shall be published in the Official Journal.

3. *The Assembly adopts, in so far as they have been approved by the Fourth Committee, the conclusions of the various reports of the Supervisory Commission submitted to its consideration, and at the same time expresses to the Supervisory Commission its thanks for the services it has so well rendered.*

4. *The Assembly adopts the conclusions of the report of the Fourth Committee.*

The President : M. Zumeta, first delegate for Venezuela, will address the Assembly.

M. Zumeta (Venezuela) :

Translation : The Venezuelan delegation in no way desires to start a discussion on points

¹ This sum was subsequently reduced by the Assembly to 22,930,633 gold francs, see page

of procedure. It merely wishes to declare that, since the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly also apply to Committees, and since, when the vote was taken by roll-call in the Fourth Committee, several delegations not only stated that they would, but actually did, vote against the credits for an enquiry into the production of opium in Persia and the increase of 100,000 francs for the settlement of Russian refugees, the Venezuelan delegation makes every reservation concerning the inclusion of these two credits in the 1926 Budget ; as, however, it desires to show a spirit of conciliation, it will abstain from voting.

The President :

M. Fernandez y Medina, delegate for Uruguay, will address the Assembly.

M. Fernandez y Medina (Uruguay) :

Translation : We agree with the Venezuelan delegation regarding the principles which should govern votes on budgetary questions in the Assembly and in the Committees. Nevertheless, with regard to the credit for an enquiry in Persia which gave rise to so much discussion, the delegations opposed to this credit have authorised me to state that if it is reduced to 100,000 francs they will accept it, in that spirit of conciliation to which the delegate for Venezuela has referred and which has always been a rule of conduct among the delegations.

The President : I ask the delegate for Persia, Prince Arfa, to inform us if he accepts this reduction.

Prince Arfa (Persia) :

Translation : In view of the budgetary difficulties, I consider that a credit of 100,000 francs will suffice for the moment. I hope, moreover, that the Council will be able to obtain resources from elsewhere. In any case, Persia will accord the Commission of Enquiry every facility.

The President : M. da Costa, delegate of Portugal, will address the Assembly.

M. da Costa (Portugal), Chairman of the Fourth Committee :

Translation : In accordance with the opinion of the Fourth Committee, of which I had the honour to be Chairman, I wish to say that we accept this reduction from 150,000 francs to 100,000 francs for the enquiry to be carried out in Persia.

The President : Does any other delegate desire to speak on this subject ?

If no other delegate desires to speak, I shall consider the resolutions as approved, with the amendment proposed by the Uruguayan delegate. (*Assent.*)

74. — CONTRIBUTIONS IN ARREARS : REPORT OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President : The third item on the agenda is the consideration of the report of the Fourth Committee on Contributions in Arrears, and I will ask M. Barboza Carneiro, delegate for Brazil, to take his place on the platform.

(M. Barboza Carneiro, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

M. Barboza Carneiro (Brazil) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Fourth Committee has examined the delicate question of contributions in arrears due from certain Members of the League.

The Committee appointed a Sub-Committee to examine with the utmost care the different cases communicated to it by the Secretary-General. Various documents were placed at the Sub-Committee's disposal, and it was able to obtain all the information necessary to enable it to reach a decision upon the different aspects of the question. Its task was greatly facilitated by the valuable help of Sir Herbert Ames, Financial Director, to whom I should like, on behalf of the Committee, to offer our most hearty thanks. The Sub-Committee came to the conclusion that the Secretary-General had taken all the necessary steps to carry out the resolutions adopted by the fifth Assembly on September 26th, 1924. It found that much progress had been made, but unanimously recognised the urgent need for the Secretary-General to take further steps with a view to settling the few cases still outstanding.

The Fourth Committee, after examining the confidential report presented by the Sub-Committee, has done me the honour of requesting me to submit the following draft resolution :

The Assembly,

Having considered the report which was submitted to it by its Fourth Committee :

(1) *Decides to approve the settlement of the Argentine Republic's debt ;*

(2) *Expresses the satisfaction with the efforts made by certain Members to pay their debts to the League ;*

(3) *Makes a pressing appeal to Members whose contributions have not yet been paid to take the necessary measures for the settlement of their debts to the League of Nations and requests the Secretary-General to make further urgent representations to these Members ;*

• (4) *Invites the Secretary-General to report to the Council on the results of these representations at its session of June 1926, in order to enable the Council to examine the question of contributions in arrears and report to the seventh Assembly.*

The President: Does any delegate desire to speak on this report ?

If no one desires to speak, I shall regard the resolution as adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

75. — **TRAFFIC IN OPIUM AND OTHER DANGEROUS DRUGS : (a) WORK OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ; (b) COMMITTEE OF ENQUIRY TO VISIT CERTAIN OPIUM-PRODUCING COUNTRIES : REPORTS OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.**

The President. — The next item on the agenda is the consideration of the report of the Fifth Committee regarding (a) the work of the Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium, and (b) the Committee of Enquiry to be sent to certain opium-producing countries. (Annexes. Documents A.123, 1925, IV and A.127, 1925, XI.)

I call upon M. Veverka, delegate of Czechoslovakia, Rapporteur, and M. Garay, delegate of Panama, Chairman of the Fifth Committee, to come to the platform.

(M. Garay, Chairman of the Fifth Committee, and M. Veverka, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President: The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Veverka (Czechoslovakia), Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—The reports which I have the honour to submit to you are only a short summary of the facts. Actually they represent a portion of the unremitting work of the Advisory Committee, which has done yeoman service in the noble struggle against the greatest scourge that has ever menaced humanity.

The immensity of the problem with which we have undertaken to deal is—and I should like to emphasise this point—the sole criterion by which we can gauge the amount of work and above all the length of time still required to bring our task to a successful conclusion. I say this for the benefit of idealists who chafe at our slow progress.

The scourge which we seek to abolish and which threatens to become universal can be effectively combated only by a common, loyal and united effort—by solidarity. I venture to say that on the part of all sacrifice is also essential. No material interest, no secondary political consideration, no question of race, must be allowed to stand in the way. For some time now this problem has ceased to be a merely humanitarian or regional one; it has become a universal problem, the solution of which is vital for the progress and well-being of the world.

The two opium Conferences have again demonstrated the difficulty and complexity of this problem. They have also shown that the psychological moment has arrived to attack the scourge. The traffic in opium must be abolished, or else we must accept the consequences, which will mean the eventual degeneration of the human race. Time and good-will are necessary. On the one hand, the experts often blame the idealists for their precipitancy and lack of technical experience; on the other, the idealists often tax the experts with timidity and lack of idealism.

I am inclined to believe that no positive result will be attained until these two elements, technical experiences and idealism, backed with courage, unite in fighting the danger. The peril will be vanquished by those who are bold enough to face it squarely and experienced enough to be able to fight it to the bitter end.

I am firmly convinced that the two Opium Conferences have cast much light upon the subject. They represent, as it were, the "diagnosis" stage. The stage of realisation and achievement should now follow. This is the path the Advisory Committee, whose work I have ventured to outline, is following, and the Fifth Committee congratulates it on all that it has done.

The other report now before you shows that progress has been made as regards the decrease of the production of opium in some of the producing countries. I trust that it will be approved by the Assembly, because we must do everything in our power to decrease production. But I frankly say that the only way to lessen the danger will be for all other producing countries to enter into a loyal engagement not to increase their production, and not, by seeking to win new markets, to increase the misery of the human race.

I cannot pass in silence over the serious social aspect of this question. The poor man, sunk in depths of misery, exhausted by the rough labour of the day, will only abandon opium and drugs, which procure for him an artificial paradise, when

we have assured for him a modest paradise perhaps, but still a paradise on earth.

I admit that to do this we must consent to heavy sacrifices, but that has always been the price paid for the fulfilment of noble ideas.

That we may more readily bear these sacrifices, think of the multitude of sufferers, the innumerable victims of the past, and, sadder still, the future victims who rise before us and implore our aid. Think also that the League of Nations works under the moral supervision of all nations, and that the public opinion of the world, which follows our work, must not be deceived, for the measure of such deception would only be comparable to the hopes which these wretched outcasts and victims have placed in our work.

Accordingly, I have the honour to submit the following resolutions :

I. The Assembly adopts the report of the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs, together with the resolutions embodied therein.

II. The Assembly urges on all States which have not already done so to ratify or to adhere to the agreements and resolutions adopted by the First and Second Conferences.

and then as a conclusion to the second report, the following resolutions :

I. The Assembly,

Having considered the resolution contained in the Final Act of the Second International Opium Conference with regard to the appointment of a Commission of Enquiry in certain opium-producing countries :

Recommends that such a Commission should be sent to Persia to study :

- (a) *The existing situation with regard to the cultivation of the poppy;*
- (b) *The replacement of a proportion of this cultivation by other crops.*

II. The Commission shall consist of not more than three persons to be appointed by the Council : a person having the necessary qualifications to act as Chairman, an expert on the agricultural side of the problem to be nominated after consultation with the International Institute of Agriculture, and a person having experience of business conditions and markets in the East and knowledge of transport problems.

III. The Assembly is of opinion that such an enquiry would require for its work the sum of 100,000 gold francs and decides that this sum be voted for the purpose.

The President : M. da Costa, first delegate for Portugal, will address the Assembly.

M. da Costa (Portugal) :

Translation : Mr. President and colleagues — We are asked to adopt two reports, the first of which concerns the enquiry in certain opium-producing countries, particularly Persia.

With regard to this proposal, the delegate for Portugal, my colleague, M. de Vasconcellos, was one of those who in the Fourth Committee opposed the estimate of 150,000 francs ; but we agree with M. Fernandez y Medina's proposal to reduce this estimate to 100,000 francs. We therefore withdraw our opposition to the second report.

With regard to the first report, I have to state, on behalf of my Government :

1. That Portugal, as a signatory of the Hague Convention of 1912, participated in the Opium

Conferences of 1924 and 1925 convened at Geneva under the auspices of the League ;

2. That the Portuguese Government signed the agreements and resolutions adopted by these two Conferences subject to the reservations necessitated by practical considerations, and the obligations consequent upon earlier agreements concluded under the provisions of the Hague Convention ;

3. That the Portuguese Government has already submitted the agreements and resolutions of the two last Conferences to Parliament for ratification ;

4. That Portugal approves the second resolution submitted to this Assembly by the Fifth Committee, more especially because it was the Portuguese delegate who first proposed it to this Committee ;

5. That this vote appears to us at present to be the sole legitimate and really useful vote for the humanitarian aims we are pursuing, for this Assembly must show full confidence in the results of the two Conferences, in which States which are not Members of the League took part ;

6. That the Portuguese delegation refuses to vote for the first resolution submitted to us, but has nevertheless decided to support all proposals to give the Council of the League the widest powers to carry out to the full, by every possible means, all the resolutions adopted by the two Conferences.

The President : If no other member desires to speak, I will declare the resolutions before you as approved.

The resolutions were adopted.

76. — ARMENIAN REFUGEES : LOAN FOR THEIR SETTLEMENT IN ARMENIA : REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President : The next item on the agenda is the consideration of the Fifth Committee's report on the question of a loan for the settlement in Armenia of Armenian refugees (Annex Document A. 126, 1925, II). I invite M. de Brouckère, delegate of Belgium and Rapporteur, to take his place on the platform.

(M. de Brouckère took his place on the platform.)

The President : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium), Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Fifth Committee has entrusted me with the task of submitting to you a report on the question of the settlement of Armenian refugees in the Caucasus. If we merely had to consider the business side of the question, our task would be a simple one but, seen from a different angle, it presents many difficulties, and I feel that any responsibility at the moment is almost too heavy.

The business side of the problem can be resolved into the appointment of a committee of enquiry and investigation and to the renewal of a credit of 50,000 francs which was granted last year. But behind all this there is a work of humanity, a work which affects many wide human interests, a work which, in one of its aspects at least, concerns the honour of the League, and which, if

properly conducted and developed, can create immense forces for peace in a region particularly exposed to war.

The details of this question, as with most other questions, are very complicated. The Fifth Committee and its Sub-Committee have found it far from easy to study them all with the requisite care and conscientiousness. But, if I confine myself to saying only what is necessary to enable you to understand the proposal which is to be submitted to you, the whole problem can be put in a nutshell.

And what is the problem?

The Fifth Committee proposed to you last year — and the Assembly accepted the proposal — that an enquiry should be held regarding the possibility of settling Armenian refugees in the Caucasus.

The first scheme was not prepared with sufficient care and seemed hardly realisable. You decided that the International Labour Office, in agreement with Dr. Nansen, should conduct an enquiry, and you placed a credit of 50,000 francs at their disposal.

Dr. Nansen went to the Caucasus, accompanied by experts. He has drawn up a report which has been communicated to you, and from it we can deduce the following information, which is definite and extremely clear.

First of all, there is a large stretch of irrigated land in the Caucasus which is admittedly very fertile. Secondly, cotton has been widely and very successfully cultivated there during the past few years.

Further, in recent years new irrigation works have also been successfully undertaken and a considerable area of very good land has thereby been placed at the disposal of the numerous refugees who have already returned.

Lastly, a scheme has been prepared, and worked out in its main details, which does not appear to offer greater technical difficulties than other schemes which have proved successful. This scheme, if carried into practice, would allow the settlement of about 25,000 refugees on 33,000 to 34,000 hectares of new land. Of this number, 10,200 are to be selected from amongst the hundreds of thousands of refugees who have returned to the Caucasus in the last few years and who have been settled under unsatisfactory conditions. Of the remaining 15,000, 10,000 are living in precarious circumstances in Greece and 5,000 in an even worse situation in Constantinople.

From what I have said, you will see that the execution of these irrigation schemes will result in saving 25,000 human lives.

I do not mean that the 25,000 who can be settled in the Caucasus would all be doomed if we are unable to carry out Dr. Nansen's schemes; but I do mean that death is daily taking heavy toll of the hundreds and hundreds of thousands of hapless Armenian refugees scattered throughout the world; that whatever we do, death will inevitably sweep many of them away; but that, if we succeed in partially relieving the congestion in districts where Armenians are now concentrated, by settling 25,000 of them in conditions safeguarding their welfare and ensuring them a livelihood, we should then have saved 25,000 human lives.

It is often said that reports such as the one I am submitting to you now only represent one of the League's minor activities. Perhaps 25,000 human lives in these days are not of much value, taken at their market price. To save 25,000 human lives is an operation of minor importance. An operation of the opposite kind would hardly suffice to bring fame to a divisional general. But these 25,000

human lives, added to hundreds and hundreds of thousands of others, to hundreds and hundreds of thousands of prisoners in Russia, refugees in Constantinople and many others still, total up to a high figure, and the day will come when this small side of the League's activities will have saved as much blood as was shed during the Great War.

The Assembly will forgive me if I detain it a few moments longer.

The question, as I have explained, is very simple and would not appear to offer much difficulty; but yet — and this is why I refer the matter to you — there is one difficulty, a difficulty which you have already foreseen. To carry out this work, money is necessary. The experts tell us that the undertaking will cost about £900,000 sterling. To save these human lives money must be found.

How? A subscription has been mentioned, but the sum is too large to be obtained from charitable sources. A loan must be raised, and it will not be made easier by the fact that the lenders will have to be told that it is intended to save lives and to accomplish a humanitarian work.

Financiers, business men, may be warm-hearted, but money certainly is not. Money only runs downhill, and so can hardly rise to the heights of human solidarity.

In order to find this money, guarantees will have to be provided. What guarantees can we hope to secure? First of all, there are the revenues from the land cultivated by the refugees. According to the information given to the Fifth Committee, this revenue should be considerable. There is also the guarantee which the Government of the Armenian Republic could afford and this guarantee could be covered in various ways. Either a guarantee given to the lenders, the Armenian Government borrowing in its own name, or guaranteed interest payable, perhaps to an agricultural loan company which would issue the loan. The Russian State Bank might provide this guarantee or perhaps the guarantee — and this is a point which should particularly appeal to many financiers — could be given by an agricultural loan company dealing on a co-operative basis with the farmers settled on the land.

There may be other guarantees which could be afforded by a number of public or private authorities. But here I will stop. It should be clearly understood — and the Rapporteur must say this so as to prevent any misinterpretation of a Government's intentions — it should be clearly understood that there is nothing in our report which can pledge any Government in advance.

Since the financial difficulties appear to be serious but not insuperable, what exactly is the proposal of the Fifth Committee? It requests — and you will realise how extremely important this is — it requests the Council to appoint commissioners, a limited number of commissioners, not a large number of persons more or less interested in the scheme, but four or five commissioners who would be authorised, as soon as they are certain that the work can be carried out, to begin negotiations and conduct the necessary enquiries. Finally, when their preparatory work is finished, they will be authorised to submit a scheme to the Council, but will not proceed with it until authorised to do so by the Council itself.

There is nothing in all this which involves the Assembly or its Members in any undue responsibility.

Before concluding, I would venture to mention one or two more objections which have been raised, and to point out at the same time some of the difficulties which arise.

Of the objections which have to be met I will merely mention two. First of all, it has been said the task will be a very difficult one, so difficult that it would be better not to undertake it.

If it is the technical difficulties which are meant, I think I may state, after carefully studying the problem both this year and last year, that the difficulties in question are not insuperable.

There are, of course, technical difficulties. Indeed, I have already referred to them. There is the financial difficulty, which might even be held to render the scheme "impracticable", if—as some people do—we take the word "impracticable" to mean everything that has never yet been done.

But I venture to point out that now, in this Assembly of the League, we are actually carrying out work which, according to the above definition, was so utterly impracticable that until now these people have hardly dared to dream of it. This proves that, with steadfastness and perseverance, we can overstep such a narrow definition of the possible.

This has been the spirit actuating every Assembly. It is admirably crystallised in a phrase which we first rediscovered here and which has since made remarkable headway. I refer of course to Danton's famous phrase in which he mapped out the path of the French Revolution; and, as if to prove that, among the various races gathered together here, those fundamental differences of temperament to which so many allusions have been made do not really exist, these words were first quoted in this Assembly by an Englishman. Since then they have often been repeated and have indeed become a sort of watchword among the delegates. I have often heard them quoted at previous sessions, but, curiously enough, they have not once been spoken this year. I want, therefore, to repeat them now in order to show that we are maintaining our traditional optimism, an optimism founded not on a blind faith that all will be well but on a firm determination to make sure that all shall be well. Indeed, whenever the difficulties of this scheme are mentioned to me, I shall always repeat these same words of Danton: "De l'audace, encore de l'audace et toujours de l'audace".

This year, as far as the problem in question is concerned, boldness will be all the easier, because we need only, so to speak, be vicariously bold. It is the Commissioners who will have to face the difficulties; for the present, we assume no responsibility for them.

There is one thing more which I venture to add. We have been told not only that the problem is a very difficult one but that it is not really our business at all. It is not for the League, we are told, to cure all the ills from which the world is suffering. The League must not exceed its proper duties.

I consider, however, that this matter is our business for two reasons:

First, because the Covenant has entrusted us with the mission of establishing co-operation between all nations and also of aiding the most unfortunate;

Secondly, because the Armenian people is in a special position with regard to the League.

We must not forget all the promises which were made to these people, all the resolutions voted here, all the decisions of the Council. It is a melancholy business to review them all, and I do not propose to do so. I merely venture to read from one of them two lines, which summarise all the rest.

The second Assembly passed a formal resolution recalling the fact that "the first Assembly, on November 18th, 1920, entrusted the Council with the duty of safeguarding the future of Armenia".

This constitutes an engagement which we must never forget.

In analysing this proposal as Rapporteur, I said: "There is nothing in our report which can pledge any Government in advance". But before I leave this platform, may I remind you of a provision in the constitution of our League, a provision which lays down that, though each nation here has only one vote, it has three delegates, all of whom may speak. The intention was that, in addition to official statements, each delegate should be able, to a certain extent, to state his individual view by speaking in a personal capacity.

If no Government is pledged, I shall be careful not to pledge mine, but it seems to me that, after so many resolutions and votes, the personal responsibility of those who have taken part in these discussions is definitely engaged. If at any time our countries are asked to assume financial responsibility, I do not hesitate to say that if the matter is presented on favourable conditions I shall do all in my power to induce my Government to accept it; and I shall use the argument that where the delegates have voted on behalf of their Governments in this matter, not only are those delegates morally bound by voting these resolutions but their Governments also.

If by means of financial help, guarantees or support of any kind—the form of such support to be determined by each Government at its discretion—it were at last possible to foresee, if not the certainty at least the possibility, of fulfilling part of the promises made; of restoring to Armenia, if not her political independence, at least several thousand of her subjects, furnished with the means to resume their national life, and if under these circumstances the attitude of the League were indifferent or hostile, it would indeed be a black day for the League.

In one of the pointed and witty speeches which Her Grace the Duchess of Atholl made during the meetings of our Committee, she told us that in her country, among the many associations for public welfare, there was one which had set itself the task of preventing people from throwing paper about the streets. Well, ladies and gentlemen, it has always seemed to me that the League of Nations is in a way an association of this kind, and that the highest ideal it has set itself is henceforth to prevent scraps of diplomatic paper littering the face of the earth.

The President. — Dr. Nansen, delegate for Norway, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Nansen (Norway): Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The wonderfully eloquent speech which we have just heard reminds me of the definition of the difference between the difficult and the impossible. The difficult is that which can be done at once: the impossible is that which takes a little longer.

At the beginning of this Assembly most people thought that the proposals which were made on behalf of the Armenian refugees were quite impossible of realisation. The number of people who think so now is much less. We know that we still have great difficulties to overcome, but much progress has been made. During the past few weeks, the discussions in the Committee have been prolonged and exhaustive. The consultation with experts — experts on agriculture, irrigation and finance — were not merely formal but really went deeply into important aspects of the question. I believe that, as a result, the whole Committee is satisfied that the scheme is capable of realisation and of conferring great benefits. The machinery proposed by the Committee is not only acceptable, but I believe it is to be strongly recommended.

We hope that the Assembly and the Council will carry into effect in the best possible way the machinery for carrying on these negotiations which are still necessary, for meeting the difficulties of the Governments, and for facilitating working arrangements and the raising of funds.

Under the plan proposed no one will be asked to back Soviet bonds, and I very warmly welcome that part of the resolution. I fully realise that Governments are not able at this moment to pledge their guarantees. We trust that their point of view will change in the future as it has done in the past as regards similar matters. I may remind you of the prisoners of war, the Russian refugees in Constantinople, typhus in Poland, and many other similar questions.

We believe that the Governments will adopt our point of view as soon as they understand the real facts of the case. We know that the principle is sound, because the British Government acted in the same way three years ago when it was faced with the problem of 7,000 Armenian refugees in Mesopotamia. It sent these refugees to Armenia, because it thought that Armenia was the only place to which to send them — to the Armenian Republic, under the same government which now exists there. This scheme was a perfect success.

No solution of the present problem can be found in Syria or elsewhere. The Republic of Erivan is the only region in which we shall be able to build up a national home for the Armenian people. This will be a real Armenian home; all Armenian parties, of whatever political colour they may be, are agreed upon that point, and they have renewed their assurances of support before the Fifth Committee. They believe that a country as large as Belgium, but only inhabited by 1,200,000 people, is capable of absorbing all the Armenian refugees now in Europe.

The discussions in the Fifth Committee have also shown that there are great difficulties to be faced in securing the necessary funds, because of the conditions in Armenia; it is clear that those funds can only be secured after long and difficult negotiations. If, however, as a result of those negotiations, the Western Powers should agree to give their guarantee, the fund can certainly be raised, and easily raised. This is a test case. The Assembly, and later the Governments, can thereby show whether their promises mean something or not.

I will not quote the resolutions of the Assembly of previous years nor the words of Allied statesmen; but they are in this book, which contains declarations by all Allied statesmen, giving an account of what the Armenian people suffered during the War for the Allied cause because of their allegiance to the Great Powers which they looked upon and believed to be their protectors. I could quote Mr. Lloyd George, Lord Balfour, Lord Cecil, Mr. Asquith, Mr. Wilson, M. Pichon, M. Orlando, M. Luzatti and many others.

In discussing the question of disarmament people often say that the real difficulty is to be found in the Near East. Perhaps they are right; but here I think is the way to remove some part at least of that difficulty. In his memorable speech, Mr. Chamberlain uttered the other day the following remarkable words: "But there is another disarmament which is not less important, which indeed is more urgent, for it is a necessary preliminary to the physical disarmament of nations. It is the moral disarmament of the world. It is, as the President said to us in his opening speech, the need of creating a new international soul and a new international morality. Unless we find some method to allay the distrust, to remove

the suspicions... we shall never succeed in achieving the great programme which we have set before us".

I think this is certainly right. It is also certain that it is not enough to say so: we must also act. We cannot wait for this new international soul to develop of itself. We must do things in order to create it. This is one of the first steps towards securing moral disarmament between the peoples, towards creating that new international soul and that new international morality, because it wipes out ancient wrongs, because it brings reconciliation instead of distrust and proves to the world that promises are not made in vain. I feel firmly convinced that this scheme will be carried through and that it will be a great success. This work has to be done and the League must give its best assistance.

The President: I now invite Mrs. MacKinnon, delegate for Australia, to address the Assembly.

Mrs. MacKinnon (Australia): Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I should not have thought of addressing the Assembly to-day, even in support of a cause which I have so much at heart as that of the Armenians, had not Dr. Nansen asked me to do so. I will not detain you long.

First of all, I should like to congratulate Miss Jeppo on having obtained again the consideration and sympathy of the members of this great Assembly. We in Australia have known of her splendid work for many years.

I want to say that in my country we have no such splendid record of service in favour of those poor refugees as has Great Britain, from which country, during the past few years, the enormous sum of £1,000,000 has been provided by various societies, such as the "Save the Children" Fund, the Lord Mayor's Fund and others. Our work does not compare favourably. We send our few thousands, most of which is devoted to the upkeep of the Australian Orphanage at Antilyas. The women in this audience may like to know that our experience of the children in that orphanage has been perfectly wonderful. They are industrious, grateful and affectionate and show every possible attribute of good citizenship.

Let me tell you one thing which will appeal to every woman here. For months after they are taken in, the little children put under their pillows at night — and it takes months to break them of the habit — a little of their evening meal, because they have lived in such a state of fear that they have never known from whence their next meal would come.

It has undoubtedly been more difficult to raise money in Australia for such causes since we have lived, during the whole period of our young life as a nation, under the protection of a great and gracious Motherland, and since we have the feelings of a people who come from a country where for nearly a thousand years we have been free. During that period of a thousand years, or for at least two-thirds of that time, the Armenians have lived in such a state of misery, persecution, suffering and have been subjected to such atrocities as might well freeze our blood even to hear of them.

I do not wish to harrow your feelings, but I would ask you whether we are not indebted to this people. Those of us who are Christians, and indeed, the whole world, cannot but admire a people whose greatest offence has been that it has clung to the faith of its fathers. I would add that in Central Europe it should never be forgotten that when John Ziska and the champions of Christendom held the gates of Vienna against

the oncoming Moslems there were with them many thousands of Armenians who fought to the death and who are recorded in history as having been excellent and valiant soldiers of the faith.

I do not wish to go in detail into the scheme which has been presented to you. Everybody who has worked for the Armenians knows the heartbreaks we have experienced. No sooner have we established them in one place than the Turks have swept over that place and the Armenians have been scattered once more. It has seemed as if it was not possible to find a water-tight scheme by which to deal with this intricate and difficult problem. There are, however, two or three points in the scheme which has been put before us by Dr. Nansen and his experts which seem to me to be all to the good. First of all, I would mention the character of the Armenian himself. He has been so misrepresented in the past. We have judged him so much by the petty hucksters. What nation would like to be judged by the petty hucksters who are, as it were, the flotsam of the population? First and foremost, the Armenian is a peasant, with the defects of a peasant perhaps, but also with his splendid qualities. The Armenian is intensely thrifty, he is industrious and he can live on what we might think was very little indeed. These facts have been reiterated by Dr. Nansen.

The other good point of the scheme is that it is formulated and inspired by a man of Dr. Nansen's calibre whose temperament is such that he does not slur over the difficulties but surveys the whole scheme, difficulties and all; he overcomes those difficulties and achieves what other people would say was the impossible. He meets the difficulties as they arise, he bends them to his will, and behold, Muscovite, Armenian and Turk will, I believe, really do as he wishes! Dr. Nansen will, before he leaves us, perhaps, experience the great joy and satisfaction of seeing not merely fifteen or twenty thousand Armenians settled in Erivan but a large number of them, with, at last, a national home assured by the League of Nations, free from the Turks, and in which they can live in comfort and security.

The President: M. Montigny, delegate for France, will address the Assembly.

M. Montigny (France):

Translation — Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The French delegation has requested me to inform you that it will be very happy to vote for the draft resolution now before us. As the hour is very late, I will not make a speech, but I feel it my duty to express to Her Grace the Duchess of Atholl our gratitude for the very able manner in which she presided over the work of the Sub-Committee.

It is due to her firm yet enlightened leadership that this difficult question has been solved.

After our experience of the eminent services rendered, to the Fifth Committee, by the Duchess of Atholl, I should like to say, if the head of my delegation will allow me, that I think those delegations which do not as yet include women delegates are depriving themselves of a vast wealth of understanding and sympathy.

The President:

Viscount Cecil, delegate of the British Empire, will address the Assembly.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire): Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — In the first place, I am charged by the Duchess of Atholl to express on her behalf and on behalf of the British delegation our warm thanks to M. Montigny for the generous

and, my delegation thinks, well-justified compliment which he has paid to the Duchess.

I desire to say only one word on behalf of the British Government in connection with the question before us. We approve and support the report which has been presented by the Fifth Committee. I myself am very pleased to observe with what care and restraint the report has been drafted. It seems to me to be a model of what such a document should be.

As regards its substance, it is not the first time that from this tribune I have recognised the overwhelming appeal of the Armenian nation. No one who has considered its history for the last ten years can doubt that the Armenians have a very urgent claim on the support and generosity of the civilised world. This claim has always been recognised by the British Government.

Although I can make no pledges, no promises on behalf of my Government, I can say with great sincerity and truth that I am certain that the British Government will give its most careful and sympathetic consideration to the proposals made here and it will earnestly hope that those proposals will be carried to a successful issue.

The President:

Does anybody else wish to speak?

I put to the vote the resolutions submitted by the Fifth Committee, which read as follows:

The Assembly,

In view of the resolution adopted by the fifth Assembly at its meeting on September 25th, 1924, inviting "the International Labour Office, in collaboration with Dr. Nansen, to institute an enquiry with a view to studying the possibility of settling a substantial number of Armenian refugees in the Caucasus and elsewhere";

In view of the reports by Dr. Fridtjof Nansen and by the experts who were sent with him to Armenia;

In view of the fact that these reports are unanimous as to the possibility of carrying out irrigation works which would allow of the settlement in Armenia under good conditions of at least 15,000 Armenian refugees, now in Greece and Constantinople, as also of 10,000 refugees already repatriated, on condition that the sum of about 9,000,000 gold roubles (900,000 pounds sterling) is forthcoming for the execution of the necessary work;

Desirous of availing itself of every practical opportunity of giving effect to the resolution, so often renewed by former Assemblies, regarding the return of Armenian refugees to a national home:

Invites the Council to appoint at once not more than five Commissioners whom it would empower:

(a) *To ascertain finally the technical possibility of the proposed undertaking;*

(b) *To exchange views, as may be necessary, with the organs of the League of Nations, the Government of the Armenian Republic, and the other Governments, the associations and private individuals whose help would appear useful for the realisation of the scheme;*

(c) *If their findings are favourable, to propose to the Council the constitution of a Body of Trustees to whom its statutes would give especially the following powers:*

(1) *To conclude with all authorities public and private all necessary contracts for the execution of the plan for settling the refugees; to accept, if necessary, from the Armenian Government a concession of the areas to be irrigated.*

(2) To negotiate, if necessary, the issue of a loan; and, in that case, to act as trustees of the funds, and to assure the financial service.

The Assembly invites the Council to place at the disposal of the Commissioners the sum required in 1925 for the execution of the above resolution, this sum to be entered in the Budget under Unforeseen expenditure.

It decides to enter an item of 50,000 francs in the 1926 Budget for the same purpose.

The resolution was adopted.

77. — MEASURES TO HELP REFUGEES : REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President: The next item on the agenda is the consideration of the report of the Fifth Committee on measures to help refugees (Annex Document A. 128. 1925).

I invite the Rapporteur, M. Bandeira de Mello, delegate for Brazil, to take his place on the platform.

(M. Bandeira de Mello took his place on the platform.)

The President :

The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Bandeira de Mello (Brazil), Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—I have the honour to lay before you the results of the Fifth Committee's work on the measures for the relief of refugees. I must remind you that, in conformity with the decision of the fifth Assembly, the protection of refugees, which has so far been carried out by the High Commissioner, has now been transferred to the International Labour Office, with, however, the cordial collaboration of Dr. Nansen.

The Fifth Committee examined the reports with great interest and duly appreciated the admirable work done by the International Labour Office on behalf of these unfortunate people.

The Refugee Service of the International Labour Office began its programme by establishing in various countries advisory committees and selection committees, which classified the refugees according to their occupations, so as to be able to transmit to them any offers of employment.

The difficulty of settling these workers in Europe has been greatly increased by the unemployment crisis. The possibilities of emigration overseas have been considered; but serious difficulties arose in connection with the identity certificates, as several South-American countries have not yet accepted the Nansen passport.

Moreover, some South American countries, whilst agreeing to take immigrants, have imposed severe restrictions, particularly in regard to the question of morality and the occupational qualifications of the workers.

As many of these emigrants are indigent and have no means of paying for their transport and settlement, it was suggested that a working capital fund should be created to cover these requirements.

The International Labour Office has succeeded in surmounting all these difficulties and has settled about 18,000 refugees in thirty different countries. Thanks to the aid thus afforded them, these refugees have thus been able to reconstitute their homes and resume a normal way of life.

This magnificent work achieved by international co-operation and solidarity redounds to the honour of the League.

In view of all these difficulties, the Fifth Committee suggests that the countries directly concerned might hold an inter-governmental Conference.

The report submitted to you gives detailed information regarding the suggestions made by the different delegations and embodied in the Fifth Committee's resolution which is before you.

The President. — The Duchess of Atholl, delegate of the British Empire, will address the Assembly.

The Duchess of Atholl (British Empire). — Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—I do not wish to detain the Assembly, but as Chairman of the Sub-Committee of the Fifth Committee, which discussed the scheme before you, I should like to say that that scheme was very carefully examined by the Sub-Committee and that, though a reservation was made by one member of the Sub-Committee, all the others were, I think, convinced that, if advantage was to be taken of the openings which are believed to exist in South America for these refugees whom we are so anxious to help, it would be necessary for the League to appoint agents in South America. It is for this reason that the Assembly is asked to vote a credit of 100,000 Swiss francs more than was asked for last year.

We are encouraged to hope that the appointment of these additional agencies will lead to the placing of a considerable number of refugees, because the International Labour Office in the course of nine months' work only has succeeded in placing 18,000 of these refugees in employment in various countries in Europe with the aid of its agents in those countries. We feel, therefore, that the appointment of these two additional agencies in South America is necessary if we are to hope for real practical results from the survey which the Assembly authorised last year.

It was suggested, in the course of the discussions, that the unemployed from some countries in Europe where unemployment is severe might possibly be assisted as well as the refugees to some of these openings for employment in South America. I was extremely sorry, however, to have to point out on behalf of my delegation that, much as we sympathise with the lot of the unemployed—we have only too good a reason to do so, because we have such a large number in our own country—yet we felt that to extend this service for the refugees to unemployed generally would be to make a very large extension of the service, and would, in reality, be asking the League to intervene in a question which is a responsibility for individual Governments.

Apart from the question of these agencies which we desire to see established in South America, there is the question of a fund to help the refugees to get to South America. This is a very urgent question, because, up to the present, Dr. Nansen has been administering for this purpose a small revolving fund, which, I am very glad to know, is the remains of a fund provided by the British Government for the repatriation of Armenian refugees. There is now nothing with which to help the refugees to get to South America and to take advantage of the openings which actually exist there at the present moment.

It is therefore urgently necessary to obtain some money whereby the refugees can be transported to South America. It was proposed in the Sub-Committee that the Assembly should be asked to advance from its Working Capital Fund a sum of £100,000 for this purpose, and this proposal was accepted by the Sub-Committee. It was not approved, however, by the Supervisory Commission, and therefore this money will have to be found in some other way.

Two other methods have been suggested: (1) That the Governments of those countries in which the refugees are at present established should advance the money to enable the refugees to go to South America; and (2) that a special tax should be put on the identity certificates issued to refugees. This latter proposal has, I understand, been approved by several refugee organisations. The Fifth Committee is therefore very anxious that the Council should consider the possibility of summoning at the earliest possible date a Conference of the Governments specially interested in this question, to see whether this working capital fund could be set up by means either of contributions from the Governments which are anxious to see the refugees settled or by a tax on identity certificates, or by both these means.

I know that the Governments of many of those countries in which there are large numbers of refugees have contributed very generously to their support. We fully recognise that this is a pressing problem in some countries, and notably in Greece. I should like, however, to suggest to these countries that if they can find it possible to help this fund by making advances to the refugees they will be doing a very great service to these unfortunate people and, I hope, ultimate good to their own countries, because they will relieve themselves of a continuing obligation which hitherto they have had to meet.

I therefore earnestly hope that the Assembly will support the proposals made to it in the name of the Fifth Committee, because we hope that by the help of these agencies it will be found possible next year to reap some practical benefit from the survey undertaken last year in South America, and so assist some more of these unhappy people to establish themselves and their families in security, and we trust in prosperity.

The President. — M. Suvich, delegate of Italy, will address the Assembly.

M. Suvich (Italy):

Translation: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — In the Fourth and Fifth Committees the Italian delegation did not vote for the additional credit of 100,000 Swiss francs over the sum voted last year.

Nevertheless, the Italian delegation is anxious to act in accordance with the League's traditional spirit of conciliation, which should as far as possible be safeguarded, and accordingly withdraws its opposition on the understanding, given to the Fourth Committee by the representative of the International Labour Office, that the new scheme for settling refugees will, before being put into execution, be approved by the Governing Body of the Labour Office.

The Italian delegation desires to join in the expression of thanks to all who have contributed towards the success of this work, and to the Governments which, at considerable sacrifice, have up to now maintained these refugees in their own territory and provided them with the necessities of life.

The President. — Does any other delegate desire to address the Assembly?

If no one else desires to speak, I will put to the vote the resolutions proposed by the Fifth Committee, which read as follows:

The Assembly,

1. *Having read with great interest the report of the Refugee Service of the International Labour Office on the work accomplished for the refugees during the first seven months of 1925, indicating the possibility of developing on an extensive scale the placing of refugee workers in employment in various parts of the world:*

Wishes to record its deep gratitude to the Governments which have afforded their valuable co-operation in this connection by means of financial contributions, the collaboration of their technical services or by visa and transport facilities;

Expresses its great appreciation of the work accomplished by the Refugee Service of the International Labour Office in co-operation with Dr. Nansen, and notes the urgent necessity of finding employment for Armenian refugees living in Greece.

2. *Taking note of the proposals in the report for the continuation and extension of the Refugee Service and, in particular, of the statement that an additional sum of 100,000 Swiss francs is required for the establishment of two additional agencies of that Service in South America, while recognising that it is an entirely temporary service, decides to include in the budget of the International Labour Office for 1926 the sum of 303,000 Swiss francs for the Refugee Service.*

3. *In view of the fact that the Governing Body of the International Labour Office has not yet had an opportunity of examining these proposals, recommends that the report should be submitted as soon as possible to the Governing Body for its consideration, and authorises the Council to enter into negotiations with the Governing Body, if necessary, for determining the measures by which effect can best be given to the report.*

4. *The Assembly urges the Council to arrange for the convocation of an Inter-Governmental Conference as soon as possible for the purpose of examining the suggestions put forward in the report for the creation and administration of a revolving fund of not less than £100,000 sterling to assist the migration of Russian and Armenian refugees, and of effecting an improvement in the present systems of refugee identity certificates.*

The resolutions were adopted.

78. — PROTOCOL OF AN AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 16 OF THE COVENANT: COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President. — I take the liberty of reminding the members of the Assembly that the Protocol of an Amendment to Article 16 of the Covenant, adopted by the Assembly on September 21st, 1925, is open for signature in Room 68 at the Secretariat.

The meeting rose at 1.5 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SIXTH ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

NINETEENTH PLENARY MEETING

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26th, 1925, AT 2.45 P.M.

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President : MR. DANDURAND.

79. — QUESTION OF SLAVERY : REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President : The first item on our agenda is the consideration of the report of the Sixth Committee regarding slavery, (Annex, Document A. 130. 1925. VI).

I invite the Rapporteur, Lord Cecil, first delegate of the British Empire, and M. Guerrero (Salvador), Chairman of the Committee, to take their places on the platform.

(*M. Guerrero, Chairman of the Sixth Committee, and Viscount Cecil, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.*)

The President : Viscount Cecil, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Viscount Cecil of Chelwood (British Empire) : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I have to present to you the report of the Sixth Committee on the question of slavery. I am not going to read the report, but I may perhaps point out to you a very slight but rather important emendation

that has been made in the text. The fourth paragraph of the report on page 3 reads : "In principle, the Committee was most decidedly opposed to the use of forced labour for other than public purposes, but at the same time it recognised that, owing to special conditions in certain colonies, it might be" — the rest of the words in the sentence should be left out and replaced by the following words, "impossible to abolish it forthwith". Apart from this, the report stands as it is printed.

The present international position with regard to slavery is that, except for one single paragraph in the Convention of St. Germain of 1919, there is at present no general international provision on the subject. It is true that the Brussels Act is probably still in force in certain cases, but the extent to which it is in force is doubtful, and it certainly does not extend to all or nearly all the nations of the world. In these conditions the report, the very admirable report of the Temporary Slavery Commission appointed by the Council in pursuance of a resolution of this Assembly, is exceedingly well founded.

The Assembly owes a great debt of gratitude to that Commission, and, if I may say so, not least to its distinguished Chairman, M. Gohr. I hope and believe that all those who take an interest in this question will study the report and will learn a great deal both as regards the present position of affairs and as to the possible remedies which may be adopted, partly international and partly by the nations concerned.

When this report came up for consideration it was possible to deal with it here in one of two ways. We might have drafted one of those vague and general resolutions which are sometimes passed, expressing admiration for and sympathy with the report, which would not, in my view, have been of very great service.

Instead of that, at the suggestion of the British Government, a different course has been followed. The Sixth Committee has drawn up a Convention, which it hopes will ultimately be signed by all the nations, and which contains definite and specific

proposals. They are necessarily rather general in character because they deal with a general situation; but they are proposals such as the Governments concerned may examine and then decide whether they are prepared to adopt them or not. The Governments will have to decide whether they are going to bear their part in promoting the reform of this great evil, for, though at one time the British Government had proposed to ask the nations represented at this Assembly to sign that Convention forthwith, it now suggests, or rather the Sixth Committee suggests, that the proposal should be generally approved in the terms of the resolution, which I will read before I conclude, and should be then sent to the Governments, who will consider it, and, we hope, be prepared to state definitely at the next Assembly what their position is with regard to it and give instructions and full power to their representatives to sign the Convention with or without alteration.

It is possible, of course, that during the twelve months which they have for reflection the Governments, or some of them, will see objections to some of the provisions. It is possible they may desire to cut them down. It is also possible, and I trust more probable, that they will be prepared not only to accept the proposals now made, but to go even further. In this connection, I should like to draw attention to three proposals which Dr. Nansen submitted to the Committee, but, unfortunately, mainly owing to the very late date at which they were submitted, it was impossible for the Committee to take any decision upon them. Those three proposals are: (1) that any question as to the interpretation or application of the Convention shall be submitted to the Permanent Court of International Justice; (2) that a report, in some form or another, shall be made annually of the progress that the nations have been able to make in carrying out the Convention; and (3), with respect to the conditions of forced labour, that that matter should be remitted to the International Labour Office.

Those are proposals which will, no doubt, be considered by the Governments concerned; and either at the next Assembly or earlier they will be able to state their attitude towards them.

Now as regards the contents of the Convention itself, it deals with three aspects of this evil. In the first place, there is the slave trade. This evil has of course been condemned for very many years, and it was naturally thought right to insert in the Convention a provision for its complete and immediate abolition so far as it still exists by land or sea. With the object of intercepting this trade, we invite all the Powers directly interested in its suppression, those, for instance, having warships in certain seas, to consult together and to consider the best method of making their action effective.

I pass now to slavery, which includes not only slavery properly so-called, but all analogous conditions such as what is sometimes called domestic slavery or serfdom, debt-slavery and other similar conditions which approach very close to and are, in fact, a form of slavery, but are not usually included in the simple term of slavery. With respect to all those, we ask for their abolition, we ask all the nations to agree to their abolition, which will be carried out, as all reform must necessarily be carried out, as progressively as may be possible, and as soon as possible.

Thirdly, we deal — and for the first time in international agreements — with the question of forced labour. Forced labour, in some form or another, is admitted, I suppose, in every State for public services, on the demand of the Government of that State. I do not think that there is any nation, civilised or uncivilised, which does not

possess powers enabling the Government, for certain purposes and under certain restrictions, to require forced or compulsory labour on the part of its citizens. In uncivilised or semi-civilised countries that demand must necessarily be and obviously is much more frequently made than in civilised countries. In civilised countries, of course, a number of social services are organised, which do not exist in an uncivilised country, and those social services have to be carried out, if necessary, by compulsory labour on the part of the citizens. It is therefore inevitable that, for public purposes, forced or compulsory labour must be admitted, and the Convention therefore recognises this and says that, in principle, this is the only kind of forced labour that ought to be admitted.

So as regards forced labour for private profit or for purposes other than the public services properly so-called, such labour is treated in the Convention on exactly the same lines as slavery, namely, it is provided that this form of labour should be discontinued as soon as possible. The Sixth Committee, however, did not think that this was quite enough, for, undoubtedly, very great evils are connected with forced or compulsory labour, in particular when such labour takes the form of recruiting a number of persons who are but little civilised, carrying them away from their families and homes to a distant place, herding them together there and compelling them to work for private profit.

This kind of forced labour, which unfortunately exists to a great extent in certain countries, is a fearful evil, and very closely resembles or may very closely resemble slavery itself. We propose that this kind of labour should be abolished forthwith. No form of forced or compulsory labour involving the removal of the labourer from his home should henceforth be allowed. We say also that even in those cases where forced labour, by reason of native or other customs, has been allowed to exist, but where there is no question of compelling the labourer to leave his home, such labour can only be permitted in the face of an emergency, some flood or natural disaster which, in order to avert a public danger, may require the assistance of everyone. In all cases, such forced or compulsory labour must always receive adequate remuneration. Certain cases may also exist where by tribal customs long continued some species of forced labour has been allowed among native races.

These are the three kinds of forced labour with which the Committee dealt. We say that the so-called recruited labour, labour which involves the transport of the labourers from their homes, must be abolished altogether; that, in other cases, forced labour must only be allowed in emergency and for temporary purposes, and that in all cases all forms of forced labour for other than public purposes must be stopped as soon as possible.

Further, two general provisions are included in the Convention to apply to all forced labour, whether for public or for private purposes; one of these provisions states that in no case must such labour be allowed to degenerate into slavery, and the other that in all cases the labour must be under the direct responsibility of the central authorities of the territories concerned.

Such are the broad lines of the Convention which the Sixth Committee submits to this Assembly. I personally have no doubt that, if this Convention is accepted by the nations and carried into effect, it will constitute one of the greatest advances towards complete human freedom that has ever been made. I believe that it will free tens or hundreds of thousands of unhappy beings from conditions which closely resemble slavery and which

now exist. It will be of untold advantage to humanity in general. I am, therefore, the more surprised to hear that in certain quarters this very great effort is being subjected to criticisms, on the ground that the effort does not go far enough, and that, as it does not go far enough, it would be better to do nothing at all.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is the most fatal of all doctrines. Let us never forget the French proverb: *Le mieux est l'ennemi du bien*. That is a profound truth. We must advance in this world step by step. We must do what we can to improve the conditions of mankind, and if we are to refrain from taking one step forward because it is not two steps forward, then, believe me, we shall make no progress whatever.

I hope I am not unduly suspicious if I suggest to you that sometimes those who desire to do nothing are precisely those who pretend that they will not take even one step forward because it does not go far enough. I have seen these tactics pursued in other similar cases, and I venture respectfully to warn the Assembly and the public against it.

I trust that you will now accept the resolution which I propose to read to you.

"The Assembly,

"Considering that the Members of the League of Nations have undertaken, in virtue of Article 23 (b) of the Covenant, to secure just treatment of the native inhabitants of territories under their control;

"Having examined the Report of the Temporary Slavery Commission which has been communicated to all the Members of the League of Nations; and

"Being of opinion that a Convention is the best way of giving effect to the suggestions made in this Report and of accomplishing the work undertaken by the League of Nations for the suppression of Slavery:

"Decides to recommend for approval the annexed draft Convention;

"And requests the Council to communicate this draft to all States Members of the League and to such other States as the Council may specify, with a view to the conclusion of a Convention which will be as far as possible in conformity with this draft, and to invite the above-mentioned States:

"(a) To forward to the Secretary-General not later than June 1st, 1926, any observations they may desire to make regarding the provisions of this draft:

"(b) To appoint at a later date Plenipotentiaries who will meet at the time of the opening of the seventh Assembly to re-examine, if necessary, the articles of the draft Convention and to sign immediately the text of the Convention which has been agreed upon; and

"(c) To make every effort to adopt at once all possible measures in conformity with the provisions of the draft Convention in question;

"(d) To assist one another forthwith in the abolition of the slave trade, slavery and conditions analogous thereto, by all practicable means, and in particular by the conclusion of special agreements and arrangements."

The President: M. Montigny, representative of France, will address the Assembly.

M. Montigny (France):

Translation: Ladies and gentlemen—On behalf of the French delegation I should like to explain very briefly our reasons for voting for the resolution submitted by Lord Cecil. I wish to congratulate Lord Cecil on having proposed to the Assembly the draft Protocol examined by the Sixth Committee. In doing so, I must at the same time pay a tribute. I will not say to his conciliatory attitude, but to his deep understanding throughout of the various interests involved.

You will have appreciated the clearness with which he has explained the present situation. I should like, in turn, to offer a few suggestions to the Assembly.

The League was right in taking up the question of slavery and kindred forms of servitude. The Temporary Slavery Commission has done most important, most interesting and I would even say most reassuring work, since the raising of this question by the League might quite possibly have caused some confusion and misunderstanding among the public. The public might have thought that you felt bound to take up this problem because slavery was still a common and widespread evil which you could not ignore. Unfortunately, abuses still exist, but the report submitted to the League by the Temporary Commission contains a number of reassuring passages which prove that slavery itself has happily become a rarity throughout the world and that the sources of slavery are, as it were, practically dried up everywhere. Indeed—and these details are of very great value—Chapter II of this report states that the chief sources, indeed the only sources, of slavery are (more particularly in Africa) raids properly so-called—tribal warfare and individual captures.

Tribal wars, we learn from the report, are now becoming rarer and rarer. Whereas they once formed the main source of the local supply of slaves in Africa and also provided slaves for exportation, this source has now been practically dried up owing to the occupation and pacification by the colonising nations of the countries under their control.

It is stated, moreover, that the abominable practice of capturing individuals has virtually ceased, since justice has been regularly established and the natives understand the facilities provided for them to obtain redress for wrongs committed against them.

This means then that two sources of slavery have practically disappeared.

As regards the third source of slavery, the raids, which occur chiefly in the Sahara Desert, the report states that these have now been made practically impossible owing to the measures of supervision and repression adopted by the neighbouring Powers, Egypt, Italy and France.

The report also states the very important fact that the number of slaves actually captured in the Sahara does not appear to exceed twenty annually.

It is therefore clear from this report that, although slavery is still to be met with in exceptional circumstances—and I agree that if there were only ten slaves on the surface of the globe the matter would still be sufficiently serious to merit the attention of the League—the evil is, at all events, very limited in extent.

One further reflection occurs to me on reading this document. These sources of slavery—tribal wars, raids and the capture of individuals—have practically disappeared, and—according to the statement of the Temporary Slavery Commission, which is composed not of politicians but of experts without political bias—it is owing to the civilising

action of the Colonial Powers that the terrible curse of slavery has been brought to an end. I should like to emphasise that point now, at a time when an attempt is being made, by the dissemination of certain doctrines, by raising controversies and through the medium of the Press, to cause unrest among the natives by persuading them that it is the measures taken by the Great Powers to introduce civilisation that have retarded their progress and made them the victims of cruel oppression. These reports and the expert investigation of the question prove that the Powers which bear the heavy material burden of their colonies have never failed in the work of civilisation which they have undertaken.

After this digression, let me say that France fully concurs in the object of the Advisory Committee, that is to say, the total abolition, once and for all and throughout the whole world, not only of slavery, but of all intermediate states between slavery and freedom.

We think that the League should, in the near future, bring into force a Protocol giving a legal sanction to these principles.

I will doubtless be said that such a Protocol might have been drafted and adopted this year. That would perhaps have been premature, since, as the report now before you states, it has been impossible for the Governments Members of the League to study before this session the draft submitted by the British delegation; no matter how sincerely and urgently all the Members of the League may desire to remedy existing abuses, there are delicate and complex questions, *de facto* situations, which cannot be ignored, and the seriousness of which the Rapporteur frankly admits when he states in his report that, in certain cases in the past, the attempt to do away with slavery and other similar conditions in an abrupt manner, although noble in its inspiration, has resulted in unforeseen and regrettable hardships for the individuals whose condition it was sought to alleviate, and even in grave social upheavals. In these circumstances the Sixth Committee felt that the abolition of slavery, however desirable, could only be successfully brought about with due regard to the maintenance of order and the well-being of the peoples concerned.

Therefore, gentlemen, although the Sixth Committee has not been able to produce definite results this year, it must not be thought that there has been any desire, in any quarter, to delay the proceedings.

France will loyally support any further efforts of the League to abolish the evils of which I have spoken. She can point with pride to the fact that, as far back as 1848, she was one of the first countries in the world to abolish slavery in her own colonies, and she has always taken steps to carry out the measures mentioned in the report to prevent the capture of prisoners, raids and tribal wars within her territory. France was also one of the first Powers to demand that a clause providing for the equitable treatment of populations should be embodied in the Covenant.

It is hardly necessary for me to recall these facts, however. You all know that my country has a long tradition, I might even say a long colonial creed, and that, far from encouraging oppression, abuses or barbarous traditional customs and usages, we have always aimed not only at ensuring the material progress and security, the health and well-being of the native populations under our control, but their education, moral progress and intellectual emancipation.

France will never forget that "liberty" is the first word in the motto of the Republic.

The President: Does any other member wish to speak? If no one wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution proposed by the Sixth Committee and which reads as follows:

The Assembly,

Considering that the Members of the League of Nations have undertaken, in virtue of Article 23 (b) of the Covenant, to secure just treatment of the native inhabitants of territories under their control;

Having examined the report of the Temporary Slavery Commission which has been communicated to all the Members of the League of Nations; and Being of opinion that a Convention is the best way of giving effect to the suggestions made in this report and of accomplishing the work undertaken by the League of Nations for the suppression of slavery;

Decides to recommend for approval the annexed draft Convention;

And requests the Council to communicate this draft to all States Members of the League and to such other States as the Council may specify, with a view to the conclusion of a Convention which will be as far as possible in conformity with this draft, and to invite the above-mentioned States:

(a) To forward to the Secretary-General not later than June 1st, 1926, any observations they may desire to make regarding the provisions of this draft;

(b) To appoint at a later date plenipotentiaries who will meet at the time of the opening of the seventh Assembly to re-examine, if necessary, the articles of the draft Convention and to sign immediately the text of the Convention which has been agreed upon;

(c) To make every effort to adopt at once all possible measures in conformity with the provisions of the draft Convention in question;

(d) To assist one another forthwith in the abolition of the slave trade, slavery and conditions analogous thereto, by all practicable means and, in particular, by the conclusion of special agreements and arrangements.

The resolution was adopted.

80. — ELECTION OF NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

The President: In accordance with our agenda, the Assembly will now proceed to the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council.

The following is the relevant passage from the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly:

"Where several seats are to be filled, the election shall be made by voting a list of names. Any ballot paper containing more names than there are seats to be filled shall be null and void.

No Member shall be elected at the first or at the second ballot unless it has obtained at least the absolute majority of the votes. If after two ballots there still remain seats to be filled, a third ballot shall be held upon a list consisting of the candidates which obtained most votes at the second ballot, up to a number double that of the seats still to be filled, and those Members shall be elected which obtain the greatest number of votes.

If two or more Members obtain the same number of votes and there is not a seat available

for each, a special ballot shall be held between them; if they again obtain an equal number of votes, the President shall decide between them by drawing lots."

In accordance with this procedure, you are about to elect six Members to sit on the Council during the year 1926. On the voting tickets must be written the names of States and not the names of delegates representing such States.

M. Chao-Hsin-Chu (China): In connection with the procedure for the election of non-permanent Members of the Council of the League, allow me to remind the Assembly of the recommendation which was unanimously passed here just two days ago regarding the applicability of the geographical principle to the allocation of such non-permanent seats. I have the honour, Mr. President, to request that the Assembly should be reminded of this recommendation before the ballot is taken, in the hope that this geographical principle will not be overlooked.

The President: I will ask M. Mensdorff, delegate of Austria, and M. Caballero, delegate of Paraguay, to act as tellers.

(M. Mensdorff and M. Caballero took their places on the platform.)

The President: We will now proceed to a secret ballot by roll-call.

(The vote was taken by roll-call and secret ballot. The Secretary-General proceeded to count the votes.)

The President: The result of the ballot is as follows:

The following States voted:

Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, British Empire, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Czechoslovakia, Colombia, Cuba, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Esthonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, India, Irish Free State, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Persia, Poland, Portugal, Roumania, Salvador, South Africa, Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Siam, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Uruguay, Venezuela.

The following States were absent:

Argentina, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Peru.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| Number of votes cast | 49 |
| Blank papers | 1 |
| Absolute majority required | 25 |

The votes obtained by the States were as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------|----|
| Brazil | 43 |
| Uruguay | 40 |
| Czechoslovakia | 35 |
| Spain | 35 |
| Sweden | 31 |
| Belgium | 32 |
| China | 26 |
| Persia | 9 |
| Netherlands | 8 |
| Chile | 4 |
| Switzerland | 2 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Cuba | 25 |
| Denmark | 25 |
| Poland | 25 |
| Portugal | 25 |
| Siam | 25 |
| Colombia | 1 |
| Finland | 1 |
| Greece | 1 |
| India | 1 |
| Latvia | 1 |
| Liberia | 1 |
| Roumania | 1 |
| Salvador | 1 |
| Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes | 1 |

Brazil, Uruguay, Spain, Czechoslovakia, Sweden and Belgium have obtained the absolute majority of votes required and are therefore elected non-permanent Members of the Council. It is my happy duty to offer them my congratulations.

81. — ELECTION OF THE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL: PROPOSAL BY THE VENEZUELAN DELEGATION.

The President: M. Zameta, first delegate of Venezuela, asks leave to address the Assembly.

M. Zameta (Venezuela):

Translation: There is every indication that the present choice has been determined by the very legitimate desire which has so far led the Assembly to maintain the *statu quo* in the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council, a desire shared by the Venezuelan delegation. At the same time, it is clear that, whether the amendment to the Covenant on this point is ratified in the near future or whether a system of rotation is agreed to, the present arrangement cannot continue.

The Venezuelan delegation has reason to believe that its views are shared by most of the members of this Assembly, and proposes to embody these views in a recommendation on the following lines:

"The Assembly.

"Noting that the non-permanent Members of the Council at present in office have been re-elected for a year;

"Considers the meaning of this re-election to be that it is subject to the non-permanent part of the Council being renewed as from the election of 1926 by application of the principle of rotation."

The President: Is there any opposition to this recommendation?

M. de Palacios (Spain):

Translation: The Spanish delegation will not oppose the adoption of the recommendation, but as it has not been able to obtain instructions from its Government, it will not vote.

The President: Does any other Member of the Assembly desire to speak on this recommendation? If no one wishes to speak I will declare the recommendation adopted.

The recommendation was adopted.

82. — CLOSE OF THE SESSION: SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT.

Ladies, gentlemen and dear colleagues — Our work is finished. Before vacating the Chair to which you elected me, I should like first to discharge a duty and, secondly, to attempt to indicate the lessons which this Assembly has taught us.

On behalf of all the delegations, I express our thanks to the Swiss Republic and to the Canton and City of Geneva. Switzerland has become the home of noble schemes of international pacification. It is in the peace-inspiring atmosphere of this country that the lofty ideas of universal reconciliation have been born. Animated by the spirit of hospitality, of reason and of discipline, the Swiss democracy offers us an example of the fraternal union of peoples differing in race, language and religion.

Secondly, our thanks are due to the Secretary-General, Sir Eric Drummond, who, with his wide and rich experience, has controlled the complicated machinery of the League's organisations. I would ask him to convey to all his collaborators, whatever their position, our great appreciation of the value of their daily help.

The many reports submitted to us by the six Committees are proof of the breadth of view and the ripe wisdom of those who have helped to prepare them.

We are particularly glad to pay our tribute to the active sympathy extended to us by the Press. The Assembly regards the Press as an all-important factor in world peace. It has passed a resolution proclaiming the necessity of the co-operation of the Press in preparing for that moral disarmament which must precede material disarmament. In its capacity as a coadjutor of the League in the work of peace and the creation of a "new conscience" for humanity, the Press will be able to spread far and wide such words as will calm passion and mould public opinion.

Several speakers have already observed that this Assembly was not intended to be, or even to appear to be, a school of rhetoric. It is not our duty to distribute laurel wreaths or to strew palms before the victors in the lists of oratory. The object of our meeting here is to consider problems which affect the future of the great civilisations and to seek with patient zeal to reconcile the sometimes discordant elements of practical and acceptable solutions.

It has been unjustly said that our meetings lacked the quality of brilliance. I am inclined to make a virtue of what was intended as a criticism. Is this not actual proof of the serious nature of our work? Whether in matters social, financial, economic or political, decisions have been taken which may have far-reaching consequences. In all spheres in which we are competent to act, important results have been obtained. Of these I will only say one word.

Through the help given to refugees and the extension of protective measures for women and children, the League has sought to safeguard the rights of the weak and to alleviate the misfortunes of the suffering. In this connection I should like to pay a warm tribute to the International Labour Office for all the help it has afforded.

Special mention should be made of the Convention drafted by the Sixth Committee to remove the last traces of slavery. This is an undertaking of real humanitarian value and we hope that it will be welcomed by the Governments concerned.

By the interest it has shown in the organisation of public health and the regulation of the opium traffic, the Assembly has proved its anxiety to

remove dangers threatening the physical and moral well-being both of individuals and of entire communities.

Thanks to the sincere co-operation of the Governments of Hungary and Austria, the financial reconstruction of these two countries has yielded most encouraging results.

The technical organisations, such as the Financial Committee and the Economic Committee, to which should be added the Committee for Communications and Transit, have displayed a praiseworthy activity. Each in its sphere has prepared the way for an undertaking of the world-wide scope of which you will all have realised. All Governments are agreed that the causes of international difficulties and disputes often lie in economic conditions: accordingly the proposal for a general Economic Conference has been welcomed. The resolution proposed by the Second Committee opens up a vast field of enquiry and investigation with a view not merely to mitigating the effects but to removing the causes of the evils which at the present time weigh so heavily upon all nations.

The question of intellectual Co-operation also offers a promising outlook. The Committee will shortly have at its disposal an admirable instrument in the Paris Institute, and its influence is bound to increase with time. It will have to concentrate its attention on schemes for diffusing a knowledge of the ideal of the League, for winning fresh support and making its work better known. This task cannot be pursued by means of partisan propaganda, but only by a faithful and unbiased statement of the League's activities.

Although no actual resolution has been passed on the somewhat thorny question of the protection of minorities, it has nevertheless been discussed by the Sixth Committee. The opinions expressed during this discussion show that the League is conscientiously performing the useful and noble but difficult task entrusted to it under the Treaties, namely, that of safeguarding the interests of certain national minorities. The work it has done should inspire confidence in those populations which look to it for support. All fears, all sensitiveness, will gradually be removed by the wisdom of the Governments and the loyalty of the minorities. The combined and sincere efforts of the League, the Governments concerned and the minorities themselves should eventually lead to a situation, a brotherly relationship, which will mark the end of the minorities problem, both from the international and the domestic standpoint.

I must also draw attention to the work of the Mandates Commission in developing and perfecting the institution established by the Treaty, the supervision of which is entrusted to the League. We are firmly convinced that the mandatory Powers have at heart the steady improvement of the material and moral conditions of the populations placed under their paternal and, I would add, vigilant tutelage.

I now turn to that trilogy which has become classic — "Arbitration, Security and Disarmament". The deliberations of this Assembly have shown us that the spirit of the Protocol drawn up last year still lives. It constitutes, at the present time, an ideal and a rule of conduct. None of the general principles enunciated by the fifth Assembly were questioned by the sixth. The only modifications concerned the application of these principles: the principles themselves formed the fundamental basis of our discussions. Did not the Assembly show what was its intention by denouncing a war of aggression as an international crime? Did it not again affirm the necessity of arbitration and security as essential conditions to disarmament? Surely, however, Security, as contemplated in the

Protocol, must, by the very terms of that document, and in accordance with the statements of the most authoritative members of this Assembly, necessarily be supplemented by regional agreements, by pacts between peoples with common interests who believe themselves directly threatened?

Two methods of attaining this end were proposed by the authors of the scheme for the pacific settlement of international disputes. The idealistic method, based upon general conceptions, sought to reconcile human facts with principles: the realistic method endeavoured to find a compromise between principles and facts, and to accommodate ideas to circumstances. I may be pardoned for recalling Plato and Aristotle. Called upon to choose between the method of the disciple and that of the master, the Assembly decided that it would perhaps be more expedient to follow the teaching of the disciple. The eventual end will be the same. It is the methods of realisation or application that differ. The Members of the League wish to prepare the way for disarmament by means of special agreements in order to obtain security. They propose the pacific settlement of conflicts and disputes by arbitration conventions. From all these facts it is clear that the spirit of the Protocol has animated and quickened the work of this Assembly.

It has not been judged advisable to engage once more in a discussion of the project for universal compulsory arbitration. But inevitably, whatever paths we may tread, we shall one day reach this goal. A little reflection will show that there are only two possible alternatives — arbitration or arbitrariness. Between these two words, which follow each other in the dictionary and yet are mutually exclusive, the Members of the League have never hesitated.

This brief and superficial survey of the work done in the last few weeks is enough to show that the sixth Assembly has not disappointed the hopes which the world placed in it. This work has been such as to confound the sceptics, to convert the pessimists and to give to all those who believe in

the League fresh ground for confidence, optimism and faith. Our Assembly has courageously done its duty and faced most difficult tasks. With a clear realisation of its mission and of its responsibilities it has drawn up the programme of the great enterprises of to-morrow and revealed to mankind new and shining horizons.

Ladies and gentlemen, in the course of your walks through Geneva you may have happened upon the little church of St. Paul, whose red-tiled roof and Romanesque front lie sheltered under the foliage of autumn. Harmonious in its proportions, rich in its sobriety, this modern temple with its mediæval air contains a masterpiece of the French painter, Maurice Denis.

The arch of the central nave frames this magnificent work of art, which dominates the high altar, fills the whole apse and casts a subtle oriental light on the high vault. Before us lies a calm sea which the twilight mantles with purple and greenish gold.

A fishing-boat gently rocks upon the waters.

In it a number of figures are grouped round a man clothed in a robe of many folds. The apostle Paul addresses his companions, come to him from Rome and Corinth, Jerusalem and Ephesus, Cyprus and Thessalonica. The words fall upon the mellow air: "There is no longer Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free..."

Before this striking evocation of apostolic times I found myself dreaming that one day we may see on the shores of this peaceful lake men of every religion, faith and race acclaiming the voice which the echoes will carry to the uttermost ends of the earth: "There is no longer victor nor vanquished, oppressor nor oppressed, for you are all one in justice and peace".

Ladies and gentlemen, the sixth Assembly of the League of Nations is now closed.

The Assembly rose at 5 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SPECIAL SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

(MARCH 1926)

FIRST PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, MARCH 8th, 1926, AT 3 P.M.

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1. — OPENING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

Viscount Ishii, delegate of Japan, Acting President of the Council, took the Chair.

The Chairman :

Translation : Ladies and Gentlemen, — The Assembly of the League of Nations is about to meet, for the first time, in special session.

The Covenant of the League states that "the Assembly shall meet at stated intervals and from time to time, as occasion may require . . ." The Rules of Procedure adopted by the first Assembly provide for a general session of the Assembly in September of each year and set forth the conditions in which special sessions may be summoned.

On February 9th, 1926, the Secretary-General of the League received an application for the admission of Germany to the League. On the same day the Council of the League was convoked by its Acting President, the representative of Italy, to meet at Geneva on February 12th to consider whether, in accordance with the provisions of the Rules of Procedure, a special session of the Assembly should be summoned, in order that Germany's application might be examined without delay. The Council decided to summon the special session of the Assembly, in virtue of which you have met to-day, and drew up the agenda which is before you.

At the annual general sessions of the Assembly it is the custom for the Acting President of the Council, in opening the session, and as an introduction to its deliberations, to review the work of the League for the previous year. In view of the special character of the agenda of this session, I am sure that you will agree that there is no occasion for me to anticipate in any way the introductory speech which will be made at the regular session of the Assembly next September.

Perhaps, however, I may venture to make one or two remarks.

In the first place, I would draw your attention to the fact that, since the application of the German Government was received, just one month has elapsed. The meeting at such short notice of the official representatives of most of the States of the world is surely without precedent, and is evidence of the efficiency of the League as a machine for the transaction of business affecting many nations.

Secondly, I am confident that I shall be expressing the feelings not only of the delegates assembled here, but of those people throughout the world who are following your proceedings, if I say that the event which has brought us together is, in the highest degree, significant. A great nation asks to

be admitted to the League. I venture to see in this a sign that the covenants which unite the Members of the League, so long as they are applied, however imperfectly, in the spirit of international equity which underlies them, will appeal with growing force to the hopes and consciences of the nations of the world.

Ladies and gentlemen, I declare the special session of the Assembly of the League of Nations open.

2. — ELECTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE CREDENTIALS OF DELEGATES.

The Chairman :

Translation : In accordance with Article 5 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, a Committee to report on the credentials of delegates should be elected by the Assembly in order that it may submit its report without delay.

This Committee should consist of eight members.

M. Motta (Switzerland) :

Translation : I beg to propose that the Committee on the Credentials of Delegates should consist of the following eight delegates :

The Hon. Philippe ROY (Canada).
 M. DE AGUERO Y BETHANCOURT (Cuba).
 M. Louis LOUCHEUR (France).
 M. Dino GRANDI (Italy).
 M. Willis SCHUMANS (Latvia).
 Baron LEHMANN (Liberia).
 Prince ARFA (Persia).
 M. Petresco COMNÈNE (Roumania).

The Chairman :

Translation : Does any member desire to speak regarding the list which has just been suggested ? If no one wishes to speak, I shall regard it as adopted.

The list proposed by M. Motta was adopted.

The Chairman :

Translation : It is important that the Committee for the verification of credentials which has just been appointed should meet at once. I therefore propose that we adjourn for an hour in order to enable the Committee to meet and submit its report to-day. I accordingly request the Committee to meet at once in the President's room.

This meeting of the Assembly will be resumed at 4.30 p.m., and after hearing the report of the Committee for the Verification of Credentials the Assembly will elect the President of this special session.

The Assembly adjourned at 3.30 p.m. and the meeting was resumed at 4.30 p.m.

3. — CREDENTIALS OF DELEGATES : REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS.

The Chairman :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the consideration of the report of the Committee on Credentials.

I request M. de Aguero y Bethancourt, first delegate of Cuba, to read his report.

M. de Agüero y Béthancourt (Cuba), Chairman and Rapporteur of the Committee on Credentials :

Translation : The Committee on Credentials met to-day at 3.30 p.m. and elected me Chairman and entrusted me with the duty of drawing up the report.

The Committee examined the documents transmitted to it by the Secretary-General and found that the following States are represented by delegates who are in possession either of letters of credentials from Heads of States, or letters from Ministers for Foreign Affairs, or telegrams from the same source, or letters from the representatives on the Council of the League, or from permanent representatives accredited to the League of Nations :

Abyssinia, Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, British Empire, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Esthonia, Finland, France, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, India, Irish Free State, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Paraguay, Persia, Poland, Portugal, Roumania, Salvador, Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Siam, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Uruguay, Venezuela.

The Committee considers that the representatives of these States Members are duly accredited.

The Committee also found that the following States Members have not presented any documents regarding their representation at this session of the Assembly of the League of Nations :

The Argentine Republic, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Haiti, Honduras, Panama, Peru.

The Chairman :

Translation : Does anyone wish to speak on this report? If no one wishes to speak, I shall declare the conclusions of the report adopted.

The conclusions of the report were adopted.

4. — ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Chairman :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the election of a President for the present special session of the Assembly.

In conformity with the Rules of Procedure, voting will be by secret ballot.

I request two former Presidents of the Assembly, M. Motta, first delegate of Switzerland, and Mr. Dandurand, first delegate of Canada, to act as tellers.

The votes of the delegations were taken in turn by secret ballot.

The Chairman :

Translation : The result of the voting is as follows :

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Number of States voting | 48 |
| Blank voting paper | 1 |
| Voting papers valid | 47 |
| Majority required | 24 |

| | | |
|--------------------------------|----------|----------|
| M. Affonso da Costa (Portugal) | received | 36 votes |
| M. Herluf Zahle (Denmark) | | 8 " |
| Others | | 3 " |

I have therefore the honour, in accordance, with the Rules of Procedure, to announce that M. Affonso da Costa, first delegate of Portugal, is elected President of the present special session of the Assembly.

M. da Costa, the Assembly has, by a large majority, elected you President. I sincerely congratulate the Assembly on its choice, as I also congratulate you personally and the country which you so worthily represent here.

I call upon M. Affonso da Costa to take the chair of the present special session of the Assembly.

M. da Costa took the Presidential Chair.

5. — PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

M. da Costa (Portugal) (President of the Assembly):

Translation: Ladies and Gentlemen, My dear Colleagues, — I am deeply sensible of the great honour you have conferred upon me in asking me to preside over the work of this Assembly, and profoundly appreciative of the flattering words which the President of the Council was good enough to address to me.

I know that this tribute is paid mainly to my country, which is truly worthy of the honour you are conferring upon it. It was one of the earliest pioneers of our civilisation, and has always given proof of its ardent and unshakable desire for peace. It has ever been a staunch defender of the principles which guide the beneficent activities of the League of Nations.

As for myself, I see in your choice only a further incentive to do my duty with that zeal which I have brought to the defence of these principles ever since the already distant days when this new and admirable system of international relations was framed and developed.

I am the more sensible of the honour you have done me in that our task on this occasion, though it will not delay us long, is of truly immense importance. We are not now meeting merely to lay the foundations of the constitution and to frame the rules for the working of our League. To-day, we are called upon to give it its final shape, to adapt it to the conditions which will be most likely to further the attainment of its essential object — that of ensuring peace and furthering the progress of mankind.

During the six ordinary Assemblies of the League of Nations, from 1920 to 1925, we have, after some tentative experiments which were inevitable in the beginning, collected excellent material for perfecting this gigantic organisation, which already includes the majority of the nations of the world. But it was only after the Locarno Agreement that the key-stone of this magnificent edifice was ready to be placed in position by the present Assembly.

It is not only the entry of a new nation into the League of Nations which gives this present session such special importance: there are other nations which still remain outside the League, among which we need only mention that great nation, the United States of America, whose seat, unfortunately, is still empty. This Assembly is given an exceptional significance by the growth and influence in our discussions of what I may call *the new spirit*, the Locarno spirit, the spirit which has brought Germany here, the spirit of fraternity which to-day is possible, and which will in the future increase and will bind together all the peoples of the world.

This is the true significance of the present occasion.

I can therefore say without exaggeration that a new era is at length opening for all mankind — an era of tranquillity and happiness, after all the suffering and anguish of the past.

What, then, is the spirit of Locarno? It is directed towards the construction, on a rational and firm foundation, of a system in which force shall be replaced by reason, violence by justice, conflict by understanding. This spirit of Locarno was proclaimed here last year, in the most eloquent and definite terms, by its great creators, M. Briand and Sir Austen Chamberlain. At the meeting on September 10th, 1925, Sir Austen Chamberlain, speaking of the agreements then in preparation,

which were to be executed under the auspices of the League, clearly summed up the dominant idea as follows:

“I hope we shall have the sympathy and approval of the League of Nations, for we shall bring to the League great support, a great increase of its authority and influence, and the largest contribution that it is in our power to make to the preservation of the peace of the world.”

This promise has been worthily fulfilled. You have before you, gentlemen, the Locarno agreements and you will examine them simultaneously with Germany's application for admission to the League of Nations under Article 1 of the Covenant.

At the same time, without pre-judging your decisions, I cannot refrain from offering here and now, on behalf of the entire Assembly, a warm and cordial welcome to all who contributed to the admirable work done at Locarno which opens up such excellent prospects for the future.

You may feel that I am unduly optimistic; you may be somewhat surprised that neither personally nor as President of the Assembly have I made any reservations or given expression to any doubts. The reason is a simple one. I am a man of principle and a man of faith, and the League of Nations, in whose name I have the honour to speak, has no right to contemplate the remotest possibility of its own disappearance, or even of a retrograde movement. The present juncture is so decisive a turning-point as regards the effectiveness of the League's work that we cannot but feel the most complete confidence, lest we should have to admit that all our vast dreams of peace and progress might vanish away at the very moment when they are beginning to take shape as beautiful realities, and might leave the communities of mankind once more beneath the heel of all those forces of destruction which we thought had been overcome.

That is no longer a possibility. None of us here who are taking our share in the life of the League must make, or let others make, depressing and discouraging suggestions.

In conclusion, I would ask you to give me your support and co-operation in the carrying-out of the important duties which you have done me the honour of entrusting to me, and to help me to make my contribution towards what we may expect will be the happy outcome of this Assembly.

6. — ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA.

The President:

Translation: In order to shorten our procedure, and unless any delegation desires that we should vote on the agenda item by item, I propose that we should vote on it as a whole — *i.e.*, on Items 1 to 4 of the document distributed to you. In these circumstances there appears to be no object in setting up an agenda committee.

If there is no objection, I shall regard this procedure as adopted. (*Assent.*)

The agenda was adopted. (Annex 1, document A. 5. 1926 (Extraordinary).)

7. — NOMINATION OF COMMITTEES OF THE ASSEMBLY AND ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMEN OF THESE COMMITTEES.

The President:

Translation: According to precedent, it is necessary that the special session of the Assembly should now constitute its Committees. The General

Committee of the Assembly cannot be set up until the Committees have elected their Chairmen, since the latter, together with the six Vice-Presidents elected by the Assembly, will form the General Committee of the Assembly.

The agenda of this special session indicates the desirability of setting up two Committees, one to deal with Item 1 of the agenda, "Request of the German Government for admission to the League of Nations", and the other to consider Items 3 and 4: "Budgetary Questions and the Construction of an Assembly Hall".

In making these suggestions as to the distribution of the work between these Committees, I am following the precedent established at the ordinary sessions of the Assembly.

You will no doubt agree with me that for the moment we should take no decision regarding the reference to one of the Committees of Item 2 of the agenda: "Decisions of the Assembly on Council proposals, if any, in application of Article 4 of the Covenant of the League of Nations".

This question should first be considered by the Council, and we must therefore wait until the Council has finished its examination of the question, and leave it to the General Committee of the Assembly to suggest the best procedure to adopt.

If there are no objections, I shall consider that the Assembly agrees, on the one hand, to set up two Committees and, on the other, to distribute between these Committees, in the manner I have indicated, three of the items on our agenda, the second item being reserved for the present. (*Assent.*)

In order to save time, I suggest that we adjourn so that the two Committees may be formed, and elect their Chairmen. In suggesting this course, it is not my intention to introduce innovations in our procedure or in the constitution and election of the Committees of the Assembly. I am merely endeavouring to fulfil your wishes by suggesting to you a means of simplifying our arrangements without departing in any way from the established rules and traditions.

The meeting will therefore be suspended for fifteen minutes, during which time the delegations will designate their representatives on each of the Committees. I will then invite one of the Committees (which might, if you agree, be called Committee No. I, that is, the Committee which will deal with the first item on the agenda) to meet immediately in the Assembly Hall to elect its Chairman.

As soon as this has been done, I will invite the other Committee (which, for convenience, we might call Committee No. II) to take the first Committee's place in the Assembly Hall and proceed in the same manner to elect its Chairman.

If that course commends itself to the Assembly, and if no objections are raised, I will consider it as adopted. (*Adopted.*)

The meeting is suspended for a quarter of an hour to allow the delegations to appoint their representatives on the two Committees and Committee No. I will then meet in this hall to elect its Chairman.

The meeting was adjourned at 5.25 p.m. and resumed at 6 p.m.

8. — ANNOUNCEMENT OF CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.

The President :

Translation : I have the honour to inform the Assembly that Committee No. I has elected as

Chairman Sir Austen Chamberlain, first delegate of the British Empire, and Committee No. II has elected as its Chairman M. Loucheur, delegate of France.

9. — ELECTION OF THE SIX VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : In accordance with the first paragraph of Article 7 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, it is now necessary to proceed to the election by ballot of six Vice-Presidents.

Let me remind you that paragraph 3 of Article 21 of the Rules of Procedure which governs this election reads as follows :

"When a number of elective places of the same nature are to be filled at one time, those persons who obtain an absolute majority at the first ballot shall be elected. If the number of persons obtaining such majority is less than the number of persons to be elected, there shall be a second ballot to fill the remaining places, the voting being restricted to the unsuccessful candidates who obtained the greatest number of votes at the first ballot, not more than double in number the places remaining to be filled. Those candidates, to the number required to be elected, who receive the greatest number of votes at the second ballot shall be declared elected."

I call upon Sir Austen Chamberlain, first delegate of the British Empire, and M. Loucheur, delegate of France, to be good enough to act as tellers.

The votes of the delegations were taken in turn by secret ballot.

The President :

Translation : The following are the results of the voting :

| | |
|----------------------------|----|
| Number of States voting | 46 |
| Voting paper null and void | 1 |
| Voting papers valid | 45 |
| Majority required | 23 |

The analysis of the voting is as follows :

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| M. SCIALOJA (Italy) | 45 votes |
| Viscount ISHII (Japan) | 42 " |
| Sir James ALLEN (New Zealand) | 34 " |
| M. CABALLERO (Paraguay) | 32 " |
| M. TITULESCO (Roumania) | 32 " |
| M. MORALES (Dominican Republic) | 29 " |

In accordance with Article 7 of the Rules of Procedure, I declare the above-mentioned delegates duly elected Vice-Presidents of the special session of the Assembly.

The Committees having now elected their Chairmen and the questions on the agenda having been distributed between the Committees, it is necessary, in order to avoid loss of time, that the Committees should commence their work at the earliest possible moment.

After consulting with the Chairmen of the two Committees, I have the honour to inform the Assembly that it has been decided that both Committees should meet to-morrow at 4.30 p.m. at the Secretariat.

The Assembly rose at 6.30 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SPECIAL SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

(MARCH 1926)

SECOND PLENARY MEETING

SATURDAY, MARCH 13th, 1926, at 10.30 a.m.

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President : M. AFFONSO DA COSTA (Portugal).

10. — COMPOSITION OF THE AUSTRIAN DELEGATION : REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE CREDENTIALS OF DELEGATES.

The President :

Translation : M. de Agüero y Bethancourt, Chairman and Rapporteur of the Committee on Credentials, will address the Assembly.

M. de Agüero y Bethancourt (Cuba), Chairman and Rapporteur of the Committee on Credentials :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Federal Government of Austria has informed the Secretariat that M. Leo di Pauli, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Austria accredited to the Swiss Federation, has been appointed third Austrian delegate to the special session of the Assembly of the League of Nations now being held at Geneva.

The Credentials Committee has examined the documents regarding the appointment of His Excellency M. Leo di Pauli. It has found them in order, and trusts that the Assembly will agree to regard M. di Pauli as duly accredited.

The President :

Translation : Does anyone wish to speak on the conclusions of this report ?

The conclusions of the report are adopted.

11. — TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF M. LÉON BOURGEOIS.

The President :

Translation : As you will have seen from the agenda, the first part of this meeting will be devoted to the payment of a tribute to one of the first champions of the ideal of the League of Nations, who was for many years one of the most illustrious members of the League's Assembly — M. Léon Bourgeois, first delegate of France, who has passed away since the Assembly last met in ordinary session.

A communication has already been sent to all the delegations informing them of the decisions taken by the General Committee of the Assembly with a view to giving this expression of our grief a special character of simplicity and dignity.

M. Urrutia, first delegate of Colombia, who originally suggested that this tribute should be paid, will speak first, and afterwards, on behalf of all the delegations present, I will associate myself with his words.

M. Urrutia (Colombia) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Since the last session of the Assembly we have suffered an irreparable loss in the person of our distinguished and regretted colleague, M. Léon Bourgeois. We desire to pay to his memory a

tribute of affection and of the deepest gratitude. He will always hold an honoured place in the history of our League of Nations for his noble endeavours to found it, for the unstinted support and generous assistance which he afforded it, and for all his work, during a long and glorious career, on behalf of justice and international peace.

I do not now propose to review this work. I would merely remind you, in the first place, of his persevering and enlightened action at the two Hague Peace Conferences, the object of which may be summarised as follows: to extend and consolidate the reign of law in international relations by establishing peace on a legal and not on a military basis; to secure the adoption of compulsory arbitration with a view to safeguarding the principle of juridical equality between States; and to inculcate respect for the rights of small and weak nations, rights which are just as sacred as those of the Great Powers. "Here", he said at the First Hague Conference, "there are neither great nor small Powers — all are equal in presence of the work we have to accomplish."

The President of the Second Conference, the Russian delegate, M. Nelidow, said at the closing meeting:

"The part which His Excellency M. Léon Bourgeois, one of the mainstays of the First Conference, has played at the Second Conference is so generally known that there is no need for me to draw particular attention to it. Devoted body and soul to the aims we have been pursuing, he has taken a most active part in every branch of our work, and in mere justice we are bound to express to him the cordial appreciation and most sincere thanks of the Conference."

Thereupon the Conference paid a unanimous tribute to M. Léon Bourgeois.

A few years after this memorable incident, when the nations gathered together at The Hague thought that they had laid the foundations of the juridical organisation of peace, there occurred that appalling catastrophe which transformed the face of Europe and overwhelmed mankind with suffering and horror. Men who, like Bourgeois, thought that in 1899 and 1906 they had succeeded in consolidating the reign of law and justice or had at any rate succeeded in humanising and regulating war, appeared to be nothing more than noble idealists; yet in reality their work had not been unfruitful. In the sinister light of all this slaughter their predictions acquired fresh force and seemed to be almost prophecies. As the disaster spread and assumed ever greater proportions, the idea of establishing a new international organisation based on the duty of solidarity between nations with a view to the maintenance of peace and their mutual defence gained more and more adherents and obtained support as powerful as that of President Wilson.

Even in the darkest and most uncertain days of the war M. Léon Bourgeois continued to be the ardent advocate of this idea, which is the true origin of the League of Nations.

In 1917, when the French Government decided to create a special commission to examine the means by which such an organisation could be formed, M. Léon Bourgeois was appointed President. When the war was over, we know the energy he put forth, as representative of France, to endow the League of Nations with that moral and material force which he felt was necessary if its activities were to develop satisfactorily. Distinguished philosopher as he was, Bourgeois attributed preponderating influence to moral forces as the forces which regulate international relations. That

was the reason for the idea which he put forward at the Hague Conference and which has since become an axiom: material disarmament must be preceded by moral disarmament. But in Bourgeois the idealist was combined with the man of sound common sense; he was therefore well aware that material forces would have to co-operate with moral forces to protect law and justice.

When once the League of Nations had been formed, the precursor and apostle became a man of action in the new organisation. He was French representative at the first sessions of the Council and Assembly, and the new situation created in Europe had not disturbed his calm and perfect poise or weakened the strength of his earlier ideals. With the same ardent faith he set himself, before the nations assembled at Geneva, to defend the great principles of international justice, to demand that these principles should be transformed into positive realities, and to proclaim the empire of law — the only empire which, to use his memorable words, can never decay.

M. Léon Bourgeois' name is connected with the most important acts of the League during the first years of its existence, and in particular with the creation of the Permanent Court of International Justice, which meant, for him, the fulfilment of the highest of his generous ideals. We who worked in the First Committee of the First Assembly under the chairmanship of M. Léon Bourgeois in drawing up the Statutes of the Court can bear witness to his perseverance, his faith in the rule of right, his marvellous tact in reconciling divergent, and at times diametrically opposed, interests and opinions, his tolerance, his respect for all opinions — which was the outcome of his experience and wisdom — his inexhaustible kindness. At times the discussions in the Committee became heated, and oratorical duels became frequent, particularly as regards the extent of the Court's jurisdiction. Some wished to render this jurisdiction compulsory, at any rate as far as points of law were concerned, while others thought it should be optional. M. Léon Bourgeois' sound observations, his conciliatory tone, and, above all, his great personal authority invariably smoothed the way to the solution of what seemed to be the most difficult problems. To us, who desired that the Great Powers should accept compulsory jurisdiction, he repeated the words he had spoken at the Second Hague Conference when the creation of the Court of Arbitration was under discussion:

"It would be too much to expect the growing child to possess all the faculties of manhood and of ripe experience."

M. Léon Bourgeois was always in favour of the principle of compulsory arbitration, and he could not be otherwise than personally favourable to the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court, at any rate as far as points of law were concerned. Yet he fully realised the political opposition which this proposal still encountered. He was confident that, when the Court had been set up, its jurisdiction would continually be extended by the very force of circumstances, owing to the new order of ideas prevailing among the nations, and that the acceptance of compulsory arbitration would become more and more widespread. The great events which have occurred in the last few years in the international sphere, both within and without the League, have shown how well founded this conviction was. His eyes, before they closed for ever on this world to open again and view the realms of eternity, saw the most cherished dreams of his life become a living and glorious reality.

During the memorable discussions which took place at the First Assembly regarding problems connected with world peace, the attitude of M. Léon Bourgeois, the representative of one of the greatest Powers in the world, was for all of us the best evidence that international affairs had undergone a profound change, that the times when an international assembly like that of the First Hague Conference could be called together without the States of Latin America being invited were gone for ever, and, above all, that when, later, at the Second Conference, the delegates of these States gave their unanimous support to M. Bourgeois, they performed an act of wisdom, foresight and justice.

When M. Léon Bourgeois mounted the platform to address the Assembly, he always received an ovation. An orator of the classic school, his words had not the same verve as those of M. Viviani, but they were more persuasive. His every word and action, his calm and measured movements and expression, showed that he was a thinker and a philosopher. He seemed to conjure up before us the image of certain great forerunners of the French Revolution. His forehead was broad and serene like Plato's, and his glance displayed the nobility and grandeur of his soul. The lucidity of his arguments, his clear and penetrating thought, his firm will, lofty ideas and noble altruism invested him with an irresistible authority and gave a charm of countenance which was both austere and smiling. He made one of his most brilliant speeches at the meeting of the First Assembly held on December 13th, 1920, when the Statutes of the Court of International Justice were being adopted. Overcome with deep emotion, he greeted the creation of the Court as follows:

"A star has risen above the mountains. As yet it shines feebly, but we feel that its brilliance is increasing day by day. Believe me, the nations will be able to find their way towards this star. They will not hesitate; they will travel towards this shining point, advancing with a will which is based more and more on knowledge and on thought . . .

"*Ubi lux, ubi jus, ibi pax*".

A tireless fighter, neither illness nor age nor the approach of death were able to deter him or extinguish his faith. Who can forget his last appearance in the 1925 Assembly, when already his bodily powers failed to respond to his will and when his very regard was lit up with the light of approaching immortality! As a great French writer has said, "Having burned with such a flame, he will remain in history a centre of warmth and light".

For us who have had the honour to collaborate with him he will continue to be an example and a symbol of the realisation of great hopes in international affairs and of the consolidation of the reign of justice among nations, of sincere and enduring reconciliation between peoples under the kindly ægis of the League. He will also continue to be one of the highest incarnations of the spirit of the League. The torch which the philosopher, the herald, the apostle, the builder, bore in his hands illuminates the meetings of Council and Assembly and there casts its light on the whole civilised world.

The President:

Translation: Ladies and gentlemen — After the delegate of Colombia's very full and very moving speech, I will merely express, on behalf of the Assembly and on my own behalf, the deep sorrow we all feel at the loss of our distinguished colleague, M. Léon Bourgeois, one of the founders of the League of Nations, its ardent advocate and its fearless defender.

May I say, however, that M. Léon Bourgeois was all his life a man of principle, an enlightened friend of peace, a champion of the belief that moral forces are the true springs of human action?

Before he reached the stage of working for arbitration and later for the League — as M. Urrutia has told us in such moving words — M. Léon Bourgeois had already propounded a doctrine of the same intrinsic nature — the doctrine of solidarity between men and between nations. From 1894 onwards, he devoted books, lectures, reports and speeches to this cause. In his view, solidarity implied the subordination of the spiritual, historical and economic forces of the world to the dictates of moral ideals. It implied that human and social action could only acquire an obligatory character if based on unity of sentiment, the criterion of well-being and reason, the criterion of truth.

Having originated this doctrine, M. Léon Bourgeois became its enthusiastic apostle. Statesman and politician as well as philosopher, he applied the same principles to politics, and published remarkable works on the education of democracy, the rights of man, and social hygiene.

The monumental work which M. Bourgeois accomplished had all the continuity of a straight line. He worked tirelessly to draw men and nations closer together, to smooth away disagreements, to attack evil, and to preach moral force as the guiding line of conduct, and peace as its outcome. He stands as a matchless example of goodness applied in action. As a great pacifist he was fitly rewarded in 1920 with the Nobel Prize, and, indeed, there is no tribute which could be refused to his memory.

I think I am interpreting the views of every delegation in asking you, in memory of Léon Bourgeois, to rise and stand for a few moments in silence and meditation.

(The members of the Assembly rose and stood for a few moments in silence in memory and honour of M. Léon Bourgeois.)

M. Briand (France):

Translation: I desire, on behalf of the French delegation, to offer my sincere thanks to the Assembly for this simple yet touching expression of its reverent sympathy. I must express my gratitude to the President of the Assembly and to the first delegate of Colombia for their eloquent words in memory of my great fellow-countryman, M. Léon Bourgeois, who, as you all know, was an ardent worker in the cause of peace. To this cause he devoted his best energies and his life itself, and he represented my country in this Assembly worthily, honourably and with conspicuous ability.

12. — SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR 1926: RESOLUTION BY THE SECOND COMMITTEE.

The President:

Translation: The next item on the agenda is the consideration of the resolution proposed by the Second Committee concerning the Supplementary Budget Estimates for 1926.

(At the request of the President, M. Loucheur, Chairman, and Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, Rapporteur, of the Second Committee, took their places on the platform.)

The President:

Translation: The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

Viscount Cecil of Chelwood (British Empire),
Rapporteur :

This is a matter which, I think, need detain the Assembly for only a few minutes, although it is of considerable importance.

When it became necessary to hold this special session of the Assembly, it was obvious that certain expenses would be incurred which could not have been foreseen at the time when the budget was presented at the last regular Assembly, namely, the actual expenses of the Assembly itself, and certain expenses which might be the outcome of the proceedings of the Assembly. The occasion was an altogether exceptional and special one, and the Secretary-General thought that it would best be met, and, indeed, that it could only be met, by the presentation to this Assembly of a supplementary budget. He accordingly prepared such a supplementary budget, and, following the ordinary procedure in such matters, submitted it to the Supervisory Commission.

The Assembly is well aware of the very great debt which we owe to that Commission. It knows with what scrupulous care, and with what complete impartiality, the members of that Commission have for so long discharged their duties. The Supervisory Commission, being the guardian of the financial purity and regularity of the League, pointed out, when the supplementary budget was presented to it, that, for certain reasons which I do not think that it is necessary to go into in detail, there were great difficulties in even considering a supplementary budget, that it was not within the ordinary and regular financial practice of the League. In these circumstances, the Commission reported that it was unable, without the authority of the Assembly, to consider the budget presented to it. The matter was brought before the Second Committee, which you appointed the other day, and we had to consider the report of the Supervisory Commission.

We felt that it was necessary that the supplementary budget should be considered, that there were altogether exceptional reasons for proceeding in that manner, and we accordingly decided to recommend to this Assembly that it should authorise the Supervisory Commission to consider the supplementary budget. I will read the terms of the resolution in a moment.

I have only one other thing to say. As the Second Committee was very anxious that no time should be lost, it asked the Supervisory Commission whether it could not unofficially begin the consideration of the supplementary budget in order that, as soon as the authorisation of the Assembly had been received, it could submit a report, which could be considered by the Second Committee and reported on to the Assembly at its next meeting. I believe that the Supervisory Commission has very nearly concluded its work on this matter and that its report will be presented to the Second Committee this afternoon. If we have your authorisation we shall consider that report and present our conclusions upon it to the Assembly at its next meeting.

The resolution which I have to move, which is necessarily a little different from that actually passed by the Second Committee, reads as follows :

The Assembly thanks the Supervisory Commission for its report (document A.8.1926.X, Special), decides to authorise the Commission to consider the supplementary draft budget for 1926 and requests it to present a report on that budget with the least possible delay . . .

Then follows a sentence which I think will recommend itself without any comment to the Assembly :

The Assembly is of opinion that no expenditure should be proposed in the supplementary budget which can properly and reasonably be postponed till the regular budget for 1927 is examined.

The only other observation I desire to make is that I present this resolution to the Assembly as an altogether exceptional matter. I believe that the concluding sentence will guard against any possible abuse of this case as a precedent in future. Indeed, I hope that it will never be regarded as a precedent, as it merely arises from the exceptional nature of the proceedings in which we are now taking part.

I beg to move the adoption of the above resolution.

The President :

Translation : At the conclusion of his statement the Rapporteur proposed that the Assembly should adopt the Second Committee's resolution, which reads as follows :

The Assembly thanks the Supervisory Commission for its report (document A.8.1926.X, Special), decides to authorise that Commission to consider the supplementary draft budget for 1926, and requests it to present a report on that budget with the least possible delay. The Assembly is of opinion that no expenditure should be proposed in the supplementary budget which can properly and reasonably be postponed till the regular budget for 1927 is examined.

If there are no observations, I shall regard the Committee's proposal as approved by the Assembly and the resolution as adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

13. — ERECTION OF AN ASSEMBLY HALL AND OF ANNEXES FOR THE USE OF THE SECRETARIAT : REPORT AND RESOLUTION OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the consideration of the report of the Second Committee on the erection of an Assembly Hall and of annexes for the use of the Secretariat (Annex 2. Document A.11.1926.X, Special).

I will ask M. Réveillaud, Rapporteur of the Second Committee, to come to the platform.

(M. Réveillaud, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Réveillaud (France), Rapporteur :

Translation : Gentlemen — The members of the Second Committee are unanimously of opinion that the resolution which I have the honour to put before the Assembly should finally settle the question of the new buildings of the League. It may perhaps seem a little paradoxical to apply the term "final" to the third draft resolution tabled on this question in less than two years. It is necessary, in fact, to give some explanation of the reasons for our changes of policy in this matter and to make it quite clear that the successive resolutions which the Assembly has adopted, though contradictory, are far from being a matter of reproach to the League; they should rather be placed to its credit, as showing that all who are concerned with its interests, whether permanently or temporarily, are anxious to pay due regard to

every consideration and to refrain from entering into any commitments until all the questions which arise have been carefully elucidated.

In September 1924, the Assembly, having been generously offered by the Genevese authorities the site adjoining the present offices of the Secretariat and known to the public of Geneva as the "Armleder property", decided to proceed as soon as possible with the erection of a new Assembly Hall.

The immediate sequel, however, was that the International Jury of Architects which was formed to lay down the conditions of competition decided almost at once that the solution to which I have referred would prove unsatisfactory if carried into effect because the comparatively small area of the site in question (about 12,000 square metres) precluded any possibility of subsequently adding to the offices of the Secretariat should it become necessary to do so.

This objection was a very sound one, and when the last Assembly met in September 1925 its Committee at once set to work to find another and a larger site, while, at the same time, the original credit of about 4,000,000 Swiss francs was raised to 11,700,000 Swiss francs.

I should add, incidentally, that this great increase had become possible owing to the fact that in the meantime the Secretariat had received large sums in payment of contributions in arrears.

At that time there were already two solutions for the Sub-Committee of the Fourth Committee to consider. Despite the deliberately guarded terms of the report which I had the honour to submit last year, the respective merits of these solutions were discussed at length. Each had its strong supporters and, as often happens, it was found necessary to adopt a compromise. This was arranged on the following lines: If the Hôtel National, which was purchased in 1920 and which formed the scene of the League's earliest activities — a magnificent building *quâ* hotel, but not wholly suited to the requirements of a vast public administration — if the Hôtel National could be sold for 4,500,000 Swiss francs — which was considered a fair price by the experts — the lakeside solution could then be considered.

If, however, by December 15th, 1925, no offer had been received, there was no choice but to remain in the Hôtel National and build on the large adjoining property known as the Château Banquet.

On the expiry of the time fixed for receiving offers no purchaser had appeared, so that, under the terms of the Assembly resolution of 1925, the only possible solution was what is now known as the Château Banquet solution, the alternative to the lakeside solution.

The die was cast — or so it seemed — when events took a fresh turn. About the middle of January last the International Jury of Architects — which in time to come will doubtless be regarded as our good genius in this affair — while drawing up the conditions for the competition for the erection of the buildings on the ground chosen by the Assembly, expressed a formal opinion — an opinion all the more weighty by reason of the unanimity of the members, who were drawn from the highest expert opinion in nine countries — that the Château Banquet solution chosen last year could not be compared with what is known as the lakeside solution, which we now have the honour to submit to you for approval.

No one, I am sure, will blame the Secretary-General or the Special Committee, which had been appointed in accordance with the wishes of the Assembly and which Sir Eric-Drummond consulted

at this difficult juncture, for having provisionally suspended the execution of the Assembly resolution until the new factors which had arisen could be laid before you. I think I am justified in claiming that the present scheme submitted by your Second Committee is, in its clear-cut lines, quite different in scope from the laboured compromise of last year, which then seemed the only possible solution.

The League of Nations will thus take steps to establish itself as rapidly as possible, with its Assembly Hall and all the Secretariat buildings, on the actual shore of the lake, on the far side of Mon Repos Park, through which, as has been carefully made clear in the course of private conversations, it can be reached by pedestrians. An arrangement has been made with the local authorities that the existing road is to be altered without cost to the League. The League will thus have a site of 66,000 square metres, consisting of the Moynier, Perle du Lac and Bartholoni properties, and will also hold the option of acquiring additional land should this ultimately prove necessary.

The extensive property which lies between the Secretariat and the International Labour Office buildings belongs to a generous lady whose attitude towards the League is well known to most members of this Assembly, and that property could readily be acquired by the League.

The beauty of the new site is such that there is no need to justify the choice by adding further arguments to those submitted by the architects.

As regards the budgetary aspect of the question, however, you will no doubt wonder how, after last year's failure, unanimity was reached.

If you have followed my explanation, you will have realised that the principal difficulty of the problem was anxiety lest the League, after beginning building operations at a distance from its present site, might have to take all the risks of a chance sale of its present property. It might for that reason have had to make a sacrifice which would have left the very worst impression on all the States Members of the League. The more the various aspects of the question came to be examined the more apparent it was to some of us that the problem could only be solved if, by means of negotiation, it proved possible to eliminate all financial risks.

It was at this point that M. Motta, the eminent first delegate of Switzerland, appeared as our good genius, and two days ago, after conferring with the Cantonal authorities and with his colleagues on the Federal Council, gave us the desired guarantee. You will find the terms of this guarantee in the following passage of the report before you:

"The honourable Federal Councillor has been good enough, on behalf of the Swiss Government and subject to ratification by the Chambers, to guarantee that the Federal Government will cover the League of Nations on the sale of the Hôtel National — which will take place as soon as the Secretariat is housed in the new buildings — for the difference, whatever its amount, between the lower sum received and the 4,000,000 Swiss francs appearing in the present estimate. There is therefore no need to make allowance for a lower sum on this account. On the other hand, if the selling price exceeds 4,000,000, the League of Nations will naturally keep the surplus."

M. Motta added to this guarantee, which in our opinion is essential, a further undertaking, the importance of which you cannot fail to realise.

namely, that the League of Nations would have the right of expropriation for the purchase of additional land, should it so desire.

For this twofold proof of friendship, I would ask M. Motta once more to accept the thanks which we desire to express to him personally, to all the Swiss authorities, and, indeed, to all his fellow-countrymen.

Thanks to these guarantees and to the reductions effected by the Second Committee in various items — I do not propose to give particulars, but would refer you to the report — it was found possible to arrive at the sum of 12,968,000 Swiss francs for the lakeside solution and, as it had become necessary in the meantime to make a slight increase in the cost of the Château Banquet solution in order to provide for the purchase of additional land, so as to place this solution on a par with the lakeside solution, the difference between the cost of the two solutions is, in round figures, only 450,000 Swiss francs, which is quite a small sum when compared with the incontestable advantages offered by the lakeside solution.

This was how, as I mentioned at the outset, unanimity was obtained in the plenary Committee, just as it had been obtained in Sub-Committee and as, I am convinced, it will in a few moments be obtained in this Assembly. It will be obtained all the more easily because, as far as the budget is concerned, there will be no need to vote a fresh credit. Indeed, as is explained in the last part of the report, it was decided by the last Assembly, in conformity with the proposals of the Supervisory Commission, that the sums to be used for meeting the cost of the new buildings of the League should be provided by a special account made up mainly of the surpluses remaining from previous years and that a fixed annual payment of 1,375,000 francs should be included in the budget each year until the total sums advanced by the treasury had been amortised. This plan will still be adhered to without change, since the slight increase in the estimate can quite well be met out of the funds of the League.

Before leaving this platform, I desire to mention that all the decisions of previous Assemblies concerning the necessity for an international competition of architects will stand.

The following is the text of the resolution which I have the honour to propose to the Assembly :

The Assembly,

Deciding, in view of the unanimous opinion expressed by the Jury of Architects appointed by the Council, to modify the resolution which it adopted on September 23rd, 1925, with regard to the construction of an Assembly Hall and of adjoining buildings for the Secretariat of the League of Nations :

1. Approves the report of its Second Committee concerning the construction of an Assembly Hall and of adjoining buildings for the Secretariat :

2. Adopts for this purpose the working estimate, amounting, after deduction of the sum of 1,000,000 francs (being the guaranteed sale price of the Hôtel National), to 12,968,000 francs, of which 8,000,000 will be for the construction of an Assembly Hall, 6,138,000 francs for the construction of a new Secretariat, 300,000 francs for the construction of a temporary annex, and 2,530,000 francs for the purchase of ground.

The President :

Translation : M. Motta, first delegate of Switzerland, will address the Assembly.

M. Motta (Switzerland) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I was present yesterday at the meeting of the Second Committee and so had an opportunity of expressing the gratitude of the Federal authorities and the authorities of the Canton of Geneva.

When I came to the Assembly this morning, I felt sure there would be no need for me to speak ; but the Rapporteur of the Committee has expressed such generous and friendly sentiments towards the Confederation, the Canton of Geneva and my fellow-countrymen that I cannot do less than reciprocate his courtesy by expressing my gratitude anew.

I therefore beg to offer my thanks to the Chairman and Rapporteur of the Second Committee, and I should like to make special mention of M. Réveillaud, for it is he who, in bringing this important question to a successful conclusion, has been the good genius of the League in its relations with the Swiss Confederation and the Canton of Geneva.

I also desire to thank all the members of the Committee, the Secretary-General and his staff, the Chairman of the Supervisory Commission, M. Osusky, and all whom I cannot mention here by name but who have helped to solve this difficult yet most important question.

I regard the decision which you are about to take as evidence of your faith in the future of the League ; I regard it, too, as evidence of your confidence in Switzerland and in the Canton of Geneva.

I cannot conclude more fitly than by repeating the words of the Roman magistrate : "*Hic manebimus optime*".

The President :

Translation : M. Zumeta, first delegate of Venezuela, will address the Assembly.

M. Zumeta (Venezuela) :

Translation : I would ask the Rapporteur to be good enough to give us the Supervisory Commission's report on this fresh expenditure.

M. Réveillaud (France), Rapporteur :

Translation : The Supervisory Commission has not drawn up any special report on the financial consequences of the transaction, as the Chairman of the Supervisory Commission, M. Osusky, was good enough to attend all the meetings of the Sub-Committee of the Second Committee although not a member of it. I have no hesitation in saying, however, that he is in full agreement with all the details of the conclusions I have put before you.

In reply to a difficulty mentioned to me by M. Zumeta in the course of a private conversation, I may say that, as regards the working estimate adopted last year, the increase will certainly not amount to more than 1,000,000 francs. As I explained to you — for I have no desire to be other than frank in this matter — it was found necessary this year, when comparing the two solutions, to raise the estimate for the Château Banquet solution (last year's solution) by more than 500,000 francs, in order to be able to add a further group of properties to the Château Banquet property adjoining the Secretariat, so as to place this solution, as I said, on a par with the other and at the same time enable a reserve to be formed sufficient to meet any further extensions of the Secretariat.

In actual fact, the difference between the two solutions is only 450,000 francs. I think I can guarantee that, if the Assembly decided to ask the

opinion of the Supervisory Commission before taking a decision, that body would pronounce itself emphatically in favour of our proposal.

The President :

Translation : If no one else desires to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution proposed by the Second Committee, which reads as follows :

The Assembly,

Deciding, in view of the unanimous opinion expressed by the Jury of Architects appointed by the Council, to modify the resolution which it adopted on September 23rd, 1925, with regard to the construction of an Assembly Hall and of adjoining buildings for the Secretariat of the League of Nations :

1. Approves the report of its Second Committee concerning the construction of an Assembly Hall and of adjoining buildings for the Secretariat ;

2. Adopts for this purpose the working estimate, amounting, after deduction of the sum of 4,000,000 francs (being the guaranteed sale price of the Hôtel National), to 12,968,000 francs, of which 8,000,000 will be for the construction of an Assembly Hall, 6,138,000 francs for the construction of a new Secretariat, 300,000 francs for the construction of a temporary annex, and 2,530,000 francs for the purchase of ground.

The resolution was adopted.

The Assembly rose at 12.10 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SPECIAL SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

(MARCH 1926)

THIRD PLENARY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17th, 1926, at 10 a.m.

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President : M. Affonso DA COSTA (Portugal).

14. — REQUEST OF THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT FOR ADMISSION TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the examination of the conclusions of the report submitted by the First Committee on the German Government's request for admission to the League of Nations.

I call upon the Right Honourable Sir Austen Chamberlain, Chairman and Rapporteur of the First Committee, to take his place on the platform.

Sir Austen Chamberlain (British Empire) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The proposition which I have the honour to make to you depends upon a declaration which has been made to me by the honourable representative of Brazil. I would beg, therefore, Mr. President, that I may be allowed to defer my remarks until the representative of Brazil has communicated his declaration to the Assembly.

M. de Mello-Franco (Brazil) :

Translation : I desire to address the Assembly.

The President :

Translation : M. de Mello-Franco will address the Assembly.

M. de Mello-Franco (Brazil) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Replying to the memorandum sent by the German Government to the Governments of the States represented on the Council, the Brazilian Government stated that it earnestly desired and, indeed, considered it essential that all States which were still not Members should join the League, reaffirmed our devotion to the spirit and letter of the Covenant, of which Brazil was one of the signatories, and proceeded as follows : "The Brazilian Government is of opinion, however, that the concrete questions arising out of the desires expressed by Germany are such as cannot be dealt with by individual Governments as between themselves ; they should rather be stated and discussed as a whole by the Members of the League and within the League in order that the various aspects of these questions and the views of the other Members should be fully made known. The German Government may be sure, however, that we shall examine impartially and in a conciliatory spirit the desires it expresses in its memorandum dated September 29th, 1924, and that we are resolved to find satisfactory solutions for all questions and all just claims, without prejudice to the engagements undertaken by Brazil and to the true doctrine of international law, so far as the latter is applicable in each individual case".

It is upon the principles enunciated in the above reply that the Brazilian representative on the Council has acted during the arduous and painful discussions at the secret meetings of the past few days.

We took no part in the difficult work of negotiating a solution acceptable to the various political

interests at stake. We merely avoided compromising the principles laid down in our reply of December 1st, 1924, which I have just quoted.

We still maintain that the reform of the present constitution of the Council is not a matter which concerns certain European States only; we think that this question is of such vital importance to the League that it cannot be solved by means of special agreements between individual Members, but that every State without exception must be heard in order that, before a solution is adopted, the views of all may be known.

These principles, which we are proud to have championed, are based on the foundations of the Covenant itself and on the juridical equality of sovereign States.

The Brazilian nation followed the work of the Locarno Conference with deep interest and rejoiced when it learnt of the conclusion of the great work of the Treaty of Guarantee and the Arbitration Conventions, which will help so greatly towards the establishment in Europe of peace based on justice.

How, indeed, could it be otherwise, in view of public opinion in an idealistic and peace-loving country like Brazil, which has placed arbitration among the cardinal principles of its political constitution?

Nevertheless, despite the great value of these agreements, which so greatly redound to the honour of the distinguished statesmen who concluded them, we must not forget that it is the admirable work done at Locarno which must be brought within the framework of the League of Nations and not the League which should be brought within the political framework of Locarno.

It would be a most unfortunate mistake to assume that our policy during recent events was actuated by any merely selfish consideration or by misguided national pride.

That, I repeat, is utterly untrue. I desire to reaffirm in this Assembly what I have always maintained in the Council: that, in virtue of our right as an American nation, we claim that America should be represented more equitably and more fully on the Council. As an integral part of America, Brazil has an equal right with the other American countries to formulate this claim; for it is the logical consequence of a community of interests, as of an abstract condominium, that a joint owner may defend joint property as if it were his own — *res sua propria agitur*.

We sincerely regret that the great German nation has not been at once admitted to the League. We regret it not only because of the value of her contribution to the common task but also because her entry would represent an immense advance towards the universalisation of the League, to which, I would add, Brazil has on all occasions afforded her modest yet unflinching support.

The distinguished representatives of the States Members of the Council cannot in justice refuse to acknowledge that our conduct has been loyal and based upon considerations of the highest order.

I have the honour to inform the Assembly that my Government's instructions are irrevocable and final.

The President :

Translation : I will again ask the Chairman and Rapporteur of the First Committee to come to the platform.

(*Sir Austen Chamberlain, Chairman and Rapporteur of the First Committee, took his place on the platform.*)

The President :

Translation : Sir Austen Chamberlain will address the Assembly.

Sir Austen Chamberlain (British Empire), Chairman and Rapporteur of the First Committee :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The report of the First Committee has been in your hands for some time (Annex 3, Document A. 9. 1926 VII, Extraordinary). It answers in the affirmative the questions which it has been customary to put when examining a request from any nation for admission to the League, and it recommends the acceptance of the German request and an approval of her entry into the League. But, ladies and gentlemen, it is known to us all that, from the first, the German Government has made its demand subject to one natural and reasonable condition: that, if when she entered the League, she should receive a place on the Council consonant with her great position and influence. It was necessary, therefore, that, before I could propose to you to give a vote which, by itself, would make Germany a Member of the League, we should be assured that this further and most reasonable request would receive satisfaction.

The declaration which has just been made by the honourable representative of Brazil shows that the members of the Council are not in a position to give that assurance and, under those circumstances, it is impossible for me, having regard to the duty of loyalty that I owe to Germany herself, to propose that, at this moment, you should make her a Member of the League.

Ladies and gentlemen, when we all came to Geneva, we found that there had risen suddenly, and owing to a regrettable misunderstanding — I might even say owing to a regrettable failure on either side to mention a point which was of critical importance — many difficulties in the way of the immediate acceptance of Germany.

At one moment those difficulties existed in the ranks of the Powers which signed the Protocol of Locarno. I am profoundly happy to be able to say that all the difficulties which existed within the ranks of the seven Locarno Powers have been removed and that, if they had been the only obstacle, we might at this moment vote the entry of Germany into the League, to-day she might receive her permanent seat upon the Council, and this new acquisition of force and strength to the League, this new pledge for the stability of peace, would have been realised, as we all earnestly trusted that it might be.

Moreover, I cannot merely record that those difficulties have been removed. I must add that they were removed by the generosity of two members of the Council and the States which they represented. One of them was numbered among the Locarno Powers, and one of them had no occasion to participate in the Locarno meetings. I can only say that it was with profound emotion that I listened to the offer which they made and which solved our difficulties — an offer which shows, if any proof were needed, how deeply both are attached to the cause of world peace, how profound is the devotion of both to the interests of this great League and of all for which it stands, and how keen must have been their sense of the disaster which menaced us all, if the entry of Germany were not now accomplished.

I desire on behalf of the British delegation — and I know I speak the mind of all my colleagues from the Dominions and from India — here from

this tribune to express our deep appreciation of the generous, unselfish and, indeed, noble conduct of Sweden and of Czechoslovakia.

It is indeed a tragedy that when these difficulties had been removed, when there was no longer any danger that Europe might again be divided into the two camps of a few years ago, when, by surmounting these difficulties, we had not only not injured or impeded the work of reconciliation that was in progress but had given new proof how deeply its roots had struck and had shown that even under such a strain that work of reconciliation had continued and would continue, another obstacle has arisen in our path and the unanimity of the Council is not secured.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am obliged to speak not only — perhaps least of all, in the circumstances — as Rapporteur of the First Committee but also in the name of Great Britain. Permit me, therefore, to say that we, the seven Powers who signed the Treaty of Locarno and its accompanying Pacts, are determined that the good work done there shall not be interrupted, that those Pacts shall go forward to their fulfilment and their ratification, and that the policy of peace, of reconciliation and of co-operation which was there begun shall not be interrupted.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I have discharged my task. It is a bitter disappointment to me that that which I have so earnestly striven to accomplish, that which seemed well within our grasp and capable of realisation here and now, must be postponed; but I am sure that the Assembly, whilst sharing my regret, will share my hope and confidence that an adjournment of this request, if adjournment there must be, shall be an adjournment only in order to make certain that at the next meeting of the Assembly the demand is accepted and that Germany shall take her rightful place, so that the League gains all that new importance and new influence in the world which the co-operation of that great country with us who are already Members of the League will bring to us and to her.

The President :

Translation : M. Briand, first delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. Aristide Briand (France) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I come before you on behalf of the French delegation to associate myself wholeheartedly with the lofty and eloquent words of my colleague and friend Sir Austen Chamberlain, first delegate of Great Britain.

Like him, I have to express both regret and hope. When this Assembly met, certain serious difficulties had arisen among the members of the Council, and I may say that between the representatives of France and the representatives of Germany who had come here to negotiate with them there were certain serious misunderstandings, aggravated by polemical discussions, which might have appeared difficult to remove. Both the German and the French representatives, however, attacked these problems resolutely in a spirit of conciliation and compromise, and I can say that, in the light of the explanations given by both parties, these misunderstandings were gradually dispelled, until at length an agreement was reached between us which it was thought would be confirmed by the Assembly and Council: the admission of Germany into the League and the satisfaction of her legitimate desire.

This agreement was not reached without certain sacrifices, to which Sir Austen Chamberlain has just paid a tribute. I desire to endorse what he has said. The Members of the League are imbued with the League spirit — a spirit of conciliation and peace. When means had to be found to attain the end for which this special Assembly was summoned, a spirit of generosity and self-sacrifice, to which fitting reference has already been made, was at once displayed to smooth away difficulties. My colleagues M. Undén and M. Benes, representatives of two countries which have already rendered signal service to the League, at once came forward, and, thanks to their unselfishness, final agreement appeared to have been reached. All that was needed was the confirmation of that agreement.

Owing, however, to difficulties, upon which it is not for us to pass judgment — difficulties based on considerations and principles which the League traditionally respects — we now find the path to agreement blocked. I cannot believe that because of this fact, regrettable though it may be, we need give up all hope. It has not produced the disastrous results which might have been anticipated. It has been contemplated by the principal parties concerned with exemplary equanimity — and in saying this I desire to express my appreciation of their attitude. It showed us that we might, after all, have to postpone the fulfilment of our hopes, but not that they were finally destroyed.

I am convinced — profoundly convinced — that we shall emerge from this difficult situation without having impaired the work of peace which we have jointly accomplished and without harm to this great Assembly — to this League of Nations, which has already rendered such great service to the world.

I already hear the criticisms of the League eagerly uttered by those pessimists and sceptics who cannot bear to see it growing year by year in strength, nobility and splendour; I hear them proclaiming disaster and final ruin.

Gentlemen, it has often been said that I am an incurable optimist. I confess that I am. Even amid the difficulties with which we are confronted, even in the grave circumstances in which we find ourselves — circumstances which have brought about a postponement veritably distressing for us all — I say that the League of Nations remains untouched.

It has already rendered mankind too many services, its achievements are too great and too glorious, to be marred by mere passing events which are rather in the nature of growing pains and can leave no lasting injury.

When we glance at the work that is behind us, when we consider the serious conflicts which were brought before the League and which it settled, thereby perhaps preventing still graver and more deadly conflicts, we may rightly point to such a record and say that the League can meet transient difficulties, however serious, in the certainty of solving them.

It is in this spirit that I regard the difficulties which face us at the present moment.

As the representative of France, I may say frankly that I feel more deeply than anyone else the turn that events have taken. I am more grieved than anyone that Germany cannot at this Assembly become one of us and work on the Council with us.

France and Germany, in common with five other great nations, have signed a loyal and sincere pact of peace. We know that it cannot become

wholly effective, that it cannot develop to the full, except under the ægis of the League of Nations. To the League, therefore, we have entrusted it. In the League, through the League, it will come to fruition, for the League provides the atmosphere favourable to the settlement of all the acrimonious disputes which may arise between two nations which appear in the blood-stained pages of their history so frequently arrayed against each other on the battlefield.

Only in the peculiarly serene atmosphere of the League, of which I was so profoundly conscious when, as President of the Council, I was called upon in difficult circumstances to settle a dispute — only in this atmosphere of peace and strength, which leaves its mark on us all, can an agreement such as ours come into being and attain its ends.

It is therefore a profound disappointment to me, who put my whole heart into this work, to find that it cannot yet receive the final consecration which we had planned.

The League of Nations was born of an idea, lofty indeed, yet, it must be owned, somewhat limited. Through the course of events it came about that, though aided and encouraged by the peoples of the world — for it has struck its main roots among the peoples and has grown strong through them — the League was received by those who are termed the elect with a scepticism which would certainly never have warmed it into life.

The higher instinct of the peoples, their horror of war, their desire to find an organisation that would ensure peace — this it was that gave birth to the League and brought it to the prominent position it occupies in the world to-day.

The League has grown. From all quarters of the world peoples have turned to it; social problems, the settlement of disputes, have been referred to it; it has been appointed as arbitrator, it has been nominated as the proper body to take humanitarian endeavours under its protection; an ever-growing number of serious and complex problems have been referred to it.

And now its duties have outgrown its constitution. It is beginning to encounter difficulties which it cannot solve, and for the sake of its future the causes of this powerlessness must be removed.

For this purpose we must attack the problem of reform. It will be a difficult and complex task, for we must go down to the fundamental principles upon which the League was originally based. We must act warily; we must take care to destroy nothing, but we must achieve something. We must take to heart the lesson taught us by present experience.

It is inconceivable that we should be unable to solve a problem such as the one now before us or that a great organisation like the League should again suffer such a humiliating paralysis.

We must therefore turn our thoughts to the future and, far from being discouraged by this experience, we must draw from it strength to reform and rebuild, and we must reaffirm still more strongly our faith in the future of the League.

Turning to Germany, I feel bound to say that, in spite of all, her representatives have met the difficulties which have arisen with a certain serenity of spirit and true generosity, for which I, a Frenchman, desire to pay tribute.

Far from being disheartened, far from feeling any bitterness or ill-will, they have from the outset seen the difficulty in its true light. They said: It is inconceivable that an obstacle of this kind, which after all merely postpones the ultimate

settlement of these problems, should endanger the spirit of peace in which we jointly signed the Pact of Locarno.

The year once joined with us in proclaiming before the world that this work of peace remains untouched, that it is still intact, that it will live on and develop; and we have unhesitatingly given our signature to that noble declaration of which — I acknowledge it and congratulate them upon it — they were the originators.

But it is essential that in the near future they should join us and take the place rightfully due to a great nation like Germany. Germany will understand that equality is the essence of the League spirit; that antagonisms between nation and nation cannot be countenanced, that the individual is merged in the collectivity, for equality is the motto inscribed upon the charter of our brotherhood.

Germany will understand this and to-morrow the difficulties of to-day will be overcome if we set our hearts and minds to accomplish the work of reconstruction of which I have spoken.

Yet this Assembly must not disperse without a message to Germany. It is essential that she should realise our profound disappointment at our failure to accomplish all that we had hoped.

It is essential that the Assembly should close with a moral admission, as it were, in anticipation of the actual realisation of our hopes. Accordingly, as delegate of France, I venture to submit to you the following draft recommendation:

"The Assembly:

"Regrets that the difficulties encountered have prevented the attainment of the purpose for which it was convened,

"And expresses the hope that between now and the ordinary September session of 1926 these difficulties may be surmounted so as to make it possible for Germany to enter the League of Nations on that occasion."

The President:

Translation: The first delegate of France has submitted a recommendation for adoption by the Assembly. I will ask the Assembly to take a decision on this recommendation after the close of the general discussion.

Viscount Ishii, first delegate of Japan, will address the Assembly as Acting President of the Council of the League.

Viscount Ishii (Japan), Acting President of the Council of the League:

Translation: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — After the eloquent words of the distinguished speakers who have preceded me, I need not dwell upon the deep regret I feel at the postponement of the admission of Germany to the League or upon my profound admiration and gratitude for the chivalrous and Bushido-like action of my two colleagues of Sweden and Czechoslovakia.

I will merely say that the Japanese delegation desires to associate itself fully with the tribute paid to M. Undén and M. Benes and to the two countries which these distinguished colleagues represent.

The Japanese delegation also wholeheartedly seconds the recommendation which the first delegate of France has just submitted to you.

As President of the Council, I think I should inform the Assembly that I shall submit to my colleagues on the Council — and I am sure they will give it their approval — the proposal that

before the end of the present session the Council should appoint a committee to study the composition of the Council and the number and mode of election of its members. This Committee will be asked to issue its report in time to enable the Members of the League to consider it before the opening of the ordinary session of the Assembly in September 1926.

The terms of reference and composition of this Committee will be decided upon by the Council during its present session.

The President :

Translation : M. Undén, first delegate of Sweden, will address the Assembly.

M. Undén (Sweden) :

Translation : Gentlemen — This Assembly was summoned for the purpose of admitting Germany to the League of Nations. All friends of the League had long ardently desired to see Germany within its fold. Her admission, it was held, would mark a great step forward. It would mean the beginning of a new era in the life of the League ; it represented the first stage towards universality — a condition which is essential to enable the League to accomplish its lofty mission : the preservation of peace. We are therefore profoundly disappointed to find that Germany cannot at once be admitted to the League.

The sole object of this special Assembly was to admit Germany to the League with a permanent seat on the Council. Unfortunately, her admission was brought into relation with other and irrelevant issues. National claims were advanced in various quarters ; individual interests came into conflict with the general interest, the common good of the League.

In order to surmount the difficulties raised by these new questions, great efforts were made and arduous negotiations took place.

To our profound regret we have to admit that these efforts and negotiations have produced no positive result and that it has been found impossible to reach a solution compatible with the fundamental principles which underlie the constitution and organisation of the League.

Nevertheless, however keen our present disappointment, we must still hope — as M. Briand has urged — that the League, in a broader and more universal spirit, will shortly admit Germany to its ranks.

The President :

Translation : M. Caballero, first delegate of Paraguay, will address the Assembly.

M. Caballero (Paraguay) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen. — as Vice-President of this Assembly, I have been asked to make the following statement :

I desire, on behalf of the delegations of Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Paraguay, the Dominican Republic, Salvador, Uruguay and Venezuela, to express profound regret that this Assembly should be obliged to adjourn without having completed its agenda.

The American delegations which I have named have simply followed on this occasion their traditional policy of conciliation : pacification and friendly collaboration in the permanent interests of universal peace and of all that can contribute towards the true and lasting reconciliation of the

peoples of Europe, which is essential to the peace of the world.

These delegations have given fresh proof of this spirit during the course of the present Assembly by the unanimous decisions they have forwarded to the head of the Brazilian delegation, in the hope of obtaining unanimity in the Council.

I would ask your permission to read the text of the decision taken on Tuesday morning by the American delegations present at this Special Session of the Assembly of the League :

“The American delegations present at the Special Session of the Assembly of the League of Nations, having exchanged their views in a spirit of the utmost cordiality and solidarity, and, having heard the information which M. Guani and M. de Mello-Franco, members of the Council, have been good enough to give them, have decided as follows :

“The American delegations, conscious of the gravity of the League’s present situation, mindful of the interests of world peace, and realising how essential it is that the American States should exert their influence to bring about the reconciliation of the peoples of Europe, desire to express to His Excellency M. de Mello-Franco the hope that Brazil will take such steps as she may consider most opportune to bring about unanimity in the Council and so remove the difficulties which stand in the way of its decision.”

I desire to add, on behalf of the delegations I have named, that we associate ourselves with the proposal put forward by M. Briand.

The President :

Translation : M. Motta, first delegate of Switzerland, will address the Assembly.

M. Motta (Switzerland) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen. — It is with profound emotion that I mount this platform. That phrase is constantly on the lips of public speakers, but to-day the emotion I feel is very real and is shared, I know, by all the delegates in this Assembly. The words I have heard during this morning’s debate, however, have somewhat reassured me. I might perhaps have indulged in recriminations — and I should have been wrong. This is no longer the time for recriminations, after the noble declarations we have heard from most of the speakers who have preceded me.

We were summoned to this special session of the Assembly for one purpose : the admission of Germany to the League of Nations. Everyone knew that this admission also meant that she would be given a permanent seat on the Council.

The First Committee of this Assembly unanimously accepted the German Government’s proposal : no objection was raised, as that request was held to be legitimate and in order.

I know that many difficulties had arisen, but they had all been removed except one. It is not for me to make a formal complaint or to seek, however remotely, to bring pressure to bear on behalf of the delegations who are met here. I know that all the States are equal before the law and are equally possessed of sovereign rights.

I had hoped — this I will say — that the vision of stricken bleeding Europe, ready at last to extend the hand of reconciliation, would have touched all hearts. I had hoped that that great and noble country which has contributed so much to the promotion of international justice and arbitration would have lent its aid to bring about reconciliation

in Europe. It was not to be. I would not now make any criticism. Let me assure the Council, however, that, if the Assembly had been called upon to second it in its difficult task, the Council would have found the Assembly unanimously desirous to aid it in overcoming the difficulty. If the Assembly was really to represent public opinion throughout the world, it must be placed in a position to carry out this essential duty.

I was wondering a few minutes ago whether, from the point of view of form, the proper procedure would not have been for us to refer back to the First Committee, which had unanimously arrived at a favourable conclusion, that problem the solution of which has to-day encountered difficulties. I do not propose, however, to raise this question of procedure, as it seems to me petty and even somewhat narrow compared with the gravity and complexity of the present situation. Nevertheless, the Council can count to-day on the support of the whole Assembly.

I desire to add my tribute of respect to Sweden and Czechoslovakia, and to the Governments of both those countries. I wish also to pay special tribute to the British Government and to that of France. If there is one glowing record of this Assembly which will remain, if there is one gesture the memory of which will be graven in our hearts, it is that of M. Aristide Briand, who on this occasion truly deserves to be hailed as wise and just. M. Briand has recognised the serene spirit in which the delegates of Germany awaited the decision and realised the necessity for the adjournment of their admission to the League. I wish to emphasise the significance of this act. It is my most earnest hope that at the autumn session of the Assembly Germany may be admitted to the League and may obtain the permanent seat on the Council to which she is entitled, and that, thanks to a spirit of justice and conciliation on all sides, all the present difficulties will be removed. With that hope I leave the platform.

The crisis through which we are passing is a grave one. If the League surmounts it, it will have given proof of its vitality. I trust that it will survive it. If this present crisis, which I hope may be safely surmounted, were really the crisis preceding the downfall of the League, the noise of that downfall would be drowned in the cry of despair, anger and indignation which would arise from all peoples.

The President :

Translation : M. Loudon, first delegate of the Netherlands, will address the Assembly.

M. J. Loudon. (Netherlands).

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen. — My purpose in speaking now is not to offer opposition to the proposal so eloquently voiced by the first delegate of France; I desire, on the contrary, to give that proposal my cordial support.

As a member of this Assembly, however, I feel it my duty to express the consternation which we all felt yesterday on learning that the question which we had been summoned to Geneva to decide was not settled and that the decision was to be adjourned until September.

For ten days the Assembly had been awaiting a solution with growing impatience. At the beginning of this session it instructed its First Committee to examine Germany's request for admission. That request, however, although unanimously approved by the Committee, could not be complied with, because the members of the Council were unable to agree as to the allocation of the permanent seat which had been promised to Germany.

For ten days the members of the Council have tried, by means of private and unofficial conversations — fragments of which have reached the various delegations — to arrive at an agreement, but — alas! — the spirit which ought to govern the League, the spirit which places the welfare of the community before the *amour-propre* of each of its Members, has not prevailed. Certain of those Members, however, while in no way departing from the principles they advocated, have displayed a spirit of disinterestedness to which it behoves us to pay — and by your applause you have already paid — a heartfelt tribute.

Is it surprising that the delegations of the forty-eight nations which were summoned here to decide a question of vital importance to the League should have shown impatience, followed by profound dissatisfaction, on finding that the object for which they had met had not been attained? As M. Motta very rightly says, we all know that the Assembly would have given its unanimous support to Germany's request for admission to the League.

Does this failure to find a solution for the burning question now before us mean the downfall of the League? No, a thousand times no! In the eyes of the general public and of sceptics the League will, for some time to come, have lost something of its glory and even of its prestige. But to those who care to think, who see and understand the work it has done in the seven short years of its existence, to Governments and men who realise that a number of disputes — most of which, it is true, though by no means all, were bloodless — have been settled through its intervention, to those who recognise its success in bringing about the financial restoration of certain countries, the League, as M. Briand has so truly pointed out, has given incontestible proof of its power to live, and difficulties such as those with which we are faced to-day are but of minor importance. At the same time, whether of minor importance or not, these questions have, in the eyes of the masses — who are still sceptical as to the work which is being accomplished by the League in furtherance of world peace — a significance of which we must never lose sight. The more the Council is criticised, the more the public shrugs its shoulders — with a smile of compassion, perhaps — the more clearly does it become our duty to restore a prestige which has suffered so rude a shock.

What we ask of the Council, therefore, is that, since adjournment has been found necessary, the Council will neglect no steps to have the forthcoming discussion next September fully prepared in advance in order that there may be no risk of a fresh setback, which would be unpardonable — perhaps even fatal.

We ask the Council to use the utmost impartiality in choosing the members of the Committee of Enquiry of which His Excellency Viscount Ishii has just spoken; we ask that there shall be entire freedom from political considerations, that the Assembly, and not the Council alone, shall be largely represented, and, I repeat, that the *amour-propre* of individual States shall not be allowed to play a dominant part.

Only in this way will our resolution of adjournment be accepted with confidence by public opinion. If M. Léon Bourgeois — that great Frenchman to whose memory we paid a tribute a few days ago, and who, better than anyone, personified the spirit of the League — were still among us, he would, I think, say what I am now saying. Let us act as he would have acted. I make an urgent appeal to the Council. Our honour — the very future of the League — is at stake.

The President :

Translation : Dr. Nansen, delegate of Norway, will address the Assembly.

Dr Nansen (Norway) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen. — We know that the eyes of the world are anxiously turned towards Geneva at this moment. The resolutions which we are taking here are of very great importance for the whole future of the League and of the world. Unfortunately, questions have arisen which are of such difficulty that it has been proposed that we shall adjourn our meeting, and that the decision for which we hoped shall be postponed until September.

Let us hope that that adjournment is really only a postponement, and that in September Germany will come into the League with all the honours of a Great Power and with a permanent seat on the Council.

We also know, however, that, having met here for the one purpose of admitting Germany, and not having succeeded in doing so during our time here, we are exposed to criticism throughout the world. I am afraid, as M. Loudon has said, that the League may have lost or may lose some of its prestige on account of what has happened, but it should be said here — and the attention of the world ought to be drawn to the fact — that, under the circumstances, owing to recent developments and to the difficulties that unexpectedly arose, the machinery of the League has not been used at all, and therefore the League itself cannot be blamed for what has happened. The machinery of the League did not even begin to work; no use has been made of it. What has happened is that there have been private conversations. There has been no meeting of the Council and no meeting of the Assembly to discuss the question. No record at all has been kept for the future of what happened in Geneva in March 1926.

I think that public opinion throughout the world should appreciate this fact and should realise that the methods of the League cannot be blamed. We who have worked in the League for many years know its methods and know them to be efficient and good, and we hope that recent happenings will not damage too much what has been built up in past years.

It has been proposed that the Council should appoint a committee to consider the composition of the Council. I realise — and I think we all realise — that there are very complicated questions which have to be studied carefully before any important decisions are taken in this matter. As, however, this is such a very important question for the League, I venture to propose to the Council that the Committee should include as many impartial members as possible, representing the different views of the Assembly and of the League of Nations. I think that this point is of the very greatest importance in view of what will happen in September, when the League meets again.

Let me close my speech by saying that I am sure we are all willing to co-operate to the utmost of our power and ability in seeking a happy solution of the difficulty which has arisen, and we all look forward to the future success of the undertaking which has been begun here, but which unfortunately has had to be postponed. We all hope sincerely that no new difficulties will be placed in the way of the entry of Germany into the League and her permanent seat on the Council.

The President :

Translation : M. Piip, the first delegate of Esthonia, will address the Assembly.

M. Piip (Esthonia) :

Ladies and gentlemen. — The Esthonian delegation regrets very much that the main object of this Assembly has not been attained and that Germany has not been admitted into the League and is not yet a permanent member of the Council. When my Government instructed our delegation to vote in favour of both these matters, we considered that the entry of Germany into the League meant a further stabilisation of peace in general and particularly in Eastern Europe, as we also hope that some day we may have the pleasure of welcoming here another great European Power which is still outside the League.

Very fortunately, the question of the admission of Germany is only postponed. The Esthonian delegation hopes that by the time of the meeting of the Assembly in September all those difficulties of procedure that have made the efforts of this Assembly fruitless will be eliminated. It is evident that the present construction of the organs of the League and its present procedure are not sufficiently elastic to carry out the unanimous wish of the Members of the League as expressed in the First Committee, especially as the difficulty arose on the part of a member of the Council elected by the Assembly, which procedure seems to us quite abnormal.

We therefore welcome and heartily support the proposal of the Council, referred to by Viscount Ishii, for an examination of the League machinery with a view to removing existing defects and establishing an effective *modus vivendi* for the election of members of the Council.

We consider that the League of Nations is of such importance for the peace and welfare of humanity that minor defects ought not to endanger its work. Up to the present, all the decisions of the League of Nations have been carried out by all States practically without exception, and there is no doubt that the League has sufficient internal power to overcome the present temporary difficulties. The great declarations made by Sir Austen Chamberlain and M. Aristide Briand, and the great and noble sacrifice of Sweden and Czechoslovakia, are the best guarantees of the vitality of this great organisation for peace which has been the dream of centuries for humanity. Fortunately, this crisis is, in our opinion, not a crisis of the League of Nations but only a crisis of procedure.

The President :

Translation : His Excellency M. Chao-Hsin Chu, first delegate of China, will address the Assembly.

M. Chao-Hsin Chu (China) :

Ladies and gentlemen. — I am asking for permission to speak at this critical moment, but I can assure you that I am not going to add more difficulties on this controversial subject which the Assembly has been discussing.

What I have to say is this : in order to make the League a more successful organisation for international usefulness, two wrong conceptions should be corrected. In the first place, people now a days generally recognise a Power by reason of its military strength. This is a wrong conception.

From my humble point of view, in considering a nation as a great Power we should take into account solely its economic potentialities and geographical position. If we still take a narrow-minded point of view and consider a Power as a military Power, it will tend to encourage military preparations. Such encouragement will, in the long run, endanger the peace of the world. We should form an international public opinion which would entirely discourage and look down on militarism. It is our duty, Gentlemen, for the sake of humanity, to work out, without further delay, a practical programme of general disarmament and mutual security in order to save world civilisation from being once more ruined.

Another wrong conception of the League which people generally take is that the League is dominated by European affairs. We all admit that European affairs nowadays seem more vital to the peace of the world, but we, as Members of the League, should not forget that the League is a League of the whole world and has to fulfil a world-wide expectation. The League should be in no wise dominated by European politics. It should have its eye on all parts of the world and we should encourage all nations to take an equal part in the great work of its international organisation.

In conclusion, I wish to support the proposal just put forward by M. Loudon, the first delegate of the Netherlands, that the Council should appoint an absolutely impartial committee to consider the whole question of the enlargement and composition of the Council. Furthermore, let me urge that in the allocation of seats on the Council the Committee should pay full attention to the geographical principle which has been emphasised by the Chinese delegation and reaffirmed annually by the previous Assemblies.

The President :

Translation : M. Cornène, delegate of Roumania, will address the Assembly.

M. Cornène (Roumania) :

Translation : On learning late on Monday, March 15th, of what was expected, during the present Assembly, of the member of the Council representing the Little Entente, the Roumanian delegation immediately did all in its power to prove its sense of international responsibility in regard to the solution of the grave problems which had arisen.

We desire, therefore, to proclaim that Roumania, conscious not only of her rights but of her duties, gladly undertook her part, side by side with her Czechoslovak and Serb-Croat-Slovene allies, in the great work of peace which we had hoped to consummate.

The Roumanian delegation takes this opportunity of urging that new methods, more democratic in character and more in keeping with the spirit of modern times, should be adopted to enable the League, in the wider interests of humanity, to develop smoothly.

The Roumanian delegation believes that, by dint of combined effort and by the manifestation of that spirit of conciliation which is the very essence of the League, it will become possible for Germany to take the place in the League and on the Council which is her due.

The President :

Translation : M. Zahle, first delegate of Denmark, will address the Assembly.

M. Zahle (Denmark) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen. — Is shall be very brief. After the eloquent

words uttered from this platform by those of my colleagues who have already spoken, there is very little for me to add.

I desire, on behalf of my country, to associate myself wholeheartedly with the expressions of dismay and regret, and also hope, which have been voiced in this Assembly. I desire also to second the remarks of the Netherlands delegate concerning the constitution of the committee suggested by the Council. I venture to emphasise the desirability of including on that committee a number of representatives of States which are not members of the Council.

I specially appreciated the few words uttered by M. Motta. With his characteristic wisdom he advised us to make no effort at this juncture to apportion responsibility for the present state of affairs. I entirely agree. It is clear that the time has not yet come to fix this responsibility, but it is only right to proclaim from this platform that that responsibility does not, at any rate, rest upon the Assembly.

The President :

Translation : M. Mehdi Frasheri, Delegate of Albania, will address the Assembly.

M. Mehdi Frasheri (Albania) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen. — After having heard the utterances of so many distinguished statesmen, I have no intention of making a speech myself. I think, however, that every member of the Assembly has the right to express an opinion on the question under discussion: namely, whether we are competent to take a decision immediately or whether we must adjourn it to the meeting of the Assembly in September.

With your permission I propose to present the question from a somewhat different standpoint from that adopted by previous speakers.

The Council is, as you know, composed of two kinds of members: the permanent and the non-permanent. The non-permanent members receive their mandate from the Assembly and not from their own Governments.

If, as the result of the action of a non-permanent member, the Council fails to agree, on a question which does not directly affect the interests of the League and the Assembly but concerns the interests of the country which that member represents, the position is quite different: the non-permanent members of the Council, not having received a direct mandate, are free to express their individual convictions. If, however, a non-permanent member of the Council opposes the settlement of a question directly affecting the interests of the League — a question for the specific settlement of which a special session of the Assembly has been convened — the Assembly, in virtue of its sovereign powers, possesses full competence to take an immediate decision.

I beg to propose, therefore, that you declare that the Assembly, in virtue of this sovereignty, is entitled, despite the disagreement of one of the non-permanent members of the Council, to give a final decision on the admission of Germany to the League and the allocation to Germany of a seat on the Council.

The President :

Translation : As no one else has expressed the desire to speak, I declare the general discussion closed¹.

¹ After the close of the general discussion, His Excellency Prince Arfa, first delegate of Persia, handed to the President a statement relating to the discussion. This statement appears as an annex to the verbatim record of the meeting.

I invite the Assembly to vote on the proposal submitted by M. Briand, first delegate of France, which reads as follows :

*The Assembly,
Regrets that the difficulties encountered have prevented the attainment of the purpose for which it was convened,*

And expresses the hope that, between now and the ordinary September session of 1926, these difficulties may be surmounted so as to make it possible for Germany to enter the League of Nations on that occasion.

If there is no opposition, I shall consider as adopted unanimously by the Assembly the proposal made by the first delegate of France and that the Assembly agrees to postpone until its ordinary session in September the consideration of the report of our First Committee on the request of Germany for admission to the League. (*Assent.*)

15. — DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET FOR 1926: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The agenda of the special session of the Assembly includes the draft Supplementary Budget for 1926, which was referred to the Second Committee. M. Belloni, who is Rapporteur of the Second Committee for this question, will wish to give certain explanations to the Assembly.

I call upon M. Belloni to speak.

M. Belloni (Italy) Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — In the new situation in which we are now placed the question of a supplementary budget no longer arises. If the wishes expressed to-day by the Chairman of the First Committee and the speakers who followed him are realised — and my country, inspired by the same sentiments as the other signatories of the Locarno Pact, earnestly hopes that they will be realised — there will, of course, be no longer any need to consider a supplementary budget, as the expenditure required for the admission of Germany to the League can be included in the ordinary budget for 1927, which will be discussed by the Assembly in September.

There are, nevertheless, two categories of expenditure to be met. I am sure that, as regards the special session of the Assembly, the Council will decide to charge the expenditure incurred to the credit allotted to "Unforeseen Expenditure". As regards the cost of installing the Annex the construction of which the Assembly approved last Saturday, this could, if necessary, be met from the fund for the construction of the new buildings. It is within the competence of the Council to approve the budget proposals involved, which in any case must be submitted by the Secretariat, to meet the expenditure relative to the upkeep of the Annex.

The President :

Translation : If there is no objection, I shall consider as approved by the Assembly the statement made by M. Belloni in the name of the Second Committee. (*Assent.*)

16. — CLOSE OF THE SESSION: SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT:

The President :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — It is my duty to close this session, but before I do so you

must allow me to explain in a few words the meaning and purpose which I attribute to the resolution just adopted by the Assembly.

Sir Austen Chamberlain, as Chairman and Rapporteur of the First Committee, has told us how that Committee reached a unanimous agreement and what were the reasons which prevented us from giving effect to its proposals during the present session.

Our decision to adjourn the question is, however, a sign of strength; it shows primarily that the League of Nations is completely confident that at the next ordinary Assembly in September the difficulties which have arisen will be overcome, and that we shall then be able to accomplish the work which was entrusted to us at this session.

The League of Nations will thus be in a position to assert itself very shortly as the essential, if not the only, organ for giving expression to the international aspirations and tendencies of all peoples. It will do so through its work in developing conceptions of understanding and fraternity and in settling in an equitable manner all differences — even the gravest — which may from time to time arise and imperil the peace of the world. The adjournment is itself a means of achieving the most satisfactory solution of the differences — pacific though they are — which have recently arisen with regard to the best method of supplementing or reorganising the Council of our League.

Every great work has been achieved with difficulty and has involved suffering, and the League of Nations, although it has not immediately attained the result announced and hoped for, will be entitled to seek consolation in the fact that its work has not been useless, and that its foundations remain unshaken despite the long discussions, hesitations, and even anxiety which it has experienced during the brief period of this Assembly.

Now that all the Governments have had the problem clearly set before them, they are bound henceforth to accept their responsibilities, because in the short space of time between now and the September session all causes of dispute or misunderstanding must be removed. From the point of view of mankind, and consequently of the League of Nations, the essential consideration, in every aspect, of this matter is the advance actually accomplished along the road of progress, and not the obstacles encountered on the road. We only dwell upon the obstacles with the view of overcoming them now and avoiding them in the future.

When we survey the whole evolution and the present position of the League of Nations, we are bound to admit this: whatever prejudices there may be against the League, and however great may be the temporary disappointment at the adjournment of the greatest problem which has ever come before us, our institution is now in readiness to take its chief step forward towards the attainment of the object for which it was created, the object which is defined in the Preamble to the Covenant. It is perhaps actually on the eve of taking this step.

This proves, in the first place, that the League is now conscious of its own value; and if we get down to essentials we must also realise that, owing to force of events and public feeling, it was very different in the early days of its existence from what it will become when the decision postponed to-day is taken in September.

From this summit which we have reached, and on which we desire to establish ourselves firmly, we cannot allow ourselves to descend. Anyone who in a moment of madness, or by a reversion to obsolete principles, dared to attempt it would be

condemned to failure, to universal reprobation, and more than that, he would see himself, however great might be his importance, obliged by the force of circumstances to retrace his steps and do full penance to regain his lost position.

The greatness that the League of Nations has thus achieved and secured does not prevent it, like all human organisms, from endeavouring to improve itself and to adapt itself better to the requirements, every day more complex, of the aims it pursues. It seems to me — and in saying this I give my personal impression — that the League of Nations will have to modify some of its organs and render them more elastic, more effective and more powerful. The example supplied by the democratic evolution of countries with a parliamentary system leads me to think that a similar gradual transformation will take place in the structure, attributions and working either of our Council or of our Assembly. Every circumstance is favourable to-day for the study of these reforms to be undertaken without loss of time, each of us offering his contribution in the spirit of the Covenant, in order that the reforms may be introduced in due course by the general will of the States which belong or may belong in future to the League.

For the present, as President of this Assembly, and in the name of all my colleagues, I only wish to express the earnest hope that the work of the League of Nations may not cease but may, on the contrary, be strengthened in all its fields of activity for the welfare of humanity and for the permanent and

immutable maintenance of peace among all the peoples of the world.

During the period which lies immediately before us, the various organisations of the League will have to deal also with problems of special importance. I need only refer to the preparations for an Economic Conference and for a Conference on the Reduction of Armaments. It is most desirable that, in carrying these tasks to a satisfactory conclusion, the League should be inspired with the completest confidence in itself and with the certainty that the results of its work will increase its reputation and prestige and enable it to meet calmly, and with the certainty of success, the inevitable political differences, which can only gradually, and through the daily activity of the League itself, be attenuated and eventually overcome.

In paying my tribute to the spirit of co-operation which has, in spite of everything, been displayed in the course of these difficulties, I do not address myself exclusively to the delegations represented in this building but also to that of the great nation which, though not immediately associated with the work of this Assembly, is directly interested in it and will soon take its proper place, the place which we desire to see it occupy, among us.

Ladies and gentlemen, I declare the special session of the Assembly of the League of Nations closed.

The Assembly rose at 1.15 p.m.

ANNEX.

STATEMENT BY PRINCE ARFA, FIRST DELEGATE OF PERSIA.

Translation : Almost every year I am impelled to make certain very frank observations, which may perhaps give the Assembly the impression that I am a somewhat sharp critic of the League. I must crave pardon for this. Nevertheless, the League cannot progress unless it has the courage to recognise its defects and correct them.

Like the honourable delegates for Sweden and the Netherlands, I regret that the Council sometimes, at critical moments, neglects to consult or seek help from the Assembly. This is perhaps one of the chief reasons for the anxious struggle to obtain seats on the Council. I trust that the Committee which is to be appointed will be recommended to study very carefully the problem of the relations between Council and Assembly.

It is unfortunate that the delegates of more than forty countries have been vainly waiting day after day without knowing exactly what is taking place. Are we ultimately to have everyone on the Council or are we to have a small Council, which, however, will always be ready to co-operate with the Assembly and take due note of its views? That should be one of the main points for the Committee to study.

We have come long distances to admit Germany to the League. We have not been permitted to do so on account of difficulties which have arisen on the Council. We all deeply deplore this, but it proves the urgent need for a change of system. That, I think, will be the conclusion reached by the nations of the world, whose earnest desire for peace should be our law.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SEVENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FIRST PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 6th, 1926, AT 11 A.M.

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Speech by M. Beneš, Acting President of the Council.
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1. — OPENING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

M. Beneš, delegate of Czechoslovakia, Acting President of the Council, took the Chair.

The Chairman :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — It is to the delegate of Czechoslovakia that falls the great honour of opening the meetings of the Seventh Session of the Assembly of the League of Nations and of inaugurating its work. I am proud of this honour, and it will remain for me an unforgettable memory, particularly as the present Assembly will without doubt be of special importance both in the history of the League and in that of European politics in general.

In opening this first meeting, I do not wish to dwell too much on the difficulties of the moment. You are as familiar with them as I am, and we shall have to deal with them during our discussions. But I shall also refrain from sounding a note of triumph, or of "official optimism", regardless of existing obstacles, which we can hardly hope to surmount without difficulty.

I do not wish to indulge to excess the optimism which must inspire all those who work for the advancement of the League and who desire through it to contribute to the maintenance of world peace; neither will I attempt, on the other hand, to ignore the obstacles which daily beset our path; but at the same time I will not give way to the misplaced pessimism or accept the unjustifiable criticisms of the sceptics, who are rarely

capable of any solid achievement in our distracted society or of bringing humanity a step forward in the path which leads to a better future. I merely desire, in accordance with our young tradition, to give a brief outline of what the League has done directly or indirectly during the last twelve months. We shall all realise that, while it has not brought about a radical change in the present difficult conditions of political, social and economic life, the work it has accomplished in the past year has nevertheless been very considerable; it constitutes a step forward in the evolution of Europe and it furnishes a proof that the path we have chosen is leading, despite all, to a progressive and comparatively rapid improvement of the world of to-day.

The struggle we are waging is a hard and difficult one; but it holds out promise of success and of final victory, and we all realise that this victory can only come slowly and at the cost of great sacrifice.

You have before you the report on the work of the Council and of the measures taken to execute your decisions of last year. Who can peruse it without being struck by the growing amplitude of the League's work, by the fresh responsibilities it is constantly assuming, and by the ever greater services it is rendering to the cause of peace? May I therefore be allowed to recall in a few words the League's activities during the year 1925-26?

Broadly speaking, these activities may be divided into three categories. The first comprises the work of the technical and advisory organisations of the League and of the Council, particularly in economic and financial matters and social and humanitarian undertakings. In this connection it may be pointed out that, since the last Assembly, Committees have sat at Geneva every month to consider problems of the most varied kinds.

On two occasions the League has held general Conferences, technical conferences in connection with the Transit Organisation, for the purpose of reducing the numerous formalities which,

particularly since the war, have hampered commercial relations. One of these Conferences, which dealt with certain technical points concerning inland navigation, was a European conference, while the other was world-wide. The latter dealt with one of the most irritating of the minor problems of the post-war period — that of passports. In order to remove the most vexatious formalities, forty States sent representatives, who agreed upon a number of conclusions.

In this connection, I should like to draw the attention of all delegations to the fact that it is their duty, once they have returned to their own countries, to see that effect is given to the decisions taken at Geneva. I am fully aware that our Parliaments, which are often overburdened with work, are obliged to take questions in their order and to postpone, sometimes for too long, the ratification of the international instruments signed at the seat of the League. We must not forget, however, that in the sphere of international conventions the reserve and caution displayed by the League have sometimes been judged excessive, that the draft conventions it has drawn up refer to technical questions which it is in the interest of all to have finally settled, and that it has always made every effort to simplify the mechanism of international exchange without detriment to individual interests.

I think I am bound to say that, from the point of view of the conventions drafted by the technical committees, by the Economic, Transit, Health and Opium Committees and by our Disarmament Committees, the situation is not very satisfactory. Indeed, the further progress of our technical work would be a matter of some difficulty if this situation did not improve. The action of our experts and even of our Governments would run the risk of being thwarted if, owing to the non-ratification of these instruments, it were deprived of the groundwork provided by established conventions; and, knowing your desire to have these conventions put into force, I am convinced that you will convey my appeal to the proper quarter and that it will be heard in all your capitals.

In the past year the League of Nations has continued its efforts to improve international relations in the various technical spheres with the assistance of the most qualified representatives which our administrations possess. To realise this, it is sufficient to peruse the list of tasks undertaken by the Economic and Financial Organisation: the draft Agreement on the abolition of import and export prohibitions and restrictions; investigations on economic crises and unemployment; on false Customs declarations; on unfair competition; on double taxation and tax evasion; on the measures to be taken to prevent the issue and circulation of counterfeit currency. This enumeration outlines the work of to-morrow of the economic rapprochement which is essential if peace and international co-operation are to be established on solid foundations.

In this connection we have, as you know, undertaken an ambitious task, the preparation of an International Economic Conference. A Committee has met the composition of which ensures that every type of interest will be represented and defended. It comprises a list of experts, chosen from among the most competent. It has already drawn up a rough programme of the investigations which must be made before the Conference itself is convened. The organisations of the League of Nations, the International Labour Office and other international organisations immediately set to work on this task. The Committee has sketched the main outlines of the

enquiry which they must pursue. Once in possession of these data, the Committee will be in a position, at its next session, to single out the chief points of the industrial, agricultural and commercial problems to be submitted to the Conference. The latter will therefore only meet to consider these vital and complex problems after it has been given a clear, precise and limited agenda. It will, therefore, be able to reach its conclusions with a full knowledge of the facts.

Meanwhile we must not omit to lay stress on the progress achieved by the League of Nations in the work of European reconstruction, which has now been pursued for some years with the success that you know. The thorough enquiry conducted last year in Austria by two eminent economic experts appointed by the Council, Mr. Layton and Professor Rist, showed that the economic difficulties suffered by Austria in common with so many other countries do not threaten to compromise the work of financial monetary reconstruction. The financial stability of the country is now established on a solid basis. The two League experts at the same time indicated the best methods to be adopted to enable the results of financial reconstruction to develop and to become the source of an economic prosperity which will enable Austria, in cordial co-operation with all her neighbours, to play in full freedom that part in the European community which is hers by right. Our Commissioner-General, M. Zimmerman, having concluded his task, has been able to take up other work, and I am sure I shall be voicing the feeling of the Assembly in expressing to him our deep gratitude.

The thanks of the Assembly are also due to Mr. Smith, who has devoted himself with such conspicuous success to the work of financial control in Hungary and whose exceptional qualities of tact and thoroughness have won for him the affection and esteem of all with whom he has come in contact. Before his departure Mr. Smith had the satisfaction of learning that the Financial Committee had recognised the excellent results of the budgetary supervision which he had been called upon to exercise, and that the Council had undertaken itself to deal with the question of the utilisation of the balance of the reconstruction loan.

Since the last Assembly, other examples have demonstrated the value of international action in financial matters and the assistance which can be rendered by your Council in this connection, among them being those of the Danzig Municipal Loan, the enquiry into the position of the Free City undertaken by the Financial Committee, the continuation of the work of the Greek Refugees Settlement Commission with the help of the loan, and the preparation of a loan for the settlement of the Bulgarian refugees. Such have been the principal contributions made by the League in the course of the year to the great work of European reconstruction; the cause of peace cannot fail thereby to be greatly promoted.

Thus the economic, financial and humanitarian activities of the League of Nations have continued unchecked. While adding to this list the work undertaken for the benefit of the Armenian refugees and for the protection of children, I should also mention that the first institution of the League of Nations in the Far East — our Epidemiological Bureau at Singapore — has begun operations. In this field also the League is pursuing its task with conspicuous success.

Finally, when reading the report of the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, you will certainly be struck by the increasing interest which its work arouses. It was only right that the work of peace

undertaken by the League should extend to intellectual matters. Fortunately, thanks to the initiative of the French Government, means were found to enable the eminent scholars on our Committee to translate their decisions into realities. To-morrow, through the generosity of the Italian Government, they will be endowed with a new instrument of work. The results of these welcome acts of generosity are already becoming apparent. Assistance is arriving from all sides. Of their own accord, scholars all over the world, taught by a long experience of disinterested work, have come forward with suggestions to save their colleagues loss of time, to complete the process of international co-operation in the sphere of letters and science and to secure in that field the final triumph of the great principle of division of labour. National Committees have been established in almost all countries. They are working with redoubled energy; a kind of intellectual League of Nations is spreading its organisation into all countries.

As you see, gentlemen, one of your main preoccupations of last year, namely, to ensure continuity in this slow, steady, fruitful and constructive work, which it lies with the League of Nations to perform, has been given all possible consideration by your Council and by the advisory and technical Committees which you placed at its disposal.

As regards the second class of questions on which the League of Nations is permanently engaged — I refer to the regular work done by the League and the Council in the sphere of daily political relations between States, the settlement of any disputes which may suddenly arise between Members of the League and, lastly, special questions like minorities and disarmament — substantial results have again been attained this year.

In this connection I would remind you, in the first place, of the final settlement of the very delicate question of Mosul. It was included in the agenda for 1925, when we were all gathered in this same hall. Several months of work were needed before the Council could arrive at a solution. That solution was adopted after lengthy reflection, after the pros and cons had been weighed and after the report by the Commission of Enquiry which was sent to the disputed territory had been carefully studied. A valuable opinion by the Permanent Court of International Justice, the new tribunal of the nations, enlightened the Council on the legal aspect of the question. The Council finally gave a unanimous award, which seemed to it fair and which it surrounded with all possible precautions in the interests of the populations concerned.

It was certainly not without a deep sense of its responsibilities that the Council took its final decision. Its satisfaction was therefore great when it learned that the two parties in the case, animated by a spirit of conciliation which cannot be too highly prized, had concluded an agreement between themselves to apply the award given. At its last session the Council took note, with what pleasure you may imagine, of the arrangement concluded between Turkey and Great Britain. All that is now wanting is the logical conclusion, which I hope Turkey will shortly enable us to supply. We shall all be delighted if the opportunity is given to us to welcome her among us as a member of the League.

Another case, of a different kind but perhaps no less serious, came before the Council quite recently. That was the dispute which arose on the frontiers of two Members of the League, Greece and Bulgaria. I am quite convinced that unavoidable circumstances forced both Governments into that difficult situation, which found its solution in Paris before the Council of the League. This is proved

by the readiness with which they acceded to the suggestions we made to them.

Those, gentlemen, are powerful assurances for the future, firm pledges of agreement and understanding. These hopes receive strong confirmation, if you read through the report of the Council now before you and if you examine the work of the League on minority questions. Formerly oppressed, the sport of international ambitions, these minorities are to-day assured of free development within the States to which they belong. Further, you will find in that report positive and remarkable results concerning the administration of certain territories, the exchange of populations, the delimitation of frontiers, conciliatory action of all kinds, the work of the Mandates Commission on behalf of native populations, etc.

It is with the same intention of political pacification that the League of Nations is pursuing its work on disarmament. Last year you suggested the idea of two great Conferences of world importance — the Economic Conference, of which I spoke just now, and the Disarmament Conference.

No one can be surprised that the preparations for such vast enterprises are not yet complete.

Ever since its creation, the League of Nations has, in virtue of its Covenant, been concerned with the problem of disarmament. Pessimists may find that these six years of effort have yielded very meagre results. That would be a harsh and an unjust judgment. Naturally, we should all like to be much further advanced than we are, but, if we glance back at the road we have travelled, we see that in spite of everything we are appreciably nearer our goal. The problem of armaments is nothing less than the expression of the political, social and, above all, psychological state of the world. The progress made towards pacification during the last six, and particularly during the last two, years will, I am sure, bring the first positive results within our reach at an early date.

There is no doubt that even now the disarmament problem cannot be solved in its entirety. What we propose is to accomplish a first stage and to arrive at an initial international agreement on the limitation of the preparations for war, however restricted this limitation may be, though we all hope that it will be as little restricted as possible. No one can fail to realise its importance, or to grasp the fact that nothing since the agreements concluded last year at Locarno would be more likely to improve international relations.

More perhaps than in the case of any other Conference, it is important in this case not to approach the final act too heedlessly but to make all the requisite preparations, and, as far as possible, to reconcile in advance the important interests at stake. That is the work of your Committees, which know well that the failure of an ill-prepared Conference would amount to a catastrophe. The chief of these Committees has drawn up a programme of all the technical difficulties to be solved. It has had the co-operation of Germany and of the United States of America. For the study of this programme it established comprehensive bodies of technical experts, which set to work immediately. They will shortly be able to give us the result of their work. It will then rest with the political representatives on the Preparatory Commission to draw the conclusions and to elaborate a draft agreement for submission to a general conference.

When this Conference meets, the League of Nations, thanks to the resolutions which you are going to adopt, will have made further progress towards that universality to which you have always aspired.

I thus come to the last class of questions with which our League has been occupied during the past year. These are for the moment the most important, because they touch upon current questions of European and even world policy, and because their settlement aims at the reconciliation of the great European nations which took part in the Great War, and at ensuring for a long time to come the security and peace of a very large part of the world. I refer to the important international event known as the Locarno Agreements, which, apart from their great international political significance, are of decisive importance to the League of Nations, because they are bound up with the entry of Germany into our League.

In September of last year, M. Painlevé, at that time President of the Council, in opening the Assembly, informed it that its previous work for the organisation of peace was on the point of bearing fruit and that, although it was not possible to put in force immediately the regulations which the Assembly had drawn up the previous year in drafting the Geneva Protocol, at least the principal European nations, guided by its spirit, were about to conclude between themselves a system of guarantee pacts and arbitration conventions which would define the pacific obligations of the Covenant of the League of Nations. He thus emphasised the extreme importance for the future of peace of the year which was to elapse before our present meeting. It is no exaggeration to say that all diplomatic negotiations, at all events in Europe, since the last Assembly, have turned in the direction of the League of Nations.

You are all familiar with the events to which I refer. Hardly had you separated last year when a number of European Powers, those who had been most closely engaged in the Great War, met at Locarno to conclude the agreement and treaty of arbitration, of which you will indirectly decree the coming into force this week. Although the Conference of Locarno was held outside the League of Nations, the work accomplished there was none the less inspired by its influence.

M. Briand, President of the Council, made the following statement in October last during our Paris session :

“Under the inspiration of a resolution voted by the last Assembly, which gave us great encouragement, we have pursued the limited, but nevertheless important, work of Locarno If the negotiations of Locarno have been crowned with success, it is due to the fact that from beginning to end we took the utmost care to conduct those negotiations in the spirit of the League of Nations and of its Covenant. It is because we were guided by all the previous work of the League of Nations that we were able to attain our ends.”

Sir Austen Chamberlain, who so largely contributed to the success of this great work of peace, has on various occasions emphasised its historic importance. Other statesmen who took part in it — M. Mussolini and M. Scialoja, M. Vandervelde, M. Stresemann and M. Luther, Polish statesmen and political circles in Czechoslovakia — all these, without over-estimating the value of what had been done, have borne testimony that the Treaties of Locarno mark a definite stage in the political history of Europe.

But for the existence of the League, the Treaties of Locarno would, as you know, be a dead letter. They are, in fact, no more than an application of the Covenant, all the provisions of which they scrupulously respect. They are also the outcome of the great effort made by the Fourth and Fifth

Sessions of the Assembly for the organisation of peace. Your long discussions, which were the necessary preliminary to the elaboration of the draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance and subsequently of the draft Protocol, have borne fruit. Although it has not proved possible to give to the ingenious and effective legal formulas which you devised that universal application which was your desire, at least we have been able to apply them in a restricted field, as you had indeed foreseen.

The Treaty of Mutual Assistance and the Geneva Protocol contemplated the conclusion of partial agreements carefully linked to the Covenant of the League of Nations, in conformity with its provisions, and placed under the guarantee of the Council. The most original of these treaties which could by conceived was concluded last winter at Locarno. It bound together the belligerents in the late war. It is in no way reminiscent of the alliances of a former day, which aimed at establishing a false security by means of a balance between groups of Powers, secret alliances which only too frequently masked ambitions and war-like intentions.

I think I may state from this platform, without fear of contradiction, that the negotiators of Locarno were true to the new spirit created by the Assembly of the League, a spirit which it personifies and which has been acclaimed here in moments of unforgettable enthusiasm by all the representatives of civilised nations. Those negotiators also took into account the importance which you so rightly attach to the progress of conciliation and arbitration. I know that no policy could be more popular with you and that it will, in particular, meet with the approval of the Republics of Latin America, which have already pursued this path so long and whose wish it has been that their youthful strength, their powers of expansion and their future should develop along the lines of arbitration and justice.

Provision is made as between all the signatories of Locarno for the whole series of pacific procedure : commissions of conciliation, arbitration, Court of Justice, Council of the League of Nations.

But there is more than this. As a result of the powerful impulse given by the last two sessions of the Assembly, a remarkable movement has begun in the political world. In response to the Assembly's recommendation, the States Members of the League throughout the world are in process of inaugurating among themselves a vast new political system based upon the principle of conciliation and arbitration. It is impossible to over-estimate the importance of this evolution, of this new procedure instituted by the nations for the settlement of their disputes. What valuable assistance will be given to Governments by this appeal to conciliation which will make it possible for them to obtain a hearing by organisations at once competent and impartial, and thus to justify the concessions indispensable to a good international understanding !

I am well aware that this system is not yet perfect, that there are certain gaps and that failures may occur, but the voluntary action of various States during the last few months, in conjunction with the supreme guarantee, more especially in political matters, afforded by the appeal to the Council of the League of Nations, provides the most complete system that has yet been inaugurated for the pacific settlement of international disputes.

I now come to the events of the last few days, which are occupying us all at this moment.

Signalised by the auspicious events to which I have just referred, the first months following the last Session of the Assembly encouraged

the belief that Germany would be speedily admitted into the League of Nations. You are all aware of the events which made it necessary for us to wait until to-day in order to reply to the request which Dr. Stresemann submitted on February 10th last.

To solve these difficulties, the Council constituted a Committee, the members of which were assisted by the representatives of several other States and of Germany herself. The report of this Committee will shortly be in your hands. It has taken account, not only of the obstacles which faced the Special Session of the Assembly in March, but of the work done by the First Committee during previous years.

This question of the organisation of the Council arose in almost the very earliest days of the League. You know the controversies to which it led in the Council, when the question of new permanent seats was raised in 1921, and, later, when the question came before the Assembly, which has thoroughly studied the rules for the election of the non-permanent Members. It is possible that a certain impatience may have been aroused by the length of these discussions. It is impossible that we should not congratulate ourselves upon them to-day, since the reorganisation of the Council may further facilitate the solution of the grave problems with which you are faced.

The new Committee has taken account of the Assembly's wishes, and has drawn up rules for election based directly upon those which you had laid down. It has taken account of certain opposition that made itself felt, and with which the Assembly will no longer be faced, thanks to the welcome ratification of the amendment to Article 4 of the Covenant, a ratification at which we all rejoice, while realising the grave responsibility which it lays upon this Assembly.

Thus our Committee has given elasticity to the proposed system by according to the Assembly facilities for re-electing States, if it so desires, when their mandate has expired. It has wisely limited this right to a small number of States. Thus the two tendencies which have manifested themselves in the past are reconciled, and I hope that in this way further difficulties may be avoided in the future. We should perhaps have one day regretted it if we had drawn up too rigid a plan. The one submitted to you, which will now serve as the basis of your discussions and upon which you will be asked to pronounce freely in your sovereign independence, seems to me to hold out prospects of a unanimous and speedy agreement.

Accordingly, I think that the difficulties with which we were faced in March will no longer arise, and that to-morrow we shall have the satisfaction, first of welcoming a new Member in our midst, and, secondly, of satisfying certain legitimate claims by other States. In the interests of world peace, international understanding and European reconciliation, we may congratulate ourselves upon this happy event. I venture already from this platform to extend a cordial welcome to the new Member of the League.

Is it possible that this expected agreement and the entry of a great European Power into the League may be saddened by decisions which would result, to our sorrow, in the departure from among us of some of the States which are dearest to us? I have not yet lost all hope. For six years the Assembly has attempted to give such proofs of wisdom, breadth of view, justice and equity that no one should misunderstand the import of the decisions which you will take. We are all anxious to accord the largest possible share, their rightful share, to all the civilisations, old and new, to all forms of culture, to all those inestimable riches contributed—out of their long past, through the virtues of their race and through their future

also—by those Members of the League of Nations which have communicated to us their desires and aspirations in the course of the year.

I am fully aware that two important States, both Members of the Council, which for six years have worked on the League with the utmost devotion in the cause of peace and international understanding, and which through their distinguished representatives have rendered incalculable service to the League, have taken decisions which are profoundly saddening to us all without exception.

May I be allowed, as President of the Council, to appeal to-day, with less authority, indeed, than that with which you will certainly soon appeal but with the same confidence of heart, to their noble sentiments, to their pride even, which will, I am sure, prevent them from abandoning their part in the responsibilities which fall upon us all, to their generosity, and to their spirit of international friendships?

I declare the Seventh Session of the Assembly of the League of Nations open.

2. — ELECTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE CREDENTIALS OF DELEGATES.

The Chairman :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — In accordance with Article 5 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, the Committee to report on the credentials of delegates should be elected by the Assembly in order that it may submit its report without delay.

This Committee should consist of eight members.

M. Motta (Switzerland) :

Translation : I have the honour to propose the following list of eight members to form the Committee on Credentials.

The list I am about to read is composed according to the alphabetical order of States, and I beg the Assembly's indulgence for my boldness in making this proposal. My object is solely to expedite the progress of our work.

I accordingly propose the following delegates as members of the Committee on Credentials :

M. Vladimir MOLLOFF (Bulgaria).
M. Wang KING-KY (China).
M. DE AGÜERO Y BETHANCOURT (Cuba).
General Johan LAIDNER (Esthonia).
M. Joseph BARTHÉLEMY (France).
H.H. the Maharaja of KAPURTHALA (India).
Count BONIN-LOGGARE (Italy).
Baron LEHMANN (Liberia).

The Chairman :

Translation : Are there any observations in regard to this proposal? Does any member wish to propose any other candidate? If there is no opposition I declare the proposal adopted.

The Committee to report on the Credential of Delegates will therefore consist of the members proposed by the delegate of Switzerland.

The list proposed by M. Motta was adopted.

The Chairman :

Translation : The Committee on the Credentials of Delegates which has just been elected will meet at 3 p.m. to-day at the offices of the Secretariat, Room D.

The next meeting of the Assembly will take place at 4.30 o'clock this afternoon.

The Assembly rose at 12 o'clock noon.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE
SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY
OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SECOND PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 6th, 1926, AT 4.30 P.M.

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3. — CREDENTIALS OF DELEGATES : REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS.

M. Beneš, delegate of Czechoslovakia, Acting President of the Council, in the Chair.

The Chairman :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the report of the Committee on Credentials.

I call upon M. de Agüero y Bethancourt to read his report.

M. de Agüero y Bethancourt (Cuba), Chairman and Rapporteur of the Committee on Credentials :

Translation : Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen — The Committee appointed by the Assembly to report on the credentials of delegates met to-day at 3.30 p.m. at the Secretariat of the League of Nations. I was elected Chairman and was entrusted with the duty of drawing up the report.

The Committee examined the documents transmitted to it by the Secretary-General and found that the following States are represented by delegates who are in possession either of letters of credentials from heads of States or letters from Ministers for Foreign Affairs, or telegrams from the same source, or letters from permanent representatives accredited to the League of Nations :

Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, British Empire, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Esthonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Hungary, India, Irish Free State, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Persia, Poland, Portugal, Roumania, Salvador, Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Siam, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Uruguay, Venezuela.

The Committee considers that the representatives of these States Members are duly accredited.

The following States Members have not accredited delegations to this Assembly :

The Argentine Republic, Bolivia, Brazil, Costa Rica, Honduras, Peru and Spain.

Your Committee on Credentials trusts that the Assembly will approve its report.

The Chairman :

Translation : I beg to thank the Chairman of the Committee on Credentials for his report.

Has anyone any observations to make on the conclusions of the report ?

The conclusions of the report were adopted.

4. — ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Chairman :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the election of the President of the Seventh Session of the Assembly.

In conformity with the Rules of Procedure voting will be by secret ballot.

I call upon M. Motta, delegate of Switzerland, and a former President of the Assembly, and His Excellency Prince Arfa, delegate of Persia, a former Vice-President, to act as tellers.

The votes of the delegations were taken in turn by secret ballot.

The Chairman :

Translation : May I first thank the tellers for their kind assistance ?

The result of the voting is as follows :

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Number of States voting | 48 |
| Absolute majority | 25 |

M. Nintchitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes) has received 42 votes.

I have therefore the honour, according to the Rules of Procedure, to announce that M. Nintchitch, first delegate of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, is elected President of the Assembly.

I am sure that I am voicing the feelings of all delegates present in congratulating my friend M. Nintchitch on the display of good-will shown to him by this Assembly in electing him President.

All of us here know the great merit and high qualifications of this statesman of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. First as Professor of Finance and Political Economy, then as Minister of Finance and Commerce and, for several years since the war, as Minister for Foreign Affairs, he has proved himself a talented, practical and clear-headed statesman. At home and in dealing with neighbouring States he has pursued a policy of reconstruction and consolidation, always in conformity with the principles of the Covenant of the League. For several years past he has taken part in the work of our Assemblies and Committees, of which latter he has more than once been elected Chairman.

It is unnecessary to say more. You all know our new President and you know that your choice is an admirable one. I am especially glad to be able to add to the general congratulations my personal sentiments of friendship towards a man with whom, since 1920, I have worked in close intimacy and in a spirit of friendship, loyalty and, above all, devotion to the work of European peace.

I call upon M. Nintchitch to take the Chair of the Assembly.

M. Nintchitch took the Presidential Chair.

5. — PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

M. Nintchitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes), President of the Assembly :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — I beg to thank you for the great honour you have just done my country, for indeed it is on my country and not on myself that your choice has fallen.

I am sure that to-day's vote will cause profound emotion in my country, which, having experienced all the trials and horrors of war, is all the more resolutely attached to the League of Nations, the guardian of peace and of civilisation.

I am especially proud to be presiding over this Seventh Session of the Assembly. The task it has before it will leave an indelible mark upon our history. Despite the difficulties through which the League has just passed, it will emerge from this Assembly stronger than ever before.

We trust that the clouds which have darkened our horizon during these past few months will clear. The presence of yet another great nation among us in the near future should give us full confidence. A new guest is about to enter our house. In welcoming that guest, as we shall to-morrow, we all have the conviction that those of our friends who are absent on that great occasion will soon return to us. The solemn act which will take place within this building a few days hence will certainly resound throughout the world.

For those peoples who are watching us and who are still in doubt there could be no more convincing testimony, no more moving appeal to come and join us in our work of peace and universal collaboration.

In the region of Europe from which I come, this robust faith in what I do not hesitate to call the noblest of human institutions is an absolute necessity. For centuries war has ravaged this part of our continent. If we are to believe in peace, if we are to defend its sacred cause, we must feel that all peoples are animated by the same desire. Pessimists who sometimes indulge in the vain intellectual pastime of belittling the League of Nations and announcing its approaching ruin do not realise the painful effects which such thoughtless words may have in certain countries of Europe which, having known war only too well, sometimes find it difficult to believe that it will never break out again.

If we are firmly resolved to maintain peace, we must proclaim aloud our conviction that it will henceforth be inviolable. Many statesmen come here to these annual Assemblies for the renewed encouragement and faith which they require to enable them, on returning home, to pursue the sometimes difficult task of conciliation, moderation and peace.

During the seven years of its existence, the League of Nations has rendered eminent services to mankind, which was so sorely tried by the war. It is preparing to render it fresh services, but, even apart from the beneficent action which it exercises by direct means, its very existence is sufficient in itself to imbue the peoples with a new and hitherto unknown spirit.

I wonder what relations would exist, but for the League of Nations, between the peoples who through the war seemed fated to be for ever pitted one against another. If the work of moral reconciliation has already made such progress, it is to the League of Nations that this is due.

Lastly, is it not highly significant that we should find so many eminent statesmen, bearing the heavy responsibility of power in their own countries, coming quite naturally to meet each other at Geneva every year at this time, moved by a common desire to settle quarrels and bring about the reign of harmony and good-will among the peoples? How many misunderstandings which might have led to disastrous consequences have been dissipated through such personal contact; how many serious problems have found their solution at Geneva? Yet there are superficial and malicious minds which affect to believe that we are wasting time on mere academic discussions.

Such are the auspices under which the work of this Assembly opens. In your committees, and in this hall too, you will deal with the whole work of the League. You will have to define the programme for the coming months and to give to the representatives of all the countries assembled here guiding principles which they will gladly take back with them and defend and carry through to ultimate triumph, for the welfare and glory of that great community of peoples, the League of Nations.

6. — QUESTION OF THE COMPOSITION OF THE COUNCIL: LETTER FROM THE ACTING PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL COMMUNICATING THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED ON SEPTEMBER 4th, 1926.

The President :

Translation : Before asking you to take a decision regarding the agenda for the session which is before you, I think I should communicate to you the following letter, dated September 6th, which I have just received from the Acting President of the Council :

"I have the honour to communicate to you, and to ask you to be good enough to transmit to the Assembly, the attached resolution, which the Council, after taking note of the report of the Committee on the Composition of the Council, adopted at its meeting held on September 4th.

(Signed) BENEŠ
Acting President of the Council."

The resolution reads as follows :

"The Council, taking note of the resolution proposed by the delegate of France and passed by the special Assembly of March 1926 — which resolution reads as follows :

"The Assembly,

"Regrets that the difficulties encountered have prevented the attainment of the purpose for which it was convened,

"And expresses the hope that between now and the ordinary September session of 1926 these difficulties may be surmounted so as to make it possible for Germany to enter the League of Nations on that occasions';

"And, acting in pursuance of the wish expressed in that resolution :

"1. Approves the report of the Committee on the Composition of the Council ;

"2. In consequence and in virtue of the powers which it derives from Article 4 of the Covenant decides upon :

"(a) The appointment of Germany as a permanent Member of the Council upon her entry into the League of Nations ;

"(b) The increase in the number of the non-permanent seats to nine ;

"3. Recommends to the Assembly the approval of these decisions ;

"4. Commends to the favourable consideration of the Assembly the proposals made by the Committee as regards the method of election and tenure of the non-permanent seats."

The Assembly will note that this communication concerns Item 12 of the agenda. I would propose, therefore, that the Assembly should decide upon the action to be taken on this communication when I submit to it suggestions relating to that item of the agenda.

If there is no objection, I declare this proposal adopted.

The proposal was adopted.

7. — AGENDA : EXAMINATION AND ADOPTION.

The President :

Translation : In order to save time, and if no delegation asks for a vote, I propose that the Assembly adopt the agenda *en bloc*, that is to say, the questions contained in the document distributed to the Assembly, under Numbers 1 to 23 (Annex 1, document A.2.(1) 1926).

With regard to the supplementary list of items distributed after May 1st, 1926, I propose that the Assembly should take a separate decision in each case.

If there is no objection, I shall consider this proposal as adopted.

The proposal was adopted.

The first item on the Supplementary List is as follows :

Conclusion of an International Convention on Slavery and Conditions analogous thereto.

If there is no objection to the inclusion of this question, it will be entered as Item 23 of the agenda. (*Assent.*)

The second question on the Supplementary List is as follows :

Conference on Russian and Armenian Refugee Questions : Measures taken by Governments to give effect to the Terms of the Arrangement concluded at the Conference.

If there is no objection to the inclusion of this question, it will be entered as Item 24 of the agenda. (*Assent.*)

The third question on the Supplementary List is as follows :

Staff Provident Fund : Amendment to Article 6 of the Regulations provisionally made by the Council.

If there is no objection to the inclusion of this question, it will be entered as Item 25 of the agenda. (*Assent.*)

If there is no objection, I shall consider the agenda of the Seventh Session of the Assembly as adopted in the form proposed.

The agenda was adopted.

8. — CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES.

The President :

Translation : In accordance with precedent, the first matter to be decided by the Assembly is the constitution of its Committees. Before the General Committee of the Assembly can be established, the Committees must have elected their Chairmen, as the Chairmen of the Committees, together with the six Vice-Presidents elected by the Assembly, form the General Committee of the Assembly.

The Seventh Session of the Assembly will probably wish to follow the procedure adopted by previous Assemblies and form six Committees — the first to deal with constitutional and legal questions, the second with the work of the technical organisations, the third with the reduction of armaments, the fourth with budgetary and financial questions, the fifth with social questions, and the sixth with political questions.

In the light of experience gained at previous Assemblies, I would suggest that the meetings of the Committees should be arranged so as to alternate as follows: the First, Second and Sixth Committees would meet at the same time, as would the Third, Fourth and Fifth Committees.

If there is no objection, I shall consider these proposals adopted. (*Adopted.*)

As the Assembly has accepted these suggestions, the Secretariat will supply the delegations with forms on which to enter the names of their delegates and substitutes to sit on each Committee. As soon as these lists have been collated, each Committee will meet to elect its Chairman and Vice-Chairman. The Assembly can then proceed to elect the six Vice-Presidents, who, with the Chairmen of the Committees, constitute the General Committee of the Assembly.

9. — AGENDA COMMITTEE : APPOINTMENT.

The President :

Translation : As was done at previous Assemblies, I would suggest that a small Committee of seven members should be appointed to examine the question of the inscription of new items on the agenda.

If the Assembly agrees, and if there are no proposals by delegations concerning the names of the members of this Committee, I would venture to put forward the following list :

| | |
|----------------|------------------|
| M. DINO | (Albania), |
| Viscount CECIL | (British Empire) |
| M. URRUTIA | (Colombia), |
| M. NEMOURS | (Haiti), |
| M. GRANDI | (Italy), |
| M. BECH | (Luxemburg), |
| Prince CHAROON | (Siam). |

If no one has any objections to raise, I shall consider the list adopted. (*Adopted.*)

10. — AGENDA : DISTRIBUTION OF ITEMS AMONG THE COMMITTEES.

The President :

Translation : I think that the simplest procedure would be for the President, as usual, to submit suggestions concerning the distribution of the items on the agenda among the Committees.

I should first like to submit a proposal concerning Item 11 of the agenda :

Consideration of the Report of the First Committee of the Special Session of the Assembly on the Request of the German Government for Admission to the League of Nations.

And Item 12, which is as follows :

Such report or proposals as the Council may decide to make after considering the Report of the Committee on the Composition of the Council appointed by the Council resolution of March 18th, 1926.

With this last question might be coupled the letter and resolution which the Acting President of the Council forwarded to me and which I have just

read. We noted that this communication concerned Item 12. I think the Assembly will agree with me that it would be well to place the General Committee, as soon as constituted, in a position to submit proposals so that the Assembly may decide upon the procedure to be followed as regard both Items 11 and 12 and the various paragraphs of the resolution communicated by the Council.

If there is no objection, I shall consider that the Assembly has accepted my proposal to submit these various questions to the General Committee for previous examination. The General Committee will meet as soon as constituted, and I will in due course communicate to you the results of its examination.

The proposal was adopted.

I propose that the other items on the agenda should be distributed as follows :

Items 13, 14, 15, 16 and 19 might be dealt with by the Second Committee; Item 20 by the Third Committee; Items 10, 21 and 25 by the Fourth Committee; Items 9, 17, 18 and 24 by the Fifth Committee; and Item 23 by the Sixth Committee.

With regard to Items 7 and 8, I think I shall be interpreting the opinion of the Assembly in proposing the allocation of these questions to the First and Third Committees, which would decide which parts of the questions they should respectively examine.

If the Assembly accepts my proposals, the various items on the Agenda will be distributed among the Committees as follows :

First Committee : Certain aspects of Items 7 and 8.

Second Committee : Items 13, 14, 15, 16 and 19.

Third Committee : Item 20 and certain aspects of Items 7 and 8.

Fourth Committee : Items 10, 21 and 25.

Fifth Committee : Items 9, 17, 18 and 24.

Sixth Committee : Item 23.

Do any delegations wish to make observations on the distribution of work which I have proposed ?

If there is no objection, the arrangement is adopted. (*Assent.*)

In order that the Committees may proceed without delay to the election of their respective Chairmen, I would propose that they should meet to-morrow morning at the Salle de la Réformation in the following order :

First Committee, 10 a.m. ; Second Committee, 10.20 a.m. ; Third Committee, 10.40 a.m. ; Fourth Committee, 11 a.m. ; Fifth Committee, 11.20 a.m. ; Sixth Committee, 11.40 a.m. (*Assent.*)

Dr. Nansen, first delegate of Norway, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Nansen (Norway) :

I do not know what the reason is, but I have not been able to hear a word of what has been said. I would ask that we should be supplied as soon as possible with a record of the decisions taken to-day, because we do not know them. Perhaps nothing very important has been decided — I hope not — but important things may have been said which

have escaped our attention, and I do not think that we can be quite bound by them now, as we do not know what has happened. I propose that we receive as soon as possible a record of the decisions taken to-day.

The President: *Translation*: I will note this remark, which has to do with a notorious defect in this hall, namely, its poor acoustic properties.

There is only one real remedy for this defect, and that is to build a new hall. In the meantime, as my voice does not carry sufficiently, I think that those of my colleagues who understand English — and the delegate of Norway is one of them — might

listen to the interpreter, whose voice is more powerful than mine and who can certainly be heard quite well as a rule.

To return to Dr. Nansen's proposal, we will, as usual, proceed as rapidly as possible with the distribution of the report of this meeting.

I would avail myself of the opportunity provided by the Norwegian delegate's observations to request the members of the Assembly to be good enough to remain silent. This might counteract to some extent the defective acoustics to which he referred.

The Assembly rose at 5.30 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE
SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY
OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

THIRD PLENARY MEETING

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7th, 1926, AT NOON

CONTENTS :

11. ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.
12. VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE ASSEMBLY.
Election of six Vice-Presidents.
13. PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES.
Communication by the President.

11. — ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES

The President :

Translation : The following is a list of the Chairmen elected this morning by the Committees :

| Committees | Chairmen |
|------------|---|
| No. I. | M. MOTTA (Switzerland), |
| II. | Mr. FITZGERALD (Irish Free State), |
| III. | M. VILLEGAS (Chile), |
| IV. | M. TIFULESCO (Roumania), |
| V. | M. MENSENDORFF-POUILLY- DIETRICHSTEIN (Austria), |
| VI. | M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium). |

12. — ELECTION OF THE SIX VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE ASSEMBLY

The President :

Translation : Under Rule 7, paragraph 1, of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, the agenda includes the election of the six Vice-Presidents.

Under Rule 21, paragraph 3, of the Rules of Procedure, this election takes place by secret ballot.

I call upon M. Mensdorff (Austria) and M. Villegas (Chile) to be good enough to act as tellers.

The votes of the delegation were taken in turn by secret ballot.

The President :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — The result of the ballot is as follows :

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Number of States voting | 46 |
| Voting papers valid | 46 |
| Majority required | 24 |

The analysis of the voting is as follows :

| | |
|--|----------|
| Sir Austen CHAMBERLAIN (British Empire) | 44 votes |
| M. BRIAND (France) | 43 " |
| Viscount ISHII (Japan) | 43 " |
| M. SCIALOJA (Italy) | 42 " |
| M. FIGUEROA (Guatemala) | 29 " |
| Baron LEHMANN (Liberia) | 24 " |
| M. BECH (Luxemburg) | 18 " |
| M. SETÄLÄ (Finland) | 11 " |

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure, I have the honour to declare the following delegates Vice-Presidents of the Assembly : Sir Austen Chamberlain, M. Briand, Viscount Ishii, M. Scialoja, M. Figueroa and Baron Lehmann.

13. — PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEES : COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

Translation : In order to avoid loss of time, I propose that the Committees should meet this afternoon at the offices of the Secretariat in the following order :

The First, Second and Sixth Committees at 4.30 p.m.

The Third, Fourth and Fifth Committees at 6 p.m.

The Committees will thus be able to appoint their bureaux and study their agendas, so as to begin the discussion of the questions submitted to them at their next meeting.

Finally, I suggest that the General Committee should meet at 3 o'clock this afternoon in the Secretary-General's office.

As we have now come to the end of the agenda, I will close the meeting.

The Assembly rose at 12.35 p.m

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FOURTH PLENARY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8th, 1926, AT 10 A.M.

CONTENTS :

14. REQUEST OF THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT FOR ADMISSION TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND QUESTION OF THE COMPOSITION OF THE COUNCIL.
Proposals of the General Committee of the Assembly.
15. APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE AS A MEMBER OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.
Communication by the President.
16. COMPOSITION OF THE FINNISH DELEGATION.
Communication by the President.

14. — REQUEST OF THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT FOR ADMISSION TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND QUESTION OF THE COMPOSITION OF THE COUNCIL.

The President :

Translation : There has been distributed to the delegations a document¹ containing the proposals which the General Committee decided to submit to the Assembly concerning Questions 11 and 12 on the agenda and the Council's resolution of September 4th communicated to the Assembly at its meeting on the afternoon of September 6th.

The proposals of the General Committee are as follows :

"The General Committee of the Assembly proposes that there should be a plenary meeting of the Assembly on Wednesday, September 8th, at 10 o'clock, with the following agenda, which comprises Questions 11 and 12 on the agenda of the Assembly :

" 1. Consideration of the report of the First Committee of the Special Session of the Assembly on the request of the German Government for admission to the League of Nations.

¹ Document A. 49. 1926.

" 2. Consideration of the resolution adopted by the Council on September 4th, 1926, in regard to :

(a) The nomination of Germany as a permanent Member of the Council.

(b) The increase to nine of the number of non-permanent seats on the Council.

" 3. Consideration of the proposals made by the Committee instructed to study the question of the composition of the Council as regards the method of election and tenure of the non-permanent seats.

"The General Committee proposes that the Assembly should determine, in accordance with Rule 14, paragraph 2, of its Rules of Procedure, to decide on Items 1 and 2 on the above agenda without reference to a Committee.

"The General Committee proposes that Question 3 on the above agenda should be referred to the First Committee with the request that a report on the subject be presented to the full Assembly at the earliest possible date.

"The General Committee has asked M. Motta, delegate of Switzerland, to present its proposal to the Assembly."

M. Motta, first delegate of Switzerland, will address the Assembly.

M. Motta (Switzerland) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The General Committee of the Assembly has entrusted me with the task of giving you a verbal report on the proposals which I have the honour to submit to you on its behalf.

My task, though perhaps not difficult, is extremely delicate. I therefore feel that I should at the outset claim your indulgence and your sympathy.

With your permission I will divide my report into two parts. I will first deal with certain questions of procedure and then briefly with the fundamental question involved.

As regards procedure, the General Committee suggests that you should employ the most direct and expeditious means of attaining our object. It asks you to consider the matter yourselves without referring it to one of the Committees. It is true that under the Rules of Procedure all matters coming up for decision by the Assembly should first be considered by one of the Committees. Rule 14, paragraph 2, of the Rules of Procedure, however, lays down that the Assembly, by a majority of two-thirds, may take up and debate any subject directly, that is to say, without referring it previously to one of the Committees. We ask you to make use of this power. We ask this because the usual procedure would seem in this case to be unnecessary. On the contrary, the summary procedure would seem to be called for in the circumstances.

If the employment of the summary procedure were in any way to interfere with the liberty of the Assembly, the General Committee would not have made this proposal. Indeed, we consider that the complete liberty and authority of the Assembly are necessary for the discussion of questions of principles which are raised.

There are three things to be considered. First, the admission of Germany to the League; secondly, the granting to her of a permanent seat on the Council, in ratification of the unanimous decision already adopted by the Council itself; and, thirdly, the simultaneous increase of the number of non-permanent, *i.e.*, elective, seats from six to nine.

The first of these questions is more than ripe; it is much over ripe. The First Committee of the Special Session of the Assembly held in March presented, on March 11th, a unanimous report proposing the admission of Germany to the League. The Rapporteur was the first delegate of the British Empire, our distinguished colleague, Sir Austen Chamberlain. You all know how the March Assembly was prevented from completing the task for which it was convened.

The allocation of a permanent seat on the Council is one of the conditions laid down by Germany in submitting her request for admission to the League. It is obvious that these two questions — admission to the League and the allocation of a permanent seat — must be considered *pari passu*.

The third point in the proposals submitted to you is, as I have said, the increase in the number of non-permanent seats on the Council.

The President of the Council, who gave the General Committee all necessary explanations at its meeting yesterday, stated that in the intentions of the Council the allocation of a permanent seat to Germany and the increase from six to nine in the number of non-permanent seats constituted two inter-locking actions. The resolution therefore forms a single whole.

If the two questions had had to be separated, it was by no means certain that the necessary unanimity would be obtained in the Council. It is not, therefore, possible, speaking politically, to refer to a Committee the question of the non-permanent seats without referring to it the other two questions at the same time.

I would point out that these two questions, which are quite distinct, should not be confused; I refer to the question of the increase from six to nine in the number of the non-permanent Members of the Council and that of the rules to be applied by the Assembly in the election of these non-permanent Members.

This last question is referred to the First Committee, which will give it most careful consideration and will shortly present its report with its proposals.

To sum up: the immediate procedure is indicated, but this will not interfere with the Assembly's

liberty of discussion. I hope you will accept the General Committee's views.

I have still a few remarks to make on the fundamental question involved. This forms the second part of my report. I will be as brief as possible.

The admission of Germany to the League has, in my opinion, always been a vital necessity. This feeling has been strengthened year by year. It is no longer questioned by anyone. That is one of the most striking proofs of the great impulse which the establishment of the League of Nations gave to ideals of peace, conciliation and arbitration.

The admission of Germany to the League will realise one of the dearest wishes of the Swiss people, which I have the great honour to represent here among you. I venture to add that I humbly rejoice no less on this account.

The allocation of a permanent seat to Germany is one of those ideas which have in public opinion the force of elementary truth. Whether it is right or not that the Covenant should *de jure* grant permanent seats to great Powers is an open question.

The discussion of this subject, although closed to-day, may perhaps be resumed at some more or less distant date. The pros and cons of the question are very evenly balanced.

I am not so devoid of all sense of political reality as to ignore the full weight of the reasons that militate in favour of permanent seats, but it is none the less true that the theory of permanent seats is not altogether in conformity with democratic doctrines as we conceive them or with the theory of equality among nations.

However, I do not propose to discuss that question to-day. This is neither the hour nor the place for such a discussion. It is obvious that if the great Powers are given permanent seats, Germany, being beyond all doubt a great Power, could not, cannot, enter the League except upon the condition that she also obtains a permanent seat on the Council.

The question of the increase in the number of non-permanent seats, however, is another matter. I am prompted to make this observation by my sense of justice and equity in debate. This question may be, indeed has been, the subject of much controversy. I realise only too well the reasons which militate both against an increase in the number of the non-permanent seats and against an excessive increase in that number.

The great honour of presiding over the Committee on the Composition of the Council fell to me. I considered it my duty, since that Committee was in a position to examine all the aspects, all the facets, of the problem, to indicate what, in my view, were the reasons against an increase.

There are two reasons which I do not propose to dwell upon or to develop particularly, but which I wish to indicate in order to show you that the problem before us has been considered in the necessary atmosphere of calm and tranquillity.

One of the reasons against increasing the number of the non-permanent seats is the danger lest the Council, were it to become too large, should be tempted to assume too great a measure of power, with the result that the Assembly would suffer — though quite unintentionally on the part of the Council — a loss of prestige and authority.

If — as I trust will be the case, and as I urge you to decide — the number of permanent seats is increased, we shall have to see that the Assembly's sovereignty remains inviolate, for we must never forget that it is in the Assembly, especially when unanimous, that the pulse of the world beats.

The second reason is that an unduly large Council might, in view of the rule demanding unanimity, be hampered or handicapped in its working and actions.

These are, I think, the two principal reasons which may honestly be adduced against an increase in the number of the non-permanent seats and, in general, against too large a Council.

But there are also weighty, and at the present time, in my opinion, conclusive, reasons in favour of an increase.

When I say that these reasons are conclusive, I must admit that I too have had to make an effort of mind and conscience as I trust every delegate will do—to weigh and decide, with a full knowledge of the facts, the reasons which conscience and mind show to be conclusive.

The chief reason in favour of the increase is that we must in future strike a more equitable balance between the interests of the different continents. Latin America has no permanent seat, and you know that it has not been possible to satisfy the desire expressed by one of the Latin-American States. Since this continent has no permanent seat, it seems only fair that we should be generous towards it in the allocation of non-permanent seats and this is the reason why first the Committee, and then the Council, proposed, and are now proposing to you, to give three non-permanent seats to Latin America.

The experience of past years, moreover, has shown us how painful it was for the Assembly to vote each year a recommendation addressed to itself, inviting itself to take into account the big geographical divisions of the world, and each year to find it morally impossible to fulfil the obligation it had thus imposed upon itself. Thus, one of the largest Asiatic States was unable to gain election to the Council though we all thought at the time that she ought in fairness to be represented there.

The second reason for increasing the number of non-permanent seats is the necessity for reconciling the principle of rotation, by which all, or almost all, the States of the Assembly will one day be able to take their seat on the Council, with the need which may exist, which does exist, and which has existed, as we all realise, to take into account the political exigencies, the meritorious services and the aspirations of certain States in particular circumstances.

That is why the Committee and the Council, while proposing to increase the number of non-permanent seats, have also recommended greater flexibility in the system of rotation by providing, subject to a two-thirds majority of the Assembly, for exceptions to the rule by which a State whose period of re-election to the Council has come to an end is no longer re-eligible.

Finally, the third reason which, apart from all purely academic theories, militates in favour of increasing the number of the non-permanent seats, the reason which statesmen regard as conclusive, is that it was imperative to put an end to the crisis. If for this purpose it was necessary to sacrifice some preferences, some opinions, some views, it was impossible, if we were to find a solution, to refuse to make the necessary sacrifice on the altar of the common weal.

There is a proverb which may be aptly quoted here: *primum vivere deinde philosophare*. The question of the best constitution for the Council could be discussed to the end of time, but the best solution will always be that which obtains the unanimous suffrages of the Assembly.

The good-will and the spirit of conciliation which prevailed in the Committee and later in the Council will, I hope, I trust, I beg of you, prevail in the Assembly also. This will be an historic day. Discussion of internal organisation will cease for a time, and the League will be able to devote its energies to the concrete tasks that await it—international collaboration in every field, the

codification of law, the development of pacific methods for the solution of disputes, disarmament. To-day will be a day of reconciliation and justice. The work of Locarno that prospered in the sunlit little city to which I am so deeply attached—since it is one of the jewels of my homeland, the little Canton of Ticino—will at length be fully and effectively safeguarded for all time.

From my student days I call to mind some lines of the poet Lucretius. They occur in his great poem *De Rerum Natura*. At the opening of the poem Lucretius invokes the Goddess of Love and Life:

“Terrible the sufferings of Rome from war, but the sky at length has cleared.”

“*Placatumque nitet effuso lumine coelum.*”

For many years past the sky of Europe has been overcast with grief and darkened with the lowering clouds of anxiety. May God in His goodness at length restore to us, through the medium of the League of Nations, the quickening sun of peace and justice!

The President:

Translation: M Loudon, first delegate of the Netherlands, will address the Assembly.

M Loudon (Netherlands):

Translation: Mr President, ladies and gentlemen—The General Committee of the Assembly, adopting the resolution of the Council, proposes that, in conformity with the second paragraph of Article 14 of the Rules of Procedure, we should now agree to take a decision on Items 1 and 2 of the agenda of the present meeting without first referring them to a Committee of the Assembly.

As regards the first question, namely, the admission of Germany to the League, there can be no objection, since her admission was unanimously voted by the Committee of the Special Session of the Assembly appointed to examine the matter in March of this year.

Nor shall I, in the present circumstances oppose the adoption of the second item. I should, however, be lacking in frankness if I did not declare that, in my opinion, despite what has just been said by the Rapporteur, M. Motta, it is a mistake to link the question of a permanent seat on the Council for Germany—which no one, as we all know, has any desire to refuse—with the question of an increase in the number of non-permanent seats, a matter on which opinions are divided.

I consider that such a procedure amounts to forcing the Assembly's hand, and that even if we agree to it as an exceptional measure, with the sole object of avoiding fresh complications, the Assembly has a right, and indeed is morally bound, to express its profound disappointment.

I did not come to this platform to raise objections: I realise too well the difficulties with which we are faced. At the same time, those of you who were present at the meeting of the Third Session of the Assembly on September 25th, 1922, will not be surprised to hear the delegate of the Netherlands declare himself opposed to the principle of an increase in the number of Members of the Council. On the occasion to which I refer, we alone voted against the proposal for an additional two seats. My late colleague, Professor Struycken, explained the reasons for our vote in the following terms:

“The solidarity and collective responsibility of the Council will diminish.”

And his concluding words were :

"If this year we admit a radical transformation of the principal organ of the League . . . by reason of the aspirations of political groups . . . what guarantee have we that . . . every year the composition of the Council will not be determined in accordance with the ephemeral state of affairs at the moment ?"

The Assembly ignored his arguments, and by 44 votes to 1 (the Netherlands delegation) increased the Members of the Council by two. The suggestion now before us is that it should be increased by no less than four !

In the space of four years, therefore, we shall have increased the number of seats from eight to fourteen. Consider what danger this involves for the League, if the proper balance is to be maintained between the Assembly and the Council and if the necessary unanimity is to be obtained in the Council ! Consider what difficulties may arise whenever it becomes necessary to convene the Council suddenly, if some political question calls for immediate decision !

These objections were clearly set forth in the Committee of Fifteen ; the Minutes of its proceedings show how forcibly M. Scialoja, M. Sjöborg and M. Le Breton opposed any further extension of the Council. M. Scialoja's concluding words were : "The smaller the increase the better ; best of all would be no increase at all."

Nevertheless, the opponents of the scheme, acting in a spirit of conciliation and desirous of amending the rather painful situation which arose out of what has too often been called the "crisis in the League", have finally agreed on the proposed compromise, by which the number of non-permanent seats is raised to nine.

The Netherlands delegation will adopt the same course, and for the same reasons. We desire to state, however, that we still maintain all our previous objections to the extension of the Council ; if it were feasible, we would even urge that the number of non-permanent seats should again be reduced to four, the number existing up to 1922, even if our country itself were never to have a seat on the Council, for as I declared with the most profound conviction at the Assembly in March of this year the spirit which should, in my opinion, animate the League — but which, as we have seen to our regret, does not always do so — should place the interests of the community above the *amour-propre* of individual Members.

The Netherlands delegation, constrained by circumstances, is thus prepared, to support this further proposal to increase the number of non-permanent seats. We accept it as a temporary expedient, with the sole object of surmounting the difficulties which have arisen.

Having said so much, we now proclaim our satisfaction — a feeling which is, I know, shared by the whole Assembly — that this day should witness a further step in the application of that principle of universality so essential to the evolution of the League by the admission of another great Power — Germany — and that this proposal should be passed not merely by a majority, but by the unanimous vote of the Assembly.

The President :

Translation : Dr. Nansen, first delegate of Norway, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Nansen (Norway) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Norwegian Government is very happy that we have at last come so far, that there is a very near prospect of Germany entering the League and taking her proper place amongst its Members,

That the prospect of this happy result is so very much better now than it was even in March, is due to the work of the special Committee on the Composition of the Council. Our Government recognises that immense difficulties have been overcome by that Committee and that it has deeply changed the situation for the better by its well-ordered debates and by the methods of publicity which it has brought to bear on all the aspects of the question.

We are also convinced that the proposal of the General Committee of the Assembly, which is now before us, is inspired by the desire to settle this question as soon as possible, to end this unhappy period and to open the way for the League to proceed with its proper work of reconstruction. No one can be more anxious than the Norwegian Government and the Norwegian delegation that this should be achieved at the earliest possible moment.

Having said this, I am, however, bound to say that my Government has the gravest misgivings about some parts of the proposal. These misgivings arise from the fact that during all the past difficult period there have been serious departures from the proper constitutional methods of the League. Of the lamentable events in March, I need say nothing. Everybody in this hall regrets them as much as we do and if we have learnt nothing from them our bitter disappointment will have been in vain. Yet even now part of what has been done and certain of the proposals made do not seem to us to be quite constitutional.

For instance, on Saturday last the Council decided to grant a permanent seat among its Members to a State which was not a Member of the League. We rejoice in that decision on every ground except one. We believe that it was not consistent with the strict terms of Article 4 of the Covenant and on the grounds of constitutional principles alone, therefore, we regret that it could not have been done otherwise.

Similarly, we deeply regret the proposal of the General Committee of the Assembly that the questions of the permanent seat and the increase in the number of the non-permanent seats are linked together and that they should both have been dealt with without the usual reference to a Committee. For our part, we have to admit that the explanation given in this connection does not appear conclusive. The explanation given just now by the Rapporteur, that the permanent seat on the Council might not be given to Germany unless this Assembly raised the number of non-permanent Members to nine, surprised us, and we sincerely hope that it may be based upon some misunderstanding. We deeply deplore that these two questions, being linked thus together, prevented us from voting freely on them separately as we desired.

We entirely agree with every word of the views which have just been expressed by our honourable colleague, the delegate for the Netherlands on this subject. Ever since the beginning of the League, the granting of a permanent seat to Germany has always seemed to practically every Member of the League as right and inevitable.

The increase in the number of the non-permanent Members is an entirely different matter. It is a new proposal which no one ever heard of until a few months ago and of which most of the Members of the Assembly have only had formal notification this morning. It is a proposal which we consider to be of vital importance for the future of the League. A similar proposal for an increase from four to six was discussed for weeks in the First Committee and in Sub-Committee before it was adopted by the full Assembly.

This new proposal, which is infinitely more serious, because it increases the size of the Council to the unwieldy number of fourteen, we are now asked to accept without any similar discussion, and without any chance of debating the matter on its merits. I wish to emphasise that only fifteen Members out of fifty-five have had any opportunity of expressing an opinion on this particular proposal, whether in the special Committee, which the Council set up, or in the Council itself, or by written communication. Forty Members of the League have had no opportunity until this morning, of expressing their views, and yet we are asked to accept this very serious increase without any time for consideration and practically at sight. We understand the reasons of those who urge this procedure, but we nevertheless feel that it involves an infringement of the full liberty of the Members of the Assembly and that, if it were accepted as a precedent, it might constitute a very serious menace to the future working of the League.

I will not develop other points on which I might dwell. We do not propose to move any counter proposal; we do not propose to take any action which will prevent a rapid solution of the problem or which will disturb the full harmony which ought to mark the entry of Germany into the League.

We want to make this declaration, and we want it to be considered as the most solemn protest we can make against any form of unconstitutional procedure; we desire to close it with a fervent appeal to the Members of the Council, and to other leaders of the League, to uphold with scrupulous care the sound and constitutional methods which have proved satisfactory in the past and to help in every way to safeguard the rights of the Assembly which is and must be the supreme organ of the League, and thus to build up its authority and discretion. We make this appeal because we are absolutely convinced that only these methods can create the true League spirit of co-operation and confidence which is vital to its future success.

The President :

Translation : M. Löfgren, delegate of Sweden, will address the Assembly.

M. Löfgren (Sweden) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — After what has been said by the Rapporteur and by the previous speaker, I have only to make a declaration in order to express the views of my Government and of the Swedish delegation on the question now before us.

It has been proposed by the President that the admission of Germany to the League, the granting to Germany of a permanent seat on the Council, and the question of increasing the number of the non-permanent Members from six to nine — all these questions should be treated as one question and should not be referred to a Committee. I feel bound, on principle, to join in certain reservations already made to this procedure, although I do not wish under the present circumstances to ask for a division on the question.

I also respectfully submit that the granting to Germany of a permanent seat on the Council has, as a matter of procedure, no material connection with the creation of new non-permanent seats. The admission of Germany as a permanent Member of the Council has, from the outset, been made an integral condition of her membership and has thus been known to all the Members of the Assembly and has in fact, if not in form, been already agreed to by all of us here present.

On the other hand, the creation of three new non-permanent seats has hitherto not been considered in any way. This question, moreover, is in its turn intimately connected with the regulations proposed by the Committee, regulations which are entirely within the sole competence of the Assembly.

It is true that countries like my own had the privilege of studying the whole of this problem in the Committee appointed by the Council. While loyally collaborating for the purpose of reaching an agreement, we have thus had the opportunity of expressing our serious doubts as to the wisdom of the proposed increase in the Council and of formulating the conditions which we for our part felt bound to attach to the acceptance of a scheme which we considered fraught with certain dangers for the future development of the League. While now agreeing to the proposed extension of the Council, we do this for the purpose of saving the League from what is, perhaps, the gravest crisis that has occurred in its short existence.

In my view, however, all the other Members of the League who have not been members of the Committee should not, in my view, have been deprived of their right and freedom to deliberate on this vital problem in accordance with the ordinary procedure of the League. I feel, therefore, that, whereas the question of Germany's permanent seat on the Council, which is universally accepted, could be decided at once, the question of the increase in the number of the non-permanent seats should have been referred separately to a Committee together with the proposed regulations.

I venture very respectfully to think it a mistake, when dealing with a problem of this magnitude, not to have had sufficient confidence in the political judgment of the Assembly as to enable it to treat the question laid before it by the Council in accordance with its ordinary procedure.

In conclusion, I express the fervent hope that the present exception which has been made in the ordinary procedure of the Assembly will not be considered as a precedent for the future.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly has before it the proposals submitted by M. Motta on behalf of the General Committee of the Assembly. Before asking you to take a decision on the procedure to be followed in regard to these proposals, I would remind you that the General Committee proposes that one of them — the third — should be referred to the First Committee, which will be asked to report on it. The third proposal reads as follows :

“Consideration of the proposals made by the Committee instructed to study the question of the composition of the Council as regards the method of election and tenure of the non-permanent seats.”

I think the Assembly will agree that there is no objection to the reference of this resolution to the First Committee without further formality.

Question 3 was referred to the First Committee.
As regards the first proposal made by M. Motta on behalf of the General Committee, the Assembly must decide first of all whether it desires to discuss it forthwith.

If no one wishes to speak, I declare that, in accordance with Article 14, paragraph 2, of the Rules of Procedure, the Assembly, without taking a vote, unanimously decides to discuss this proposal immediately. (*Assent.*)

The Assembly having decided upon the immediate discussion of the first proposal submitted by

M. Motta, I will now read the following draft resolution :

"Subject to the approval of the Council resolution mentioned in Point 2 of the agenda of the present meeting, the Assembly approves the report of the First Committee of the Special Session of the Assembly on the request of the German Government for admission to the League of Nations."

According to the conclusions of the report, therefore, the Assembly will now have to take a decision regarding the admission of Germany to the League of Nations.

Under the second paragraph of Article 1 of the Covenant, the Assembly must take its decision on this admission by a two-thirds majority.

The vote will be taken by roll-call. The name of each delegation will be called out, and one of its members will answer either "yes", "no", or "I abstain from voting". The result of the vote will be duly registered and announced.

(The vote was taken by roll-call.)

The President :

Translation : The result of the voting is as follows :

Number of States voting : 48.

All the delegations have voted in favour of the admission of Germany to the League.

I therefore proclaim that Germany is admitted to the League of Nations by a unanimous decision of the Assembly.

I think that we may congratulate ourselves upon the step that has just been taken. It vindicates those who, last March, never lost heart despite the difficulties which we all deplored — difficulties which could not have been foreseen and which may always arise to stop any great measure of progress.

By this vote we have accomplished one of the most necessary and at the same time one of the most difficult tasks with which the League has been faced — one, too, which is of momentous importance for its future. I feel sure I shall be voicing the unanimous feeling of the Assembly in expressing my joy, my very legitimate satisfaction, at the step which the Assembly has just taken, and also in expressing the hope that the representatives of Germany will take their places among us as soon as possible.

I will now ask you to take a decision on the second draft resolution proposed by M. Motta on behalf of the General Committee of the Assembly.

The draft resolution reads as follows :

"The Assembly approves the proposals put forward by the Council in its resolution of September 4th, 1926, regarding :

"(a) The nomination of Germany as a permanent Member of the Council ;

"(b) The increase in the number of non-permanent seats, which shall be brought up to nine."

In accordance with the second paragraph of Article 4 of the Covenant, the Assembly is asked to approve the Council's proposals by a simple majority.

The second paragraph of Article 4 of the Covenant reads as follows :

"With the approval of the majority of the Assembly, the Council may name additional Members of the League whose representatives shall always be Members of the Council ; the Council with like approval may increase the number of Members of the League to be selected by the Assembly for representation on the Council."

If there is no objection, I will at once proceed with the roll-call for the second proposal. The vote will be taken in accordance with Article 20 of the Rules of Procedure.

Dr. Nansen (Norway) :

Is it decided that we are not to refer the matter to a Committee ?

The President :

Translation : That has already been decided. We voted for immediate discussion. The roll-call will now be taken.

The vote was taken by roll-call.

The President :

Translation : The result of the vote is as follows :

Number of States voting : 48

All the delegations voted in favour of the resolution.

I therefore declare that the second resolution has been unanimously adopted.

The Assembly having approved the Council's proposals by the necessary majority, the conditions laid down in the second paragraph of Article 4 of the Covenant have been fulfilled.

Accordingly, Germany is now included among the Members of the League which are permanently represented on the Council, and the number of Members of the League to be elected by the Assembly for representation on the Council, has been raised to nine.

15. — APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE AS A MEMBER OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY: COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

Translation : At its meeting yesterday, the General Committee decided to follow last year's procedure and propose that the Chairman of the Agenda Committee should be appointed a member of the General Committee of the Assembly.

If there is no objection, I shall regard this proposal as accepted. (*Assent.*)

16. — COMPOSITION OF THE FINNISH DELEGATION: COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

Translation : I have just received from the Finnish delegation a letter informing me that, in accordance with the first paragraph of Article 6 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, M. Hugo Valvanne will act as a substitute delegate for Finland.

The Assembly rose at 12.5 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FIFTH PLENARY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8th, 1926, AT 4 P.M.

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17. — MAINTENANCE OF ORDER IN THE
ASSEMBLY HALL: COMMUNICATION BY
THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

Translation: Before we begin the agenda, I wish to communicate a decision taken by the General Committee at yesterday's meeting concerning the maintenance of order in the Assembly Hall. This decision has been published in the Assembly Journal, but I think that, in view of its importance, it would be well to have it read here. It is as follows :

"Decision of the General Committee of the Assembly.

"1. The ground floor of the Assembly Hall, except the reserved seats at the back, is intended exclusively for delegates, substitute delegates, experts, advisers, secretaries and members of the Secretariat. The public or members of the families of the persons mentioned above will not be admitted to this part of the hall.

"2. In conformity with the practice followed in national Parliaments, no applause will be allowed in the galleries reserved for the Press and for the public."

I will accordingly draw the attention of the public to the necessity of abstaining from any sort of manifestation. The interest that everyone

takes in the work of the Assembly is quite understandable, but, however interested it may be, the public has no right to display its feelings. This might interfere with the work of the Assembly. I think everyone will understand this and will in future abstain from any public manifestation.

18. — THE REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE
COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT.

The President :

Translation: The first item on the agenda is the discussion of the report to the Seventh Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the League of Nations on the Work of the Council, on the Work of the Secretariat and on the Measures taken to execute the Decisions of the Assembly (Annexes 2, 2(a) and 2(b), documents A.6. and 6(a) 1926). Count Moltke, first delegate of Denmark, will address the Assembly.

Count Moltke (Denmark) :

Translation: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — In addressing you for the first time, I should like at the outset, on behalf of the Danish Government, to give this illustrious Assembly, the distinguished persons composing it and the League which we are all here to serve, an assurance of our feelings of cordial fraternity, profound respect and unshakable confidence in the work which is being done.

Even though at the outset we could legitimately express our confidence in the League's work, and even though these expressions of confidence have, despite passing difficulties, been justified by the course of events in the first years of the existence of the League, yet it seems to me that, in this last year especially, its development has shown many hopeful signs.

I make no claim to draw up a balance-sheet of the great work accomplished by the League in any particular period of its existence, but in looking through the report on the work of the

Council — which is the subject of to-day's discussion — I cannot pass over in silence certain aspects of its work which perhaps display these reassuring signs in the brightest light.

May I refer to the solution of the Greco-Bulgarian dispute in October of last year? The dispute broke out on October 19th: nine days later the incident was closed, the menace to peace which it involved was averted thanks to the authority which the League and the Council already possessed, thanks to the prompt action of the Council and the highly commendable good-will displayed by the two Governments concerned, which constituted, as the report says, an example — I might say an admirable example — of the conduct which might be expected of Members of the League of Nations between whom some incident has arisen which threatens the peace of the world. This peaceful solution set up a new jurisprudence, as was so aptly pointed out on that occasion by the Right Hon. Sir Austen Chamberlain.

I would mention, too, the solution of the Mosul affair. I do not propose to go into the details of that important question. I simply desire to remind you of the great and beneficial endeavours made by the Council to conciliate the claims of the parties concerned, the important advisory opinion given on November 21st, 1925, by the Permanent Court of International Justice, and the agreement concluded directly afterwards between Great Britain, Iraq and Turkey, an agreement desired and welcomed by every friend of peace.

I wish also to dwell upon the importance of the auspicious event in which we took part this morning — the admission of Germany as a Member of the League. We have spoken hitherto of certain reassuring features; we now have every reason, I think, to rejoice profoundly on the occasion of this event, so long awaited, so full of promise for the future. We extend a cordial welcome to this new Member, who will take among us the place that awaited her and was due to her. The entry of Germany — a vital necessity for the development of the League in accordance with the principles forming the basis of the Covenant — gives us reason to view with confidence the outcome of our policy of reconciliation and co-operation. It also signifies a further step towards the aim upon which our hopes are set — the universality of the League.

Apart, however, from its direct action in any given matter, the League exercises a further action by reason of its fundamental qualities, its very existence as an instrument of good, its permanence and its receptivity to ideas which serve the great cause of peace. The fact that during the last few years the League has occupied a preponderating and increasing part in the proceedings of the Parliaments of the States Members deserves attention. Of even greater significance is the fact that these proceedings have served to bring the work of the League to fruition in those very States, just as the individual work of those States or groups of States in this or that domain of the policy of international understanding serves to bring to fruition the ideas on which the League is based. Reflex action of this nature is of the highest importance. It finds, and has found from the very beginning, ground prepared for its beneficent influence in the conditions arising out of the permanence of the League. Formerly, Conferences were held: sometimes their purpose was attained, but sometimes they proved abortive, or the situation remained uncertain or unsolved. The merit, the incontestable merit, of the League, is that its voice has always been heard urging the same principles during the seven years which have elapsed since its foundation.

Even when a proposal has not been adopted in its original form, it has been possible to continue the discussion and to resume the thread thanks to the experience acquired; many ideas and principles incorporated in proposals which have not been fully carried out still persist and govern our proceedings. In other words, there has been no backward step. We have behind us a record of patient, laborious and persevering work, of work calculated to consolidate this immense foundation and to reduce the sceptics to silence.

Ladies and gentlemen, I spoke just now of the individual work of the States in the cause of peace. I would remind you in a few words of what Denmark has done during this last year in pursuance of our traditional policy and in entire conformity with the principles laid down by the League.

On September 25th, 1925, the Assembly passed a resolution calling the attention of States Members of the League to the desirability, from the point of view of their security, of concluding particular conventions for arbitration or for the judicial settlement of disputes.

The purpose of this resolution was to emphasise not only the great importance of the conclusion of such conventions for the contracting States themselves, but also the indirect support which they afford to joint international efforts designed to promote the great objects set forth in the Covenant of the League, objects which may be summed up in the formula: arbitration, security, reduction of armaments.

I have always regarded the means advocated in the resolution of September 25th as highly beneficial. It has this advantage among others — that it enables each State to show by its actions that it is prepared to take its share in the realisation of these lofty aims. Hence the Danish Government took immediate advantage of the opportunity provided by this resolution to effect a drastic revision in its system of arbitration treaties.

Denmark was one of the first countries to adhere to the arbitration movement, and has always been ready to conclude conventions of this nature on the widest bases. I would venture to remind you that the Treaty of February 12th, 1904, between Denmark and the Netherlands, is the first Arbitration Treaty free from reservations ever concluded. It goes so far as to open the way to all who desire to give their adhesion and proclaims the intentions of the contracting States in the frankest possible manner by laying down in the simple terms of Article 4 that:

“Non-signatory States may accede to the present Convention. Any State which desires to accede thereto shall notify its intention in writing to each of the contracting States.”

As a result of the Assembly resolution of September 25th, 1925, the Danish Government has, during the past year, carried on negotiations with a number of States with the object of concluding conventions on compulsory arbitration. As regards Denmark's relations with the northern countries, Poland, Germany and France, these negotiations have already led to concrete results. I wish to acknowledge from this platform the frank and loyal co-operation we have received from all the Governments referred to, which have helped us along the road that leads to right, justice and mutual confidence.

The object of the Danish Government, which is continuing its negotiations with other countries with a view to completing treaties of compulsory arbitration without any reservation has been to give the widest application to the resolution — already mentioned — of the 1925 session of the

Assembly. My country hopes that by its efforts it has contributed, however humbly, to the general progress. We are glad to know, however, that we are not alone in this work and that other countries on all sides are animated with the same desire. Here on the hospitable soil of Switzerland, let me also recall the services rendered in this respect by the Government of the Swiss Confederation, and the courage and perseverance it has displayed in concluding many similar conventions with countries which are prepared to follow a similar policy of confidence.

A big movement in favour of compulsory arbitration has been set on foot. We welcome it with all our heart as a great boon for the contracting States and as a powerful aid in the realisation of the work which the League has taken in hand under the formula of "arbitration, security and reduction of armaments".

May I in conclusion call to mind a saying of one of the founders of the League, that great American, the late President Woodrow Wilson, at a time when he cherished, with his whole heart and mind alike, that idealism which contributed so much to the creation of the League. The President was then on a visit to his mother's little native town in England. After divine service in the little village church he addressed the congregation. In his speech the following passage will be found, which I venture to read first in English and then to translate into French :

"It is from quiet places like this all over the world that the forces are accumulated that presently will overpower any attempt to accomplish evil on a great scale. It is like a rivulet that gathers into the river and the river which goes to the sea. So there come out of communities like these streams that fertilise the conscience of men, and it is the conscience of the world we now mean to place upon the throne."

I can imagine no finer distinction for a nation, for a people, for a State, or for a Government, than to be counted among the rivulets or the rivers — it matters little which — that in the course of years will have contributed the most towards fertilising, by their purity and limpidity, the conscience of the world to which Mr. Wilson referred — that new conscience which has so often been mentioned by speakers in this Assembly as the indispensable condition for the success of our work.

Guided by such ideals, Denmark wishes to continue her co-operation in a spirit both of purity and of perseverance. It is her wish, ladies and gentlemen; it is also a promise.

The President :

Translation : M. Urrutia, delegate of Colombia, will address the Assembly.

M. Urrutia (Colombia) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — May I be permitted, now that the Assembly has under consideration the great work achieved by the Council and the Secretariat, and also the general interests of the League, to express to you the deep regret felt by the Colombian delegation at the decision of Brazil to leave the League and again at the absence of Spain from the present session of the Assembly.

I can assure you that the regrets I have just expressed are shared by all delegations to the Assembly from the American continent. There is no country in America which does not maintain close and cordial relations of friendship with Brazil; some of these countries, like my own,

are united to Brazil not only by bonds of geographical propinquity and by common interests, but also by kindred traditions and ideals of international justice and fraternity. Brazil has invariably endeavoured to extend her relations with her sister Republics on the basis of respect for right and in a pre-eminently pacific spirit. Who will ever forget the lofty proposals which the great Lusitanian Republic laid before the Second Hague Peace Conference, proposals which were voiced by the eloquence of Ruy Barbosa? Who can forget the brilliant co-operation of Brazil in the work of the League? Within the League, Brazil has ever and always striven to extend the dominion of right in international relations.

Spain, too, has given invaluable assistance to the League. The void caused by her absence from this Assembly is keenly felt and regretted by all, but it has a special significance and causes a particularly deep regret among the delegations from countries of the same race and tongue.

Bound to Spain by indissoluble moral ties, these countries share her pride in her glorious past and in the inestimable contribution that she has made, in the course of her celebrated history, to the work of civilisation and human progress.

Let us trust that the places we see empty to-day will not remain so indefinitely. Let us fervently hope that the League will find the means of ensuring its universality, which is the indispensable condition to its development. Let us pray that, by a strict observance of the principles of the Covenant and by a continuous endeavour to realise the ideals underlying it, the League will soon acquire sufficient moral power to attract all nations to itself and to create between them and itself spiritual bonds strong enough to withstand any future vicissitudes or emergencies such as those which deprive us to-day of the presence of Spain and Brazil.

The President :

Translation : His Highness the Maharaja of Kapurthala, delegate of India, will address the Assembly.

His Highness the Maharaja of Kapurthala (India) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen. — Before I address myself to those aspects of the work of the League which are of special interest to India, I wish to offer you, Mr. President, on behalf of the Indian delegation to this Assembly and in my personal capacity as a ruling Prince of India, my most sincere and respectful congratulations on your election to preside over the work of this session.

This is not the first occasion on which an Indian Prince has had the honour of addressing the Assembly of the League. Among my predecessors Their Highnesses the Maharajah Jam Sahib of Nawanagar and the Maharajahs of Bikanir and Patiala have been privileged, as members of other Indian delegations, to tell you something of the awakening of interest and sympathy among the Governments and the masses of India for the ideals and work of the League.

It may not be out of place to mention that India, with its vast area and population composed of peoples of different races and creeds speaking languages which are as entirely different in different parts of the country as, for instance, Portuguese is from Russian or Swedish from Greek, can more appropriately be called a sub-continent and two-fifths of this entire Indian peninsula and one-fifth of its population are ruled by the Indian Princes and chiefs, under the suzerainty and the protection of His Majesty the King-Emperor.

The principal ruling Princes are absolutely independent in the internal administration of their States. The British Indian Law is not in force in their territories, nor can the Indian Legislature legislate for them, and the High Courts of Justice in British India have no jurisdiction over their subjects.

I and my brother Princes keenly feel the honour and responsibility of being included among the representatives of India at the Assembly of the League. We are glad, as practical administrators conversant with the day-to-day problems of government, to be allowed the opportunity of bringing our personal experience to the common stock and sharing in your important deliberations.

I feel and have no hesitation in declaring that we Indian Princes, as rulers of our people, have better opportunities of diffusing the knowledge and the aims of the League — *i.e.*, universal peace and harmony and mutual co-operation for the welfare of humanity on the basis of equality of nations — amongst our people and from there to the remotest corners of the Indian Empire than others who are differently placed *vis-à-vis* to ourselves.

With the spread of education and the knowledge and experience gained by travel in foreign countries, to which the people of India are now beginning to apply themselves, India is awakening to a spirit of nationalism and, with its own traditions and ideals and the friendly guidance and assistance of the British Government, I sincerely hope it will one day, not in the far-distant future, achieve its glorious goal and will become a united nation and self-governing country, in all its rights and privileges, like its sister dominions of Canada, Australia and South Africa, and prove a jewel of outshining splendour in the Commonwealth of nations forming the British Empire.

India is well aware that it has been essential for the League hitherto to devote its main energies to solving the grave problems left behind by the Great War. We have watched with interest the unceasing efforts of the Council and the Assembly to devise some means of promoting the great ideals of security, arbitration and reduction of armaments and its zeal in pressing forward schemes for the economic and financial reconstruction of those countries most heavily stricken during the aftermath of the war.

India, though geographically far removed from the main scenes of these activities, has been privileged also to take some share in these endeavours. Several indeed of my countrymen have been associated in the work of League organisations directed to these objects. Among those now so engaged I may mention Sir Jagadis Bose, of the Committee for Intellectual Co-operation; Sir Muhammad Rafique, of the Committee for the Codification of International Law; and Sir Atul Chatterjee, of the Preparatory Committee for the Economic Conference.

But the League has also undertaken other tasks imposed upon it by the Covenant in which India has a more direct interest and in which it has played a more conspicuous part. I speak of the international work in labour and social questions. India has been represented on the Governing Body of the Labour Organisation since 1923 as one of the eight chief industrial countries of the world. Her representatives have taken an active part in the discussions at the International Labour Conferences: they have also attended other important international gatherings organised by the League. Among these I may cite the Conferences on Transit and Communications, Customs, Passports, Opium, Traffic in Women and Children and Traffic in Arms. As a result of India's

participation in this work, twelve important international conventions concluded at the League have been ratified on her behalf, apart from the special labour conventions concluded through the International Labour Organisation which she has also accepted.

To give effect to these conventions, a number of legislative and administrative reforms have been enacted in British India. Our recent labour legislation has included the Indian Factories Act and the Indian Mines Act, which limit weekly hours of work in accordance with the Washington Labour Convention, 1919, and secure to miners the twenty-four hours weekly rest-day in accordance with the Geneva Labour Convention, 1921.

Social legislation in India to implement the ratification by India of the Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children has included important amendments of the penal law devised to protect the community, and particularly minors, more effectively against sexual crime. Much has also been achieved for the protection and welfare of children by administrative measures and the devoted work of private organisations. Opportunity will arise to speak more in detail on these matters during the discussion in Committee.

The discussions at Geneva on opium and dangerous drugs have produced administrative changes resulting in the progressive restriction of the cultivation, internal consumption and export of opium, and also providing for the exchange with other countries of information designed to check the illicit drug traffic. I may here remind the Assembly that India has now decided to reduce its exports of opium by a fixed annual proportion during the next ten years so that this export trade will be absolutely extinguished save for medical and scientific purposes in ten years.

Turning to the health work of the League, I am glad to tell you that India is closely co-operating with neighbouring countries to promote the work of the League Epidemiological Bureau at Singapore and officers and doctors of her Medical Services are collaborating with European scientists in research into the cause of diseases which specially menace the East.

The Indian States in some cases are at present ahead of British India in social and educational advancement. In my own State, for instance, education is making rapid strides both for the boys and girls. It is compulsory in some parts and the compulsion is being gradually extended to other parts of the State. English, Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit languages are taught, and since a few years the French language has also been introduced in the lower and higher classes, but mine is the only State in India where this language is taught.

Modern hygienic methods, sanitary improvements and electric light are established in the State. The municipalities are given powers to elect their own Presidents, and a representative Assembly exists for examining and discussing the budgets, for suggesting fresh legislation, and for advising my Government on social, agricultural and other administrative points. Marriage is unlawful among juveniles and laws prohibiting children smoking are in force. Central and provincial committees have been formed for maternity and child welfare, and philanthropic societies organised by educated people are doing useful work for humanity, which I think is the best beginning of the aims and objects of the League.

At the risk of wearying you I have ventured to recapitulate these facts about India's share in the League work in order to show you that her activities in this field have not been

lacking. Distant as we are from the centre of League policy at Geneva, the obligations undertaken for my country by its representatives who signed the Covenant at Versailles have been brought home to the Governments and peoples of India in all directions, particularly in matters affecting social and industrial life.

On the other hand, India is a country with its own ancient civilisation and traditions, of which it is intensely proud and which, in many respects, it regards as in no way inferior to the more material civilisation of the West. It is also a deeply religious and, in many respects, conservative country, to which many of those theories and principles which have emerged from the rapid industrial, social and political developments during the last hundred years in Europe are entirely foreign.

Nor are the circumstances of India in other respects analogous to those of modern industrial nations of the West; in many cases, social and industrial problems in India must be dealt with on different lines, though we have accepted and carried out the greater part of the reforms in domestic and industrial life recommended from Geneva. It is for this reason that I feel justified in inviting you, on behalf of the Indian delegation, to consider whether in the future more particular attention should not be paid by the League to the conditions and problems special to Asia.

All of us desire that the influence and authority of the League throughout the world should be as universal as the authors of the Covenant intended. If this object is to be achieved, the decisions and policies adopted at Geneva must be truly international, they must take more account of the differences existing in mankind due to climate, traditions, civilisation and history, and must be conceived in a form which can be applied with allowance for those differences and with equally beneficial results to all parts of the world.

To us in India some of the proposals made by League organisations have seemed to be too narrowly drawn on European models. In other cases, they appear to encroach on the internal authority of the various Governments in India. My predecessor, the Maharajah of Patiala, uttered a word of warning last year relating to certain schemes both in the social and economic spheres which His Highness and his colleagues considered unsuitable in their present form for adoption in India. I will not detain the Assembly by any detailed discussion of these proposals, as such an examination can more properly be made wholly in the Committee. But I ask the Assembly seriously to consider what practical demonstration can be made to the peoples of India for whom I speak, what direct evidence can be offered to make them realise that their interests are appreciated and considered at Geneva as of equal importance with the interests of the West. Unless and until India is convinced of this it will be impossible to secure for the work of the League that wholehearted interest and co-operation which is essential for the success of its great task.

May I in particular cite one direction in which the assistance and sympathy of the West would be highly valued by all Eastern people, namely, the prevention of epidemic disease? Here is a problem on which the health and happiness of the highest and the humblest equally depend, and if the League can promise the collaboration and assistance of countries more fortunately situated than the peoples of Asia in their daily contest with plague, cholera and other similar diseases, the cause of the League would, in my judgment, be greatly advanced in the East, and the value of the great work done would be more

widely felt and known, not only amongst the millions of India, but throughout Asia. Members of the Indian delegation will refer in greater detail in Committee to the methods in which this great duty of the League may be promoted.

It only remains for me to assure you, Sir, that my colleagues and I are eager to do our share in furthering the work of the League and in making its beneficent influence as comprehensive and worldwide as possible, and it is to this end that our suggestions and criticisms will be directed.

The President :

Translation : Prince Arfa, delegate of Persia, will address the Assembly.

Prince Arfa (Persia) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — This is the sixth time that I have come among you to state the Persian view of the work of the League of Nations during the preceding year. The League has no need either of flattery or disparagement. It requires only justice and truth. With these two principles in mind I will now proffer my thanks and criticisms.

First I would express my thanks. You all know, that, pending its full political development, the League has already rendered great services in the domain of international co-operation in health matters. Persia is profoundly grateful for it.

The East is afflicted by a terrible and persistent scourge, malaria. In response to our appeal, the League of Nations sent us an eminent specialist, Dr. Gilmour. Immediate results have been obtained from Dr. Gilmour's visit and from his enquiry and report. He recommended the draining of the marshes which are poisoning certain parts of Persia. He made proposals to the Health Section of the League of Nations for the training of Persian specialists. Dr. Sheikh, who was appointed by the Persian Government for this work, came to Geneva, and, supplied with the necessary instructions from the Health Section, made a tour in Europe for the purpose of experimental study. His report has made a great impression, and the Persian Government is about to undertake the draining of the marshes with the aid of technical experts whose assistance has already been secured. Thousands of human lives will thus be saved.

The East is also afflicted with another scourge, opium. This matter has been discussed for six years at Geneva from every point of view, but no adequate reduction has yet been made in poppy cultivation throughout the world. At the Geneva Conference, Persia submitted a memorandum demanding that the evil should be attacked at the root. America agreed with us and proposed that a Commission of Enquiry should be sent to Persia. The League of Nations granted 100,000 gold francs, the Rockefeller Foundation 150,000 francs, and the Persian Government undertook to defray the entire housing and feeding expenses of the members of the Commission, who were its guests throughout their stay in the country. Every facility was granted to them in carrying out their task.

The report of the Commission will shortly be submitted to you. If it is favourably received and Persia thus aided in replacing the cultivation of the poppy by some other crop, many more thousands of lives will be saved, not only in Persia, but throughout the world.

On behalf of my Government, I warmly thank the Assembly, the Council and the Secretariat for these two acts of beneficence.

I would like to have stopped here, but in relation to political events, justice and truth force me to utter a few less optimistic words. Only this

morning one members of the Assembly showed regret at the apparent tendency in the League to set aside the Assembly in favour of the Council and its Committees. This is a great danger.

The Council must not be transformed into a State within a State — that is to say, an assembly within the Assembly. Those countries, great or small, which in future will form the Council must remember that they hold their seats not in order to represent first and foremost their own interests, but, in brief, as representatives chosen by the Assembly to defend the common welfare and the superior interests of the whole community.

For this reason, the principles of geographical representation and of rotation must be seriously applied. A Council composed of fourteen members from which Islam and the great Asiatic civilisations were excluded would give rise in the East to greater disappointment and graver doubts than a Council of eleven. No handle must be given to those critics who refuse to see in the League anything but a new form of domination by some nations over the remainder.

We proclaim here the absolute equality of races and peoples of whatever colour, religion or importance. The League of Nations can only work effectively for peace by keeping this equality in view. Privileges, exceptions, combinations and attempts at domination have always been the cause of those wars which have exhausted our poor world.

Finally, there is a point to which we attach great importance, namely, Article 10 of the Covenant. Three years ago we opposed any change in the fundamental meaning of this essential article of the Covenant. To-day the Council has been largely increased and this fact will give rise to certain difficulties in summoning it in an emergency. At the least, its decisions must, in case of need, be prompt.

The Protocol failed to find favour in the eyes of many Governments, but it did give us one thing, a thing which would have particularly facilitated the rapid and effective action of the Council in the event of conflict — that is to say, the definition of the aggressor, namely, the State which refuses arbitration.

We should be grateful and even reassured if the members of the new and enlarged Council would tell us that this definition will guide their attitude at its table, should any Member of the League be threatened by a more powerful Member.

Since we have not yet been able to bring about disarmament, let us at least attempt energetically to promote the principle of arbitration, and to secure the acceptance in practice of a definition which has received the approval of the Assembly.

The President :

Translation : M. Franco, delegate of the Dominican Republic, will address the Assembly.

M. Franco (Dominican Republic) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — As a representative of one of the youngest and, from the material point of view, one of the weakest States of the New World, I do not propose to weary you with high-sounding but empty words. Nevertheless, the importance of the subject with which we are dealing compels me to take my place upon this tribune of the nations and put before you in a few words the actual thoughts and feelings of this Latin-American people, which, in the course of its long-suffering and heroic existence, has given so many proofs of its devotion to international institutions.

The work of the League appears to the whole world as deserving of the profoundest gratitude and the highest admiration. No one doubted but

that the realisation of the dream of Emeric Crucé and Bernardin de Saint-Pierre would constitute the climax in the history of international relations. An examination of the efforts made and the work accomplished during the first few years of this international organisation justifies the highest hopes on the part of those who truly desire to put an end to the anarchy of sovereignties. This anarchy, which has been falsely described as proceeding from the fundamental idea of the equality of States, means in actual fact the destruction and negation of that principle, without which civilised life would be impossible; for civilised life depends upon an international spirit of respect and justice, confidence and sacrifice.

The noble spirit of the League thus serves to keep ever present in our minds the duty which unites us, and which, to quote a well-known author, consists in realising that the best way of serving the interests of the States represented is not to set those interests one against another, but to conciliate them as far as possible in the supreme general interest, the satisfaction of which never fails to conduce to the well-being of each member of the international community.

Thus it is undoubtedly essential, if the spirit to which I have just alluded is to prevail and extend its influence, that we should eliminate as far as possible any tendency on the part of States or their representatives to vie with each other in the pursuit of honours. To the Dominican Republic the supreme honour has always consisted, and will always consist, in being and remaining a loyal and esteemed Member of the League.

It is in this spirit, ladies and gentlemen, devoid of all ambition and all pretensions, that I now turn to examine that vital and difficult question — the composition of the Council of the League.

It is an open secret that the crisis through which the international organisation first established in 1919 has just passed owed its origin to certain claims to a permanent seat on the Council involving an increase in the number of such seats. I would mention at this point, in order fully to explain my thought, that, examined strictly from the point of view of the theory of international law, the constitution of the Council as laid down in the Covenant of the League is contrary to the principle of the equality of States, which forms the very basis of modern international law. It is obvious that, viewed in this light, the existence of permanent Council seats, constituting the exclusive and individual property of the Powers described as "having general interests", is entirely contrary to the fundamental principles upon which the Covenant itself was supposed, and was stated, to be based.

I would add, however, that the other States were moved by a sense of the realities of international politics to accept, at all events provisionally, circumstances which arose out of the facts of everyday life. This is not a tribute to brute force. Nor does it represent an honour accorded to the powerful or the abandonment of a right to certain States; it is a sacrifice designed to destroy once and for all the mischievous conception of absolute sovereignty and to inaugurate an era of order in the liberty of States corresponding more nearly to the present facts of international interdependence.

In a word, we agree and I still agree, so far as may be necessary in view of existing realities and necessities, to a position whereby the Powers which, at the time of the drawing up of the Covenant, were regarded, though wrongly, as Powers "with general interests" may acquire or retain the privilege of a permanent seat on the Council of the League. It remains for us

therefore to respect the existing situation, provided that the States enjoying this privileged position are worthy and continue to be worthy of it. Our actual life and, *a fortiori*, the progress of this international organisation make this an imperative necessity.

Having said so much, I now desire to proclaim from this platform, over which the mighty spirit of Bolivar and Washington seems to hover, that we must resolutely oppose the creation of further privileges, since these would constitute a violation of the international spirit and of international law without even the justification which exists in the case to which I have just referred. There must not be, there cannot be, any further conferring of honours within the League.

The democratic principles which lie at the root of our American institutions and constitute the essential characteristic of the peoples of the New World make it incumbent on us to support

the proposal whereby the number of non-permanent seats on the Council would be increased as far as the normal working of that body permits, and all States, by a fair system of rotation, would be given the same rights and opportunities.

We hereby declare ourselves unreservedly opposed to the creation of new categories among the States Members of the League.

Thus, we boldly sacrifice our deepest affections to the claims of international law, to the reign of an international spirit, to the protection of the League and to the gradual realisation of our ideal. We close our ears, harden our hearts to the poignant call of blood and of the past, and heed only the call of a loftier duty and of the higher claims upon our gratitude and devotion.

The Assembly rose at 6.10 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE
SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY
OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SIXTH PLENARY MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 9th, 1926, AT 10.15 A.M.

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19. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the continuation of the discussion on the Report on the Work of the Council, and on the Measures taken to execute the Decisions of the Assembly.

Sir George Foster, delegate of Canada, will address the Assembly.

Sir George Foster (Canada) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Yesterday this Assembly had the pleasure of listening to speakers from middle Europe and far-off India, from the small islands of the West Indies and from the continent of South America. It is not therefore unfitting that a voice should be heard from a not unimportant part of the American continent which comprises the large and populous countries extending from the Gulf of Mexico to the North Pole.

Sometimes in our discussions it would almost seem as though in describing this area the word "America" was entirely appropriated to our friends of the United States of America. I may be

permitted this morning to make a mild protest against that assumption and to assure you that there are others in North America who do not fly the flag of the United States.

I am not for a moment proposing to answer for all that portion of North America which lies north of the Gulf of Mexico, but I am here to state that the ideals and the purposes of the League of Nations are supported within these limits by a population of more than 10,000,000 Canadians who are in absolute sympathy with those aims and purposes. Moreover, I do not think I should be outside the truth were I to say that the overwhelming majority of the 120,000,000 people of the United States are heart and soul in unison with the ideals of the League in its aspirations for world peace and its hatred of aggressive war.

It is, I think, very appropriate that, at the opening of the Assembly each year, sufficient time should be given as is now being done to a review of the whole field of work which is being carried on by the League. During this time we may profitably examine the past, we may as profitably take stock of the present, and we may take common counsel regarding the future work of the League.

I call to mind that I was a member of this Assembly during its first session in 1920. Since that time I have not had the pleasure of participating in the actual work of the Assembly at Geneva, and I see a strong and vivid contrast between the field of work covered in 1920 and that covered by the League to-day.

In 1920, the League of Nations was but an infant in swaddling clothes. Seven years have passed, and that infant has grown to a lusty, strong and virile young manhood. In the early days there was a feeling of extravagant optimism on the part of a few, of doubt and scepticism on the part of others and of active opposition on the part of many. Seven years have proved that the idea of the League has emerged into this era of our world history as a great, a beneficent and an enduring organisation. It may not have fulfilled all the hopes of its most ardent supporters, but it is equally true that it

has disproved the scepticism and fears of those who were doubtful or hostile. I do not think it can be said with truth to-day that there are in any quarter of the wide world thoughtful and serious-minded people who are in doubt as to the good work that the League has done and as to the work which it may do in the future if properly and wisely conducted.

We have had trials and disappointments; but what organisation of any merit has not had its trials? The League has grown in strength, in purpose and in power by the very fact that it has experienced difficulties, that it has faced them, has triumphed over them and continued victoriously upon its course. I am not one who fears trials. While we do not court them in connection with the work of the League, they bring out the virtue, strength and power of the organisation.

Our first great disappointment in connection with the League of Nations was that we were deprived from the beginning of the active co-operation of the United States of America. Many a sceptic and doubter said that the absence of the United States of America from the League of Nations spelled its failure. They said that without the United States of America it would be impossible for the League to do effective, continuous and progressive work. Yet in spite of that we have continued, we have done progressive work and we have made our way forward step by step. And we have done all that with the sympathetic co-operation of the United States of America.

It is true that nationally the United States of America do not belong to the League, but it is equally true that among the population of that country there are millions upon millions of individuals whose sympathetic hearts and minds are running parallel with our own in their approbation of the great work of the League. We are therefore not without help and comfort from that quarter. And to-day, after seven long years, this Assembly has before it a proposal from that great country with a view to its entrance into and its co-operation with the Permanent Court of International Justice. I earnestly hope that this proposal may be consummated in due time.

To the north of the United States of America the Dominion of Canada, with its population of 10,000,000, is completely in sympathy with the work of the League.

Having met and survived our first disappointment, we have encountered other and serious difficulties which we have succeeded in leaving behind us. Grave and perplexing differences had to be faced in carrying out the treaties and obligations of the League. The troubles in Silesia and Lithuania were met with patience and with prudence, and the days of bitterness and strife have been succeeded by a period of co-operation and friendly fellowship.

Then came the incident of Corfu — a sudden and sharp test. In this connection, once again the sinister doubt was expressed that the League might here meet its great crisis and might fail to overcome it. But the spirit of the League prevailed again and triumphed over the older war spirit; to-day that difficulty has faded into the past, and its solution has given us added strength and power from the fact that it was met, and met successfully.

Then there is the problem of disarmament, which is the primary object of our League of Nations. The solution of this problem still lies in the future — may be in a distant future — when the nations of the world are no longer weighed down under the crushing burden of armament expenditure and war waste, when the resources

of the nations, released therefrom, may be used for the works of peace and development. First, the draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance was put into concrete form. It did not meet the case and was succeeded by the Protocol, and in that Protocol the League of Nations reached the high-water mark of its ideals — arbitration for the settlement of disputes, security as the result of that arbitration instead of war for the settlement of disputes, and disarmament following upon the security gained through the medium and by virtue of the principle of arbitration. That, I say, was the high-water mark, the lifting high of the ideals of the League of Nations in view of a waiting world. From this position the League of Nations has not retreated and does not propose to retreat. It was not, however, found possible immediately to adopt the Protocol, but the agreements of Locarno which followed in direct sequence adapt the principle and substance of the lofty declarations in the Protocol and apply them in a practical and prudent manner. Thus proceeding from the smaller to the larger, from the lesser to the greater, by a system of agreements and arbitration, and as a result of the security and disarmament thereby evolved, the League will achieve the thorough and complete fulfilment of its high ideal.

In this way, through successive trials, the strength, virtue and power of the League of Nations has been demonstrated, has been appreciated and is to-day acknowledged by the whole world.

Many milestones of success and of progress have been erected in the seven years which have passed. There was first the constitution of the Permanent Court of International Justice, the fulfilment of a wish which had long existed in the world. To-day, that institution is a beneficent and efficient agency in the working economy of the League of Nations. Secondly, there have been the strong and notable achievements of the League of Nations concerning economic and financial matters. Who among those who have followed the history of the work of the League in this connection has not been struck by the prudence and wisdom of its methods — and by the success with which they have been attended — in a reconstructed Austria, a restored Hungary, and in Greece, which, in its dire necessity, could find no help from any other source but found it in the admirable dispositions of the League of Nations?

These and many other facts which might be mentioned form an imperishable testimony to the beneficent work of the League of Nations in the most important field of financial and economic reconstruction in a world which has been so torn and injured by the disastrous war. So I might pass from one to another of the successfully progressive stages of the work of the League of Nations up to the present time. The memory of a bitter March has not yet altogether faded from the minds of the lovers and the partisans of the League of Nations; but the failures of that bitter March have already been overtaken and met by the milder atmosphere and the more pleasant reflections of the month of September.

And so to-day we trace a record of trials, of difficulties successfully overcome, and of marked achievements which have taken their place in the world's history as agencies with which it will not be possible hereafter to dispense. It is very useful at a time like this to review the past and to take from it the strength to which we are entitled as a result of the progress made. It is our duty to do so. It is also our duty to renew our vows.

I may say, speaking as one coming from a far distant country separated from the centre of the activities of the League, but which follows them—as millions of our people do—with sympathy and intense interest, that we have complete faith in the ideals and in the purposes of the League, that we gather strength from its record in the past, that we feel a growing confidence in the present situation, and that we look forward to the future with unabated optimism.

But let us to-day again renew our vows. In the first flush of a new situation, marked by a great heart and a great purpose, enthusiasm mounts high and optimism takes its loftiest place. Then come the prosaic and difficult hours of everyday work when ideals must be somewhat blurred and when optimism must be a little diminished—hours which the stern realities of life and the weakness of human nature bring to an organisation and to a cause. In these hours we must go back to the old ideals—that the peace of the world is what brings us together, the attainment of a future when war shall cease and good-will shall rule the whole world.

Each of the fifty-six nations which belong to the League must again review and burnish its ideals, knowing that before it there is much yet to be accomplished through many a weary mile of progress, work which will test our patience and resources to the uttermost, but which, if followed with calm persistency and strength and with a faith which will not be denied, will bring this old world of ours sooner or later out from the fogs and miasma of war and the bitter trials which follow in its wake into the sunlight and clearness of a peace in which good-will and brotherhood shall reign the whole world over.

Now, Mr. President, just one word more before I conclude. I have already said that it is the duty of this League every now and then—and no occasion is better than when the annual Assembly of the League of Nations meets—to renew its vows in the spirit in which those vows were taken seven or eight years ago, and to consecrate itself anew to the high cause of peace and good fellowship in the world. I want to say in this connection that we must sedulously cultivate the spirit of self-sacrifice in a great world cause; that, in a prudent and moderate degree, self-interest must give way to the general interest; that personal ambitions, racial ambitions, and national ambitions, while having their due place and power amongst the nations of the world, must bear in mind that they are a part and parcel of the world aggregate and that there must be due subordination of ambitions of that kind to the purposes and work of the League.

Most, if not all, of our difficulties have arisen (as difficulties generally do arise) from mistakes made in the past. How well we see that exemplified in the last year of the work of the League. If no mistakes had been made in the past years, we should not have been confronted by the circumstances of March 1926; if no mistakes of a similar nature are made in the future, we shall not experience similar difficulties in the future. We must remember that the League of Nations has introduced a new principle and new methods into international dealings before which, and in the carrying out of which, the old practices of the past diplomacy must take a subordinate place and largely disappear from the scene of action. I hold that the League of Nations should respect itself and its interests and maintain that self-respect and that interest against all comers.

There need be no unhealthy rivalry between the Council and the Assembly; they are too intimately related for that. I do not say that there has been

rivalry before; I do not say that there will be rivalry in the future. But each of us must, as Members of the League of Nations, remember that there must not be rivalry between the Council and the Assembly and that both of them, just as they have worked together harmoniously in the past, must continue to work harmoniously in the future.

To this end, I say that the Assembly should maintain its essential independence and its essential rights as a body, which is built up directly and freshly from the different nationalities which give it substance and form, and that it must keep that self-respect and that independence and the liberties which thereby belong to it. I do not say that there is any disposition in other quarters to infringe or trespass upon those rights, but so long as we hold them prudently, hold them firmly and hold them as essential to an organisation working for peace and good-will in the world, the better we shall be prepared therefor.

The League of Nations is an organisation which must not bend either to the cajolery or to the menace of interested Powers. It must be conscious of its own rights mindful of its own purposes; it must keep them in mind and not deviate from them to the tenth part of an inch merely because some outside body or Power attempts either to menace or cajole it. We must have faith in the inherent virtue and power of our organisation; if outside parties say: "Unless you do so-and-so, we cannot come in with you", or, being already in, "we cannot stay with you", regard must first be had to our own League purposes and ideals. If we can accommodate ourselves in such a way as to bring that Power in, or retain it when in, well and good; but if that is impossible, without prejudice to our work, we can only part with regret, in the hope that we may meet again in a more reasonable atmosphere. Fidelity to our principles and reasonable self-respect can demand no less.

One last thought. What we need as the groundwork and foundation of the League of Nations is wide instruction, regarding its purposes and principles, in those fundamental and primary areas where that education can alone be successfully effected. You may send your 165 delegates here year after year; you may pass your resolutions and carry on your work from Assembly to Assembly and from Council session to Council session; you will make a certain progress in educative work but you will not thereby arrive where it is necessary for this League to arrive if it is to be a continuous, growing and successful power in the world. We must get into the homes, to the firesides, into the schools where the young mind is being taught and eagerly imbibes its principles for later action, into the colleges and the universities. Into these areas we must penetrate; we must get there and stay there, animated by a feeling that years of patient and constant effort, unmitigated in their ardour and their persistence, must be cheerfully and faithfully spent in order that at last we may familiarise our whole generation, in the home, the school and the college, with our principles and our ideals. If we can have one full generation of teaching, of precept and of sympathetic instruction, the League of Nations will be firmly based upon a broad foundation in every member nation, and then, and then only, will the League of Nations rest upon a foundation which will justify the strongest hope and the highest optimism for its future.

The President:

Translation: Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, delegate of the British Empire, will address the Assembly.

• Viscount Cecil of Chelwood (British Empire) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I think anyone who looks at the report on the work of the Council will be struck by one characteristic more than by any other, namely, by its immense extent. It deals with subjects of the most varied character, from a serious international dispute between Greece and Bulgaria to proposals for the reform of the calendar and the fixing of the Feast of Easter. It deals with the traffic in opium, with commercial arbitration, with the provision of swimming baths for children, with the codification of international law and with the reduction and limitation of armaments, apart from the very serious matter of the reconstruction of the composition of the Council.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, it would be quite impossible to attempt, even if it were useful, any review of activities so widely extended as these, and in the observations which I am about to address to the Assembly, and which, I trust, will be brief, I propose to confine myself to certain very practical and serious points without attempting to make, even if I were capable of doing so, an emotional and eloquent oration.

In the first place, may I say one word on the very important topic of the codification of international law. As you know, the Assembly appointed a Committee — I think it was two years ago — to deal with that subject, and on the very first page of the report on the work of the Council an account is given of the activities of the Committee. I cannot help feeling that, though we are very grateful for that account as far as it goes, we should like to know rather more about the actual procedure of the Committee, the lines upon which it has proceeded, and whether its activities show any prospect of success or achievement in the near future. I do not intend to submit a motion on the matter, but I venture very respectfully to suggest that the First Committee of the Assembly should consider whether it ought not to make some enquiry into the activities of that Committee, since, in many parts of the world, the codification of international law is regarded as one of the most important possibilities of the League.

The next observation I desire to make arises not only from the report itself but from the exceedingly interesting opening address made by M. Benès in his capacity as Acting President of the Assembly. You will remember that he then called attention to the importance of the ratification by the Governments of Conventions concluded or suggested by Conferences called under the auspices of the League or by the League itself.

May I quote three sentences from his speech ? He said :

“In this connection, I should like to draw the attention of all the delegations to the fact that it is their duty, once they have returned to their own countries, to see that effect is given to the decisions taken at Geneva.”

Then a little later on he adds :

“I think I am bound to say that, from the point of view of the Conventions drafted by the technical committees, by the Economic, Transit, Health and Opium Committees and by our Disarmament Committees, the situation is not very satisfactory. Indeed, the further progress of our technical work would be a matter of some difficulty if this situation did not improve.”

This is a matter which was brought to the attention of the British Government by certain important commercial interests. They pointed out that it was discouraging to those all over the world who were interested in commerce and

industry if admirable Conventions were drawn up by or under the auspices of the League and then months and even years elapsed before those Conventions were brought into effect. The result was, as they pointed out, a gradual diminution in the belief in the efficiency of the League and also the creation in the commercial and industrial world of that uncertainty which is, perhaps, the chief enemy of industrial and commercial prosperity. It was from that document that I obtained figures stating that, as regards eight Conventions dealing with these commercial subjects, there had been fifty-five signatures and only twenty-three ratifications; the result was, of course, that the Conventions had not come into force.

A more elaborate examination of the subject has revealed facts like the following: that to the Convention on International Waterways, which was concluded no less than five and a-half years ago, there were twenty-seven signatures and only eleven ratifications, and as regards the Protocol for the Mutual Recognition of Arbitration Clauses in Commercial Contracts — one of the most useful and, as I venture to think, important commercial achievements of the League — there were twenty-seven signatures and only twelve ratifications. I venture very respectfully to state to my colleagues that we should do well to devote some of our energy to finishing what we have so well begun, even before and in preference to undertaking new responsibilities and work.

These remarks do not apply only to the commercial sphere. The Convention on the Traffic in Arms has not been ratified by a single one of the Powers which signed that Convention; thirty-one have signed it and thirty-five Powers have signed the Protocol dealing with the employment of gas in warfare which is attached to that Convention. As regards the Opium Convention, in which I take some personal interest because I happened to be one of the representatives of my Government at the Conference which drew it up, though there have been thirty-four signatures there have been so far only six ratifications, which — I may perhaps be pardoned for remarking — all come from the British Empire.

I therefore venture to propose that we should adopt the following resolution — or at any rate send it for consideration by a Committee :

“The Assembly :

“Observing with regret that many Conventions and agreements concluded under the auspices of the League of Nations have remained ineffective or have only come into force after undue delay owing to the difficulty experienced in securing a sufficient number of ratifications by the signatories ;

“Desires to call the attention of the Governments of all States Members of the League to the necessity for taking all measures in their power to facilitate and expedite the ratification in all cases of Conventions and agreements signed in their name ;

“And decides to invite the Council of the League to examine the possibility of appointing a Committee to consider whether any general understanding could be promoted that would secure rapid and if possible simultaneous action by signatories of such Conventions and agreements.”

I come now to the last topic on which I desire to say a few words to the Assembly and which is a topic of some delicacy and difficulty.

On more than one occasion recently, questions have been raised concerning what is and what is not the proper sphere of activities of the League of

Nations. This is an exceedingly difficult subject and one, I think, of very great practical importance. If you turn to the Covenant you will see that the object of the League of Nations is to promote international co-operation and to achieve international peace and security, and the Assembly and the Council are told that they can deal with any matter within the sphere of action of the League affecting the peace of the world. I think everyone will agree that those indications of the sphere of action of the League are necessarily and properly, as I think, rather vague in their terms.

Different opinions may well be held as to what are proper subjects for international co-operation. Some subjects, of course, are quite clear. The question of armaments is obviously international, and one which affects the peace of the world. For many years — for a hundred years or more — the slave trade has been regarded by everyone as an international matter, and, as a consequence, slavery also, since it will never be possible to put an end to the slave trade unless an end is put to slavery. Labour conditions, I agree, do not constitute a matter with which this Assembly deals directly, for they fall within the competence of the International Labour Office; but here, again, it is obvious that the conditions of labour in one country have an important repercussion on the conditions of labour in another, and that this matter therefore is one which quite properly calls for international consideration. Broadly speaking, the same is true of all hygienic matters. Bad health conditions in one country affect or may affect the health of its neighbours and, through its neighbours, all the countries of the world.

These topics, and there are many others, are evidently within the sphere of action of the League as requiring international co-operation, and with regard to which international co-operation can certainly be beneficial. Outside these matters, however, there is a very large number of others which, by gradations, are further and further away from the international sphere and more and more nearly approach the national sphere of activity of individual countries.

Very early in the history of the League it was said that, broadly speaking, the ordinary educational policy of each country was a matter for that country and that country alone to settle. Personally, I thought at the time, and still think, that this is too broad a proposition, and that there are, at any rate, some aspects of education which are unquestionably international, as, for instance, the proposal which we have adopted at this Assembly on more than one occasion that it is desirable that the youth of the world should be instructed in the principles and activities of the League of Nations. No doubt when we come to the subject I mentioned just now — the provision of swimming baths — it seems very difficult to attribute any special international aspect to the provision of swimming baths in the different countries. On the other hand, there are cases which excite immense sympathy in the minds of every one of us, such as the case of neglected children, the case of cruelty to animals, but regarding which it is, at any rate in my mind, somewhat doubtful whether they could justly be brought within the sphere of international action.

This is not an academic question, and I will explain in a moment why I think it is of great importance for the League and for its prosperity. I have no cut-and-dried remedy. I am going to move a motion merely asking that the matter be considered. If it were possible to lay down principles with greater precision, it might be that it would be desirable to set up some kind of machinery, some kind of Committee of Referees, to

which, on the application of any country, a special subject might be referred for advice as to whether it was of an international character or not.

Certainly, as far as I personally am concerned and as far as my Government is concerned, we have no desire whatever to restrict or to diminish the legitimate activities of the League. On the contrary, I have always preached (and there is nothing in my present position which prevents my continuing to preach) that the greater the activity of the League the greater will be its success, provided, of course, it really confines itself to international action. I am not in the least afraid of its doing too much international work. On the contrary, I would go further and I would say that as a broad principle (and without dealing with any specific cases) I believe it would be desirable to concentrate in Geneva, as far as it can be done, all the official international action taken in the world.

The existence of a number of international authorities and a number of international organisations is, in itself, a bad thing and causes, as I know from what people have said to me, disquiet and uncertainty amongst those who are affected by their activity. The more we can concentrate international action at Geneva the better I shall be pleased. But I do say, with great emphasis, that it is important that we should confine ourselves to really international action and that we should not be led by any argument, however powerful and however specious, to extend our activities beyond the international sphere.

I say this for two main reasons. In the first place, if we extend our sphere of action too widely, there is a danger that we may obscure, in the public mind, the chief objects for which the League of Nations exists. We exist to secure — and let us never forget it — international co-operation making for the peace of the world. It is a tremendous and august task, and one which we shall find will strain the whole powers of every one of us if we are to accomplish it properly. Do not let us allow ourselves for one moment to be diverted from or to be weakened in that task by any appeals to deal with matters which do not contribute to that supreme object.

Secondly — and this is the most important observation — we are faced with a very delicate task. In some respects we are bound to infringe and impinge upon national sovereignty; that is essential and is involved in the very existence of the Covenant, the very existence of an agreement that we will, in certain respects, submit ourselves to international restriction and agreement. It is of the utmost importance that, since we have to do this, since we have to run the risk of rousing national feelings against us, we should not do so unnecessarily or for reasons which are less than the supreme reason of the maintenance of peace and good relations between the nations of the world, because by so doing we may give occasion to our enemies to blaspheme and to add difficulties to our already difficult task. I am convinced that the future of the League depends very largely upon this.

How far can we enlist in the work of the League that immensely powerful motive amongst men, the motive of patriotism and national feeling? There is no essential contradiction between the League of Nations and patriotism of the most burning character. What is essential is to create in the breasts of the patriots of the world (who, after all, comprise some of the noblest of the human race) a new object and a new purpose of patriotism, namely, to excel in the work of peace and to ensure the prosperity of their own nation through the prosperity of humanity at large.

I venture, therefore, to move the following resolution:

"The Assembly requests the Council to appoint a Committee to consider and report what questions are and what are not within the sphere of action of the League within the meaning of the Preamble and Articles 3 and 4 of the Covenant, especially with reference to the questions which are now being dealt with by the organs of the League or are proposed to be so dealt with."

The President :

Translation : The Assembly has before it the draft resolutions submitted by Viscount Cecil on behalf of the British delegation. These documents will be printed and distributed to the delegations before the Assembly decides upon the action to be taken. This decision will be taken at the close of to-morrow morning's meeting.

M. Guerrero, delegate of Salvador, will address the Assembly.

M. Guerrero (Salvador) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — To all who have closely followed the work of the League since its foundation, it is most reassuring to note the continual progress it has made.

Conducted systematically, with precision and with a true comprehension of the growing requirements of mankind, its activities have been gradually extended to all questions of a moral, political, economic or legal character which are of international interest.

The report presented by the Council to this seventh ordinary session of the Assembly gives a very accurate idea of the wide scope of the work accomplished during these last few months. The work of the Committee for the Progressive Codification of International Law, that of the technical organisations, that of the Preparatory Disarmament Commission — to quote only a few examples — would be sufficient to preserve intact the hope and faith which the different nations have placed in the League.

It seems inconceivable that the manifold activities of this institution should be, as it were, brought to a standstill by an obstacle so difficult to surmount, so tremendous that in very truth the whole fabric has been shaken by it.

The peril, ladies and gentlemen, must be resolutely faced. The only real remedy for a situation which has become so serious is "the salt of truth", to quote the text so aptly cited by the eminent Archbishop who preached the sermon at the opening of this Assembly.

For this, however, everyone must be allowed to speak his mind freely and in accordance with the dictates of his conscience, in an atmosphere of trust, disinterestedness, loyalty and devotion to the common weal; and, in so doing, must be cleared in advance of the charge of adding to the complications of the situation by destroying the more or less elastic and provisional compromises by which diplomacy endeavours to circumvent difficulties — and only too often fails to overcome them.

May I be permitted, then, in virtue of this right of freedom of speech, to indulge in a few brief observations on the supremely important question now before the seventh ordinary session of the Assembly.

Our League, which has been in the throes of a crisis since the beginning of March, has in the course of a few months experienced numerical and material losses and, most serious of all, a weakening of prestige. Two great States have withdrawn their valuable collaboration. Such are the facts. Let us now trace their origin.

One of the most eminent of men, one whose consummate worth and authority dominate this Assembly — I speak of M. Briand — declared in March that the League was suffering from "growing pains". Much as I admire the opinions of our eminent colleague, I am, to my regret, unable to agree with him here, and I would venture to point out that his diagnosis has never been confirmed, and that there is nothing to suggest the likelihood of its being confirmed in the future. If it were merely a matter of growing pains, all we should have to do would be to let it develop in its own way, leaving it to time to effect a cure. Unhappily, the roots of the evil lie deeper. The League is suffering from a congenital defect, a malformation dating from its very birth.

To extirpate the germ of the evil, we must strike at its root. We must not be afraid to attack the Covenant of the League, lest Article 4 should have the effect of destroying that principle of equality among the States Members of the League which forms the very basis of its existence.

What justification is there, in the present state of the comity of nations, for a situation in which the equality imposed by the Covenant on all Members of the League in regard to sacrifices, obligations and undertakings has no counterpart in absolute equality from the legal point of view?

What is the use of dwelling upon this constitutional defect? It is known to all; it may have been of use at the outset, when the Covenant was first drawn up, but it has since cost us the abstention or withdrawal of the Argentine Republic, Brazil and Spain, three nations unsparing in their devotion to the work of peace and solidarity on which our aims are set. This, I fear, may be only a beginning; this list, already of appreciable length, may become longer still if we persist in our error and fail to apply the energetic remedies that are called for now that the situation has been considerably aggravated by the events which have followed in such swift succession since the special session of the Assembly in March.

It is never too late to mend. Nothing is yet lost if only we speed up the work of readjustment that is to restore to the League the true equilibrium and the vigour essential to the accomplishment of its task. That task, I am glad to say, appeared to be proceeding most satisfactorily, but it has so far only been sketched in broad outline, and for its accomplishment, the unity of all the Members of the League — including those who have felt it their duty to absent themselves for a time — is a necessity so absolute as to constitute a *sine qua non*.

Let us admit, then, that the League, in following the path laid down for it in the Covenant, has strayed from its true aims.

It is obvious that the solution adopted by the Council is not calculated to eradicate the evil. On the contrary, it increases the evil, since it amounts simply to a widening of the inequality already existing between States. The time is past for expedients which may serve to deliver us from one difficulty but will not prevent us from falling into another.

Desperate diseases require desperate remedies. Since the hour of sacrifice has sounded, let us accept sacrifice willingly rather than wait until it is imposed upon us by the irresistible force of events.

Let us consider who should make this sacrifice. It certainly should be the States which, when war had laid Europe in ruins, resigned themselves, solely in the cause of peace, to a situation at variance with their democratic principles. Those States have already given their full quota of sacrifice.

The States which should make the great sacrifice are those for whose benefit there was created under the Covenant the situation that has brought about the present crisis — a crisis which, I would add, will assuredly be followed by others. I refer to the voluntary renunciation of permanent seats of the Council.

By this I am simply suggesting the only means — impossible of immediate fulfilment, perhaps, but not impracticable in the future — of settling the crisis in the League once and for all; and, in my opinion, this crisis cannot be solved by one of those provisional compromises to which modern diplomacy too often has recourse.

The President :

Translation : M. Hambro, delegate of Norway, will address the Assembly.

M. Hambro (Norway) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Norwegian Government is in cordial sympathy with those feelings of gratitude for and content with the progress of the League of Nations and its growing competence in settling international disputes which have already been so eloquently expressed in the addresses delivered by the delegates of various nations. I can only add to their words of appreciation that my Government has followed with special interest the work of the Permanent Court of International Justice and has decided to renew for another period of ten years its acceptance of compulsory jurisdiction according to Article 36 of the Statutes of the Court.

There is one part of the work prepared or accomplished by the League during the past year to which the Norwegian Government attaches the very highest importance. I refer to the work so successfully begun by the special Committee for the Codification of International Law. This is a practical work of far-reaching influence tending to restrict the possibilities for international friction and to help and further international knowledge and understanding of the separate usages, traditions and laws of every country. I was glad to hear the illustrious delegate of the British Empire (Viscount Cecil) emphasise so strongly the work of this Committee. We congratulate the Committee on having started with the study of the important questions concerning territorial waters, because these questions have been waiting for international examination and touch the interests and problems of most States.

If I have a few remarks to make concerning the work of the Committee, it is not in a spirit of criticism but with a view to making the results of this important examination as complete and satisfactory as possible. I do it with the highest regard for the learned Rapporteur of the Committee whose authority we all recognise, and whose works on these questions we have studied with profit, and I do it with all due respect for the members of the Sub-Committee who have worked so thoroughly and successfully.

There are, however, countries which are not represented on the Committee, countries for whose very existence the questions of territorial waters are of the utmost importance, and foremost among such countries is Norway, with a longer and more broken coastline than any other European country and with a history from time immemorial indissolubly bound up with the sea and the gifts of the sea. The northern parts of Norway would hardly be inhabitable without the fisheries, and about 90 per cent of the population of these parts of the country are wholly or partly dependent on the territorial waters for their living. These questions, therefore, are followed with the closest attention

in Norway and with the conviction that they cannot be studied exhaustively from a lawyer's point of view only. It is necessary to study them also hydrographically, geographically and historically in order to understand the established rights of centuries, rights that cannot be infringed upon and which for a great proportion of the population of Norway represent a question of existence or non-existence.

The Norwegian Government is not at present prepared to frame any proposals, but would ask the Council and the special Committee to consider earnestly and sympathetically whether it would not be advisable and save time and trouble if countries particularly interested in such questions as fall under the examination of the Committee were given the opportunity to participate even in the preparatory work of codification.

This reflexion leads me to the problem of the composition of the Committees of the League in general and more especially of the permanent Committees.

In the opinion of the Norwegian Government, it would be natural to distribute the seats on those Committees more evenly among the Members of the League, if possible, under a system of rotation similar to that which was unanimously recommended for the elections to the Council by the Assembly in 1922 and 1923. The Norwegian Government attaches considerable importance to the carrying out of these recommendations, which ought already to have been made effective, and sincerely trusts that the Members of the Council will always act in the most scrupulous way upon the resolutions and recommendations of the Assembly, bearing in mind that the seats on the Council have been given them in trust by the Assembly in order to respect and uphold the wishes and the rights of the Assembly.

I was glad to hear the same views expressed so openly by the delegate of Persia yesterday, and I have listened with the greatest interest to the address delivered this morning by the delegate of Salvador. It follows from these remarks that the Norwegian delegation will support any attempt to make the system of elections more just and in accordance with the repeatedly expressed opinions of the Assembly, and will try to counteract any attempt to create a new and more marked classification of States. It will do this in the hope that it will not prove necessary to establish an instrument for the protection of minorities in the Assembly, and in the hope that all the actions and activities of the Assembly will be inspired by a spirit of confidence and openness, of independence and fearlessness, which will steadily grow stronger, and that the necessity or the temptation to sacrifice convictions on the altar of unanimity will occur more rarely. We are happy to find in the general report of the Secretariat ample proofs that such hopes are not unfounded.

20. — REFERENCE TO THE THIRD COMMITTEE OF QUESTIONS DEALING WITH THE REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS : DRAFT RESOLUTIONS PROPOSED BY THE NETHERLANDS DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : Jonkheer Loudon, delegate of the Netherlands, will address the Assembly.

Jonkheer Loudon (Netherlands) :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — What I have to say does not bear on the subject under

discussion, but refers to a matter which concerns the Third Committee.

The Secretariat has distributed to the delegations document A.32, consisting of extracts from documents A.6 and A.6 (a) (Annexes 2, 2 (a)), that is to say, the Report and Supplementary Report to the Seventh Ordinary Session of the Assembly on the Work of the Council, on the Work of the Secretariat and on the Measures taken to execute the Decisions of the Assembly.

This document contains all the requisite information to enable the Third Committee to discuss the questions placed on the Assembly's agenda under Item No. 20; these questions have already been referred to that Committee by a decision of the Assembly.

It would, however, be desirable for the Third Committee to be in a position to discuss other sections of this important document. I accordingly propose that the Assembly should adopt the following resolution:

"The Assembly decides to refer to the Third Committee all the portions of the Report and of the Supplementary Report on the Work of the Council and of the Secretariat which deal with the reduction of armaments."

We have also received document A.47, containing the resolution adopted by the Council on September 4th, 1926, in regard to the preliminary draft Convention on the Control of the Private Manufacture of Arms and Ammunition and of Implements of War, prepared by the Committee of

Enquiry and the Committee of the Council and submitted by the latter Committee to the Council.

Under this resolution the Council refers to the Assembly, for information, the preliminary draft already mentioned. It would accordingly be proper to refer document A.47 to the Third Committee, as it contains all the necessary information on the subject.

I propose, therefore, that the Assembly should adopt the following resolution:

"The Assembly decides to refer to the Third Committee M. Benes' report (approved by the Council on September 4th, 1926) on the draft Convention for the Control of the Private Manufacture of Arms and Ammunition and of Implements of War, and the documents attached thereto."

I have no doubt that the Assembly will adopt these two draft resolutions.

The President:

Translation: Jonkheer Loudon, on behalf of the Netherlands delegation, has just submitted two draft resolutions for the reference of certain questions to the Third Committee. These draft resolutions will be printed and distributed to members of delegations, so that I shall be able, at the close of to-morrow morning's meeting, to ask the Assembly to take a decision on them.

The Assembly rose at 12.30 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE
SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY
OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 10th, 1926, AT 10.30 A.M.

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21. — CREDENTIALS OF THE GERMAN DELEGATES: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS.

The President :

Translation : The Chairman of the Committee on Credentials will read the report and submit the decisions of the Committee on the credentials of the German delegation.

M. de Agüero y Bethancourt (Cuba), Chairman and Rapporteur of the Committee on Credentials :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Committee instructed by the Assembly to examine the credentials of delegates met to-day at 10 o'clock in the Salle de la Réformation to examine the credentials of the German delegates to the Assembly.

The Committee has examined the credentials of the delegates of Germany signed by the President of the Reich and the Minister for Foreign Affairs. This document having been found in good and true form, the Committee considers that the delegates of the German Government to this Assembly have been duly accredited.

The President :

Translation : If nobody has any remarks to make, I will declare the conclusions of the report of the Committee on Credentials adopted.

The conclusions of the report were adopted.

The President :

Translation : The conclusions of the report being adopted, I invite the German delegates to take their seats.

(The German delegates took their seats in the Assembly.)

22. — WELCOME TO THE GERMAN DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — My rôle as President to-day is an easy one, since I have but to voice the unanimous sentiments of the Assembly in extending a warm welcome to the German delegates who have just taken their place amongst us.

This event is, for the League of Nations, both happy and memorable in a twofold sense.

In the first place, it marks a new step towards that universality to which the League is inevitably progressing, despite difficulties which we hope are only temporary.

Secondly, the essential object of the League is the maintenance of peace, and the admission of a great European Power is a happy omen for the peaceful future of the continent which has suffered most from war.

We have therefore the double good fortune to see the accomplishment of an act for which the League has never ceased to hope, and to see in it the prelude of new successes in its mission of peace. The preparations for this happy event were made last year, and this year, too, both within and without this hall, but its achievement was made possible by the will of this Assembly which, the day before yesterday, expressed its opinion with a unanimity the symbolic importance of which will be plain to all.

I am glad to see Germany take her rightful place amongst us as a great nation desirous of supporting our work for international security and understanding.

In extending a cordial invitation to the distinguished representatives of Germany to take part in our work, I welcome their presence as a new pledge for the success of international collaboration in the cause of peace.

M. Stresemann first delegate of Germany, will address the Assembly.

M. Stresemann (Germany), speaking in German :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The President of this High Assembly and the President of the Council of the League of Nations have been good enough to accord Germany a joyful welcome on her entry into the League, and in addressing you from this platform I feel it my first duty to express Germany's thanks to these two gentlemen and to the Assembly. Allow me at the same time to express our gratitude to the Swiss Government, which is now extending its traditional and generous hospitality to Germany as a Member of the League of Nations.

More than six years have passed since the League was founded. A long period of development was thus necessary before the general political situation rendered it possible for Germany to enter the League, and even in the present year great difficulties have had to be overcome before Germany's decision could be supplemented by the unanimous decision of the League. Far be it from me to revive matters which belong to the past. It is rather the task of the present generation to look to the present and to the future. I would only say this, that, although an event such as Germany's entry into the League is the outcome of a long preliminary process of development, yet that very fact constitutes perhaps a surer guarantee of its permanence and of its fruitful results.

To-day Germany enters a circle of States to some of which she has for decades been attached by unbroken ties of friendship, whereas others were allied against her during the Great War. It is surely an event of historical importance that Germany and these latter States are now brought together within the League of Nations in permanent and peaceful co-operation. It is a fact which indicates more clearly than any mere words or programmes that the League of Nations may in very truth be destined to give a new direction to the political development of mankind, and civilisation would be exposed to grave dangers indeed at the present time if the nations could obtain no assurance that they would be able to perform in peaceful and untroubled co-operation the tasks which their destiny has assigned to them.

The catastrophic events of a terrible war have recalled the conscience of mankind to a consideration of the tasks which confront the different nations. In many countries we have witnessed the ruin of whole classes of the population, who are not only valuable, but intellectually and economically indispensable to the life of the nation. We are beholding the birth of new forms of economic life, and the disappearance of older ones. We see how economic life is overleaping the old national boundaries and creating new forms of international co-operation. The old economic situation of the world had no statutes, no programmes, to guide its co-operation. This co-operation was based on the unwritten law of the traditional exchange of goods between the different continents. It must be our task to restore that exchange. If we really desire the economic development of the world to proceed undisturbed, we shall not obtain that end by erecting barriers between the countries, but rather by bridging over the gulfs which hitherto have separated the different national economic systems.

But there is something which far transcends in importance all material considerations, namely, the souls of the nations themselves. There is just now a mighty stirring of ideas among the nations of the world. We see some that adhere to the principle of self-contained national unity

and reject international understanding, because they do not wish to see all that has been developed on the basis of nationality superseded by a more general conception of humanity. Now I hold that no country which belongs to the League of Nations thereby surrenders any of its national individuality. The Divine Architect of the world has not created mankind as a homogeneous whole. He has made the nations of different races; He has given them their mother-tongue as the sanctuary of their soul; He has given them countries with different characteristics as their homes. But it cannot be the purpose of the Divine world-order that men should direct their supreme national energies against one another, thus ever thrusting back the general progress of civilisation. He will serve humanity best who, firmly rooted in the faith of his own people, develops his moral and intellectual gifts to the utmost, thus overstepping his own national boundaries, and serving the whole world, as has been done by those great men of all nations whose names are writ large in the history of mankind.

Thus the ideals of nationality and of humanity may unite on the intellectual plane, and they may similarly unite in pursuit of political ideals, provided that there is the will to make common progress in this field.

The political outcome of these ideals is a moral obligation on the part of the different countries to devote their efforts to peaceful co-operation. This moral obligation also applies to the great moral problems of humanity. No other law should be applied to their solution than that of justice.

The co-operation of the peoples in the League of Nations must and will lead to just solutions for the moral questions which arise in the conscience of the peoples. The most durable foundation of peace is a policy inspired by mutual understanding and mutual respect between nation and nation.

Even before her entry into the League, Germany endeavoured to promote this friendly co-operation. The action which she took and which led to the Pact of Locarno is a proof of this, and as further evidence there are the arbitration treaties which she has concluded with almost all her neighbours. The German Government is resolved to persevere unswervingly in this line of policy, and is glad to see that these ideas, which at first met with lively opposition in Germany, are now becoming more and more deeply rooted in the conscience of the German people. Thus the German Government may well speak for the great majority of the German race when it declares that it will wholeheartedly devote itself to the duties devolving upon the League of Nations.

During the past six years the League has already taken in hand a substantial portion of these tasks, and has done most valuable work. The German delegation does not possess the experience which the members here assembled have acquired. We believe, however, that, as regards the new work which lies before us, the subjects dealt with first should be those in which the individual nations can do most by combining in joint institutions. Among other institutions which the League has created, we have in mind the World Court, which is the outcome of efforts made to establish an international legal order.

Furthermore, the efforts made towards disarmament are of particular importance for the consolidation of organised international peace. The complete disarmament of Germany was stipulated by the Treaty of Versailles as a preliminary to general disarmament. It is to be hoped that practical steps will be taken to further this

general disarmament, and thereby furnish evidence that the lofty ideals of the League of Nations already contain within them the seeds of a great positive force.

Germany's relations to the League are not, however, confined exclusively to the possibilities of co-operation in general aims and issues. In many respects the League is the heir and executor of the Treaties of 1919. Out of these Treaties there have arisen in the past, I may say frankly, many differences between the League and Germany. I hope that our co-operation within the League will make it easier in future to discuss these questions. In this respect mutual confidence will, from a political point of view, be found a greater creative force than anything else. It would, indeed, be incompatible with the ideals of the League to group its Members according to whether they are viewed with sympathy or with antipathy by other Members.

In this connection I reject most emphatically the idea that the attitude hitherto adopted by Germany in matters concerning the League of Nations has been dictated by such sympathies or antipathies. Germany desires to co-operate on the basis of mutual confidence with all nations represented in the League or upon the Council.

The League has not yet attained its ideal, which is to include all the Powers of the world. Germany's entry into the League does, it is true, constitute an important step towards its universality. But we desire at the same time to express our deep regret that Brazil has manifested her intention to withdraw from it. We regret this more particularly because we believe that if the League is to be world-wide, one continent alone should not have a predominant influence within it. Furthermore, we share with the other Members of the League the firm hope that we may retain the valuable co-operation of Spain. We are convinced that the appeal which has been addressed to Spain by all the Powers will reveal to that great country and its people how detrimental it would be to the high ideals of which Spain has been a leading champion if she were long absent from Geneva at this period.

Universality alone can protect the League against the danger of using its political forces for other purposes than in the service of peace. Only on the basis of a community of all nations, without distinction and on a footing of perfect equality, can mutual assistance and justice become the true guiding stars of the destiny of mankind. Upon this foundation alone can that principle of freedom be set for which nations and individuals alike are constantly striving. Germany is firmly resolved to found her policy upon these lofty ideals. To all the nations assembled here we can apply the words of that great thinker who said that we belong to a generation which strives from darkness towards the light. It is our fervent hope that the tasks of the League may be fulfilled on the basis of the noble conceptions of peace, freedom and unity. So shall we draw nearer the ideals to which we aspire, and it is the firm resolve of Germany to assist wholeheartedly in that task.

The President :

Translation : M. Briand, first delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. Briand :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—I sincerely thank my colleagues on the General Committee of the Assembly for having allowed the delegate of France to follow the distinguished representative of Germany on this platform, to welcome the German delegation on its entry into this Assembly and to assure you that we are resolved to

collaborate with that delegation, cordially and sincerely, in the work of international pacification. My colleagues on the General Committee doubtless realised—and I thank them for it—that the presence of the delegate of France on this platform at this moment, after the eloquent and lofty words which you have just heard, would perhaps do something to emphasise the character of this occasion and make clear its significance, its consequences and all the hopes which the peoples of the world rightly centre in it.

Those who indulge in irony and detraction at the expense of the League of Nations, who daily cast doubt upon its soundness and time after time proclaim that it is doomed to perish, what will they think if they are present at this meeting? Is it not a moving spectacle, and a specially ennobling and comforting one, when we think that only a few years after the most frightful war which has ever devastated the world, when the battlefields have hardly ceased to reek with blood, the peoples, the same peoples who were hurled in combat against each other, are meeting in this peaceful assembly and are expressing to each other their common will to collaborate in the work of world peace?

What a renewal of hope for the nations! From this day on how many mothers will look at their children without feeling their hearts contract with fear.

Peace for Germany and for France: that means that we have done with the long series of terrible and sanguinary conflicts which have stained the pages of history. We have done with the black veils of mourning for sufferings that can never be appeased, done with war, done with brutal and sanguinary methods of settling our disputes. True, differences between us still exist, but henceforth it will be for the judge to declare the law. Just as individual citizens take their difficulties to be settled by a magistrate, so shall we bring ours to be settled by pacific procedure. Away with rifles, machine-guns, cannon! Clear the way for conciliation, arbitration, peace!

Countries do not go down to history as great solely through the heroism of their sons on the battlefield or the victories that they gain there. It is a far greater tribute to their greatness if, faced with difficulties, in the midst of circumstances in which anger all but drowns the voice of reason, they can stand firm, be patient and appeal to right to safeguard their just interests.

Gentlemen of the German delegation, our nations need give no further proof of their strength or of their heroism. Both nations have shown their prowess on the battlefield, and both have reaped an ample harvest of military glory. Henceforth they may seek laurels in other fields.

For many months now M. Stresemann and myself have been working together at the same task. He had every confidence; so had I. I do not regret that confidence; I trust that he also will have no occasion to regret it. With the help of a man whose noble and generous spirit and sincerity are known to you all—I refer to my colleague and friend the first delegate of the British Empire, Sir Austen Chamberlain—we have worked together. Both of us needed all our courage in our endeavour to reach a goal which was then so distant. As the crow flies, Locarno and Geneva are not far distant, but the road between them is by no means easy. It has to pass round many obstacles, and since we all admire faith when it moves mountains, we should certainly feel pride in the faith that has brought the Lake of Locarno so near to the Lake of Geneva.

If at the outset we had allowed ourselves to lose heart; if, influenced by the expressions of doubt, hesitation and mistrust emitted by some in our countries, we had gone no further, all would

have been at an end. Far from taking a further step towards peace, the seeds of renewed mistrust would have been sown between countries already divided.

I have perhaps the right, speaking from this platform, to feel a special pride in having taken part in to-day's manifestation, for I have the great satisfaction of seeing in it the outcome of a personal effort — although that, of course, is a small matter — and above all I foresee that there will henceforth be no possibility of a repetition of the terrible events which we have witnessed in recent years.

Before we could arrive at the stage we have reached to-day, certain difficult problems had to be settled by means of private negotiations. In point of fact, these negotiations were recommended by previous Assemblies, which displayed remarkable political insight and realised that, if certain *rapprochements* were not made outside the League of Nations, if certain concessions could not be obtained from both sides, if certain conversations could not be held in preparation of solutions to be submitted to you, the task we were jointly pursuing would never be accomplished.

At the last Assembly, we came very close to the danger-spot. I am glad now that at the time I never doubted of the final result and that it was I who caused the special Assembly to adopt the motion which enabled the German representatives to leave Geneva in the certainty that morally Germany's application had been unanimously accepted by the Assembly.

In the interval we discussed matters, and we prepared for solutions by conciliation. This kind of work, I hasten to add, does not partake of the true spirit of the League of Nations. In the League everything must be done in public and in collaboration with all the nations belonging to it. I can now proclaim, with the certainty that I shall not be contradicted by my friends, that in future it will no longer be necessary to resort to proceedings of this nature.

All the Members of the League of Nations, great and small, without distinction, must collaborate with a view to attaining the objects laid down in the Covenant.

If, during these difficult times through which we have passed, some of you have felt perhaps that it was our intention not to admit you to a share in our decisions, let me persuade you that you have been mistaken. No one is more firmly resolved than the delegates of France that in future the work of the League shall be done in the light of day and with the collaboration of all its Members.

I have no fault to find with the remarks made by the representative of Germany concerning his conception of collaboration with us on the League. As regards the delegate of France, I may say that the German delegation can be sure of finding in him a loyal collaborator.

The fact that we are both present in this Assembly and that, on the plane of the ideal, we can hold communion with one another does not destroy existing obstacles. Such obstacles still exist, as you, Sir, so tactfully indicated. Of this fact I am fully aware. M. Stresemann and I, each in our respective countries, are in a position which enables us to perceive those obstacles, and the mere fact that he has left the Wilhelmstrasse and I the Quai d'Orsay, to meet here in the fair city of Geneva does not mean that these difficulties have disappeared through the good-will manifested in our words.

It is sufficient, however, if both of us, voicing deep-rooted feeling in our countries — and I

can assure you that it is the feeling of my country — have the will to meet these various difficulties, firmly resolved to settle them by conciliatory means. That is enough to prevent any dispute between us from becoming an armed conflict.

It is especially those peoples who have not always been in agreement who have most need of the League of Nations: for, if it is true that there may be some divine plan whereby the nations are prevented from making war on one another, M. Stresemann will readily agree that, during the long years of the past, this plan has been singularly disregarded. I should like to see it applied from to-day onwards, and you may be sure that I will do nothing to prevent it. I simply wish to say this: If you are here as a German and only as a German, and if I am here as a Frenchman and only as a Frenchman, agreement will not be easy. But if we come here, not forgetting our respective countries, yet as citizens sharing in the universal work of the League, all will be well, and we shall attain spiritual communion with our colleagues in the atmosphere peculiar to Geneva.

You said, Sir, that you were inexperienced; that will not be for long. You possess intuition, the statesman's supreme quality — this your speech has clearly proved — and you have the sensitive perception which enables you to realise the spirit of the League.

I have often arrived at Geneva, or in some other town where the Council of the League was sitting, with the helpless feeling of being at grips with problems impossible of solution and confronted with the comments of the Press and of politicians which sometimes serve to render them more obscure. On such occasions, I have often said to myself that we should separate without coming to an agreement or finding a solution. But a solution has always been found, because, directly we were seated opposite one another, under the safeguard of the Covenant, infected by the spirit of the place, ennobled in one another's eyes by our great purpose, realising the moral responsibility which weighed upon us not only toward our individual nations but the whole world, we readjusted our minds, we made a supreme effort, and at the most critical moment, just when a solution appeared to be escaping us for ever, we were able, by a kind of miracle which I will not attempt to explain, to reach an agreement, to the amazement of all and particularly of those who perhaps had not desired the success of our endeavours.

But such a result could only be attained upon one condition, which I am now going to put before you. It is a condition which applies no less to myself than to you all, for I, like any other statesman, am not strong enough to resist committing that kind of error. I have in the past been guilty of many such errors, and I trust that what I am going to say will be taken not as advice but largely as a confession.

There are two spirits in which delegates may come to Geneva: the objective spirit and the fighting spirit. If the League takes on the semblance of a kind of tourney; if, under the stimulus of polemical debates or actuated by an overheated national sense of pride, we come here as champions to fight, with the desire to gain the perilous successes of prestige, then all will be spoilt. Victories of prestige bring no result save in appearance. Think of the havoc they have wrought in the past! Prestige stimulates the imagination, aggravates selfish interests, urges States to feverish demonstrations of national pride and incites them to oppose the statesmen, who then lose the guiding rein of reason and the power to find moderate solutions. It is impossible for statesmen, under

such conditions to work in a spirit of conciliation. They face one another like wrestlers in the ring, with their peoples eagerly looking on and asking which is going to throw the other. That is the spirit of war; it is a spirit which must not exist — least of all in the League.

For my part I promise to do my best to avoid bringing this spirit here, and I count on the intelligence, the pacific spirit and the lofty sentiments of the German delegates to do the same.

If we are egged on against each other, if we are urged in interviews and speeches to oppose each other, we must put aside all such temptations; let us thrust them far from us! That is the road of blood, the road of the past, covered with the dead, the road of mourning, of destruction and disaster. It is not our road.

Henceforth our road is to be one of peace and progress. We shall win real greatness for our countries if we induce them to lay aside their pride, if we persuade them to sacrifice certain of their own desires in the service of world-peace. This sacrifice will not diminish, it will increase their prestige.

When Europe has regained its economic and moral equilibrium, when the peoples realise their security, they will then be able to cast away the heavy burdens imposed by the dread of war, they will be able to work together to improve their respective positions. There will arise at last a European spirit which will not be born of war, and will for that reason be nobler, loftier and more worthy of admiration.

It is for us to make this effort. It is easy to blame the peoples, but it is generally their leaders who are to blame. It is they who should know how to control themselves, who should have a proper understanding of events and should always interpret them in a spirit favourable to efforts of conciliation.

Arbitration! That word is now at the height of its prestige and its power. Arbitration treaties are increasing; nation after nation is promising to abjure war and to accept intermediaries. Peace is making its way through all these undertakings. The spirit of the League is at the root of them; and for that reason all nations should devote themselves heart and soul to the League's defence. It should be sheltered from all attacks and placed above all other considerations.

With the League goes Peace! Without it, the menace of war and blood from which the peoples have suffered too long!

This day should be commemorated with a white stone. The words of collaboration which Germany and France have just exchanged in a like spirit of sincerity should be marked with a white stone — and I for one will never change the colour of that stone.

And now, apologising for having presumed upon your patience so long, may I say that the League

has to-day, by the entry of Germany, made another step towards its object—universality. Although this is a cause for rejoicing, our joy is darkened by the fact that two great nations of the League are no longer with us.

I endorse your remarks both as regards Brazil and Spain. These two great countries were deeply imbued with the spirit which animates us all; they have rendered many services to the League in difficult circumstances. It is therefore not surprising that even our joy at to-day's event should be tinged with regret at their absence. But we do not give up hope, and I am deeply convinced that soon we shall see the representatives of Spain and Brazil among us once again.

The League is not going back; its future will be one of constant expansion. To-day it has taken one step forward; to-morrow it will take another. Our presence, both yours and ours, is of great significance.

I am glad to have been able to take part in this event. It will, I am sure, take a great place in history. It is for us to ensure that no imprudence on the part of any of us will endanger the hopes of the peoples of the world.

The President:

Translation: Ladies and gentlemen — Sharing as I do the deep emotion with which you have listened to the last two speakers, I am convinced that the Assembly will wish me to convey our thanks to M. Stresemann and M. Briand and to assure them that their sincere and touching words have reached our inmost hearts.

It was indeed a moving spectacle to see the delegates of Germany and France mount the same platform, animated by the same desire to proclaim their deep faith and unshakable conviction in the future of the League!

Their words, I am convinced, will prove a determining factor not only in the work to be accomplished here, but also in the whole future of this great international association.

Sir Austen Chamberlain (British Empire):

I beg to move that the speeches which you, Mr. President, have addressed to us from the Presidential chair and the speeches of the honourable representatives of Germany and France be printed verbatim in the Assembly Journal.

The President:

Translation: I take your applause to mean that the Assembly has adopted the proposal of the first delegate of the British Empire.

I think that, in view of the deep emotion we have all experienced, it would be inopportune to continue the discussion of the agenda at this morning's meeting. I propose, therefore, to adjourn until this afternoon. (*Assent.*)

The Assembly rose at 12.15 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 10th, 1926, AT 3.30 P.M.

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23. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the continuation of the general discussion of 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.

Mr. J. G. Latham, first delegate of Australia, will address the Assembly.

The Honourable J. G. Latham (Australia) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — In the first place I desire, on behalf of Australia, the country which I have the honour to represent, to associate myself with the sentiments expressed this morning on the occasion of the entry of

Germany into the League of Nations. This morning a great step was taken towards the universality of the League — a step which many have said was impossible. It has, however, been accomplished. The unanimous desire to receive Germany into the League is inspired by the faith and the hope that Germany will work with the Members of the League for the accomplishment of the ideals for the promotion of which the League was formed.

Many will remember that during the war in France millions of men and women looked forward to peace and happiness *après la guerre*. In the words of M. Briand this morning : "*Plus de guerres*". It is the greatest hope of mankind to-day that this statement may prove to be true. The events of this Assembly, marked as they have been by the surrender or sacrifice of certain ambitions in order to attain unanimity, in order to reach an agreement, help to justify the hope that the statement of M. Briand, supported as it was by the statement of the representative of Germany (a statement which is also a prophecy), may be realised in the world of fact as well as in the realm of aspiration and hope. The possibility of attaining the ideals of the League depends in the judgment of most, if not all, who are present here to-day upon the League pursuing its work in accordance with the principles for which it stands.

It is difficult after the events of this morning to return to the ordinary work of the day, but that I conceive to be the proper duty of those who are here representing their countries upon the League. I therefore make no apology for resuming the debate upon the work of the Council and of the Secretariat during the past year.

The report before us is a record of useful activities constituting an effective reply to any persons who would suggest that the League is not worthy of support. I propose to deal briefly this afternoon with three subjects only. In the first place, I propose to say something on the subject of the International Economic Conference. Secondly, I propose to make a small

practical suggestion which I venture to hope may facilitate the work of the League. Thirdly, I propose to make some remarks upon the question of disarmament and certain associated subjects.

The peoples of Australia are very interested in the proposal to hold an International Economic Conference. They regard it with interest, but also, I am bound to say, with some degree of concern. I refer to this question in order that, if there be any misunderstanding, it may be dispelled in the interests of the League and of the Members of the League.

In the first place, it is necessary to understand exactly what the present position is. This matter was initiated by a resolution of the Assembly passed on September 24th, 1925, which remitted to the Council the question of the desirability of holding an International Economic Conference. That resolution did not itself determine that a conference should be held, but it left the convening of the Conference under the auspices of the League to be a matter for subsequent decision by the Council. The Council then considered the matter and passed a resolution appointing a Preparatory Committee for the purpose of preparing and collecting such economic information as would be useful if the Economic Conference were held. There was, however, no definitive decision of the Council to hold a conference, and there has not been, I venture to suggest, an authoritative description by the Council of the nature and the scope of the Conference which it is proposed to hold.

It is true that the Economic Committee which reported to the Council had a very definite idea of both the nature and the scope of this Conference, because in its report the Committee made the following statement :

"In response to the request made to it in connection with the composition of the Preparatory Committee, the Economic Committee desires to point out that the membership of such a body must depend essentially upon the nature, composition and aims of the Conference itself.

"The Economic Committee has accordingly assumed that the Conference would consist of persons having commercial, industrial, and economic qualifications, who would be appointed by, but not responsible to, their Governments, and whose object in meeting would be to discuss matters with complete freedom and not to draw up conventions.

"On this assumption the Economic Committee considers that the composition of the Preparatory Committee as proposed by the French Government answers, on the whole, to the duties allotted to that Committee and to the nature of the proposed Conference. The Committee feels, however, bound to offer the following observations :

"It desires to emphasise its entire agreement with the view taken in the French memorandum that the members of the Preparatory Committee should not be regarded as Government delegates. It also thinks that any members of technical organisations of the League who may take part should sit as experts and should not be hampered by instructions from the technical organisations to which they belong, though they would, of course, keep those organisations informed of the progress of the Preparatory Committee's work."

Again, in taking its decision, the Council approved the report of the Rapporteur, which contained the following statement :

"One point in respect of which there appears to be unanimous agreement, and on which I feel sure it is essential to insist, is this : it would seem that the Conference is not to have a strictly Government character and that it is not to be composed of responsible delegates invested with full powers for the conclusion of conventions; it is intended rather to organise a general consultation in the course of which, as at the Financial Conference at Brussels, the various programmes and doctrines may be freely exposed without the freedom of discussion being restricted by any immediate necessity to transform the conclusions of the Conference into international engagements.

"The Council will, in any case, have to consider this point before taking a definite decision as to the convening of the Conference after receipt of the Preparatory Committee's report, but I have thought it necessary to mention it at once since it may be an important factor in determining the scheme of work of the Preparatory Committee itself".

The particular point which I desire to make is this — that the Council has not yet taken any decision upon these questions and, in view of the nature of the provisional recommendations of the Preparatory Committee, it is important that the Council should arrive at that decision as quickly as possible.

There is a certain fear that the Conference may feel itself entitled to make recommendations, upon which the League may be asked to take action, regarding questions many of which are essentially domestic in character; it is very desirable, therefore, that the Council should, as soon as possible, make a declaration upon the scope and nature of the suggested Conference.

Reference to the list of matters which the Preparatory Committee has under consideration as potential subjects of enquiry shows that they include, among others, questions of tariffs, the question of protection and free trade, more particularly the question of preferential tariffs, selling organisations, State trading, bounties, the organisation of internal trade and commerce in relation to the utility of middlemen and similar subjects, and various questions affecting migration. I venture to ask, therefore, for the consideration by the Council at an early date of the scope and nature of the Conference.

In the meantime, information upon these problems will be collected and it may be that matters will be allowed to drift in such a way that it will be assumed that all these problems are to become subjects of enquiry by the League of Nations. Upon a number of the matters to which I have referred, political opinion within the various countries of the world is acutely divided, and I suggest that it would be an error for the League to hold a conference of such a character that the League would run the risk of becoming associated with one side or the other in any form of domestic controversy.

The work of the League, as Viscount Cecil suggested yesterday afternoon, is marked out for it, and it is in the true interests alike of the League and of the world that it should, whilst doing that work, confine itself to the legitimate functions which it has under the Covenant.

To make a complete study of these questions would occupy many years, because the conditions and circumstances in every country vary greatly. In Australia, before we impose a protective duty, the matter is sent for enquiry to a Tariff Board, and sometimes many months are occupied in examining a single industry. In the same way,

we have a Development and Migration Commission, which is charged with the duty of considering the economic development of the country. In this case, again, the problems will undoubtedly occupy a considerable time in detailed study before action can be taken.

I venture, therefore, to ask for a definite decision upon the nature and scope of the Conference, in accordance with the principles that the Conference should be a conference of experts as recommended by the Economic Committee, that it should not be a conference of representatives of Governments as such, and in accordance with the further principle that the League will best serve its own interests, and therefore the interests of the world, by avoiding domestic questions which are not truly international in character.

I come now to a relatively small matter upon which I desire to make a practical suggestion for action by the League. There is no formal document in the world to which reference is so frequently made as the Covenant of the League of Nations. The Covenant is now presented in a form which is unsuited for ready and convenient reference. Some of its articles are lengthy and contain many paragraphs. Article 15, I think, contains ten paragraphs; Article 22 contains nine. My suggestion is that it would facilitate reference to the Covenant and would accordingly in some measure facilitate the work of the League if the paragraphs of the articles were numbered. Accordingly, I propose that the First Committee be requested to consider and to report to the Assembly upon the desirability of numbering the paragraphs of the articles of the Covenant in all copies of the Covenant published by the League. This is not, I conceive, an amendment to the Covenant; a direction to the printer of the League's publications will be sufficient. I suggest, however, that it ought to be done and by the proper authority.

Finally, I wish to speak shortly on the subject of disarmament. Disarmament is one of the principal objects of the League. If the League fails to achieve results in this direction, it is difficult to see how it can effectively attain its object of securing peace.

It is the general view at present that the subjects of arbitration, security and disarmament are inseparably linked together and that no one of them can be solved unless the others are simultaneously solved. At this Assembly these questions are again under consideration. The League has already explored — unfortunately without success — the possibility of general agreements such as those embodied in the draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance and in the Protocol. In view of the failure to secure general assent, new methods of approach are being utilised.

I venture to make two observations upon this aspect of the matter. In the first place, all lawyers are familiar with the distinction between substantive law and the law of procedure. Procedural law merely provides the means for administering substantive law. It is substantive law which actually defines and specifies the rights and duties of those persons who are subject to the law. I suggest that arbitration belongs not to substantive law but to procedural or adjective law. Arbitration is merely a method of ascertaining facts, of declaring and of enforcing rights, which rights are derived from some other source than the arbitral procedure itself — that is to say, arbitration, speaking generally, operates as a means of procedure within a system of law, that system of law defining the rights and duties to which it is the function of the arbitrator to give effect. There are some special instances in which

individuals agree that they shall submit their differences to arbitration without any insistence upon legal right, so that the matter is simply left to the discretion of the particular arbitrator. In this case, everything depends upon his knowledge, impartiality and fairness. The effect of this procedure is that the matter is removed from the realm of law to that of the opinion of an individual or individuals. There are obvious objections to such a process, or rather there are obvious limitations of the utility of such a procedure in the case of important differences, especially when they involve questions of policy or of national aspiration.

What, then, is required? Something more than arbitration as a procedure is required. What is required is either a system of law or the making of agreements between nations. That system of law or those agreements will define rights and duties, and then there is an appropriate sphere for the exercise of the functions of an arbitrator. Accordingly, among the most important subjects with which the League may properly concern itself, a function which it is seeking to discharge, is the problem of the codification of international law. This is one of the fundamental questions upon which, I suggest, the future of the League depends, and, in particular, the effectiveness of any system of arbitration depends upon something of this character.

The second observation which I make upon arbitration is this. There are certain dangers attached to the institution of a system of arbitration in which the arbitrator, instead of applying a law derived from another source than himself, or interpreting and applying an agreement made by the parties, is left to act according to his own view of the case. The effect of such a procedure is that the arbitrator, instead of administering any form of law or applying any agreement, really makes a law, and we have found in Australia that when a body is set up for the purpose of determining industrial disputes without any rules being laid down as to the law according to which they are to be determined, the result is that, in order to invoke the jurisdiction of the tribunal, a dispute is created. We do not want to get into a similar position in international affairs, and the mere establishment of a tribunal for the settlement of international disputes incurs the risk of the creation of disputes in order that an appeal may be made to the jurisdiction of the international tribunal. In such a case the claimant has nothing to lose and may gain something. This, again, is another reason for the development of a complete system of international law and for the making of further agreements between the representatives of the nations.

A final word upon disarmament itself. The Preparatory Commission has prepared a questionnaire which attacks the problem of disarmament in analytical detail. No one will deny either the importance or the relevance of the issues raised, but what must strike any student of the report is the remarkable complication, the extraordinary complication, of the problem, and the difficulty, amounting, I should think, in some instances almost to impossibility, of securing any general agreement upon the answers to the questions proposed. I mention, by way of illustration, Question V (a) from the questionnaire, which is in these words:

"On what principle will it be possible to draw up a scale of armaments permissible to the various countries, taking into account particularly population, resources, geographical situation, length and nature of maritime communication, density

and character of the railways, vulnerability of the frontiers and of the important vital centres near the frontiers, the time required, varying with different States, to transform peace armaments into war armaments, the degree of security which, in the event of aggression, a State could receive under the provisions of the Covenant, or of separate engagements contracted towards that State."

That is one question out of seven. On reading these questions, we begin to wonder whether, if disarmament is to await a general agreement upon the answers to these questions, it is within the sphere of human vision. These questions, with their balancing and opposing consideration, remind me of the dialectical discussion upon the subject of whether to marry or not to marry, to be found in a famous French classic. The risks of an unfortunate marriage are so great if they are really thought out that the truly reflective man or woman would have missed all opportunities for marriage if he or she insisted upon fully accomplishing the process of reflection, and yet we do marry and we do take the risks. Surely, in the case of disarmament, something can be done even if the whole problem in all its aspects cannot be completely solved.

I hope that the Chairman of the Preparatory Commission will be able to make some reassuring statement to the Assembly upon this subject before it rises. The Treaty of Locarno, which we now hope is to come into effective operation, goes far to promote security in a large area of Europe. The peoples of the world await a definite step towards disarmament. The problem, ladies and gentlemen, is urgent. It cannot wait; it cannot be postponed indefinitely. Action depends upon the Governments of the peoples. I venture to appeal to the representatives of the Governments not to lose the opportunity by over-elaboration of discussion even of very necessary and relevant questions. Those who are prepared to lead the way on this question by action, in addition to discussion, will earn and fully deserve the undying gratitude of mankind.

The President :

Translation : A draft resolution has been submitted to the General Committee by the Australian delegation. The text will be published in the *Assembly Journal* so that Members may consider the action to be taken on it at the next meeting.

M. Ramek, delegate of Austria, will address the Assembly.

M. Ramek (Austria) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The report of the Council of the League, which is on the agenda for discussion, gives us, by the variety of the subjects handled, an accurate picture of the complex and splendid work accomplished by the League of Nations.

The reconstruction of Austria, which has just been brought to a successful conclusion, is an integral part of this work and attaches my country to the League more than most by ties of sincere gratitude.

Further, I note with keen satisfaction that the Council has succeeded in completing its work by solving the very difficult questions of organisation which arose during the year.

From the bottom of my heart, I extend a very cordial welcome to the new Member of the Assembly, for Germany and Austria are peopled by one and the same race. The entry of Germany should mean a powerful reinforcement of the League, which, by the reconstruction of Austria, has shown how great is the vital force engendered by the united efforts of the nations.

In this solemn hour I would evoke the memory of those great leaders of mankind, of all civilised nations, who have worked together throughout the centuries to build up those ideas which are gradually assuming practical shape before our eyes. It cannot, I feel sure, imply any depreciation of the merits of the others if I single out by name one of the most illustrious sons of the country which has to-day taken its place in this Assembly."

I would recall those noble flights of genius which are scattered throughout the work of the great philosopher Kant. When designing the plan for his League of Peace, Kant saw on the horizon the outline of this noble institution, the League of Nations. The scaffolding erected by this prince of thought and other kindred minds in other countries was too far in advance of the political thought of the age. Their ideas had no practical result, but they have survived, championed and nurtured by devoted and persevering men throughout the world until that decisive hour when, after the disasters of the war, they took on lasting and solid shape in this town of Geneva.

The new League of Nations, like all human work, could hardly lay claim to perfection; it could not attain its ideal of universality, nor has it done so even to-day. The eastern and the western wings of our great building are still missing, but the central structure is now firmly set on its foundation; it can weather any passing storms that may arise, and is unshakable for all time.

The deep emotion we have felt should, I am sure, impel us to offer our thanks to all who have bent their efforts to the reconciliation of the nations and so paved the way for the historical event we have witnessed to-day.

It is with sincere joy that we warmly welcome the new Member of this Assembly.

As I have already stated, the advent of Germany must strengthen all that is sound and vital in the League. The principal source of its strength must, however, be confidence in the future — the very life-blood of the great League of Nations — that splendid confidence which has brought us through to this memorable day and which is alone capable of leading us to greater and ever greater heights of perfection for the good of mankind.

The President :

Translation : Viscount Ishii, first delegate of Japan, will address the Assembly.

Viscount Ishii (Japan) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Since the beginning of the year the League has had to deal with a particularly difficult question — the reorganisation of the Council. This time the evil came from within, and just as a physician, even the highest in the land, can seldom treat himself with ease, so the crisis through which the League has passed, was full of incident and attended by moments of anxiety.

The League has invariably proved successful in solving the problems — sometimes of a delicate and difficult nature — with which it has been confronted during the past six years. We are happy to note that it has succeeded once again in overcoming a great difficulty, thus proving to the world that by good-will and a spirit of sacrifice a satisfactory solution can always be found.

It is a matter of deep regret, however, from the point of view of the universal extension of the League, that one of the great Latin-American republics should have announced its intention of withdrawing from our councils. Public opinion in Japan has been profoundly impressed by the retirement of this great and friendly Power, which

has contributed so brilliantly to the work of the League. We fervently hope that her absence will not be more than temporary.

It is a matter of no less regret to me that Spain, whose co-operation in the work of the League has been so greatly appreciated, should, as it appears, have the intention of withdrawing from all active part in our work. We trust most sincerely that she will reconsider her decision at an early date.

To turn to Germany, I desire, on behalf of the Imperial Government and the Japanese nation, to offer her my hearty congratulations on her entry into the League with a permanent seat on the Council.

If, from the purely legal point of view, the Treaty of Versailles restored peace between the belligerents, Germany's entry into the League may be said to mark the happy re-establishment of political peace between former enemies. The Locarno agreements restored order in Europe, and now the participation of the Reich in this great institution will effectively assist in the work of general stabilisation throughout the world. With Germany's entry into the League, the spirit of suspicion and antagonism will give place to a spirit of trustful and brotherly co-operation, and with this new circumstance the League's work will become more normal and regular, more solid and durable.

Now that the incident of the organisation of the Council is happily closed, we must devote ourselves untiringly to ensuring the development of the League along sound lines.

Suggestions have been advanced from various quarters with regard to its future. One of these contemplates the establishment of several Leagues on a continental basis, the head organisation at Geneva being retained as a co-ordinating and recording centre. All international questions would thus be referred to these new continental Leagues. In my opinion, this suggestion should be put aside. There is the danger that, with several continental Leagues in existence, misunderstanding, suspicion, competition and even intrigue might gradually develop. Inter-continental difficulties, should they arise, would be the more alarming in that they would cover a far wider field than difficulties between individual States. Continental bodies of the kind proposed, instead of contributing to world peace, would give rise to grave perils and new antagonisms.

In a general manner, groups formed on a continental basis or on the basis of religion or race are, in our opinion, by no means to be encouraged, since they would necessarily have a sectarian or regional tendency, however praiseworthy their original purpose.

True world peace can only be achieved after every barrier erected upon continental, religious or racial considerations has been broken down.

I am firmly convinced that the task of the League is to conciliate and bring into harmony the various sentiments and interests existing in the different parts of the globe, and to facilitate and promote cordial co-operation between the different States, the different continents and the different races. If our faith in the League is unshakable, it is because the League, instead of dividing mankind, seeks to unite it. It is because the Covenant constitutes a great charter of international concord between the civilised peoples of every continent.

In conclusion, I wish to proclaim my conviction that our one aim and purpose should be to consolidate, expand and intensify on sound and general lines the development of the League and its organisation as it now exists at Geneva.

It is in this spirit that Japan, the Japanese Government and the Japanese people will devote themselves loyally to the work of the League, proud to join hands with all their friends in Asia, Europe and America.

21. — REFERENCE TO THE THIRD COMMITTEE OF QUESTIONS DEALING WITH THE REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS: ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTIONS PROPOSED BY THE NETHERLANDS DELEGATION: COMMUNICATIONS BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

Translation : May I remind the Assembly of the proposal I made, at the end of yesterday's meeting, in regard to the draft resolutions submitted by the Netherlands and British delegations. These drafts have been published in the *Journal* of the Assembly and have also been specially distributed to delegates, so that you have now had an opportunity of becoming familiar with them.

I also said that I should submit the necessary suggestions at the end of to-day's meeting in regard to the action to be taken on those draft resolutions.

I will first remind you of the terms of the resolutions submitted by the Netherlands delegation. They read as follows :

1. "The Assembly decides to refer to the Third Committee all the portions of the Report and of the Supplementary Report on the Work of the Council and of the Secretariat which deal with the reduction of armaments."

2. "The Assembly decides to refer to the Third Committee M. Benes' report (approved by the Council on September 4th, 1926) on the draft Convention for the Control of the Private Manufacture of Arms and Ammunition and of Implements of War, and the documents attached thereto."

I propose that the documents mentioned in these resolutions should be referred to the Third Committee.

If no one has any objection, I shall regard this proposal motion as adopted. (*Adopted.*)

25. — RATIFICATION OF THE AGREEMENTS AND CONVENTIONS CONCLUDED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE PREAMBLE AND ARTICLES 3 AND 4 OF THE COVENANT: REFERENCE TO THE AGENDA COMMITTEE OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTIONS PROPOSED BY THE BRITISH DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : We next come to two draft resolutions submitted by the British delegation, the first of which reads as follows :

"The Assembly :

"Observing with regret that many Conventions and agreements concluded under the auspices of the League of Nations have remained ineffective, or have only come into force after undue delay, owing to the difficulty experienced in securing a sufficient number of ratifications by the signatories ;

"Desires to call the attention of the Governments of all States Members of the League to the necessity for taking all measures in their power to facilitate and expedite the ratification in all cases of Conventions and agreements signed in their name;

"And decides to invite the Council of the League to examine the possibility of appointing a committee to consider whether any general understanding could be promoted that would secure rapid and, if possible, simultaneous action by the signatories of such Conventions and agreements."

The second draft resolution submitted by the British delegation is as follows :

"The Assembly requests the Council to appoint a committee to consider and report what

questions are and what are not within the sphere of action of the League within the meaning of the Preamble and Articles 3 and 4 of the Covenant, especially with reference to the questions which are now being dealt with by the organs of the League or are proposed to be so dealt with."

In accordance with custom, I propose that these two draft resolutions should be first referred to the Agenda Committee, which will perhaps be good enough to meet as soon as possible, so as to present suggestions on the action to be taken in regard to them.

If no one has anything to say, I shall regard my proposal as adopted. (*Adopted.*)

The Assembly rose at 5.5 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE
SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY
OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

NINTH PLENARY MEETING

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14th, 1926, AT 3.30 P.M.

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26. — MAINTENANCE OF ORDER IN THE ASSEMBLY HALL : COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

Translation: Before turning to the agenda of the meeting, I should like to read you the following communication.

The General Committee, at its meeting held on the morning of September 13th, discussed various measures to help the President to maintain order during the plenary meetings of the Assembly.

In particular, the General Committee desired that the attention of the Assembly should again be called to its previous decision, which was brought to the notice of the delegations through the *Assembly Journal*.

This decision, as you know, was to the effect that the floor of the Assembly hall should be exclusively reserved for members of delegations or of the Secretariat, and Press representatives, photographers and the public would in no case be admitted. This rule applies, therefore, to relatives and friends of delegates, and the General Committee wishes to appeal to delegates to see that it is scrupulously observed.

Further, in order to maintain silence during the speeches and to allow freedom of movement during the translations, I should like to submit to the Assembly the following suggestions which, if they meet with approval, will assist me in my difficult task of maintaining order:

1. Between the end of a speech and its translation, an interval of one or two minutes will be observed to enable anyone who does not wish to listen to the translation to leave the Assembly Hall.

2. The doors of the press and public galleries will be kept strictly closed, except during the interval between two speeches or between a speech and its translation.

3. The attendants will be instructed to check conversation and movement amongst members of the public during speeches and translations.

If no one has any remarks to make on these suggestions, I will take it that they have the approval of the Assembly and will have them published in the *Assembly Journal*.

The proposals were adopted.

27. — INTERPRETATION OF THE PREAMBLE AND ARTICLES 3 AND 4 OF THE COVENANT; AND RATIFICATION OF THE AGREEMENTS AND CONVENTIONS CONCLUDED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS: REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE ON THE DRAFT RESOLUTIONS PROPOSED BY THE BRITISH DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the report of the Agenda Committee on the draft resolutions submitted by Viscount Cecil on behalf of the British delegation. The report is as follows :

“The Agenda Committee met on September 11th, 1926, under the Chairmanship of H. E. M. Urrutia.

“It has examined the two draft resolutions which have been sent to it following the decision of the Assembly taken at the meeting of September 10th, 1926.

“After this preliminary study, it was decided unanimously to propose to the Assembly to refer to the First Committee the following draft resolution :

“The Assembly requests the Council to appoint a Committee to consider and to report what questions are and what are not within the sphere of the League of Nations within the meaning of the Preamble and Articles 3 and 4 of the Covenant, especially with reference to the questions which are now being dealt with by the organs of the League or are proposed to be so dealt with.”

“On the other hand, it was unanimously decided to propose to the Assembly to refer to the Sixth Committee the following draft resolution :

“The Assembly :

“Observing with regret that many Conventions and agreements concluded under the auspices of the League of Nations have remained ineffective, or have only come into force after undue delay, owing to the difficulty experienced in securing a sufficient number of ratifications by the signatories ;

“Desires to call the attention of the Governments of all States Members of the League to the necessity for taking all measures in their power to facilitate and expedite the ratification in all cases of Conventions and agreements signed in their name ;

“And decides to invite the Council of the League to examine the possibility of appointing a Committee to consider whether any general understanding could be promoted that would secure rapid and, if possible, simultaneous action by the signatories of such Conventions and agreements.”

If no one has anything to say, I will ask the Assembly to vote on the Agenda Committee's proposals.

The proposals were adopted.

28. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT: CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : M. Bouroff, first delegate of Bulgaria, will address the Assembly on the Report on the Work of the Council and of the Secretariat.

M. Bouroff (Bulgaria) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — My sole motive in addressing this Assembly is the imperative duty of expressing my country's gratitude to the League of Nations.

Among the many problems relating to peace for which the League has found a solution, there are two which are of particular concern to Bulgaria. These two questions are dealt with in the report of the Secretariat. The first is the frontier incident which occurred at Petritch in October and which might have entailed serious complications. Within the brief space of a few days, the League of Nations, by its pacific intervention and thanks to its great moral prestige, succeeded in averting the dangers involved and in liquidating the consequences of the incident, thereby earning the deep gratitude of the two countries concerned and reaffirming not so much its moral prestige — which was already great enough — but its efficacy in action.

A few months after this beneficent intervention on the part of the League, Bulgaria requested your assistance in the solution of another problem of a social, political and financial nature, namely, that of the Bulgarian refugees.

The refugees, who, after a succession of wars, left their homes and fields and crowded into Bulgaria, in most cases without any means of subsistence, still constitute to-day a very heavy burden on the country and are the cause of serious disturbance in its social and political life. This horde of human beings, uprooted from their native soil and subjected to many a cruel ordeal, forms a favourable ground for subversive propaganda. Poorly nourished, even more poorly housed and clothed, and living in lamentably unhygienic conditions, they fall an easy prey to sickness and suffering of every kind. They yield an abundant harvest to the scythe of Death. Industry is as yet so backward in Bulgaria that their temporary settlement in our cities has led to a decline in wages and an increase in unemployment, and this fact further complicates the labour problem of the country.

The ordinary resources of the State being found inadequate to remedy the position, a foreign loan was imperative for the final settlement of the refugees, since their settlement was both essential for themselves and salutary for the State. In the circumstances in which she found herself after many wars, Bulgaria was unable to conclude a foreign loan without assistance. She was unable to furnish the necessary securities, her entire resources being pledged for reparations. Only the intervention of the League could smoothe out her difficulties and render a loan possible. She confidently solicited your intervention. At the beginning of May this year we addressed a petition to the League, and at the beginning of June a favourable solution had been found as regards the principle of the question involved, while, in the course of its present session, the Council has unanimously agreed to grant the loan for which we asked. We have to-day at our disposal an advance of £400,000 for the needs of the refugee settlements, pending the receipt of the loan as soon as conditions on the financial market permit of its flotation.

It is the bounden duty of a country which, within a brief space of time, has had the rare good fortune of experiencing on two separate occasions

the beneficent and effective intervention of the League, to proclaim its deep gratitude towards this organisation and its abiding faith in the efficacy of its action and in its future.

Let others criticise or doubt; the Bulgarian delegate cannot. He can only solemnly declare that Bulgaria is firmly resolved to adhere to a policy based on the pacific ideal of the League and to contribute, within the measure of her limited resources, to its ever-ennobling work.

The expression of our gratitude would be incomplete if I did not also offer our thanks to the permanent organisations of the League. I have had the opportunity of working with the members of the Secretariat in circumstances of great perplexity and intricacy, and I have come to recognise the lofty idealism, combined with untiring perseverance and a full sense of reality, that they bring to the accomplishment of their task. To them, too, I tender my country's deepest thanks.

I do not, however, wish to leave the impression that our confidence in the League and our devotion to it are due to our gratitude alone. My belief in the future of this great family of organised nations rests on deep-seated reasons of a general nature. The League is the living embodiment of the peoples' undying wish for a fuller measure of justice, equity and, above all, for the consolidation of the benefits of peace. So long as common sufferings and warring interests exist, so long as there are questions which can only be solved effectively by international collaboration, so long as there is danger of armed dispute, so long will the need for and the usefulness of the League be felt in an ever-increasing degree. There will still be difficulties to be faced and crises to be met, but if an organisation has the power of life, the difficulties it encounters, so far from enfeebling it, only steel it and strengthen it.

But to my mind the surest guarantee of the future development of the League is the fact that, conceived in the chancelleries of diplomacy, it has become the work of the nations themselves, and its vigilant guardian is the conscience of the world.

Let us, then, have the faith that creates and the optimism that engenders action. Let us ever have present in our minds the unforgettable memories of that historic day, September 10th.

As I listened to the eloquent words, so pregnant with sincerity, ripe reflection and active good-will, spoken by the distinguished representatives of Germany and France, I was profoundly moved, and I realised that a change had come over the world, that it had turned towards international collaboration and a belief in the brotherhood of man. Let us follow the example of concord and self-denial set by these two great nations; let us express to them our heartfelt gratitude for pointing out to us the true path.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have done. I share in the unanimous regret of the Assembly at the withdrawal of Brazil and Spain, two great countries which are devoted to the cause of peace, and I trust that circumstances will permit them to reconsider their decision at an early date. I have only to tender to you once more the deepest thanks of the Bulgarian nation and Government and solemnly to reaffirm their unshakable resolve to co-operate loyally and untiringly in the League's work of peace.

The President :

Translation : Jonkheer Loudon, first delegate of the Netherlands, will address the Assembly.

Jonkheer Loudon (Netherlands) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I have no desire to waste the Assembly's

time, but I wish to draw your attention to certain sections in the Council's report which call for special mention.

The first point concerns a legal question in which the Netherlands delegation took a special interest at previous Assemblies, namely, the report of the Special Committee of Jurists referred to in the Council's resolution of September 28th, 1923.

At our instance, the Assembly had addressed a request to the Council, with which the latter complied by its resolution of September 26th of last year instructing the Secretary-General to invite the Governments which might find in the report of the Special Committee of Jurists points requiring elucidation or which might have other comments to make on the report to inform the Secretariat with a view to a possible examination of the matter by a committee to be appointed by the Council.

We find on page 7 of the Council's report that twenty-one Governments replied to this invitation. Their notes have been printed and published.

I do not propose to go into the details of their replies. It is sufficient to say that the observations they contain refer mainly to the coercive measures mentioned in the fourth question submitted to the jurists, most of the Governments being ostensibly preoccupied by the question of such measures.

One of these Governments writes :

"In reality, coercive measures described as not being acts of war... may constitute a grave danger for the security of the smaller States... it is essential that an individual State should not be allowed to take the law into its own hands and presume upon that inequality of strength which must always subsist between States."

Several Governments consider coercive measures to be incompatible with the fundamental principles of the League, that they represent the imposition of the individual will by means of force, and that in the absence of any criterion for determining their legality or illegality it is hardly possible to decide in what circumstances or in what form they should be permitted. Assuredly, the intentions of the Government responsible for such measures would not settle the question, and, as one of the Governments points out, measures which take the form of the violation of territory are inadmissible as being incompatible with Article 10 of the Covenant.

In addition to the question of coercion, there are other points which also give rise to doubts.

In short, the replies communicated to us by the Council prove that, after studying these questions, many Governments are still not satisfied and desire additional explanations.

The Council considers, however, that there would be no practical advantage in attempting to carry the matter further by appointing a new committee which would reconsider the answers given by the Special Committee. It is of opinion that the five questions examined are general questions of interpretation of the Covenant and of international law which cannot be authoritatively or finally settled by a report from such a Committee.

While I regret that the Council proposes to forego the re-examination suggested in the resolution of September 26th last, and although I am unable to share the Council's somewhat optimistic opinion that, since all the Governments have had an opportunity of expressing their opinion, the essential object has been attained, I recognise that it would be difficult to arrive at a practical solution of the problems under consideration by appointing a new committee to reconsider the jurists' answers, although the object is rather to throw further

light, on these answers than to formulate fresh replies to the same questions, as stated in the Council's report.

The Netherlands delegation will accordingly not insist for the moment on the procedure which it had proposed. We consider it, however, to be the duty of the Assembly to take special note of the assurance given by the Council that it will not fail, if necessary, to take into consideration the observations received from so many Members of the League. This official assurance constitutes an undertaking.

In my country great interest and sympathy have been manifested in the work of the Committee of Experts engaged in the question of the progressive codification of international law. If I might be allowed to submit an observation on this work, I would urge that for the time being attention should be concentrated on questions of special urgency for which the preparatory studies have reached a point at which codification has become a practical possibility. We all know that the preparation of international conferences requires much time. If the Committee of Experts would confine itself for the moment to questions which are of primary importance and are now ready for codification, we should, I think, arrive more rapidly at definite results.

It would, moreover, be expedient, in order to avoid any chance of overlapping, to leave on one side questions which have already formed the subject of special international conferences, such as the Brussels Conference on Maritime Law, the Berne Conference for the Protection of Industrial Property and Literary and Artistic Works, the Hague Conference on Private International Law or, lastly, the Pan-American Conferences.

In his instructive speech last week, Lord Cecil said that the Assembly was entitled to demand fuller information concerning the work of the Committee of Experts. He expressed the wish that the First Committee of the Assembly might enquire into the activities of the Committee for the Codification of International Law. I would venture to go a step further and to put before you a resolution referring to the First Committee the report of the Committee on International Law. It is surely desirable that the First Committee should take official note of the experts' work, in view of the fact that the Committee over which M. Hammarskjöld presided with such distinction is the outcome of an Assembly resolution.

Before passing to another question, I beg to inform the Assembly that the Netherlands Government recently renewed for a period of ten years its adherence to the compulsory clause of Article 36 of the Statute of the International Court.

Many centuries of wide experience as a colonial Power give the Netherlands a special interest in the mandates problem and the work of the Permanent Mandates Commission. I have on several occasions drawn the attention of the Assembly to the good work done by this Commission and also by the mandatory Powers, work which has been acknowledged in the Council's reports. This year's report, too, shows how important the work of the Mandates Commission has been. Its duty is to maintain a general supervision over the administration of the mandated territories in accordance with the resolutions taken by the Council at San Sebastian in 1922 on the report of M. Hymans. It has also to supervise the moral and intellectual welfare of the inhabitants of the mandated territories. This is a difficult and often delicate task. The Commission is careful to avoid giving to its work of supervision any character of interference.

Its work deserves, I am sure, the wholehearted approval of the Assembly.

I now turn to the great question of disarmament. The reduction of armaments is the problem most exercising public opinion throughout the world. It is the great object of Article 8 of the Covenant. As has been said by a notable English writer, Noel Baker, it is the beginning of the demilitarisation of human society, which since 1860 had flung itself at an ever-increasing pace into the fatal and, from every standpoint, destructive competition of armaments. We all feel that this is one of the most difficult problems to solve, because of its very close connection with security.

This year we are no longer engaged in the discussion of appropriate methods. The preliminary work for what is called an International Conference on Disarmament, that is to say, the progressive reduction and limitation of armaments, has been begun and, I venture to assert, is well in hand. The Preparatory Commission has been working since May 18th, 1926. You have read in the Council's report that at the outset the Commission set up two Sub-Commissions, one to deal with the military, naval and air aspects of the problems referred to it, the other to study their non-military aspects. These problems are also set out in the Council's report in the form of a questionnaire, with the instructions added by the plenary Commission.

It is obvious that these Sub-Commissions, and particularly the Military Sub-Commission, have a very arduous and intricate task before them.

The science of disarmament is still new and it opens up a variety of prospects, many of them very remote. It deals with some exceptionally thorny questions.

During the summer, the Military Sub-Commission has achieved a great deal of work in two long sessions, each lasting several weeks. It will resume work at the end of this month, as soon as the Secretariat, which is at present fully occupied with the Assembly, is again able to give its indispensable assistance.

The Sub-Commission has finished a large part of the work entrusted to it, which consisted chiefly in elucidating and defining the technical military aspect of the questions involved with a view to the preparation of an agreement on the reduction of armaments.

The task of the non-military Sub-Commission is to consult such bodies or persons as it may consider proper regarding the points in the questionnaire. At its first meeting, it referred certain questions for opinion to the Commission which was set up by the Council under the name of the Joint Commission and which consists of representatives of the Economic and Financial Organisations of the League of Nations and the International Labour Office. This Joint Commission has been given the power to call in other experts.

I will not go further into details, nor can I foretell the date on which the Preparatory Commission, of which I have the honour to be President, will have finished its work.

That work requires great deliberation and is extremely intricate, but it is being carried on assiduously and in a spirit which does honour to the League and displays a fixed determination to succeed.

How can it be said, ladies and gentlemen, when we consider these achievements, when we consider the admirable work of the Secretariat, of the different organisations of the League, of the Permanent Court of International Justice and of the numerous committees of the League; when we consider the very notable work of the Council, which by its tact and rapidity of decision has settled disputes

that had already given rise to bloodshed, how can it be said that within the few short years of its existence the League of Nations has not justified its creation?

What is the opinion of "those who indulge in irony and detraction", to quote the admirable words of M. Briand at the memorable meeting of September 10th, when, hardly seven years after the most frightful of wars, the enemies of yesterday are expressing to each other their will to collaborate in the work of world peace?

If I am not mistaken, it is not so much the chief detractors of the League who require to be convinced of its soundness as the indifferent and lukewarm, who say, with a shrug of the shoulders and a smile of compassion: "Yes, this League of Nations is all very well, but how can you expect to change human nature?"

Change human nature! We should not attempt to do so, nor should we try to minimise the noble sentiment of patriotism, as was so ably pointed out the other day by Viscount Cecil. What we need to-day is to accustom men and nations, led by their Governments, to reflect on the unhappy results, for victors and vanquished alike, of having recourse to arms for the settlement of disputes. Such is the moral disarmament which the League of Nations has in view.

We have just made an immense advance towards universality. We have greeted with enthusiasm the advent of Germany amongst us. We listened — and I can vouch for many of us — with tears in our eyes, our hearts and minds alike stirred, to the eloquent speech of M. Briand in reply to the lofty words of the first delegate of Germany.

Latterly, it is true, and in particular last Saturday, we have had great disappointments. Two Members of the League have, for reasons which it is not for me to discuss from this platform, considered it necessary to withdraw from the League. This is regrettable, no doubt, but you will agree. I am sure, that it can in no way weaken the great Geneva institution. Our work here, with its ever-increasing ramifications throughout the world, is sufficiently strong to withstand a few passing shocks.

Let us not exaggerate in words the importance of this work. Let us rather work as much as possible in silence. Those nations who have left us will soon realise, without our telling them, that the League of Nations, despite its youth, is indispensable to the common life of the nations.

The President:

Translation: I now have to lay before the Assembly the following draft resolution, submitted by Jonkheer Loudon on behalf of the Netherlands delegation:

"The Assembly decides to refer to its First Committee the section of the Secretary-General's report dealing with the work of the Committee of Experts for the Progressive Codification of International Law."

This text will be printed and distributed to the delegations in the *Assembly Journal*. At a future meeting, I will submit suggestions to the Assembly as to the action to be taken on the draft resolution. (*Assent.*)

Dr. Nansen, the first delegate of Norway, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Nansen (Norway):

Ladies and gentlemen — I would like, first of all, to express our gratitude to M. Briand for the remarks which he was good enough to make in his epoch-making speech the other day on the subject

of the future working of the League. I need not say that we welcome very warmly his assurance that publicity and co-operation among all the Members of the League are to be the basic principles of its constitutional methods. I am sure you will forgive me if I refer very briefly to one or two other points of the same nature.

The first relates to the desire expressed in certain quarters that the work of the Assembly should finish at a fixed date, to be decided upon very shortly after the Assembly has opened and even before the debate on the Secretary-General's report is finished.

I need not say that we desire as ardently as anyone that there should be no waste of time and that the meeting of the Assembly should not be unduly protracted. On the other hand, it seems to us of the greatest importance that there should be no undue haste, but that full time should be given for the adequate discussion of the grave and complicated matters which we have come here to consider. The whole work of the League during the next year depends in great measure upon the decisions taken by the Assembly. This year we have to deal with many questions affecting the whole future of the League. It is essential, therefore, that we should avoid the mistakes into which undue haste may cause us to fall. From much that I have heard I know that in this matter I am only expressing the opinion of many delegations.

The same is true, I believe, as regards the second point which I wish to mention. It relates to the conduct of the present debate on the report of the Secretary-General. There are many members who consider this debate to be a most important part of the work of the Assembly. Those who hold this opinion cannot but regret that it should have been thought necessary to interrupt the debate in order to press on with such haste with the work of the various Committees. They understand, of course, the special circumstances of the present case. Nevertheless, they regret that we should still be discussing here in general terms the work which the Council and the Secretariat have been able to perform during the past year, while at the same time, before our general survey has been completed, the Committees have already gone a long way into the detailed programme of the work for the coming year. We hope, therefore, and I am sure that on this point I am speaking for many of my colleagues, that the special practice of this year will not be a precedent for the future.

I attach more than usual importance to our general survey this year, because I believe that the course of events in some matters which have been dealt with during the past twelve months should afford very valuable guidance and encouragement to the present Assembly. In saying this I have in mind one question to which the Government of Norway attaches great importance. I refer to the question of disarmament. I have received special instructions to raise this question in the Assembly. The Norwegian Government believes that the solution of this problem is of vital importance to the successful working of the League. I fully agree with what was so eloquently said upon this matter by the honourable delegate for the Netherlands.

A year ago, after considerable debate and with much hesitation on the part of some Members of the Assembly, it was agreed to invite the Council to set up a special committee to prepare a concrete programme for a Disarmament Conference. A committee was set up, and, happily, the full co-operation of Germany and the United States of America was obtained. Our Government regrets that on this important Committee there is not a larger representation of States which, owing to their geographical position, are free from great

armaments, and which, therefore, are in a specially favourable position to contribute to a constructive programme. Nevertheless, they think that a good start has been made in the difficult work of preparing a scheme for the reduction and limitation of armaments of all kinds. They are very happy that this start has been made and hope that the Committee will press on with all speed. If there is even a chance that from the work of this Committee there should result a real solution of this very difficult problem, I think it should encourage the Assembly to go forward without fear or hesitation in fulfilment of all its great international tasks.

I now pass to a subject which is dealt with at great length in the Secretary-General's report. I refer to the administration of mandated territories for which the League is responsible. Here, again, I associate myself entirely with M. Loudon's eloquent description of the work done during the last year.

I venture now to propose a resolution similar to those which I have put forward in previous years, the purpose of which is to secure the consideration by the Sixth Committee of questions relating to mandates. The debates in previous years have been very valuable and I am sure the Assembly will agree that the practice is one that should be continued. I therefore propose the following resolution :

"The Assembly :

"Following the precedent already established in previous years ;

"Decides to refer to the Sixth Committee the annual reports of the mandatory Powers, the reports of the Permanent Mandates Commission, and all other documents dealing with the mandates question which have been distributed to the Members of the League since the sixth ordinary session of the Assembly."

I now come to the principal matter to which I wish to draw the attention of the Assembly, namely, the question of the settlement of the Armenian refugees. Many members of the Assembly will remember the prolonged debate which we had on this subject in the Fifth Committee a year ago. Perhaps I may briefly refer to the subsequent development of the question set out in the Secretary-General's report.

The Fifth Committee last year agreed that the schemes put forward for the settlement of the Armenian refugees deserved the most serious consideration. They agreed that only in the Republic of Erivan could they hope to see a national home for the Armenian people. They agreed that the Armenian people had undergone sufferings so terrible that they had a very special claim upon the interest and support of the whole civilised world, and there were few of them who did not feel that the promises made by many Members of the League constituted a moral and political obligation of the strongest kind. On these general grounds, they urged the Council to set up a Special Committee to study the technical realisation of the plans for settlement and national reconstruction which had been proposed.

This Committee was duly appointed by the Council and included among its members distinguished citizens of Great Britain, France, Germany and Italy. The Committee held a number of meetings during the course of the year and they sent to Armenia two representative experts, one of whom was a highly qualified British engineer. As the result of the investigation which the experts made and the preparatory work with the Armenian Government, the Committee came to the unanimous conclusion that the plans prepared for irrigation and other works and for

settlement in general were, from the technical point of view, absolutely sound. As regards this part of the task, therefore, the Committee may be said to have been completely successful, and if the necessary funds were available the carrying out of the scheme could have been begun at once with the certainty of the best results. But, unfortunately, in connection with the second part of the task, the raising of the necessary funds, the Committee were confronted by the greatest difficulty. It had hoped to be able to raise a loan of the same kind as those raised for Greece and Bulgaria. To this end it obtained certain important guarantees for a loan from the Armenian authorities and the State Bank.

Unfortunately, owing to circumstances into which I need not enter, the Financial Committee of the League did not find it possible to recommend the issuing of a public loan without additional guarantees of a different kind. I need not remind the Assembly that I had hoped and believed that such guarantees would be forthcoming from Governments of the Western Powers and that they would agree to establish for the Armenian loan a system of divided responsibility similar to that set up for the Austrian reconstruction loan, which had such a striking success.

For some time these hopes received great encouragement. The Governments of France, Italy and Germany had all given promises of a guarantee of a part of the loan under certain conditions, and other Powers had promised that they would consider the proposal favourably, if the greater Powers were ready to take action.

I should especially like to express my gratitude to the French Government for having been the first to make such a conditional promise. Unfortunately, its condition, which was that the British Government should also participate in the collective guarantees, could not be fulfilled. For reasons which seemed to the British Government conclusive, it felt unable to carry out the policy to which some members of the Government, including the Prime Minister, had previously given their warmest support.

The Assembly will understand how bitter is the disappointment of the Armenian people and their friends that, after coming so near to the guarantees which would have brought this plan into practical effect, they have nevertheless been compelled to witness the failure, or rather, as I trust and believe, the postponement of their hopes.

But it is not my purpose to go over this ground again. What has happened has happened. I want rather to make a new appeal to the Governments to consider afresh the present situation as it actually exists. I do not ask for their help in any specific form. I do not now put forward any concrete proposals to which they might have some great objection. I only wish now to beg them to take a new and generous view of the tragic destiny of the Armenian people, of the sufferings which they have endured for so many centuries of their blood-stained history, of the promises which they have received, and of the future to which they can look forward.

I beg them to think for a moment what the history of the Armenian people has been. During the past twelve months, I have spent a great part of my time in studying the story of the Armenian people, and I have been forced to the conviction that no people in recorded history have endured misery and maltreatment in any way comparable to that through which the Armenians have passed. I cannot attempt to give even the briefest sketch of the heartrending horror of this story. I would not dare to evoke again the picture of what

happened to them in the years 1915 to 1918 and even afterwards right on to 1922. I would not care to describe the nerve-shattering terror and the nameless infamy of the appalling pilgrimage of death which the historians will call the deportations, when innocent victims — men, women, greybeards and tiny children — perished not by hundreds, not by thousands but by hundreds of thousands, and with every circumstance of savage torture. They were beaten, they were killed, they were sold, they were driven on till they starved to death.

Here was a people with intense national feeling, with a remarkable history of achievements in bygone days, with the finest gifts of intellect and practical capacity, a people who had made — though few of us here may know it — a great contribution to the mediæval culture from which our modern civilisation is in so great a part derived — here was this people in a few years almost wiped out or scattered to the winds. And yet the surviving remnant of this people, with a tenacity and a national patriotism which no one can sufficiently admire, is now making with desperate courage another valiant attempt to build up a new national home.

The Republic of Erivan is nothing less than that to Armenians of every class and every party in whatever land they may now be. Whether they be for the present Government or not, whether they be rich or poor, they look not to Syria, not to Anatolia, not to South America, but to Erivan, the land at the foot of the eternal snows of Ararat, as the place where the destiny of their nation must in future lie. There year by year they are striving to build up a new community, a political and social system which is Armenian through and through.

Slowly they are gathering together by tens and by hundreds their destitute brothers who had found a temporary refuge in foreign lands, and they are sending them, with such funds as they can privately contribute, to the Armenian State of Erivan. In Erivan itself they are going forward. Since I described the country to the Assembly as I saw it a year ago, great changes have taken place. Distress has been considerably reduced, production of all kinds has been increased, the whole condition of the country has steadily improved.

I now want to beg the Governments who lead the League to find some means by which they can help the Armenian people in the gallant effort they are making. Compared with what the Armenians have previously been led to hope, how small a thing it is that they now ask, how infinitesimal the sum of money which is required to realise these schemes. A million and a-half pounds sterling among the civilised peoples of the world; can we not find this sum to pay so great a debt — a debt of honour and of pity that lies on all mankind? This sum, divided amongst us all, should be for us a trifling thing, but to the Armenians it means very much indeed, for if we can but find it it will give them new hope and new courage in the struggle for a national existence in which they are engaged. It will be a pledge to them that mankind has not forgotten the sufferings they have endured. It will be another great step forward in the reconstructive work to which the League has so profitably set its hand. It may yet be that, by some means which we do not now foresee, we shall secure the kind of loan for which we had previously hoped. It may be that we must turn to new sources and use different methods to achieve our ends.

However this may be, I cannot, for my part, abandon hope that a definite result can be achieved, and I must therefore press on until every possible way has been explored. I appeal, therefore, to the

Assembly not to close the door on any path by which the goal may be attained, and I appeal to the representatives of the great and generous-hearted peoples who are gathered here to think again whether there is no way in which their help may yet be given and in which their great collective burden of responsibility may be discharged. If they will conjure up before their minds the tragic story on which I base the urgent appeal that I have made, I cannot but believe that even yet they will find this way.

The President :

Translation : On behalf of the Norwegian delegation, Dr. Nansen has just put the following motion to the Assembly :

“The Assembly :

“Following the precedent already established in previous years ;

“Decides to refer to the Sixth Committee the annual reports of the mandatory Powers, the reports of the Permanent Mandates Commission, and all other documents dealing with the mandates question which have been distributed to the Members of the League since the sixth ordinary session of the Assembly.”

The motion will be printed and communicated to Members of the Assembly in the *Assembly Journal*. I will submit at a later meeting a proposal on the action to be taken on this motion. If there is no objection, I shall regard my proposal as adopted. (*Adopted.*)

The President :

Translation : M. Mitileneu, delegate of Roumania, will address the Assembly.

M. Mitileneu (Roumania) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — In mounting the steps of this platform to address you I cannot but feel a certain emotion, especially after the memorable and impressive meeting held last Friday. This is my first appearance among you as representative of Roumania, and I am anxious to reaffirm once again the devotion felt by my country for the League of Nations. In saying so, I am not using the meaningless expressions of conventionality; I am giving utterance to a genuine and deeply felt sentiment.

Roumania is anxious and eager for peace above all things. She observes treaties and the obligations and rights which they entail for her. Hence she regards the consolidation of the League and the extension of its influence to all parts of the world as the surest means of attaining universal pacification. She regards this sacred union of all the peoples, this common endeavour of all the nations of the world, as the realisation of a universal aspiration for an atmosphere of peaceful work and the tranquil development of international relations.

And so we may trust that the day is not far distant when all the peoples will be united here in a common ideal and bound by identical feelings of brotherhood.

We trust that we shall witness the return of those who have left us and that our appeal will be heard by those who are not yet here. That day will be heralded with joy by Roumania. Roumania — let me to-day solemnly repeat it once again — is still prepared, behind the shelter of the frontiers she now possesses, to sign a pact of non-aggression with all her neighbours without distinction.

Eager to collaborate on the closest and most loyal terms, Roumania reaffirms her sentiments of lively admiration and sincere friendship for this illustrious Assembly.

29. — QUESTION OF THE DESIRABILITY OF NUMBERING THE PARAGRAPHS OF THE ARTICLES OF THE COVENANT: REFERENCE TO THE AGENDA COMMITTEE OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE AUSTRALIAN DELEGATION.

• The President :

Translation : The Assembly will remember that at its last meeting the Hon. J. G. Latham, first delegate of Australia, submitted to it the following draft resolution :

"That the First Committee be requested to consider and to report to the Assembly upon the desirability of numbering the paragraphs of the Articles of the Covenant published by the League."

This text has been published and communicated to the Members of the Assembly through the *Assembly Journal*.

You will also remember that at the time I asked your permission to suggest at a later meeting what action we should take in regard to this draft resolution.

I now propose that it be referred to the Agenda Committee, and I will ask that Committee to be so good as to meet as soon as possible and submit its conclusions.

If there is no opposition, I shall consider this proposal as adopted. (*Adopted.*)

30. — INCLUSION OF THE QUESTION OF ALCOHOLISM IN THE PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS: PROPOSAL OF THE DELEGATIONS OF FINLAND, POLAND AND SWEDEN.

The President :

Translation : I have just received a communication submitted jointly by M. Setälä, first delegate of Finland, M. Zaleski, first delegate of Poland, and M. Löfgren, first delegate of Sweden. This document reads as follows:

"In its practical activities in the field of social, economic and humanitarian questions, the League has more and more been compelled to deal with the question of alcoholism. Thus the report to the seventh ordinary session of the Assembly on the work of the Council and of the Secretariat contains the information that the Traffic in Women and Children Committee was unanimously of the opinion that an interdependence existed between the two evils, namely, alcoholism and prostitution (page 111), and the Child Welfare Committee, after having considered the report furnished by the International Bureau against Alcoholism, requested the Council to ask the Governments to protect children and young people from the danger of alcoholism by every possible means (page 114).

"The difficulty of the mandatory Powers and the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations in dealing with the importation and consumption of liquor in the mandated territories is well known, as well as the lack of clearly defined terms and of uniform methods in this respect (pages 57 and 66).

"Moreover, the absence of co-ordinated international action against alcoholism is felt in the most civilised countries. As an example may be mentioned the smuggling of alcoholic liquor which is much in evidence on the frontiers of all countries and especially on the seas and which, to the disgrace of civilisation, renders vain the most praiseworthy efforts of the peoples and Governments to settle the alcohol question.

"On various sides (United State of America, States around the Baltic Sea) recourse has been had to conventions passed between States in order to extirpate the evil, but without uniform international action there can be no hope of success.

"Various organisations founded to protect society against alcoholism have for a long time been endeavouring to secure international official action against this scourge of the world.

"The International Conference of Studies against Alcoholism which met at Paris on April 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1919, under the presidency of M. Vandervelde, now Foreign Minister of Belgium, requested the Peace Conference to consider whether it would be possible to ask the League of Nations to take the question of alcoholism under detailed examination.

"The International Conference against Alcoholism which met at Geneva on September 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1925, voted a series of resolutions relating to the questions of the colonies, of smuggling and of the conflicts between alcohol-exporting States and States with advanced alcohol legislation, and requested the Council of the League of Nations to examine in what way the League could concern itself with the alcohol problem. Finally, the Eighteenth International Congress against Alcoholism which met at Dorpat (Esthonia) from July 21st to 29th, 1926, adhered to the resolutions voted by the Geneva Conference and requested the League of Nations to interest itself in the alcohol question.

"Several Congresses assembling representatives of very many countries have appealed to the League of Nations, hoping that, with all the authority at its command, it will now undertake a co-ordinating action for the future settlement of the alcohol question, so important for the future of humanity.

"There are divergencies of opinion as regards the alcohol question and the best means of solving it. What has to be done now is to examine the question thoroughly and scientifically and to endeavour thus to prepare the proper measures to be taken.

"When the different Governments and the different currents of opinion join together for a common task, undertaken in the spirit of the League of Nations and on the basis of impartial scientific research, one may hope that this work will bear fruit which will prove beneficial to humanity.

"The undersigned therefore venture to request that the Assembly should decide to include in the programme of the work of the League of Nations the question of alcoholism and should ask the Council to take measures to this effect."

This text will be printed and distributed, and at a subsequent meeting I will suggest what action we should take in regard to this proposal. (*Assent.*)

The Assembly rose at 5.50 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY

OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

TENTH PLENARY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15th, 1926, AT 10 A.M

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Report of the First Committee.

31. — RULES DEALING WITH THE ELECTION OF THE NINE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL, THEIR TERMS OF OFFICE AND THE CONDITIONS OF RE-ELIGIBILITY: REPORT OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the discussion of the proposals made by the Committee on the Composition of the Council regarding the method of election and tenure of the non-permanent seats on the Council.

M. Motta, Rapporteur and Chairman of the First Committee, will address the Assembly.

M. Motta (Switzerland), Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The First Committee begs to submit to-day the result of its work concerning the rules applicable to the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council, their terms of office and the conditions of re-eligibility.

As Chairman of the First Committee, I have been requested to explain to you the proposals which it unanimously adopted. My explanations will be purely verbal, as I have had no time to prepare a written report, owing to the fact that the Committee did not conclude its work until last night.

I desire to point out, first, that the Committee's work proceeded in a friendly atmosphere of courtesy and mutual understanding. Nothing was done with undue precipitation ; we avoided any suspicion

of dangerous haste. It was thus possible for us to discuss the question in that atmosphere of calm and serenity which can alone safeguard the absolute liberty and dignity of the Assembly. Our work had been facilitated by the investigations of the Committee appointed by the Council, which approved the conclusions of those investigations and recommended them to the Assembly.

I should, however, be failing in my duty and in the requirements of justice if I omitted to mention that the discussions in the First Committee, while adhering to the guiding principles of the scheme submitted by the Committee of enquiry, defined that scheme still further, improving and amplifying it to a very considerable extent.

The work which we are about to accomplish will thus not be a mere solemn formality of purely superficial import but a real legislative act re-affirming the sovereignty of the Assembly.

The draft resolution submitted by the First Committee is divided into two parts. The first, consisting of Articles I to III, fixes the rules applicable under normal circumstances ; the second, which consists only of Article IV, indicates the temporary provisions applicable to this year's elections.

I propose first to explain the general principles underlying the system recommended to you. I shall then briefly dwell on the differences between the permanent or normal provisions and the temporary provisions.

The dominating principle is that of rotation. The term of office is fixed at three years. On the expiry of this period, the non-permanent Members will not normally be re-eligible. They then enjoy what I may describe as a spell of rest. The term of office begins immediately on election and ends on the day of the elections held three years later by the Assembly. The period during which a retiring State remains ineligible lasts only for three years; on the expiry of this period, that State again becomes qualified for election.

The re-election of the non-permanent Members of the Council is effected by thirds: that is to say,

the annual elections apply only to three of the nine non-permanent Members. This system satisfies two essential requirements: that of appointing to the Council as many States as possible in succession and that of continuity.

The great idea of equality between the States which are non-permanent Members of the Council is thus reconciled with the necessity of ensuring in the Council, a feeling of continuity accompanied by sound methods of work.

The principle of rotation does not, however, constitute an absolute, rigid or inflexible rule. Situations may arise in which it is imperative, in the interests of the League, to make exceptions. It may be desirable that a State should remain on the Council for an extended period; it may be that the services which it has rendered or may still render in the cause of peace will justify an exception in its favour. Such an exception, however, must not be allowed to become a rule. Hence, the draft resolution provides that it shall only be confirmed by a separate secret ballot, in the case of each individual State, and by a majority of two-thirds of the votes cast in the Assembly. The vote may be taken only upon the request of the State concerned and, as a general rule — apart from the temporary provisions for the present year — only on the expiry of the term of office or during the years which I have described as years of rest.

Blank or spoilt votes are to be deducted in calculating the two-thirds majority. It is only right that a State should be required when voting to express its opinion by a definite "pro" or "con". The question of blank voting papers, moreover, ceases, to my mind, to be of any practical importance directly their actual value, significance and effect are realised.

The scheme provides, further, that the Council shall in no case include at any one time more than three States which have qualified as re-eligible.

The Assembly — and this is a point I would emphasise — is free at any time to exercise its right to proceed, whenever circumstances call for such action, to a new election of all the non-permanent Members of the Council. Hence no vested right has been created in the seats on the Council. The Assembly remains the sovereign power. It may take away what it has given, but it will only exercise this right by a two-thirds majority and will determine the special rules applicable in this case.

This right reserved by the Assembly, which gave rise yesterday to a long and interesting discussion in the First Committee, is derived from the general spirit of the Covenant. It does not constitute a menace to anyone — this I would emphasise — it is simply the supreme means whereby the Assembly can intervene to deal with critical situations which admit of no other solution.

The rules which I have just explained as clearly as I can are subject to certain modifications for the present year. First and foremost, the elections for this year apply not to one-third but to all the non-permanent Members: three States are to be elected for a term of three years, three for a term of two years, and three for a term of one year. The procedure is to be determined by the General Committee.

I ask your permission to explain this special point. You will find in the proposal now before you a provision laying down explicitly that the General Committee, in virtue of powers delegated by the Assembly, shall decide the procedure for this year.

This is the crux of the matter. The ballot this year can be taken in two ways. The Assembly could first proceed to elect nine non-permanent

Members by one ballot, and then, by three further ballots (thus making four in all), it would divide these seats between the nine elected Members, indicating those elected for three years, then those elected for two years and, finally, those elected for one year.

Another way would be, instead of proceeding first to the election of nine Members and then dividing them into different categories, to take three successive ballots, electing first the States to be nominated for three years, then those for two years, and finally those for one year.

The Committee recommends that the Assembly should refer this question for decision to the General Committee, and I hope you will give the General Committee this mark of confidence, which it certainly merits.

Further, the declaration regarding re-eligibility will follow the election and not precede it. As I have just explained, the declaration of re-eligibility would normally precede the election itself. This year it will not be so. It would, in fact, be illogical to ask a State to become a candidate for re-election before it knew that it had been elected.

If — which is most improbable — several States should be candidates, only those obtaining the greatest number of votes — at least two-thirds of the total number of votes cast — would be declared re-eligible.

In the case of a tie, the general provisions of the Rules of Procedure would apply and there would be a fresh ballot.

In 1927 and 1928 the Assembly will be able to declare other States re-eligible. Nevertheless, if this year more than three, or at least three, States are declared re-eligible, it should only make use of these powers in quite exceptional circumstances.

These are, in brief, the proposals which the First Committee has the honour to submit to you. I trust that you will adopt them unanimously — although according to the Covenant a two-thirds majority would be sufficient — and so set the seal on the compromise intended to conciliate the differences of opinion which have arisen in the past few months.

The elections will be held to-morrow. You will not forget that the Council and the Assembly, in increasing the number of non-permanent Members from six to nine, desired *inter alia* to give a larger share than at present to Latin America. You will bear in mind, too, that wisdom and justice alike demand a better representation for Asia.

At yesterday's sitting of the First Committee, the delegates of Persia and China again urged that two non-permanent seats should be allocated this year to Asia and Africa. Is this possible? In present circumstances, can the continent of Asia for once be allowed more non-permanent Members?

You will understand that I must treat this subject with reserve, seeing that the freedom of action of the Assembly is involved. Nevertheless, I venture to think that we cannot overlook, either this year or — and more particularly — in future years the claims of the enormous populations and the inexhaustible wealth of Asia. Moreover, we should not forget that Asia was the birth-place of the most ancient philosophies and civilisations.

You will all be guided, as in the past, by the spirit of conciliation which underlies this compromise. The compromise is not perfect. That remark is becoming almost a commonplace. I realise that as well as anyone. But if I had to choose between a palace of great architectural beauty built on principles of pure reason and a

house of plainer design but answering the needs of everyday life, I should select the practical house in preference to the palace.

The compromise is certainly defective in many ways. It would, however, be unjust, and more than unjust, to say that it was inadequate and hastily conceived. Even before its main lines had been laid down, it brought us to the great day of September 10th. M. Briand and M. Stresemann, in their noble gesture of reconciliation between France and Germany, told us that their Governments would do as much as was humanly possible to close the road leading to bloodshed.

Near my seat there was seated a woman in mourning. I was moved with great sympathy to see her. Her eyes were filled with tears. She was, I am sure, a sacred and symbolic picture of all mothers and wives whom the poet had in mind when he wrote the words: "*Bella matribus detestata*". That is sufficient to vindicate and justify the compromise.

But the compromise does more than this. It demonstrates the wisdom of the Assembly. It proves that each one of us can subordinate individual views to the general interest. Our policy has not been dictated by considerations of prestige. The Assembly has not abandoned its proper rôle. By its unanimity it will, I hope, assure the moral force and prosperity of the League of Nations.

The President :

Translation : M. Löfgren, first delegate of Sweden, will address the Assembly.

M. Löfgren (Sweden) :

When some days ago, at a moment of historical importance, the first delegate of France, in a remarkable and memorable speech, welcomed the great State which then entered the League, he emphasised the necessity of counteracting within this world-wide institution all the dangers which national vanity and national prestige may let loose. In moving words he reminded the leaders of all the States of their duty earnestly to try to moderate the egotism of their different peoples and to induce them to sacrifice their selfish aspirations in the interest of general peace. That a ready response may be made to this mighty appeal to the good-will between the nations is a desire fervently cherished by millions of men and women in all countries.

The optimism which characterised the speech of the eminent French statesman, as well as the report of our honourable Rapporteur, does not, I fear, generally prevail. It may, perhaps, not be out of the way to recall on this occasion how, in the minds of many, the very long and extremely difficult crisis which will to-day, I hope, be settled, brought into daylight how far the different peoples are from the time when national egotism and policy will cease to be deciding factors in international affairs.

In all the countries of the world there are those who believe that if the League, during this crisis, has been shaken to its foundations, this has been due less to differences of real interest than to tendencies of national pride and prestige, such as exist among most peoples and in most countries. I express no opinion on the question whether this view is justified or not. But I cannot abstain from emphasising that the solution of the crisis which is now at hand — a solution which is probably the only one obtainable — is, in my opinion, and in the opinion of the country I have the honour to represent, so far from being an ideal one that it may, on the contrary, imply grave dangers and difficulties for the League in the future.

Circumstances have compelled Sweden to take a more active part than many other Members of the League in the preparation of this solution; but it would be a mistake to think that we look with pride and entire satisfaction on the result achieved. Without pretending in any way that our standpoint has always been the only right one, the Swedish representatives on the League have time after time tried to prevent decisions which, in their modest judgment, seemed to be rash or unwise.

With regard to one vital point, namely, the organisation of the Council, their views have prevailed. They have, however, opposed in vain the increase in the number of the non-permanent Members of the Council and certain provisions in the proposals before us. In giving up one or other point of view which we had held without any selfish motives, only believing that we were acting in the interests of the League, we did so in the belief that the long-drawn-out struggle being waged within the walls of the League must be brought to an end, lest the League should suffer incalculable harm.

In this spirit we accepted some days ago the decision to increase the number of Members of the Council, a decision which the situation made inevitable. In the same spirit I shall vote to-day for the proposal made by the First Committee. I feel able to do this because I believe that the stipulations before us cannot rightly be interpreted as violating any basic principle of the League. Explicit assurances have been given to me (and I think the sense of the text itself will bear witness in the same direction) that the scheme does not involve any classification of States, does not involve any privilege being conferred on any special State nor any guarantee whatsoever for re-election.

Nothing could give us greater satisfaction, in watching the work of the Council as an ordinary Member of the Assembly, than to find that our apprehensions have been unfounded, and that the application of the scheme will bring about not only a temporary peace but also a definite and lasting solution with regard to the organisation of the Council. May this constitutional peace, for which we all hope, assure us a new era of good-will for all the Members of the League.

With this desire in view, I shall support, on behalf of my Government, the plan laid before us.

The President :

Translation : Sir George Foster, first delegate of Canada, will address the Assembly.

Sir George Foster (Canada) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Allow me for a moment to associate myself with the observations made by the delegate of Sweden in his note of appreciation concerning the influences and feelings which have been manifest in this present session of the Assembly, notably in connection with the speeches made by the delegates of Germany and France.

Those of us who have not attended the different sessions of the Assembly but who from distant points have watched with unabated interest the work of the League cannot help contrasting, and with great joy, the difference between the conditions at this present Assembly and those of the Assembly in March last. If we had then to pass through a bitter crisis we can now congratulate ourselves upon having passed it successfully and upon finding ourselves a few months afterwards in a stronger position as a League of Nations and higher in the estimation of the world than at any preceding stage in the history of the League.

Let me call the attention of the delegates to this one fact which we must always keep in mind. The League of Nations was not sent down to us from Heaven fully organised and equipped with perfected plans upon the basis of which it should work out its great purposes and ideals. It was an experiment confided to human and fallible beings, to men who had to learn from experience and build up a new organisation — a world organisation at that — upon the results of their experience. The thought that comes to me strongly, and that I believe we should all keep in mind, is that this institution is an evolution, an experiment upon a world-scale unexampled in the history of nations, and that it is from step to step, from grade to grade, from position to position, based upon experience, that this organisation has ultimately to be built up.

Coming to the subject of to-day's discussion, what have we? There is a feeling amongst all the Members of this Assembly that the one thing necessary is that within the Council we should have the best ability, the widest experience and the greatest prestige possible. An executive which has to do what the Council of the League of Nations has to do needs to be made up of the very best material that the League can provide and place in the position of counsellors for the execution of its policy. We are all agreed upon that. We are all agreed also, I believe, that continuity is a very strong element in the successful work of the Council. The Covenant itself provides for both in making permanent Members of the great Powers that had signed the Treaty of Peace. They were not only influential, they were not only experienced, they not only had the largest view of the world's work from a diplomatic and political point of view, but they were also there from the first to preserve continuity in the work of the Council.

So much was gained. The Assembly was at first represented on the Council, as we know, by four Members, afterwards by six, which affirmed the position of the Assembly as a paramount power in the work of the League of Nations. Then came the practical difficulties, which do not need to be recounted here, and these difficulties led the way to a reconsideration of the question of the composition of the Council and of the methods of procedure of the Assembly and the Council as related one to the other.

The Committee's report now placed before us brings the whole matter to a unanimous conclusion, not as the ideal thing, perhaps, as the delegate from Sweden well remarked, nor yet as the definitely and absolutely fixed position which shall be maintained for all the years to come, but as the best that we can achieve for the present, leaving the future to take care of itself as experience points the way for amendments and improvements, in our methods.

Much, then, is gained if we keep in mind that this is a matter of evolution and that we are preserving continuity in the work of the League of Nations by its permanent memberships and at the same time are bringing from the Assembly from year to year fresh views and fresh methods of application of those views.

We shall have gained another element of continuity if we pass this present report, which provides that a non-permanent Member instead of being elected for one year will be elected for three years, and will thus have the advantage — and it is a very great advantage — of adding year by year to its experience and becoming a more capable and a more useful Member of the Council than if the appointment were a yearly appointment.

I think we shall have gained in strength and power if the Assembly approves of the report.

But we have also gained one thing more, which I think was essential and which may be looked upon as a very strong addition to our working methods. We have made it absolutely impossible, if we adopt this report, for there to be a repetition of what took place in March 1926, an event which we, who believe in the League, all deplored and an event which was equally deplored by a great mass of public opinion in nations which did not belong to the League and had not consented to co-operate with it. We have made it absolutely sure that the Assembly of the League will have the power, whenever it wishes to exercise it, to recall the mandates, so to speak, of its appointed non-permanent Members and to give different instructions and, if necessary, to a different set of Members. This, in my view, is a strong and essential factor in connection with the work and efficiency of the League of Nations.

I think, then, that those delegations which have had strong and differing views with reference to permanent and non-permanent Members may congratulate themselves on the net result, and I for one, if I may be permitted to do so, congratulate those members of delegations who have held such strong views and have held them so sturdily, but who, in the general interests of the League of Nations, have been able to meet their brethren of different views and so come to a unanimous conclusion. This is proof positive to me that in the brotherhood of nations which is represented in the League it is possible for the strongest diversity of view, held with perfect honesty, to be merged into conclusions which, whilst they are not entirely satisfactory to either one or the other, are accepted because they are in the interests of general co-operation and world peace.

I think, too, that we must make a distinction between what is the official position and utterance of the League of Nations with reference to the matters dealt with in the report before us and the incidental favourable allusions made by the Committee of Fifteen. Some things will have been absolutely affirmed when this report is adopted, and those I have stated. There are other considerations which have not been affirmed in this report but which have been favourably commented upon and recommended by the Committee which reported to the Council and whose report is now before us. These latter refer to the general question of the allocation of seats and their distribution among the Members of the Assembly.

A geographical distribution of seats has been mooted and discussed and Assembly after Assembly has passed resolutions thereon. Weight has been given, and I think rightly, to the question of geographical distribution. I am in favour of a reasonable and efficient distribution of seats based in part on geographical conditions and necessities; my point of view, however, is this — I give it with all modesty but with sincere conviction — that in this matter the Assembly should not bind itself at this or any particular juncture as regards the kind of geographical distribution that may be best in the distribution and allocation of seats in the Council by the Assembly.

I do not like to see a great world organisation dividing itself up by rigid rules into water-tight compartments and fettering and hampering the action of the League of Nations for future years. I believe that it is best to allow entire freedom to the League of Nations Assembly itself to be guided by circumstances and the experience of later years and to make its dispositions with regard to those groundwork principles. Therefore, whilst I am in favour of a reasonable and proper allocation on the grounds of geographical conditions, I am not willing to bind myself or to bind this Assembly

to any cut-and-dried specific numerical allocations which will force our hands in the future.

The Committee also showed its favourable consideration of the Latin countries in South America and sympathised with the allocation of three seats to Latin America. This allocation applies entirely to a group of countries located in one continent, a group of nations having a racial and cultural unity and similarity. I have every respect and give reasonable support to the underlying sentiment upon which that claim is founded, and the most generous appreciation of that claim when once it is made. But, again, I ask myself, and I ask this Assembly, to consider the fact that, after all, we are a world society and we must avoid as far as we possibly can the setting up of a series of racial or cultural divisions which take the form of groups and make their appeal on those grounds. I hope the Assembly understands what I mean.

Cultural divisions there will be, racial divisions there will be, and whilst there must exist, and while due respect must be given to their claims, we in the League of Nations must always keep in view the fact that it is a world organisation, and that it is to a world co-operation that we have to appeal. With this in mind, while giving these different groups their due power and consideration, we must hold ourselves free to do our work in the League from the world point of view. From that point of view a man is a man, whatever his race and whatever his culture, and in the League nationalities must meet together, if its purpose is to be ensured, upon a groundwork of brotherhood, and must aim at the achievement of a great work of peace and amity which shall be as wide as the world itself. The division into groups, racial or cultural, begets rivalries, leads to discord, and tends to break up that broad union so necessary to success.

Let me add one more word in continuation of this line of argument. It should, I think, be kept in mind — and I wish particularly to refer to it at this time — that, after all, the League of Nations must look for its support and its success to the individual moral and intellectual conscience of the wide world. Unless in our different nationalities we can bring our League of Nations, with its principles and ideals, into the hearts and minds of the units of each nation, and found our hopes for access in our work upon that individual conviction, we shall never have a League with the power and permanence for which we hope. None of us will find in our hearts any opposition to this contention, that it is upon this great worldwide conviction in the hearts of individual men and women that we must erect our temple, that we must place our altars, that we must make our vows, and that we must depend for the support of the League of Nations in its great work.

In this way we come together, men of different nationalities, men of different convictions, men of different cultures, and we place ourselves upon the common level of men of the world and brothers in humanity, working together and co-operating throughout the whole world, and having respect for all the different portions of the great world which makes up our membership.

I have thought that it is not at all out of place to call the attention of the Members of the Assembly this morning to one fact. We have heard much of the claims for representation on the Council of cultural and racial groups, but we have not, during the six years that the League of Nations has been in operation, heard anything of that group, if I may call it such, of Members of the League of Nations made up of the overseas dominions and possessions of the British Empire. Away out in

the Pacific Ocean there is an immense island continent peopled already by six million inhabitants of the British race and with all the resources, industries and development of a great and growing nationality.

On the North American continent there is the Dominion of Canada with ten million inhabitants, with rich and almost boundless resources, with well-developed industries, with great strength in the present and greater hopes for the future.

In South Africa we come upon another rich and widely extended Member belonging to this group. On the Indian Ocean there is an immense population possessing a large geographical section of country which is being developed with persistency and success.

Then, in addition, there is the Dominion of New Zealand and the Dominion of the Irish Free State, both enterprising and progressive countries. All these, united in similar cultural and political sentiment, form an aggregate of present potency and future possibility which may well bear comparison with any within the membership of the League.

These different dominions for seven years more or less have been units of the League of Nations and Members of this Assembly occupying a position of absolute equality with every other nation Member of the League. They have been steady, unflinching and uncomplaining supporters of the League.

During those six years you have never heard, with one exception (because I understand this morning that the delegates of the Irish Free State propose to submit a claim for a seat on the Council), of any demand or claim from that group of free peoples for special precedence or consideration or for a place in the Council. I do not think it is beyond what is fair and reasonable to make that statement before this Assembly. So far as my country and the other members of the British overseas countries are concerned, we have not hitherto made and are not now making any claim for a seat on the Council of the League. But it is pertinent, and I think it is right at this stage, to say to this Assembly and to the League itself that we consider that we have equal rights to representation on the Council and otherwise with every one of the fifty-six Members of the League of Nations, and that we do not propose to waive that right.

With reference to filling seats on the Council, with reference to the apportionment of honours that are invested in, and rightly invested in, the League of Nations, we make no claims except to equal status and equal privileges with all other Members of the League. My own view of membership of the League is this: that it is for every Member of the League of Nations not to seek overmuch for place and honours which may be given in the course of the work of the League, but to search his own heart and find out what he can do to give of his best and his truest to the work of the League itself, in the way of effort, of sacrifice and of co-operation. The moment we set our minds more upon the ribbons and feathers, upon the honours and the positions, the more we are led away from our primary and central duty, which is to give, and to give until it costs, for the benefit of humanity in the cause of peace and with self-abnegation.

It pained my heart, and it pained the hearts of millions of people in my country and in the North American continent, when the impression came to us last March that in some respects more regard was being given to honours than to service. But, happily, we have passed from that bad atmosphere, and to-day we have before us that most splendid and most heartening assertion which was made from

this platform to the Assembly on Friday last, when the representative of France, replying to the representative of Germany, flashed into view for a moment the battlefields and the long lines of dead and the casualties of the war, and said: "C'est fini, c'est fini". Those are words which will ring round and round this old world of ours and bring hope to a million hearts. "C'est fini".

These assertions and these sentiments which we have heard in this Assembly have raised the prestige and strengthened the purpose and power of the League of Nations to a degree which is incalculable and have given grounds for hopeful optimism for the future. The cold cynics say: "Words are good, but wait till you see the fulfilment". I put no such limitation upon the words which we have heard in this Assembly. I take it that the heart then spoke through the tongue and that conviction in the heart was simply put into French and German words by the representatives of those two countries respectively. I have absolute faith in their convictions and the strength and honesty with which they were expressed, and I look forward with undiminished faith and confidence to their being carried out in the future.

I have taken fresh courage for the League of Nations from the work and the sympathetic cooperation of this Assembly, and I ask for it in the future, at the hands of its friends, the most unabated and sacrificing work on its behalf, at the hands of sceptics and of its enemies, a fair and honest appraisal of the great work which it has done, and from all lovers of humanity their unflinching support.

The President:

Translation: Mr. Fitzgerald, first delegate of the Irish Free State, will address the Assembly.

Mr. Fitzgerald (Irish Free State):

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I think this resolution may be described as a facing up of the situation. I do not think that, in principle, the proposals are desirable. For instance, fourteen is too large a number for the Council, seeing that each Member possesses a veto. I think also that the provision debarring elected Members from re-election is theoretically undesirable, as it limits the Assembly's choice in selecting representatives.

The League has to be guided to a large extent by practical experience. We know that an enlarged Council became necessary or practically necessary in order to overcome some of the difficulties that arose during the last year, and we know that non-eligibility is practically desirable though in theory wrong, because our short history shows that elected Members regard their seats as theirs by prescriptive right, overlooking the fact that those seats were the free gifts of the Assembly, to be given to whomsoever the Assembly chose. Consequently, the Assembly was placed in an invidious position when it came to remove one Member and to replace him by another. It was not only placed in an invidious position but had, possibly, to face a crisis and the withdrawal of the aggrieved nations from the League.

The position being what it is, I think we may be justified in agreeing to the resolution, but in doing so we must be watchful that we do not create a situation worse than that which existed before. The difficulty of the fourteen vetoes is overcome, to some extent at least, by Article III, which allows the Assembly to recall an elected Member of the Council who exercises his veto against the wishes of the Assembly. It is, on the whole, better to limit our power of choice rather than to have the elected Members regarding themselves as permanent Members who are merely to go through the formality of an election from time to time, with the threat

of withdrawing from the League if the Assembly exercises its undoubted right to change its representatives. On the face of it, then, I agree with the resolution as practically worthy of support.

But let us face the situation frankly. Are we getting rid of the claims of prescriptive right to a seat? Is it not common property that alongside of the proposals in the resolution is the division of the League into geographical constituencies, with seats allocated to them? Are there not behind the suggestions which are placed before us other plans calculated to give certain States or certain groups of States very good grounds for saying hereafter that if they do not get the seats they now have but have no particular right to expect they have a grievance? I say that there seems to be behind the present proposals a proposal which may be interpreted as giving a right to certain seats to particular groups of States, geographical groups or groups based on alliances or understandings.

We recognise the desirability of having a Council on which there is representation of the different States and civilisations comprised in the League. At the same time, we think that we must never lose sight of the fact that the Assembly as a whole elects the non-permanent Members and that accordingly the non-permanent Members must represent the Assembly as a whole. Every effort must be made to preserve to the Assembly the greatest possible freedom of choice as to the States that shall from time to time be appointed to the Council. Accordingly, while we hold that all shades of opinion and every sort of interest in the League should from time to time be represented on the Council, we deny the right of particular groups to be at any time represented thereon in any specified proportion, and we deny more emphatically still the right of any group to choose from among themselves a State which the Assembly would be under an obligation to elect.

Such an arrangement means that not only will there be a hierarchy in the Council, itself undesirable but practically necessary, but a hierarchy in the Assembly. It means that in the Assembly the continent of Atlantis has the right to three seats and the country of Ruritania has a right to one seat, and there are certain other countries with no right whatever to a seat. The Assembly will be divided into a hierarchy of States which are due to be Members of the Council once in every two years or every three years or every four years, and States that are only due to be Members of the Council once every ten years, and those others which, with these States revolving in their orbits, will never get a seat at all.

I say that we cannot stand by now and see such a situation created either by resolution or by the establishment of precedent. It may be said that no such arrangement is made; but last March we saw a situation arise whereby a country deemed that, because it had been elected by the Assembly on a number of occasions for a number of years, it held its seat by prescriptive right.

The whole history of the League shows that the establishment of prescriptive right tends to take away entirely all the powers of the Council. What is the chief power of the Assembly? We know perfectly well that we come here every year unorganised. We have only one power that is really vital and that is really great, and that is our power to control the Council. We control the Council by our power to elect the majority of its Members. That I consider to be the greatest and the most important power possessed by the Assembly.

I hold the view that the conscience of the world as a whole is always going to be right, but I do

not think that any one nation will on every occasion be right; I will not even claim that quality for my own country. I do not think that any group of nations at any one time will always be right. I think, therefore, that for the proper exercise of the Assembly's power, for a proper implementation of the world-conscience, the Assembly must retain as one body, representing almost all the nations of the world, the power to choose freely from year to year, without any consideration of established prescriptive right, whatever representatives it likes. It must also, at any time, be able to say that it is not satisfied with any Member or Members of the elected Powers on the Council and to tell those Members that they must make way for another. It must be able to do that with a perfectly free hand and not be called upon to weigh the possibility of fresh crises, the possibility of the League breaking up as a result of its action or the weakening of the League and of the power of the League through crises arising when nations — because they have a grievance or feel that they have a grievance which we consider imaginary but which they, with a certain amount of right, consider to be real — decide that they will have nothing more to do with the League because the Assembly has not voted for them. To our minds, the very essence of voting is choosing, and it seems to us that behind all these arrangements is an attempt to let us veto but not to let us choose those who are to represent us on the Council.

The President:

Translation: M. de Brouckère, first delegate of Belgium, will address the Assembly.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium):

Translation: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I must first crave the Assembly's indulgence for speaking this morning.

We are now at the end — at the very end, I trust — of certain lengthy negotiations which have created, not in the Assembly itself but in its environment, an atmosphere of nervousness. It is essential that the clouds which darken our sky should be dispersed as quickly as may be, and I should therefore reproach myself if I were to delay this happy event even by a few moments.

After hearing some of the previous speakers, however, I found it impossible to resist the desire to address you.

I have listened with the greatest attention and interest to M. Löfgren, the distinguished representative of Sweden. I listened with no less attention and interest to Mr. Fitzgerald, the representative of the Irish Free State. And since both these speakers expressed apprehension and regret, since M. Löfgren, to some extent, voiced the disappointment and pessimism felt by a certain section of public opinion, I desire not to put forward a different view but as it were to supplement the picture by explaining why I am in an optimistic frame of mind and why I shall give my country's vote, in a spirit not of resignation but of joy, in favour of the motion now before us.

To what echoes of disillusionment have we had to listen for some time past! We have been told that the League is passing through a crisis and that no reasonable solution will ever be found but only expedients adjusted to one another, Heaven knows how. We have been told that egoism incompatible with the very existence of the League is being displayed on every hand.

That men should still be men, that the nations should not lose their national egoism — is this really a matter of surprise to an assembly of statesmen?

Did we expect the League to develop regardless of human nature? Did we propose, heedless of the realities of time and space, to set up a structure of geometrical perfection? Or did we intend the League to be a real political organisation, taking into account all the conditions of life? Perhaps we may have been passing through a crisis, but I think it only right and fair to add, as a matter for congratulation, that, despite so many pessimistic forecasts, we have come safely through that crisis.

The League to-day has gained in material and moral power. It has taken a decisive step in the direction of universality. It has acquired a new Member: Germany has taken her seat among us.

And we have not lost a single Member. I am fully aware that two Powers have forwarded what I may call a preliminary notice of withdrawal, and that there is the risk of our losing them two years hence. But I would ask you: Are we resigned to this? Have we not still two years before us in which to work and do all that lies in our power to win them back again, to show them our sympathy, and perhaps, too, to make them understand that their duty to mankind and to themselves forbids them to abandon the task to which they have set their hand?

We have been told that the nations bring with them to this Assembly purely personal, and some have even said egoistic, sentiments. It is not for me to form an opinion of the sentiments which actuate the different States. But this I can say, that we need not be surprised, since men are men and States are States. It would even be a matter of regret if everyone were to abandon here a consideration or care for national interests. We do not believe that those interests should be ignored or sacrificed; on the contrary, we must endeavour to reconcile these different individual aspirations, bring them into harmony, and unite them in one great aspiration common to all mankind.

We have been told: "You find nothing but expedients and temporary makeshifts". I would urge those who speak in this strain to read again the report submitted in 1922, on this very platform, by M. Barthélemy. I would urge them to read again the remarkable speech delivered the year before by Lord Balfour. They will find in them the same preoccupations and a foreshadowing of the same solutions. They will realise that the League is not confronted with an unforeseen emergency arising out of the rashness of a few or the imperfection of mankind, but that it is under the necessity of solving a great problem of constitutional law, and that, in solving it, it will accomplish an immense step forward.

What is the task before us? It is to find a method of constituting a Council of the League which shall be truly representative of all the peoples. This it must be. I do not propose to determine at this point the respective rôles of the Council and the Assembly. I do not propose to determine which of these two bodies should be predominant over the other. I simply wish to place on record certain facts. The Council has to play the principal part when the task is that of settling one of those big disputes which might become a menace to peace. Consider, then, with this ideal of a universal League before us, how ludicrous it would be if we failed to obtain, for the solution of the difficulties which may beset the League, a Council which was also universal in character.

The Council is entrusted, under the Covenant, with the difficult and even formidable task of administering certain territories. It is its duty to supervise and control the exercise of the mandates. In whose name is this control to be exercised if not in the name of all mankind?

Finally, though perhaps the Covenant contains no provision to that effect, custom, born of the necessities of life, has brought it about that, whenever the Assembly adopts a decision, it entrusts its execution to the Council. The Assembly cannot act on behalf of a majority; it must act unanimously in its own name or not at all. How could it, then, create a body to carry out its instructions or decisions unless it imparted to that body the universal character it itself enjoys, and so contrived that all shades of opinion were really represented on it?

That is the problem before us—to create a really representative Council. I will not detain you by repeating what you all know, or review all the stages we have passed on the road towards this goal.

You will remember that at the outset it was suggested that the Council should consist solely of the representatives of the great Powers. If we face the facts and bear in mind the part played by the great Powers in the world, we must admit that the League would be an empty name if it had not the power to enforce its decisions. When we recollect that the essential part of the force available for the execution of the League's decisions is concentrated in the hands of the great nations or great Powers, we cannot but realise the great, the very great, part which those great Powers must of necessity assume in the Council.

It was, however, realised that, notwithstanding the importance of the rôle played by the great Powers, they did not represent the whole of mankind. There exist, side by side with them, many smaller nations. It was decided, therefore, that, if the Council were to present a true picture of the human race, these smaller nations must be represented. The elective system was accordingly adopted.

Mr. Fitzgerald, the distinguished representative of Ireland, has just told us that the Assembly must take care to preserve the full freedom of its electoral powers. I could not help thinking then that the whole history of the successive Assemblies of the League down to the seventh is but a long record of its attempts to find a means of escape from this unorganised freedom. Article 4 of the Covenant says you will nominate your representatives to the Council freely and your freedom shall be such that you are forbidden to limit it yourselves by any regulations as to voting. For years this clause has paralysed the Assembly.

The Assembly may be likened to an inhabitant of a town where, with the ostensible object of allowing complete freedom to traffic, motor-drivers are not obliged to keep to their right or left and are thus left entirely free, by which very fact they are caught in a block and unable to move. The position of the Assembly, powerless to organise its own freedom—for freedom can only be effective in so far as it is organised—was not far different.

Every year speakers have come to this platform to demand that the Assembly should have the right to lay down rules for voting and to establish a genuinely representative system.

It would, to my mind, be deplorable if the Assembly, in the very hour in which it has won this right, should declare that, in the exercise of its freedom, it refused to make use of it. That would practically amount to a confession that all the work of the past years had been in vain.

The Assembly, however, has made use of this right. Successive committees have drawn up a text, and M. Motta, in a speech which will still be in your minds, has pointed out the necessity of arriving at a decision. Is it really true that what he has proposed on behalf of these different

committees consists of nothing but a collection of expedients or lame forms of words devised in order to shirk certain difficulties to-day, only to be confronted with greater difficulties to-morrow?

I will not read the text of the motion again; I will recapitulate very rapidly, as rapidly as I can, the main ideas governing the proposed system of voting.

First—and this, I think, is the most important point—we have the principle of geographical representation. It would be ridiculous if, while declaring that the League of Nations should be universal, we left whole continents or important groups of nations entirely unrepresented. Let me assure you, however, that I fully realise that we must proceed with the greatest caution here.

Various speakers, and more particularly the representative of Canada, have rightly drawn our attention to the dangers of establishing at this moment a hard-and-fast system of electoral divisions. Why? Because the world has not yet found its final form. And it never will find it. We must cherish the hope that the world will always be capable of change and improvement, but we can affirm that at present it has perhaps not yet found a lasting form.

We are not dealing here with a clearly defined problem, and therefore we should, as regards geographical representation, look for purely temporary expedients. We should take no definite or binding decisions, so that, if necessary, we can modify and perfect our work year by year.

But it is a striking fact that in almost every case we have been led alike by necessity and by experience to distribute seats on a geographical basis. I venture to draw your attention to the fact that the necessity for geographical distribution not only arises from the universal character of the League but is dictated by experience, which will in the future show more and more clearly that, side by side with world interests, there are group interests whose claims must also receive satisfaction.

If we wish to help the League to fulfil its destiny, if we desire that these group interests should be organised within the League, under its authority and, I had almost said, under its supervision, we can only do so if the distribution of seats is placed on a real geographical basis. This being so—and I will not labour the point—can it really be said that the number of elective Members now proposed is too great?

I ask you to examine this problem in a practical light and suggest, if you can, any other solution which takes the geographical factor into account. You will at once see the difficulty that arises from the fact that Europe is still very little organised and presents a large variety of interests, and that it will be a long, and arduous task to bring about any unity.

How can all these different European interests be represented on the Council unless there is a sufficiently large number of representatives? And, again, if the number of European representatives is fairly large, how can an equitable geographical representation be obtained unless a proportionate number of seats are given to America and the other continents?

Try to solve this problem with less than nine non-permanent Members. You will find you cannot.

I am well aware of the objections to a large number. It is said that a Council of fourteen Members would not work—that it would be too large. I admit that a smaller Council works more easily. As one of my country's statesmen says: "If a committee is to be of any use, it must have not more than one member"; and perhaps he is right.

But this is not a world of ideals; and I may point out that in most great countries the Cabinet which is at the head of affairs consists of fourteen members, or even more. If this is feasible in conducting national affairs, why should it not be so in international affairs?

Then, again, it is said: "There is the right of veto. You will increase the chance of having everything held up by the persistent veto of one elected Member". But we must not forget Article III of the proposal before us, which explicitly empowers the Assembly to withdraw the mandates it issues and proceed, as it were, to dissolve the elective part of the Council and hold a new ballot.

I sincerely hope that this right will never be exercised. I am sure it will not. But its very existence will have its effect and will remind all the Members that they are there not merely to further their own interests but to fulfil a mandate given them by the Assembly as a whole.

I now come to the last problem, which I should like to survey rapidly, in order to reply to the last objection that has been raised, namely, the question of re-eligibility. What has not been said on this subject? It has often been alleged that re-eligibility is contrary to the elementary principles of democracy.

I know that in the old days there were outstanding examples — such as Athens — of republics where the principle of non-re-eligibility was pushed to its extreme; where, in fact, the position might have been summed up by saying that the functions most comparable to those of the President of a modern republic were exercised for one day each by every citizen in turn. But I do not believe that this was the reason why the Athenian Republic was such a brilliant one. It was simply because, by force of genius, the Athenians succeeded in remedying the very defects of so absurd a system.

Under our modern system of democracy, citizens are not entitled to serve as deputies in turn, but have the right to appoint their representatives freely. Directly we begin to institute a system of geographical representation under the control of the whole League, should we not leave it to some extent to the discretion of the geographical groups to determine whether each nation wishes to hold office in turn or whether they consider it more expedient, more useful to themselves and to the whole League to entrust the mandate during a given period — to be determined by themselves, almost at their own discretion — to the nation which they consider most capable of exercising it?

If we propose to maintain the principle repeatedly affirmed in this Assembly, that the mandate should be exercised not in the interest of the mandatory but in that of the whole League, is not the latter entitled to retain on the Council those Members whose presence it considers necessary?

I am well aware that certain sacrifices have had to be made to the principle of rotation, but these sacrifices were, in my opinion, quite legitimate, since, owing to the perhaps fastidious courtesy practised among us, it was sometimes rather difficult to speed a parting Member and replace him by another representative who might be considered more useful. It was hoped that this somewhat unpleasant procedure might be avoided by the establishment of a kind of automatic system whereby retiring Members would no longer be regarded as "retiring" but as "having retired" and might more easily be replaced by others.

The League would, I believe, have foundered, not through the egoism of certain Powers but through a flaw in the framing of its constitution,

if it had insisted on this qualification of non-re-eligibility and had thus departed from the true democratic principle that those who can render the greatest service may be appointed to hold office.

I would add a further observation. It would be regrettable, in my opinion, if the necessity of re-election, in many cases, were so conceived as to result in the creation of a special category of States, namely, those which have been described as "predestined to re-eligibility".

I believe that, as far as possible, the Assembly should refrain from dealing with the question of re-eligibility until that question arises — that is to say, until we are asked to vote on the re-election of a State. I desire to point out, however, that, despite the repeated statements which have appeared in the Press, the authors of the proposal now before you have adhered strictly to the principle involved, except only in the case of the first election, and that for two reasons which I do not hesitate to give.

The first reason is of a technical character and is in itself conclusive. If, in 1927, a State had been declared re-eligible under the present rules, without it being indicated at the same time which States, in the view of the Assembly, were entitled to be re-elected in 1928 and 1929, you would have created in favour of those retiring in 1927 a privilege far more dangerous than any resulting from the rules now proposed. That is my first and technical reason.

The second reason, which led to the substitution of 1926 for 1927, is political in character and is based on grounds of expediency; it satisfies the desire for continuity and is intended to solve the immediate problem. I for one do not regret the sacrifice which as a member of the Committee I offered on the altar of pure reason. I am entirely of the opinion of our Chairman. We are not here to create a work which will accord with the dictates of pure reason; we are here to accomplish a duty in the light of practical commonsense.

At one of our previous meetings I heard a delegate express the desire that Members should never again sacrifice their chosen principles to the requirements of unanimity. I humbly venture to conclude by expressing exactly the contrary view. Suppose that each of us were to refuse to yield an iota of his chosen theories, there would be a succession of eloquent speeches from this platform, but what would happen when it came to taking a vote?

We are governed by the rule of unanimity. This rule can only operate, and consequently the League can only endure, if we make mutual concessions. When, therefore, in the interests of the whole League and in order to overcome the prepossessions and satisfy the legitimate ambitions of certain States, I am asked to concur in a slight violation of logic by substituting 1926 for 1927, I do so gladly, satisfied that I am thereby helping not to weaken the League but to prove that it is in normal working order and that its Members are in the political frame of mind which enables it to work with success.

And now, one word in conclusion. I said just now that the real issue consists in the solution of this constitutional problem — or, rather, in a first attempt to solve it, for the final solution will undoubtedly take long to find — the real issue consists in the solution of this constitutional problem of making the Council of the League as truly representative of the whole world as it is possible to imagine it. It is essential that those whom you are about to elect should regard themselves as representatives, that they should regard themselves not as men endowed with a special privilege but as men who have undertaken a definite

responsibility. There can be no shame to a State in soliciting this responsibility. It is easy to imagine certain States, with full confidence in their powers, coming before the Assembly and saying: "I feel myself worthy of this honour"; but they can only really be worthy of it if they have decided, in the exercise of their mandate, I do not say to sacrifice their national interests — let me repeat, there is no question of this — but to realise to the full and defend to the uttermost the general interests of all.

The President:

Translation: I propose that the continuation of the discussion on the report of the First Committee be adjourned until this afternoon at 4.15. We will then resume the discussion on the report of the Council, which I hope will be concluded this afternoon.

The Assembly rose at 1 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE
SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY
OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

ELEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15th, 1926, AT 4.15 P.M.

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32. — REFERENCE TO THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE SECTION OF THE REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL DEALING WITH THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS FOR THE PROGRESSIVE CODIFICATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW : ADOPTION OF THE RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE NETHERLANDS DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — You will remember that at yesterday's meeting several resolutions were submitted to the Assembly. These have been published, and the delegations will have been able to take note of them.

I reserved the right to make suggestions to the Assembly at a future meeting in regard to the action to be taken on these draft resolutions.

The first draft resolution was submitted by M. Loudon, first delegate of the Netherlands, and read as follows :

"The Assembly decides to refer to its First Committee the section of the Secretary-General's report dealing with the work of the Committee of Experts for the Progressive Codification of International Law."

I propose to the Assembly that this resolution should be adopted and the matter referred to the First Committee.

If no one has any objection to make to this proposal, I will consider it adopted. (*Adopted.*)

33. — REFERENCE TO THE SIXTH COMMITTEE OF DOCUMENTS DEALING WITH THE MANDATES QUESTION : ADOPTION OF THE RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE NORWEGIAN DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : The second draft resolution was submitted by Dr. Nansen, first delegate of Norway. It reads as follows :

"The Assembly,

"Following the precedent already established in previous years,

"Decides to refer to the Sixth Committee the annual reports of the mandatory Powers, the reports of the Permanent Mandates Commission, and all other documents dealing with the mandates question which have been distributed to the Members of the League since the sixth ordinary session of the Assembly."

I propose that the Assembly should adopt this draft resolution and refer the matter to the Sixth Committee.

If no one has any objection to make to this proposal, I will consider it adopted. (*Adopted.*)

34. — INCLUSION OF THE QUESTION OF ALCOHOLISM IN THE PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS : REFERENCE TO THE AGENDA COMMITTEE OF THE PROPOSAL OF THE DELEGATIONS OF FINLAND, POLAND AND SWEDEN.

The President :

Translation : The third draft resolution was submitted by M. Setälä, first delegate of Finland, M. Zaleski, first delegate of Poland, and M. Löfgren, first delegate of Sweden.

I will not read the text of this draft resolution now, as it has been printed and distributed.

I propose that it be referred to the Agenda Committee, which will meet as soon as possible to discuss what action is to be taken on it.

If no one has any objection to make to this proposal, I will consider it adopted. (*Adopted.*)

35. — RULES DEALING WITH THE ELECTION OF THE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL, THEIR TERM OF OFFICE AND THE CONDITIONS OF RE-ELIGIBILITY : CONCLUSION OF THE DISCUSSION : ADOPTION OF THE RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE FIRST COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the discussion of the proposals made by the Committee on the Composition of the Council regarding the method of election and term of office of the non-permanent Members of the Council.

(*At the invitation of the President, M. Motta, Chairman and Rapporteur of the First Committee, took his place on the platform.*)

The President :

Translation : Count Moltke, first delegate of Denmark, will address the Assembly.

Count Moltke (Denmark) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Danish delegation has listened with

keen interest to the very lucid report submitted by M. Motta, Chairman and Rapporteur of the First Committee.

This report makes clear the view taken by the First Committee on this important question, and, as we know, this result was not at all easily reached.

It has been said that the Committee's report was a compromise, and the same may be said of the result of the First Committee's work. The word "compromise" is sometimes used in a disparaging sense, implying that success has only been obtained through what amounts to a partial abandonment by the parties of their original principles.

In an Assembly such as this, however, it would be quite wrong to come to such a conclusion. No State actuated by a spirit of international collaboration comes to the League to impose its will on the other States assembled here; the object of us all is to obtain by common accord a result which, if circumstances admit, can command general acceptance and which signifies a further step in the direction of our common aim.

This calls for heroism — a kind of heroism, moreover, which does not win public applause like other heroic acts, but which nevertheless is often none the less heroic, for it is the heroism of self-sacrifice. The First Committee has given proof of this and the Assembly will assuredly follow its inspiring example. We shall act in the spirit of the League, in a spirit of international tolerance and individual self-sacrifice.

As the Danish delegation has already said, we view with some misgiving the actual form of the solution now proposed for the question of the elections to the Council.

I desire on behalf of the Danish delegation to support the view just expressed by the first delegate of Sweden. At the same time, we welcome wholeheartedly the introduction of the system of rotation, which we have always strongly advocated. We view with a certain degree of apprehension — though we accept it with full confidence — the considerable increase which is to be made in the number of non-permanent Members of the Council.

Our confidence is due to the fact that we rely upon that sense of international responsibility which has always inspired the Members of the Council and will do so to an increasing degree in future. Whether a Power on the Council be big or small, its duty remains the same, for it must act in conformity with the fundamental idea underlying the League. Even if it were alone in its views, its voice might still be the voice of conscience, and would gradually make itself heard.

It is a well-known fact that in every country and every assembly opinions invariably differ over political aims, methods and persons, and even over art, ideas and so on. These divergent opinions, often inexact and even erroneous, are the outcome of individual points of view or national character and are sometimes devoid of adequate foundation. Such a phenomenon may come to pass even in this Assembly.

After a time, a general opinion begins to be evolved in regard to the various questions under consideration, the facts of the case and the methods to be adopted, and this general opinion dominates all others and eventually gains final acceptance. It is the *vox populi* which imperceptibly becomes the *vox Dei*.

If many of the delegations in this Assembly have found themselves able to accept the result now awaiting our confirmation, it is because they are firmly convinced that the delegates will take their decision in the sense which I have indicated when they come to record their vote.

The President :

Translation : His Excellency M. Chao-Hsin Chu, first delegate of China, will address the Assembly.

M. Chao-Hsin Chu (China) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I beg to support, on behalf of the Chinese delegation, the report of the First Committee submitted by the Rapporteur, M. Motta, who has made a great effort in helping to work out a solution for the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council.

The most important factor set forth in the new scheme is that we have now definitely adopted the principle of geographical distribution advocated by the Chinese delegation at previous Assemblies. It is of particular satisfaction to us that it is clearly stated in the report that adequate representation on the Council must be given to Asia.

On this occasion allow me to beg of you that China, which is a most important figure in the continent of Asia, should receive due attention by the League of Nations as regards her geographical position and the privileges to which she is entitled. I sincerely hope that China will be the first among the Asiatic States to occupy a non-permanent seat on the Council when the new scheme comes into force.

Asia has a perfect right to claim two non-permanent seats, but if only one seat is to be allocated to that continent this year, I am justified in demanding, on behalf of Asia, that this seat should be granted for a term of three years.

Finally, allow me to call your attention to China's legitimate request for one of the nine non-permanent seats on the Council. I hope my country will not again be disappointed in the coming election. If it were, the Chinese people would misunderstand the attitude of the League towards their country and would think that the League did not sufficiently appreciate the efforts made by China and her co-operation in the great work of this international organisation.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I shall regard the discussion on the report of the First Committee as closed.

The discussion is closed.

The Assembly will now have to take a decision, in accordance with paragraph 3 of Article 4 of the Covenant, on the rules for the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council, their term of office and the conditions of re-eligibility. These rules read as follows :

The Assembly, acting in virtue of Article 4 of the Covenant, decides as follows :

RESOLUTION MAKING RULES DEALING WITH THE ELECTION OF THE NINE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL, THEIR TERM OF OFFICE AND THE CONDITIONS OF RE-ELIGIBILITY.

Article I.

The Assembly shall each year, in the course of its ordinary session, elect three non-permanent Members of the Council. They shall be elected for a term commencing immediately on their election and ending on the day of the elections held three years later by the Assembly.

Should a non-permanent Member cease to belong to the Council before its term of office expires, its seat shall be filled by a by-election held separately at the session following the occurrence of the vacancy. The term of office of the Member so elected shall end at the date at which the term of office of the Member whose place it takes would have expired.

Article II.

A retiring Member may not be re-elected during the period between the expiration of its term of office and the third election in ordinary session held thereafter, unless the Assembly, either on the expiration of the Member's term of office or in the course of the said period of three years, shall, by a majority of two-thirds of the votes cast, previously have decided that such Member is re-eligible.

The Assembly shall pronounce separately, by secret ballot, upon each request for re-eligibility. The number of votes cast shall be determined by the total number of voting tickets deposited, deducting blank or spoilt votes.

The Assembly may not decide upon the re-eligibility of a Member except upon a request in writing made by the Member itself. The request must be handed to the President of the Assembly not later than the day before the date fixed for the election; it shall be submitted to the Assembly, which shall pronounce upon it without referring it to a committee and without debate.

The number of Members re-elected in consequence of having been previously declared re-eligible shall be restricted so as to prevent the Council from containing at the same time more than three Members thus elected. If the result of the ballot infringes this restriction to three Members, those of the Members affected which have received the smallest number of votes shall not be considered to have been elected.

Article III.

Notwithstanding the above provisions, the Assembly may at any time by a two-thirds majority decide to proceed, in application of Article 4 of the Covenant, to a new election of all the non-permanent Members of the Council. In this case the Assembly shall determine the rules applicable to the new election.

Article IV. — Temporary Provisions.

1. *In 1926, the nine non-permanent Members of the Council shall be elected by the Assembly, three for a term of three years, three for a term of two years, and three for a term of one year. The procedure of the election shall be determined by the General Committee of the Assembly.*

2. *Of the nine Members thus elected in 1926, a maximum of three may be immediately declared re-eligible by a decision of the Assembly taken by a special vote by secret ballot, a separate ballot being held for each Member, and adopted by a majority of two-thirds of the number of votes cast. Immediately after the announcement of the results of the election, the Assembly shall decide upon the requests for re-eligibility which have been presented. Should the Assembly have before it more than three requests for re-eligibility, the three candidates having received the largest number of votes, in excess of two-thirds of the votes cast, shall alone be declared re-eligible.*

3. *The according in advance in 1926 to one, two or three Members elected at that date of the quality of re-eligibility shall not affect the Assembly's right to exercise the power given by Article II in the years 1927 and 1928 in favour of other non-permanent Members retiring from the Council in those years. It is, however, understood that, if three Members already possess the quality of re-eligibility, the Assembly will only exercise this power in very exceptional cases.*

I would remind you that under the rules a majority of two-thirds is required. If any Member of the Assembly so desires, a vote will be taken by roll-call.

As no one wishes for a roll-call vote, I shall consider, if there is no objection, that the Assembly has unanimously adopted the resolution of the First Committee and has thus decided, in application of Article 4 of the Covenant, on the rules for the election of the nine non-Permanent Members of the Council, their term of office and the conditions of re-eligibility.

The resolution proposed by the First Committee was unanimously adopted.

36. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT: CONCLUSION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the discussion 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.

M. Chao-Hsin Chu, first delegate of China, will address the Assembly.

M. Chao-Hsin Chu (China) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I am speaking now on the work of the Council and of the Secretariat as set forth in the report before us.

First of all, I wish to remind the Assembly of the proposal which I put forward last year on behalf of the Chinese delegation asking for a reconsideration, in accordance with Article 19 of the Covenant of the League, of treaties between China and foreign Powers which were regarded as out of date and inapplicable. Public opinion in China is now focussed on the time-honoured issue of the revision of unequal treaties. The Chinese Government, reinforced by popular support, has been making a great effort to deal with the foreign Powers concerned in this question.

The Tariff Conference now sitting in Peking has adopted a resolution to the effect that China will have her tariff autonomy in three years, and it is now considering the question of a proportional and reasonable increase of Chinese tariffs during the interim period before autonomy takes place. Let us hope that, according to the resolution passed by the Assembly last year, the Peking Conference will, at an early date, work out a satisfactory solution which will be in the form of the revision of the unequal treaties.

China, as a sovereign State, should exercise the right of fixing her own tariffs. The present tariff rate, limited to 5 per cent. on all kinds of foreign commodities, is far from being sufficient to balance the budget of China, hence it is the cause of financial and political chaos. The Chinese Government is very anxious to increase the tariffs by means of which China will be able to reorganise her national finance and adjust her economic position on a sound basis.

Further, China is welcoming the negotiation of new treaties with foreign Powers, particularly with those the treaty status of which in China is or will be terminated according to the terms of the old treaties. China is to be congratulated on having concluded treaties of equality and reciprocity with some foreign Powers, notably with Germany and Austria. The Chinese delegation has been

instructed to register with the Secretariat of the League of Nations the newly concluded treaty between China and Austria, and the registration will take place on September 15th — that is to-day — which is the exact date when the Sino-Austrian treaty comes into force.

The Chinese Government is of opinion that, in order to make the League a real league of all nations, we must fully recognise the geographical position of the important nations and the privileges to which they are entitled. We have indeed taken due consideration of these factors and this is proved by the welcome which has been given, as Member of the League, to one of the great Powers of the world. On this occasion I offer my German colleagues who are now in our midst my sincere congratulations, and I am sure that we all look for their co-operation in the work of world peace.

I sincerely hope — and I am sure that all the Members of the Assembly share that hope — that Brazil and Spain will soon return to us and that other great nations which are still standing outside the League will join us in the near future. In this way, the scope of the League will be enlarged to the utmost and its activities will be carried out to a still greater extent.

In conclusion, let me, on behalf of the Chinese delegation and in the name of the Chinese Government, express our great satisfaction with the work which has been done during the past year by the Council and by the Secretariat of the League of Nations.

The President :

Translation : M. Hambro, delegate of Norway, will address the Assembly.

M. Hambro (Norway) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — My colleague, M. Vogt, has already announced in the First Committee that the Norwegian Government is in favour of a system of proportional representation. The Committee's task was, however, so delicate, that he refrained from asking for an immediate discussion.

The draft resolution submitted by the First Committee has just been adopted, and the question of proportional representation, which calls for very thorough examination, can be considered apart.

In my country, we adopted the proportional system first for municipal elections and then for Parliamentary elections. Our Parliamentary commissions and committees are now constituted entirely on this principle.

It is inconceivable that we should forego the guarantee which would be afforded by the division of responsibility among all parties and minorities in the Assembly. It would, in our view, be quite in keeping with the spirit of the League if this system were adopted for the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council. Whatever may be said about the system — when applied to Parliamentary elections — it would appear to be very practicable and very fair for the elections to the Council.

I have the honour, therefore, on behalf of my Government, to submit the following proposal :

"The Assembly requests the Council to appoint a Committee :

"1. To study the question of the single transferable vote and the principle of proportional representation in general as regards the problem of the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council ;

"2. To report on the method of election of the non-permanent Members in sufficient time to lay the question before the next session of the Assembly." (See Document C. 299. M. 139. 1926. V, page 143.)

The President :

Translation : This draft resolution will be printed in the *Assembly Journal* so that delegations may be able to consider it.

At a later meeting I shall submit suggestions as to the procedure to be followed in regard to this proposal.

If no one else wishes to speak, I shall declare the discussion on the report of the Council closed.

The discussion is closed.

The Assembly rose at 5.15 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

TWELFTH PLENARY MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 16th, 1926, AT 10.15 A.M.

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37. — ELECTION OF THE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

The President :

Translation : I have just received from the delegation of Uruguay a communication which I will read to the Assembly at the conclusion of the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council.

Let me first recall briefly the Rules adopted by the Assembly as temporary provisions for the 1926 elections.

The first paragraph of Article IV prescribes that in 1926 the nine non-permanent Members of the Council shall be elected by the Assembly, three for a term of three years, three for a term of two years and three for a term of one year.

As I announced at the end of yesterday's meeting, the procedure laid down by the General Committee for these elections has been communicated to delegations through the *Assembly Journal*. Delegates have, therefore, been able to acquaint themselves with the procedure. Nevertheless, I should perhaps briefly recall the salient features.

Three secret ballots will be taken by roll-call. The first ballot will be for all the nine seats to be filled, that is to say, the voting papers should designate the nine States which delegations desire to elect as Members of the Council.

After the result of this ballot has been proclaimed, a second secret ballot will be taken, whereby the Assembly will choose three of the newly elected Members to be represented on the Council for a term of three years.

After the results of the second ballot have been proclaimed, a third secret ballot will be taken, whereby the Assembly will choose from the remaining elected non-permanent Members those to be represented for a term of two years.

The results of the third ballot will be proclaimed and it is understood that the Members not chosen in that ballot will be those to be represented for a term of one year.

Before opening the ballot, may I call attention to the relevant Rules of Procedure in this connection ?

"2. Where several seats are to be filled, the election shall be made by voting a list of names. Any ballot paper containing more names than there are seats to be filled shall be null and void.

"3. No Member shall be elected at the first or at the second ballot unless it has obtained at least the absolute majority of the votes. If, after two ballots, there still remain seats to be filled, a third ballot shall be held upon a list consisting of the candidates which obtained most votes at the second ballot, up to a number double that of the seats still to be filled, and those Members shall be elected which obtain the greatest number of votes.

"4. If two or more Members obtain the same number of votes and there is not a seat available for each, a special ballot shall be held between them; if they again obtain an equal number of votes, the President shall decide between them by drawing lots."

My explanations will, I trust, prevent any confusion.

I will therefore open the first ballot, which is for the election of the nine Members.

I will ask Viscount Ishii, first delegate of Japan, and M. Scialoja, first delegate of Italy, to take their places on the platform to act as tellers. The ballot is now open.

The President : •

Translation : The result of the ballot is as follows :

| | |
|----------------------------------|----|
| Number of States voting | 49 |
| Number of votes cast | 49 |
| Absolute majority required . . . | 25 |

The votes obtained by the States were as follows :

| | | |
|----------------------------|----|-------|
| Colombia | 46 | votes |
| Poland | 45 | " |
| Chile | 43 | " |
| Salvador | 42 | " |
| Belgium | 41 | " |
| Roumania | 41 | " |
| Netherlands | 37 | " |
| China | 29 | " |
| Czechoslovakia | 23 | " |
| Persia | 20 | " |
| Portugal | 16 | " |
| Finland | 14 | " |
| Irish Free State | 10 | " |
| Uruguay | 9 | " |
| Canada | 2 | " |
| Denmark | 2 | " |
| Esthonia | 2 | " |
| Siam | 2 | " |

etc., etc.

The following States have obtained the absolute majority required and are therefore elected non-permanent Members of the Council :

| | |
|----------|-------------|
| Colombia | Belgium |
| Poland | Roumania |
| Chile | Netherlands |
| Salvador | China |

The ninth non-permanent seat has still to be filled.

According to the Rules, a second ballot will be taken for the election of the ninth non-permanent Member of the Council. Voting papers should indicate only one name.

We will now proceed to the election.

The President : •

Translation : The result of the ballot is as follows :

| | |
|----------------------------------|----|
| Number of votes cast | 49 |
| Absolute majority required . . . | 25 |

The votes obtained were as follows :

| | |
|----------------------------|----|
| Czechoslovakia | 27 |
| Finland | 11 |
| Portugal | 7 |
| Irish Free State | 4 |

Czechoslovakia, having obtained an absolute majority, is therefore elected a non-permanent Member of the Council.

I have now the privilege and the pleasure of congratulating the States which have obtained non-permanent seats on the Council of the League.

A letter received this morning from the delegation of Uruguay will now be read. I should inform the Assembly that, despite the urgent request of the delegation of Uruguay, this letter could not, owing to precedent, be read before the election which has just been held. I understand that the contents have already been communicated unofficially to the different delegations.

The letter reads as follows :

[Translation.]

"The events, now made public, which took place at the private meetings of the delegations of the Latin-American States now at Geneva, impose upon the delegation of Uruguay the duty of bringing directly to the knowledge of the Assembly the reasons which prevented it from concurring in the procedure established by the delegations of the other States for the nomination of candidates to the Council from the Latin-American Republics.

"Under Article 4 of the Covenant of the League, the non-permanent Members of the Council are to be elected by the Assembly in its discretion, and by the duly prescribed majority.

"Nominations put forward in any way other than that prescribed can only be regarded as the expression of certain tendencies in some particular electoral group and, *in fine*, may fail to be in keeping with the general feeling of the electoral body. The Assembly, and the Assembly alone, possesses the right, the power and the authority necessary to select candidates, with due reference to the following factors :

"1. The general interests of the League ;

"2. The political circumstances of the moment ;

"3. An equitable distribution of forces from the continental point of view.

"The Assembly can and should correct any tendency that is incompatible with international realities, if, for instance, it were confronted with nominations not in keeping with the common desires of any one continent.

"The adoption by a group of States of a system of voting — other than that of unanimity and more particularly of a system of secret voting such as has recently been the case — might have the highly regrettable result of enabling a group of delegates which by chance happened to be numerically stronger to impose its will not only upon all the members of that group but eventually upon the whole Assembly.

"It is essential to guard against so improper a contingency.

"The following is the actual position of Latin America in the League : of the twenty States of which it is composed, only twelve are now present at the Assembly. For various reasons, the following are absent : the Argentine, Mexico, Brazil, Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Costa Rica and Honduras. It is unnecessary for us to draw the Assembly's attention to the significance of this fact.

"In view of this very exceptional situation, we are entitled to enquire whether, from the point of view of the fair and adequate representation of a whole continent, it is right that six States, probably belonging to the same region, should be regarded as qualified, by means of a secret ballot in which they constitute a majority, to interpret in the Assembly of the League the real aspirations of the whole of Latin America.

"For the above reasons, therefore, the delegation of Uruguay is regretfully obliged to state that the meetings of American representatives, in which its own representatives have always taken a most sincere and cordial part, must be regarded by the Assembly only as an unofficial exchange of views and as admitting of no other interpretation.

"While emphasising the above considerations, and persuaded that they represent the views of the Assembly also, the Uruguayan delegation has decided not to maintain its candidature to one of the three seats assigned to the Latin-American States at the time of the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council.

"Our country, which has had the honour of sitting on the Council for four years, desires to convey to the Assembly its profound thanks for the confidence shown to Uruguay on more than one occasion, and to assure it that in the future as in the past it will remain loyal to the ideals of the League.

(Signed) J. C. BLANCO.
GUANI.
FERNANDEZ Y MEDINA.
BUERO.

(Delegation of Uruguay)"

The President :

Translation : The Assembly has now to choose from the newly elected nine Members three who will retain their seats on the Council for a term of three years.

The Rules of Procedure governing the first ballot apply in this instance also.

I will ask Viscount Ishii and M. Scialoja to be kind enough to continue to act as tellers for this ballot and the next.

* I would mention that any voting papers containing more than three names will be void. We will now proceed to the ballot.

The President :

Translation : The result of the ballot is as follows :

| | |
|----------------------------------|----|
| Number of votes cast . . . | 49 |
| Absolute majority required . . . | 25 |

The votes obtained by the States were as follows :

| | | |
|--------------------------|----|-------|
| Poland | 44 | votes |
| Chile | 41 | " |
| Roumania | 30 | " |
| Netherlands | 16 | " |
| China | 6 | " |
| Colombia | 3 | " |
| Belgium | 3 | " |
| Czechoslovakia | 1 | " |

The following Members have therefore been elected, in conformity with the temporary provisions of the new Rules, for a term of three years :

Poland, Chile, Roumania.

The Assembly has now to choose from the remaining Members three to be represented on the Council for a term of two years.

The Rules of Procedure governing the first two ballots will apply here too.

I would mention that any voting papers containing more than three names will be void.

We will now proceed to the ballot.

The President :

Translation : The result of the ballot is as follows :

| | | |
|----------------------------------|----|-------|
| Number of votes cast . . . | 49 | votes |
| Absolute majority required . . . | 25 | votes |

The votes obtained by the States were as follows :

| | | |
|--------------------------|----|-------|
| Colombia | 47 | votes |
| Netherlands | 47 | " |
| China | 34 | " |
| Belgium | 11 | " |
| Salvador | 4 | " |
| Czechoslovakia | 3 | " |

The following countries are therefore elected, in conformity with the temporary provisions of the new Rules, for a term of two years :

Colombia, Netherlands, China.

The others three Members of the Council are elected for a term of one year, namely :

Belgium, Salvador, Czechoslovakia.

38. — DESIGNATION OF POLAND AS A RE-ELIGIBLE NON-PERMANENT MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL.

The President :

Translation : I have received a request for re-eligibility submitted by Poland, which has just been elected a non-permanent Member of the Council. The request is submitted under paragraph 2 of Article IV of the Rules adopted by the Assembly.

I will read the paragraph in question :

"2. Of the nine Members thus elected in 1926, a maximum of three may be immediately declared re-eligible by a decision of the Assembly taken by a special vote by secret ballot, a separate ballot being held for each Member, and adopted by a majority of two-thirds of the number of votes cast. Immediately after the announcement of the results of the election, the Assembly shall decide upon the requests for re-eligibility which have been presented. Should the Assembly have before it more than three requests for re-eligibility, the three candidates having received the largest number of votes, in excess of two-thirds of the votes cast, shall alone be declared re-eligible."

I will therefore now read the request for re-eligibility submitted by Poland to the Assembly :

[*Translation*]

"By to-day's vote the Assembly of the League of Nations has elected Poland a Member of the Council.

"In conformity with the new Rules for the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council, which were adopted by the Assembly on September 15th and which provide for the re-eligibility of the elected Members of the Council, I would beg you to place before the Assembly the request of the Polish Government that the Republic of Poland should be declared re-eligible under the temporary provisions of the above-mentioned Rules.

(Signed) Auguste ZALESKI,
Minister for Foreign Affairs,
First Delegate of Poland."

I propose that the Assembly should decide on this request for re-eligibility, and I may remind you that a two-thirds majority of the votes cast is necessary for a State to be declared re-eligible.

We will now proceed to a ballot by roll-call.

Each State will be called by name and a representative of the delegation will come up and place his voting paper in the ballot-box.

Those in favour of re-eligibility should write "yes" on their voting papers and those opposed should write "no".

The ballot is now open.

The President :

Translation : The result of the ballot is as follows :

| | |
|---|----|
| Number of votes cast | 48 |
| Blank papers | 4 |
| Number of votes valid | 44 |
| Two-thirds majority | 30 |
| Votes in favour of granting the request | 36 |
| Votes against | 8 |

The Polish request having received more than the requisite two-thirds majority, I declare Poland re-eligible for election to the Council on the expiry of her present term of three years.

Let me warmly thank M. Scialoja, first delegate of Italy, and Viscount Ishii, first delegate for Japan, for their kind assistance in acting as tellers at the many ballots we have held to-day. This has entailed a very great deal of hard work and I offer them the Assembly's thanks.

40. — QUESTION OF THE DESIRABILITY OF NUMBERING THE PARAGRAPHS OF THE ARTICLES OF THE COVENANT : REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE ON THE DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE AUSTRALIAN DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen— I have just received the report of the Agenda Committee, which met at the conclusion of yesterday's meeting of the Assembly.

The text of the report is as follows :

"The Agenda Committee met on September 15th under the Presidency of His Excellency M. Urrutia and examined the draft resolution moved by the Honourable J.G. Latham, delegate of Australia, on September 10th, 1926, in regard to the question of the desirability of numbering the paragraphs of the Articles of the Covenant. This draft resolution was referred to the Agenda Committee by a decision of the Assembly of September 14th, 1926:

"After a preliminary study, it was decided unanimously to propose to the Assembly that the following draft resolution should be referred to the First Committee :

"That the First Committee be requested to consider and to report to the Assembly upon the desirability of numbering the paragraphs of the Articles of the Covenant published by the League."

If no one has any objection to make, I declare the report adopted and the question referred to the First Committee. (*Agreed.*)

The Assembly rose at 1 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE
SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY
OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

THIRTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21st, 1926, AT 10.30 a.m.

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40. — INCLUSION OF THE QUESTION OF ALCOHOLISM IN THE PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS :
REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE :
REFERENCE TO THE EIGHTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF THE PROPOSAL OF THE DELEGATIONS OF FINLAND, POLAND AND SWEDEN.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the reading of the Agenda Committee's reports on two proposals submitted by members of the Assembly.

The Assembly will recollect that, at the meeting on September 15th, 1926, it decided to refer to the Agenda Committee the draft resolution on the question of alcoholism, submitted by M. Setälä, first delegate of Finland, M. Zaleski, first delegate of Poland, and M. Löfgren, first delegate of Sweden.

As the draft resolution has been communicated to all delegations, it is unnecessary, I think, for me to read it. Accordingly, I will simply read the Agenda Committee's report.

"The Agenda Committee met on September 15th, 1926, at the Salle de la Réformation, under the chairmanship of M. Urrutia, and

made a preliminary examination of the draft resolution on alcoholism which was submitted by M. Setälä, first delegate of Finland, M. Zaleski, first delegate of Poland, and M. Löfgren, first delegate of Sweden, on September 14th, 1926, and referred to the Committee by a decision of the Assembly dated September 15th, 1926.

"The Committee, after examining the proposal, did not fail to appreciate the extreme importance of the question, which had not previously been placed before the Assembly, but considered that the problem, in the terms in which it was raised, did not appear on a first examination to be sufficiently clearly defined. For these reasons, and in view of the very recent date at which the proposal was submitted, the Committee thought it would be preferable to place it on the agenda of the next ordinary session of the Assembly.

"It was unanimously decided, therefore, to propose to the Assembly that, if the originators of the proposal agreed, the draft resolution should be placed on the agenda of the next session. In any case, the Committee feels bound to say that, in its opinion, the draft resolution could not be dealt with at the present session of the Assembly."

If no one has any observation to make, I shall take it that the Assembly is in favour of placing the question of alcoholism on the agenda of the next ordinary session of the Assembly. (*Agreed.*)

41. — QUESTION OF THE APPOINTMENT BY THE COUNCIL OF A COMMITTEE TO EXAMINE CERTAIN QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE ELECTION OF THE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL: REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE: REFERENCE TO THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE NORWEGIAN DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : It will be recollected that, at the meeting on September 15th, 1926, M. Hambro, delegate of Norway, submitted a draft resolution to the Assembly. As it has not been possible for me to ask the Assembly to take a decision concerning the action to be taken on this proposal, I thought I should be complying with the Assembly's wishes if, with the consent of the General Committee, I requested the Agenda Committee to make a preliminary examination of the draft resolution so that it might be able to submit its report at the earliest possible moment.

In consequence of the expeditious procedure adopted, I am to-day able to communicate the Agenda Committee's report on this matter to the Assembly.

The text reads as follows :

"The Agenda Committee met on September 18th, 1926, under the Chairmanship of M. Urrutia. It has examined the draft resolution submitted by M. Hambro, delegate of Norway, on the subject of the appointment by the Council of a Committee to examine certain matters connected with the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council.

"After this preliminary study, it was unanimously decided to propose that the Assembly should refer to the First Committee the following draft resolution:

"The Assembly requests the Council to appoint a Committee :

"1. To study the question of the single transferable vote and the principle of proportional representation in general, as regards the problem of the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council.

"2. To report on the method of election of the non-permanent Members in sufficient time to lay the question before the next session of the Assembly."¹

If no one has any observation to make, I shall take it that the General Committee's proposal is adopted and that the draft resolution under consideration is referred to the First Committee, which is requested to take it into consideration as early as possible. (*Agreed.*)

42. — INCLUSION IN THE AGENDA OF THE PRESENT SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF THE QUESTION OF THE SETTLEMENT OF ARMENIAN REFUGEES: LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TRANSMITTING A REPORT OF THE COUNCIL.

The President :

Translation : As you will have seen from the agenda, I have received from the Secretary-General a letter covering a report of the Council dated September 16th, 1926, on the settlement of the Armenian refugees. The letter reads as follows :

"I have the honour to communicate herewith the report adopted by the Council at its meeting on September 16th, 1926, concerning the settlement of the Armenian refugees.

"As you will note, the last paragraph of this report reads as follows :

"The Council decides that this question shall be placed on the agenda of the present session of the Assembly.

"I should be very grateful if you would communicate the contents of this report to the Assembly at one of its next meetings."

The report of the Council mentioned in this letter has been distributed to the delegations in document A.70. 1926.II.

In order to save time, I propose that the Assembly should decide without further formality whether it is prepared to include this question in the agenda of the present session.

If nobody has any observation to make I shall regard the proposal as adopted. (*Adopted.*)

I suggest that the Assembly should refer this question directly to the Fifth Committee. It is similar in character to those with which the Fifth Committee is dealing and with which it dealt last year.

If no one has any observation to make, I take it that my proposal is adopted, and I will ask the Chairman of the Fifth Committee to submit the question to the Committee as soon as possible. (*Assent.*)

¹ See document C.299.M.139.V, page 143.

43. — WORK OF THE GREEK REFUGEE SETTLEMENT COMMISSION: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Second Committee's report on the work of the Greek Refugee Settlement Commission (Annex 3, document A.71.1926.II).

I will ask the Rapporteur, M. van Cauwelaert, delegate of Belgium, and Mr. Fitzgerald, Chairman of the Second Committee, to take their places on the platform.

(Mr. Fitzgerald, Chairman, and M. van Cauwelaert, Rapporteur, of the Second Committee, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. van Cauwelaert, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. van Cauwelaert, Rapporteur, read his report.

The President :

Translation : M. Caclamanos, first delegate of Greece, will address the Assembly.

M. Caclamanos (Greece) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The documents communicated to the Assembly by the Rapporteur of the Second Committee on the subject of the settlement of the refugees in Greece place upon the representative of Greece the duty of saying a few words, first, in order to take note of the report of the Second Committee and, secondly, in order to request you to adopt the resolution proposed by the Committee.

First, in taking note of M. van Cauwelaert's report, I wish to offer him my deepest thanks for this very notable document, which gives so complete, so lucid and moving an account of the work accomplished in Greece for the settlement of 1,500,000 refugees (I venture to make a slight correction in the figures given in the report) under the auspices and with the aid of the League of Nations. To the aid afforded by the League I desire to pay yet another public tribute of gratitude.

May I make one observation on a passage in the report, which states that no restriction has been placed on the districts in which the refugees may be lodged? If this observation is to be taken as registering a fact or as a matter of purely historical record, we are in entire agreement. If, however, it was the Rapporteur's intention to introduce an allusion of any kind, will he permit me to submit one simple remark, of the accuracy of which his insight and sound judgment will convince him. If no restrictions of any kind have been placed on the settlement of the Greek refugees, this is because no demand for restrictions has been put forward; and the fact that no such demand has been put forward from any quarter proves that there was no ground for it to be put forward.

The explanatory account which the Rapporteur has just given you renders it unnecessary for me to detain you on the subject of the settlement of the refugees. The work involved, which was the legacy of an overwhelming tragedy, appeared at the outset to offer an insoluble problem, a problem likely to cause far-reaching unrest in South-Eastern Europe.

In July 1923 the Council of the League approved in principle and placed under its own auspices an international loan for £10,000,000 for the settlement of Greek refugees. The scheme only began to be carried into effect, however, towards the end of 1924, at the time of the session of the Assembly in that year. It was, moreover, unanimously recognised that the sum of £8,000,000, the amount remaining after deduction of the costs of the financial operations involved (the difference between the net yield of the loan and the nominal capital, bankers' commissions and publicity expenses) was inadequate. The nominal capital of the loan was finally increased to £12,000,000, from which a net sum of £10,000,000 was placed at the disposal of the Commission entrusted by the League with the work of carrying out the settlement scheme.

Meanwhile, Greece had expended more than £4,000,000, or one milliard drachmæ, from her own funds to keep the refugees alive, to lodge and feed them — in brief, to preserve the human material which the League's Commission was finally to save from total destruction.

According to the moving report recently communicated to the League by Mr. Howland, the distinguished Chairman of the Refugee Commission, 750,000 refugees have already been settled by the Commission. Greek Macedonia has been completely transformed. In places where once there was uncultivated or waste land, field after field of rich crops can now be seen, stretching farther than the eye can reach. Smiling villages are arising everywhere among the fields, and rugged and contented workers till the earth and make it rich and fruitful. Whole towns are rising around Athens as by the wave of a magic wand. New industries are being founded and are developing all over the country. In a few years the sacrifices made by our nation, which has afforded the world an ennobling example of fellow-feeling with its kindred, will bring their reward in the increased wealth of the country thanks to the toil and labour of her newly acquired sons.

The League of Nations may be proud of having, by its kindly care, preserved and endowed with prosperity a population of one and a-half million souls. It has erected a barrier against the rising tide of resentment engendered in men's minds by poverty, hunger and privation.

Beyond all question, the League will desire to finish the work that is now in full swing, and will continue to give it its moral assistance and support. According to Mr. Howland, five million pounds will be sufficient to complete this work, which only requires the finishing touches. It will survive as yet another memorial to prove that the League is not a vain Utopian conception, but that, side by side with its task of international conciliation, pacification and collaboration, it is engaged upon a task which may perhaps be more modest and less spectacular, but is no less useful — namely, the material reconstruction and consolidation of countries which have been sorely tried by fate. So may the poverty and discontent which give birth to social and political unrest be gradually eliminated from the world and mankind may continue its onward march in peace, rejoicing in the work before it.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution of the Second Committee, which reads as follows :

The Assembly :

(1) Has learnt with satisfaction that the work of settlement effected in collaboration between the

Greek authorities and the Settlement Commission set up under the auspices of the League has made continuous and satisfactory progress during the past year, within the limits of the available funds, which are now nearly exhausted ;

(2) Observes that this piece of work is attaining the results expected of it. More than one-half of the 1,400,000 destitute refugees who have entered Greece have been assisted to establish themselves and have become productive citizens. Apart from the humanitarian significance of the scheme, it is having permanent beneficial results in strengthening the economic life of the country and in promoting social stability ;

(3) Expresses the hope that conditions may be such that the money required may become available in due course for the completion of this work, which has progressed successfully under the League's auspices and the results of which have amply justified the association of the League with it.

The resolution was adopted.

44. — NUMBERING OF THE PARAGRAPHS OF THE ARTICLES OF THE COVENANT: REPORT OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : We now have to discuss the report by the First Committee on the question of numbering the paragraphs of the articles of the Covenant.

(On the invitation of the President, the Hon. J. G. Latham, Rapporteur, and M. Motta, Chairman, of the First Committee, took their places on the platform.)

The Hon. J. G. Latham (Australia), Rapporteur read the following report and resolution¹ :

"On September 16th, 1926, the Assembly adopted the following proposal made by the Hon. J. G. Latham, delegate of Australia :

"That the First Committee be requested to consider and to report to the Assembly upon the desirability of numbering the paragraphs of the articles of the Covenant published by the League."

"The First Committee unanimously approves Mr. Latham's suggestion and accordingly recommends the Assembly to adopt the following resolution :

"The Assembly instructs the Secretary-General to cause the paragraphs of the articles of the Covenant to be numbered in all future editions published by the Secretariat."

He continued as follows :

The effect of adopting this resolution, if the Assembly sees fit to do so, will be that each of the paragraphs of the articles of the Covenant will be numbered, and, accordingly, it will not be necessary, when referring to the Covenant, to count the paragraphs in the separate articles in order to discover any particular one. For example, the paragraphs of Article 22 (let us say) will be numbered 1, 2, 3, and so on and this will apply to each of the articles of the Covenant.

The Committee considers that this is a small but very desirable improvement and that its

¹ Document A.69.1926.V.

adoption will facilitate the work of the League itself, and will also facilitate the work of those who are interested in the League.

I, therefore, submit to the Assembly for its approval the resolution which I have read to you.

The President :

Translation : M. Scialoja, first delegate of Italy, will address the Assembly

M. Scialoja (Italy) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I do not propose to make a speech. The question before us is not of vital importance, and what I have to say is even less important.

While it would be an excellent thing for the convenience of those desirous of referring to the Covenant to number the paragraphs of the articles, we should, I think, make provision for future amendments and take into account the amendments already adopted.

If, then, the Secretariat confined itself to writing in the numbers in their correct order, so that paragraph 3, for example, did not come before paragraph 1, there would not be much point in the operation. It would be quite useless if every fresh amendment necessitated a new edition of the Covenant containing no references to the acts of a previous Assembly.

I would therefore urge the Secretariat, which, under the terms of the resolution, is to be responsible for this numbering, to adopt an elastic system, so that the fundamental part of the Covenant may always bear the same numbers.

I am not going to submit a proposal, but will give an example to show exactly what I mean : amendments constituting fresh paragraphs would bear the original number followed by (a) or (b), etc., so that the numbering would always remain the same and the reader could see at a glance that he was dealing with an amendment and not with the original text.

I think this suggestion might make the Secretariat's work more useful than a mere arithmetical operation.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution proposed by the First Committee, which reads as follows :

The Assembly instructs the Secretary-General to cause the paragraphs of the articles of the Covenant to be numbered in all future editions published by the Secretariat.

The resolution was adopted.

45. — WORK OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CONFERENCE: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report on the work of the Preparatory Committee for the International Economic Conference (Annex 4, document A.76.1926.II).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Loucheur, Rapporteur, and Mr. Fitzgerald, Chairman, of the Second Committee, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Loucheur, Rapporteur of the Second Committee, will address the Assembly.

M. Loucheur (France), Rapporteur :

Translation : The Second Committee's report has been distributed to all delegations. It simply remains for me to explain as briefly as possible the proceedings in the Second Committee and the conclusions it has reached.

You will remember that, on September 24th, 1925, the sixth ordinary session of the Assembly unanimously passed a resolution inviting the Council to consider the expediency of constituting a Preparatory Committee with a view to the subsequent convening of an International Economic Conference.

In response to the Assembly's suggestion, the Council constituted this Committee, which has already held its first session at Geneva. The session, presided over by M. Theunis in the absence, through illness, of M. Gustave Ador, resulted in the compilation of lists of questions which constitute, as it were, the basis of the Preparatory Committee's present investigations.

The length of these lists and the number of questions included in them appeared somewhat alarming to certain delegations, which imagined that the Preparatory Committee was engaged in drawing up a long and involved programme which would obviously have doomed the Economic Conference to certain failure.

You may perhaps remember that, last year, when I explained the French delegation's proposal from this platform, I ventured to direct your attention to the danger of drawing up a programme which was not confined to a few essential questions. I also pointed out that the difficulty lay in determining the questions to be omitted from the programme rather than those to be included in it.

M. Theunis was requested by the Second Committee to report on the Preparatory Committee's work. He succeeded in completely reassuring those delegations which were somewhat alarmed by the contents of the documents distributed. He explained that, at the next session, to be held at Geneva on November 15th, the Preparatory Committee would proceed to eliminate questions which might later handicap the work of the Conference and would endeavour to fix the main lines of its discussions.

The Second Committee concurred in M. Theunis' views, and unanimous agreement was reached in regard to the chief points of the programme for the Economic Conference.

A second question, however, arose in the Second Committee, namely, the actual composition of the Economic Conference. This point was raised by Mr. Latham, delegate of Australia, and by the representative of the British Empire. Two suggestions were put forward.

Certain speakers thought that the Conference should consist exclusively of experts who would be free to express their personal views, without instructions from their Governments, so as to afford the Assembly of the League insight into the deep-rooted causes of present evils and the remedies to be adopted.

The British delegate urged that a Conference composed of representatives who had, as it were, received a mandate from their Governments would be apt to deal with certain delicate problems less frankly and boldly, and that it was accordingly essential that the members of the Conference should in no case be bound by instructions from their Governments.

Another view was advanced in opposition to the foregoing argument: it was suggested that it might be preferable to convene a Conference somewhat diplomatic in character, and consisting of representatives holding a mandate from their Governments with the possible ultimate object of concluding international conventions.

The Committee was from the outset unanimous in rejecting this second proposal. Accordingly, the forthcoming International Economic Conference will in no sense be a diplomatic Conference and will not be expected to frame international conventions.

Certain delegates, however — in particular M. Jouhaux, the delegate of France — pointed out that there was a risk that the importance of the Conference might be lessened and that it was possible, to put it frankly, that it might be deprived of all authority, if it were composed entirely of experts chosen or nominated by the League itself.

The Committee agreed on the adoption not of a hybrid system but of a system already sanctioned by experience. You will all remember the Brussels Financial Conference, which consisted of representatives who were appointed by the Governments, but were given absolute liberty to express their views with complete frankness and were not bound by formal Government instructions.

The Brussels Conference, it was pointed out, was composed of experts, and the usual pleasantries at the expense of Ministers of Finance, who may be described as greater or lesser experts, found an echo in our Committee. We thought that the definition of the word "expert" might give rise to controversy and difficulties. "Expert" does not bear quite the same meaning in English as in French. We thought, and we still think, that the Governments will show their wisdom by sending to the Conference only representatives possessing the twofold qualification of experience and knowledge.

The formula which we adopted was, therefore, that employed for the Brussels Financial Conference, namely, representatives appointed by the Governments, without formal instructions from the latter so that they might be perfectly free to study the important problems submitted to them.

A more heated, more lengthy and, in my opinion, more important discussion occurred as regards the date for the convening of the Conference. We had occasion — yesterday morning, in particular — to explain our views clearly on this point.

The world is awaiting with growing interest the results of the work upon which we are now engaged. It is a year — over a year now — since the Assembly decided upon the convening of an International Economic Conference. I do not say that the time since then has been ill-spent, for the Preparatory Committee has collected, and is still collecting, documents which will be of great use to the future Conference. But we must not run the risk of wasting our time in protracted preparation. In this connection there was placed before the Committee a line of argument which found an energetic advocate in the person of the delegate of Sweden. The suggestion was that you should be invited at this meeting to specify in the resolution on which you are about to vote a definite and final date for the coming meeting of the International Economic Conference.

I, personally, would be glad if it were possible to insert a clause convening the Conference for next spring. The representative of Sweden, less ambitious, proposed that it should meet before the next session of the Assembly of the League. Finally, by way of a compromise, he suggested that the Conference should be held in 1927.

The resolution now before you, however, mentions no date at all. It contains one of those

facile expressions which are sometimes found in recommendations of this kind. It says that the Conference shall be convened as soon as possible. I want to explain what we mean by the words "as soon as possible".

We adopted this text with the idea of compromising, in order to obtain general agreement, and this desire for general agreement has at all events led to some result.

I am convinced that the Committee was unanimous in its desire that the Conference should be held at an early date. We were reluctant, from motives of courtesy which you will readily appreciate, to interfere in the work upon which the Preparatory Committee is at present engaged.

Last year, you showed your confidence in the Council when you invited it to constitute this Committee. There is no reason for withdrawing that confidence now, and, since a Committee of the Council is following the work of the Preparatory Committee, we propose to renew our confidence by asking the Council at its December session to decide to convene the Conference at the earliest possible date.

The resolution now before you is, if I may say so once again, a declaration of our confidence in the Council and in the Preparatory Committee.

May I be allowed to add a few words, not in my capacity as Rapporteur, but on my own behalf? I wish briefly to explain why, in my opinion, we can no longer postpone convening the Conference.

Last year, when stating the grounds which led the French delegation to propose this important decision to the Assembly, I drew attention to the gravity of the financial and economic position in all parts of the world, and I said that the thought of what might happen within the next few years filled me with apprehension.

There has, as you are all aware, been no improvement in the economic situation since last year. I even believe that we are on the verge of serious crises in different countries. Some of those countries are making an energetic attempt to emerge from a position which, it is claimed, is the result of the war, but which, I assure you, may rather be the consequence of economic mistakes committed before the war.

The war, it is true, did not improve matters, but I question whether even before the war those responsible for the conduct of affairs of State understood quite what was happening in the world or realised that, as a consequence of over-industrialisation in certain countries, the food supplies of the inhabitants were being jeopardised by the failure to maintain a proper balance between agricultural and industrial production. This state of affairs, which arose out of pre-war conditions, was intensified by the war, and no measures, so far as I am aware, have since been taken to remedy this most alarming situation.

Every day, however, it becomes necessary to provide sustenance for increasing numbers, while new frontiers have to be taken into account as well as the circumstances in which certain countries find themselves as a result of the erection of Customs barriers hitherto non-existent between them and the countries with which they formerly traded. We must, therefore, come together and find a remedy for this problem without delay; otherwise it may become so acute as to pass beyond any possibility of solution.

Thus, while we are examining the problem in all its aspects in Preparatory Committees, the usefulness of which I fully recognise, timid attempts are being made in various quarters to remedy the situation, but the remedies found are not always properly thought out, and some

may even lead to further difficulties. To take just one example: You are all aware of the effort now being made to unite steel interests in Germany, Belgium, France and Luxemburg. I am among those who approve and heartily commend such efforts, but, unless they form part of a general plan and include as many countries as possible, they will immediately give rise to alarm. One of our colleagues, whose name I shall not mention, but who does not belong to any of the countries to which I have just referred, confided his fears to me. He said: "Are we to be left out of this steel ring?"

If, on the other hand, the Economic Conference had been convened, if it had formulated rules which would have made it possible to include more countries in rings of this description, if at the same time it had framed protective regulations ensuring State supervision, it would assuredly have done useful work and made a solid contribution towards the solution of the great problem of economic reconstruction.

There is a danger that, while we are still talking, timid and inadequate solutions, if I may repeat the term I used just now, may be attempted which will only serve to aggravate the situation which we desire to remedy.

There is another point. We were witnesses here very recently of an unforgettable event. But the peace for which we are working rests, we fully realise, upon insecure foundations. We have among us many valiant workers who are determined to consolidate that peace, but the Economic Conference would prove a most valuable adjunct in our task.

I pointed out last year that, if you are looking for the causes of past wars, their true origin will be found in the economic field; and, as M. Scialoja said, legal formulas alone are not sufficient to banish the spectre of war. We must seek out its causes, strike at the very root of the evil and endeavour to discover a permanent remedy.

In his eloquent speech a few days ago, M. Stresemann sketched out a general plan. He said: "We see how economic life is overleaping the old national boundaries and creating new forms of international co-operation." And he added: "We shall not obtain that end by erecting barriers between the countries."

I need not say that I agree with M. Stresemann and yet, in the midst of these discussions, we are daily raising up fresh barriers against one another. Is this logical?

I therefore ask you — if I may revert to the view that a solution of our present economic difficulties will promote the cause of peace — whether it will be possible to break down the barriers between nation and nation until a feeling of greater security has been created between them?

We are faced, then, with the conclusion that the solution of economic problems must promote security, and that security, if established, would prove an invaluable factor in the solution of economic problems.

At our next meeting — in all probability tomorrow — the Assembly will be asked to discuss the question of disarmament and to reconsider the great problem of security, so that this is a most appropriate moment for urging that the Assembly should also take steps to solve the economic problem; otherwise, all our efforts are doomed to failure.

I ask you, therefore, to approve, in the spirit in which it is intended, the very moderate resolution now submitted to you by the Second Committee. I would ask you, above all, not to lose sight of the great aim which we have in view. We are all agreed, as M. Briand said, that the time for bloodshed is

past — you all applauded him. There must be no drawing back. We must have courage to engage frankly, resolutely, loyally and confidently in combating the dangers which now beset the world. That is the great task to which you are called. The nations are looking to you for courage and determination.

The President :

Translation : Baron von Rheinbaden, delegate of Germany, will address the Assembly.

Baron von Rheinbaden (Germany) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Before proceeding, as delegate of Germany, to explain our views on the International Economic Conference, which we have already discussed in Committee, I will venture, with your permission, to make a few observations of a general character.

When, last autumn, the Assembly adopted the suggestion put forward by M. Loucheur, delegate of France (who is to-day acting as Rapporteur), and decided to convene an International Economic Conference, Germany was not a Member of the League and, in consequence, could not give her co-operation in regard to that decision.

Even at that time, however, the Rapporteur made it clear that an International Economic Conference without the participation of Germany could only achieve partial success. To-day, for the first time, Germany can put before this Assembly her views on the Conference, and I will take this occasion to say that my country fully appreciates the noble principles and lofty ideals invoked by the Rapporteur when submitting his resolution.

The world-war gave a rude shock to the economic relationships which previously existed between the different States. In a number of countries it has called into being industries which in ordinary times would never have seen the light and, indeed, may not survive the restoration of normal conditions. Throughout a large part of the world the war has destroyed the purchasing-power of the masses. Export and import prohibitions and State intervention have diverted the normal current of economic life. Further, the increase in the number of frontiers and the re-establishment of great Customs barriers have led to a critical situation in the economic field and, as regards social conditions, have resulted in unemployment on an unprecedented scale.

Those countries in which the situation I have briefly outlined is still obscured by exchange fluctuations are endeavouring to reconstruct their economic life and to stabilise their exchanges ; but they again are faced with the problem of stabilisation and its social consequences. The only escape from the disastrous effects of the war, from the endeavour to apply the old principles to a situation to which they are no longer suited, is to educate international public opinion in the ways and means of bringing order out of the present chaos. Everywhere there are signs that this fact is beginning to be realised. An improvement in the means of communication and in modern technical methods for which mass distribution is essential has resulted in a general demand for the formation of large economic territorial units, undivided by Customs or other State-erected barriers.

On the other hand, it is sometimes said that such a territorial reorganisation and, in general, any international redistribution of labour would result in the collapse of existing undertakings and would increase unemployment.

A clear understanding of the special character of the age is an essential pre-condition of any epoch-

making change, and the Economic Conference is intended to bring about a more speedy realisation of the facts.

Allow me to say a few words on various matters of detail with which the Second Committee dealt. We, too, think that the Preparatory Committee should make certain questions of principle the main pivot of the Conference. I have already indicated the line we intend to take in this matter.

We also think that the Conference should not be confined to general principles. We must learn how to progress from one stage to another with a minimum of loss to the economic life of the various nations. As an example of this method, international agreements might be concluded covering the various aspects of international economics with reference to production and consumption. These agreements might pave the way for, and place on a practical footing, some kind of international distribution of labour. In this connection I would mention that, in the past few weeks, an agreement has been reached between the metallurgical industries of Germany, France and Luxemburg. It is hoped, too, that the Belgian industry will also shortly become a party to this agreement. Such agreements are not directed against the general interest ; this is clear from the fact that they were not concluded until the engineering industries had first been consulted.

The question of the composition of the Economic Conference was considered at length by the Committee. We agree that the Governments should have a considerable say in this matter, and should be given the task of selecting experts of world-wide repute. There is no doubt that public opinion in the various countries will ensure that only the best qualified persons will be selected. But these experts should also be free to express their opinions without being bound by the instructions of their Governments. Only in this way can their abilities be utilised to the full.

The actual date of the Conference necessarily depends on the progress made in the preparatory work, and should, therefore, be left to the Preparatory Committee, which enjoys our full confidence, and in whose work we have already had the opportunity of co-operating. The economic situation of the world, as I have just described it, requires that we should expedite not only the holding of the Conference itself and the decisions which it will take, but also, and more especially, the practical effect to be given to those decisions. The question of the best method of putting these decisions into practice will be one of the most important matters which the Conference will have to study.

The profound attention which this august Assembly is devoting to the matter of the Economic Conference and the very lucid account which the Rapporteur has given of the task before it will certainly do much to strengthen the confidence of the world, on which the outcome of the Conference will ultimately depend, and will also give public opinion in the various countries the weight which is the *sine qua non* of success.

The President :

Translation : M. Adelswärd, delegate of Sweden, will address the Assembly.

M. Adelswärd (Sweden) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — During the Second Committee's discussion of this subject, which lasted for more than two days, I objected to the proposal, but this was not because I was opposed to the report which has just been

read. On the contrary, I congratulate M. Loucheur on his admirable work. My objection does not apply to the actual resolution now before you or its contents but rather to what it does not contain.

Of the three questions discussed by the Committee — the composition, the programme and the date of the Economic Conference — only one — the date — is dealt with in the resolution, and even on that subject all that has been done is to propose a recommendation by the Assembly that the Economic Conference should be convened as soon as possible. You are not even asked to recommend that the Conference should be held during the coming year. That proposal might perhaps have been dangerous, though for my part I cannot conceive why. Whatever the reason may be, I was very pleased to hear M. Loucheur himself express a wish that the Conference should be called as early as next spring.

As regards the programme of the Conference, the resolution has nothing to say on the matter, but the report proposes that only a small number of essential questions should be examined. Now, I believe that economists, big financiers and captains of industry throughout practically the whole world are all beginning to realise that the economic disease from which Europe is suffering is largely due to the existence of frontier barriers, and they seem to agree that the best remedy would be gradually to throw open these frontiers to free intercourse. That being so, I think the report should have contained some reference to this great truth; in this way the subject would have been brought to the notice of the whole world, which ought to have its eyes opened to the facts as soon as possible.

Is it not true of this question, as of all others, that public opinion is supreme? We have often said, and we all believe, that no great problem can be solved unless public interest has first been aroused and public opinion won over. That is one reason why I could have wished that the proposed resolution had been more definite and explicit. We must maintain and, above all, we must strengthen the prestige and authority of the League, but we shall never succeed in doing so by means of resolutions such as that now before us.

The President :

Translation : If nobody else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution of the Second Committee, which reads as follows :

The Assembly notes that the Council has given effect to its decision of December 15th, 1925, by constituting a Preparatory Committee for the Economic Conference.

It realises that the general economic situation of the world calls more imperiously than ever for an effort towards international co-operation and makes it yet more necessary that the Economic Conference should be held.

The Assembly therefore hopes that the Committee will actively push forward its work, so as to enable the Economic Conference to be convened as soon as possible.

The resolution was adopted.

46. — TRAFFIC IN OPIUM AND OTHER DANGEROUS DRUGS: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the report of the Fifth Committee on the Traffic

in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs (Annex 5, document A.74.1926.XI).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Veverka, Rapporteur, and M. Mensdorff-Pouilly-Dietrichstein, Chairman, of the Fifth Committee, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Veverka, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Veverka (Czechoslovakia), Rapporteur :

Translation : In submitting to the Assembly the report on the Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs adopted as the outcome of the work done by the Advisory Committee during the current year, I have perhaps little to add to what I said last year, but I shall certainly have to repeat many of the points to which I drew attention then. The only method by which we can pave the way for the solution of questions so important as these is to build up a solid body of public opinion, a *communis opinio* of the nations.

The steady output of literature on the subjects, the associations that are being formed in all parts of the world, the work of the Churches, and so forth, are proof of the close attention with which our work is being followed. We must bring the utmost zeal and devotion to our task if we are to cope with the grave and alarming situation existing to-day.

The Fifth Committee fully realised the seriousness of the position, and it is with great pleasure that I draw your attention to the unanimity with which it approved, in particular, the measures to counteract the illicit traffic, and strongly recommended the early ratification of the Geneva Convention, which still further strengthens the engagements entered into under the Hague Convention.

The same unanimity was shown as regards the continuance of the struggle against this ever-growing danger.

In this connection I would once more dwell on the immense responsibility we should incur if the remedies applied proved inadequate, or if we failed to erect in time the barriers that are needed to save mankind from the destructive flood of opium and drugs.

There is one fact which, to my mind, increases that responsibility. Both the man engaged in mass-work under primitive labour conditions and the highly strung product of our times are so constituted mentally that they unhappily supply only too ready a market for the balance of the world's surplus production.

So much for the social side of the question. The man who lives by primitive daily labour takes opium; and the modern man, enervated and driven towards an exaggerated suggestive individualism — the sociological phenomenon of the age — craves for drugs.

The duty of the rulers of this world is to watch over suffering humanity until the day when the economic reformation of the one and the moral reformation of the other have been achieved.

It is in this spirit that I submit to the Assembly the resolution you have before you. It is my firm conviction and hope that the campaign against the scourge of opium and drugs will be carried on with ever-increasing energy and that this is the only war in which the League will never urge disarmament.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution of the Fifth Committee, which reads as follows :

1. *The Assembly adopts the report of the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs, together with the resolutions contained therein.*

2. *The Assembly, impressed by the report of the Advisory Committee as to the gravity of the present situation in regard to the illicit traffic and by the resolution of the Committee that it was extremely difficult to secure an effective control of the international traffic in opium and drugs until the Geneva Convention has been brought into operation, urges on the Governments of all States Members of the League to proceed to ratify or adhere to the Geneva Convention so that, if possible, the ratifications necessary to bring that Convention into force may be deposited with the Secretariat before the end of the year.*

The resolution was adopted.

47. — SUPERVISION OF THE PRIVATE MANUFACTURE OF ARMS AND AMMUNITION AND OF IMPLEMENTS OF WAR : REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Third Committee on the Supervision of the Private Manufacture of Arms and Ammunition and of Implements of War. (Annex 6, document A. 73. 1926. IX.)

(On the invitation of the President, M. Guerrero, Rapporteur, and M. Villegas, Chairman, of the Third Committee, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Guerrero (Salvador), Rapporteur, read his report.

The President :

Translation : M. Escalante, delegate of Venezuela, will address the Assembly.

M. Escalante (Venezuela) :

Translation : Mr. President — I have asked leave to speak in order to propose a slight amendment to the draft resolution submitted to you by the Third Committee. Our delegation has just been officially informed that the Government of Venezuela has ratified the Convention for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War. The instruments of ratification will be deposited shortly with the Secretariat of the League. This means that two ratifications have now been registered, those of France and Venezuela.

The second paragraph of the draft resolution now before us states that up to the present this Convention has been ratified by only one signatory country. May I propose to the Rapporteur, M. Guerrero, that the paragraph in question should be amended as follows :

“It notes that, up to the present, the Convention on the Supervision of the International Trade has been ratified by only two signatory countries, and hopes that the efforts which are being made to obtain the ratification of the principal producing countries will soon be successful.”

I regret that I was unable to submit this proposal during the discussion of the report in the Third Committee, as our delegation had not then received the official communication from the Venezuelan Government.

The President :

Translation : M. Mensdorff-Pouilly-Dietrichstein, first delegate of Austria, will address the Assembly.

M. Mensdorff-Pouilly-Dietrichstein (Austria) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Austria has consistently followed with the greatest interest the efforts of the League to bring about a general reduction of armaments.

My country, firmly convinced of the very special importance of the task entrusted to the League under the first paragraph of Article 8 of the Covenant, in the interests of world peace, and having itself adopted a consistently pacific policy, hails with profound satisfaction every step taken towards the aim so ardently desired by thousands of mankind.

M. Guerrero's very remarkable report brings out the conditions in which, in the Third Committee's opinion, the League should endeavour to settle the difficult question of the supervision of the private manufacture of arms.

The delegation of Austria — a country which is now disarmed and is particularly anxious to bring to an end a state of affairs that is a greater menace to us than to other countries, but is assuredly a menace to the peace of the world — confidently welcomes in this report certain indications which appear favourable to the accomplishment of the task we have so much at heart.

The first of these is the fact that the resolution for the convening of the Conference on the supervision of the private manufacture of arms, proposed by the French delegation — France being as yet the only country which with Venezuela has seen its way to ratify the Convention — is based upon the hope that the valuable work achieved by the Preparatory Committee of the Disarmament Conference will result in the convening of that Conference during the coming year.

Secondly, the information given in the Third Committee as regards the efforts made by Great Britain to bring about an agreement between producing States with a view to making it easier for them to ratify the Convention on the Supervision of the Trade in Arms justifies the hope that the General Conference will produce a solution for the question of the ratification of this Convention, together with that of the reduction of armaments, and will result in the adoption of a Convention for the supervision of private manufacture. It is this hope which reconciles us somewhat to the provisional postponement of the Conference for the supervision of private manufacture, a Conference which should, in the opinion of many, be held at an early date. We bow to the considerations which led the French delegate to look for a solution of this question to the general Disarmament Conference rather than to the special Conference hitherto contemplated, and which take into account the views expressed by the Council on September 4th and unanimously endorsed by the Third Committee.

I would venture, however, on behalf of Austria to draw special attention to the very definite alternative laid down in the last paragraph of the proposal now before us, namely, the convening of the general Disarmament Conference before the eighth ordinary session of the Assembly, or, alternatively, the convening by the Council, without further delay, of a special Conference for the supervision of private manufacture. In the event of its proving impossible again this year for the general Conference to engage upon its general task, the resulting disappointment would inevitably be increased by the failure of the League to make at least an attempt to arrive at partial solutions, which might still serve to pave the way for and facilitate the general reduction of armaments.

The President :

Translation : M. Guerrero, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Guerrero (Salvador), Rapporteur :

Translation : When drafting the report which I have just read, I was not aware that Venezuela had ratified the Convention for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms.

The Venezuelan delegate's statement has been duly noted and my report will be amended accordingly.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution of the Third Committee, which will be amended to read as follows :

The Assembly,

Once again draws attention to the close connection which exists between the question of the supervision of the private manufacture of arms and ammunition and of implements of war and the international trade in these articles ;

Notes that, up to the present, the Convention on the Supervision of the International Trade has been ratified by only two signatory countries, and hopes that the efforts which are being made to obtain the ratification of the principal producing countries will soon be successful ;

Notes the work which has been carried out under the direction of the Council with regard to the supervision of private manufacture ;

Declares that it is in agreement with the Council as regards the connection which exists between this question and the whole problem now being examined by the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference ;

Lays stress upon the necessity of concluding a Convention as soon as possible, though it recognises that priority must be accorded to work in connection with the Convention on Disarmament ;

And proposes that the Council should continue its enquiries regarding private manufacture, in order that these questions may be included in the programme of the Disarmament Conference, if this Conference can be convened before the eighth ordinary session of the Assembly, or, if that is impossible, in order that a special Conference may be convened as soon as possible to deal with the matter.

The resolution was adopted.

48. — TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION :

The President :

Translation : We will now pass to the last question on the agenda : the report on the Traffic in Women and Children (Annex 7, document A.75.1926.IV).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Nagai, Rapporteur, and M. Mensdorff-Pouilly-Dietrichstein, Chairman, of the Fifth Committee, took their places on the platform.

The President :

Translation : M. Nagai, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Nagai (Japan), Rapporteur :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The report which I am directed by the Fifth Committee to place before you this morning deals with the traffic in women and children. It is lamentable to reflect that this traffic has been left to take its course in the past. But no longer can such a blot, such an evil, be permitted to continue. It is a crime which is revolting to the conscience of the age in which we live and every strong and useful measure must be taken to eradicate it. In view, however, of its complex and delicate nature, it is necessary that we should go carefully to work in studying it and in considering what steps can be taken towards the end we have in view.

This august Assembly will note with satisfaction the progress that has been already made in that direction by the Advisory Committee; an account of that progress is given in the report of the Fifth Committee, which I will now read.

M. Nagai read his report.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution of the Fifth Committee, which reads as follows :

The Assembly approves the report of the Traffic in Women and Children Committee and the resolutions contained in that report.

The resolution was adopted.

49. — COST OF LIVING AT GENEVA: REFERENCE TO THE FOURTH COMMITTEE OF THE REPORT OF THE SALARIES ADJUSTMENT COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — The Secretary-General of the League has communicated to me a report adopted by the Council at its meeting yesterday regarding the report submitted by the Salaries Adjustment Committee on the cost of living in Geneva (document A.78.1926.X).

The Council's report, which has already been laid before the Assembly, states that the Salaries Adjustment Committee's report should be communicated direct to the Assembly.

I think that, in order to avoid loss of time, the Assembly will agree that the report of the Salaries Adjustment Committee should be referred without

Further formality to the Fourth Committee, since the Assembly itself cannot take any decision on the conclusions of the report until the latter has first been studied by the proper Committee.

If there are no observations, I shall regard my suggestion as adopted, and the report will at once be communicated to the Fourth Committee. *(Agreed.)*

50. — QUESTION OF THE EXTENSION TO OTHER GROUPS OF REFUGEES OF THE MEASURES OF ASSISTANCE TAKEN FOR RUSSIAN AND ARMENIAN REFUGEES : REFERENCE TO THE AGENDA COMMITTEE OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE BELGIAN DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : The Belgian delegation has submitted to to-day's meeting of the Assembly the following draft resolution :

"The Assembly invites the Council to request the High Commissioner for Refugees and the

International Labour Organisation to consider how far the measures taken to give protection to, to provide employment for and, to afford relief to Russian and Armenian refugees can be extended to other categories of refugees."

In order to avoid loss of time I will ask the Assembly to authorise me to communicate this draft resolution direct to the Agenda Committee. If the latter considers that it should be sent to a Committee, I would ask to be permitted to take this action without further delay.

If there is no objection, I shall regard this proposal as adopted. *(Adopted.)*

The President :

Translation : The next meeting of the Assembly will take place on Thursday, September 23rd, at 10.15 a.m.

Does anyone else wish to speak ?

The meeting is adjourned.

The Assembly rose at 1.10 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE
SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY
OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FOURTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23rd, 1926, AT 10.15 A.M.

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51. — FACILITIES FOR JOURNALISTS WHO ATTEND THE MEETINGS OF THE LEAGUE AT GENEVA: DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE CHILIAN DELEGATION; REFERENCE TO THE AGENDA COMMITTEE.

The President:

Translation: M. Quezada, delegate of Chile, will address the Assembly.

M. Quezada (Chile):

Translation: Mr President, ladies and gentlemen — The Chilian delegation had the honour at the last ordinary session of the Assembly to propose and secure the adoption of a resolution recommending the convening of an International Press Conference to consider how it might be possible to assist in the transmission of news, thereby helping to reduce the risks of international misunderstanding by improving international relations, in view of the fact that this is one of the most effective means of directing the public opinion of the world towards moral disarmament. Useful preparatory work has already been done in improving the facilities granted to the Press.

A Committee of News Agencies met last month at Geneva, and very important and encouraging results were obtained.

We have no doubt that this work will be continued and that a meeting of Press experts might be held later on, as contemplated in the resolutions of the Council and of the Assembly.

The International Committee of Journalists accredited to Geneva might form the nucleus of the future committee of experts proposed in the Chilian scheme. If we begin by granting its members special facilities, the success of the scheme will be materially promoted.

Our idea of these formalities would be a kind of official recognition of journalists' cards. These would bear the holder's name and photograph and a recommendation, signed by the Secretary-General, which would enable the holder to obtain all assistance from Secretariat officials.

These cards have been of great utility to journalists, particularly in assisting them to cross frontiers. We know that the Association is most careful only to admit as members journalists of established reputation who are actually engaged in their profession. It has to-day 160 members representing the Press of twenty-five different countries; these representatives come regularly to Geneva to attend meetings of the League. Most of them have to cross a number of frontiers several times a year.

Supervision would be necessary, of course, and for this purpose the Association would have to forward copies of these cards to the various Foreign Ministries. I understand that it would be prepared to do this.

In view of the considerations which I have briefly stated, I venture to submit to the Assembly the following draft resolution:

"The Assembly of the League of Nations, with a view to facilitating the work of journalists who attend the meetings of the League at Geneva, recommends the Governments to consider the possibility of granting to bearers of identity cards issued by the International Association

of Journalists accredited to the League of Nations all possible facilities which will assist them to cross frontiers in the fulfilment of their professional duties."

The President :

Translation : M. de Jouvenel, delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. de Jouvenel (France) :

Translation : The French delegation strongly supports the resolution submitted by the Chilean delegate.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly is asked to consider a draft resolution, which has just been read and which will be printed and distributed to the delegations.

To avoid loss of time, I propose that the Assembly should at once decide to refer this draft resolution to the Agenda Committee. Should the Agenda Committee decide to refer the proposal to one of the Committees, I will ask for the Assembly's authority to forward it to the Committee in question without further formality, in order that it may proceed with its discussion of the proposal. (*Agreed.*)

52. — RATIFICATION OF AGREEMENTS AND CONVENTIONS CONCLUDED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS : RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE SIXTH COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the resolution proposed by the Sixth Committee concerning the ratification of Agreements and Conventions concluded under the auspices of the League of Nations.

(*On the invitation of the President, Viscount Cecil, Rapporteur, and M. de Brouckère, Chairman, of the Sixth Committee, took their places on the platform.*)

The President :

Translation : Viscount Cecil, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Viscount Cecil of Chelwood (British Empire), Rapporteur :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Assembly will remember that I had the honour of laying before it a proposal the purpose of which was to secure, or to attempt to secure, the more rapid ratification of Conventions concluded under the auspices of the League of Nations. I proposed that the Council should be asked to appoint a Committee to see what could be done on the matter. My proposal was, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, referred to the Sixth Committee, and was very carefully considered, first by that Committee as a whole and afterwards by a small Sub-Committee.

In the circumstances, the Sub-Committee did not consider it worth while to ask for a fresh examination of the question by a Committee of the Council. It took some trouble to ascertain the actual state of affairs at the present time, and also to compare our procedure with that of the International Labour Organisation.

I do not know that we found out anything very new about the state of affairs here. I had already laid before the Assembly the facts which, indeed, are to be found in documents distributed to the Assembly. Everyone was agreed, both in the Sub-Committee and in the Committee itself, that some effort should be made to expedite the ratification of Conventions. The representative of the International Labour Office told us of the procedure adopted there. I need not recount it to this Assembly. In many respects that organisation is able to proceed more rapidly, or perhaps at any rate with fewer formalities, than we are. Its representative also showed us a very interesting form of diagrammatic report indicating the progress made in the ratification of the various Conventions concluded under its auspices, a report which is issued by the Office every month. One single page shows exactly the state of affairs. I think that all the members of the Sub-Committee were impressed with the technical nature of that report.

The representative of the International Labour Office also described to us the more elastic procedure which it was possible for that organisation to adopt in view of the provisions of the Treaty under which it exists. We felt that it was not possible for us to recommend that any drastic alteration should be made in our procedure. Such action could only be taken after a very careful discussion, and with the assistance and support of all the Members of the Assembly. Nor were we quite satisfied that even if such changes were made we should effect a material improvement in the rapidity of the procedure.

Nor did we think, for the reasons which I have already given, that it was well, at any rate at present, to ask the Council to appoint a Standing Committee to deal with this matter. We considered that it would be better at first merely to suggest that the Council should consider, at least every six months, the situation as regards the various Conventions signed or concluded under the auspices of the League, and should consider carefully every six months what steps, if any, ought to be taken to hasten the ratification of those Conventions. It is evident that the Council might decide to communicate directly with the Governments, asking for information concerning the difficulty in the way of ratification, or to take other steps which it might think fit in respect of each Convention.

The Sub-Committee — and the Sixth Committee agreed with it — thought that it would be better to leave a great deal of liberty of action to the Council in this matter, and all that we propose at present is that the Council of the League should be invited to ask for a report every six months on the progress of ratification and to consider methods for securing the more rapid bringing into force of the agreements and conventions.

I was particularly authorised to say that this must be regarded as an experimental measure; I hope that the Assembly will keep very careful watch over this matter, and if next year it is found that there has been no improvement, it will be for the Assembly to consider what further action could be taken. Meanwhile, I may perhaps be allowed to make an appeal to my colleagues to use their influence with their respective Governments — as I certainly will do with mine — to secure more rapid ratification of the agreements which the League has either authorised or supervised in connection with these very important international matters.

I beg to ask the Assembly to adopt the resolution proposed by the Sixth Committee.

The President :

Translation : M. Bastid, delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. Bastid (France) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I have the honour to state that the French delegation fully concurs in the proposal which Viscount Cecil originated, and for which he has acted as Rapporteur. We do so, firstly, out of deference to the eminent delegate of the British Empire and, secondly, on grounds of principle.

We all know Viscount Cecil's chivalrous, almost religious, devotion to the League. We can all recall to mind his generous and efficacious initiative in countless circumstances, and we should be loth to let him feel himself a solitary champion of the League's cause.

There is, however, another aspect of the matter to be considered. France has always deplored the fact — and her actions have been consistent with her words — that the decisions passed at Geneva in matters of minor importance, and still more in matters of major importance, have not invariably been followed by tangible results. This city must not be allowed to stand as an oasis of faith in the midst of a desert of hesitation and doubt. The effect and influence of our acts here must, if necessary, overcome Governmental inertia. We can no longer tolerate two diplomacies pursuing a parallel course : the new diplomacy of Geneva, which works in a new spirit and a purer atmosphere, and the old diplomacy which, it would seem, has survived by some inexplicable paradox of history.

The facts, moreover, are arguments in themselves. The continual progress made by the League, the services it has rendered and the services it has endeavoured to render are eloquent pleas in its favour.

The measures agreed to by the Governments here, in an atmosphere in which the aspirations of the world converge, in which we hear the full and splendid harmony of the voices of the nations, must not be subsequently exposed to the risks of obstruction or delay. We are convinced that it will not be so, and France desires, in supporting Viscount Cecil's proposal, to reaffirm the unity and consistent purpose of her foreign policy.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution of the Sixth Committee, which reads as follows¹ :

The Assembly,

Observing with regret that many conventions and agreements concluded under the auspices of the League of Nations have remained ineffective, or have only come into force after undue delay owing to the difficulty experienced in securing a sufficient number of ratifications by the signatories :

Desires to call the attention of the Governments of all States Members of the League to the necessity for taking all measures in their power to facilitate and expedite the ratification in all cases of conventions and agreements signed in their name ;

And decides to invite the Council of the League to call for a report every six months on the progress of ratification and to consider methods for securing the more rapid bringing into force of these agreements and conventions.

The resolution was adopted.

¹ Document A.83.1926.

53. — WORK OF THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION FOR THE DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE: REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion on the report of the Third Committee on the work of the Preparatory Committee for the Disarmament Conference. (Annex 8. Document A. 93. 1926. IX.)

(On the invitation of the President, M. Paul-Boncour, Rapporteur, and M. Villegas, Chairman, of the Third Committee, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Paul-Boncour will address the Assembly.

M. Paul-Boncour (France), Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Deep emotions, legitimate emotions, have swept over this Assembly, but the League would be neglectful of its duty and the objects for which it was created if it remained content with outbursts of this kind, which, however far-reaching in their effects, are merely illustrative — though supremely illustrative — of its progress, if, strengthened by the addition to its numbers and buoyed up by these very emotions, it failed to benefit thereby, to further that practical work which constitutes its *raison d'être* and is, as it were, the true condition of its permanence. By a fortunate chance we have had to deal at two consecutive meetings with the two great tasks to which the League, fortified by the advent of its new Member, must henceforth devote itself unsparingly, until it has succeeded in concluding the international conventions which should be the practical outcome of its efforts. One of those tasks is to convene the Economic Conference, which is destined to mark a further stage in the League's progress, its purpose being to seek out the deep-rooted causes and possibilities of war, to discover international regulations for the production and distribution of wealth, for the allocation of raw materials, and for the whole question of migration, so as to ensure that what are sometimes vital necessities shall be obtained here by common consent and not by victory in the field. The other task is the task summed up by the hopes of mankind in one comprehensive word — disarmament, but more cautiously defined by the Covenant as the limitation and reduction of armaments.

This is not merely one of the objects of the League ; it is, as it were, the woof that supports the whole fabric. It has its origin and its basis which are laid down by the terms of the Covenant. Compare Article 8 of the Covenant and the Preamble to Part V of the Peace Treaties and you will see that it forms part of these Treaties themselves. None of you will be surprised that the representative of France should appeal to these Treaties, for he is in duty bound to refer to them. This matter, I repeat, forms the very basis of the League. The special limitations imposed on certain countries are prescribed solely as the pre-condition of the reduction of armaments that is to follow.

If at each successive stage on the way towards this goal the road has seemed to stop, has seemed longer than we thought, these apparent and temporary checks should not serve as a test of the success of our best work. Our best work has been achieved solely by the measure of our anxiety

for the limitation and general reduction of armaments, by the sustained effort, in strict adherence to the Covenant, to combine the limitation and general reduction of armaments with the general conditions of security. The Treaty of Mutual Assistance and the Protocol were discussed solely in the light of this final goal.

I will not refer again to these various stages on the road: I will begin at the stage on which you are asked to give your opinion to-day in the light of the results which have been reached and which the Third Committee asks you to note as a starting-point for the next stage. The extent of that next stage the Committee has endeavoured to define. You will remember the feeling of perplexity, uncertainty and discouragement which marked the opening of the sixth ordinary session of the Assembly last year. Our path was, if I may say so, strewn with wreckage. The Protocol, which had been so conscientiously debated by the representatives of every nation during the fifth ordinary session of the Assembly, and had raised so many hopes, had not been ratified by certain of the Powers. The number of these Powers and, in particular, their legitimate importance in the world made it impossible, without their ratification, to bring the Protocol into force.

With the failure of the Protocol the chancelleries appeared to be bending their thoughts once again towards the idea of separate agreements, but this reminder of memories too recent to be buried aroused anxiety among many members of the Assembly.

First the Third Committee and then the Assembly performed an act which is the basis of all that is great in man: namely, an act of faith. We perform this act when, by a spiritual effort, we transcend, without forgetting, the realities of the moment.

On the assurance given by the representative of the British Empire, Sir Austen Chamberlain, and by myself on behalf of France, the Assembly performed this act of faith. It undertook to believe that these agreements would not be a contravention of the principles which it had so long debated, and which were simply a development of the Covenant. It undertook to believe that they would signify the full application to a particularly susceptible spot in Europe of the principles discussed by the Assembly.

As it was realised that the work would be protracted, that the consideration of technical matters, however irksome at times, would be the indispensable prelude to discussions among statesmen, the Third Committee and the Assembly proposed that this work should be put in hand at once, without even waiting to learn the results of the conversations which the diplomats of Europe were going to hold in a certain town not far from Geneva.

Events have justified this act of faith. The Locarno Agreements, as you know, are not a revival of the old diplomacy, of those old arrangements which, always defensive in appearance, always bare, as it were, a sharp point of offence directed against one or other of the groups concerned.

The Locarno Agreements are a reaffirmation and not a denial of the principles of the Protocol. This fact the Third Committee, in agreement with the First, will — in a very notable report, to be expounded, I believe, by M. Markovitch — ask you to note. The Agreements recognise the arrangement whereby the organisation of peace will henceforth depend, not on special conventions between two or more States, but on agreements based on arbitration. Sanctioned by this guarantee, the Locarno Agreements appear in their true light as a part of the Protocol which has been employed

to meet certain risks that seemed particularly threatening.

They justify the arguments I adduced last year. They even prove the truth of the simile I used when I likened the stream of life to the stream of a river, the river may refuse to follow the ideal course prescribed by the mind of man, and the reflection may be broken by the passing waves of the river, but in the end its outlines are recomposed intact and meet to form again the perfect picture.

Other agreements have been made and old agreements remodelled in the light of these principles. Doubtless M. Markovitch will tell you to-morrow that the Third Committee is almost perturbed by the multiplicity of these agreements. He will probably propose to the Assembly to consider ways and means of examining the contents of these treaties, which are submitted each year under different titles to the League for registration. I will not detain you with this part of our work: it will be expounded to-morrow.

I may affirm that those States which stood aside from the Locarno Agreements have endeavoured to solve the problem of security on the basis of arbitration sanctioned by the guarantee on which the Protocol is founded. In relation, therefore, to some of the more acute problems of Europe, if not, alas! to all, the Covenant has been amplified by these special agreements in a manner determining the essential objects of the Treaty of Mutual Assistance and of the Protocol, and hence the Third Committee notes that the political conditions laid down in Article 8 of the Covenant for the Reduction and General Limitation of Armaments have, in part at any rate, been fulfilled. Consequently, as soon as the technical work to which I have referred has been completed, it will be possible, on the decision of the Council — for this, of course, is our constitutional practice — to convene the Conference on the reduction and limitation of armaments.

As a result of the action taken by the Council, as a result of the decision of the Assembly, the Conference will no longer find it necessary to undertake certain work. The broad lines for a questionnaire have been worked out and the questionnaire has been submitted to the Preparatory Commission and modified and developed by it. This Committee subsequently referred these questions in their entirety to the technical, military and economic organisations. When, in the Third Committee, the delegate of the Netherlands, who is also Chairman of the Preparatory Commission, expounded and amplified the written report supplied to us by the Secretariat, we thought — with the caution required by any prediction — that the work was so far advanced that its final completion might be expected in the months following the present session of the Assembly.

The zeal with which this work has been consistently conducted justifies me in paying a public tribute to the body of experts who for some months past have exerted their best endeavours here, in order to furnish you with the material without which a Conference for the limitation and reduction of armaments would be impossible or would be doomed to certain failure. If we pursue the prudent course of allowing this work to be completed, within a relatively short time, as we are assured it will be by the members of the Committee of experts — or those who have remained at Geneva and whose heart and soul are in their work — and if the Governments, whose experts have, I understand, kept them in touch with their proceedings, are notified in time for a Preparatory Commission to be convened at the beginning of next year, then there is every reason to hope that the Conference for the limitation

and reduction of armaments may be able to meet before the next ordinary session of the Assembly.

In this connection—I am not now speaking as Rapporteur, for the question has not yet been discussed by the Assembly; I am stating my personal opinion, or rather the opinion of my country—the interval which must elapse between the meeting of the Preparatory Commission and the convening of the Conference will obviously depend upon the view adopted as to the work of the Committee and of the Conference itself.

I personally do not think that the Preparatory Commission can conceivably take the place of the future Conference, as regards the actual work to be done. In my view, its duty is simply to draw up and define a programme, whereas the Conference, and the Conference alone, will be entitled to enlarge that programme and frame a Convention.

My reasons for this view are twofold. In the first place, certain nations are not represented on the Preparatory Commission, and, considering the vital interests involved, I doubt whether they would agree to any hard-and-fast arrangement being made before they themselves had had ample opportunity of expressing their opinions.

In the second place, let us try to imagine what will actually happen; let us try to picture the Conference actually seated round the Conference table. What will the Conference be? Will it be a Conference at which the League, acting on its own authority, is to determine the armaments of every nation? That is a sheer impossibility. It might have been possible, if we had taken our stand on a different plane, if we had conformed to the conception which M. Léon Bourgeois threw upon the Conference table at the Hôtel Crillon during the actual framing of the Covenant, the conception by which the League itself would be the sole depository of the international forces of the world.

It would have been possible under the Treaty of Mutual Assistance or the Protocol. These were based on the same conceptions as those I have mentioned—only each was more elastic than the last whereby the States would of course have kept their respective forces; but the League, in virtue of a general system of security designed to permit of rapid action to prevent or intervene in disputes, would be responsible for general security—and would assure it—since it would have at its disposal the land, sea and air forces determined beforehand by whichever of the two Conventions we had adopted—the Treaty of Mutual Assistance or the Protocol. The League would in that case have been justified in inverting the problem, as it were, and in laying down what armed forces should be allowed for each country, since the aggregate of these armed forces would constitute the instrument of security it was endeavouring to create. I am accusing no one; nothing is more futile than recrimination. I simply wish to put the balance-sheet in all its truth before you.

You will not misunderstand me when I say that the Covenant does undoubtedly constitute a very real guarantee of security; through the instrumentality of conciliation and arbitration it brings into the world a spirit hitherto unknown.

At the same time, without those precise definitions of which we have been in search, there is no sure, no immediate guardian of international security, and each State must first decide what is needful to ensure security for itself.

A Conference for the limitation and general reduction of armaments, which, for the reasons I have indicated, would be perfectly feasible,

must therefore be regarded not as a Conference at which the international organisation will lay down the limitations and reductions to be imposed, but as one at which each country will propose such limitations and reductions as it thinks fit. The delegates will not merely sit round the Conference table and discuss general problems. Each one must state, with reference to the requirements of general security and any special conditions resulting from separate agreements, what he regards—in the well-chosen terms of Article 8 of the Covenant—as the lowest point consistent with national safety.

Each country will state its case and submit its proposals, and since, in my view, the first serious act of the Conference will be to receive these different contributions, matters cannot proceed very far until the Conference actually meets.

It is obvious that the States will not entrust confidential information of this nature to a Preparatory Commission the outcome of whose proceedings no one can yet foresee. Neither will they assume the grave responsibility of committing themselves until the Conference has met to discuss that information.

But there could be no Conference, there could be nothing but a registration of views, if these concrete proposals on which the success of the Conference depends were left in their original form. The whole value of the Conference will consist in an exchange of views and in the observations which the different countries will present as a result of the comparison of the various proposals with one another, a comparison which may, nay must, involve the amendment and, let us hope, the reduction of the proposals themselves. Friendly and courteous discussions will be held between the delegates, for they will be men who have agreed to meet together in the cause of peace.

But if these discussions are to be of any value, if they are to bear fruit, the subject must be clearly defined beforehand.

Suppose some countries cited, in support of their claims, their population, or the fact that they had no natural physical frontiers, or the difficulties of mobilisation, or any other factor. Consider the position in which the Conference would be placed if, in order to assess these conflicting claims, it were obliged to start the technical investigations on which our special Committees are now engaged. Now do you realise the importance of those investigations? Their value lies first and foremost in the fact that they are a means of testing those general arguments which may be advanced in support of the proposals which will make a Conference on the reduction and limitation of armaments a necessity.

Now do you realise why, despite the inevitable delays so often misunderstood by an ill-informed public, the work which is being done by the committees of experts is the *sine qua non* of what I might call—to use an expression which is somewhat feeble in comparison with the enormous interests at stake—a useful and profitable conversation between the States taking part in the Conference?

If we adopt this view of the matter—and I for my part can adopt no other—I cannot conceive of a conference for the limitation and reduction of armaments resulting in a simple enunciation of general principles or—to take the opposite view—a mathematical scale to be uniformly applied irrespective of differences of situation.

If you view the Conference as I do, what will be its result? And why are we so emphatic

in urging that it should meet at the earliest possible date? Because of Article 8 of the Covenant. The existence of Article 8 would make an international Convention for the reduction and limitation of armaments an immense step forward in itself, even if—to take the lowest possible case in order to prevent any chance of disappointment—even if that Convention represented no more than the stabilisation and acceptance of the *status quo*—and it may represent something more, as I shall shortly show—even if it involved no reduction from present conditions, even if, in conformity with Article 8, it were restricted to determining that reduction.

The more one studies the Covenant, the more grateful one feels to those who, when the war was barely over, before the clash of hatred had died down, or the wounds of battle been healed, conceived a scheme at once so vast and so precise, so lofty and so practical, assuredly the best, perhaps the only scheme ever attempted since the beginning of the world for the organisation of peace.

Consider the implications of Article 8 and you will realise the importance of a Conference for the limitation and reduction of armaments, conceived, even on the smallest possible scale, as the first stage so prudently recommended by your Third Committee, which knows that the work of disarmament will not be achieved in a night, but is a continuous onward movement through a series of stages to be covered before the actual goal is reached.

Even within these narrow bounds, Article 8 implies that States will in future be unable to exceed the figures they have accepted in the Convention, save with the consent of the Council of the League.

This means the complete cessation of the race for armaments, which, failing an international Convention, will certainly be resumed—make no mistake about it—as soon as the memories of the war have faded from men's minds and the temptation arises, with improved financial conditions, to employ our principal resources in the work of destruction.

With an international Convention sanctioned by Article 8, the race for armaments becomes an impossibility. There is another point. This Convention, I need hardly say—it is clear from my report and from the Third Committee's proposals now before you—can only apply to a limited period, serving as an experimental period with the object, so to speak, of reassuring the States and inducing them to enter upon the second stage, to advance further and with greater boldness than in the first. During the varying periods of time fixed for the execution of the different provisions of the Convention, the States will be bound, should they desire to amend it, to come back and put their case before the international organisation itself. The armaments charter will thus be transferred from the national to the international plane.

But this fact will, I imagine, involve fresh duties for the League. And here I approach a problem to which I am impelled by an elementary sense of loyalty to refer, for it is a problem which I personally raised—or, to be more exact, for France has well weighed her responsibilities—a problem which I raised on behalf of the country I represent, a problem which, I am aware, is giving rise in the Preparatory Commission, and will give rise at the Conference, to serious differences of opinion.

Let me explain. I cannot imagine that any international Convention—I must emphasise this point—the scope of which was laid down in accordance with Article 8 of the Covenant, in the manner I have just indicated, would fail to include

provision for a suitable measure of international control. If the States are in truth required under the terms of Article 8 to come before the League for power to alter a Convention to which they have set their names, I, fail, to see how the League could withhold that power from them until it had determined whether the arguments adduced were sound. I fail to see how, without the power of supervisory control, the League could ascertain—until it had decided upon some sort of procedure for ascertaining the truth—whether the arguments adduced were sound, whether real danger were near at hand, or whether one of the signatories had not, by secret increases of armaments, justified the purpose of the application made by another State in all singleness of mind.

In the course of our discussions, my friend M. de Brouckère outlined a mode of procedure based on Articles 419 and 420 of the Labour clauses in the Peace Treaty. According to this proposal, the League could, upon receiving a complaint from any given State, decide to hold an enquiry into the grounds of the complaint. This is neither the time nor the place to go into the details of the proposed procedure. What I am attempting to do is to convince you of the probable results and importance of a Convention on the limitation and reduction of armaments. But, to my mind, the procedure indicated will never work, unless the League assumes—and I, personally, shall be delighted to see it assume—new responsibilities, unless it really undertakes the essential object for which it was created, namely, that, when confronted with the possibility of a threat of war, it should not wait until war has broken out, but should employ its good offices for the restoration of peace, when thus disturbed.

Further, I have based my argument upon the narrowest possible supposition—the supposition that the first Conference may be able to achieve no more than the stabilisation of the *status quo*. Even so, however, the result would be clear: the competition in armaments would be arrested and the League would be under an obligation to deal with threats of war and nip them in the bud. I believe that with this first stage—to judge by the present political situation and the existing condition of security resulting from the Covenant as a whole, vague though it be—I believe, I say, that a measure of reduction is practicable, for certain countries at any rate, provided that we are content to look for reduction only where it is practicable and susceptible of supervision; for I personally am unable to separate the idea of supervision from the idea of an international convention.

Let me explain what I mean by a reduction which is practicable and susceptible of supervision. I admire, I envy those for whom the problem of disarmament is obvious and simple. I envy them because, however great our wish to take our stand upon the international plane, we are still, and in all sincerity, actuated by motives of a national character. In our conception of the international plane we must still be governed by the reflexes to which we are predisposed by a sense of our country's real position.

I realise that disarmament appears simplicity itself to countries which are freed from the haunting fear of invasion by the wide expanse of the seas, by the peaceful course of their history or their geographical situation, remote from the natural roads of invasion. The other countries, those which have a different position on the map or a different history, hope never to repeat the experience of the invasions that, like the ebb and flow of a tide, have ravaged the principal European nations and poisoned the very life of their peoples.

If these countries are to come to the Conference with the freedom of mind and loyalty of heart that are the essential condition for the success of a congress of this kind, they must be certain that the problem has been considered in all its aspects — and not in order to make it yet more complex, but in order to head straight for those points that are susceptible of solution.

We, gentlemen, are not living in times when war is waged with the lives of others, as in the paintings of those old Dutch masters — those artists of the country which we asked to preside over our work for disarmament, because her proud warriors exist now only in her glorious history and in the genius of her painters. War is no longer waged as in the pictures of Van der Meulen, in which fashionably dressed gentlemen look on at the manoeuvres of armies of the strength of a modern division. If that were so, the question of a Disarmament Conference would probably never have arisen. It was the sense of immense suffering forced on public opinion in every country by the size of modern armies that induced the peoples to bring pressure to bear on their statesmen and to ponder the problem in search of a solution. Public opinion is our judge, public opinion will listen to no excuse for unpardonable delay.

To-day the position is changed. Countries now stake the whole of their existence in a war. They throw their entire resources into the scales. In the blood and mire of the trenches the men of three generations from every country stood shoulder to shoulder. Old men and young boys alike entered the fray. To maintain these enormous armies supplies and raw materials are required, and ships and railways to transport them. Battles that were won of old by the marching power of soldiers are now won by motor-cars and railway trains. Further, there would seem to be a law though we refuse to accept it as inevitable — whereby even the triumphs of man's genius, things that should be devoted solely to the purposes of life, are immediately usurped for the work of death. There is now not a single chemist working in his laboratory whose discoveries may not be utilised in the event of war. Even those who have, so to speak, endowed man with wings — man who seemed to have been created to walk the earth — have, when all is said and done, simply provided new instruments of destruction. How great, but how infinitely tragic, the gesture with which, but a few years before the war, an aged, white-robed man, with hand uplifted to Heaven, made the sign of benediction on the first aeroplane to fly above the gardens of the Vatican.

Well, since this is so, since in modern warfare a country's real power of aggression lies in the genius of its sons, the number of its railways, its economic products, factories and ships, this potential war strength — a term which it was my good or evil fortune to coin for it has earned for me much hostility in certain quarters — this potential war strength is a self-evident reality, a reality which cannot be disregarded when we study the problem of disarmament. When, therefore, we regard the question in all its component parts, are we forced in despair to the conclusion that the problem is insoluble? No, never!

The analysis carried out by our technical Commissions signifies two things. It signifies, first, that a Conference on the limitation and reduction of armaments would be impracticable without a League of Nations — a League resolved to achieve its task, a League consisting of nations determined to meet each and every undertaking to which they subscribed in signing the Covenant. The question of potential war strength, the analysis of all the different factors that at the present time go to

make up a country's power of aggression, will assuredly not complicate the problem so greatly as to render it insoluble. On the contrary, they will show that there is only one method of eliminating inequality as regards war resources, thereby enabling the nations to come to the Conference determined to make it a success. That method is to apply Article 16 of the Covenant, and nothing more. Article 16 in itself constitutes a definition of potential war strength. What is this obligation — for an obligation it is — that bids each and every Contracting State withhold all means of aid from the State guilty of aggression, that bids each and every Contracting State place the whole of its resources at the disposal of the State attacked, that requires all States whatsoever, if they are Members of the League, even though in no way engaged in the struggle, to enable the State attacked to obtain all it requires for its defence against the aggressor?

Although the international spirit is still, I am afraid, somewhat weak, because we do not yet quite realise that there is no justification at all for armed forces unless they are intended to be used some day against some State declared by the Court of Arbitration and the Council of the League to be an aggressor; although, too, the Covenant very wisely makes no provision for military, air and naval assistance except in the form of a recommendation, yet an obligation does exist: there is the obligation — and it is a very real one — to make recommendations in the event of a contingency actually arising.

Let it be clearly understood that we are going on as we began, that at each stage of disarmament we shall have to make fresh adjustments to improve the working of the Covenant and, more particularly, to increase the speed with which its provisions can be put into operation.

Yet another lesson emerges. It is the second important point in this analysis, which some have found over-complex, though this complexity and consequent slowness were unavoidable. This very complexity teaches us that if we really desire to arrive at a practical and at any rate partial solution of the problem we must attack all the elements of it that are capable of settlement. We must try to effect reductions wherever they are obviously needed, in whatever constitutes a permanent feature or can be definitely measured, or in whatever, by good fortune, can be shown to be a most serious menace to peace or to be most likely to prevent the League from playing its proper part.

Public opinion is not deceived. The public, with its common-sense view of things, sees eye to eye with the experts. The armaments we chiefly need to reduce are those which constitute national burdens; I refer to the armaments permanently maintained in peace-time — soldiers in barracks, warships in port or at sea, aeroplanes ready to pounce upon neighbouring countries. It is in connection with this burden of permanent peace-time armaments that the race in armaments exists.

These are the burdens which the public has in mind when it waits with impatience, but with hope, for the conclusion of our work. And it is not wrong, for with its common sense it sees clearly that these are the burdens which are crushing down the peoples, swelling budgets, sapping national vitality, using up labour and raw material for the work of death instead of for the work of life, which is so vital a necessity after all the suffering and death with which the world has been visited. These armaments, too, constitute the gravest danger to peace. Not that I accept the mistaken idea that disarmament is in itself an essential condition of peace. The essential condition of peace is security.

But it is equally certain that insecurity, with the competition in armaments which it entails, creates a situation which will eventually lead some nation to yield to temptation and fly to arms in an attempt to recover its expenditure and lighten its burdens. By throwing its peace-time forces into a neighbouring country within the space of a few hours there is a very real danger that that nation may forestall the League's action and so render it inoperative.

The Covenant exists. The moral obligations it involves cannot be denied, and neither can its political obligations. When we consider the safeguards it contains, the indispensable conditions it lays down, the rule of unanimity it enjoins, the serious nature of the action necessary to decide the grave question whether a given country shall be adjudged the aggressor, thereby calling down upon itself the reprobation of the whole world—when we consider all this, we cannot but realise that the operation of the Covenant is necessarily slow.

Let us be frank. Let us look facts in the face and so come to a better understanding of them. The *sine qua non*, the essential outcome of any Conference, is this: no nation in the world shall be permanently in a position to attack either on land, on sea or in the air, and so prevent the League from taking conciliatory action and carrying out its mission of arbitration and active intervention.

Such is in broad outline—though I apologise sincerely for having spoken at somewhat undue length—of my own conception of what a Conference on the limitation and reduction of armaments should be, and such, in my view, will be the outcome of its deliberations.

I think a picture such as that which I have delineated, though it may not perhaps be entirely accurate, was necessary, now that you are about to ratify—as I have no doubt you will do—the Third Committee's proposals; now that the hour of the Conference is drawing nigh, so that you may be able to obtain in advance some idea at any rate of what its nature will be. So will you see your hopes fulfilled, and you will also be spared disappointment.

Yet we must take heed. The hour is sounding, the time is ripe for us to take the first step, but I still emphasise—and public opinion must be made to realise the fact—that it is no more than a first step.

I repeat, the time is ripe to take this step, now that the League has happily been enlarged by the entry of Germany. It is ripe also because we have created the right moral atmosphere, which only those who were not here can deride. The time is ripe, because certain of the nations which are most deeply concerned in this question have now concluded special agreements defining the essential conditions of security.

We must not let this hour pass unheeded. I am confident that a Convention of some kind, however small its scope, will definitely be concluded to stop the race in armaments. I am sure of this, because I am equally apprehensive that, but for such a Convention, we shall quickly see the resumption of that race in armaments which has so grievously afflicted both Europe and the generation to which we belong, and which was once the nightmare of a whole continent for nearly fifty years.

When we have obtained fresh resources through the financial recovery for which we are striving, and towards which the Economic Conference will afford so valuable a contribution; when the vision of war, which still remains to blind even the closed eyes of those who have once seen it, begins to fade; when our generation has been

succeeded by a generation which has never experienced war, then the horrors of the battlefield will be no longer even a memory, and all that will be known of war will be its beauty and its heroism, recorded on the page of history and by the hand of art.

In conclusion, then, I repeat: the hour which is sounding to-day would have sounded in vain had we not firmly resolved to follow the way which has been opened to us, and we should see once again that which all of us here, I am firmly convinced, never wish to see again.

The President:

Translation: M. Villegas, first delegate of Chile, will address the Assembly.

M. Villegas (Chile):

Translation: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—On behalf of Chile I give my full support to the report before you and to the resolution submitted to the Assembly. I should be very glad to see the preparatory work for the Disarmament Conference hastened on, so that our hope that the Conference may meet before the next session of the Assembly may be realised.

We do not wish this because the question of the reduction of armaments is of direct or urgent importance to my country. It has often been said from this platform that the problem has not for us either the same aspects or the same acuteness as it has for Europe, and that we are not threatened with the perils of armed peace, since our armaments are not even sufficient for our own national security. The only question, therefore, that affects Chile and the other countries of our continent is the prevention of any possible race in armaments.

These different standards, due to the political, economic and geographical conditions of our country, which are so unlike those of Europe, point to the need for regional agreements as the medium for the solution of our own particular problems; this, indeed, was pointed out in the Preparatory Commission alike by the representatives of the Argentine, Brazil and Chile.

It would be quite wrong to suppose that these characteristics in any way lessen our interest in the solution of the general problem of disarmament, which is an indispensable condition for the maintenance of peace. Materially, the last war proved to us that an armed conflict brings disastrous consequences even to the most distant countries. Morally, the only reason for our presence here and for our sincere adherence to the League of Nations is our fervent desire to collaborate in the organisation of world peace.

My country has already given proof of this desire; in America, by submitting to arbitration all its international problems that have arisen in the last quarter of a century; here, by its co-operation in all the steps taken in the cause of peace, by the signature of the Protocol of 1924, and by its constant efforts to promote the universality of the League, for Chile is convinced that the increase of the League's power constitutes a guarantee for the future of international relations, of which it is the safeguard and should become the ideal embodiment.

During this seventh ordinary session of the Assembly the League has made an important step forward towards universality. Chile welcomed with enthusiasm the admission of Germany, which had been awaited so long, and she has no doubt of happy and beneficent consequences of this event. We are also watching attentively and, I venture to say, with optimism, the collaboration of the United States of America in the Preparatory Commission on Disarmament.

Though we harbour no illusions as to the complete co-operation of the United States of America in the League's work in the near future, we hope that a satisfactory solution will be found in respect of the reservations attaching to her signature of the Statute of the Court. They ear 1926 will then have been marked by two events of outstanding importance — the entrance of Germany into the League of Nations and the adhesion of the United States of America to the Permanent Court of International Justice.

We welcome with great satisfaction the increasing co-operation of the Argentine Republic with the League, for we attach great value to the assistance of this great nation, which is both a sister and a friend. At the International Labour Office, on its Governing Body, on the Preparatory Commission, and on the important Committee on the reorganisation of the Council, everywhere the Argentine has given evidence of its enlightened collaboration and the high qualifications of its representatives. All this encourages the hope that, when constitutional difficulties have been overcome, the Argentine will take the place belonging to a country which is one of the most progressive of our continent.

These happy events and hopes are, it is true, darkened by one poignant regret. No one can hide the loss we have sustained through the absence of two countries which have afforded us their generous and loyal collaboration since the birth of our institution. We deplore the absence of Spain — a European Power bound to us by ties of blood, culture and sincere affection. We dare to hope, so great is our desire, that she will once again take her seat among us.

My country has special reasons for giving particular expression on this occasion to the regret we feel at Brazil's decision. We respect her motives, but we are deprived of the valued collaboration of a great sister nation of our continent, united to my own country by a friendship that, throughout our history, has never failed.

I trust the Assembly will forgive me if I take this opportunity to express the very sincere wish of the Chilean delegation that the Council will be able to find means — in supervising the general interests of the League, and at a suitable moment — to satisfy Brazil's needs and enable her to resume her place in the League.

Chile, which is loyally attached to the ideals of the League and its work of peace, and has always fervently desired its universality, will feel profound joy when all the sister nations which are not represented or which have left us return and work with us again.

The President :

Translation : M. Comnène, delegate of Roumania, will address the Assembly.

M. Comnène (Roumania) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The work already done by the experts of Sub-Committee A of the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference, on which I have the honour to represent my country, constitutes a remarkable achievement. I might even say that the whole of military science has been passed in review, that every theory, every doctrine has been examined.

As the result of approximately one hundred and fifty meetings, an enormous wealth of knowledge has been acquired. Never, I believe, has a more scientific study been undertaken with

this ultimate object in view than the one the results of which will shortly be submitted to you.

I feel deeply distressed, therefore, when I hear criticisms levelled against this Sub-Committee or detect a sceptical and superior smile on the lips of many. We hear on every side that we are not progressing as quickly as we should.

Just imagine: for ten, for twenty thousand years, ever since the first ape-man made war on the second ape-man, who came to rob him of his prey, man has made war on man. We have behind us centuries upon centuries of what may be called the "increasing momentum" of war, ruins, death and suffering — and we expect in the course of a few weeks to find a solution for a problem of such vast dimensions! This cannot be.

Does this mean that we are authorised by the very immensity and complexity of the task before us to stand idle, to sign an open confession of failure? Do not misunderstand me.

No, gentlemen. When we signed the Covenant of the League, after those hours of terror through which we lived, we entered into solemn undertakings towards our own nations, towards our dead, towards our children. The nations are crying out for peace, they are waiting only for peace, and they realise that there can be no peace unless the first step, at all events, is taken to bring about disarmament.

Complete disarmament? No. They know that for generations yet this cannot come to pass; but they realise that something at least can and must be done. What that something is we must endeavour to determine in the Preparatory Commission. A vague, nebulous, faint and fugitive possibility is emerging to-day from the shadows, is assuming a definite outline and beginning to take shape, and soon, we are convinced, we shall be able to place it before you, tentatively, perhaps, but with the certainty that we have done all that mere human effort could achieve, and, as M. Paul-Boncour said just now, we have accomplished one stage in the onward movement.

This exhaustive work, the fruit of deep reflection and days of laborious endeavour on the part of indefatigable enthusiasts and idealists, will soon be in your hands. It constitutes a tangible, an incontestable achievement.

Away then with this paralysing scepticism! Away with this feverish impatience, this anxiety for haste even at the expense of thoroughness!

I venture to think that it would be wiser, as indeed the Roumanian delegation suggested in the Third Committee, to give no undertaking to finish our work by a definite date.

We know from experience that Conferences prepared with undue haste invariably end in failure. Failure may be permissible in any other matter, but failure in the matter of disarmament might have effects so tremendous as to jeopardise the very future of this great institution. We dare not run such a risk. We have no right to do so. Let us pursue our work unwearyingly, concentrating on the glorious ideal before us and inspired by our common belief in and devotion to the cause of peace.

The President :

Translation : The discussion on the report of the Third Committee will be continued to-morrow at 5 p.m.

The Assembly rose at 12.55 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FIFTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24th, 1926, AT 5 P.M.

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54. — GIFT OF THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT TO THE LIBRARY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS. INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT IN CHINA.

The President :

Translation : M. Chao-Hsin Chu, first delegate of China, will make a declaration to the Assembly.

M. Chao-Hsin Chu (China) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Acting under instructions received from Peking, and in the name of the Chinese delegation, I make the following declaration to the Assembly.

In the first place, I have pleasure in declaring that, on my recommendation and in conformity with the statement I made last May in the Committee on the Composition of the Council, the Chinese Government will present to the Library of the League of Nations a complete set of the Chinese Encyclopædia as soon as its reprinting is finished. We Chinese claim that this Encyclopædia is the largest of its kind in the world, and we are making this appropriate gift to the League for the purpose of international intellectual co-operation.

In the second place, I desire to state the facts with regard to an international incident which has just occurred in my country. According to the information received by the Chinese delegation, those facts can be summarised as follows.

On July 8th, August 2nd and 29th, several British merchant ships sailing under the names of *Tyenkong*, *Wanliu*, *Chaili*, sailed up the Yangtse at full speed. A number of native wooden ships and small boats were wrecked by these British merchant ships and over one hundred passengers, military officers and soldiers were drowned; goods and silver were also lost. When the Chinese authorities sent soldiers to make enquiry on board these British merchant ships, they were interfered with by a British cruiser which happened to be on the spot. Moreover, the British cruiser threatened

the villagers on both shores of the river with the points of its cannons. The Chinese authorities were obliged to detain the British merchant ships and took up the matter with the British Consul in Chungking.

Unfortunately, before this case was settled, a much more serious incident occurred. It was reported that a British gunboat arrived at Wanhsien on September 5th and opened fire on the gendarmerie in the town, killing over a hundred of them. Following this, other British cruisers used their big guns to bombard the town of Wanhsien. Over one thousand houses were destroyed and thousands of civilian lives were lost as the result of the bombardment. The Chinese soldiers were obliged to return the fire in self-defence.

My Government has also informed the Chinese delegation that instructions have been given to the local authorities to settle the matter peacefully if possible. Since this is such an extraordinarily serious incident of international importance which, if developed, would endanger the peace of the Far East, the Chinese delegation is instructed to make known these facts to the Assembly as a matter of record.

The President :

Translation : Viscount Cecil, delegate of the British Empire, will address the meeting.

Viscount Cecil of Chelwood (British Empire) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I have heard with some astonishment the statement which the Chinese delegate has thought it right to make from this tribune. He did not give me or my Government any kind of notice or intimation that he was going to raise this matter, or was going to make any such statement to the Assembly. I cannot but regret that this very strange method of procedure prevents me from replying in any detailed way to his remarks. I happen, however, to know sufficient about the facts, as reported to the British Government, to say at once that we do not in any way agree with the statement that the Chinese delegate has made, and that our view of the incident is entirely different from that which he has laid before the Assembly.

I am able to agree that the matter is the subject of negotiation in China, and it is to be hoped that a peaceful and friendly settlement will be reached. I cannot pretend to think that such a statement as that just made by the Chinese delegate is in any way likely to assist in obtaining a peaceful and friendly settlement of the question.

The President :

Translation : It is impossible to open a discussion on a question which is not on the agenda. I therefore close the present discussion.

55. — WORK OF THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION FOR THE DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE : CONCLUSION OF THE DISCUSSION ON THE REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the discussion of the report of the Third Committee regarding the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference.

(On the invitation of the President, M. Paul-Boncour, Rapporteur of the Third Committee, took his place on the platform.)

M. Quezada (Chile) :

Translation : Mr. President — M. Villegas, Chairman of the Third Committee, cannot be present at the meeting, as he has been obliged to leave Geneva. He therefore begs you to excuse him.

The President : Viscount Cecil, delegate of the British Empire, will address the meeting.

Viscount Cecil of Chelwood (British Empire) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — We were privileged yesterday to hear a very remarkable speech by M. Paul-Boncour on the subject of disarmament. It was a speech such as we have become accustomed to expect from that speaker ; that is to say, it was a finished and admirable oration, setting forth with great force the point of view which he holds.

Broadly speaking, it is a great satisfaction to me to know that I am in full agreement with what our Rapporteur has said. I could not help feeling that there were two of his auditors who must have heard that speech with great satisfaction. One was M. de Jouvenel, and the other myself. Some three or four years have passed since we were able to arrive at an agreement, which was sanctioned by this Assembly on certain broad principles, upon which it might be hoped successfully to base a policy of disarmament, and it is certainly a very great satisfaction to know that those broad principles, adhered to by M. Paul-Boncour, are now regarded as fundamental to any policy of disarmament which can hope to secure the approval of the nations.

It is now generally admitted that the limitation and reduction of armaments, as M. Paul-Boncour very properly preferred to put it, must go hand in hand with security ; that disarmament, if it is to be effective, must be general, that security may be reached either regionally or by general agreement and that, as our Rapporteur very truly said, many advantages would accrue if only a general scheme of security could be attained. All those considerations have become the commonplaces of the question, and I cannot help hoping that other matters, which at present are to some extent controversial, will also become matters on which general agreement may be assumed.

M. Paul-Boncour mentioned a matter which has been a subject of great discussion, both inside and outside the League, namely, the question of what is called a "potentiel de guerre". I have always believed that there is no substantial difference of opinion on that question and that very soon the controversy will be wholly historical. So it is, I hope, with other questions. M. Paul-Boncour referred to the question of control, a matter about which I am not very perturbed. I believe very strongly that when we reach an agreement on the broad general question of disarmament, such differences of opinion as may still exist on the question of control will, as it were, automatically disappear.

Let me tell you a story that is current in my country. If two men have a question between them concerning which they are in agreement on ninety-nine points out of a hundred, while they disagree on one point, it is said that if they are Scotch they will talk only about the one point, that if they are Irish they will talk only about the ninety-nine points on which they are agreed, and if they are English they will avoid the subject altogether. I do not know whether that is a true appreciation of the national characteristics of the peoples that dwell in the British Isles, but I do know that the procedure attributed to the English in that story has a great many advantages to recommend it,

since, if the parties are agreed on ninety-nine points out of one hundred they will usually find that if they do not discuss unduly the one point on which they were disagreed, the progress of events will show that the importance of that point has been very much exaggerated. I venture to hope that, in connection with the question of control, we shall find that general maxim of human controversy to be as true as it is in other cases.

I welcome the immense progress which the problem before us has made, — progress which was demonstrated not only by the speech of M. Paul-Boncour itself, but by the underlying assumptions on which it was based — because I have always held, and I have ventured to express that opinion more than once from this tribune, that the question of disarmament is absolutely vital to the League of Nations. It is what our American friend called the acid test of the whole procedure and conception on which the League rests. It must succeed. We cannot even contemplate the possible failure of this movement.

I say this not only because of the manifest danger which threatens peace so long as armaments continue to exist on a war scale in the various countries, the continual threat of aggression which they must represent, not only because the maintenance of these armaments is a tremendous strain on the finances and on the prosperity of every country, but even more because of their psychological effect on the nations of the world. So long as these armaments exist, so long as you are to conduct your public affairs with the sub-stratum, the underlying understanding that sooner or later war may come upon you, so long as that is your condition, the cause of peace has immense difficulties with which to contend. The whole education of the people must be coloured by that fact. The people must be continually reminded of the sacrifice which they may be called upon to make. They must continually be trained to contemplate war as a duty and as an end which may at any moment be forced upon them by their love of their country. The whole education, the whole psychology, the whole training of the people will be coloured by this conception, and, therefore, until you can really cut at its roots, until you can remove this conception, until you can divert the minds of the people from war and battles and armies and direct them towards peace, prosperity and industry, so long will the danger to peace continue and so long will the work of this League be hampered and impeded.

I say, therefore, that we must succeed. And what is the condition of success? The condition of success is this: that the Conference on Disarmament shall only take place, the countries shall only be summoned to it when full and complete preparation for it has been made. I believe it to be a maxim, with scarcely any exception, that international conferences succeed in direct proportion to the completeness of the preparation which has been made beforehand for their work. That is the reason which makes preparation so vital. Unless it is complete, success will be far more difficult; indeed, it may be impossible. There are some people who say: "Call your Conference immediately. Let it begin now. Let the nations begin to discuss disarmament straight away". I believe that no counsel is more fatal for the success of disarmament than that. I have always been a strenuous supporter of the full preparation for that Conference.

I welcome the great zeal, the great energy, the great skill, the great knowledge that have been displayed in the technical Commission which has been considering this matter. I noticed that one

of the speakers yesterday suggested that the merits of those technicians had not been adequately acknowledged. That idea would certainly be very remote from any thought of mine. I believe, on the contrary, that they have done admirable work, and that they have shown a zeal and a devotion to the cause which is worthy of the highest appreciation and commendation.

In this great matter, however, the questions which, in the end, will really determine the failure or success of the Conference are not only the technical military, naval and air questions, or even the technical economic questions, but the broad political question which underlies the whole problem. What is that question? It is simple enough. What, broadly speaking, is to be the attribution, the allocation, of armaments to the various nations? What proportion is each nation to be content to accept as sufficient to meet its own essential interests? That is primarily a political question — that is to say, it is a question which goes to the very root of the existence of each State, to the very foundation on which the whole political system of Europe, and indeed of the world, is built.

This is the question on which the Governments of the various countries will have ultimately to give a lead and take a decision, and no one who is not blind can fail to see the enormous responsibility and difficulty which will rest upon the Governments when they have to take that decision. It means that they have to take upon themselves to say: "What armaments can we accept? What armaments can we put forward? How low can we strike the balance of armaments between ourselves and our neighbours consistently with the safety of the country and the great trust which has been placed upon us by the populations which we represent?" That will be a tremendous decision to take. But I personally do not doubt that, difficult as such a decision must necessarily be, the solution of the problem is perfectly possible, perfectly easy, in a way, provided that the peoples of the world are really willing and are really in earnest in the pursuit of disarmament, provided that they really recognise that this is the great political change of the future, the great international political change on which the whole peace of the world may ultimately depend.

The question then arises: "Are the peoples in earnest? Are the Governments which represent them really in earnest?" I know that everybody is in favour of disarmament — as long as it is confined to all the nations except the one to which the speaker belongs! It is said in my country — this is a very well-known story, and I apologise to my fellow-countrymen for repeating it — that a body of elderly judges once met to draw up the terms of an address of congratulation to their sovereign. The draft of the address began as follows: "Conscious as we are of our own infirmities", whereupon objections came from several different parts of the room, and one of the judges suggested a small change in the drafting which satisfied everybody. He said, "We had better begin 'Conscious as we are of one another's infirmities'". That is the attitude which, perhaps, in some cases is too often assumed with regard to disarmament. We are all conscious of the danger of other people's armaments. Yet, in spite of this, I am convinced myself that there is a profound desire for disarmament amongst the people. I am convinced not only that M. Paul-Boncour was sincere, as he obviously was, in his speech yesterday on this subject, not only that his Government is sincere, which I do not doubt, but that, broadly speaking, all the Governments meeting together in the Preparatory Commission are equally sincere.

To my mind, it is a great achievement on the part of the Preparatory Commission — even if they accomplish nothing else it would be a great achievement — to make it clear to any impartial observer that the countries represented on the Commission really do desire disarmament, whatever may be the opinion of individuals, and no one can look into the individual mind. The members of the Commission came to Geneva conscious that they dared not, in the face of their people, say anything except that they were in favour of disarmament and ready to take all reasonable measures to effect it. I believe that this has already been accomplished, but there remains, as I have said, the great problem of the figure for disarmament, and I am quite confident that the Disarmament Conference will meet in vain unless the most careful preparation has been made in order to promote the possibility of success as regards that point.

That is why I confess to having had some doubts whether the Third Committee was really right in trying to fix even a remote date for the meeting of the Conference. I myself would do nothing which could possibly indicate to those entrusted with the preparatory work that they would be justified in accepting anything less than complete results for their work. It is vital that their work should be complete, and though I earnestly hope that the Conference may meet at the earliest possible date — and I should rejoice as much as anyone here if it were possible for it to meet before the next Assembly — I, personally, would far rather postpone it for six months or even for twelve months if by so doing we could secure a more complete preparation, and greater prospects of ultimate success. I am convinced that a meeting of the Conference which failed to achieve any result would be the greatest possible disaster to the cause of peace since the foundation of the League of Nations.

I do not doubt that this is a difficult matter. I do not doubt that the preparatory work will call for courage, insight and prudence, that it will call for courage also from the Governments concerned. I know that this work is going to be a great test for all Governments and all peoples, but I believe that they can accomplish it; but they can only accomplish it if the Governments feel that they have behind them the convinced support of public opinion in their respective countries and the public opinion of the world. This seems to me to be almost the most important step that any of us can take during the coming months. We must spare no effort to bring to bear behind this great cause the public opinion of our own country. A great responsibility rests upon all of us who are here as delegates. We shall be looked to by our people to tell them what it is that is really essential for the peace of the world and of Europe, and the attitude of the populations who are looking to us for guidance will depend very largely upon the conviction and the vigour of our answer in this matter.

I will venture to add one more word. It is not on us only that the responsibility rests; perhaps it rests still more on the gentlemen and ladies of the Press. They have here a great responsibility, as they always have. I know that it is dull to say that things are going well, that, on the whole, the cause of disarmament is advancing smoothly and peacefully, that it is much more amusing and much more readable to write some interesting story of combinations and intrigues and desires for domination and duplicity displayed by various individuals and countries.

I read only the other day a most interesting and vivid account of some transaction in which my country and another were engaged, in which we

were held up as desiring to obtain some obscure domination for ourselves and some equally obscure destruction for others. The story, I need not say, was totally and absolutely destitute of foundation. It made, I dare say, good reading, but I doubt whether it served the cause of peace. I know it must be difficult, very difficult even, for the most conscientious writer not to say sometimes what he, no doubt, genuinely thinks about the conduct of foreign nations and foreign statesmen; but I beg you in this case to remember the vast issues and the vast moment of the question which we are discussing.

There are enormous difficulties in our way — difficulties of prejudice, difficulties of tradition, difficulties of fear, difficulties of long-ingrained opinion and education. We are trying to do something which has never yet been successfully accomplished. We are trying to do something without which peace can never be secured. This is a tremendously difficult task. We have, indeed, two great assets in the righteousness of our cause and in the fundamental and convinced, yea, the passionate support of the populations of the world. They desire disarmament, whatever other people, their rulers or other guides, may think. I venture to ask the Press to make clear beyond dispute the righteousness of our cause and to make the support of the people so vocal that no Government, however timid or however unwilling, can fail to carry out to the best of its power this great, this vital cause for peace, for prosperity and for happiness.

The President :

Translation : Dr. von Schubert, delegate of Germany, will address the Assembly.

Dr. von Schubert (Germany) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — You will hardly expect me, at the end of a long session, to rehearse in full the question of the reduction of armaments, or Germany's attitude towards it.

The German point of view, which is in keeping with the interests of the League, is, moreover, a matter of common knowledge. Even before her entry into the League, Germany eagerly welcomed the opportunity of assisting in the work of the Preparatory Commission. Her representatives on that Commission and on the Sub-Commissions have co-operated actively in framing the various draft replies to the questionnaire prepared by the Council. You are familiar with the differences of opinion manifested in this connection. They are sufficiently clear from the Minutes, as are the difficulties arising out of every attempt to find a common formula. Throughout the course of the proceedings, the German representatives have kept the general interest before them. They believe that, in the present circumstances, the reduction of armaments must be regarded as the supreme task of the League, and that, in seeking to accomplish that task, the League is working not only for its own consolidation but also for the benefit of all mankind.

It would be easy to pass in review the various obstacles that have arisen or that may yet arise to prevent the conclusion of any agreement for general disarmament worthy of the name, and we might readily formulate definite criticisms or express our disappointment in regard to certain points. The meetings of the Preparatory Commission will afford our delegates an opportunity of discussing all these questions in detail. The only things that matter here and now in this Assembly are the principles to be applied and the aim to be pursued.

M. Paul-Boncour, yesterday, in an eloquent speech, stated clearly the principles upon which

any attempt at disarmament must be based. He referred to Article 8 of the Covenant. These principles, as the French delegate pointed out, are also to be found in the Preamble to Part V of the Treaty of Versailles.

Special limitations, he said, had been imposed on certain nations, but only as a preliminary to the general reduction of armaments that is to follow.

As regards the object of our endeavours, we are all assuredly agreed we wish to put an end to the insecurity to which the different countries are exposed as the result not only of the race in armaments, but of the inequality of armaments, as it exists at present.

It was stated, however — merely, it is true, as a supposition and in order to avoid possible disappointment — that an international convention for the reduction of armaments would in itself constitute a considerable advance, even if it amounted merely to the fixing and acceptance of the *status quo*.

We too feel that it is essential to proceed by easy stages, but consider that the fixing of the *status quo* cannot be regarded as a genuine advance, for we contend that the preparatory work should be directed from this moment towards the final object, which is to reduce the existing disproportion between the armaments of the States Members of the League, and thereby fit the League more perfectly for the accomplishment of its mission.

No one can fail to be aware of the enormous difficulties which still obstruct the realisation of any general plan for the reduction of armaments. No one can be blind to the political and technical obstacles that must still be overcome.

The German delegation does not in any way overlook realities to be taken into account in a matter so delicate as that now before the Assembly. We realise that nothing but perfect loyalty and that desire for mutual understanding of which the Assembly, at this session, has given such conspicuous proof, can serve to clear the path which leads to our common ideal.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will read the draft resolution submitted by the Third Committee :

The Assembly takes note of the report submitted to it by the Secretariat and the very full information furnished to the Third Committee by the President of the Preparatory Commission on the work of that Commission, its technical Sub-Commissions A and B, and the Joint Commission.

It expresses its complete satisfaction with the work performed and thanks those who have contributed to it.

Being desirous that the investigations, in regard to which the Assembly itself took the initiative in its resolution of September 25th, 1925, should be brought to a successful conclusion as soon as possible, it requests the Council to call upon the Preparatory Commission to take steps to hasten the completion of the technical work and thus be able to draw up, at the beginning of next year, the programme for a conference on the limitation and reduction of armaments corresponding to existing conditions in regard to regional and general security, and it asks the Council to convene this conference before the eighth ordinary session of the Assembly, unless material difficulties render this impossible.

If no one else wishes to speak, I shall consider the resolution as adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

56. — WORK OF THE COMMITTEE ON INTELLECTUAL CO-OPERATION : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : We will now pass to Item 3 of the agenda : Report by the Second Committee on the Work of the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation (Annex 9. Document A.80.1926. XII).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Munch, Rapporteur, and Mr. Fitzgerald, Chairman, of the Second Committee, took their places on the platform).

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Munch (Denmark), Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — You have before you the report of the Second Committee. I need not therefore read it, but will confine myself to emphasising the most important points.

When the Assembly during its second ordinary session, on the proposal of M. Léon Bourgeois, passed a resolution creating the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, there were sceptics who doubted whether it would be possible to achieve any thing in this direction within the organisation of the League.

The necessity was recognised, it is true, of reviving the intellectual co-operation which had come into being prior to 1914 and which was interrupted by the war. It was not quite clear, however, how the League could succeed in organising intellectual co-operation.

Nevertheless, the Committee was instituted, and eminent savants from various countries were appointed to serve on it. No member of this Assembly will, I am sure, fail to agree that the Committee has accomplished a most important work. It has facilitated the resumption of relations between savants in former enemy countries. It has even set up new organisations and promoted intellectual contact in directions not thought of before the war. Every year its work has grown and become more concrete. The Committee on Intellectual Co-operation is now a permanent organisation, and its work constitutes a most important part of the League's activities.

The Second Committee was gratified to note that during the past year the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation has again made very considerable progress.

It has not only continued and carried further the work already undertaken before the sixth ordinary session of the Assembly, but has also begun valuable new work.

The scheme for the establishment of the International Institute in Paris which was under discussion last year has since been put into effect and all doubts as to its character and utility are now dispelled. The Second Committee was unanimous in recognising the impartial character of the Institute from the very outset. It was happy to note that the Institute, by its collaboration with the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation and the Secretariat, has already been of great assistance in further defining and widening the basis of this particular work.

The Second Committee expressed its grateful thanks to the Polish and Czechoslovak Governments, which have offered subsidies to support the Institute so generously established by France. It urges the other States to follow this example, if possible.

The Committee noted with satisfaction that there has been a rapid increase in the number of National Committees, whose activities are proceeding in a most satisfactory manner. It also noted that international meetings have been held between the Directors of the National University Information Bureaux and between representatives of International Student Associations.

Three Governments represented on the Committee have offered the hospitality of their countries to international conferences on this work. Roumania and Switzerland have both extended offers of hospitality to the International Conference on the Popular Arts. Great Britain has offered to make arrangements for a Conference of Teachers to study the best means of instructing young people in the organisation and objects of the League and inculcating the spirit of international co-operation.

This latter question was raised at the last ordinary session of the Assembly, and during the past year the first steps were taken to find a practical solution. One of the chief results of the year's work is the creation of a Sub-Committee of experts, which has already formulated two series of proposals and suggestions: these, as you have no doubt seen, are to be found among the documents submitted to the Assembly and communicated to the Governments of the States Members of the League.

Nearly all the speakers in the Second Committee showed special interest in the education of young people in the ideals of international co-operation. This interest is, in my opinion, fully justified, for the future of the League depends upon the evolution of the minds of the coming generation. The present generation, which began its work during the progressive period preceding the Great War and upon whose minds the horrors of war have been vividly impressed, resumed its task of international co-operation after a period of transition, after the passions of war had subsided, and so was able to resume the work already begun. The men who lived through the war have made a beginning with the new world organisation which is to ensure a happier future for the coming generations. But that organisation will collapse unless the generation into whose hands it will pass a few years hence understands how to employ it.

Our chief task must therefore be to win over the young to the cause of peace, peace between the different nations and peace between the different classes, and to make them realise the necessity of international co-operation on a basis of peace and justice. It thus becomes imperative that they should be instructed in the objects and organisation of the League.

But, while engaged in organising such instruction and in carrying on a vigorous propaganda, we must never lose sight of the fact that the coming generation, which never knew pre-war conditions and will soon have but a vague idea of the horrors of the Great War, will judge us mainly by our actions. Its respect for and interest in the League will depend primarily on the League's activities. If we can make real progress towards the attainment of our object, if we can bring about moral disarmament, effect a radical reduction in armaments and promote economic co-operation between the different countries and classes, then the younger generation will assuredly be converted to our cause.

The Second Committee, having examined the reports on the work of the League's organs in this field, recommends that the Assembly should express its satisfaction at the progress achieved by passing the resolution submitted to it.

The President :

Translation : Dame Edith Lyttelton, delegate of the British Empire, will address the Assembly.

Dame Edith Lyttelton (British Empire) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I am not going to keep you more than a few moments, but I wish to say a few words about the work of the Sub-Committee of Experts mentioned in the report which you have just heard.

I believe, as we all must, that the future of the world depends upon the babies. To-day, as I walk in the park and see the children playing on the grass or sitting in the perambulators with that curious unconsciousness which is one of their greatest charms, I say to myself, "Here is the new barbarian race coming to the gates of Rome", or, to use Ibsen's phrase, "Here are the people who are knocking at the door". The question is: When they open that door, what are they going to find? I feel that it is not enough to make the world a better place; we have also to make the children to understand what the League of Nations is trying to do.

The problem of the method to be adopted in order to teach the children about the League of Nations is difficult. It is not easy to make the League of Nations an exciting subject. It is not easy to use the League for propaganda purposes. Someone has told me that they were looking through a series of pamphlets issued by some organisation — I do not know what the organisation was — which was trying to do propaganda work for the League of Nations. One of the pamphlets bore on the back of it two pictures. The first picture was of a number of glorious young men leaping over a trench, guns in their hands and bombs bursting all around them, and on the top was written "The Old Way". The second picture showed a number of gentlemen just like yourselves sitting round a table talking, and on the top of this was written "The New Way". I do not think that anybody can say that that is very good propaganda, and, of course, it was dismissed at once. I only tell the story with a view to showing how difficult it is to put the ideas of the League of Nations into a shape that children can understand.

I am not one of those who believe that you can teach internationalism without teaching nationalism. It is necessary to give children first of all a pride in their home and their nation and after that a pride in the part which their nation can play in world affairs. The child spirit pours itself into a multitude of moulds, and it is vital that none of those moulds should be broken, but that all of them should contribute to the beauty and richness of the human race. The child must be made to take a pride and glory in its own nation, and it is very difficult to teach children that pride and that glory unless you deal with the question of battles and fighting. It is inevitable also that we should make them proud of the heroisms which have characterised their past history and the sacrifices which have been endured. We have then, I think, to take a different attitude, not to gloss over the brutalities and horrors and cruelties of the past, but to let the children understand that past history contains a great deal which should be done away with now and that in the future it is necessary to build in a different spirit.

We are not very far forward with our history yet. Every nation has to look back upon a history stained with blood. The roots of every nation are fixed in a past which is full of the worst sides of human nature as well as of the best. Of course, we have all the glory of thought and all the power of idealism to teach and inspire us. It seems to me that the world is governed by thought and ideas.

That is why the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation has, I think, found the right line to take when it deals with the teaching of children and young persons. If anybody is in doubt as to the method by which this is to be done, let me recommend a study of the report of the Sub-Committee of Experts on this matter. That Sub-Committee has translated into practical details the wish which we all share that the children should be made to understand towards what future the world is moving.

The series of recommendations which the Sub-Committee has drawn up is full of common sense and full of possibilities for good. I should like to mention two or three things — without entering into details. There is, first, the suggestion that teachers should be helped to inculcate a new spirit, and I would like to say that my own Government is making a reference to this matter in the new edition of a book of suggestions for teachers. It is also suggested that national Conferences be called to deal with the subject, and my Government proposes to convene a Conference of local education authorities to deal with the matter.

But our aim is not only to obtain a new attitude in the schools, but a new attitude in the homes. If we must draw pictures for children, let us show them the horrors of the past as well as the possibilities of the future. Let the first picture for propaganda purposes to which I have referred show, not young men leaping over trenches, but what happens to those men after they have left the trenches; let us show the horrors and cruelties of the old way, and, as for the new way, let us depict a future with young men and young women walking arm-in-arm in the freedom of fellowship, and about to climb the mountains that even now we see are gilded at the top with the new dawn. To get at the children is to get at the future. I commend to you the report of the Sub-Committee.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolutions of the Second Committee, which read as follows :

The Assembly approves the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation, as at present constituted — with the International Committee and its sub-committees, the National Committees and the International Institute. It considers that this organisation now provides a mechanism capable of strengthening the intellectual relations between nations and of improving the conditions of intellectual work in the world. It notes with satisfaction the assurance given by the Governing Board of the International Institute to the effect that that institution is so conducted as to ensure perfect equality of treatment between all nations. It draws the attention of all the Members of the Assembly to the felicitous step taken by Poland and by Czechoslovakia, which, following France's generous action, have granted a subsidy to the International Institute.

• Further, the Assembly wishes to emphasise the practical character and the expediency of the plans for international intellectual co-operation which the Committee and the Institute are, at the present moment, proceeding to carry out. It lays particular stress on the importance of the following plans — the convening of a Congress of Popular Art, the creation of an International Museums Office, the union of libraries of all countries in order to facilitate research by the public, the co-ordination, by means of international collaboration, of the analytical bibliographies of the various sciences.

The Assembly, having considered in its Second

Committee the report of the Sub-Committee of Experts on the instruction of children and youth in the aims and objects of the League of Nations, urges the Governments of the States Members of the League to give this report their sympathetic consideration and to take the measures necessary to give effect to all or any of its recommendations which may be found suitable for adoption in their respective countries.

The Assembly invites the various States to, consider, and asks the competent institutions to examine, the possibility of establishing scholarships for university students, whereby they would be enabled to visit Geneva both before and during the annual Assemblies, in order to obtain first-hand knowledge of the work of the League of Nations.

The resolutions were adopted.

57. — FINANCIAL RECONSTRUCTION OF HUNGARY : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Second Committee on the Financial Reconstruction of Hungary. (Annex 10. Document A. 81. 1926. II).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Suvich, Rapporteur, took his place by the side of the Chairman of the Second Committee on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Suvich, delegate of Italy and Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Suvich (Italy), Rapporteur :

Translation : The report of the Second Committee on the financial reconstruction of Hungary has been distributed, so I shall confine myself to a summary.

Two years have passed since the coming into force of the scheme for the financial reconstruction of Hungary. The Assembly is now asked to agree that the supervision exercised by the High Commissioner should come to an end. During these two years the scheme has been put into effect in accordance with the programme and has succeeded beyond all expectations. This is proved by the fact that it has been possible to utilise for productive investments the greater part of the loan which was raised to meet the deficit in the budget.

The scheme of reconstruction included : an international loan secured by certain State revenues ; the creation of a Central Bank of Issue enjoying the monopoly of issue ; the fixing for twenty years of the reparations payments at an average rate of 10 million gold crowns per annum ; the establishment of a Committee of Control appointed by the Reparation Commission ; the appointment of a Commissioner-General to supervise the execution of the whole programme and control the use of the loan ; administrative reforms.

Actual facts have proved that the scheme was wonderfully well conceived. By good fortune its execution was entrusted to Mr. Jeremiah Smith, a man who possessed all the qualifications necessary to ensure its execution, and he has devoted himself to this work with genuine enthusiasm and an extraordinary tact and sense of proportion.

There has been no deficit in the budget since 1924. The loan, although assigned to a large extent for works of a permanent and productive character, still shows an available surplus.

The secured revenue is to-day nearly eight times in excess of the annual sum required for the service of the loan.

Economic conditions in Hungary are vastly improved. Agricultural production is again approximating to the pre-war level and, in the case of certain crops, even exceeds it. The adverse trade balance is also steadily decreasing.

One point to which I desire to direct your special attention concerns commercial treaties. During the past year two new treaties came into force, one with Austria and a provisional agreement with Czechoslovakia.

In the circumstances which I have briefly outlined, and which are set out at length in my report, Hungary has been able to embark upon the most important reform, that of her currency. The fact that the paper crown, the currency previously in circulation, had been stable for a fairly long period constituted the necessary basis for the complete conversion and reform of the monetary system. This stability of the currency is confirmed by an examination of the wholesale and retail index numbers, which have not risen since 1924 but, on the contrary, have shown a downward tendency. During the same period the increase in the deposits in savings banks and other banks has continued.

This reform has undoubtedly been made possible solely by the success of the scheme for the reconstruction of Hungary and by the resulting economic recovery of the country.

It is generally admitted that there can be no question of the stabilisation or conversion of the currency until two essential conditions have been fulfilled, these being the balancing of the budget and the approximate establishment of equilibrium in the balance of payments.

The other circumstances, such as the amount of currency in circulation, the proportion of reserves, etc., are of importance rather in determining the relation to be fixed between the old and new forms of currency.

As regards the Hungarian budget, the deficit, as already stated, had disappeared in the accounts for the year ending June 30th, 1924. The balance of payments, judging by the principal factors, that is to say, the trade balance, is approximately even. The policy of inflation had already been brought to an end by the creation of a National Bank of Issue independent of the State and governed by a Statute which prohibits it from making advances to the State.

Having thus been withdrawn from Government influence, the new Bank was in a position to exercise an effective influence on the monetary policy of the country. A foreign Adviser was attached to the Board of Directors, in order to assist the new Bank in accomplishing its task, which constituted the pivot of the whole reconstruction programme.

The Bank's policy has been extremely cautious and conservative. On June 30th last, the reserve amounted to 55 per cent of the circulation, and one-half of the reserve consisted of minted gold or bullion. The discount rate has been reduced and fixed at 6 per cent.

Towards the end of 1925, a law was passed in Hungary providing for the introduction, as from January 1st, 1927, of a new currency, which can, however, be used for purposes of reckoning before that date. The value of this new currency, the "pengő", has been fixed at 1 pengő per 12,500 old paper crowns.

The balance-sheet of the National Bank is already expressed in "pengős", and measures have been taken for all private concerns to draw up their balance-sheets in terms of gold in accordance with the principles laid down. The form and value

of the new currency have been exhaustively studied, and care has been taken that proper attention should be given to the psychological factors which might have had a dangerous effect on the cost of living in the country at the moment of its introduction.

The considerations which I have just explained and the fact that the whole economic life of the country is gradually becoming accustomed to the "pengő" justify the hope that it may be possible to reach the gold standard without undue disturbance.

The programme of the financial reconstruction of Hungary, conceived and applied in the manner I have indicated, constitutes an achievement of which the League can justly be proud. The problem submitted to the League has been solved with brilliant success alike from the technical, social and political points of view.

In expressing its appreciation of the results obtained, the Council approved the Hungarian Government's proposal — which had received the support of the Commissioner-General and of the Financial Committee — that the supervision exercised by the Commissioner-General should cease on June 30th, 1926. The duties of the foreign Adviser attached to the Bank of Issue also ended on that date.

The service of the secured revenues will in future be ensured by the Trustees. The balance of the loan — in regard to which no decision has yet been taken — will be kept available in a separate account in the name of M. ter Meulen, who has been appointed for the purpose by the Financial Committee. The Committee of Control will remain in office and will communicate directly with the Hungarian Government.

I now have the honour to submit the following draft resolution :

The Assembly :

(1) *Notes that, the Council having ascertained that the financial stability of Hungary is assured, the functions of the Commissioner-General were brought to an end on June 30th, 1926; and that with this step the work of reconstruction has been brought to a successful close within the minimum period contemplated under the original plan ;*

(2) *Congratulates on this result the Hungarian Government and people, the Commissioner-General and the Financial Committee, who prepared the original plan. It confidently hopes that, by a prudent financial policy, the Hungarian Government will in the future maintain and consolidate the satisfactory position now attained ;*

(3) *Observes with satisfaction the conclusion of commercial agreements between Hungary and the neighbouring States with whom about half of her total foreign trade is transacted ; and repeats the hope expressed at the last ordinary session of the Assembly that the further progress of such commercial agreements may tend to bring about a progressive reduction of the tariffs in Central Europe and will thus contribute to establishing closer economic relations.*

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I will consider the resolution of the Second Committee adopted.

The resolution, was adopted.

58. — FINANCIAL RECONSTRUCTION OF AUSTRIA: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President:

Translation: The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Second Committee on the Financial Reconstruction of Austria (Annex 11. Document A.82.1926.II).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Strasburger, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform by the side of the Chairman of the Second Committee.)

The President:

Translation: The Rapporteur, M. Strasburger, delegate of Poland, will address the Assembly.

M. Strasburger (Poland), Rapporteur:

Translation: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — As the hour is now late, and in deference to the wishes of the President, I will not detain you long. The report on the financial reconstruction of Austria is already in your hands. I will confine myself to drawing your attention to certain salient points.

It was agreed to abolish the office of the Commissioner-General for Austria on June 30th, 1926, upon two conditions, which the Austrian Government accepted: first, the retention of a foreign Adviser to the National Bank, and, secondly, the retention of the right of the Council, during a period of ten years, to re-establish control if, contrary to all expectations, the budgetary equilibrium were seriously endangered. The Austrian Government has therefore assumed full responsibility for its finances.

The following results have been obtained from the loan. The net yield amounted to 568.7 million gold crowns, of which only 13 per cent was used to cover deficits. The remainder went towards repaying credits previously granted to the Austrian Government or spent on productive investments.

The closed accounts for 1924 showed a deficit of 9,000,000 gold crowns; the closed accounts for 1925 gave a surplus of 28.4 millions.

It should be remarked that Austria first passed through a very severe financial crisis, which was followed later by an economic crisis.

The Council instructed Mr. Layton and Professor Rist to examine the economic situation in Austria to see how far this economic crisis might affect the financial situation. These two gentlemen went to Austria, and their investigations there clearly showed that the economic crisis was directly connected with reconstruction, but that there was no ground for anxiety concerning the country's power of ultimate recovery.

Recovery is certain if the Austrian people and the Austrian Government strive energetically, as the League of Nations is sure they will, to maintain budgetary equilibrium and exploit to the full Austria's natural advantages.

By thus justifying the confidence which the Council has placed in her, Austria will complete the work of financial recovery which she was the first to begin. In this way she will contribute towards the economic stability of the whole of Central Europe.

I venture to recall the words spoken two years ago in this Assembly by the distinguished representative of France, M. Georges Bonnet, who said:

"We sincerely desire the removal of the control as soon as possible. We hope and trust that it will be removed; we are convinced of it, because that would be the best possible proof that Austria had at last recovered financial stability and economic prosperity."

What was then foreseen has now been realised. The Austrian Government has been able to resume full responsibility for its finances.

The great work undertaken by the League has been crowned with success, and I am particularly gratified that the honour of presenting to the Assembly the report, on the financial reconstruction of Austria should fall to my country, which is also in the throes of serious financial difficulties.

As Rapporteur, and at the same time as representative of the Polish Government, I wish to express to the organisations of the League our great admiration for the notable work of international co-operation which they have just achieved. I also wish to congratulate the Austrian people and Government and to express the hope that they will be able by their own efforts to ensure the prosperity and economic stability of their country.

On behalf of the Second Committee, I have the honour to propose to the Assembly the adoption of the following resolution:

The Assembly:

Has taken note of the Council resolution of June 9th, 1926, whereby the functions of the Commissioner-General for Austria were brought to an end on June 30th, 1926;

Is gratified that Austria has been able to reassume full responsibility for her budgetary and financial policy;

Does not doubt that the Austrian people and the Austrian Government will by their own efforts be able finally to ensure the results of the work of reconstruction;

And expresses its thanks to the countries which have helped Austria with their credit and thus made possible a great act of international co-operation."

The President:

Translation: If no one wishes to speak, I will consider as adopted the draft resolution proposed by the Rapporteur.

The resolution was adopted.

59. — SETTLEMENT OF BULGARIAN REFUGEES: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President:

Translation: The next item on the agenda is the discussion on the report of the Second Committee on the Settlement of Bulgarian Refugees (Annex 12. Document A. 84. 1926. II).

(On the invitation of the President, Commander Hilton Young, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform by the side of the Chairman of the Second Committee.)

The President:

Translation: The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

Commander Hilton Young (British Empire), Rapporteur:

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I have the honour to present to the Assembly the report of the Second Committee on the subject of the Settlement of Bulgarian Refugees. As the Assembly knows, this is a new scheme for the relief of refugees in Bulgaria. It will not be necessary for me now to do more than underline the principal features of the report.

The scheme which has just been adopted by the Council for the settlement of refugees in Bulgaria is the second of its kind undertaken under the auspices of the League. The first, which has now been in operation for two years in Greece, is well known.

The two problems are similar in certain respects, and so are their solutions. In each case the finances of the country have been examined by the Financial Committee, which has drawn up a plan containing, amongst other things, a statement of the securities which could suitably be given for a foreign loan to pay for the work of settlement. In both cases the Government has agreed to provide for settlement purposes a minimum quantity of suitable land and to accept the control of an authority responsible to the Council to ensure the expenditure of the money on the specified objects. Greece is the easier problem because many suitable houses were made available by the return of peasants to Turkey under the system of exchange and enough cultivable land was available. In Bulgaria, on the other hand, there are not nearly enough houses or land, and a part of the proposed loan will have to be spent on re-claiming land and making it fit for cultivation. In general, the preparation of the Bulgarian plan required long negotiations — which were not needed for the Greek plan — with the neighbouring countries and with the reparation authorities, whose consent was necessary in order to provide securities for the new loan. It has been provided that the work of settlement shall be done under the supervision of a single Commissioner appointed by, and responsible to, the Council of the League, with power to investigate and approve all plans for the work of settlement and with sole control over the proceeds of the proposed loan.

It is not necessary to detain the Assembly with any further details at the present time. I am confident that if the Members of the Assembly will study the results of the prolonged and careful work of the Financial Committee and of the Second Committee they will come to the conclusion that this is a most important and valuable work which must be done in the cause of humanity, work which will enable Bulgaria to be released from a burden which is too heavy for it to bear alone and for which it was not itself responsible.

I am confident also that the Assembly will come to the conclusion that the plan will not only alleviate the sufferings of the unfortunate refugees but will promote the external and internal stability of the Bulgarian State. It is too early to speak of it at length at present, but I trust that next year or the year after a Rapporteur may stand here and give a report to the Assembly of the successful conclusion of this work.

The President :

Translation : M. Molloff, delegate of Bulgaria, will address the Assembly.

M. Molloff (Bulgaria) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — On behalf of my Government, I have the pleasant duty of expressing once more the gratitude of Bulgaria to the League and its various organisations for their invaluable assistance in the work of the settlement of the Bulgarian refugees. I wish also to express our high appreciation of the very succinct and felicitous report submitted by Commander Hilton Young.

In recent years, Bulgaria has made a great effort punctually to carry out with the aid of her own resources the different stipulations of the Treaties of Peace. She has honoured her financial obligations, which are becoming an increasing strain

on the budgetary resources of the country. While pursuing indefatigably her policy of peace, international collaboration and national reconstruction, she has succeeded in balancing the budget and stabilising the currency during the past three years. But the increasing influx of refugees, due mostly to the exchange of population brought about by the treaties, created a situation of indescribable distress for the families involved, a heartrending situation in itself, but one which also endangered the internal stability of the country and was liable to provoke serious disturbances that might have affected international relations.

The funds required for the settlement of this horde of refugees far exceeded the country's resources. This state of affairs, the true facts of which were recognised and described by the organisations of the League, called for immediate international intervention, and there was no body qualified to handle the situation so effectively as the League.

Bulgaria confidently applied to the League for aid, and has since complied with every recommendation made by its competent organisations, for we were convinced that this was the only way of reaching a satisfactory solution. May I venture to point out that, as a corollary, the stabilisation of our currency has been assured for the future by a decision of the Reparation Commission, setting up a Transfer Committee to regulate our external payments.

In conformity with another recommendation, we have settled in a satisfactory manner our relations with pre-war bondholders. The Financial Committee has sanctioned an additional loan to repay a Paris bank for advances made to Bulgaria in 1912-13.

From another point of view, it is important to point out that the National Bank of Bulgaria has been transformed into a central Bank of Issue. This will enable us to participate in the system of central banks proposed by the Genoa Conference and recommended by the Financial Committee.

The utilisation of the funds of the loan to be issued is placed under the strict and effective control of the League.

We have already received advances from the Bank of England, to which I express our deep gratitude. The Bank of England has such complete confidence in our determination to reconstruct our finances that it has been good enough to assist us, thereby making an effective contribution to the work begun by the League.

We have therefore complied with all your recommendations and have thus afforded every requisite guarantee for the flotation of the proposed loan, which will, we trust, be offered in the near future. This event will mark the final consummation of this mission of charity and peace, which will assuredly enhance the high authority and growing prestige of the League.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution of the Second Committee, which reads as follows :

The Assembly :

(1) *Has learnt with great satisfaction that the negotiations of the last six months have resulted in the adoption by the Council of a scheme for the settlement of some 120,000 refugees in Bulgaria ;*

(2) *Observes with satisfaction that, by means of an advance of £400,000, this work has already been begun ;*

(3) *Expresses the hope that the total sum estimated for this work, namely, £2,250,000, may be successfully subscribed in the near future ;*

(4) *Desires to express its appreciation of the valuable work once more done by the Financial Committee, on whose advice the plan was adopted by the Council, and whose long and unique experience in such work of reconstruction has borne fruit in Austria, Hungary and Greece;*

(5) *Expresses the belief that the execution of this plan will not only alleviate widespread suffering but will also benefit economic and social order within Bulgaria and consolidate and improve the political relations of Bulgaria with neighbouring countries.*

The resolution was adopted.

60. — WORK OF THE FINANCIAL COMMITTEE : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion on the report of the Second Committee on the work of the Financial Committee (Annex 13. Document A. 85. 1926. II).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Avramovitch, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform by the side of the Chairman of the Second Committee.)

The President :

Translation : M. Avramovitch, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Avramovitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes), Rapporteur :

Translation : I have the honour, on behalf of the Second Committee, to submit to you the report of the Financial Committee. This involves an examination of questions which are perhaps of the same nature at those already dealt with, but which nevertheless have an importance of their own. I should like to mention in particular the Danzig question.

At the request of the Free City, the Council, which guarantees its Constitution, authorised M. Janssen, a member of the Financial Committee, to go to Danzig to study the financial situation and to consider what measures it might be necessary to take in that connection.

M. Janssen submitted his report to the Financial Committee at its July session in London, and the Committee in its turn submitted a report to the Council. The Committee recommended that the Free City should be given assistance in view of special difficulties arising out of unemployment and certain deficits due to the reduction in the Customs revenues.

The Financial Committee also urged in this connection that the Free City should cut down its general expenditure by at least 10 per cent. It then recommended the conclusion of an economic agreement between Danzig and Poland and the issuing of a loan of approximately thirty million gulden with the twofold object of (1) covering the deficits arising out of exceptional circumstances in the budget for 1926-27 and repaying the floating debt, and (2) meeting certain productive expenditure.

Your Second Committee was gratified to note that this agreement between the Free City and Poland was concluded on the very day on which the present report was being examined.

If, as is hoped, the Free City succeeds in reducing its expenditure and increasing its production and resources, the Council will perhaps be able in the near future — not later than next December —

to recommend, on the proposal of the Financial Committee, that the loan in question should be authorised under the auspices of the League. As a conclusion to this first question, for which I have the honour to be Rapporteur, I propose that the Assembly should adopt the following draft resolution :

“The Assembly has taken note of the Financial Committee’s two reports on the restoration of the public finances of the Free City of Danzig.

“It trusts that, in accordance with the conclusions of these reports, it may be possible for the Financial Committee, when the Free City has effected the necessary administrative and budgetary economies, to recommend the issuing of a loan designed to consolidate the financial and economic situation of Danzig.”

I now come to the second question, which concerns the suppression of counterfeiting.

The Council had to consider an application from the French Government requesting an examination of this matter, which disturbs the course of international relations, more particularly in those countries whose currency is counterfeited.

The question was referred for examination to the Financial Committee, which requested certain information. It drew up a questionnaire and asked, as the matter was in its opinion a most important one, that it might be given proper time to go into the question exhaustively and without incurring the risk of precipitate action.

It is hoped that the Committee, which has already given such tangible proof of its value in theoretical and practical matters and which has done such fruitful work in the past, will succeed in finding a satisfactory solution of the problem.

As a conclusion to this second question, I propose, on behalf of the Second Committee, that the Assembly should adopt the following resolution :

“The Assembly has noted that, at the request of the Council, the Financial Committee has undertaken a study of the methods whereby the Governments and Banks of Issue might collaborate to prevent the issuing of counterfeit currency. It trusts that the Financial Committee’s work will be actively pursued, so that practical proposals may be submitted to the Council for consideration at the earliest possible date.”

The third question is that of double taxation and fiscal evasion, a problem which has occupied the League’s attention for some years. It was first studied by four eminent economists and was then referred to the Financial Committee, which examined it in its turn. The Committee’s report was submitted to exhaustive examination by experts of the countries concerned, namely : Germany, the Argentine, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, France, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, Switzerland and Venezuela. They had been so chosen as to ensure that the Committee should be composed of nationals of countries whose interest and outlook in fiscal questions were as different as possible ; countries which exported capital and new countries partially financed by foreign capital.

The similarity of views displayed by these experts made it possible to draw up three preliminary draft conventions regarding : (1) double taxation, (2) judicial assistance with regard to the recovery of taxes, and (3) fiscal evasion and administrative assistance.

These proposals were not definitive, the experts being undecided whether a general international convention or bilateral conventions would prove the most satisfactory solution. The Financial

Committee decided, as the question called for more exhaustive examination, to deal with it at its next session, which will probably be held in December.

I have the honour, therefore, on behalf of the Second Committee, to propose the following draft resolution :

"The Assembly has taken note, according to the Financial Committee's reports, of the results of the work of the last meeting of experts on double taxation and tax evasion.

"It trusts that their work will be continued and will serve as a useful preparation for the development and progressive unification of international law in the matter, by means of general conventions or of partial conventions based upon common principles."

In conclusion, I should like to draw your attention to the economic and financial publications of the Economic Intelligence Service of the Secretariat. Apart from the *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics*, which appears on the last Saturday of the first fortnight of each month, the *Memorandum on Currency and Central Banks* for the period 1913-25 has already been published. This Memorandum has aroused great interest in the business world, especially in financial circles. A new edition of the *Memorandum on Public Finance* is now in course of preparation.

In view of the importance of these questions, I would urge you to adopt the draft resolutions which I have just submitted on behalf of the Second Committee.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolutions of the second Committee, which read as follows :

I. *The Assembly has taken note of the Financial Committee's two reports on the restoration of the public finances of the Free City of Danzig.*

It trusts that, in accordance with the conclusions of these reports, it may be possible for the Financial Committee, when the Free City has effected the necessary administrative and budgetary economies, to recommend the issuing of a loan designed to consolidate the financial and economic situation of Danzig.

II. *The Assembly has noted that, at the request of the Council, the Financial Committee has undertaken a study of the methods whereby the Governments and Banks of Issue might collaborate to prevent the issuing of counterfeit currency.*

It trusts that the Financial Committee's work will be actively pursued, so that practical proposals may be submitted to the Council for consideration at the earliest possible date.

III. *The Assembly has taken note, according to the Financial Committee's reports, of the results of the work of the last meeting of experts on double taxation and tax evasion.*

It trusts that their work will be continued and will serve as a useful preparation for the development and progressive unification of international law in the matter, by means of general conventions or of partial conventions based upon common principles.

The resolutions were adopted.

61.— WORK OF THE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion on the report of the Second Committee on the work of the Economic Committee (Annex 14. Document A. 94. 1926. II).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Nagai, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform by the side of the Chairman of the Second Committee.)

The President :

Translation : M. Nagai, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Nagai (Japan) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The report which I have to make, at the request of the Second Committee, concerns the work done by the Economic Committee during the past year.

As you will see, the report covers three pages containing a summary of the work done by the Economic Committee. On account of the diversity and the technical nature of the problems involved, the statement is naturally quite lengthy. But in view of the late hour, I shall refrain from reading it.

There is one point, however, which I must emphasise and which is dealt with in the following passage of the report :

"The Economic Committee is systematically pursuing the study of the various problems set before it, and is ascertaining in each case, by comprehensive and exhaustive enquiry, how far the proposals which it is considering are of practical value and capable of realisation in the international sphere."

I have now to submit for your approval the following resolutions :

The Assembly :

(1) *Again states its conviction that commercial relations would be greatly improved by the conclusion of an international convention for the abolition of import and export prohibitions and restrictions.*

It notes with satisfaction the progress which has been made, thanks to the efforts of the Economic Committee, towards the realisation of the recommendation made by the ordinary session of the Assembly in 1924.

It notes the Council's resolution to convene, for this purpose, at as early a date as possible, a Conference of Representatives of the Governments of States Members and non-Members of the League of Nations, and expresses a most earnest hope that this Conference's work will be crowned with success.

(2) *It notes with satisfaction that the Protocol established in 1923 is still making its influence felt in the direction of a wider recognition of commercial arbitration, and that the Economic Committee has recently begun to consider the possibility of preparing an additional act, the object of which will be to ensure the execution of arbitral awards given abroad.*

(3) *It records the fact that the number of ratifications of the International Convention for the Simplification of Customs Formalities is increasing and notes that this international act has had a beneficent influence on the conclusion of certain treaties of commerce.*

(4) It observes with satisfaction that most of the methods suggested by the Economic Committee to ensure more effective protection against unfair competition have, in most cases, been embodied in the new provisions of the Convention of the Union for the Protection of Industrial Property revised at The Hague in November 1925.

(5) It follows with interest the enquiries being conducted by the Economic Committee with regard to measures for the repression of false Customs declarations; the standardisation of legislation with regards to bills of exchange and cheques; the unification of economic statistical methods; the protection of the buyer against worthless goods, and the Committee's research work regarding the causes of excessive fluctuations in economic activity.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I shall consider the resolutions of the Second Committee as adopted.

The resolutions were adopted.

62. — WORK OF THE HEALTH ORGANISATION : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion on the report of the Second Committee on the work of the Health Organisation (Annex 15. Document A. 63. 1926. III).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Fernandez y Medina, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform by the side of the Chairman of the Second Committee).

The President :

Translation : M. Fernandez y Medina, delegate of Uruguay, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Fernandez y Medina (Uruguay), Rapporteur, read his report and the following draft resolutions :

I. The Assembly :

Having taken note of the reports dealing with the work of the Health Organisation (documents A.6. 1926, A.6(a).1926 and A.17.1926), notes with satisfaction the growth and increasing usefulness of that work with its tendency to universality;

Expresses its gratification at the work undertaken and the results obtained by the Health Committee and its organs as well as by the various experts entrusted with special missions, and wishes to express its sympathetic interest with the scientists of the International Commission on Sleeping-Sickness who are conducting their sometimes dangerous enquiry in Equatorial Africa.

• II. The Assembly notes with satisfaction the close collaboration established with the sanitary and medical authorities of Japan as a result of the interchange and the conferences held in that country; and with the sanitary administrations of other Far-Eastern countries, through the intermediary of the Advisory Council of the Epidemiological Intelligence Bureau of the League at Singapore;

Notes, in particular, the plan of research work and special enquiries into health problems of the Far East in which the administrations of British India, China, the Dutch Indies, French Indo-China, Japan, the Philippine Islands and Siam have promised their assistance;

And requests the Council to refer the resolutions proposed by the Cuban¹, Czechoslovak² and Uruguayan³ delegations to the Health Committee for consideration.

III. The Assembly :

In view of the importance of the work of the Singapore Bureau of Epidemiological Intelligence as the first institution of the League of Nations in the Far East, and in view of the utility of its work not only for the Far-Eastern countries but also for other States Members of the League;

Decides that provision for the expenses of the Bureau should be made in the budget of the League for 1927.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I shall consider the resolutions of the Second Committee as adopted.

The resolutions were adopted.

63. — CHILD WELFARE : REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion on the report of the Fifth Committee on Child Welfare (Annex 16. Document A.77.1926.IV).

(On the invitation of the President, Count Mensdorff-Pouilly-Dietrichstein, Chairman of the Fifth Committee, and Dr. Riddell, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : Dr. Riddell, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Riddell (Canada) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I have been requested by the Fifth Committee to present to the Assembly its report on child welfare, and I have accepted that honour realising that it is a tribute to the great interest taken in my country on this subject.

¹ The Second Committee, in conformity with the resolutions adopted by the Assembly at its fifth and sixth ordinary sessions on the subject of infant mortality and the protection of children, requests the Council to ask the Health Committee to consider to what extent it could, at a suitable time, enlarge its scheme of international enquiry to include other problems of eugenics.

² The Second Committee, considering the importance of physical culture as a means for preventing disease and in view of the interest which numerous countries take in that question, asks the Council to instruct the Health Committee to consider the inclusion in the programme of its work of the international investigation of physical culture, including scholastic hygiene, and to decide what special problems may necessitate a comparative study and a co-ordination of national research work and national enquiries.

³ The Second Committee, having taken note that the International Economic Conference's plan of enquiry is to include an examination of the problem of nutrition (document A. 24. 1926. II), points out the interest which would attach to the supplementing of this enquiry by a study of the problem from the standpoint of race improvement. This study should take into account the work of the Health Organisation regarding infant mortality, as well as the reports by the Japanese Institute of Research into Nutrition Problems comprised in the publications of the Health Committee.

The Rapporteur then read his report and continued as follows :

It has been a matter of great satisfaction to the child welfare organisations and multitudes of laymen throughout the world that this subject of child welfare has been included in the work of the League by the unanimous consent of all its Members. There are, in fact, few questions with which the League deals which appeal to a wider constituency, or are more suitable for comparative study and research.

During the last two or three decades, great progress has been made in certain countries through organised effort to promote the welfare of children ; and surely it is an object worthy of the League that this experience and knowledge should be made available to all its Members. It is possible that the study of child welfare may not prove as fruitful of international agreement as some other questions before this Assembly, but the results will be none the less valuable for the prestige of the League and for the well-being of generations yet unborn.

I hope you will give this report your most careful consideration and your approval.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolutions of the Fifth Committee, which read as follows :

The Assembly :

1. Takes note of the report presented by the Child Welfare Committee and desires to express its thanks for the work done by the Committee ;

2. Approves the proposals contained in Resolutions III, V and VIII adopted by the Committee for pursuing the enquiries into the protection of infant life, the age of consent and of marriage and the subject of family allowances ;

3. Approves Resolution XIV, subject to the conclusions it contains being confirmed by subsequent investigations into the general problem of alcoholism ;

4. Expresses its concurrence with Resolution VI relating to child labour ;

5. Considers that the enquiry into children's courts can most suitably be undertaken by the Child Welfare Committee, but, in the circumstances, agrees with the course proposed to be taken by the Council in regard to Resolution XIII ;

6. Expresses the wish that the Committee should actively pursue the enquiry into the effect of the cinema on children with a view to the presentation of a report for the information of the Governments ;

7. (a) Recognises the importance of recreation in the life of children and young persons as expressed in Resolution XI, but, as doubts have been expressed how far the subject is one which is suitable for action by the League of Nations, the Assembly, in view of the sanction of the study of this subject given last year by the Council and Assembly, approves its continued study by the Advisory Committee, but considers that it should be confined, as indicated in the resolution adopted by the Assembly at its fifth ordinary session, to the comparative study of those aspects of the subject on which "the comparison of the methods and experiences of different countries . . . and international co-operation" may be likely to assist the Governments in dealing with these problems ;

(b) Recommends that the subject of biological education, regarding which similar doubts have been expressed, should be postponed for the present ;

8. Agrees generally with the resolutions adopted by the Council on June 9th and September 2nd, 1926.

The resolutions were adopted.

The Assembly rose at 8.10 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE
SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY
OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SIXTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25th, 1926, AT 10 a.m.

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64. — COMMUNICATIONS NOT CONNECTED WITH QUESTIONS ON THE AGENDA : INTERPRETATION OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE.

The President :

Translation : I wish to draw the attention of the Assembly to the proper interpretation of certain provisions of the Rules of Procedure, which lay down that delegations may ask the President's consent to make communications not connected with questions on the agenda of the meeting.

Rule 13 of the Rules of Procedure reads as follows :

"At the beginning of each meeting the President shall present to the Assembly all communications addressed to the Assembly or to the League the importance of which appears to him to warrant such action."

Further, paragraph 1 of Rule 15 lays down :

"No representative may address the Assembly without having previously obtained the permission of the President."

While the President is bound to be liberal in giving leave to delegations to make communications to the Assembly, the delegations are under obligation to inform him in advance of the object and nature of such communications, so that he may have a full knowledge of the facts before giving his consent.

I believe that my remarks, which I felt it my duty to make, are in accordance with the intentions of those who drew up the Rules of Procedure.

I am sure that with this reminder all delegations will conform to the Rules.

65. — ARBITRATION, SECURITY AND THE
PACIFIC SETTLEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL
DISPUTES: REPORT OF THE THIRD
COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Third Committee on the progress in general security, brought about by the conclusion of Conventions and Treaties. (Annex 17. Document A. 79. 1926. IX.)

(On the invitation of the President, M. Villegas, Chairman of the Third Committee, M. Motta, Chairman of the First Committee, and M. Marcovitch, Rapporteur of the Third Committee, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Marcovitch, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Marcovitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes), Rapporteur, read his report and continued as follows :

Translation : With your permission, I will add a few general remarks to the report of the Third Committee which I have just read.

If it were possible to solve once and for all the questions of arbitration and of the pacific settlement of international disputes, the face of the world would immediately be changed and a lasting peace would be ensured. The efforts of the Assemblies of the League and likewise of the Governments of the various countries have all been directed towards this ideal. In past years we have sometimes strayed from the straight path. But we have sought ways and means of solving the problem, and this in itself is evidence of a firm desire to obtain concrete and practical results.

I do not propose to recount the various steps taken by the League. It first adopted the celebrated Resolution XIV of 1922, next, in 1923, it drew up the Treaty of Mutual Assistance and, in 1924, went so far as the Protocol. The Protocol was intended by its authors to be an instrument of general scope for the permanent settlement of all international disputes by pacific or judicial methods.

Last year it was stated that the Protocol was far in advance of the realities of the international position. While the validity of the general principles laid down was admitted, it was nevertheless affirmed that the States were not in a position to adopt it as a general rule for the guidance of the foreign policy of their countries. But though last year we were, I regret to say, checked in our advance towards the pacific settlement of international disputes, we yet retained the hope that the negotiations being conducted between the Western Powers with a view to the conclusion of a pact of guarantee — and these negotiations were in no way secret — would yield favourable and concrete results.

In its report to the Assembly, the Council dwells on the fact that the Treaties of Locarno — which can be brought into force now that Germany has been admitted to the League — mark an appreciable advance towards pacification, the restoration of mutual confidence and the progression of Europe and the world generally towards peace. The Third Committee, examining these results, was struck by the capital, the vital importance of the general provisions of the Locarno Treaties.

Those Treaties contain certain principles which, if taken as a general rule for the foreign policy of all countries, would contribute largely to the maintenance of peace and the permanent restoration of international confidence. I venture to recall the fact that, in the Locarno Treaties, the signatory States, Germany and France, Germany and Belgium, and Germany, France, Belgium and Great Britain, guarantee jointly and severally to maintain the territorial *status quo* and the inviolability of their frontiers.

The same States give a mutual undertaking not to engage in any attack or invasion or to have recourse to war in any circumstances.

As a logical complement to the above undertaking, they agree to settle pacifically all disputes of whatever nature which may arise between them and which are not amenable to the normal diplomatic procedure.

Here, then, we have a very important step towards the pacific settlement of international disputes. Germany, France, Great Britain and Belgium solemnly undertake to settle all their disputes and all their quarrels, of whatever nature, by pacific methods. By signing arbitration conventions they have pointed out the way which we all — for we are equally concerned in the maintenance of peace — should follow and adopt as the practical policy of our country.

I must remind you that, in so far as they have been used as the basis of the Third Committee's resolution, the Locarno Treaties have been regarded solely from the political point of view. We considered this the best guide in laying down the direction to be followed in our future endeavours to establish peace.

The Third Committee did not go into details nor did it examine any particular clauses in the Locarno Treaties. It confined itself to a purely political examination, and the resolution it proposes to the Assembly is essentially a political resolution.

It considered that the Powers in question, whose antagonism dates back to the most distant historical times and covered very serious problems; showed both boldness and common sense when they signed the Locarno Treaties. They removed all danger of war and undertook publicly and in the sight of the whole world not to have recourse to war in any circumstances. The Third Committee believes that other countries in other parts of Europe might similarly be induced to wipe out a past that all desire to forget, and thereby to ensure peace and turn their eyes towards a brighter future.

In view of this fact, the Third Committee decided to recommend, as regards political matters, that all States should follow the road laid down by the Locarno Treaties.

I will not detain you on this subject. I have tried to give a brief explanation of the resolution proposed to the Assembly by the Committee. I wish to add only one word concerning a passage in the resolution which I consider essential; I refer to the passage in which the Council is requested to offer its good offices when it judges such action opportune.

The Council, of course, retains complete liberty of action in this matter, but we believe that, being an independent and impartial body, it should avail itself of the general atmosphere of confidence, reassurance and hope which now prevails, to complete the pacification of Europe and the revival of mutual trust, and so facilitate the great work of disarmament, which is of vital concern to all men and all nations.

I therefore ask the Assembly to adopt the resolution proposed by the Third Committee. I believe that the resolution marks a further

stage in the spiritual evolution leading to the permanent settlement of the problem of peace and the institution of stable and pacific methods, which will render war a futility and will prevent the nations from ever again having recourse to arms.

The President :

Translation : M. Motta, first delegate of Switzerland, Chairman of the First Committee, will address the Assembly.

M. Motta (Switzerland), Chairman of the First Committee :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I have no report to submit or speech to deliver. I have only one observation which the First Committee has instructed me to make.

The First Committee's task was a very simple one. The Third Committee had already, so to speak, prepared our work.

We studied the draft resolution drawn up by the Third Committee, and we were able to give it our unreserved support. Some delegations, however, were afraid that to accept the resolution would involve them in actual interpretations of the Covenant of the League. We do not think that this is the purport or scope of the resolution submitted to you. Moreover, Dr. Markovitch in his eloquent speech said that the resolution was not constitutional or judicial, but purely political in character. I am glad to state that the First Committee entirely concurs in this view.

We welcome the work done at Locarno. We approve the main idea underlying the Locarno treaties, the setting up of a procedure of conciliation, judicial settlement, arbitration and security through mutual guarantees against unprovoked aggression. That is the essence of the resolution. The Covenant is unaffected. We have no intention of laying down any interpretation of it on this occasion.

Another question was raised in the Committee, namely, whether the magnificent opportunity provided by Locarno should not be utilised to urge all States once again to reconsider the question of accepting the compulsory jurisdiction clause of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice.

However, we came to the conclusion that it was unnecessary to mention this aspect of the question in the draft resolution. We thought that this great, this vital question of the acceptance of the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court was, if I may say so, still on the "agenda" of mankind and was therefore one which concerned the Government of every country.

The President :

Translation : M. Marks von Wurtemberg, delegate of Sweden, will address the Assembly.

M. Marks von Wurtemberg (Sweden) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Swedish delegation supports the proposed resolution. The Third Committee and its distinguished Rapporteur have emphasised the importance of the Locarno Treaties and shown how desirable it is that the main ideas underlying these treaties regarding conciliation and judicial settlement, and the mutual guarantee of States against unprovoked aggression, should be put into wider practice by the conclusion of further international conventions.

The Swedish delegation fully shares the Committee's views on these points and sees in this development of international relations an effective means of ensuring peace and mutual

confidence between nations and of facilitating the general reduction of armaments, which is ardently desired by the Swedish nation.

In this connection, however, I should like to draw attention to two points in the Committee's report to which our delegation attaches special importance. The report shows that certain States are in a position to go further and to accept a more strictly judicial system than that of the Locarno Treaties. Sweden is one of those States. She is, in fact, one of those that have concluded conventions entailing a judicial settlement of all disputes without exception. This settlement applies, therefore, not only, as in the Locarno Treaties, to disputes of a legal character, but also to political disputes. Sweden has recently concluded such treaties with her neighbours, Denmark and Finland. Our Government and Parliament have further declared themselves in favour of concluding a similar treaty with Norway, and there is every reason to believe that they would be prepared to make similar agreements with other countries. We therefore think it desirable to point out that the stipulations of the Locarno Treaties concerning the judicial settlement of international disputes — although they certainly represent a very considerable advance — should not bar the way to the conclusion of treaties providing for an even wider application of the principle of judicial settlement.

The report points out, moreover, that certain States do not consider it necessary to identify themselves strictly with the system of mutual guarantee provided for in the Treaties of Locarno. Sweden has always sided with these States, and will probably continue to do so in the future.

The views I have just expressed are, it is true, embodied not only in the report but also in the resolution itself, which expressly recognises that there are certain countries whose interests do not require the conclusion of treaties on the same lines as those of Locarno.

Having drawn special attention to the above-mentioned passages in the report and the resolution, the Swedish delegation welcomes the proposed resolution and gives it its unreserved support.

The President :

Translation : M. Cassin, delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. Cassin (France) :

Translation : Gentlemen The French delegation gives its entire support to the resolution submitted to the Assembly by the Third Committee, and this not only because France is one of the signatories of the Locarno Agreements, but also for certain general and fundamental reasons to which special reference must be made.

This resolution contains the elements of the continuity necessary in the work of successive Assemblies. Since public opinion always feels a sense of disappointment at inconsistency, the confidence of the nations in the League is bound to be strengthened if it can be shown that the decisions and recommendations of the Assemblies are followed up by practical action.

The resolution reaffirms the continuity of the method selected in 1924, and, as in 1925, the Assembly will proclaim its continued adherence to the triple and indivisible formula: arbitration, security and reduction of armaments. The League of Nations and the States Members must rely on this for the maintenance of world peace.

These fundamental considerations justify the unanimous approval of the resolution submitted by the Third Committee.

The President :

Translation : If no one has anything further to say, I will put to the vote the resolution of the Third Committee, which reads as follows :

The Assembly :

Having examined the reports of the Council on Arbitration, Security and the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes ;

Records the fact that the resolution adopted by the Assembly at its sixth ordinary session to the effect that the most urgent need of the present time is the re-establishment of mutual confidence between nations has had definite results. It sees clear proof of this in the ever-increasing number of arbitration conventions and treaties of security conceived in the spirit of the Covenant of the League of Nations and in harmony with the principles of the Geneva Protocol (Arbitration, Security and Disarmament). It emphasises in particular the importance of the Treaties of Locarno, the coming into force of which has been rendered possible by the admission of Germany into the League of Nations and the principal object of which is to ensure peace in one of the most sensitive regions of Europe ;

Sees in the last-mentioned Treaties a definite step forward in the establishment of mutual confidence between nations ;

Considers that agreements of this kind need not necessarily be restricted to a limited area, but may be applied to different parts of the world ;

Asserts its conviction that the general ideas embodied in the clauses of the Treaties of Locarno, whereby provision is made for conciliation and arbitration and for security by the mutual guaranteeing of States against any unprovoked aggression, may well be accepted amongst the fundamental rules which should govern the foreign policy of every civilised nation ;

Expresses the hope that these principles will be recognised by all States and will be put into practice as soon as possible by all States in whose interest it is to contract such treaties ;

And requests the Council to recommend the States Members of the League of Nations to put into practice the above-mentioned principles and to offer, if necessary, its good offices for the conclusion of suitable agreements likely to establish confidence and security, the indispensable conditions of the maintenance of international peace and, as a result, to facilitate the reduction and limitation of the armaments of all States.

The resolution was adopted.

66. — EXAMINATION OF THE SECTION OF THE REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL DEALING WITH THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS FOR THE PROGRESSIVE CODIFICATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the section of the report on the work of the Council dealing with the work of the Committee of Experts for the Progressive Codification of International Law.

M. Motta, Chairman of the First Committee, will address the Assembly.

M. Motta (Switzerland) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I rise once more to make a short announcement to the Assembly. There is no report on the question and I shall certainly not make a speech.

This section of the report on the work of the Council was referred to the First Committee on the proposal of the Netherlands delegation. The First Committee studied it with great care and came to the conclusion that a general discussion on the codification of international law would not be advisable for the moment.

The codification of international law is of course one of the most important of the League's activities. It is closely connected with two other major questions — the pacific settlement of international disputes and disarmament.

The question has been referred for examination to a Committee of Jurists, who are now engaged upon this work, so that a debate in the Assembly would be neither wise nor helpful.

The First Committee confined itself to an exchange of views. It decided that the Minutes of its discussions should be transmitted through the Secretary-General to the Committee of Jurists. We may rely upon the wisdom and experience of the Committee to make such use of them as may seem expedient in the circumstances.

The President :

Translation : If nobody has anything further to say, I shall consider that the Assembly has taken note of the statement made by M. Motta, Chairman of the First Committee. (*Assent.*)

67. — EXAMINATION OF CERTAIN QUESTIONS REGARDING THE ELECTION OF THE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL: RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE FIRST COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the appointment by the Council of a Committee to examine certain questions regarding the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council.

(*On the invitation of the President, M. Zahle, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform by the side of the Chairman of the First Committee.*)

The President :

Translation : M. Zahle, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Zahle (Denmark), Rapporteur :

Translation : In a memorandum dated May 12th, 1926, Viscount Cecil, delegate of the British Empire, drew the attention of the Committee on the Composition of the Council to the system of the single transferable vote in regard to the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council. As you know, the memorandum is annexed to the report of the Committee on the Composition of the Council, which Committee, as you are aware, did not examine the question, as it considered it to lie somewhat outside its scope.

The Norwegian delegation, in view of the advantages which the adoption of this system might entail, submitted the following resolution to the Assembly :

"The Assembly requests the Council to appoint a Committee :

"(1) To study the question of the single transferable vote and the principle of proportional representation in general, as regards the problem of the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council.

"(2) To report on the method of election of the non-permanent Members in sufficient time to lay the question before the Assembly at its next ordinary session."

The First Committee examined the Norwegian delegation's resolution. On that occasion the Norwegian delegate drew attention to the great importance which the Norwegian Government attached to this question, on the ground that the Council should represent as completely as possible the different opinions and interests existing with the League. In the Norwegian Government's opinion the object in view cannot be attained under a system of elections by majority. The Norwegian delegate pointed out, moreover, that, in the present instance, it was not a question of ordinary political elections. The objections usually advanced against the system of proportional representation as applied to political elections were not valid here.

During the examination of the proposal by the First Committee, the Norwegian delegate submitted the following amended proposal :

The Assembly requests the Council to instruct the Secretariat to study the system of the single transferable vote and of the principle of proportional representation in general, in connection with the problem of the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council, in order that this question may be laid before the next ordinary session of the Assembly.

You will see that there is a substantial difference between the two draft resolutions. In the first, the Council is requested to appoint a Committee to study the question, whereas in the amended resolution the Council is only requested to instruct the Secretariat to study the system.

I would like to point out that the First Committee did not discuss the substance of the question. The Chairman of the Committee found that the resolution did not affect the question, but left it intact. Moreover, it did not entail any expenditure by the League.

The States Members of the League will be able, if they wish, to send memoranda on the subject to the Secretariat.

As Rapporteur of the First Committee, I have the honour to submit to the Assembly the amended resolution.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I shall consider the draft resolution submitted by the First Committee as adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

68. — WORK OF THE ORGANISATION FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSIT, INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF FACILITIES TO BE ACCORDED TO JOURNALISTS WHO ATTEND THE MEETINGS OF THE LEAGUE AT GENEVA : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Second Committee's report on the work of the Organisation for Communications and Transit (Annex 18. Document A.96.1926.VIII.) and the proposal of the delegation of Chile concerning facilities to be accorded to journalists

who attend the meetings of the League of Nations at Geneva.

(On the invitation of the President, Mr. Fitzgerald, Chairman of the Second Committee, and M. Jaramillo, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Jaramillo will address the Assembly.

M. Jaramillo (Colombia), Rapporteur, read his report.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolutions of the Second Committee, which are as follows :

The Assembly :

Notes the progress accomplished by the Organisation for Communications and Transit since the sixth ordinary session of the Assembly, and especially the success obtained by the European Conference on the Measurement of Vessels employed in Inland Navigation and the Conference on the Passports Regime ;

Trusts that the Third General Conference on Communications and Transit, which will be held in 1927 and which will examine in particular the general questions of organisation and documentation, will consider the question of improving, as far as possible, technical liaison between the work of the Organisation for Communications and Transit and the specialised administration and experts of non-European countries ; and

Notes, finally, the conclusion of the work of the Special Committee of Enquiry into the Reform of the Calendar, and associates itself with the findings and suggestions made by the Advisory and Technical Committee.

The Assembly of the League of Nations, desiring that all possible assistance should be given to journalists attending the meetings of the League at Geneva,

Takes note of the liberal statements made at the time of the Passports Conference with regard to the facilities for crossing frontiers to be granted to bearers of identity cards issued by the International Association of Journalists accredited to the League of Nations

The resolutions were adopted.

69. — INTERPRETATION OF THE PREAMBLE AND OF ARTICLES 3 AND 4 OF THE COVENANT : REPORT AND RESOLUTION PRESENTED BY THE FIRST COMMITTEE : MOTION OF ADJOURNMENT PROPOSED BY M. BENES (CZECHOSLOVAKIA).

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the report of the First Committee on the interpretation of the Preamble and of Articles 3 and 4 of the Covenant (Annex 19. Document A.102.1926.V).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Motta, Chairman of the First Committee, and M. Joseph Barthélemy, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Joseph Barthélemy will address the Assembly.

M. Joseph Barthélemy (France), Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Viscount Cecil has submitted a proposal the object of which was to request the Council to appoint a special Committee to draw up a report defining the sphere of action of the League of Nations.

The British delegate withdrew the first part of his proposal, in which the Council was requested to appoint a special committee, and putting forward various considerations, more particularly the necessity for economy, he proposed simply that the First — the legal — Committee should appoint a Sub-Committee to draw up a report on this subject.

The First Committee rejected the proposal thus made, for reasons which I will explain. It refused to define the League's sphere of action ; it merely recommended that the letter, and more especially the spirit, of the Covenant should be observed. It considered that the Covenant was sufficient in itself, and accordingly proposes the adoption of the following resolution :

"The Assembly :

"Having considered with the deepest interest Viscount Cecil's proposal and the memorandum of the British delegation annexed to the present resolution ;

"Shares the feelings which inspired these two documents ;

"Recognises that the League of Nations should avoid dissipating its activity upon subjects which might divert it from its lofty mission of promoting the peace of the world and facilitating co-operation between nations for the peaceful progress of mankind ;

"Recommends that each body forming part of the League, before taking into consideration any proposal submitted to it, should satisfy itself that the proposal is in accordance with the objects of the League as indicated by the Covenant and possesses real importance from the point of view of the attainment of those objects ;

"Decides that in case of doubt, and if so requested by a member of the body, the question shall be submitted to the Council, in the interval between the sessions of the Assembly, and, during those sessions, to the Committee appointed by the Assembly for legal and constitutional questions.

"The present resolution shall be brought by the Secretary-General to the knowledge of the various bodies forming part of the League."

I must first submit to the Assembly certain observations on the text which has just been read. In the first place, Viscount Cecil's proposal and the memorandum submitted by the British delegation in support of this proposal are annexed to the resolution. This does not mean that the proposal was adopted or that the Committee agreed absolutely, and to the letter, with the conclusions set forth in the memorandum. It only means that the high standing of the authors, the importance of the great country they represent and the importance of the question raised in these two documents — the proposal and the memorandum — deserve the fullest consideration.

You will doubtless have noticed, too, that the Assembly, which is happy, on occasion, to assert its sovereignty, uses in paragraph 4 the timid word

"recommends". The reason is that the Committee did not wish to settle the extremely delicate question of the relations between the Council and the Assembly. These bodies have parallel powers, and there is no established hierarchy. For this reason the Assembly in addressing the Council "recommends".

The recommendation is addressed to the organs of the League. This point, however, had aroused the susceptibilities of the International Labour Office, and we were instructed to state that the International Labour Office is not an organ of the League. The only certain and incontestable right of the Assembly — and it is a right which we shall always defend — is the voting of the necessary credits for the International Labour Office.

I now pass to the fourth point to which I drew your attention. When a special and new subject is submitted to you for discussion there is no need to hold a special debate on it, terminating with a vote on the question whether action in the matter would be in order or desirable. In the words of the proverb of the sunny south, so appositely quoted by the distinguished representative of Italy : "Do not scratch the cicada to make it sing"; do not force the League to engage in superfluous discussions.

We simply wish to draw the particular attention of the organs of the League to this point — that they must not blindly accept any subject whatever and bring it within the League's sphere of action.

When submitting his proposal, Viscount Cecil undoubtedly had some retrospective purpose in mind, and as the League has now been in existence and at work for six years, it seems at first sight a little strange to say after all this time : "Well, we have been working for six whole years. It is time we decided what we ought to be doing !"

Doubtless Viscount Cecil has discovered that the League has exceeded its powers in some respects, or is in danger of doing so ; but he has not thrown any light on this point, although it would have been of especial interest.

To define is to limit, and to limit is to restrain ; but the Committee has shrunk from the difficulty of finding a definition. A definition must contain the whole *res definita*, and it must contain nothing else. Indeed, have not lawyers and theologians always throughout the ages said, *Omnis definitio periculosa* ("any definition is dangerous") ? A definition is doubly dangerous both because it is difficult to make and because, when once it is made, it may have very vexatious consequences.

The honourable delegate of Canada, Sir George Foster, whose warm and hearty eloquence we all so greatly appreciate, said : "No, all definitions are not dangerous. On the contrary, they are necessary, and in life no progress is possible without definite rules of conduct."

I trust the honourable delegate of Canada will believe that the French delegation also considers rules of conduct necessary both in private and public life. But we consider, too, that a hard-and-fast definition is not invariably a good thing. If, for example, we were asked to define the phrase "fully self-governing" which appears in the article of the Covenant providing that any State desiring to become a Member of the League must be fully self-governing. If I myself were asked to define this phrase, which covers such a multitude of things — and it has been my profession for thirty years to define what a free government is — I should refuse the task.

The British delegation had in mind a universal, abstract, sound and clear definition — a surprising fact, seeing that it is usually my country which is accused of an excessive fondness for universal definitions, a taste for abstractions, a superstitious

reverence for the written word; and we have always thought that one of the many great qualities of the British mind was its practical nature, its wariness in committing to paper, its trust in established custom and its preference for dealing with difficulties as and when they arise.

But, as M. Scialoja remarked, we owe some gratitude to the British delegation, since both the proposal and the memorandum might have been written by a professor of a Latin country — and there can be no derogatory implication in the term, seeing that it comes from the eminent delegate of Italy, who represents here the world-famous University of Rome, and from myself, who all too unworthily represent the great University of Paris.

Viscount Cecil's proposal is confined to a suggestion to nominate a Committee, but there is a memorandum attached to the resolution. This memorandum first sets out a certain method of interpreting the Covenant; secondly, it supplies the material for a definition of the League's sphere of action, and, thirdly, it lays down a certain procedure which the League's activities would have to follow.

The memorandum begins by laying down a method of interpreting the Covenant. There are two possible methods. When considering a document we can look at it with the eyes of a jurist, scrutinising every letter, twisting the text, studying its grammatical interpretation, giving it what some would call a judaical and others a jesuitical interpretation. The text may be subjected to an *interpretation strictissima*, as if the French *Cour de Cassation* were hearing a plea regarding a party wall or a criminal case, where the *interpretation strictissima* must be taken whenever it benefits the accused.

Is this the best method to apply when dealing with a document like the Covenant? My very eminent and eloquent friend, M. Paul-Boncour, who is now the head of the French delegation, said the other day that the more one studied the Covenant the more gratitude one was bound to feel towards those who, on the immediate morrow of the war, when the earth still reeked with the smoke of battles, raised this imperishable monument, conceived this precious and precise instrument for the organisation and maintenance of peace. No one has a greater admiration for it than I have; but for the very reason that the Covenant was drawn up at a time when deep emotion was everywhere prevalent, it is essential that we should make it a rule to distinguish, if we can, between what the authors of the Covenant said and what they intended to say.

Turn to the Preamble. Two of the League's objects are set out therein, namely, the promotion of international co-operation and the attainment of international peace and security.

The words used are: "In order to promote international co-operation and to achieve international peace and security".

Let us go further and, in a common-sense spirit, taking a somewhat higher view than the man in the street, let us read Article 23. "The Members of the League will endeavour to secure and maintain fair and humane conditions of labour for men, women and children." Article 25: "The mitigation of suffering throughout the world." Article 22: "The well-being and development of such people", that is, inhabitants of mandated territories. All these articles assert the sacred mission of civilisation and, since we have this text, which glows with the spirit of the Covenant, what right have we, in drawing up a list of the special missions of the League, to declare such a list to be limitative

instead of simply enumerative or, as the jurist would say, *ad exemplum constitutus*.

Personally I think that the spirit of the Covenant is sufficiently lucid and clear to justify all the activities of the League in the sphere of international co-operation and the maintenance of peace.

Secondly, the British delegation's memorandum provides material for a definition. The League may deal with (1) the object of a treaty; (2) whatever may become the object of a treaty; (3) a treaty dealing only with international questions (this idea, perhaps, is not very sharply defined). As regards national questions, the League may, if I understand the British memorandum aright, only collect information.

Before reverting to what I have already said, I would ask what would be the use of a science which produced no practical results, or of information not intended as a preliminary to action. To my mind, the League may legislate on anything that is likely to promote international co-operation and the maintenance of peace.

The disadvantage of a restrictive definition is that it would both add to the Covenant and limit it. There is the risk that it might reflect upon some of the past work of the Assembly, and even on some of the noble work in which Viscount Cecil has enthusiastically participated. I have in mind the restoration of Austria, the financial assistance rendered to Hungary, the assistance given to Greek and Bulgarian refugees, Armenians, Russians and others—in fact, all the works conducted by Dr. Nansen. There are certain evils so serious and deep-rooted that the countries suffering from them constitute a definite element of unrest in the world — evils so serious and deep-rooted, especially when resulting from the war, that peace cannot be regarded as secure until they have been eradicated.

To take another point: a restrictive definition would eventually become a handicap. Supposing that at some distant date, perhaps so distant that we shall not be here to see it, measures were contemplated to remedy the money market troubles which exist, as you know, both in countries with depreciated currencies and in those whose currencies are somewhat paradoxically described as favourable; supposing that we were one day asked to deal with some great humanitarian work, beyond the power and resources of a single State, should we declare such work outside our sphere of action?

If this proposal for the restrictive definition of the Covenant is designed to prevent the League from dealing with questions like children's baths or swimming pools for adults — to return to the examples already quoted to you — the fable would be reversed and instead of the mountain bringing forth a mouse, the mouse would bring forth a mountain. Or, to quote another fable, it would be like the bear which, in order to rid its master of the fly on his nose, proceeded to break his head.

The maintenance of peace is indisputably the chief, the primary object of the League. But does that mean that we shall ensure peace simply by meeting in this hall and making statements of doctrine. Is peace a matter of courts and magistrates, of public prosecutors or judges' robes and wigs? Can peace be manufactured by the machinery of the law?

No, if the triune godhead of the League, — arbitration, security and disarmament — is to come down on earth and live among us, preparing the way for peace, we must create the proper atmosphere for its reception. We must teach the nations that the interests which they have in common are more numerous than those which

divide them and are also more real, more profound and more permanent. Collaboration and co-operation between the peoples create an atmosphere favourable to the maintenance of peace.

In the British delegation's memorandum an attempt is made to establish a line of demarcation between national and international affairs. This is an intricate problem, one as difficult as the definition of public order, morality or decency which are by their very nature conceptions liable to change. One speaker in the Committee referred to the fact that it was formerly considered improper for a woman to show her feet. Well, standards of decency change. The bathing costume of to-day is not what our grandmothers would have worn. It does for seaside bars and restaurants, but is, so far, prohibited in city streets and restaurants. Everything is a question of latitude, of period, of the state of opinion at the moment. Questions are continually extending beyond the bounds of national affairs and coming within the international purview. Some questions which were once international are no longer even national, but simply matters for the individual.

Mr. Latham, delegate of Australia, spoke of a uniform religion for all Members of the League as a sheer absurdity. It would indeed be an absurdity at the present day, when religion has become a purely individual matter, but less than two hundred years have elapsed since the Holy Alliance. We have seen the evolution of religion from the international to the national plane and from the national to the individual plane, on which it finally stands.

Let me now turn to the question of the internal constitution of States.

Viscount Cecil, the eminent delegate of the British Empire, gave an excellent example of the national purview when he spoke of the reform of the House of Lords. That is obviously an essentially national question, but it is too forceful an illustration to provide us with a definition. It is as if we had hold of the two ends of the chain but could not find the intermediate links.

Does this mean that, from the international standpoint, the internal constitution of States is a matter of indifference? Parliamentary democracy is for some of us the most satisfactory constitution from the international point of view, and, in the view of some, the democratic control of diplomacy is calculated to prevent war.

Is it not, moreover, in keeping with the spirit of the Covenant, under which, as I have just said, none but States "*qui se gouvernent librement*", or, in the more explicit wording of the English text, "fully self-governing" States may become Members of the League? At the same time, nobody here would wish to raise in this hall these burning questions, which are so essentially legal in character, for the simple reason that the problem is not a legal one within the competence of the First Committee, but a matter of expediency and tact which concerns every organ of the League.

Hygiene was once unknown, hence the terrible epidemics of the Middle Ages. It became a national affair and fearful scourges still occurred, such as the Marseilles plague. At length it became an international question, and cholera and plague are shrinking day by day.

Social and labour legislation, which at one time did not exist, were first national affairs and are now tending more and more to become questions of international concern.

How is it possible to distinguish between the national and international aspects of such questions? Can we decide, for example, that an epidemic disease is international, that a non-

infectious and non-epidemic disease is essentially national and that an infectious but non-epidemic disease is a mixture of the two? Can cholera be included among international and arterio-sclerosis among national diseases? Can cancer be included in the national category because it is not considered to be transmissible, while tuberculosis would be considered as half and half?

Such hair-splitting would lead us into endless difficulties.

A third point: the British delegation's memorandum — and now I am dealing with an essentially technical matter, which is both intricate and difficult — suggests that a certain procedure should be adopted for action by the League.

This is a question which requires mature consideration. The British delegation's memorandum proposes to restrict action by the League not only to a certain sphere, but proposes to lay down certain rules for the exercise of the League's activities within that sphere itself. The League could only act by framing an international treaty or creating an international bureau. The Committee felt, however, that in each specific case the League should be left to decide whether the matter in question was of sufficiently general interest for it to take up, or whether it was preferable to leave the Powers most directly concerned to settle it.

Once this point is decided, it is for the Assembly to select the procedure which it considers most suitable. In particular, resolutions adopted by the Assembly in accordance with the Covenant and the Rules of Procedure may constitute a perfectly satisfactory basis for action by the League. The rule of unanimity imposed upon members of the Assembly is an adequate guarantee that they will not overstep the limit.

The Covenant is enough in itself and we have the necessary organs to interpret it, whenever a proposal is referred to them, namely, either the Council or the Assembly — on the report of the Legal Committee, that is to say, the First Committee — or the Hague Court when purely technical questions are involved.

Wherein, then, would the disadvantages of a legal definition lie? It would mean that the League would be shown the immensity of its domain, as when the Devil took Jesus upon a high mountain and offered him the kingdoms of the earth; and we should have to say: Take care, be cautious, be wise, do not attempt everything at once.

An old English jurist once said: "Parliament can do anything except change a man into a woman". That is an excellent legal definition, and I think it is a very good legal definition of the sphere of action of the League of Nations.

This legal definition does not mean that the British Parliament is bound to do everything short of changing a man into a woman, and the Assembly and its organisations should not take up every question *ad absurdum*. What I mean is that a distinction must be made between the question of legal competence and the question of expediency.

On the question of expediency we see eye to eye with the British delegation, and the Committee shares the feelings which inspired the British memorandum and draft resolution.

Are we to take up every question without a preliminary study of its constitutionality and expediency? Think how overburdened our agenda is, how the meetings of the Committees are crowded together and how the most important questions are rushed through in the charming intimacy and friendliness of the closing period of a session! Account must be taken of political contingencies, practical and financial possibilities.

In this latter connection I am particularly glad of the support of the eminent representative of Czechoslovakia on the First Committee, M. Osusky, who emphasised the importance of financial considerations.

What is the resolution now before us? It is a recommendation not to accept everything indiscriminately, not to admit all those who knock insistently at our doors. It is a recommendation to select. There are questions of major importance which fall within the legal competence of the Assembly but which cannot be taken up, either because we are incapable of settling them at the moment or because we do not possess the necessary funds, or because the matter is a very delicate one affecting the internal policy of States.

There are also minor questions which it is not for the League to examine. The League must not be made to appear an academy of cranks or the last refuge of a school of sentimental thought. The League must be wary in taking up the more or less ingenious schemes of reform conceived in the brains of bachelors or old maids or of the childless, or even — I would add, lest I fail to carry the whole Assembly with me — of men with family cares. Questions such as heliotherapy, hydrotherapy, language reform, or rational food and clothing belong to a sentimental school of thought into which we cannot penetrate. The League's task is obviously not to provide children's baths or swimming-baths for adults. If the Assembly were asked to deal with a question which for some hours occupied the attention of the French Parliament, namely, the question of babies' dummies, and to recommend the international prohibition of their use, I should most certainly ask it to refrain.

There are certain problems which should only be dealt with when public opinion is ripe. I must confess that when, in a few days' time, I return to our farmers in the south of France and tell them of the great work the League is doing, I do not propose to mention the reform of the calendar, important as that question undoubtedly is.

It is essential, moreover, to realise that the importance of any question is purely relative and varies considerably according to latitude and country. For example, certain countries regard opium as a burning question; others attach capital importance to infectious diseases, while others again — and these constitute the majority — regard the maintenance of peace as the primary work of the League.

The meaning of our resolution is perfectly clear: no questions must be taken up without due reflection, for fear of damaging the League's prestige.

We maintain that certain unwritten rules are implicit in the Covenant: the sense of expediency, a comprehension of practical possibilities and respect for what Roosevelt once called "sublime common sense". I think the Assembly ought to be unanimous on all these points.

We have, however, refused to consider any rigid or restrictive legal definition which might one day hamper the League in the performance of its duties, in the attainment of its instinctive objects and in the realisation of those great hopes which the world looks to it to fulfil.

The President:

Translation: M. Beneš, first delegate of Czechoslovakia, will address the Assembly.

M. Beneš (Czechoslovakia):

Translation: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I am not going to oppose the resolution submitted by the Committee, but simply to make a small observation.

You have heard the views of the First Committee, and the Rapporteur's observations on the British proposal, and, since this proposal might have far-reaching consequences, I will ask the Assembly to consider the following suggestion.

I quite agree with Viscount Cecil that the League should not engage in work outside the sphere of international co-operation or work which is not in keeping with its other objects. Moreover, I regard the drafting of any resolution on the question as a very important matter; it concerns not only the First Committee, but also the other Committees whose work it can or might affect.

At the same time, I recognise and call special attention to the weight attaching to the Rapporteur's arguments and the large measure of truth which they contain.

For all these reasons and in view of the fact that the other Committees have had neither time nor opportunity to study the draft resolution and its possible effect on the work which concerns them more particularly, I venture to propose that the examination of the resolution should be postponed until the next session of the Assembly.

The President:

Translation: Viscount Cecil, delegate of the British Empire, will address the Assembly.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire):

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — It is probably one of the chief difficulties of the League of Nations that the mentality of the French race is so different from the mentality of the British race, so that, however clearly we try to express our thoughts, we find ourselves constantly misunderstood by our French friends; and it may be that the converse happens with equal frequency.

We have listened to a most interesting and a most versatile discourse by the distinguished representative of France. It was very elaborate and, in parts, very entertaining; but it was based on a complete misapprehension of the central topic with which he dealt, namely, the British memorandum on the question before us. He conceived — indeed, he asserted in the most emphatic way — that we desire to lay down a hard-and-fast definition of what is and what is not within the competence of the League of Nations. No conception could have been further from our thoughts, and I can only say that I do not think that any English person reading our memorandum could have arrived at so strange a conclusion.

The memorandum consists of an argument to show what perhaps it was not worth while so elaborately to show, namely, that the League is constituted to deal with international matters and not with national matters; it has not to take the place of organs of national opinion or of national constitution. When an attempt is made to draw a line between what is international and what is national there are obvious and immense difficulties to be encountered. As M. Barthélemy very truly said, not only is it very difficult to draw the line at any particular moment, but the line necessarily changes from time to time. This is all quite true and is all recognised or implied in the British memorandum. An endeavour has been made there to give examples of what may be thought to be clearly on one side of the line or clearly on the other side. I recognise, of course, that the statement is not a complete one, and that it could not be made complete unless it were a good deal longer. It was merely put forward as the basis for discussion and I hoped very much that the First Committee would have seen its way to elaborate it and to make it — I will not say quite complete, because I doubt whether it could ever

be made so — but more widely embracing so as to give a more useful indication of what was and what was not within the competence of the League.

I think that our French colleague pointed out very truly one subject which was entirely omitted — and it is a grave omission — from the British memorandum, namely, such spheres of activity as the assistance of refugees and the action which the League has taken — so happily and usefully from an international point of view — in Hungary, Austria, Greece, Bulgaria and other countries. It may be — I trust it will be — that such action is only the prelude to other action of the same kind. A man must indeed be a lunatic if he thinks that such action is not clearly international in character.

The whole basis, therefore, of that part of the French orator's speech which attacked and criticised with some severity the British memorandum because it sought to lay down a strict definition was based — I must say so quite plainly — upon a complete misunderstanding of what that memorandum essayed to do. I do not desire to withdraw anything which I said when I first laid this matter before the League. I do think it is important that the League should confine itself to matters of international concern, though I quite admit that any attempt rigidly to define what are international matters would be mistaken and impossible. I did not bring this question forward, as the French delegate appeared to think, merely because some Advisory Committee had recommended swimming-baths, or for any reason of that kind. I took that suggestion as an illustration, an obvious and a harmless illustration, of the kind of thing which seemed to me to be clearly outside the competence of the League.

This is not a trifling matter and it is a grave mistake to suppose that it is. There is a danger that our critics, the enemies of the League — and there are enemies of the League in every country, perhaps as many in France as in my own country — may be able to say that Geneva is the home of cranks and fanatics. It would be grossly untrue to say so, but it is very important that we should take care not only that it is untrue but that there is not even a scintilla of basis for such a charge.

It is for this reason and in order to reassure public opinion in certain countries and to make it quite certain that there is no intention of interfering with national sovereignty, no intention of utilising international machinery in order to accomplish a strictly national object, or, still less, to interfere with national independence and sovereignty, that I desire to bring this matter seriously to the consideration of the League, and I had hoped that we should have had a more helpful kind of speech than that to which we have just listened.

I personally greatly prefer the report of the Committee to the argument by which it has been recommended and I do not doubt that the essential paragraph, which suggests that "each body forming part of the League should satisfy itself that the proposal is in accordance with the objects of the League as indicated by the Covenant", does lay down a useful guide which might be considered carefully by those bodies. It does not amount to a definition, because it does not say what the objects of the League are or what exactly is meant or indicated by the Covenant. I think the authors of the definition were very wise not to attempt rigidity.

I believe that, broadly speaking, the objects of the League are, for the reasons given in the British memorandum, matters of international concern, and I agree with the very able argument of M. Barthélemy to the effect that in interpreting

the League it is necessary to take into consideration the whole League. It is necessary to take the preamble of the Covenant as indicating the object in view, and the articles as illustrating how that general object may, in particular cases, be accomplished. With all this I agree and, personally, I should have been quite satisfied to have adopted this report as it stands without further delay. My friend M. Beneš, however, has suggested that further consideration is desirable, and has pointed out with undeniable force that, owing to the great haste in which we have been conducting our business for the last week, we have not perhaps had an opportunity of considering as fully as we ought the exact wording which should be adopted in dealing with this very important matter. I personally should be the last to oppose his suggestion, and if he desires that this matter should be postponed to the next session of the Assembly, I am very ready to agree, particularly as my chief object was to draw the attention of the League to the dangers of unduly expanding its activities, rather than to lay down any rigid and unalterable rule as to what those activities should be.

I therefore accept the proposal of M. Beneš.

The President :

Translation : Sir George Foster, delegate of Canada, will address the Assembly.

Sir George Foster (Canada) :

Ladies and gentlemen — Do not be in the least afraid that I am going to impose a speech upon you. That would be altogether out of place, but I find myself in a certain difficulty.

All those who have listened to the speech made by M. Barthélemy, the honourable delegate of France, and who contrasted with that speech the very meagre and insufficient English interpretation which followed it, will appreciate my difficulty. I do not understand all the arguments brought forward by that distinguished orator, and I do not therefore know exactly what was the close connection between the arguments he used and the resolution which we are asked to pass. From my imperfect knowledge of French I judged, if I may be allowed to use my judgment, that he was combating something which had not been asserted.

We have a phrase in our country which we use when, for example, an advocate tries to get the better of an opponent before a popular audience; we say that he puts up a "man of straw". In the most valiant fashion he beats that "man of straw" and at last administers the final "knock-out blow". It is a great victory, for the advocate himself, and I was wondering; when my friend M. Barthélemy was speaking, whether or not, if he had been delivering such a speech in an assembly in my country, we should have classed him under the style of advocate I have just mentioned. But, of course, for sedate and cultured Europe to undertake that kind of advocacy is out of the question! I have not the least suspicion that it would ever be undertaken.

This is my difficulty. If I am asked to vote for this resolution I am asked also to admit the value of and to support the argument by which it was placed before this Assembly, and I do not know what that argument was. Consequently, I am in some doubt lest, in voting for a resolution which seems fairly reasonable, I shall be endorsing an argument which I should consider to be somewhat unreasonable. For that reason, I would suggest that it is of importance that this Assembly, in view of the duty which it owes to itself and the duty which it owes to the great public which is listening to it, should not regard this debate as ended, but

should give an opportunity for it to be continued at another session of the Assembly. It is not possible, at the present session of the Assembly for the other side of the argument to be adequately presented, and I think therefore that we should do well to resume this discussion at another time.

I want to endorse what Viscount Cecil said — that there is a very real and continuing danger ahead of the League. There is a suspicion on the part of a great many people in the different countries of the world, there is even an apprehension — I cannot think that it is well grounded — that the League of Nations is pursuing methods which make it liable to be regarded as entrenching upon the national rights and privileges of the countries of the world. That is considered in some quarters to be its object, or at all events one of its methods. I meet that criticism — I have to meet it and overcome it as best I can — when I am upholding the League.

I believe that the League must be very careful not to give any prominence or support to actions which could give rise to that suspicion. I believe it is perfectly possible to have the general scope of its action fairly well defined and understood and carried out, leaving each proposal as it arises to be judged by circumstances and to be brought to the test whether it is within the sphere of the League of Nations or not. I must not, however, run into argument or take up more of your time. I simply wish to approve and support very strongly the proposal made by Dr. Beneš that this debate be adjourned and that the subject be held over for further discussion by a future session of the Assembly.

The President :

Translation : M. Motta, Chairman of the First Committee, will address the Assembly.

M. Motta (Switzerland) Chairman of the First Committee :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I have no desire to presume upon your patience, but I think that as Chairman of the First Committee I ought to give you my views on the proposal for postponement submitted by Dr. Beneš, first delegate of Czechoslovakia.

In view of present circumstances and of the stage which the discussion has reached postponement is advisable. I trust, therefore, that in agreeing to the discussion being held over until next year I am faithfully interpreting the views of the delegations and their representatives on the First Committee.

I do not think that any harm can come of postponement. The question is a difficult one, involving serious issues, and may still require lengthy discussion. A long discussion hardly appears desirable at this late hour.

It is quite true that, owing to the large number of questions to be dealt with by the First Committee, we were perhaps unable to devote as long as we should have liked to the discussion of each one of them. Fortunately, however, we succeeded in arriving at a unanimous agreement on the basis of the resolution expounded by M. Barthélemy.

The essential feature of this resolution was a recommendation that each body forming part of the League, before taking into consideration any proposal submitted to it, should satisfy itself that it comes within the scope of the Covenant and is of real importance from the point of view of the League's activities.

We shall accordingly resume the discussion of the question under consideration next year, though we feel that, while postponement is desirable, the discussion this year has been equally so.

I trust no one will imagine that the resolution refers to action already undertaken or work already begun by the League. This was by no means the Committee's intention.

As regards any fresh activity subsequently suggested to the League, this discussion will, I feel sure, constitute a sufficient recommendation to proceed with caution, moderation and, best of all, common sense.

The President :

Translation : We have before us two proposals : first a resolution submitted by the First Committee and, second, a motion for postponement submitted by Dr. Beneš, delegate of Czechoslovakia. Under the Rules of Procedure the motion for adjournment must be taken first. I note that it has been agreed to by the Chairman of the First Committee and by all the previous speakers. I will ask the Assembly whether it is in favour of postponement.

As nobody has anything to say I declare the motion for postponement adopted. (*Agreed.*)

70. — MANDATES : RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE SIXTH COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Mandates question.

(*On the invitation of the President, M. de Brouckère, Chairman and Rapporteur of the Sixth Committee, took his place on the platform.*)

The President :

Translation : M. de Brouckère, Rapporteur of the Sixth Committee, will address the Assembly.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium), Rapporteur :

Translation : The Sixth Committee has adopted and now submits to the Assembly the following resolution :

"The Assembly :

"Having taken cognisance of the report to the Council relating to the mandated territories and of the discussion on the subject which has taken place in the Council ;

"And having heard the Vice-Chairman of the Permanent Mandates Commission :

"Thanks the Permanent Mandates Commission for the devotion and the zeal with which it has carried out its delicate task ;

"Has confidence in the members of this Commission as well as in the Members of the Council to ensure the application of the principles of Article 22 of the Covenant in a cordial spirit of co-operation with the mandatory Powers."

Such is the very brief report drafted after somewhat lengthy proceedings which were marked at times by a certain animation but were inspired throughout by the loftiest sentiments.

I have already acquainted you with the conclusions reached by the Committee as the result of its proceedings. It is not for me as Rapporteur to give an official account of the various arguments advanced. Anyone interested in the question will find them in the Minutes. At the same time I shall not, I think, be exceeding my duty if, in a verbal report engaging only my personal responsibility, I endeavour briefly to set forth those ideas upon which I feel — indeed I am convinced — that the Sixth Committee was unanimous.

In the first place, we were all agreed in testifying most gratefully to the zeal and devotion displayed by the members of the Mandates Commission in the performance of a difficult task. Certain doubts on this point have been expressed, not in the League, but among the public. The proceedings of the Sixth Committee, following on the very clear and definite statements of the members of the Council, will serve to dispel these doubts once and for all.

The members of the Mandates Commission have a supremely difficult task to fulfil.

They have to obtain detailed information concerning the most varied kinds of peoples. That is a singularly thankless task, since they are never called upon for assistance when things are going well, but are nevertheless obliged to intervene whenever there is the menace of a dispute calling for settlement. Lastly, their duties are, I need hardly say, of a particularly delicate nature.

With the years of experience behind us we can testify that, no matter how difficult their task, they have always succeeded in performing it with credit to themselves.

There is a second point on which unanimous agreement was reached, and it calls for special mention. I refer to the importance universally attached to the work for which the Mandates Commission is responsible. No one dreams of under-estimating that work or of restricting the Commission's powers which are clearly defined in the last paragraph of Article 22 of the Covenant :

"A permanent Commission shall be constituted to receive and examine the annual reports of the Mandatories and to advise the Council on all matters relating to the observance of the mandates."

I might remind you that this general provision was further defined and elucidated by the famous report which we owe to one whose presence for many years shed a special lustre on the Belgian delegation : I refer to M. Paul Hymans.

As you are all aware, the League is directly involved in the administration of the mandates. It is specifically laid down in Article 22 that States entrusted with the duty of tutelage shall exercise such tutelage as Mandatories on behalf of the League. This means that the League can never divest itself of its responsibility in regard to the way in which the mandate is exercised.

Nor must it be forgotten that this task involves the application of an entirely novel principle and the regulation of the relations between the mandated territory and the mandatory Power on the one hand and between the League itself and the mandatory Powers on the other. It is obvious that the adjustment of relations of such recent growth cannot be brought to perfection in a day. Such a task calls for long experience, and until that experience has been acquired, the only means whereby the various interests can be reconciled and the necessary co-operation established is to continue to act with tact and circumspection, a rule, I repeat, to which the Mandates Commission has constantly adhered.

That body, it should be noted again, has clearly affirmed its intention to carry out its mission, but not as a body of magistrates examining persons lying under a charge, since the mere fact of giving a State a mandate and entrusting it with the execution of so high a mission constitutes a proof of confidence which must carry with it certain implications. No, the Mandates Commission has openly proclaimed its intention of collaborating with the mandatory Powers. Collaboration does not preclude advice or even criticism, provided

that the criticism is constructive and designed to help the Mandatory to do better.

One word more. Two definite questions occupied the special attention of the Sixth Committee, the first being that of the questionnaire. You know what that means. The Mandates Commission drew up a questionnaire a long time ago, in order to assist the mandatory Powers in drawing up the annual report to be submitted under Article 22 of the Covenant. It is now proposed to revise this questionnaire. Naturally, such a step cannot be taken until the mandatory States have been consulted. This is now being done and I have no doubt that the conciliatory attitude to which I have just referred will result in complete agreement being reached between the mandatory States and the Mandates Commission.

As regards the reorganisation of the right of petition, I would emphasise the Commission's very explicit declaration that it had never contemplated the establishment of a system conferring upon petitioners any unilateral right to be heard.

In this connection I desire to make the following statement, not in my capacity as Rapporteur, but as delegate of Belgium.

I desire to state that my Government maintains intact its original view as to the exercise of the right of petition. It cannot agree to any system whereby the mandatory Powers could be arraigned. It does not, however, reject *a priori* a procedure by which the Commission would be empowered, in certain strictly defined cases, to carry out investigations and to hear the statements of both parties.

I have no more to say. The word "crisis" has been used in connection with the meeting of the Council at which the report of the Mandates Commission was discussed. It has become the fashion to employ that word in connection with all the League's activities. It is perfectly true that discussions do sometimes take place in the League, and that these discussions are sometimes more heated than used to be the case. What is the reason ? It is that the League has grown into a more tangible reality, and that the concrete interests of the nations are more closely affected.

But this, as has often been pointed out, is simply a phenomenon of growth. When an organisation is in process of development, fresh problems crop up and old problems reappear in a different form. The overcoming of such obstacles and difficulties constitutes the very life-blood of any organisation. Progress will not be achieved simply by following the course of events peacefully and, if I may say so, apathetically, but by surmounting difficulties, just as the human body overcomes its physical disabilities. This organic determination to rise above difficulties and expand is perhaps the most vital factor both in physical and in moral well-being.

It was Anatole France, I think, who once defined the will by likening it to the persistent determination of the tree to burst into leaf in the springtime.

The League will triumph over difficulties, great and small alike, because mankind remains persistent in its determination to blossom forth in the coming springtime of peace and justice.

The President :

Translation : Dr. Nansen, delegate of Norway, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Nansen (Norway) :

I wish to say a few words in support of the formal report containing the very important resolution which has just been laid before the Assembly by the President of the Sixth Committee. I shall not detain you for more than a few moments, but I do

not feel able to leave without comment here this resolution and the debates from which it resulted.

In the first place, I should like to say that in my view the value of those debates was seriously reduced by the atmosphere of haste in which, from beginning to end, they were conducted. I desire on behalf of my delegation to add my protest to that which has been made by the British delegation against the practice of seeking to end the Assembly on a fixed day decided upon before the work of the Assembly has properly begun. I have to express our ardent hope that in future years it will be decided that adequate time shall be allowed for the full and satisfactory discussion of every subject which comes before the Assembly. It is for the Assembly to give the necessary impetus to the whole work of the League for the succeeding year in all its branches, and it is certain that it must often be very difficult for the Assembly to show the wisdom that is required if attempts are made to take the work too fast.

As regards the debates on Mandates questions in the Sixth Committee, I do not propose to raise again the issues with which we dealt. I only desire to say that those debates, curtailed though they were, had, in my opinion, the greatest possible value. The resolution to which we agreed is less comprehensive than other draft resolutions which were submitted, but none the less it carries out adequately the purpose which every member of the Sixth Committee had in view. That purpose was to express in the most solemn manner possible the full and unabated confidence of the whole League of Nations in the members of its Mandates Commission.

Resolutions similar to this have been passed in previous years, but I think that our resolution this year has more than the usual significance. Anyone who has studied the reports of the Mandates Commission knows that it had, between the sixth and seventh sessions of the Assembly, a year of extraordinary activity. It held ordinary and special sessions and issues of the greatest possible gravity were submitted for its consideration. Throughout, as the Sixth Committee has unanimously recognised, it fulfilled, with great courage, great wisdom and great devotion, its duties in accordance with the Covenant and the decisions of the Council and previous Assemblies. I feel sure that I am speaking for every member of the Sixth Committee when I say that they were deeply impressed by the high-minded conception of its task which the Commission has, as witnessed, in particular, by the speeches made before it by the Vice-Chairman of the Commission, M. van Rees, and that they have the greatest admiration for the determination of the Commission to do its duty.

There are other matters in connection with the mandates concerning which I had hoped that the Sixth Committee might be able to make positive recommendations, in particular, concerning the subject of the liquor traffic in some of the mandated areas. Owing to the circumstances to which I have referred this has not been possible. I hope, in satisfactory solutions are not reached before that time, that the next Assembly will very carefully consider the matter.

In the meantime, I desire to say again that, by the resolution which is now before it, the Assembly is expressing its confidence in the Mandates Commission, both in respect of the work which it has done during the past year and that which confronts it in the year to come, and that it is expressing its approval of the action taken by the Commission during all its sessions, both ordinary and special, held during the past year. The Assembly is also, as I understand it, expressing its unabated confidence in the rightness of the mandates system, by means of which, we all believe, the mandatory Powers may be able to build up new principles of co-operation between the advanced and backward peoples of the world for the mutual benefit of both. No one who follows these matters can doubt that these relations constitute one of the gravest of the problems which the twentieth century has to face, and that towards its solution the Mandates Commission may have a great contribution to make.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak I will put to the vote the resolution of the Sixth Committee, which reads as follows :

The Assembly :

Having taken cognisance of the report to the Council relating to the mandated territories and of the discussion on the subject which has taken place in the Council ;

And having heard the Vice-Chairman of the Permanent Mandates Commission :

Thanks the Permanent Mandates Commission for the devotion and zeal with which it has carried out its delicate task ;

Has confidence in the members of this Commission as well as in the Members of the Council to ensure the application of the principles of Article 22 of the Covenant in a cordial spirit of co-operation with the mandatory Powers.

The resolution was adopted.

The Assembly rose at 1.25 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE
SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY
OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SEVENTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25th, 1926, AT 3.15 P.M.

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71. — SLAVERY CONVENTION: REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the Sixth Committee's report on the Slavery Convention (Annex 20. Document A.104.1926.VI).

(On the invitation of the President, M. de Brouckère, Chairman of the Sixth Committee, and Viscount Cecil, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : Viscount Cecil will address the Assembly.

Viscount Cecil of Chelwood (British Empire), Rapporteur :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Before I say anything with regard to the question of slavery, may I be permitted to make one observation concerning a declaration made by the Norwegian delegate, Dr. Nansen, this morning? He then explained what, I think, has been in the minds of a great many delegates and others, namely, that we have been working under conditions of great pressure, particularly during the last few days. That pressure manifested itself to some extent when we were dealing with this question of slavery, and I gather that it has been much more severe in connection with other questions. I venture therefore to express the earnest hope that care will be taken to avoid such pressure in future Assemblies and that it will be recognised that it is really impracticable for the Assembly to get through its work with due efficiency and dignity unless at least four weeks are allowed for the purpose.

In spite of any imperfections which may have resulted from the conditions I have described, I now have the honour to lay before you the results of the work of the Sixth Committee in connection with the question of slavery. The Committee has succeeded in agreeing, unanimously, upon

a Convention on this subject. That Convention is, in the main, similar to the draft Convention of last year, and deals with three main subjects. It recalls the unanimous resolve of all civilised nations to put an end once and for all to the slave trade. It makes some provision to facilitate that great object. It proposes that slavery, in all its forms, shall, as soon as possible, come to an end, but it recognises that in some countries this must still take a little time; the Convention, therefore, requires that it should be done progressively and as soon as possible. Lastly, it deals, for the first time in international documents, with the question of forced labour, which, as everyone who has studied the subject knows, may, in some of its forms, easily degenerate into conditions not very far removed from slavery.

You will remember that last year the Assembly had under consideration a draft Convention dealing with all these problems. It was examined with a great deal of care by the Sixth Committee and a revised text was submitted to the Assembly. We had hoped that it would have been signed at once, but for various reasons this turned out to be impracticable and it was arranged that the matter should be adjourned until this Assembly, when the draft Convention would be reconsidered, and that the various Members of the League should be invited, as far as possible, to authorise their representatives at this Assembly to sign such a Convention if they agreed with it. Accordingly, we have gone very carefully through the Convention again clause by clause and, I may say, line by line. We have made certain amendments, to which I will draw your attention, and we are going to ask, and indeed we do ask, all the States which are represented here to sign the Convention.

I do not propose to read at length the report of the Sixth Committee. It is necessarily rather a lengthy document, because an effort has been made to make it a full commentary on the text of the Convention and, therefore, a good deal that was in last year's report has been again repeated. I ought, perhaps, to add a word of warning; there are passages in last year's report which have been omitted in order to save space and anyone who wishes to know what is the full policy of the Assembly in this matter will still have to refer to last year's report also. One example of this, perhaps the most important, is that in last year's report some attempt was made at a definition of what was meant by public services, and that passage does not reappear in this year's report.

I think that the best way in which I can be of assistance to the Assembly is to take the Convention article by article, mentioning anything to which I think it worth while to call your special attention, referring you for any fuller comment to the report of this year, supplemented by the report of last year.

Article 1, which defines slavery and the slave trade, calls for no further remark.

In Article 2, which provides for the suppression of the slave trade and the complete abolition of slavery in all its forms as soon as possible, a slight but important change has been made since last year. In the article last year the phrase "domestic slavery and similar conditions" was included. Those words have now been left out because it is hoped and believed that the definition of slavery as contained in the Convention will cover all those conditions, at any rate, in their more objectionable form. In connection with every legal definition there is always some possibility of doubt, and you will find that in the report the definition is expanded and explained by the statement that it includes the maintenance by a private individual of

rights over another person of the same nature as the rights which an individual can have over things. In my judgment this is not in any respect wider than the actual definition so far as the English text is concerned, though I am advised that, without that explanation, there might be a little doubt as to the full meaning of the French text.

As regards Article 3, which is an attempt to improve existing provisions dealing with the suppression of the slave trade at sea, the British Government was anxious, and would still prefer, to have done that by the simple process of declaring the slave trade as being on the same level as piracy. That would have given very wide powers to deal with any slave trader who was found pursuing his nefarious purpose. Objections, however, were raised to the proposal, and we fell back on the idea that we might perhaps apply the provisions of the Convention on the International Trade in Arms to the slave trade so far as maritime search was concerned.

Even that idea proved to be rather further than some of those represented on the Committee were prepared to go, and in the clause in the Convention we arrived at this compromise: that the parties will negotiate a general Convention including provisions of the same nature as those found in the Convention on the International Trade in Arms, subject to the necessary adaptation, and we have provided, in order to meet the anxiety of a certain Power, that this provision does not imply a preference for any one of the signatory States over any other—all of them are to be treated on the same terms.

Some anxiety, I believe, exists about the wording of the Convention on the International Trade in Arms, and I think that statements to that effect will be made from this tribune. I will only say that, while fully recognising the right of any State to make such a reservation, I hope and believe very strongly that it is quite unnecessary in this case, because the obligation in the Convention itself, which does not extend to every detail of the Convention on the International Trade in Arms, will leave any question of the wording to be settled by negotiation afterwards. In addition, we have provided that any two or three Powers may make special agreements carrying, if they so choose, the rights of search, and so on, further than the Convention on the International Trade in Arms would carry them. We hope that in that way a real step forward may be made toward increasing the powers whereby any slave trade still existing may be suppressed.

Article 4 calls for no comment. It provides that every nation is to give assistance to others in putting a stop to this evil. The special method by which something of the kind might perhaps be done may be by the effective exercise of the rights of manumission which exist in certain countries, those rights to be exercised by the Consul of certain of the Powers represented there. We have exercised that right fairly freely ourselves in one country, and we trust, and I daresay with some foundation, that other countries are doing likewise.

I now pass to Article 5, which deals with forced labour. The terms of that article are almost exactly the same as last year. It provides, as you probably remember, that forced labour for private purposes is, in principle, to be abolished, and that forced labour for public purposes is declared only to be permissible if it does not in any way resemble slavery. We were urged to add certain specific provisions providing for adequate remuneration, particularly in the case of forced labour for public services. We considered this proposal very carefully, but were faced with great practical difficulties in including such a provision in the Convention,

because in many cases, or in some exceptional cases, forced labour for public services is not, strictly speaking, paid for, though it is taken in the place of taxes and things of that kind. We therefore agreed, while stating the whole of our view in the report (which I trust those who are interested in the subject will read), also to urge the Assembly to pass a special resolution on the subject, which, although it will not form part of the Convention, will indicate the strong feeling of the League on this question. You will find it as resolution No. III of the report. It says :

“III. The Assembly :

“While recognising that forced labour for public purposes is sometimes necessary ;

“Is of opinion that, as a general rule, it should not be resorted to unless it is impossible to obtain voluntary labour and that it should receive adequate remuneration.”

In addition, we have made one change. We said last year that, in principle, forced labour may be exacted only for public services. That provision has been somewhat strengthened, and we now say that, subject to the transitional provisions laid down in paragraph 2, forced labour shall only be exacted for public purposes. In other words, we make clearer what we always meant, namely, that forced labour for private purposes ought to come to an end as soon as possible.

A possible ambiguity has been pointed out to me. I do not see how it could arise, but it has been suggested. The use of the term “transitional provisions” does not mean that recourse may be had to any new forced labour for private purposes however transitory the period involved ; on the contrary, no new case of forced labour for private purposes should, under any circumstances, be admitted. Only in those cases where it already exists can it be treated with this kind of transitory toleration until steps can be effectively and justly taken to put an end to it.

Meanwhile, in the same way as last year, we lay down certain principles which in no case must be evaded, even in connection with forced labour of a transitional character for private purposes. Even during the transitional period these principles must be observed. They are as follows : the labour shall only be exacted for exceptional reasons, it shall always receive adequate remuneration, and — the most important of all — it shall not involve the removal of the labourers from their usual place of residence. That, to my mind, is almost the most important provision in the whole of the Convention. This is as far as we have attempted to go in regulating forced labour. We thought that to do more would be to go beyond our province. An institution exists — the International Labour Office — whose business it is to deal with the conditions of labour, and to make enquiries, studies and recommendations with regard to labour conditions all over the world, whether free labour or forced labour, and we were aware that the International Labour Office had already begun enquiries which would enable it to consider this question of forced labour. We thought it right, therefore, in order to remove any possible doubt or ambiguity on the subject, to recommend the Assembly to pass the following resolution :

“IV. The Assembly :

“Taking note of the work undertaken by the International Labour Office in conformity with the mission entrusted to it and within the limits of its constitution ;

“Considering that these studies naturally include the problem of forced labour :

“Requests the Council to inform the Governing Body of the International Labour Office of the adoption of the Slavery Convention, and to draw its attention to the importance of the work undertaken by the Office with a view to studying the best means of preventing forced or compulsory labour from developing into conditions analogous to slavery.”

One other condition applies to all forced labour, whether private or public, namely, that it must be exacted only under the responsibility of the competent central authorities of the territory concerned.

Article 6 deals with the penalties to be inflicted. I need say nothing about that.

Article 7 provides that the High Contracting Parties shall furnish to the League of Nations the laws and regulations which they enact with a view to the application of the provisions of the present Convention. We went a little further than that and were anxious that the League of Nations should not lose touch with this question but should continue to watch over it. We did not see our way to recommend — at least the majority of the Committee did not see its way to recommend — that an annual report should be made by the Members of the League. They were anxious that an opportunity should be given every year for the matter to come up for debate or discussion before this Assembly, if it were so desired, and they accordingly agreed to the following resolution, which we ask the Assembly to pass :

“The Assembly :

“Desires that the League of Nations should continue to interest itself in securing the progressive abolition of slavery and conditions analogous thereto and therefore begs that the Council will prepare and communicate to the Assembly every year a document mentioning the laws and regulations which parties to the Convention on Slavery, in accordance with Article 7, will have communicated to the Secretary-General, and that the Council will include therein any supplementary information which the Members of the League may be disposed spontaneously to furnish with regard to the measures taken by them to this end.”

The Sixth Committee believes that this resolution, if carried out, as no doubt it will be, will prove a very valuable safeguard in dealing with this serious, though happily diminishing, evil.

Article 8 is new. It adds to the Convention what is now a very usual clause — namely, that the Permanent Court of International Justice shall be entitled to settle any dispute with regard to the construction or application of the Convention. I do not know that I need say anything to justify this provision because it has become such a very usual clause in all modern Conventions, particularly those signed under the auspices of the League.

The remaining articles, though they have been a little changed in form, remain substantially the same as last year. They deal with the coming into force of the Convention, its possible denunciation and similar matter.

One other change has been made since last year. In the previous Convention there was an article, Article 8, which provided that all provisions of an international character anterior to the date of the Convention should be regarded as abrogated. That applied particularly to such

Conventions as the Brussels Convention and the Berlin Convention. Considerable doubt exists as to the exact international position of those Conventions and it was felt that, from every point of view, it would be much better to leave them on the Treaty Record — on the International Statute Book, so to speak — for what they are worth. The article in question was, therefore, abolished, and it is only right to say that in taking that course the Sixth Committee had in view the strong representations which had been made to the League by the Apostolic Nuncio at Berne.

I have now come to the end, I trust, of my short *exposé* of the provisions of this Convention. I have only to add that, as soon as it has been approved, as I trust it will be, by the Assembly, the Convention will be open for signature in a room at the back of the Presidential Chair.

I am glad to know that a considerable number of States have already signified their intention to sign the Convention. The following is the list of those States: Abyssinia, Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, the British Empire, Canada, China, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Esthonia, Germany, Greece, India, Lithuania, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Persia, Salvador, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and Uruguay. I have also been informed by the first delegate of New Zealand that he is only prevented by a mere formality from signing the Convention; this means, I hope, that he has no doubt, as I have no doubt, that his Government is thoroughly in favour of the Convention and will sign it very shortly.

Certain countries, of course, as anyone who has listened to the list will see, are omitted from it. I have no reason whatever to think that those omissions are due to any doubts as to the desirability of the Convention, and I think there is little question that, in the course of a very few days at the latest, the signatures of those States will also be appended to it.

The President :

Translation : Count Bonin-Longare, delegate of Italy, will address the Assembly.

Count Bonin-Longare (Italy) :

Translation : The Italian delegation has welcomed the opportunity of co-operating in the noble and philanthropic work of framing a Convention for the suppression of slavery. No country, we can safely say, has taken up a firmer or more decisive attitude towards slavery than Italy. The moment she set foot in the territories which now form her colonial possessions, she decreed in every one of those territories the abolition of slavery in every shape and form. Although sometimes her task has thereby been rendered more difficult, she has all the greater satisfaction in the knowledge that she has never compromised. Our delegation is delighted at the conclusion, under the auspices of the League, of a general agreement providing that the campaign against slavery shall be carried on with increased energy and by all countries.

Because that campaign requires to be waged with increased energy, the Italian delegation would have preferred to retain the text drafted in 1925. However, in order to meet the views of other delegations, we readily discussed any amendments to the 1925 draft which seemed suitable, and endeavoured solely to secure the rejection of any clause that might complicate and consequently handicap the work of suppression. Nothing is more harmful to a good cause than the employment of unsuitable or dangerous instruments, which may give rise to difficulties or distract from the

main object those who are attempting to bring the work of suppression to a successful conclusion.

We were accordingly [grateful to the British delegation for not pressing its amendment to Article 3, the object of which was to place the slave trade in the same category as piracy: Though justifiable on moral grounds, the embodiment of this clause in the Convention would, we believe, have overshot the mark. A different wording was adopted, though we should have liked this wording to be more comprehensive. We were quite ready to accept it, however, because it leaves the door open to special agreements between Powers which stand in a special position as regards the slave trade, and such agreements assuredly provide the most effective and vigorous means for the suppression of the trade. We should also have preferred the total withdrawal of Article 6 of the draft — a step which would have entailed the abolition, rather than the regulation, of forced labour in all its forms. We realised, however, that in certain colonial territories a period of transition was indispensable to enable this form of slavery to be gradually abolished.

We readily agreed to the withdrawal of the former Article 8 in the light of the very pertinent observations communicated to the Secretariat by the Apostolic Nuncio at Berne, who urged the necessity of maintaining the lofty and humanitarian provisions regarding missions and the improvement of moral conditions among natives — provisions, too, which are to be found in other Conventions.

The slave trade and slavery, although restricted to a small region of the earth, are none the less a slur, a moral stigma of which our civilisation must rid itself as soon as may be. Italy made this work a feature of her colonial policy from the very beginning, and she has never looked back. She could have wished that it had been possible to make greater progress than we are making to-day. But "*le mieux est l'ennemi du bien*", and the best reforms are those that are applied by easy stages and with caution.

The Italian delegation, therefore, wholeheartedly approves the Convention, and trusts that special agreements of the kind suggested in Article 3 will shortly be concluded, so as to complete the work which has been undertaken, for they will greatly aid in the abolition of slavery, the scourge which the League is bound to combat until it is completely suppressed.

The President :

Translation : Sir William Vincent, first delegate of India, will address the Assembly.

Sir William Vincent (India) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen: — I am advised that it is incumbent on me to read out here certain reservations which India will make on signing this Convention. I am not satisfied that this is strictly necessary or that this practice has always been followed in the past. But *ex majori cautela* I am prepared on the present occasion to adopt this course.

Under the terms of Article 9 of this Convention I declare that my signature is not binding, as regards the enforcement of Article 2, sub-section (b), and Articles 5, 6 and 7 of this Convention, upon the following territories; namely, in Burma, the Naga tracts lying west and south of the Hukawng Valley, bounded on the north and west by the Assam boundary, on the east by the Nanphuk River and on the south by the Singaling Hkamti and the Somra tracts; in Assam, the Sadiya and Balipara frontier tracts, the tribal area to the East of the Naga Hills district, up to the Burma boundary, and a small tract in the south of the Lushai Hills

district; nor on the territories in India of any Prince or Chief under the suzerainty of His Majesty.

I also declare that my signature to the Convention is not binding in respect of Article 3 in so far as that article may require India to enter into any Convention whereby vessels, by reason of the fact that they are owned, fitted out or commanded by Indians, or of the fact that one-half of the crew is Indian, are classified as native vessels, or are denied any privilege, right or immunity enjoyed by similar vessels of other States signatories of the Covenant, or are made subject to any liability or disability to which similar ships of such other States are not subject.

But, Sir, it is not only these reservations, but the great importance of the resolutions now under discussion which justifies my taking a few moments of your time to-day to explain the attitude of India on this question of slavery. I regard this Convention as a tangible and effective achievement of great moment and as a practical illustration to the world, in one direction at least, of the great work done for humanity by the League.

I have no desire to enter into the history of previous efforts to eradicate the slave trade and slavery, but the truth is that, in various forms and disguises, they still do subsist in certain parts of the world, and the present Convention, if it is accepted, as we hope it will be, by the Powers here present, constitutes a definite advance not only in increasing the effectiveness of measures against the slave trade proper and eradicating slavery generally but in preventing and putting a stop to those more insidious forms of servitude which approximate to slavery though called by other names.

The principles laid down, particularly in regard to forced labour, taken in conjunction with the action of the International Labour Office, cannot fail to have far-reaching effects throughout the world and, so far as I know, this is the first occasion on which a definite undertaking, or at any rate so complete an undertaking, in regard to forced labour has been accepted. I refer particularly to forced labour for private purposes. May I say that India heartily welcomes the conclusion of this Convention and is glad to undertake the duty of making every effort to root out conditions of servitude which approximate to slavery.

It is true that we have to make certain reservations on signing the Convention, but one of these, which relates only to the search of ships suspected of carrying slaves, need in no way impede the execution of an effective agreement on this subject. I can assure the Assembly that, in fact, no Indian ships are engaged in the slave trade, and that the law of India prohibits slavery and this slave trade under penal clauses of great severity.

Another reservation which we have been compelled to make relates to Indian States, and a small area of unadministered territory. The reason for this reservation as regards the Indian States is not that slavery is prevalent there, for this is not the case at all; it arises from the constitutional position which these States occupy, a position which I have fully explained in the Sixth Committee. The Convention will, however, be brought to the notice of all States, and provision exists in the Convention for extending its obligations to these areas should this be necessary or desirable in the future.

In the meantime, in the unadministered areas of which I spoke, tracts situated on the extreme north-eastern frontier of British India, the population of which is estimated at a few hundred thousand persons only, steady, systematic efforts are being made by the local governments to eradicate traces of slavery and conditions analogous

thereto. In one of these areas already over 3,000 slaves have been released (last year) on payment of substantial compensation to their owners. In another area a special expedition has been sent this year charged with the mission of securing, by persuasion and payment of compensation, the release of all slaves in that territory.

But the efforts of the Government of India have by no means been confined to measures of this kind. In other provinces steady progress has for many years been made in the direction of measures to prevent any condition of forced labour approaching to slavery, or even likely to lead to oppression. Forced labour for private purposes is not legally recognised in India. In the province in which the greater part of my career in India was spent, where forced labour was in some parts exacted as a predial obligation, and also in lieu of debt, the predial obligation has been commuted into cash payments and an enactment has been passed which prohibits any kind of servitude for debt or the enforcement of contracts of that nature. Similar efforts have been made in other parts of India, and indeed the enforcement by penal sanctions of any form of indentured labour or of contracts to labour has been abolished. Generally, it may be said that the Government of India has made and will continue to make every effort to get rid of the evils against which this Convention is directed.

Lastly, may I say that such has been the moral influence of the work of the League and of the high ideals for which it stands, that I saw in the *Times* the other day a statement, and I have no reason whatever to doubt it, that the State of Nepal, an independent State not in India but on the northern frontier, has recently completed the liberation of 59,000 slaves at a cost of £275,000 paid by the State. That is a result on which the State of Nepal may, I think, be congratulated, and is clear evidence of the influence of the League in the East.

My object in placing these details before you is to indicate by direct evidence that India, if apt to scrutinise with jealousy any agreement which is proposed, has gone a great way towards the goal which is the aim of the Convention. If we examine the terms of these agreements in detail, it is because we are careful to enter into no solemn undertaking which we are not prepared fully to implement, and because we have also to consider the effect of such an agreement on a vast population, one-fifth of the population of the world, living in very varying conditions and permeated by varying traditions and customs. But, as I have said, India is behind no State in its desire to eradicate slavery, and if the present Convention does not meet the approbation of all, it achieves a great deal. Further, should necessity arise in the future it can, and no doubt will, be supplemented by further agreements until slavery and conditions akin to it, truly described in the Committee as a crime against the human race, are utterly and wholly rooted out.

The President :

Translation : M. Freire d'Andrade will address the Assembly.

M. Freire d'Andrade (Portugal) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I should like to give you a brief and succinct account of my Government's views on slavery; but, before doing so, I am very glad to be able to inform you that the head of my delegation has just received full powers to follow the example of my colleagues by signing the Protocol.

The Portuguese delegation has made known, both here and elsewhere, the Portuguese Government's

firm resolve to combat and check every form of slavery. My country has given in the past, and will continue to give, its full and entire approval to any and every measure which the Assembly may judge necessary to combat this scourge of humanity.

The Portuguese delegation received powers to sign the Convention which was approved last year, after having duly forwarded its observations in a letter communicated to the Secretary-General in compliance with the provisions of paragraph (a) of the Assembly resolution dated September 26th, 1925.

On its arrival at Geneva, however, our delegation found that the discussion of this subject was to be revived and the Convention was at once to be radically changed. In our opinion this step was not perhaps the best or most effective that could have been taken to attain the object in view without delay, since the Convention is to be applied universally, and better results would have been obtained had this very serious question been given full consideration. Remember the Latin proverb, "*Festina lente*".

With your permission, I will recapitulate the past history of this important question. For two years a Special Commission, the Temporary Slavery Commission, was at work with the object of submitting to the League of Nations the most practical suggestions it could devise for the suppression of slavery. The Commission's report, the authors of which, I would observe, were not mere theorists and philanthropists but were anxious to attain practical results, was approved by the Sixth Committee and the sixth ordinary session of the Assembly, and the British Government thereupon authorised Viscount Cecil to propose a Convention as being the best way of giving effect to the Slavery Commission's proposals and of accomplishing the work undertaken by the League of Nations for the suppression of this scourge.

The Sixth Committee discussed at great length the draft Convention submitted to it. A Sub-Committee was appointed, but, as it failed to reach complete agreement, a smaller Sub-Committee was appointed, containing spokesmen of all the different views which had been expressed. The Committee and Sub-Committee were occupied with the question for some considerable time, and the draft Convention was not ready for approval until the sixth ordinary session of the Assembly had almost come to an end. The draft was to be signed at the beginning of the present session.

This year, however, as I said, the discussion was revived, despite all that had taken place. The Temporary Slavery Commission's report seemed to be fading into the background, and this year the proposals which were rejected last year were taken up afresh and approved. In consequence, I am sorry to say that several States may no longer be able to sign this Convention at once, because the text is not the same as that which had previously been submitted to them and which had already been considered by their Governments.

Between the last and the present session of the Assembly a new factor has arisen. The International Labour Office has taken steps to prepare for an International Conference on native labour; and it would perhaps have been wiser to await the outcome of this action before modifying the Convention in its original form.

Changes of opinion on this question, which is of great importance for the whole of mankind, are due, I think, to transitory influences. In our opinion, these changes reflect the struggle between idealism and realities, and the decisions which are taken lean to one side or the other according to

whichever school of thought happens to be in the ascendant.

The Slavery Commission's report, which has been approved by the Assembly, takes into account the rights of the individual, but it also takes the view that, if changes are abruptly introduced in existing situations which cannot be immediately liquidated, the result will be complete disorganisation or even disaster. Accordingly, the Slavery Commission's suggestions were used as the basis of the Convention which was discussed last year.

The two most controversial articles of the new draft Convention are (1) the article dealing with measures to suppress the slave trade by sea, and (2) the article dealing with forced or compulsory labour.

As regards the former, it was agreed that the suppression of this form of the slave trade was necessary, but opinions differed as to the means of accomplishing it.

As regards the second point, there was general agreement that forced labour for the benefit of private undertakings, including those in which Governments participate, should be formally condemned. At the same time it was recognised, not only in the Slavery Commission's report but also under the terms of the mandates, that forced labour should be resorted to in the public interest, this idea being expressed in the present Convention by the term "for public purposes".

Thus we have laid down that compulsory labour is to be prohibited or tolerated according to whether it is intended for private undertakings or for public purposes.

The Portuguese Government, in its letter to the Secretary-General, stated — although this point would not have prevented it from signing the Convention — that in its view it was highly desirable that compulsory labour should be defined, just as slavery had been defined, and this not only in order to prevent abuses, but also to avoid any possibility of censure.

I put this point to the Sub-Committee of the Sixth Committee, and was thereupon invited by the Chairman to submit an amendment embodying this definition. I replied that I had no means of doing so, that only an organisation such as the International Labour Office was equipped for such a task, and that for that reason the Portuguese delegates had long been in favour of asking the Labour Office to study this difficult question, which is largely the key to the future of those peoples, both in mandated territory and elsewhere, which are not yet capable of governing themselves.

I am glad to say, however, that the measures which my Government has been advocating for so long are now embodied in one of the resolutions to be submitted to the Assembly.

Last year Article 6 of the Convention was fiercely attacked by M. Palacios, delegate of Spain, a country to which we are attached by many ties of affection, and which I sincerely regret to see absent to-day, as I regret also the absence of our kinsmen from Brazil. We shall not cease to feel these regrets until the day comes — as I am sure it will — when these nations return among us and take the places which are their due through the distinguished services they have rendered the League.

As I was saying, M. Palacios fiercely attacked Article 6 of the Protocol, but I am sure his arguments would have lost a great deal of their weight if we had had a formula defining forced labour.

In a document such as that which we have been discussing it is most important that there should be no possible ambiguity, so that those

who sign it, with the intention of strictly complying with the duties which it imposes, should be quite clear as to what those duties are.

The suggestions put forward by the Temporary Slavery Commission in Chapter VII, paragraph B of its report, which was approved by the Assembly, merit our closest attention, and I also think that the statement made in paragraph A of the same chapter should be our guide in defining the "public purposes" referred to in Article 5 (1) of the Convention.

In conclusion, I am glad to have been able to announce that our delegation would sign the proposed Convention, for this is a token that the Portuguese Government, which has already approved the Temporary Slavery Commission's report, is happy to associate itself with the humanitarian action of the British Government, which has been so eloquently advocated by its distinguished delegate, Viscount Cecil.

The President :

Translation :

His Highness Prince Arfa will address the Assembly.

Prince Arfa (Persia) :

Translation : Mr. President — In giving my adhesion to the Slavery Convention I wish to state, with reference to Article 3, that my signature will not bind Persia to accede to any arrangement or convention classifying her vessels, of whatever tonnage, as "native vessels" within the meaning of the Convention on the International Trade in Arms.

I desire that my interpretation of Article 3, as adopted with the Persian delegation's amendment, be duly noted.

Having made this necessary stipulation, I beg to offer the League my sincere congratulations upon the establishment of this Convention on slavery, and I earnestly hope that it will contribute towards the final abolition of the shameful traffic in slaves.

Persia abolished slavery long since, and she now desires to afford all the help in her power to put an end to it in every corner of the world.

The President :

Translation : M. Serot, delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. Serot (France) :

Translation : The French delegation will recommend its Government to sign this Convention, although it does not yet know exactly what its final form will be, as the Committee dealing with it has only just concluded its work.

This Convention, the principles of which have for long been applied in the French colonies, is largely a reproduction of the Convention drawn up last year, but it has been given an added force and precision which will help it to bring about the complete abolition of slavery and analogous conditions. The most important modification relates to the slave traffic, and in this connection the French delegation is glad to see that the Committee has adopted its proposal to the effect that the Convention on Slavery should as far as possible be modelled on the Convention on the International Trade in Arms. It trusts that on this basis a general Convention may shortly be concluded which will put an end for all time to the abominable crime of slavery.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak I will put to the vote the resolutions of the Sixth Committee, which read as follows :

I. The Assembly :

Approves the Slavery Convention drafted by its Sixth Committee and earnestly trusts that it will be signed and ratified as soon as possible by all the Members of the League of Nations ;

Instructs the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps to bring the Convention officially to the knowledge of all States Members or non-Members of the League of Nations which may not have signed it before the end of the present session of the Assembly, to the end that they may sign or adhere to it in accordance with the provisions of Article II of the Convention.

II. The Assembly :

Desires that the League of Nations should continue to interest itself in securing the progressive abolition of slavery and conditions analogous thereto and therefore begs that the Council will prepare and communicate to the Assembly every year a document mentioning the laws and regulations which parties to the Convention on Slavery, in accordance with Article 7, will have communicated to the Secretary-General, and that the Council will include therein any supplementary information which the Members of the League may be disposed spontaneously to furnish with regard to the measures taken by them to this end.

III. The Assembly,

While recognising that forced labour for public purposes is sometimes necessary :

Is of opinion that, as a general rule, it should not be resorted to unless it is impossible to obtain voluntary labour and that it should receive adequate remuneration.

IV. The Assembly,

Taking note of the work undertaken by the International Labour Office in conformity with the mission entrusted to it and within the limits of its constitution ;

Considering that these studies naturally include the problem of forced labour ;

Requests the Council to inform the Governing Body of the International Labour Office of the adoption of the Slavery Convention, and to draw its attention to the importance of the work undertaken by the Office with a view to studying the best means of preventing forced or compulsory labour from developing into conditions analogous to slavery.

The resolutions were adopted.

The President :

Translation : I have to inform you that the Convention on Slavery is open for the signatures of delegations from to-day, September 25th, 1926. It may be signed in the Secretary-General's Office.

72. — SETTLEMENT OF ARMENIAN REFUGEES: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Fifth Committee's report on the

settlement of Armenian refugees (Annex 21. Document A. III.1926.IV).

(On the invitation of the President, Count Mensdorff-Pouilly-Dietrichstein, Chairman of the Fifth Committee, and Dr. Breitscheid, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : Dr. Breitscheid, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Breitscheid (Germany), Rapporteur :

Translation : I have the honour to read to you the Fifth Committee's report on the settlement of Armenian refugees and the accompanying draft resolution.

On behalf of the Fifth Committee, I ask you to approve these resolutions and, by doing so, to pay a tribute to the distinguished delegate of Norway, Dr. Nansen, and to the work he has accomplished.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolutions of the Fifth Committee, which read as follows :

The Assembly,

(1) Takes note of and adopts the report of the Armenian Refugee Settlement Commission, and expresses its appreciation of the valuable work done by this Commission in the elaboration of a workable scheme, found after careful enquiry to be technically sound, which it is estimated will result in the settlement of at least 25,000 Armenians in their national home ;

(2) Takes note of the resolution of the Council of September 16th, 1926, stating that, if the money to finance the initial outlay required by the scheme is forthcoming, the Council would, subject to certain conditions and if requested to do so by the parties interested, be willing to appoint a person or persons to supervise the due expenditure of that money for the objects specified in the scheme ;

(3) Requests the Council to consider the possibility, after due enquiry, of setting up a small committee, under the chairmanship of a member appointed by the Council and consisting partly of representatives of private organisations interested in the promotion of this scheme, to investigate the possibility of obtaining the sum required, and of using it for the purposes of the scheme in the Republic of Armenia ;

(4) Decides that a sum of 15,000 francs be allowed, subject to the conditions already set forth, in order to provide for the printing and distribution of literature regarding the proposed financial operation and to permit Dr. Nansen — or his representative — to lay his proposals before possible contributors in Europe or America.

The resolutions were adopted.

73. — QUESTIONS CONCERNING ARMENIAN AND RUSSIAN REFUGEES: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the question concerning Russian and Armenian refugees (Annex 22, document A.109. 1926.IV).

Dr. Breitscheid, delegate of Germany and Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee, will again address the Assembly on this subject.

Dr. Breitscheid (Germany), Rapporteur :

Translation : The Fifth Committee has adopted the following resolution, and now submits it to the Assembly :

The Assembly,

Having carefully examined the reports of the High Commissioner and of the International Labour Office on the refugee questions :

Approves those reports :

Expresses its high appreciation of the important work which they have accomplished for the refugees ;

Expresses the opinion that this work should be prosecuted to a satisfactory conclusion in the interests both of the refugees themselves and of political, economic and social order :

Having regard to the precarious position of thousands of Armenian refugees in the Near East ;

Invites the Governing Body of the International Labour Office and the High Commissioner for Refugees to consider the possibility of making an effective response to the appeals for their co-operation in the permanent settlement of these refugees and of co-ordinating the activities of private organisations working for the refugees ;

Urges the Governments of the States Members to further the settlement of unemployed Russian and Armenian refugees by giving notice as soon as possible of their ratification of the Arrangement drawn up by the Inter-Governmental Conference on May 12th, 1926, particularly as regards contributions to the working capital fund ("revolving fund") and the issue of visas to refugees on the recommendation of the High Commissioner and of the International Labour Office ; and

Invites the Governing Body of the International Labour Office to appoint a co-trustee to be responsible jointly with Dr. Nansen for the administration of the fund in question ;

Considering the necessity of maintaining a delegation of the Refugee Service in Berlin in view of the large number of refugees in Germany ;

Takes note of the possibility of a contribution of one-half the cost being made by the German Government ;

Urges the Assembly to increase the Refugee Budget by 18,750 francs in order that the important delegation of the Refugee Service may be maintained in Berlin.

This credit was approved by the Fourth Committee.

You will find all the considerations which were adduced in the report which has just been distributed to you. I will beg leave, however, to say one word on the reduction of the German contribution for the refugee agency in Berlin.

In evidence of the interest it feels in the work in question, the German Government, before entering the League, used to pay an annual contribution of 30,000 marks. Now that she has joined the League, however, Germany, like the other Members, pays a contribution towards all the League's organisations, and therefore considers that she would, in principle, be justified in withdrawing her special contribution to the Berlin agency. In view of the humanitarian character of the work, however, she is willing to pay 15,000 marks annually instead of 30,000.

Thanks to the conciliatory spirit displayed in the Fourth Committee, the difficulties arising out of the German Government's decision have been overcome.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution of the Fifth Committee.

The resolution was adopted.

74. — EXTENSION TO OTHER ANALOGOUS CATEGORIES OF REFUGEES OF THE MEASURES TAKEN TO ASSIST RUSSIAN AND ARMENIAN REFUGEES; RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE FIFTH COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : We will now pass to the next item on the agenda : the resolution proposed by the Fifth Committee on the draft proposal put forward by the Belgian delegation regarding the question of extending to other refugees the measures taken to assist Russian and Armenian refugees.

(On the invitation of the President, M. de Brouckère, Rapporteur, took his place by the side of the Chairman of the Fifth Committee.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Fifth Committee has adopted the following motion, proposed by the Belgian delegation, and submits it to the Assembly.

The Assembly invites the Council to request the High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Labour Organisation to consider how far the measures already taken to give protection to, to provide employment for, and to afford relief to, Russian and Armenian refugees can be extended to other analogous categories of refugees.

There is no need to say much concerning this proposal. We are all familiar with the great services rendered by the League in protecting and settling Russian and Armenian refugees. I should like to call your attention, however, to a coincidence which occurred in this morning's debate on the proper limits to the League's activities. Two speakers, desiring to indicate, in support of arguments which in some respects were opposed to one another, the type of activity which fell definitely within the sphere of the League's competence, both cited the work of protecting and settling refugees.

At the present time, however, the League's work is confined to protecting and settling Russian and Armenian refugees, and I need not remind you that there are, unhappily, many other refugees, other groups, in a similar position, and that sometimes groups of Russian and Armenian refugees include persons belonging to other nationalities. Should we not attempt on behalf of these other groups what we have already achieved on behalf of those belonging to the two nationalities I have mentioned ?

Our proposal does not settle the question once and for all. We have been satisfied to bring it to your notice. The proposal asks for information. It suggests that an enquiry should be made, so that the exact position may be ascertained by

next year, and you may then be able to take a decision after due consideration of the facts. You will realise that the proposal is a very modest one, and I need say no more in support of it.

The President :

Translation : Does anybody else wish to speak ? If no one else wishes to speak, I will consider the resolution adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

75. — PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN THE NEAR EAST: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the Fifth Committee's report on the Protection of Women and Children in the Near East (Annex 23. Document A.106.1926).

(On the invitation of the President, Dame Edith Lyttelton, Rapporteur, took her place upon the platform by the side of the Chairman of the Fifth Committee.)

The President :

Translation : Dame Edith Lyttelton will address the Assembly.

Dame Edith Lyttelton (British Empire) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — With your permission, I do not propose to read the whole report which is now before you. The Assembly, I think, is very familiar with the wonderful work done by Miss Jeppe in the Near East. The bravery, courage and resource that she has shown are worthy of the highest praise. I wish to add that the Fifth Committee very much regrets the decision of the Fourth Committee not to continue the subsidy to Miss Jeppe's work. We have, of course, bowed to the decision, but we have a slight feeling that if there had not been so much hurry we might perhaps have been able to soften the hearts of the members of the Fourth Committee as regards this matter. I say "soften the hearts", but their hearts are not hard at all. It is only when it is necessary to translate human things into figures that it is very difficult to keep alive the imagination which enables the heart to be softened.

I am glad to say that, in spite of the fact that she is not going to get a grant from the League of Nations, Miss Jeppe has, nevertheless, determined to continue her work. She succeeded last year in raising more money than she had had before, chiefly from England, though I am glad to be able to say that Germany also gave a very handsome contribution. Now that the League has refused her more money, Miss Jeppe has to add to her duties the work of getting enough funds to continue; but although our supply of money has ceased, it is a great pleasure to be able to report that Miss Jeppe is to continue to be a League of Nations Commissioner. I am very glad that this is so for her sake, because I think it will help her, and I am very glad for the League that this wonderful piece of work should still bear its imprimatur. I pass over the anomalous position that the League of Nations will get the palm without the dust for the next year, but that is something which cannot be helped.

Miss Jeppe will work under precisely the same conditions this year as she did last year; that is to say, under the supreme control of the mandatory Power. She speaks in the highest terms of the assistance which has been given her on every occasion by French officials. She has found them courteous and helpful in the highest degree, and asks for nothing better than to go on working with them. Last year 300 women and children and boys were rescued by the efforts of Miss Jeppe. This year, owing to the fact that some Kurdish tribes have come over into Syria and have a considerable number of girls with them, she believes that she will be able to rescue a good many more.

The reason why she feels that her work is nearly over is, in one sense, a sad one and, in another sense, a happy one. The happy side of it is that she has been able so far to rescue the greater part of the women, girls and children who were unhappy; and, perhaps, the sad side of it is that there are many women who, for the future, will always remain with the people who have taken them. It is difficult for women ever to be quite free, and when the troubles and joys of motherhood are added to their fate it is difficult for them not to resign themselves and to continue the life which they have been forced at one time to lead. I think there are people who feel that the women should not be so reconciled. I cannot agree with them there, but I think we should extend our sympathy to those who have been forced against their will and by the claims of motherhood to remain in an alien country and subject to an alien fate.

A similar decision to that taken about this work has been taken about the work done in Constantinople at the League of Nations Neutral House. The Fourth Committee had decided that this House must now be closed, but the Fifth Committee asks the Assembly, as Miss Mills, like Miss Jeppe, has already determined to carry on the work for another year with money subscribed from outside, and because, in a smaller sphere, she is doing precisely the same work, to grant her not the House, but the equipment of the House for another year; that is to say, the Committee asks that its value should not be realised now but that Miss Mills should be allowed to use it for another year. I think this is the least we can do as a sign of gratitude for the very remarkable work which this American lady has performed.

With your permission, I will now read the resolutions which the Fifth Committee puts before you:

The Assembly:

(1) *Desires to express its admiration for the work Miss Jeppe has performed and its gratitude for the devoted way she has carried it out;*

(2) *Approves Miss Jeppe's report and expresses its satisfaction with the results obtained during the course of the past year;*

(3) *Decides that the mission for the rescue of women and children, which has been entrusted to Miss Jeppe by the League of Nations, shall be prolonged for one year more under the conditions fixed by the Assembly, at its last ordinary session, that is to say, under the high authority of the Power which holds a mandate in Syria under the League of Nations;*

(4) *Seeing that the work of Armenian colonisation and any other work undertaken by Miss Jeppe personally in connection with the mission for the rescue of women and children entrusted to her by the League of Nations fall within*

the class of work entrusted by the mandatory Power, in the general interest, to a central organ representing the Refugee Service at the International Labour Office and the direction of the International Red Cross Committee, invites Miss Jeppe to come to an understanding as regards the general direction of those works mentioned under heading 3, with the liaison organisation established by the mandatory Power;

(5) *Seeing that Miss Jeppe is of opinion that her task will be discharged during the coming year, requests her to submit to the next ordinary session of the Assembly a final report on all the results of her mission;*

(6) *Thanks Miss Mills for her devoted and excellent work and regrets that it has not been found possible to continue the grant from the League of Nations for another year.*

Before I leave the tribune, I should like to express my personal regret that these resolutions are more in the form of a vote of thanks for work done than the basis for new work.

The President:

Translation: If no one else wishes to speak, I will regard the resolutions of the Fifth Committee as adopted.

The resolutions were adopted.

76. — AUDITED ACCOUNTS AND BUDGET OF THE LEAGUE AND OTHER FINANCIAL QUESTIONS: REPORT OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President:

Translation: The next item on the agenda is the report of the Fourth Committee on financial questions (Annex 24. Document A.105.1926.X).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Titulesco, Chairman of the Fourth Committee, and M. Oldenburg, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President:

Translation: M. Oldenburg, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Oldenburg (Denmark), Rapporteur:

Translation: I have the honour to submit the general report of the Fourth Committee. The report has been printed and distributed, so I shall make only a few brief comments.

The Fourth Committee has this year instructed me as Rapporteur on general questions to deal with all the subjects placed on its agenda, with the exception of that of contributions in arrears, which, in accordance with precedent, was referred to a special Sub-Committee. The Fourth Committee's proposals on this latter point form the subject of a special report to the Assembly.

At the beginning of its report, the Committee desires to pay its tribute to the First Financial Director of the League of Nations, who has just relinquished his duties as a member of the Secretariat. The sound financial organisation of the League is in no small measure due to the untiring efforts and thorough technical knowledge of Sir Herbert Ames.

The Committee has held many sessions and done a great deal of hard work. It subjected the budget to a meticulous examination and noted the orderly and methodical manner in which the League's finances are managed.

The Committee further noted the energetic action taken by the Supervisory Commission and its care in going into matters of detail.

A perusal of the report will have shown that the Fourth Committee requests you to approve the General Budget for the financial year 1927 amounting to 24,512,341 gold francs. The 1926 budget amounted to 22,930,633 gold francs.

This latter figure was divided into 937 units, the amount of each unit thus being 24,472.39 francs. The total budget for 1927 has to be divided into 1,015 units, each unit being approximately equal to 24,150 francs, or a little less than last year.

In arriving at this sum, we took into consideration the amount of 1,400,000 francs, which will be distributed in 1927 among those States which, by the prompt payment of their contributions, assisted in the constitution of the Building Fund. This fund now amounts to 7,972,135.51 francs.

The Working Capital Fund, which is regarded as the property of the States who contribute to it, amounted on December 31st, 1925, to 4,389,497 francs.

I will not dwell upon the serious danger to the finances of the League arising out of the very high figure for contributions in arrears. The League is owed as much as 6,451,318.67 francs under this head. M. de Vasconcellos, Rapporteur for this special question, will make a statement on the subject later.

The President :

Translation : M. Hambro, delegate of Norway, will address the Assembly.

M. Hambro (Norway) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Before I make a few general remarks upon the budget which has been laid before us, I want to associate myself with the observations made by the distinguished delegate of the British Empire, Viscount Cecil, some time ago and to call attention to the hurried way in which we have had to pass even the budget of the League. I should like to call attention to Rule 17 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, which states : "As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any meeting of the Assembly unless copies of it have been circulated to all representatives not later than the day preceding the meeting". We have been voting, all the afternoon, documents which have been placed before the delegates this very afternoon. We even had to pass over one item on the agenda because the draft resolution was not yet printed.

I would also like to call attention to what is stated in Rule 14, paragraph 6, of the Rules of Procedure, which says that each Committee "shall keep a register of its discussions and Minutes, which shall be published at the earliest possible date, but not until they have been approved by the Committee. They may at any time be consulted by any member of the Assembly". I know, Mr. President, that my point can be answered by saying that all delegations are represented on every Committee. But I want to call attention to the fact that we have been obliged to comply with the wishes of the Bureau and to have meetings of our Committee while the Assembly was in session here and when members of our Committee had to be here. We finished our work in the Committee this morning, after a session lasting two hours, but all the draft resolutions have not yet been printed; some of them have been distributed without being printed.

I do not raise any formal objection to this mode of procedure, but I call the attention of all the

Members of the League and the attention of the Bureau to it, and I wish to add that, if I personally do not object, it is because I have the greatest trust in the financial organs of the League of Nations whose work we have been discussing in my Committee, because I have full confidence in the work done by the Supervisory Commission, and because I think that all the members of the Fourth Committee also have the greatest confidence and trust in the work done by our Rapporteur. But I think it is necessary to remind the Bureau of the Rules of Procedure and to remind them of the words spoken by the President of the Second Assembly, namely, that he presided in the spirit that we should comply on every point with the Rules of Procedure and the resolutions passed by the Assembly.

We have been discussing here the way in which interest can be aroused in the work of the League and the way to create respect for the dignity of the Assembly and to make propaganda. I want to say that there is no better propaganda than the work done in the Assembly and by the Assembly, and if we cannot interest the Members of the Assembly in it, if we cannot interest the Bureau, how can we interest the public and the Press ? To-day we have seen the opinions which have been circulated in the Press concerning the attitude of public opinion. I will not dwell upon it, but I will mention the impression which this procedure, this rushing of our work, this informal way of doing things which would not occur in any parliament which sends delegates here, must make upon new delegates who, like myself, come for the first time to the Assembly of the League and who hold the very highest conceptions of its dignity and of the high moral character of the work done here.

I had certain reservations to make with regard to the draft resolution on the budget, but I am not going to deal with any of them here. I think it is unnecessary to do so. I have called attention to certain points in the Committee, and that will be sufficient for the moment.

I want, however, to emphasise the two things which have found expression in the report submitted by the Fourth Committee to the Assembly. I might emphasise the need of all small nations and all distant nations for a better representation on the Secretariat and on the International Labour Office. I do not criticise and I do not complain, especially as my country has no reason to complain. I do not complain because I know what has been felt, what we all have felt when we have met members of the Secretariat — we have felt the spirit of the League of Nations. We have felt an independence of national aspirations; we have met in eagerness to further the work of the League of Nations. This being so, no member of the staff will be hurt by the words that I have uttered.

It is a fact, however, that all those nations which are not French-speaking or English-speaking are under a disadvantage when they wish to be represented on the personnel of the staff, and I ask you to remember, and I ask the Council also to remember it when appointing the superior officers of the League, that we are constantly labouring under a difficulty in being unable to speak our own language here and in having to try to express our thoughts in a language which we but imperfectly command. I am satisfied with the remarks made by the Secretary-General and inserted in the report, to the effect that only for certain classes of the staff of the Secretariat shall a perfect knowledge of the two languages be made a condition. Qualifications which are independent of language will be taken into consideration. I want, however, to call the attention of the Council to the fact that,

when it is going to appoint new superior officers of the League and Under-Secretaries or Chiefs of Sections, it will have to take care not to give the world at large the impression that only the subjects and citizens of the great Powers will have the opportunity to fill those positions. I want to remind you that in the Mixed Courts of Justice in Egypt the small nations have been privileged, because it was felt that they were more likely to be politically impartial, and that the first President of the Permanent Court of Justice was a Dutchman, while the second was a native of the country whose guests we are. This is proof enough that, where people are under equal conditions, the men of the small nations have an opportunity to obtain the posts which we all want them to have.

I also wish to remind the Council of the fact that it is perhaps rather difficult for it to understand the full importance of these considerations; it is perhaps also rather difficult for a good many members of the Assembly to understand them. Many of the representatives of the Members of the Council are Ambassadors or Ministers to Paris or London and so have a perfect command of one of the official languages of the League. They must remember, however, that it is important for every delegate who comes here to be able to meet on the staff some man or woman who can understand him when he is talking his own language and asking for help in his own language.

I am perfectly confident that the leaders of the Bureau will do everything in their power, as has been promised and as is stated in this report. I am convinced that one of the great dangers for the League of Nations and its work would be undue impatience. I prefer the idea of proceeding by fractions of an inch rather than taking any step which we might afterwards have to retrace. I know the obstacles of pride and prejudice and prestige that have to be overcome in dealing with these questions, but I have spoken these words with the feeling that, being the delegate of a nation which is in the happy position of living in friendship with every neighbouring nation, and never having had any claim upon the League, it is also our duty to try to express the wishes felt by the delegations of all the small nations, wishes to which not every delegation can feel it politically wise to give expression from this rostrum.

The President :

Translation : Baron Marks von Wurtemberg, delegate of Sweden, will address the Assembly.

Baron Marks von Wurtemberg (Sweden) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I do not wish to detain you or to try the patience of those who are anxiously looking forward to the termination of this session of the Assembly. I cannot, however, forego this opportunity of associating myself with the Norwegian delegate's remarks in so far as they concern the haste which has characterised the proceedings of this Assembly. This mode of procedure is neither compatible with the dignity of the Assembly nor likely to be productive of good results.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolutions of the Fourth Committee, which read as follows :

1. *The Assembly, in virtue of Article 38 of the Regulations for the Financial Administration of the League, finally approves the audited accounts of the League for the seventh financial period, ending December 31st, 1925.*

2. *The Assembly, in virtue of Article 17 of the Regulations for the Financial Administration of the League :*

Approves, for the financial year 1927, the general Budget of the League, of the Secretariat and of the Special Organisations of the League, of the International Labour Organisation and of the Permanent Court of International Justice, including supplementary credits the total amount of which is 24,512,341 gold francs ;

And decides that the said budgets shall be published in the " Official Journal ".

3. *The Assembly adopts, in so far as they have been approved by the Fourth Committee, the conclusions of the various reports of the Supervisory Commission submitted to its consideration.*

4. *The Assembly approves the schedule showing the proportional interest of each Member of the League in the League Building Fund (see document A.39.1926).*

5. *The Assembly fixes at 79 the number of units allocated to Germany in the scale of allocation of the League's expenditure.*

6. *The Assembly adopts the conclusions of the report of the Fourth Committee.*

7. *The Assembly :*

Notes that the Internal Control Service of the League of Nations experiences difficulty and is caused considerable trouble by the fact that members of Committees and other persons who have to submit requests for repayment do not always take into consideration the exact terms of the Regulations of the League of Nations governing the administration of the funds ; and, therefore,

Requests members of Committees and all other persons performing work of any kind whatever at the request and at the expense of the League of Nations to comply strictly with the above Regulations, and, in case of doubt, to apply for information beforehand to the competent officials.

8. *The Assembly :*

While appreciating the results of the sale of publications and approving the proposals submitted to it by the Supervisory Commission and the Secretary-General relative to the extension of these sales and a stricter supervision of the employment of the grants for printing ;

Decides to draw the attention of the Advisory Committees and the Conferences convened by the League to the heavy expense entailed by the publication of their Minutes and requests them to consider whether the publication of their discussions would not frequently be better effected by means of a detailed report giving as exactly as possible an account of their work ;

Decides that the Minutes of Sub-Committees will in no case be published unless a formal request, containing a statement of the reasons for such a course, is submitted to the Council through the Secretary-General ;

Requests the Supervisory Commission to report to it again next year on the printing expenses and to indicate the saving effected, in consequence of this decision.

The resolutions were adopted.

77. — CONTRIBUTIONS IN ARREARS : REPORT OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the Fourth Committee's report on Contributions in Arrears (Annex 25. Document A.95.1926.X).

(On the invitation of the President. M. de Vasconcellos, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform by the side of the Chairman of the Fourth Committee.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. de Vasconcellos (Portugal), Rapporteur :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — The task of the Rapporteur on contributions in arrears is always a thankless one. For one thing, the subject in itself is very uncongenial, and then the Rapporteur is not allowed to expound his report, because it is confidential and the discussions have been held in secret.

I must therefore content myself with saying that, after having been drafted, the report was carefully discussed at great length, and at the end of its proceedings the Committee arrived at the conclusions which I am about to read to you. You are asked to pass what is in effect a vote of confidence. You favoured the Committees of preceding Assemblies with this vote, and I trust you will give it to the present one also.

The following are the conclusions which I have the honour to submit on behalf of the Fourth Committee :

The Assembly :

(1) Authorises the Secretary-General, as the result of previous negotiations, to write off from the accounts of the League the sum of 22,478.71 gold francs due from Panama for the financial year 1925 ;

(2) Requests the Secretary-General :

(a) To give his support, when necessary, to any steps which he may consider useful with a view to the recovery of arrears ;

(b) To submit to the Council at its session of June 1927 a detailed report on the position with regard to contributions in arrears ;

(3) Requests China to propose effective and concrete methods, acceptable to the League of Nations, with a view to the payment of her contributions in arrears ;

(4) Requests the Council to cause a study to be made of the legal position of States which do not pay their contributions to the League of Nations, with a view to informing the Assembly at its eighth ordinary session.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I shall regard the resolutions of the Fourth Committee as adopted.

The resolutions were adopted.

78. — CLOSE OF THE SESSION : SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

Translation : When opening this session of the Assembly on September 6th, the President of the Council stated that a year ago in this hall you drew up the programme of work which the organisations of the League were to carry out in the course of the year. He thus drew attention to a very valuable asset in your work — its continuity — and to the fact that, in addition to the direct results obtained by the League of Nations, your former discussions had helped to create by degrees the atmosphere in which the main political negotiations have been conducted during the last twelve months.

Now, at the end of our meetings, may I, relying on the confidence you have bestowed on me and the privilege you accord me to-day of saying a word of farewell to your delegations, say that the seventh ordinary session of the Assembly has enriched the tradition established by its predecessors and has greatly contributed to the progress of the League !

I feel that I am faithfully interpreting your wishes in thanking the Swiss Confederation and the Republic and Canton of Geneva for the cordial hospitality which they have offered us and all the facilities they have placed at our disposal, and for the friendly atmosphere which is so noticeable every year when we come here to work together for the cause of peace — a cause so dear to this noble country.

I do not think I need bestow any further praise upon the Secretariat ; you are already so well acquainted with its devotion to the League. But I should like to avail myself of this opportunity to express my regret, which is certainly shared by all the delegates, that two distinguished members of the Secretariat, two who have rendered invaluable service to the League, will no longer be with us when we meet next year — at any rate in their present capacity. I refer to Dr. Nitobé and M. Mantoux.

I hope they will accept this expression of our thanks for all that they have done and our best and most sincere wishes for the future. If I have not mentioned Sir Herbert Ames, it is not because he is not included in this expression of our gratitude but because he is present with us as a delegate, and I would scarcely dare to ask him to sit and listen to his own praise.

I shall not attempt to summarise your work. You have carefully considered in your Committees all the problems with which the League has had to deal ; you have given your opinions on the results obtained, you have shown the path to be followed, and you are now relying on the Council to carry out the work of the future. It would therefore ill become me to remind you in detail of the results of which you are resolved, when you return to your respective countries, yourselves to be the advocates.

I am convinced that the effects of our work will soon make themselves felt and that the resolution here adopted to hasten the ratifications of the conventions drawn up by the League of Nations will, thanks to your united efforts, shortly become a reality.

The special characteristics of this Assembly, which will assuredly pass into history, should not cause us to forget the vast amount of solid work we have accomplished. That each of the six Committees has done its ample share is proved by the resolutions adopted and, on certain points, the definite agreements which have been concluded, as for instance that on slavery.

If in other respects the Assembly during its seventh ordinary session has contented itself with preparing the way for other meetings, it has, in this respect at least, displayed a lively determination to arrive at tangible results. I refer, in particular, to the Economic Conference and to the Disarmament Conference, which in this Assembly have formed the subjects of such interesting and encouraging discussions. Certainly these are serious questions, fraught with difficulties of every kind, which you yourselves have defined with eloquence. But at the same time the real scope of the Economic Conference, even if the powers of that Conference are limited, has been established, and, on the other hand, we have all been made to realise the great hopes raised by the first endeavour to attain that general and loyal disarmament which will gain for the League the whole-hearted support of all peoples. This is the programme of work for the ensuing year. We leave a tremendous task to the organs of the League. I hope — as you all hope — that the two proposed Conferences will have been crowned with success before the eighth session of the Assembly.

But the two dominant features of this session will always be the reorganisation of the Council and the entry of Germany into the League. You are all aware of the many discussions which, in the past few years, have taken place around the question of elections to the Council. We have all heard the League of Nations criticised in this connection, and the uninitiated have expressed surprise that this question should involve such minute investigation, such long negotiations. But is there, in reality, any problem of greater importance for the future of the League than that of the Council, and is it not a true sign of progress that the Members of the League should be taking an interest in the details of its procedure, its

organisation and the perfecting of this international machinery which has been placed at the disposal of all our Governments ?

In order that this new institution should operate surely and evenly, it is indispensable that the rules provided for it should be known in all countries and by all our national administrations, and that the representatives, delegates and experts of all the Members of the League should realise as clearly as possible both its potentialities and the exact limits of its activity. Naturally, the crisis which you have satisfactorily solved has given us cause for serious anxiety, but I am sure that it will produce at least one good result — it will make the principal organs of the League better known and their high importance more generally understood.

I should like to add, in the hope that the authority you have been good enough to confer upon the President of the Assembly will enable his words to penetrate far beyond these precincts, that one of the arguments generally advanced by the opponents of the League has henceforth lost all force and power. The adversaries of international understanding were all agreed that our League included only a portion of the nations of the world, those who were not separated from one another by any difficulties of vital importance. But during this session we have in this hall witnessed a great event. We have seen nations which had been divided by hideous strife sit side by side and work together under the common ideal of voluntary obedience to the Covenant of the League. If the League of Nations is not yet universal, events have shown that it can and will be so.

Ladies and gentlemen, I declare the seventh ordinary session of the Assembly closed.

The Assembly rose at 6.10 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Eighth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FIRST PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 5th, 1927, at 10.30 A.M.

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1. — OPENING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

M. Villegas, delegate of Chile, Acting President of the Council, and afterwards M. Guani (Uruguay), took the Chair.

The Chairman :

Translation : Ladies and Gentlemen — For the eighth time the Assembly of the League of Nations is holding its ordinary session at Geneva, and the great honour of inaugurating its work has fallen upon the delegate of Chile. As President of the Council, it is his privilege to-day to extend a first and most cordial welcome to the eminent representatives assembled here, among whom I note the presence of an ever-growing number of Foreign Ministers at the head of their respective delegations.

It gives me particular pleasure to count among our colleagues the head of a State : M. Giuseppe Motta, the President of the Swiss Confederation, whose merits there is no need for me to extol, because you are all familiar with the distinguished qualities which he has displayed during eight years of uninterrupted representation of the wonderful country in which we are met.

For me, gentlemen, who have the honour to be your President, the Assembly conjures up a striking picture of the countries, races, continents, interests, civilisations and ideals which are uniting, like strong but invisible currents, in finding their way into this historic hall. By your presence, Geneva becomes the heart of the civilised world, to which you bring a fresh source of strength.

The work of the League of Nations is developing every day, its activities extend over ever wider and wider fields of international work. In spite of the impatience shown, which tends to become more marked as the League's importance in international life increases, this intense activity has, I think, been productive of real progress.

The past year has been marked by the large number of meetings and the wide scope of their work. Certainly no year has been busier, and never before have such heavy demands been made upon the organs of the League. I should not mention this feature, which might be considered too material, if I were not convinced of the extreme importance of the results obtained from this contact between the delegates of all nations, who represent the most varied forms of national activity and settle between them those innumerable details which really constitute international relations ; this contact is particularly valuable at a time when relations between the peoples are continually multiplying and when international laws and regulations, which were formerly few in number and restricted to a few limited objects, cover a far wider area and are continually developing.

It is here that this new law to which I have just referred is being worked out and you, gentlemen

have been largely responsible for its creation through these meetings which constitute the Assembly of the League of Nations, from which the guiding principles emanate and where all the results receive sanction.

This daily task is not sufficiently known. Interest is apt to become centred on political events, even if they are only of relative and passing importance. There is a tendency to mistake the external phenomenon for the inner cause and to see in these events the whole of international life. Too often the League of Nations appears to be outside the current of international life, whereas it is dealing with problems that really matter and is seeking to forge the links which will join nations one to another by their true interests, to remove sources of conflict and to show the weighty reasons which call for understanding and concord.

A second characteristic of the year which has just elapsed is to be found in the progress made towards the League's universality. It may be said that we have this year the same gaps to deplore as last year, due to the absence of friends who are dear to us, whom for so long we were proud to have among us and whom we hope soon to welcome in our midst once again; for it is, I am sure, the wish of us all that somehow or other the necessary means may be found of winning back their disinterested assistance in the international field and the benefit of their faith in human progress. Moreover, have not Brazil and Spain continued to co-operate in the International Labour Organisation and in some of the League's technical work? On the other hand, we have had the pleasure of welcoming on several occasions delegates of the Argentine Republic, who, in most spheres of our work, have given valuable assistance. I am particularly glad to come to this hopeful conclusion, since I represent a country of Spanish origin which has the friendliest relations with the two great South American Republics I have just mentioned.

In reality, the whole year has been characterised by the participation of an ever-growing number of States in the work of the League. Most of our important meetings have been attended by official delegates or experts not only of Members of the League, who make up the immense majority of States in the world, but also of non-Member States. I need not remind you that the United States of North America have several times sent to Geneva, with the full support of their national Administration, a number of delegates of proved competence, chosen for that very reason. They were associated with all the preparatory work for the reduction of armaments carried out by the League, with the Economic Conference, and with the Transit Conference, and they have promised to give further assistance. They have worked on other committees and have taken part in various meetings convened under the authority of the Council, more particularly the Conference of Press Experts.

A large Russian delegation attended the Economic Conference last May, and on the same occasion we welcomed observers from Mexico. I note, too, with pleasure the participation of a delegate from Ecuador in the Transit Conference. Turkey sent an important delegation to that Conference, as well as to the Economic Conference. The same applies to Egypt, and most of the non-Member States, through correspondence with our Secretariat, have been associated in the technical work of the League of Nations. In this way, proof has been given of the importance of our work, not only for individual groups of nations, not only for one or another continent, but for the whole world. Universal in its purpose, the

League of Nations is tending to become universal in the support which it receives. Are we not all firmly persuaded that its strength lies in that very universality and in the equal appeal which it makes to all Members?

This brings me to the third characteristic feature of the past year. During that period the League of Nations has turned its attention to an ever-increasing number of problems affecting not only the countries nearest to it but distant countries also. In point of fact, the present year has been rich in examples of cordial, valuable and promising relations maintained by the League with all its Members, including the most distant. I think that the main part of the work of the Technical Organisations possesses this universal character, which we are delighted to note, convinced as we are that in this way the League gains in strength and especially in independence.

The Health Organisation, for example, held a Conference at Montevideo on infant mortality, in the course of which the Health Committee, through its distinguished President Dr. Madsen, who came from Denmark expressly for the Conference, met leading experts from the countries of Latin America. It is my hope that this meeting, which at first sight may seem of interest only to a limited number of learned specialists, will have important consequences. Throughout the whole of Latin America health problems occupy a foremost place in national affairs, and I do not doubt that the Europeans who visited several of the Latin-American capitals found it exceedingly instructive to note the immense effort made in this direction, the results obtained and the opportunities for study, and therefore for progress, which those countries offer. This meeting will no doubt result in closer intercourse in the future. I take this opportunity of paying my tribute to the Health Organisation, whose work extends over the whole world, through its far-reaching investigations and its international courses, through the interchange of health personnel and through its Committees of enquiry.

This universal importance of the League's work appears in all branches of its activity. It is, for example, exceedingly encouraging to read the reports of the work done during the year by the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, its Sub-Committees and its Paris Institute, which also enjoy general support and co-operation. Among many useful measures initiated by this Committee are the efforts made to give effect to your recommendation that the work of the League of Nations, its *raison d'être* and its ideals should be made known to children and young people. These efforts are being pursued in the southern hemisphere as well as in Europe, Asia and America.

Excellent work of general importance has continued to be done by the League of Nations Committees which deal with social questions — for example, the campaign against the illicit traffic in opium and other drugs, the comprehensive enquiry with a view to a campaign against the scourge of the traffic in women, and work in connection with child welfare. The Assembly will be particularly pleased at the fresh ratifications of the Opium Convention, for which it has appealed in its recommendations. It will welcome in all confidence the completed proposals of Senator Ciruolo for the creation of an International Relief Union for countries overtaken by disasters.

No less vigorous efforts have been made by the Transit Organisation to strengthen the ties with distant countries, to organise exchange of information with them, and to ensure closer liaison with non-European countries. You are acquainted with the promising results obtained a few days ago

by the Third General Conference on Communications and Transit at Geneva.

Turning to another sphere, the work of the Financial and Economic Organisation has furnished results which, although in some cases less general in character, are also of great importance — for example, the settlement of Bulgarian refugees, the work done to complete the settlement of more than a million refugees in Greece, the help given to the Estonian Government in reforming its currency and banking and to the Free City of Danzig in connection with the issue of a loan, work of universal interest to prevent the counterfeiting of currency and to find solutions for the problems of double taxation and tax evasion.

The most important event of the year, however, was undoubtedly the meeting of the International Economic Conference in May. Its meetings have opened up fresh avenues of successful work for the League of Nations, for the Economic Conference was the beginning and not the end of a chapter, and it gives promise of renewed action for the improvement of the welfare of the peoples.

Ever since the foundation of the League plans have been devised to develop the provisions of Article 23 of the Covenant regarding the equitable treatment of commerce and to create a state of economic peace among the nations of the world. At recent Assemblies it has been suggested that moral peace depended upon economic peace, and that the latter was a necessary pre-condition of any serious endeavour to reduce armaments and organise peace. This suggestion of the Assembly was acted upon, and you may well be glad of this, for the conditions of the modern world, which is still tottering under the effects of the Great War, were such that only this initiative could have brought about that important economic enquiry at Geneva, the results of which will continue to develop for many years.

I may refer, in the first place, to the valuable set of documents prepared for the Conference. It comprised a body of work on the economic situation of the world, so full and so relevant to existing circumstances as to win unanimous praise from the most distinguished economists. Many of them, indeed, had helped in the work, together with our Secretariat, the International Labour Office, and important organisations like the International Chamber of Commerce and the International Institute of Agriculture at Rome. Probably no such complete documents on the economic systems of all countries and all continents had ever before been placed at the disposal of an Assembly.

What struck even the least experienced observer was the interest aroused in all parts of the world, evidence of which was clear from the great number and the importance of the delegations. All countries, whether Members of the League of Nations or not, appointed statesmen or high officials responsible for economic policy, their foremost specialists and their leading writers on industrial, commercial or agricultural questions, together with representatives of their most important economic organisation.

There is, I think, no need for me to expatiate upon the results obtained, which constitute a vast plan of action. The Conference paid attention to all branches of economic life: agriculture, the representatives of which were able, perhaps for the first time, to discuss the problems affecting them in their proper connection — that is to say, along with industrial and commercial questions; commerce, for which it recommended a return to complete freedom, opposing, but in a reasoned manner, Customs abuses, by taking account of existing circumstances,

the needs of the moment, and the inevitably slow progress of all such movements; and, finally, industry, of which the Conference took the widest possible view, not forgetting that the old industries are now in competition with those of new countries, or that Asia — a vast continent equally rich in human and in material resources — is adding every day to her economic equipment, and that the New World can, from many points of view, serve as a model.

These suggestions were asked for by the Assembly and the Council. The Economic Conference was convened at Geneva under our responsibility; it furnished us with a unanimous opinion on the world situation, and I cannot too strongly emphasise the authority which thereby attaches to the results of its discussions. The Council at its June session requested the Economic Committee to study forthwith certain resolutions passed by the Conference; and its members took occasion to express their appreciation of the work done and their desire that Governments should adopt it as a guide. Enthusiastic support has since been received from various quarters. I would mention, in particular, that of the International Chamber of Commerce at its Congress at Stockholm. It is now for the Assembly and the Governments which you represent to take up the task and to enable the organs of the League to continue the work of the Conference.

At the close of last year's Assembly we looked forward to seeing this year marked not only by the Economic Conference but also by the reduction of armaments. We are all aware of the criticisms that have been directed against the League for the apparent slowness of its progress in the matter of armaments. I use the phrase "apparent slowness" with intention, whereas, in company with not a few sound thinkers, I should feel tempted to say "discerning prudence", which is a condition of final success. A recent experience has once more illustrated the difficulty of this task. Three great nations have met at Geneva actuated by the wish to lighten their financial burdens and to demonstrate the good understanding between them and their confidence in a peaceful future. The problem before them, however, proved to be so complex that they were obliged to abandon it and postpone the attempt to another occasion.

How, then, can we be surprised that the preparation of a general convention for the reduction of armaments comprising all the nations has been attended by difficulties? It is, however, on these lines that the League is considering the problem, and on these lines that it may be solved. Even at last year's Assembly doubts were expressed as to the possibility of progressing with the rapidity desired by our sincerest and most enthusiastic members. Experience has shown that the task is immense and that it can only be accomplished by stages. The League has already completed some of these stages. It has not failed in this task. It has courageously set to work on the programme you laid down for it. Its technical Committees have completed their work, and the important Preparatory Commission set up at your desire has already established in part the principles which are to form the core of the future general convention for the reduction of armaments. The Commission's work, of course, has yet to be completed in a second reading, but of its ultimate success I am convinced, thanks to the general spirit of good will and the experience gained in the past year.

Let us not imagine, however, that with the framing of a Convention and the establishment of general principles our task will be completed. The recent Three-Power Conference has shown

us the need of careful, diplomatic and technical preparation required to determine the figures for each nation — figures which will then have to be fitted into the framework of the draft convention. It is, moreover, certain that, when the conference meets, an international organisation to ensure security will at the same time have been prepared. This work is developing with the development of the League itself, and from this point of view the past year had been a fruitful one, inasmuch as it has prepared for the Assembly Committees, more particularly the Legal and Disarmament Committees, executive instruments of the highest value. As you know, parallel with the technical and political aspects of disarmament we have never abandoned our efforts towards arbitration and security. The organs of the League have been engaged during the last few months in preparing a series of reports concerned with the actual working of the League.

In a noteworthy document you will find the whole of the work on Article 16 of the Covenant. It emphasises the development of the legal aspect of this question, which is of primary importance for the establishment of peace. On the proposal of the Finnish Government, the Financial Committee has examined the question of the financial assistance provided for by Article 16 and has drawn up proposals for guaranteeing a loan to the State attacked.

The Council has been concerned to define certain consequences resulting from Article 11 of the Covenant — the article which more than any other defines the action to be taken by the Council in order to prevent a conflict. It has studied and enumerated various methods of pressure to which recourse might be had before Article 16 and the sanctions proper were brought into operation. It has asked the Transit Committee to define the measures to be taken by Members of the League to assist the Council. It counts upon the support of the Assembly in inducing Governments to take steps to ensure that in times of emergency every facility may be given, without hesitation or delay, to the Members of the Council, to the agents of the League, and to all who may seek in the name of the community of nations to preserve the peace.

I am happy to record that the League's efforts during the years have been directed mainly to the prevention of war. There, in my opinion, is the key to the disarmament problem. If disarmament is inseparable from security — and we all know that it is — what better security could there be than that of an international league firmly based on mutual respect and justice?

Of the three master conceptions in our problem, still echoed by these walls — Arbitration, Security, Disarmament — arbitration comes logically first, and therefore arbitration must come first in their practical development. I could wish for no better evidence than the achievement of Locarno, established with such admirable firmness on a basis of arbitration.

The Assembly, constant in its attachment to this policy, which it has ever been at pains to adapt to the necessities of the time, recommended it last year to the good offices of the Council, which in turn conveyed your wishes to all the States Members of the League, and will not fail to do so again if you still use your influence in favour of conciliation and arbitration.

You have thus before you, in the matter of disarmament, an extensive programme including both the legal perfecting of the League organisation and the continuation of the strictly technical work — a programme which is not even confined to these two main objects but includes as well

the development of arbitration agreements and conventions and treaties of security.

I, who speak to you now, have this policy and this method particularly at heart, for I represent a country which from the first has been the constant advocate of separate arbitration and security agreements and conventions — and whose own success in that direction I have been proud to present to you — as essential steps towards a general treaty, which we regard as an end to be achieved.

At a time when the development of the League is being subjected to criticisms — often, be it said, valuable both in themselves and because they afford, in my opinion, proof of an ever-growing interest in our work — I have felt it necessary to give a brief summary of the weighty reasons we have for confidence. It cannot be denied that there are difficulties, that the patience of the architects of peace is often severely tested. But let us not forget the results achieved. Let us realise the high prestige of the League of Nations, which, combined with the increasing power of its Assembly and its manifold organisations in world affairs, has invested the Council with the necessary authority for its task of bringing peace and order into political life. This task, should grave developments occur, it will accomplish with firmness, as it has already done in the past. We may be convinced, therefore, that by a close association of the moral and material interests of peoples we shall succeed in overcoming every obstacle and that the intention of the Covenant will be wholly fulfilled. We shall have the support of public opinion and its distinguished interpreters — the representatives of the world Press — who are here around us. I bear in mind that they too have recently given the League of Nations the powerful support of their desire for peace on the occasion of the recent Press Conference under the auspices of the League, which brought together the most eminent experts from every continent.

The League of Nations is growing as it works, and maturing as it gains experience. In it and about it there is a constant and active discussion of its duties, its powers, and its channels of activity. The views of each of us are moulded by his temperament, his experience, his ideals, and his responsibilities. We shall follow this discussion not only without misgiving but with the feeling that it is a striking proof of the growing importance of the League of Nations in international life. All of us, even when our views differ, are united in our common faith in the destiny of this "living thing" — to use President Wilson's powerful words — "living" and therefore bound to grow and develop.

And, since I have quoted a great American, may I, as an American myself, evoke the noble figure of Bolivar, one of the illustrious harbingers of the ideas on which the Covenant is based? In solemn words he proclaimed the ideal of international solidarity when he expressed the hope that all nations would meet together to discuss, as they are now doing at Geneva, those vital questions the settlement of which is essential for the establishment and maintenance of peace. You are all aware that, to realise his ideal, he summoned the free nations for the first time in history to lay the foundations of universal peace at Panama and called upon them to guarantee each other's sovereignty and to base true freedom upon order and co-operation. Under the influence of these great ideals, we are assembled here, on the same footing without distinction of continents, as representatives of all nations, great and small, and of all forms of culture and civilisation.

I declare open the eighth ordinary session of the Assembly of the League of Nations.

2. — ELECTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE CREDENTIALS OF DELEGATES.

The Chairman :

Translation : Ladies and Gentlemen — In accordance with Article 5 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, the Committee to report on the Credentials of Delegates should be elected by the Assembly in order that it may submit its report without delay.

The Committee should consist of eight members. Does any delegation wish to submit to the Assembly proposals on this question ?

I call upon the delegate of Portugal, who desires to address the Assembly.

M. Ferreira (Portugal) :

Translation : Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen — I have the honour to propose to the Assembly a list of eight members to form the Committee on Credentials. I am venturing to put forward this suggestion after consulting some of my colleagues. We might expedite the progress of our work if we adopted a single list without delay. Accordingly, I beg to submit the following list to the Assembly :

M. Emerich PFLÜGL (Austria),
M. DE AGÜERO Y BETHANCOURT (Cuba),
M. Demètre CACLAMANOS (Greece),
H.H. THE MAHARAJA OF KAPURTHALA (India),
M. W. SCHUMANS (Latvia),
M. L. OFTEDAL (Norway),
Hussein Khan ALÂ (Persia),
M. Diogenes ESCALANTE (Venezuela).

The Chairman :

Translation : Are there any observations in regard to this proposal? Does any member wish to propose any other candidate ?

If there is no opposition, I declare the proposal adopted.

The Committee to report on the Credentials of Delegates will therefore consist of the members proposed by the delegate of Portugal.

The list proposed by M. Ferreira was adopted.

The Chairman :

Translation : The Committee on the Credentials of Delegates which has just been elected will meet at once in the President's room behind the platform.

Members of the Assembly who have not yet deposited their credentials with the Secretariat are requested to take them without delay to the room where the Committee on Credentials is to meet.

The plenary meeting of the Assembly will be adjourned during the meeting of the Committee on Credentials and will be resumed at 12.30 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 11.15 a.m. and resumed at 12.30 p.m.

3. — APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF DELEGATIONS TO SERVE ON THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES : COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.

The Chairman :

Translation : Ladies and Gentlemen — Before calling on the Chairman of the Committee on

Credentials I wish to make certain communications to the Assembly.

The delegations will have found in their respective places a form on which they are requested to enter the names of their representatives on each of the six Committees of the Assembly to be formed this afternoon.

All these lists should be handed in to the Secretariat at the close of this morning's meeting.

4. — SEATING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE DELEGATIONS, AND OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE ASSEMBLY : COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.

The Chairman :

Translation : The General Committee of the Assembly suggested last session that certain alterations should be made in the arrangement of the seats and in other administrative details of the Assembly.

The Secretary-General has endeavoured to comply with these instructions.

Since it was impossible, however, as you will realise, to consult the delegations in regard to these new arrangements or to obtain their opinion in advance, I have requested the Secretary-General to cancel the arrangements made and to re-arrange the delegations' seats provisionally as they were last year, until the General Committee is able to reconsider the question.

5. — CREDENTIALS OF DELEGATES : REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS.

The Chairman :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the report of the Committee on Credentials.

I call upon M. de Agüero y Bethancourt to read his report.

M. de Agüero y Bethancourt (Cuba), Chairman and Rapporteur of the Committee on Credentials :

Translation : Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen — The Committee appointed by the Assembly to report on the credentials of delegates met to-day at 11.10 a.m. at the office of the President of the Assembly. I was elected Chairman and was entrusted with the duty of drawing up the report.

The Committee examined the documents transmitted to it by the Secretary-General and found that the following States are represented by delegates who are in possession either of letters of credentials from heads of States or letters from Ministers for Foreign Affairs, or telegrams from the same source, or letters from permanent representatives accredited to the League of Nations : Abyssinia, Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, British Empire, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Hungary, India, Irish Free State, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Nicaragua, Netherlands, Norway, New Zealand, Panama, Paraguay, Persia, Poland, Portugal, Roumania, Salvador, Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Siam, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Uruguay, Venezuela.

The Committee considers that the representatives of these States Members are duly accredited.

The following States Members have not accredited delegations to this Assembly: Argentine Republic, Bolivia, Brazil, Honduras, Peru and Spain.
Your Committee on Credentials trusts that the Assembly will approve its report.

The Chairman :

Translation : I beg to thank the Chairman of the Committee on Credentials for his report. Has anyone any observations to make on the conclusions of the report?

The conclusions of the report were adopted.

6. — ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE EIGHTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Chairman :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the election of the President of the eighth ordinary session of the Assembly.

His Excellency M. Adatci, head of the Japanese delegation, will address the Assembly.

M. Adatci (Japan) :

Translation : Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen — In the interest of the League of Nations — to which, as all my friends will know, I have been sincerely and wholeheartedly devoted since its foundation — and with a view to ensuring the smooth working of the procedure for the election of the President of the Assembly, I have the Chairman's authorisation to make a few remarks in order to dispel misunderstanding.

Certain newspapers have intimated that I had agreed to stand as a candidate for the presidency of this Assembly. I know, too, that some of our colleagues are intending at this moment to put my name on their voting card.

I desire to declare to the Assembly that there is no foundation for such rumours, and that I never intended and do not now intend to stand as a candidate.

I therefore beg all delegations without distinction not to vote for me. I should be greatly distressed if, when the votes are counted, any cards are found to bear my name. I therefore beg all my colleagues here to forget my presence among you this morning. I thank you sincerely in anticipation for this act of courtesy towards myself and towards the Japanese delegation.

The Chairman :

Translation : The Assembly notes the dignified words of the eminent head of the Japanese delegation — words which exemplify both his modesty and his sincere attachment to the League of Nations.

M. Adatci (Japan) :

Translation : I should like publicly to thank the Chairman for his courtesy and good will in agreeing to record my statement.

The Chairman :

Translation : In conformity with the Rules of Procedure, voting will be by secret ballot. I call upon Mr. Dandurand, delegate of Canada, and M. Motta, delegate of Switzerland, as former Presidents of the Assembly, to act as tellers.

The votes of the delegations were taken in turn by secret ballot.

The Chairman :

Translation : May I first thank the tellers for their kind assistance?

The result of the voting is as follows :

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| Number of States voting..... | 47 |
| Absolute majority | 24 |
| M. Guani (Uruguay) | 24 votes |
| M. Mensdorff (Austria) | 21 votes |
| Voting paper null and void..... | 1 |
| Isolated vote | 1 |

I have therefore the honour, according to the Rules of Procedure, to announce that M. Guani, first delegate of Uruguay, is elected President of the Assembly.

I am sure that I am voicing the feelings of the whole Assembly in congratulating M. Guani, the eminent representative of a progressive and influential country of Latin America which has rendered great service to the League of Nations and whose fidelity to the ideals of the League has never wavered.

His long experience of the work of the League of Nations — an experience acquired at meetings both of the Assembly and of the Council, as the distinguished representative of his country and of Latin America — gives M. Guani the necessary competence and authority for the responsible duties which he has been called upon to undertake.

I am especially glad to congratulate the newly-elected President on my own behalf also.

I call upon M. Guani to take the Chair of the Assembly.

M. Guani took the Presidential Chair.

7. — PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

M. Guani (Uruguay), President of the Assembly :

Translation : Ladies and Gentlemen — I thank you most sincerely for the honour you have just done my country in appointing me to preside over the debates of the eighth ordinary session of the Assembly of the League of Nations. I desire at the same time to express my grateful thanks to His Excellency M. Villegas, the Acting President of the Council, for his friendly remarks in regard to myself and the country which I have the honour to represent. To one devoted as I am to the cause of peace, no token of sympathy could have been more welcome than the one you have given me to-day.

The fact that for the third time since the constitution of the Assembly your choice has fallen upon a representative of Latin America is a matter for profound reflection. It shows what progress has been made along the path of international solidarity since the Hague Conference of 1899, to which we younger nations were not invited — between that date and to-day, when you have done me the honour of inviting me to direct your proceedings.

We all know how eagerly public opinion throughout the world, in its earnest desire for peace and justice among the nations, is following our debates.

My presence on this platform gains an added significance when we consider that, in the reorganisation of international standards and laws — the special object of the representative organs of the League — the differences which formerly led to the classification of nations according to their political importance or material strength seem destined gradually to disappear before the levelling of all the States, great and small, in a common sentiment of mutual respect and democratic equality.

I cannot forget those who have held the office of President before me: M. Hymans, delegate of Belgium, who brought into our midst the magnanimous outlook of a nation which we have always regarded as typifying self-sacrifice and generous pride; Jonkheer van Karnebeek, whose country was the cradle, and is still the traditional seat, of international law; M. Edwards, delegate of Chile, that great Republic whose inhabitants have devoted their energies to making their country one of the most influential on our continent; M. de la Torriente y Peraza, the representative of Cuba, that isle of the Antilles, favoured alike in wealth and beauty, whose struggle for national emancipation is written in the annals of history; M. Motta, whose name alone recalls the ancient liberal traditions of the Swiss Confederation and to whose country the League of Nations is indebted for such generous and cordial hospitality; Mr. Dandurand, of Canada, living example of a people which has merged in the crucible of its national soul the spirit of two separate civilisations whose union will ever remain one of the soundest guarantees of peace and human progress; M. Alfonso Costa, the representative of Portugal, who presided over our debates in most difficult circumstances, with tact, distinction and competence that did honour to the chivalrous traditions of his country; and, lastly, M. Nintchitch, the representative of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, a nation which, with its Central European neighbours, offers the best security of our pacific intentions in its devotion of the work of peace in which we are all engaged.

My task then will not be difficult: I need only follow, so far as lies within my humble power, the example of activity, discretion and impartiality offered here by my distinguished predecessors. Your indulgence, gentlemen, will do the rest:

I shall constantly appeal to it, and I beg you to bear with me if I feel that my poor efforts are not entirely equal to the trust you have placed in me.

You may be sure that the League spirit, that compound of tolerance, mutual understanding and conciliation, will guide me in the direction of your debates, and I most earnestly hope that on the conclusion of your work, when you return to your respective countries, you will carry away with you the feeling of confidence which should underlie our activities in order that the coming generations, intent on the work of peace, may be able to pursue their task without fear, secure in the conviction that the peoples represented here will spare no effort in their determination that the devastating flame of international war shall never break out within the civilised world.

And now, gentlemen, I would invite you to pass on to a consideration of the questions included in our agenda.

As it is very late, you will probably approve my suggestion to postpone to this afternoon the adoption of the agenda of the present session of the Assembly. I shall accordingly adjourn this meeting.

The next meeting will be at 4 o'clock this afternoon. It will be devoted to the adoption of the agenda of the Assembly and the constitution of the General Committee. The Assembly will also be called upon to decide upon the allocation among the different Committees of the various questions on the agenda. As regards this point, I propose to distribute to the delegations in advance a note containing suggestions in order to facilitate the decision to be taken at this afternoon's meeting.

The Assembly rose at 1.15 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Eighth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SECOND PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 5th, 1927, AT 4 P.M.

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President : M. GUANI

8. — AGENDA : EXAMINATION AND ADOPTION.

The President :

Translation : Before dealing with this meeting's agenda I wish to mention the note¹ circulated

¹ Not reproduced here.

by the President to all the delegations setting forth the proposals which the President desires to submit in regard to the various items on the agenda.

In circulating this note in advance I was actuated by a desire to simplify the procedure as far as possible and to expedite the preliminary work.

As all the members of the Assembly have the document in question before them I will proceed with the first question on to-day's agenda — the adoption of the agenda for the present session.

Before proposing to the Assembly the adoption *en bloc* of the agenda — that is, all the questions included in the document distributed to the Assembly (Annex 1, document A.2. 1927) — I would suggest that my colleagues should take a decision in regard to the deletion of question 14, which is as follows :

Consideration of the draft resolution proposed by the First Committee of the Assembly in 1926 on the subject of what questions are and what are not within the sphere of action of the League.

This question, you will remember, was submitted by the British delegation at the last session of the Assembly, and the Assembly, by a resolution dated September 25th, decided to adjourn to its next ordinary session the consideration of the draft resolution on the subject proposed by the First Committee.

Subsequently, by a letter dated June 17th, 1927, the text of which was communicated to Members of the League in document A.20. 1927. V (Annex 2), the British Government set forth the reasons for which it thought it advisable to propose the adjournment of the question *sine die* while reserving full liberty to raise the matter again if it should appear to it necessary.

In the circumstances I think that I shall be interpreting the views of the British delegation if I propose simply that this question be deleted from the agenda of the present session.

If there is no objection I shall consider this proposal adopted.

The proposal was adopted and question 14 was deleted from the agenda.

In order to save time, and if no delegation asks for a vote, I propose that the Assembly adopt the agenda *en bloc*—that is to say, the questions contained in the document (under numbers 1 to 25) distributed to the Assembly.

If there is no objection I declare this proposal adopted.

The proposal was adopted.

With regard to the Supplementary List of Items distributed after May 1st, 1927, I propose that the Assembly should take a separate decision in each case.

If there is no objection I shall consider this proposal adopted.

The proposal was adopted.

The first item on the Supplementary List is as follows :

Work of the Committee of Experts for the Progressive Codification of International Law.

If there is no objection to the inclusion of this question it will be entered as Item 26 of the agenda. (*Assent.*)

The second question on the Supplementary List is as follows :

Report of the Committee of Experts on a Draft Protocol on the Execution of Foreign Arbitral Awards.

If there is no objection to the inclusion of this question it will be entered as Item 27 of the agenda. (*Assent.*)

The third question on the Supplementary List is as follows :

Expenses of the Permanent Central Board to be set up after the coming into force of the Opium Convention of February 19th, 1925.

If there is no objection to the inclusion of this question it will be entered as Item 28 of the agenda. (*Assent.*)

The Assembly has now to decide definitely whether an item proposed by the Norwegian Government under the second clause of Rule 4, paragraph 2, of the Rules of Procedure shall be included in the agenda. This item is as follows :

Measures in favour of Armenian and Russian refugees.

If there is no objection to the inclusion of this question it will be entered as Item 29 of the agenda. (*Assent.*)

If there is no objection I shall consider the agenda of the eighth session of the Assembly adopted in the form proposed.

The agenda was adopted.

M. Loudon, delegate of the Netherlands, who desires to make a statement on a question concerning the agenda, will address the Assembly.

M. Loudon (Netherlands) :

Translation : Mr. President, I wish to inform you that, when the discussion on the Council report is opened, I shall propose that these passages

of the General and Supplementary Reports, which deal with the vital question of the reduction of armaments, be referred to the Third Committee.

The President :

Translation : The statement of the Netherlands delegate is noted.

The Acting President of the Council has sent me a letter dated September 5th, 1927, the text of which is as follows :

"I have the honour to direct your attention to the report submitted to the Council by the President of the Health Committee on the work of the Conference of Health Experts on Infant Welfare which was convened by the Health Organisation of the League of Nations at Montevideo from June 7th to 11th, 1927.

"The Council expressed its desire that this interesting report should be forwarded to the Assembly and suggested that it should be considered and discussed by the Second Committee.

(Signed) VILLEGAS."

The Council's proposal, then, is that the report submitted by the President of the Health Committee on the work of the Conference of Health Experts on Infant Welfare should be forwarded to the Assembly and discussed by the Second Committee.

I do not think the Assembly will have any objection to complying with the Council's wishes. I therefore propose that the Assembly should decide to refer this report to the Second Committee as soon as the latter is constituted.

If no one has any objection, I shall regard this motion as adopted. (*Adopted.*)

9. — CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES.

The President :

Translation : In accordance with precedent, the first matter to be decided by the Assembly is the constitution of its Committees. Before the General Committee of the Assembly can be established, the Committees must have elected their Chairmen, as the Chairmen of the Committees, together with the six Vice-Presidents elected by the Assembly, form the General Committee of the Assembly.

The eighth ordinary session of the Assembly will probably wish to follow the procedure adopted by previous Assemblies and form six Committees—the first to deal with constitutional and legal questions, the second with the work of the technical organisations, the third with the reduction of armaments, the fourth with budgetary and financial questions, the fifth with social questions, and the sixth with political questions.

In the light of experience gained at previous Assemblies I would suggest that the meetings of the Committees should be arranged so as to alternate as follows : the First, Second and Sixth Committees would meet at the same time, as would the Third, Fourth and Fifth Committees.

If there is no objection I shall consider these proposals adopted. (*Adopted.*)

As you will remember, the Secretariat has already supplied the delegations with forms on which to enter the names of their delegates and substitutes to sit on each Committee. I would ask the delegations which have not already communicated these names to do so as soon as possible.

Each Committee will meet presently in this hall to elect its Chairman.

10. — AGENDA COMMITTEE: APPOINTMENT.

The President :

Translation : As was done last year, I would suggest that a small Committee of seven members should be appointed to examine the procedure to be followed with regard to the inclusion of new items in the agenda.

If the Assembly agrees, and if no other names are proposed by delegations for this Committee, I would venture to put forward the following list :

M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium).
M. RESTREPO (Colombia).
Mr. COSTELLO (Irish Free State).
M. SCHUMANS (Latvia).
M. A. MORALES (Panama).
M. SOKAL (Poland).
Prince VARNVAIDYA (Siam).

If no one has any objections to raise, I shall consider the list adopted. (*Adopted.*)

11. — APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE AS A MEMBER OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : At its seventh ordinary session, the Assembly decided that the Chairman of the Agenda Committee should sit as a member of the General Committee of the Assembly, together with the Chairmen of the six Committees of the Assembly and the six Vice-Presidents elected by the Assembly.

Is the Assembly of opinion that the Chairman of the Agenda Committee should, as on this previous occasion, sit as a member of the General Committee of the Assembly ?

If there is no objection I shall consider this proposal adopted. (*Adopted.*)

The Agenda Committee is asked to elect its Chairman as soon as possible in order that the latter may attend the first meeting of the General Committee of the Assembly.

12. — APPOINTMENT OF M. MOTTA AS AN HONORARY MEMBER OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly has just decided that the President of the Agenda Committee shall be a member of the General Committee of the Assembly. At this point I should like to make a proposal, not only on my own behalf but on behalf of a number of delegates who have expressed to me their sentiments in the matter.

We have the pleasure of having among us, at the head of the Swiss delegation, the President of the Swiss Federation himself. The Assembly will, I am sure, be most anxious to give M. Motta a token of its regard by appointing him an honorary member of the General Committee of the Assembly.

The Committee which will be appointed in a few moments will therefore include one additional member : M. Motta, the President of the Swiss Federation. We all hope he will be so good as to accept this proposal, and I need not, I am sure, put the question to the vote, so certain am I that I am voicing the unanimous feeling of the Assembly. (*Assent.*)

M. Motta, delegate of Switzerland, has asked to address the Assembly.

M. Motta (Switzerland) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen—I am profoundly touched by the great honour which has been paid to me by the Assembly. I desire to thank you with all my heart, and also to thank our eminent President for having made this proposal. I would beg you, however, to allow me to attribute this honour wholly to my country and to the office which I hold.

13. — AGENDA: DISTRIBUTION OF ITEMS AMONG THE COMMITTEES.

The President :

Translation : As regards the distribution among the Committees of the various items on the agenda, the simplest procedure would be, I think, for the President, according to custom, to suggest how this distribution should be effected.

I suggest that the various items should be distributed as follows :

First Committee: Items 23 and 26.
Second Committee: Items 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 22 and 27.
Third Committee: Item 24.
Fourth Committee: Items 9, 13, 25 and 28.
Fifth Committee: Items 10, 19, 20, 21 and 29.
Sixth Committee: Items 8 and 11.

A few moments ago the Assembly decided, in deference to a wish expressed by the Council, to submit to the Second Committee the question of the report made by the President of the Health Committee on the work of the Conference of Health Experts on infant welfare. This question, therefore, will also be included in the agenda of the Second Committee.

If no delegation wishes to submit any remarks as regards the distribution which I have just suggested to you I shall consider that the Assembly has adopted it. (*Adopted.*)

14. — QUESTION OF THE NEW LEAGUE OF NATIONS BUILDING: REFERENCE TO THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : As the delegates have already been informed in the note which has been distributed, I intend to lay a specific proposal before the Assembly regarding the new League of Nations building.

As is mentioned in the note, the question is related in its financial aspects to that of the general budget of the League. It thus comes within the province of the Fourth Committee. Yet, as the other aspects of this question claim special attention, I have suggested to the delegates that this particular aspect of the question should be first studied by the General Committee of the Assembly, which should as soon as possible draft proposals in regard to the procedure to be followed.

If no delegation objects to this suggestion I shall consider it accepted, and the question of the construction of the new building — apart from its financial aspect — will be submitted to preliminary examination by the General Committee of the Assembly. (*Adopted.*)

15. — PROCEDURE TO BE ADOPTED FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES: COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

Translation : In order to enable the Committees to proceed forthwith to the election of their respective Chairmen I propose that the Assembly adjourn for an hour and a-half. (*Assent.*)

The members of the Committees are requested to meet in this hall every fifteen minutes in the following order :

- First Committee at 5 p.m.
- Second Committee at 5.15 p.m.
- Third Committee at 5.30 p.m.
- Fourth Committee at 5.45 p.m.
- Fifth Committee at 6.0 p.m.
- Sixth Committee at 6.15 p.m.

The Agenda Committee is also requested to meet at 6.15 p.m. in the room behind this hall reserved for the General Committee of the Assembly, for the purpose of electing its Chairman.

The Assembly will resume its sitting at 6.30 p.m. when the names of the Chairmen elected by the six Committees and by the Agenda Committee will be communicated to the Assembly, which will then proceed to the election of its six Vice-Presidents.

The meeting will now adjourn.

(*The meeting was adjourned at 5 p.m. and resumed at 6.30 p.m.*)

16. — ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.

The President :

Translation : I have now to inform the Assembly of the result of the voting by the Committees :

| Committee. | Chairman. |
|--|------------------------------|
| I | M. ADATCI (Japan) |
| II | Mr. DANDURAND (Canada) |
| III | M. BENES (Czechoslovakia) |
| IV | M. VAN EYSINGA (Netherlands) |
| V | M. HAMBRO (Norway) |
| VI | M. BECH (Luxemburg) |
| Agenda Committee : M. DEBROUCKERE (Belgium). | |

17. — ELECTION OF THE SIX VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : Under Rule 7, paragraph 1, of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly the agenda includes the election of the six Vice-Presidents.

Under Rule 21 of the Rules of Procedure this election takes place by secret ballot.

I wish to remind my honourable colleagues that voting papers should include only the names of six members, and that no country should be mentioned.

I call upon M. Benes (Czechoslovakia) and M. Bech (Luxemburg) to be good enough to act as tellers.

(*The votes of the delegations were taken in turn by secret ballot.*)

The President :

Translation : The result of the ballot is as follows :

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----|
| Number of States voting | 47 |
| Voting-papers null and void | 2 |
| Voting-papers valid | 45 |
| Majority required | 23 |

The analysis of voting is as follows :

| | | |
|---|----|-------|
| M. SCIALOJA (Italy) | 43 | votes |
| M. BRIAND (France) | 41 | " |
| Sir Austen CHAMBERLAIN (British Empire) | 41 | " |
| Dr. STRESEMANN (Germany) | 41 | " |
| M. NEMOURS (Haiti) | 28 | " |

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure, therefore, I have the honour to declare the following delegates Vice-Presidents of the Assembly : M. SCIALOJA, M. BRIAND, Sir Austen CHAMBERLAIN, Dr. STRESEMANN, M. NEMOURS.

There remains one seat vacant, since only five names have obtained a sufficient number of votes. We shall have to take a second ballot, as required by Rule 21, paragraph 3, of the Rules of Procedure, which reads as follows :

"If the number of persons obtaining such a majority is less than the number of persons to be elected, there shall be a second ballot to fill the remaining places, the voting being restricted to the unsuccessful candidates who obtained the greatest number of votes at the first ballot, not more than double in number the places remaining to be filled. Those candidates, to the number required to be elected, who receive the greatest number of votes at the second ballot shall be declared elected."

In the present instance there is one seat still vacant, and there can only be two candidates—that is to say, "double in number the places remaining to be filled".

The voting will therefore be confined to the two candidates who secured the greatest number of votes: M. Mensdorff, who has obtained 17 votes, and M. de Vasconcellos, who has obtained 13. The one who obtains the greater number of votes will be declared elected. Any voting paper which does not bear either of these two names will be declared null and void.

(*The votes of the delegations were taken in turn by secret ballot.*)

The President :

Translation : Ladies and Gentlemen — The result of the second ballot for the election of the sixth Vice-President of the Assembly is as follows :

| | |
|---|----|
| Number of States voting | 46 |
| Voting papers spoilt or blank | 2 |

The analysis of the voting is as follows :

| | | |
|---|----|-------|
| M. MENSENDORFF - POULLY - DIETRICHSTEIN (Austria) | 32 | votes |
| M. DE VASCONCELLOS (Portugal) | 10 | votes |

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure I have the honour to declare the following delegate sixth Vice-President of the Assembly : M. MENSENDORFF, head of the Austrian delegation.

The General Committee of the Assembly is now constituted as follows :

M. MOTTA (Switzerland), honorary member ;
The six Chairmen of the Committees :

M. M. ADATCI (Japan),
Mr. DANDURAND (Canada),
M. BENES (Czechoslovakia),
M. VAN EYSINGA (Netherlands),
• M. HAMBRO (Norway),
• M. BECH (Luxemburg),

together with M. DEBROUCKÈRE, Chairman of the Agenda Committee, and the Vice-Presidents, who have just been elected :

M. SCIALOJA (Italy),
M. BRIAND (France),
Sir Austen CHAMBERLAIN (British Empire),
Dr. STRESEMANN (Germany),
M. NEMOURS (Haiti),
M. MENSENDORFF (Austria).

18. — PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEES : COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

Translation : In order to avoid loss of time I propose that the Committees should meet

to-morrow morning at the offices of the Secretariat in the following order :

The First, Second and Sixth Committees at 10 a.m.

The Third, Fourth and Fifth Committees at 11 a.m.

The Committees will thus be able to appoint their bureaux and study their agendas, so as to begin at their next meeting the discussion of the questions submitted to them.

Finally, I suggest that the General Committee of the Assembly should meet at noon to-morrow in the Secretary-General's office.

The agenda of the plenary meeting to-morrow afternoon includes the opening of the general discussion of the report on the work of the Council and of the Secretariat. Only a few members have as yet signified their desire to speak. If any of my colleagues wish to take part in the debate I would ask them to be good enough to send in their names to me as soon as possible.

As we have now concluded our agenda I will close the meeting.

The Assembly rose at 7.40 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Eighth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

THIRD PLENARY MEETING

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6th, 1927, AT 4 P.M.

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Letter from the President of the Delegation.

President: M. GUANI

19. — SEATING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE DELEGATIONS AND MAINTENANCE OF ORDER IN THE ASSEMBLY HALL: PROPOSALS BY THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : The General Committee of the Assembly met this morning and dealt with various questions concerning the arrangement of the Assembly Hall and the maintenance of order.

Arrangement of the Assembly Hall.

As regards the first point, you will remember that I informed you yesterday morning that the

arrangement of the Hall and the position of the seats would be temporarily altered pending further suggestions from the General Committee. This morning the General Committee appointed a Committee of three members, who will go into the question and submit suggestions as soon as possible. As the question is one which affects all the delegations, the latter will be duly informed of the measures proposed.

Maintenance of Order in the Assembly Hall.

The second point — the maintenance of order in the Assembly Hall — was dealt with by the General Committee at the seventh ordinary session of the Assembly. At its meeting this morning the General Committee of the eighth ordinary session examined the question again. I have the honour, on behalf of the Committee, to place before you the rules which it adopted and which will doubtless also be adopted by the Assembly :

"1. The front entrance of the Assembly Hall leading directly from the lobby of the Hotel Victoria, is reserved exclusively for delegates and substitute delegates, and the officers in charge of this door have been given instructions to allow no one else to enter the Hall by this means. Immediately at the side of this door a passage-way has been arranged leading to an entrance in the rear of the Hall. This passage is exclusively reserved for secretaries of delegations, experts, members of the Secretariat, etc., and should be used by them in entering or leaving the Assembly Hall.

"2. In the front portion of the floor of the Hall seats are reserved for delegates and substitute delegates only.

"3. Seats for experts, advisers and members of the Secretariat are reserved on the floor of the Hall behind the space reserved for delegates.

"4. No member of the general public or of the families of members of delegations or of the

Secretariat is allowed on the floor of the Assembly Hall.

"5. Experts, advisers and secretaries and members of the Secretariat are requested to enter the part of the Hall reserved for delegates as little as possible, and to refrain, as far as possible, from moving about or talking on the floor of the Assembly Hall. Delegates wishing to talk to advisers or secretaries are requested, whenever possible, to leave the Assembly Hall themselves for the purpose.

"6. It is requested that, in so far as possible, delegates and officials should not enter or leave the floor of the Assembly Hall during the time when a speech is being made.

"7. Entrance to the floor of the Assembly Hall is by card only. All cards are strictly personal, and if a card is presented by a person other than the person to whom it is issued, the huissiers have been given instructions to refuse admittance and to take up the card.

"8. No applause will be allowed in the galleries reserved for the Press and the general public.

"9. Between the end of a speech and the translation there will always be a pause of two minutes. Only during those two minutes will persons be allowed to enter or leave the public galleries. The doors to these galleries will be closed except during that time.

"10. Huissiers in uniform have been instructed to stop at once all conversation or movement in the public galleries during speeches or translations."

If no objection is raised to these proposals I shall consider them adopted by the Assembly. (Adopted.)

20. — QUESTION OF THE CREATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF THE EDUCATIONAL CINEMA AT ROME : PROPOSAL BY THE ITALIAN DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : Before we continue our discussion of the agenda, Count Cippico, delegate of Italy, who desires to submit a proposal, will address the Assembly.

Count Cippico (*Italy*) : In the name of my Government, I have the honour to make the following declaration :

"The Royal Italian Government, 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 civilised 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 ;

"Conceived 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 Governments 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 the 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.

The Royal Government will later state its views as to the final purposes of the Institute ; but it is already possible to form an idea of the nature of its future activity.

It is assumed that it would be a centre of information for the different problems of the cinema, giving the best opportunity for a mutual interchange and diffusion of every kind of film : scholastic, hygienic, historical, archeological, artistic and, in a general way, educational.

I am sure that my honourable colleagues will highly appreciate the advantage of such an Institute, and I have therefore the honour to ask that the proposal of my Government should be placed on the agenda of the Assembly.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly has just heard the proposal put forward by Count Cippico, delegate of Italy, and the request that it be included in the agenda of the present session.

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure, the proposal will be printed and communicated to the members of the Assembly and inserted in the Journal of the Assembly.

I propose to-morrow to make a suggestion to the Assembly as to the action which might be taken in regard to this motion.

21. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the general discussion of 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. (Annexes 3, 3(a) and 3(b), documents A. 13 and A. 13(a). 1927.)

Before calling on the first speaker on the list, I should like to say that the General Committee has this morning examined the steps to be taken to facilitate and expedite the work of the present session.

It is the unanimous wish of the General Committee that the general discussion on the report of the Council should close at the end of the present week — that is to say, by next Saturday.

It is, however, still impossible to say how many plenary meetings will be necessary. This will depend on the number of members who ask to speak. Up to the present few members have expressed such a desire. I therefore venture once more to urge members of the Assembly who wish to take part in the general discussion to inform me as soon as possible so that I may know how many meetings may be anticipated.

Sir Ramaswami Ayyar, delegate of India, will address the Assembly.

Sir C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar (India) :

The plenary meeting of the Assembly of the League of Nations furnishes an opportunity for passing in review the multiform activities of the Organisation and its constituent and allied bodies. As one of the delegates representing India at this Assembly, it is both my duty and my privilege to contribute to this discussion, and, in doing so, I shall naturally confine myself to those aspects of the work which have a close bearing on my country and her problems. I shall only pause for a moment to congratulate the Secretary-General and the heads of the various departments of the Secretariat of the League upon the comprehensiveness and thoroughness with which they have discharged their duties and the lucidity that characterises the numerous documents produced as the result of their co-ordinated activities.

The position of India *vis-à-vis* the other Members of the League and the entire organisation itself is unique. By her signature to the Treaty of Versailles and the Covenant and by her continuous and faithful adhesion to the principles of the organisation, she has enrolled herself in the fraternity of those who have undertaken and are pledged to the work of establishing the principles and understandings of international co-operation as the actual rule of conduct among Governments.

M. Villegas, in his most suggestive discourse, described the work of the technical organisations of the League as possessing a universal character, as removing sources of conflict and forging the links joining nations one to the other by their true interests and as establishing valuable relations amongst all the members including the most distant. It is the path of wisdom to realise this aspect of the League's work and not to fix our attention exclusively on certain spectacular political happenings, and, in the language again of M. Villegas, to "see in them the whole of international life".

It is true that many of the problems coming up for discussion before the League are essentially European in character and do not concern India in the narrower sense. But he would be both petty in outlook and short-sighted in policy who does not see in most of the activities of the League a genuine effort to promote that active and practical comradeship without which world opinion cannot be adequately formed.

The formation of such a world opinion and the impact of that opinion on the several nations must have a profound and enduring effect on India and on the world from many points of view, and therefore it is not inappropriate that India should have taken, as indeed she has taken, a lively interest in the deliberations of the League and its constituent bodies. The quest of the ideal is one of the strongest characteristics of my race. As an Indian, therefore, I feel at home in an Assembly which expects, and indeed assumes, the existence of idealism in its members; but our idealism, to be of value, must be not merely our inspiration but must be applied in a practical way to the complicated issues of national and local character which come before us.

There is no question that the necessity of establishing on an international basis social, commercial and diplomatic standards is being more generally recognised. We are striving for the creation of a new mental attitude, which has been called the international mind, and which can only be evolved by the widening of our interests. Though I recognise and appreciate the value to our country of its participation in the League, yet I hope also that the presence of delegates from India and from other far-off lands, such as Japan and China and the South American

Republics, may be of value to the League itself by preserving that character of universality which was the intention of its founders. It is just the fact that delegates from all parts of the world are not merely present but take an active part in the League's business which has kept it true to its name of a League of Nations and has saved it from degenerating into a concert of Powers.

It is not without legitimate pride that I point out that India has been fulfilling in real practice the ideals of which I have spoken, and, in particular, has shown her loyalty to them by legislation in pursuance of the Washington Labour Convention. This is not, perhaps, directly the work of this Assembly but of an organisation which forms part of the League as a whole.

As an instance of a subject in which India is less directly interested, but in which, nevertheless, she has accepted and fulfilled obligations involved in her membership of the League, I may mention that my country has signed and ratified the Convention and Statute on the Freedom of Transit, the Convention and Statute on the Regime of Navigable Waterways of International Concern and its additional Protocol, and the Convention and Statute on the International Regime of Railways and of Maritime Ports. It is also noteworthy that India took part in the Conference on Communications and Transit, which has, in accordance with the spirit underlying the work of the League, made provision for the collection and exchange of such general information on communications and transit as is likely to improve international co-operation.

A similar remark may be made as to India's attitude with regard to many other questions connected with the activities of the League and its ancillary bodies. I may specially refer to the Agreement concerning the suppression of the manufacture of and the internal trade in and use of prepared opium that has just now become operative. India's recent work in connection with the implementing of the Slavery Convention is also, I venture to say, a notable example of her adherence to the League ideals.

It is a matter for sincere congratulation that, day by day, the authorities of the League are, in their turn, realising the importance and the world-reactions of Indian and of Eastern problems. This is illustrated by the work on opium, the work of the Health Section, including the Singapore Bureau, the interchange of medical officers, researches into problems of malaria and sleeping-sickness and many other enquiries recently undertaken at the instance of the League authorities.

But it is not easy for my countrymen, remote as they are and absorbed with the problems of their own land, to realise in a concrete way how the ideals of the League are being converted into practice; and the development of the international attitude depends not merely on enlightenment but upon the establishment of more extensive and solid relations between the practical work of the League and the actual interests of my country. We shall welcome anything which will tend to develop the contact between India and the League and the appreciation of the League in India, believing that such development cannot fail to be of mutual benefit.

By reason of her political and geographical position, which is *sui generis*, India is only indirectly though much interested in some of the great political problems, such as disarmament, which have been sought to be tackled by the League, and it is therefore through the technical organisations of the League that its ideals can be most adequately realised in the non-European countries.

I propose, therefore, to deal specially with two departments of the League's work in which India's interest is direct and conspicuous. The work of the Health Organisation in Eastern countries was specially considered in 1926 and the Assembly drew particular attention to the universality of the work done by the Organisation.

The annual report of the Health Organisation for the year 1926 discloses that weekly and monthly epidemiological reports are published, giving information of great importance transmitted from the Eastern Bureau at Singapore, dealing with 122 ports served by the Bureau. These data are made available to the world very early and in a collated form. They furnish a valuable index of the trend of epidemic diseases. India is represented on the Eastern Bureau at Singapore, and the Bureau's work has continued to expand and has acquired a new significance from the duties lately entrusted to it as part of the machinery for carrying out the International Sanitary Convention. The Government of India has recently agreed to broadcast a résumé of the Bureau's weekly bulletin concerning the prevalence of epidemic diseases. It is in the highest interests of India that she should make every effort to prevent and check the spread of infection and epidemics and, realising such obligations to the full, she welcomes heartily the co-operation of the Health Organisation of the League. Such co-operation should, I submit, be regarded as one of the methods by which the League may manifest its interest in the problems of those parts of the world which are distant from the centre of its activities. Is it, therefore, too much to ask that such an obligation should be one of the first charges on the energies and finances of the League as a whole ?

Very important work in connection with malaria has been done by the Malaria Commission and there is no doubt that such researches as relate to the importance of river deltas from the point of view of endemic malaria will be of the most vital importance to India. I hope that the Malaria Commission may be able to find an opportunity of visiting India. Special courses in malaria, organised by the Health Organisation of the League of Nations, were held last year at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

It is also to be hoped that the programme of interchanges of public health personnel will include British India, as is indeed suggested in the annual health report. It is important to remember in this connection that a study tour for medical officers belonging to administrations in Asia and Australasia will take place in India in January 1928. The contemplated visits of these officers to the various provinces in India will, there is no question, be of great value not only to the countries concerned but to India itself. This event will, moreover, be a noticeable instance of a visible interest in India taken by the League authorities, as this will be the first occasion on which a League organisation will come into direct personal contact with India and with the Indian Administration, and we confidently anticipate valuable results not only from the technical but also from the wider aspects.

Perhaps, however, the work in which India is most interested, in connection with the recent activities of the League, are the discussions, deliberations and conclusions of the International Economic Conference held at Geneva in May 1927, wherein the Indian delegates, I may venture to assert, played a useful and honourable part. As one of the Assembly resolutions truly pointed out, economic peace will largely contribute to security amongst the nations, and the difficulties standing in the way

of the revival of general prosperity are largely economic in character.

The meeting of the Assembly of the League last year realised that the economic situation of the world called more imperiously than ever for inter-national co-operation, and it hoped that the Economic Conference would be summoned as soon as possible. That Conference comprised among the participants both Members and non-Members of the League of Nations, and there were also present economic experts and publicists from the United States, the Soviet Republics, Egypt and Turkey, and delegates from such organisations as the International Chamber of Commerce. It is needless for me to recount the results of the work of that Conference as that task has been performed in a masterly fashion by M. Theunis in his closing speech made on May 23rd, 1927. He emphasised that the Conference must be regarded not as an isolated event but as a stage in the continuous work of international collaboration in the economic sphere.

The Conference worked through three Committees, one on Commerce, a second on Industry and a third on Agriculture. In the reports of the Committee on Commerce it is rightly stressed that, in spite of the variety of questions raised, the diversity of theories and the legitimate national sentiments of all those who took part in the discussions, one important and extremely encouraging fact has emerged, namely, the unanimous desire of the members of the Conference that it should mark the beginning of a new era during which international commerce will successfully overcome all obstacles in its path that unduly hamper it and resume that general upward movement which is at once a sign of the world's economic health and the necessary condition for the development of civilisation. While considering the economic problems in their international bearings, the Conference did not ignore the importance of national considerations, some of which are, in the language of M. Theunis, social and political rather than economic in character.

The Indian delegates presented a document to the Conference pointing out the principal features of the position of the world as envisaged from the point of view of India. In that document it was made clear that, speaking generally, India depends more on internal rather than external markets; but at the same time it was emphasised that in India as in Europe many industries endured their share of the prevailing depression, especially inasmuch as the reactions of economic factors are nowadays very rapid and complete. The fiscal policy of India and the need for its adoption, with a view to the development of nascent industries built up with local labour and capital to meet local needs, were then outlined and it was rightly asserted that the protective policy of India aims at the development of such manufactures only as possess natural advantages and will one day be able to meet world competition. The gap that has occurred in India between the price of raw materials and the price of manufactured goods as well as the fluctuations of price were also mentioned. This was done by way of stressing the elementary truth that India stood to gain from an improvement of the world's economic situation.

In dealing with the question of Customs tariffs, Sir Campbell Rhodes, who sat on the Economic Committee, dissipated all possible misunderstandings of the Indian position by pointing out that the Indian tariff before the war was very low and has been augmented both to obtain revenue and, in a very limited number of cases, for the purpose of protection; but that her economic and tariff policy can well stand a comparison with that of

many other countries, and the India delegation proved that, although the proportionate increase was great, the actual level of Indian tariffs was not open to just criticism.

The position of India with reference to agriculture was specially recognised by the appointment of Dr. Hyder as one of the Vice-Chairmen of the Committee on Agriculture. It has to be borne in mind that the Economic Conference has definitely realised the importance of agriculture as entitled to an equal footing with industry and commerce and as being the occupation of the majority of workers throughout the world. It was the object of the Indian delegation to concentrate attention on measures which will diminish the cost of production and eliminate the unnecessary links in the chain connecting the producer with the consumer. The resolution that was finally passed provides that care should be taken to assist in the maintenance of an equitable balance between industry and agriculture.

In the memorandum submitted by the Indian delegates, India's position as a producer of raw materials was specifically adverted to and the necessity advocated of: (1) a reduction of agricultural cost; (2) the improvement, by organising research and popular education side by side, in the quality and quantity of crops; and (3) the spread of the co-operative movement in all its forms as designed to produce efficiency at all stages of agricultural work up to the stage of sales and as insuring to producers their just share in the market value of the crops.

• One of the most important subjects on the agenda of the League is the consideration of the report of the Economic Conference, and it is to be fervently hoped that the attitude of the League towards the deliberations and resolutions of that Conference will be such as will demonstrate its abiding interest in the problems and conditions of countries far removed from the scene of European economic life but forming nevertheless component and by no means insignificant factors in the sum-total of world economy.

It must be realised that the recommendations and suggestions of the Conference have yet to be considered by the Indian Legislatures and the Indian Executive Government, but it can be said with some confidence that these recommendations are in general conformity with the principles already followed in India; and, where there are differences, they are susceptible of adjustment and compromise. In the matter of agriculture, it is generally known that there is an important Royal Commission dealing with the topic of Indian agriculture and allied problems and we in India are awaiting the report of that Commission, which will no doubt engage the early attention of our local and central Governments. In their consideration of the matter they will undoubtedly derive immense assistance from the resolutions of the most authoritative gathering of economic experts that has ever been summoned.

The subjects dealt with above and others, such as the Slavery Convention, the difficulty caused by the diversity of laws in the matter of bills of exchange and the progressive codification of international law, are amongst the topics which are of special interest to my country. But, as has already been stated, it is not only with a view to the elucidation of these specific problems, but in the conviction that all the different but convergent activities of the League—political, technical and humanitarian—are slow but sure advances in the direction of organised co-operation amongst the peoples of the earth, that India is not only content but is most willing and anxious to take part in the work of the League.

The President:

Translation: His Highness Mohammad Ali Khan Foroughi, delegate of Persia, will address the Assembly.

His Highness Mohammad Khan Foroughi (Persia):

Translation: Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen—In appointing as delegates from our distant land to your Assembly men like ourselves, who, though as yet unknown to you, have spared no effort since the League's foundation in order that their country might become and remain a Member of that organisation, the Persian Government desired to emphasise its deep and earnest devotion to the cause of the League.

My colleagues and I rejoice to find ourselves in this illustrious Assembly and to join in its fruitful debates. Whatever is said or done within these precincts we shall carry back to our countrymen; and we most earnestly hope that the resolutions you adopt here will facilitate the task of those who, undeterred by difficulties and obstacles, are endeavouring to refute the criticism of a public which is necessarily exacting and naturally sensitive, and which demands an assurance that Persia, while gladly assuming the obligations attaching to co-operation with other Powers, will gladly accepting the sacrifices which devotion to the common ideal involves, shall at the same time find in those obligations and sacrifices adequate guarantees of her own independence and progress.

We are convinced that the time will come when the work of successive sessions of our Assembly will in itself suffice to allay the anxiety felt by some of our fellow-countrymen regarding the discussions, decisions or omissions of some, at all events, of the Conferences held under the auspices of the League.

I have no wish, however, even to appear to be criticising a work which, as a whole, elicits our admiration, and am anxious to pass on immediately to a study of the report on the work of the Council.

We are glad to note the progress made in regard to the progressive codification of public international law. Persia feels that any effort to lend greater precision and unity to the rules governing the relations between organised communities will contribute to a better understanding among the nations and to the consolidation of peace. She is of opinion that codification is imperative if the defects and anachronisms of common law are to be eliminated from international law. Persia is now engaged in framing her own codes, in organising her courts and in reasserting her complete jurisdiction over her own territory, and she realises that the rules adopted by the world conscience for the government of international relations should be acknowledged by all nations and in respect of all nations.

For these same reasons we welcomed the foundation of the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law. As regards one point, however, we have been disappointed. Was not an assurance given, and rightly given, that at this seat of learning all the great historical legal systems would be represented?

Now, the Persian religious law, albeit of Moslem origin, has particular features of its own. It governs the legal relations not only of my fellow-countrymen but of millions of Moslems throughout the world, and more especially in India, Egypt and Iraq. Sunni law only is represented in the International Institute, and Shiah law is not. Let us hope that this omission will be remedied.

One of the manifest benefits of the League is that it endeavours to bring all the nations together, even the smallest and most distant,

and offers them permanent facilities for meeting, for becoming acquainted and for learning to esteem and to help one another. Hence, in order to be true to the common ideal, every nation must bear in mind the individual requirements and aspirations of the others. This was our intention, this was our expectation, when we took part in the International Economic Conference. Its discussions were undoubtedly of value, and the resolutions it adopted were calculated to promote and facilitate production throughout the world and to adapt production to requirements, but on one condition, namely, that, instead of confining ourselves to Europe and America, we should also turn our attention to Asia and regard that continent not simply as a market; we should remember its various zones of production, its multifarious peoples, each one anxious to become a centre of production, to trade with other nations on a footing of equality, with absolute freedom in the matter of Customs tariffs and maritime navigation and, subject to the conventions voluntarily adhered to, with absolute freedom as regards the choice of purchases.

We ask for the same sympathetic understanding of the economic, geographical and historical circumstances by which our national life is governed, the same recognition of our aspirations in regard to two other questions of special importance, on which I now propose to touch.

The Persians are essentially a peaceable nation, but we have learned from the tragic experiences of the past always to be on our guard in order to protect our independence, on which we set such store and which we have maintained throughout the gravest vicissitudes. Accordingly, it is our most earnest desire that nothing should attenuate the articles of the Covenant, since these, if rightly interpreted, will enable us to establish a mechanism whereby, in the event of aggression, the efforts of all the Members of the League will immediately be brought to bear on the aggressor, in order to defend the victim of the aggression.

For that reason, a former delegate of Persia once expressed the fears voiced by Finland. We desire to state unreservedly that the Treaties of Locarno, in our view, express principles which should be followed, in accordance with the recommendation of the seventh ordinary session of the Assembly, and furthermore that, within the scope of the Covenant, and with due regard to our obligations as a State Member of the League, we have put those principles into practice by concluding regional agreements designed to ensure the maintenance of peace in the Middle East.

The report of the Commission of Enquiry into the Production of Opium in Persia, together with the observations on the subject which my Government submitted to the Council on March 4th, 1927, will come up for consideration before the Assembly.

I desire now, on behalf of my Government, again to thank the League for sending that Commission to Persia, and to thank the members of the Commission for the competent manner in which they accomplished their most difficult task. We are anxious to assist in the great humanitarian work assigned to us all by the Covenant, namely, to restrict the consumption of dangerous drugs throughout the world. Realising, as the Commission itself realised, the present economic difficulties in Persia, the Government, as stated in its memorandum, has submitted to Parliament a plan of action based on the Commission's suggestion. This is, in our opinion, the best that can be done in the circumstances.

I may add that the Persian nation is endeavouring consistently to carry out the suggestions of the mission of enquiry into health conditions in Persia, and to provide the country with the economic equipment the need for which we recognised even before the Commission of Enquiry on Opium. We realise in this and in all the efforts made — under the direction of our august Sovereign himself — with a view to reviving the ancient glories of our country, how closely our activities are bound up with those of all the other nations represented, and we feel the bond which unites us in our devotion to the cause of progress, liberty and peace.

The President :

Translation : Jonkheer Beelaerts van Blokland, first delegate of the Netherlands, will address the Assembly.

Jonkheer Beelaerts van Blokland (Netherlands) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — During the seven years of its existence the authority of the League of Nations has steadily grown, and the place it occupies in international life has become more and more important. The lines along which it has developed have not, however, escaped criticism, and it has in particular been blamed for having avoided big international questions capable of exercising a wide influence on world peace.

This point merits our special attention.

It would be highly regrettable from the point of view of the authority and prestige of the League if its Members decided to deal among themselves, and outside the scope of the League, with questions which, under the terms of the Covenant, come within the League's competence. It is primarily the duty of the Council to take cognisance of difficulties likely to bring about a rupture between Members of the League, and to endeavour to foresee and settle at the outset any conflicts which may arise on the international horizon. The Council must, so to speak, act as the world's conscience where international peace is concerned. The part which it has to play is admirably revealed in the discussions and report of the Committee of the Council on the application of Article 11 of the Covenant. The importance of the preventive duty of the Council in this field cannot be over-emphasised. For the fulfilment of this duty it would seem essential that the Council should meet at frequent and regular intervals, and I am therefore inclined to question whether it would not be dangerous to reduce the number of its meetings. I think that anything which might be interpreted by public opinion as lowering the Council's authority or as a sign of slackening in the work of the League as a whole ought to be avoided.

The other side of the question must not, however, be overlooked. Though the League's prestige may suffer if it is prevented from considering questions which come within its field of activity, it seems equally undesirable to create the impression that henceforth no dispute can be settled without the League's intervention. Relations between peoples have happily not reached a point when it is necessary to exclude at the outset the possibility of settling international disputes by direct negotiation between the parties concerned, without outside intervention. One of the great merits of the League is that, through these periodical meetings at Geneva, it has helped to strengthen personal contact between the statesmen at the head of the various countries, and has thereby facilitated the solution of the problems

with which they are faced. I think it is always best, whenever possible, to endeavour to settle a dispute by direct negotiation between the parties concerned, and to restrict intervention to cases where there seems no possibility of succeeding by direct negotiation.

Thus there is no article in the Covenant which requires the League to settle all disputes arising among its Members. One of the most delicate problems for the League to handle will always be that of deciding which questions call for its intervention and which should be left to the parties directly concerned.

It has been said that hitherto the Council has shown rather too much hesitation in this respect. There have, in fact, been a number of cases where the Council has refrained from intervening, even though the settlement of the dispute would not have been outside its competence. It must be admitted, too, that the solution of these questions has not always proved satisfactory from every point of view; but, before throwing the blame on the Council, it must first be ascertained that a better solution would have been obtained if the case had been referred to the Council. The Council would be wrong to adopt too reserved an attitude, but, on the other hand, it would be none the less disastrous if it over-estimated its strength and endangered the position of the League.

Nevertheless, those who think the Council over-cautious ought to make their voices heard whenever they think that Council intervention would serve the cause of international peace. In this way the Council would be led to examine even more carefully, in every individual case, whether it could risk the responsibility of standing aside. I do not myself consider that the manner in which the Council has fulfilled its task justifies a demand for a radical change in its policy. I venture to remind you that at the very outset the secondary States were uneasy lest the Council should usurp powers at their expense. But the Council has shown, by its fulfilment of its task, that this anxiety was unfounded and we cannot fail to realise the importance of that fact for the development of the League.

The vital question before the League is and remains that of the reduction and limitation of armaments. It is a question which of late has excited throughout the world a feeling of apprehension calling for serious and careful consideration by this Assembly.

In order to show clearly this feeling of disappointment which has invaded public opinion, I venture to trace briefly and in broad outline the steps taken by the League in this field.

In its early days the League of Nations strove to find a solution for the problem of the reduction of armaments independently of the problem of guarantees, that is to say, the problem of security and arbitration. The efforts made in this direction, however, at once encountered obstacles. The conclusion reached was that the nations had to be assured of a sufficient degree of security before they could be asked to consent to a reduction of their armaments. The plan for a Pact of Mutual Guarantee was based on this conception. I need not remind you how it failed.

After that we saw the birth of the Geneva Protocol, which was inspired by the formula: arbitration, security, disarmament. As you know, that scheme was not realised; but it was found possible to apply its basic ideas in a much more restricted field — that of the Locarno Treaties. The conclusion of these Treaties, which are of incontestable importance for European peace, encouraged a hope that moral disarmament was sufficiently advanced to enable the problem of the

reduction of armaments to be approached anew.

Nevertheless, despite the untiring efforts and complete devotion displayed during the past year by the Preparatory Commission and all its technical organs, we are forced to recognise that the real reduction of armaments is still no more than a distant ideal.

It could certainly be said with justice that an important step had been taken, since vague formulas had given place to a definite plan; but the nearer we approach to concrete formulas the more we are forced to realise that the whole problem of material disarmament is conditioned by the problem of moral disarmament.

As moral disarmament progresses, the work of the Preparatory Commission will have more prospect of success. For this reason, the Assembly must realise its serious responsibility in regard to Article 8 of the Covenant, and must exert the whole weight of its authority to help the Preparatory Commission at its next session. On this subject my colleague, M. Loudon, yesterday put forward a draft resolution, which I propose to include in the resolution that I shall have the honour to submit to the Assembly.

Although it appears impossible at the moment to achieve any appreciable reduction in armaments, the work of the Preparatory Commission might at least bring about a limitation which would preclude any return to the disastrous competition in armaments. That is an aim which can and should be pursued from now onwards.

Nevertheless, the slight progress made since the last Assembly in the reduction of armaments plainly shows that moral disarmament is not sufficiently advanced at the present moment to allow of the realisation of this aim, which, though prescribed by Article 8 of the Covenant, is far from easy of attainment. Until the time comes when international relations are based upon mutual confidence, any attempts to achieve an appreciable reduction of armaments are liable to be frustrated, and may only cause further disappointment. Yet, must we assume that, since the way to the reduction of armaments is blocked, we must fold our hands and wait for moral disarmament to descend upon us like a gift from Heaven? No. In order to achieve moral disarmament, public opinion must be brought into play. Peoples and Governments must act together and make a supreme effort. The Assembly — and after all, by the Assembly we mean the various countries represented there — must undertake to do its utmost to make moral disarmament a reality.

The Geneva Protocol was inspired by this lofty aim. And here I would remind you of the words spoken by the first delegate of the Netherlands at the sixth ordinary session of the Assembly:

“The Protocol is not dead; it is most certainly not buried; it but slumbers. Do not let us seek now to remodel or perfect it: rather let it rest.”

These words were fully justified and entirely reasonable at the time when they were spoken, that is to say, on the eve of the conclusion of the Locarno Treaties. Nevertheless, despite the progress achieved by the conclusion of those Treaties, I think that, if this state of rest were to be prolonged, it might degenerate into lethargy, and we must therefore push forward along the road on which we set out with such high hopes.

We must continue the study not only of the Protocol itself in all its details, but of the important principles underlying it. I shall venture to submit to you shortly a draft resolution with this object in view. We must realise that public opinion in different countries is moving in this direction and that, particularly in overseas

countries, there is a growing current of opinion which has adopted as its watchword "the outlawry of war". Has not the moment come, I ask, to resume our efforts to bridge the gap in Article 15 of the Covenant by excluding legitimate warfare in the future and by stigmatising a war of aggression as an international crime? The principle of compulsory international jurisdiction, moreover, is a necessary complement of these ideas. But if this end is to be achieved, the Great Powers must not continue to shirk obligations.

Another method which is of primary importance in facilitating and preparing for moral disarmament is economic disarmament. An important step in this direction was taken by the International Economic Conference, which condemned protectionism and emphasised the importance of freedom of trade for world peace. Its resolutions were endorsed by the International Chamber of Commerce at its recent Congress at Stockholm and have already been officially approved by several Governments. All these are hopeful signs, but we cannot help feeling some uneasiness when we find that recent international economic developments have not shown any clear tendency to conform to the principles adopted by the Conference.

The Netherlands Government considers that the conclusions relating to trade which were adopted by the Conference should be accepted *en bloc* in order to ensure that they are applied in their entirety. The abolition of import prohibitions and restrictions should be accompanied by a reduction of import duties, which to a certain extent are imposed with the same object in view. The important question of Customs tariffs deserves special attention, particularly with reference to the study of Customs nomenclature, in order to avoid discrimination to the prejudice of one country and specialisation for the benefit of another.

The obvious method of avoiding these dangers would appear to be a plurilateral convention. The best foundation for the restoration of international freedom of trade would seem to be the unreserved and unconditional application of the most-favoured-nation clause. The settlement of disputes concerning the interpretation or application of treaties should be entrusted to the Permanent Court of International Justice.

The Netherlands Government gives its full adherence to the conclusions and resolutions adopted by the Conference, not only on its own behalf but on behalf of the Dutch East Indies, Surinam and Curaçao. It does so the more readily as its economic policy has always been inspired by these principles.

But what is true of the economic policy of the Netherlands Government is also partly true of its attitude towards reduction of armaments. No State can act alone. Unless other States support it, it may eventually have to decide whether it will not be obliged to take measures dictated by its national interests and to conform, much against its wishes, with the exigencies of a policy which it considers to be disastrous and which has been condemned by the League.

Any efforts to carry out the principles advocated by the League must be accorded the invaluable support of the Press, which moulds and guides public opinion. The Netherlands Government, therefore, closely followed the work of the Conference of Press Experts and is especially glad, in studying the resolutions adopted by that Conference, to find that the Press fully realises the great responsibility it would incur if it hampered the growth of mutual understanding among peoples necessary for the promotion of world peace by the publication of obviously inaccurate, highly

exaggerated and deliberately distorted articles. My Government associates itself fully with the heartfelt appeal addressed by the Conference to the Press of the world earnestly requesting the latter to contribute by every means at its disposal to the consolidation of peace, to combating hatred between nationalities and between classes as the greatest danger to peace and to preparing the way to moral disarmament.

Every country, every Government must realise how far it will be answerable to the world if it refuses to take part in the sacred mission of establishing mutual confidence. Unless moral disarmament is achieved we shall, despite all the guarantees contained in the Covenant, find ourselves involved in fresh wars. It is the policy adopted by the nations on the question of moral disarmament which will decide the fate of the world.

The draft resolution which I had the honour to mention to you runs 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."

The President:

Translation: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution submitted by the Netherlands delegate, which has just been read. This draft resolution will be printed and communicated to the delegations and published in the *Assembly Journal*.

I propose at a later meeting of the Assembly to put forward suggestions as to the disposal of the motion.

21. — APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE DELEGATES TO THE GERMAN DELEGATION: LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE DELEGATION.

The President:

Translation: Before adjourning the meeting I wish to read a letter dated September 6th, 1927, which I have received from the German delegation:

"As first delegate of the German Government to the eighth ordinary session of the Assembly of the League of Nations, I have the honour to inform you that, in accordance with Rule 6, paragraph 1, of the Rules of Procedure of the League of Nations Assembly, I have appointed as substitute delegates the following:

Count BERNSTORFF, Member of the Reichstag, Ambassador, unattached;

Dr. BREITSCHIED, Member of the Reichstag;

Dr. HOETZSCH, Professor of Law, Member of the Reichstag;

Dr. KAAS, Professor of Theology, Member of the Reichstag, Canon and Domestic Prelate to His Holiness the Pope;

Baron von RHEINBADEN, Member of the Reichstag, former Secretary of State.

"I would beg you to be good enough to note the above.

(Signed) STRESEMANN."

The Assembly rose at 6.30 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Eighth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FOURTH PLENARY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7th, 1927, AT 10.15 A.M.

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President : M. GUANI.

23. — REQUEST BY BELGIUM FOR RE-ELIGIBILITY FOR ELECTION TO THE COUNCIL.

The President :

Translation : Before proceeding with the agenda, I wish to read to the Assembly the following letter, dated September 6th, 1927, which I have received from the first delegate of Belgium :

“ In conformity with the provisions of Articles II and IV of the Rules concerning the election of non-permanent members of the Council, adopted by the Assembly on September 15th, 1926, I have the honour to ask Your Excellency to submit to the Assembly the request of the Belgian Government that Belgium may be declared to be a State re-eligible for election to the Council.

(Signed) Emile VANDEVELDE. ”

The Assembly has to consider a request for re-eligibility from a non-permanent Member of the Council. This request has been submitted

in accordance with the Rules laid down in the resolution adopted by the Assembly during its seventh ordinary session, for the election of the nine non-permanent members of the Council, their term of office, and the conditions of re-eligibility.

Article II, paragraph 3, of this resolution provides : “ The Assembly may not decide upon the re-eligibility of a Member except upon a request in writing made by the Member itself. The request must be handed to the President of the Assembly not later than the day before the date fixed for the election ; it shall be submitted to the Assembly, which shall pronounce upon it without referring it to a Committee and without debate. ”

The Belgian Government's request having been submitted in proper form, the Assembly will vote upon it at an early meeting, without debate and without referring it to a Committee.

As regards the date when the vote might be taken, I think I shall be interpreting the Assembly's wishes in proposing that this question be submitted to the General Committee, which is responsible for arranging the work of the Assembly, so that it may name a date for the latter to pronounce upon the request for re-eligibility.

If no objections are raised, I shall consider this proposal adopted.

The proposal was adopted.

24. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the general discussion on the Work of the Council, the Work of the Secretariat and the Measures taken to execute the Decisions of the Assembly.

M. Erich, first delegate of Finland, will address the Assembly.

M. Erich (Finland):

Translation: Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — A study of the report with which we are dealing furnishes liberal proof of the continuous, devoted and valuable work of the League and its various organisations, and more particularly of the Secretariat.

We are glad to note that the Finnish proposal, which was submitted to the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference, occupies a conspicuous place in the Secretary-General's report. Though the results obtained by that important Commission are as yet small, attention might usefully be directed to one special feature, the scheme of financial assistance in support of a State which is the victim of aggression. This scheme forms part of the general proposal submitted by the Preparatory Commission.

Thanks to the praiseworthy efforts of this Commission, the Committee of the Council, the Council and, lastly, the Financial Committee, the scheme has now been incorporated in a preliminary draft, indicating on broad technical lines the mechanism of the whole system of financial assistance. In conformity with the Council's decision, the Governments of Members of the League were invited, in a circular letter from the Secretary-General, dated July 11th, 1927, to submit their observations on the report of the Financial Committee.

The Finnish Government accordingly gave a detailed and exhaustive opinion, from the technical point of view, regarding the general lines of the scheme recommended by the Committee.

While refraining for the moment from touching on the substance of the question, the Finnish delegation now expresses its firm conviction that this scheme, which is in the general interest and has been so successfully initiated, will be favourably received by the Members of the League, as it was by the League organs, and trusts that the Council, after studying the opinions expressed, will indicate the political bases for a future Convention and request the Financial Committee to frame a draft Convention.

The Finnish proposal, which was so warmly received by the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference, is still on the programme of that Commission. As may be seen from the documents submitted to the Assembly, the Preparatory Commission decided at its last session to adjourn the study of Resolution No. 8, that is, the Finnish proposal, to a later session. The Commission expects then to revert to the question in conformity with the decision of the Council.

The limitation and reduction of armaments is, of course, the Preparatory Commission's chief concern, and the Finnish Government is of the opinion that, despite the meagre results hitherto obtained, disarmament, which is one of the stipulations of the Covenant, cannot be indefinitely adjourned. Such a decision would cause serious and widespread disappointment. The work must emphatically be resumed either in November, as was originally intended, or early next year.

I have mentioned the principal reason why the important work of this Commission must be carried on without a break. But there are also certain subsidiary tasks explicitly devolving upon the Commission in virtue of special decisions, as, for example, this very proposal put forward by the Finnish Government, which is awaiting further examination by the Commission. This

is an added reason for not adjourning the work of the Commission *sine die*.

The Finnish Government and delegation are fully aware that any great evolution, any progress or reform in the international sphere is normally bound to take a long time. The essential point is to persist in the examination and to follow the development of important matters "affecting the peace of the world", in the wide sense of the Covenant. When, therefore, any scheme that is recognised to be useful, practicable and in conformity with the guiding principles of the Covenant is referred to the League organs, it must not be abandoned simply on account of the difficulty of finding a solution acceptable to all parties.

Even if such a scheme lies buried, as it were, for the time being, there is still the possibility, so ingeniously invoked on two occasions by the Netherlands delegates, of the resurrection of an idea which failed perhaps to materialise at the first attempt, despite its manifest intrinsic merits.

We therefore warmly welcome any proposal such as that put forward yesterday by the first delegate for the Netherlands, advocating the serious re-examination of the big plans for organisation, which have always preoccupied — I may even say, haunted — the League. We are convinced that the special limited proposals submitted to the Preparatory Commission by certain States, including Finland, are bound to be considered when any wider and more general scheme, falling within the vast domain of international security, is being discussed.

The idea of seeking a remedy for the present economic ills by convening an Economic Conference was received with much interest in Finnish circles. The Finnish delegation to the Conference accordingly supported, whenever possible, all proposals designed to eliminate national and international economic difficulties.

In spite of the diversity of views represented, the Conference drew up conclusions which are regarded in the main as equitable, and which answer Finland's requirements. The Finnish Government is glad to find itself in agreement with the essential passages of the reports adopted at the Conference, and trusts that these resolutions will not be allowed to remain a dead letter, but will be put into practice, so that economic recovery may gradually be achieved. Economic recovery is essential to international life, but depends largely on the establishment of international security, and this in its turn will be influenced by consolidation in the economic sphere.

I propose now to deal with two special points. The Finnish Government desires to inform you, through its delegation here, that the President of the Republic has just ratified the Slavery Convention. Finland's participation in this humanitarian work represents, as you know, simply an assertion of principle on the part of a small nation, which is an ardent supporter of human progress and has from its very infancy respected the liberty of the individual — it represents, in fact, the complete, sincere and unreserved application of the lofty principles set forth in Articles 22 and 23 of the Covenant, which are designed to promote solidarity and fraternity among all the nations of the world.

While slavery is a scourge of humanity which, at all events in its more obvious and more inhuman forms, is doomed to disappear with the onward march of civilisation, there are other scourges which defy the efforts of civilisation even at its highest level. There is the serious problem of alcoholism. A few weeks ago the eminent President of the Swiss Confederation, in the course of a great

speech, referred in eloquent and moving terms to the great danger of alcoholism from the point of view of public morality and health. The international aspect of the problem is marked by one special feature, the smuggling of spirituous liquors, which no single State can really succeed in suppressing by its own unaided efforts. These considerations led the Finnish, Polish and Swedish Governments to bring up the question at the seventh ordinary session of the Assembly. The authors of the original proposal subsequently had the satisfaction of seeing that proposal supported by the Belgian, Danish and Czechoslovak Ministers for Foreign Affairs. The Foreign Ministers of these six States sent a joint letter to the Secretary-General urging the serious investigation of this problem. As the question is included in the agenda of the present session of the Assembly, I shall confine myself to this statement, convinced as I am that the Assembly will devote to this proposal the attention which it deserves.

The President :

Translation : M. Akel, head of the Estonian Delegation, will address the Assembly.

M. Akel (Estonia) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — I will not take up the time of this august Assembly with a survey of the work done by the League of Nations — work which, without exception, has given deep satisfaction to and evoked the gratitude of my Government. I fully endorse the glowing tributes bestowed upon the League by the previous speakers.

Among the many questions dealt with in the report which we are now considering — a report which shows the full scope of the beneficent work of the League on behalf of peace and international co-operation — there is one question of special interest to Estonia: I refer to the powerful help and support given by the League with a view to facilitating banking and currency reform in my country, and for which I have the honour to express here, in the name of my Government, our deepest gratitude.

For a just appreciation of the help and support given to my country, it would be necessary to retrace the main features of the economic and financial development of Estonia since it first won its independence and concluded peace with Soviet Russia in 1920 — a development described with remarkable completeness and accuracy in the report by the Financial Committee of the League in 1925.

The conclusions and recommendations contained in that report once more show that Estonia had, on the whole, succeeded in stabilising its economic situation and in preserving its budgetary balance, but that the currency still had to be reorganised in order to complete the economic recovery of the country.

The conclusions reached by the Financial Committee showed that a foreign loan would be desirable in order to give effect to the suggested banking and currency reform. The plan for that reform and for the flotation of the contemplated loan was worked out and defined in a Protocol signed at Geneva on December 10th, 1926.

The approval of the Council having been obtained, nothing further remained to prevent the execution of the plan. The loan was floated with signal success. Thus, through its permanent organs, the League of Nations showed to Estonia sympathy of the most practical kind at a time when that country was endeavouring to restore its currency and banking.

The deep and sincere gratitude of Estonia towards the League can but increase my country's faith in this union of the nations. In the strengthening of that union Estonia sees the surest safeguard of peace and international co-operation, based on right and the consciousness of mutual dependence.

Estonia has unshakable faith in the League's future, and will always be guided in her policy by the ideals of peace which animate that body.

The Estonian Government is firmly resolved to preserve close co-operation with the League, and congratulates itself on the results already achieved. It will always be ready to contribute to the full extent of its power to the further development of the League's work.

I devoutly hope that the way is short which still separates this noble institution from universality, and that the day will soon dawn when we shall see gathered here all the nations of the world in a spirit of international co-operation, peace and understanding.

The President :

Translation : I call upon M. Cielens, first delegate of Latvia, to address the Assembly.

M. Cielens (Latvia) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — I must first of all appeal to your indulgence for my boldness in addressing you on the great and comprehensive questions of peace, security and disarmament. I feel I owe you an apology, because I represent a small and politically young nation, which only achieved its present political independence in consequence of the events of the world war. But, on the other hand, it is the very fact that I represent a small nation which urges me to say a few words on the momentous question of peace, security and disarmament.

If we ask ourselves what was the chief object of the League of Nations at the time of its foundation, the only answer is that that object was the solution of the great problems I have just enumerated. It has, indeed, accomplished great work in other spheres: it has studied economic, social, philanthropic and humanitarian questions in their international bearings, and its work in these fields meets with my unstinted admiration, for these are indeed questions of high importance, although they do not constitute the essential work of the League.

To the clear and unambiguous question how the League of Nations has approached, discussed and solved the problems of vital importance, we may give the following answer:

From the foundation of the League until 1924, the policy pursued was to define these problems in their concrete aspects and thereupon try to solve them. The year 1924 marked the culminating point reached by the League along that course.

The Geneva Protocol included formulas which, although practical, were not devoid of idealism and which placed these vital problems on a concrete basis. The whole world greeted the Protocol, which, it was hoped, was to establish the long-awaited general and lasting peace and give security to all nations, large and small, and which above all would enable the delicate and complex problems of disarmament to be approached from a practical and concrete point of view. Unfortunately, the Protocol has remained a mere pigeon-holed record.

Since 1924, we have, through lack of system and method, gradually fallen from the heights to which we had risen, until to-day, if we survey the political situation of Europe and attempt

to examine what formula of peace, security and disarmament should replace the Geneva Protocol, we are forced to recognise that the situation has become almost identical with that existing before the war.

For what are the existing guarantees for the security of nations? What are the adequate guarantees for a general, lasting and well-organised peace? How does the problem of disarmament present itself to-day?

The solution of the problem of security, as outlined in the Protocol, has, as far as the States Members of the League of Nations are concerned, been replaced by the Locarno Agreements. These Agreements have doubtless benefited the countries of Western Europe: they have established peace and increased security. But Western Europe is not the whole of Europe, still less the whole of the world. Now the problem of security is one which confronts every nation and every Member of the League, and it is of still graver moment for States which, owing to the geographical situation, have for neighbours countries which, unfortunately, do not yet belong to the League. Nevertheless, the security, as well as the political situation of these countries, fails to arouse much interest.

In other respects the Locarno Agreements, and specially Annex F, have also led to notable results, for this Annex provides an authoritative interpretation of Article 16 of the Covenant. It is not my purpose to consider this interpretation as such. I will only say that it has been, and will continue to be, of importance, for the principle of equality among all the Members of the League is a principle which must be upheld.

For our part we have drawn certain inferences from the existing situation. We have discussed, examined and sought for solutions of the problem of security and peace, in so far as it lay in our power to do so. In the first place we endeavour, in our relations with our great eastern neighbour, to establish peace and to arrive at some formula which, although of but relative value, might help to establish our security. Negotiations are now in progress between us with a view to concluding — in full loyalty to the spirit of the League — a pact of non-aggression and conciliation intended to stabilise peace and the *status quo* on the eastern shores of the Baltic.

We are sparing no effort to ensure that all our neighbours shall have free access to the sea for economic purposes. We shall continue to do so and to vouchsafe to all countries the free use of the international highways of Estonia.

We have also had in mind a "Locarno Agreement of the East". Such an agreement would guarantee the *status quo* on the eastern shores of the Baltic, in full accord with the resolution adopted by the seventh ordinary session of the Assembly on September 25th, 1926, which was considered afresh by the Council at its session of December 1926. We may some day be in a position to submit the question in a concrete form to the States interested in the *status quo* and in freedom of traffic on the main international highways of Eastern Europe.

We realise, however, that our political efforts to achieve a stable peace and an increase of security cannot unaided lead to decisive results. The problem is more far-reaching and must be solved by international agreements. We are thus naturally led to the second question of the Protocol, namely, that of a general and lasting peace.

The Latvian Government is of opinion that it is not merely our right but our bounden duty to bring this question clearly and emphatically to the notice of this Assembly. For our country has suffered from the Great War more, perhaps,

than any other country in Europe. For three years two powerful armies brought ruin and destruction upon our country. The line of fire swept it from end to end. Free from social unrest, in peace and in spirit of fairness to the rights of minorities, we are applying ourselves to the reconstruction and development of our young country.

Not only Latvia, but all nations, great and small, feel in the work of economic reconstruction the vital need for the stable peace which is essential for the normal development of trade and international credit.

But where is that peace, that general, lasting, well-organised peace to be found? I need not mention the economic competition, not to say struggle, which is the rule throughout the world in the scramble for cotton, petrol, rubber and other commodities. Nor need I refer to the political rivalries, chiefly noticeable among the great nations, but which also exist between great and small nations. It is not for me to enumerate the differences which have arisen among a number of nations in regard to their political interests.

Unhappily, the main argument brought forward for the settlement of such differences is, without exception, the appeal to brute force. In some cases, even, threats of military action have been uttered. The pre-war method is still looked upon almost universally as the most logical for the purpose of achieving the object in view.

I know it may be said that I am exaggerating, that I am prone to scepticism and that this attitude no longer accords with the present situation in Europe. In a leading article on the eighth ordinary session of the Assembly of the League which appeared in a great French newspaper, we read that there is no great conflict of political interests in Europe, or at any rate there is no divergence of political interests which might lead to war.

But the great poet Sophocles, if I am not mistaken, says in his *Œdipus Rex*, in words which are now proverbial: "The greatest misfortune of man is that when he gazes upon a calm and even sea, he never bethinks him of the storm."

The sea we gaze upon is at present moderately calm, and we never think of the storm that may arise. Yet the League of Nations should be like a seismograph accurately recording the least inward movements of the souls of nations. It should foresee, it should have prescience of, events which, like the great war in July 1914, suddenly sweep like a devastating hurricane over the world.

I now propose to discuss the third problem, namely, that of disarmament, the gravest and the most complex of all, and I regret to find that its solution has still only reached the stage of a draft filed among the League's records.

What are the facts? What is the practical solution of the disarmament problem?

In 1926 the sums budgeted for the military, naval and air forces of the European States amounted to 1,443 million dollars, a sum approximately equal to the European war budget for 1913. The number of soldiers with the colours was 3,145,000 in 1926, whereas the figure for 1913 was slightly higher, being about four million.

We must not forget, however, that under existing treaties part of Europe is now disarmed, and also that the technical equipment of armies is far more advanced than in the days before the war, owing to the considerable progress made in military technique during, and especially since, the war.

I will not weary you by enumerating all the machine-guns, tanks and other engines of war with which modern armies are equipped. It will

suffice to say a few words of the means of offence which will be employed in future warfare, namely, poison gas and electricity, the full possibilities of which for war purposes are perhaps known only to those specialists—and they are bound to secrecy—who are attached to the General Staffs.

How terrible will be the destructive power possessed by such armies! We are no specialists on such questions, yet we can visualise what that power will be; for gas bombs, carried by long-distance aeroplanes, may create havoc not hundreds but thousands of kilometers from the front-line trenches, among the civilian populations of nations at war.

Such is the true situation; and when we investigate the reasons adduced by the experts of the different nations in justification of this competition in armaments, we find the same classical arguments now as before the war. Military strength guarantees peace; military strength guarantees stability; and these are the essential methods guaranteeing general peace and stability.

How then do we stand? We are in the state of armed peace which existed before the war. We have once more the same competition, or rather the same rivalry, in armaments which has in the past led to the terrible consequences that are still fresh in our minds.

Must I remind you that numerous historians and many politicians, publicists and prominent persons connected with the League have expressed their belief that the immediate cause of the world war was competition in armaments?

What is taking place to-day? If these traditional methods are continued, if the champions of a policy of peace and disarmament are overruled, sooner or later we shall once more stumble into war. Alas, that once more we should claim to safeguard the security of nations by the nefarious policy of armaments!

If rivalry in armaments cannot bring security to the small nations, it will likewise fail to bring it to the larger ones too in the war of the future, waged as it will be with aeroplanes, poison gas and electricity.

I am no prophet; but you may be sure that another war would be terrible, not merely owing to its destructive power, but also, and mainly, because all nations, all continents, the whole world, in fact, would be dragged into its whirlpool.

Nor can we ignore the political consequences to which another European war might lead. It would beyond doubt stir up those elements of revolt in every race, the first distant mutterings of which may be heard even now by those who listen.

A militarist policy, therefore, a policy which consists in constantly increasing armaments, does not confer on the world the blessing of a stable peace, nor does it increase the security of nations or provide any guarantee for the safe evolution of civilisation.

Some will perhaps say: What futile sentimentality! or, What scepticism! or again, What lofty idealism—lofty, yes, but impracticable!

Ladies and gentlemen, I know as well as you that the solution of the problem of disarmament is a complex, a difficult, a momentous task; yet, great as it is, the moral greatness of the goal in view is no less.

The general situation in Europe after the war is particularly favourable to a solution of the problem of disarmament. All nations alike are labouring under economic difficulties, and, as I have said, part of Europe is already disarmed. Furthermore, there is one great Eastern European

nation which is weakened in its military resources, as compared with its position before the war. I am very sure that, if the principal Powers of Western Europe could agree upon a concrete scheme for the reduction and limitation of armaments, either through or under the authority of the League, there would be some hope of inducing the nations which are not yet Members of that organisation to subscribe to such an agreement, for the League would then have an immense, nay an overwhelming, prestige.

The agenda of this Assembly unfortunately contains no such draft agreement framed in concrete terms. Yet this is the main question before it, and the one which ought to have precedence of all others. I am convinced that its solution might offer a basis for the solution of the other problems bound up with a lasting peace and the security of nations.

In the draft agenda of the Third Committee communicated to us on our arrival at Geneva, we find, to our regret, nothing beyond the following question: "What measures should be taken to facilitate the meeting of the Council of the League of Nations in case of political emergency", that is to say, in case of an imminent or actual outbreak of war.

How far we are from the Protocol of 1924! We may even have come down already to the level of these celebrated conferences held at The Hague before the war.

Let us imagine for a moment a crisis such as would be discussed by the Third Committee. When the dark clouds of war are already hovering over Europe it will be too late to attempt such measures of rescue. It will be too late for the Council of the League to solve the political crisis; the voice of the cannon will already be heard.

A general peace, a lasting peace, demands preparation. Unless the question of disarmament is solved, the organisation of a general and lasting peace will be an impossible task.

The applause which greeted the eloquent speech of the Netherlands delegate—and I welcome with all my heart the draft resolution deposited by him yesterday—proves that the great hopes to which three years ago the high-minded authors of the Geneva Protocol gave expression are still alive in this Assembly.

In conclusion, ladies and gentlemen, allow me to quote from Schiller's famous poem, "The Song of the Bell", the momentous words: "*Vivos voco, Mortuos plango*". I am strongly tempted to say "*Vivos plango*"; for pitiable indeed will be the plight of the generation that comes after us if we ourselves prove unequal to the task of solving the great and difficult problem of peace.

"*Mortuos voco*": I recall the ten million soldiers who fell on the field of battle. They stand before us, nor will their image vanish from our sight until our great object has been attained. Everlasting rest will not be theirs until the League of Nations has established on earth the reign of real and universal peace.

The President:

Translation: M. Löfgren, first delegate of Sweden, will address the Assembly.

M. Löfgren (Sweden):

Translation: Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen—I venture to make a few remarks on this year's annual report, which gives a general and highly interesting account of the work of the Council and of the Secretariat, and I shall speak not only of what the report contains but above all of what it omits.

There is no doubt that as regards economics, finance, health and other fields, the extensive and energetic work of the League is still meeting with success.

All this work, which, in special directions, aims at mitigating the after-effects of the world war, is obviously — from the point of general politics — of the greatest importance also for the establishment and maintenance of friendly relations between peoples. But, on the other hand, the report says little or nothing concerning the measures taken by the League with a view to exercising a more direct influence on the political situation. Unfortunately, this silence does not warrant the conclusion that we live in a world to which, after long years of conflict, calm and peace have at length returned.

On the contrary, it is undeniable that during the past year serious disputes and grave misunderstandings have arisen to divide the peoples and disturb their mutual relations. What the report says — and omits to say — on this subject merely shows that the League has not considered it advisable to intervene in these disputes. In view of their nature and of the League's present position, however, I will not venture to express any opinion on the Council's attitude in the matter. Perhaps the Council showed its wisdom and prudence in remaining inactive, and, indeed, League intervention was not expressly claimed by any of the States Members.

Nevertheless, it cannot be concealed that the apparent passivity which has characterised the political work of the Council during the past year has not failed to occasion a feeling of disappointment. This feeling — I might even call it one of impatience — is perhaps accentuated by the fact that during 1925 and 1926 the work of the League was particularly fruitful in results. The Locarno Treaties and the admission of Germany to the League gave rise to the hope that, in spite of the simultaneous — and, may we hope, temporary — loss of certain Members, the strength and prestige of the League would be increased. The Council's prompt and successful intervention in the Greco-Bulgarian dispute led us to believe that its action in this question would constitute a precedent for similar cases.

The hope, this confidence in the League, are resources which must not be wasted. The League must therefore neglect no opportunity of inspiring the most complete confidence in its will and power not only to perfect a system for the organisation of peace in the future, but also to settle any current disputes or any disputes which may arise in the future. Public opinion desires, therefore, a programme, a fundamental principle for the political conduct of the League's organs in their constant work of mediation in accordance with Article 11 of the Covenant.

In this respect it might be pointed out that the League is so deeply interested in the theoretical discussion of Article 16 of the Covenant — that is to say, of repressive measures in the event of war — that Article 11, the aim of which is to prevent war, has been somewhat thrust into the background. Would it not be useful for the Council to apply in a more general manner that procedure of conciliation which has been recognised and confirmed by so many States in separate treaties? Certainly for the moment general peace is not threatened, but is it not dangerous to defer until to-morrow the solution of problems which might be settled to-day with a greater measure of safety?

The Swedish and other Scandinavian delegations have more than once suggested to the Assembly that there should be more definite regulations

for the Council's mediation procedure. Such regulations would also have the advantage of providing the public with an assurance that current questions of a political nature would be dealt with by the Council itself. If the newspapers and the accounts of various interviews which have taken place are to be credited, burning political questions have been discussed here at Geneva at meetings at which only certain members of the Council were present. Of course, nobody would think of blaming statesmen for discussing separately problems which directly concern their own country, even if such problems come within the competence of the League.

But, frankly, last year's experience was not such as to dispel the apprehensions of those who, at the last Assembly, expressed the opinion that an increase in the membership of the Council would enhance the danger of important political questions being withdrawn from its competence and transferred to an inner circle of representatives of certain Powers.

I need not say that, if this tendency were to increase, the League of Nations and its executive organ, the Council, might quite conceivably lose their hold on affairs and be prevented from accomplishing their high mission as the guardians of peace.

In speaking of the Council's work I will venture to add a few words concerning a question which is of vital importance, especially for small States. I wish to emphasise that, in whatever manner the Council's conciliation procedure is organised and applied, political mediation must be kept distinct from arbitration as contemplated by the Covenant and by individual treaties.

As you know, we have succeeded in developing and strengthening the system for the pacific settlement of international disputes. The League has given this system support, the importance of which can hardly be overestimated. We have seen the network of arbitration treaties spreading farther and farther, bringing closer together the various States of Europe and of the world. In order that this network should continue to extend, nothing must be done to shake the confidence of Governments in the efficacy of arbitration, even in disputes bearing on interests which one or other of the parties considers to be vital.

According to the spirit of the Covenant, it is obvious that, once arbitration proceedings have been instituted, any political intervention by the Council must be ruled out, unless, of course, respect for undertakings has to be enforced or the execution of such undertakings ensured.

The idea that any decision taken by an arbitral tribunal could be considered as a reason for political intervention by the Council, involving, if necessary, the interruption of the arbitration proceedings, appears to me contrary not only to general legal principles but also to the ideas on which the arbitration system of the Covenant is based.

Since arbitration is the essential condition for the establishment of a system of security leading to disarmament, it is all the more important that the ever-growing confidence in its efficacy should not be shaken.

The limitation of armaments is one of the lengthiest tasks upon which the League of Nations has embarked. No matter how disappointed we are at the present position of the problem, we must in fairness pay a tribute to the tireless zeal displayed by the various organs and authorities of the League in striving to reach a solution of this problem.

The present disquieting position of the disarmament problem is due to the divergent interests and

conceptions of the various sovereign States. These divergencies should not, however, discourage the League in the pursuit of its work. Nothing would be more fatal for the League than to leave the impression that this problem has come to a deadlock without hope of a remedy.

Nevertheless, if the work is to be pushed forward, it is not enough, in my opinion, to convene the Preparatory Commission at an early date, since, unless new facts arise, the Commission could surely do no more than take note once again of the existing differences.

In view of the very considerable technical results already obtained, I think the moment is ripe for us to try to find political guarantees ensuring an agreement which it has not yet been found possible to reach. Above all — and the League of Nations has the right to claim this much — the Powers whose divergencies of opinion have prevented the successful issue of previous negotiations, must make the concessions necessary to lay down the required basis for a general and definitive agreement. This Assembly, I am sure, will not fail, after carefully studying what measures are to be adopted, to express firmly and clearly its will to take a decisive step towards the solution of this problem.

If the Assembly takes this line it will, I hope, mean that the delegates — in particular, those of great military Powers — will be bound to exercise their influence in their respective countries with a view to bringing their Government's official policy into line with League principles.

In the same way, steps have been taken and preparatory work of the utmost importance has been accomplished in another sphere in which a *rapprochement* among the nations can clear the ground for a durable peace — I mean the economic sphere. At the Economic Conference convened by the League at Geneva, opinion was found to be strongly in favour of a freer commercial policy and, in particular, of the abolition of the economic and social barriers erected between countries after the world war.

The principles laid down by the Economic Conference for a future commercial policy were recommended by the Council at its June session this year to the favourable consideration of all Governments. Accordingly, the German, Austrian, Belgian, Netherlands and Czechoslovak Governments formally approved the Conference's resolutions, and representatives of the British, Italian and Roumanian Governments also accepted them.

Lastly, the principal achievement of two important Conferences held at Stockholm — the Conference of the International Chamber of Commerce and the World Congress of the International Co-operative Alliance — was to place on record unanimous resolutions urging the necessity of taking as a basis for international economic co-operation the principles enunciated at the Economic Conference of Geneva.

The experts on economic disarmament did not therefore display the same lack of unanimity as the experts on military disarmament. As regards economic policy, they all agreed that

the world can only emerge from the present protracted and serious crisis by a policy of liberty and co-operation. But, in order to give the Conference's decisions the full effect they deserve, it is essential that the great majority of States should put them into practice. The League of Nations must therefore follow up the action taken under its auspices, by bringing about an association of States with a view to obtaining the requisite co-operation.

As regards Sweden, I think I may say that her commercial policy is, in all essential points, in complete agreement with the principles adopted by the Conference. I venture, however, to point out how difficult, how impossible even, it is for individual States, especially secondary Powers, to continue to apply such principles to their commercial policy, unless those principles are generally adopted at the outset by the States whose economic influence is greatest.

The Swedish Government takes this opportunity to say that it fully adheres to the principles set forth by the Economic Conference and that it is prepared to work for their general application. Sweden addresses an urgent and sincere appeal to the Assembly of the League of Nations, to the States Members of the League, and more especially to those Members who play a predominating part in the economic life of the world, to set to work immediately to render possible the universal application of the recommendations of the Economic Conference by means of inter-State agreements as well as by the general direction of their commercial policy.

25. — APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE DELEGATES TO THE FINNISH DELEGATION : LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : Before closing the meeting, I will read you a letter I have received from the Finnish delegation regarding the composition of that delegation :

“I have the honour to inform you that, in accordance with Article 6, paragraph 1, of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, the Finnish delegation to the eighth session of the Assembly has appointed the following as substitute delegates :

M. George WINCKELMANN, Counsellor of Legation, Director of the Legal Section at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

M. Hugo VALVANNE, First Secretary of Legation.

(Signed) R. ERICH,

*Head of the Finnish Delegation
to the eighth ordinary session
of the Assembly.*”

The Assembly rose at 12.40 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Eighth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FIFTH PLENARY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7th, 1927, AT 5 P.M.

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26. — QUESTION OF THE CREATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF THE EDUCATIONAL CINEMA AT ROME : REFERENCE TO THE AGENDA COMMITTEE OF THE PROPOSAL MADE BY THE ITALIAN DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : You will remember that at yesterday afternoon's meeting I said that I might have some suggestions to put forward concerning the Italian delegation's request that the question

of the creation of an International Institute of the Educational Cinema at Rome should be placed on the agenda of the session.

The delegations have now had an opportunity of studying the text of the proposal submitted by Count Cippico, which was distributed this morning. I do not think that, in the circumstances, there is any need to read it now.

I therefore propose, in conformity with the Rules of Procedure, that the Assembly should refer this request to the Agenda Committee, and ask the latter to report on it as soon as possible.

If no one has anything to say, I shall regard my proposal as adopted. (*Adopted.*)

27. — QUESTION OF THE INCLUSION IN THE AGENDA OF THE ASSEMBLY OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS : (a) WORK OF THE CONFERENCE OF PRESS EXPERTS ; (b) WORK OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR THE CREATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL RELIEF UNION : LETTER FROM THE ACTING PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL.

The President :

Translation : His Excellency M. Villegas, Acting President of the Council, has sent me a letter, dated September 7th, 1927, which I will now read to the Assembly :

"The Council of the League of Nations, at a meeting held on September 2nd, 1927, adopted a resolution regarding the recent Conference of Press Experts which contains the following provisions : 'The Council communicates to the Assembly the resolutions of the Conference, and requests it to include in the budget of the Organisation for Communications and Transit the supplementary

credit necessary for the enquiries and other work entailed by these resolutions.'

"On September 3rd, 1927, the Council also adopted a resolution regarding the work of the International Conference for the creation of an International Relief Union which contains the following provision: 'The Council decides to communicate to the Assembly the results of that Conference with a view to future consideration by the latter.'

"In communicating to the Assembly the above decisions of the Council, I have the honour to request the Assembly to consider whether they should be placed on the agenda of the present ordinary session of the Assembly.

(Signed) VILLEGAS,
Acting President of the Council."

The Council has submitted two new questions for inclusion in the agenda of the present session of the Assembly. In order to avoid loss of time, I propose that, in accordance with precedent, the Assembly should refer the Council's communication immediately to the Agenda Committee, requesting the latter to submit suggestions as soon as possible.

If no one has any objection to raise, I shall regard my proposal as adopted. (Adopted.)

28. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND THE SECRETARIAT: CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President:

Translation: The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the general discussion 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.

His Excellency M. Urrutia, first delegate of Colombia, will address the Assembly.

M. Urrutia (Colombia):

Translation: Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen—One of the most important questions placed by the Council on the agenda of the present session of the Assembly and appearing in the Secretary-General's report in undoubtedly the work of the Committee of Experts for the Progressive Codification of International Law.

Owing to its intrinsic importance and universal interest, particularly at the present time, and by reason of its intimate association with the aims of the League as enunciated in the Preamble to the Covenant, this question of the codification of international law at present occupies a foremost position in the minds of the civilised nations.

At its last session in Paris, the Inter-Parliamentary Union drew attention to the urgent need for codification, being of opinion that it might serve to eliminate the flagrant injustice and the numerous ambiguities attaching to international law at the present day, and might offer a sure and generally accepted basis for the settlement of international disputes, thereby promoting the supreme interests of peace.

The codification of international law may be described by some as an attempt to embody the principles of international justice in concrete rules, or as the perfecting of international law; or again it may imply, in the view of certain authorities—and perhaps rightly so—the reconstruction of international law. However

that may be, the fact remains that the movement answers to a universal need.

This need was made glaringly manifest during the tragic days of the World War, which seemed well on the way to destroy the material bases of an ancient civilisation and with them the essential principles of morality and international law. It is a need that is daily becoming more ingrained in the popular mind. A strong reaction has set in against methods of violence, and a firm conviction exists that nothing but a system built on law and order is proof against disruption.

One of the main obligations laid down in the Covenant is "the firm establishment of the understandings of international law as the actual rule of conduct among Governments". Many of these "understandings", however, are ill-defined and have never been sanctioned by general acceptance; the Covenant therefore contemplated subsequent action by the League with a view to achieving this result.

In setting up the Permanent Court of International Justice, the League has already realised one of the greatest ideals embodied in the Covenant, but this achievement has only served to emphasise the need for establishing international laws. The Committee of Jurists which met at The Hague in 1920 to frame the draft Statute of the Court rightly recommended the resumption of the work of codification begun before the war by the Hague Conference. International justice cannot hope to progress except by following in the steps and seeking the light of international law.

In 1924, the League Assembly, realising its duties and acting as the faithful interpreter of that universal aspiration to which I have referred, adopted a resolution, which some thought inadequate but which was undoubtedly very important, concerning the progressive codification of international law.

Last June, M. Zaleski, the Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs, submitted to the Council a report setting forth clearly the scope and objects of the Assembly's resolution and the effect given to it in practice, as shown more particularly by the publication of the admirable reports framed by the Committee of Experts. The Council, at the same session, associated itself with M. Zaleski in praising the zeal, accuracy and competence with which the Committee had performed its difficult task.

I, too, feel that I am doing no more than my duty in acknowledging our indebtedness to the Committee. Its work was both scientific and practical; it kept in view the different aspects of the questions submitted to it; it availed itself of the important studies carried on outside the League, and in certain matters, such as the exploitation of the products of the sea, established the fundamental bases for general and regional organisation. The Committee was, however, subjected to criticism on the grounds of undue timidity and conservatism in regard to questions such as those concerning territorial waters and on account of its opposition to certain measures already established in current practice and to certain tendencies that apparently prevail in international law.

On the other hand, it must be admitted that the Committee's sagacity and moderation are likely to inspire confidence in States which might view drastic reforms with some apprehension.

The Council saw fit to leave the Assembly to decide how the work begun in 1924 could best be carried on. The Assembly is in possession of all the data—including the valuable proposals contained in the Committee of Experts' report to the Council—which it requires as a basis for discussion and for framing resolutions regarding this matter.

Suggestions and definite proposals will certainly be submitted when the question comes up for discussion before the First Committee of the Assembly, and the Colombian delegation will state its views in due course. For the moment, I will confine myself to a few general remarks.

The problem before the Assembly is so vast, so complex and of so universal a character that, in order to estimate it and find a proper solution, it is essential to bear in mind all the factors, both within the League and outside it, which already contribute or may in future contribute towards the desired end.

Even before the League took up the matter, and again later, while this work was proceeding, the question of the codification of international law had been extensively studied, and the League should be able to derive substantial assistance from these previous efforts.

It would take too long to enumerate all these various studies, which were instituted by big scientific associations, by semi-political, semi-scientific bodies, such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union, by distinguished private individuals versed in the science of international relations or by the collective official efforts of groups of States.

As regards this last category, the efforts of the American States to secure the codification of public and private international law were begun more than a century ago. Proposals on the subject were outlined at the Congress summoned in 1826 by Bolivar, at that time President of Colombia, to whom M. Villegas, the Acting President of the Council, paid a well-merited tribute in his opening speech to this Assembly.

These efforts have been pursued with energy and determination during the last five decades. They resulted in very important international agreements, such as the agreement on private international law signed at Montevideo in 1889, in the pacts and resolutions of the Pan-American Conference, in special conferences and studies such as those of the American Institute of International Law, and, lastly, in schemes embodying the knowledge and experience of eminent jurists.

The fifth Pan-American Conference, which met at Santiago de Chile in 1923, decided, in order to give a fresh impetus to the work of codification of international law, which had been suspended during the war, to reorganise the Committee of Jurists set up by the Third Conference at Rio de Janeiro, so that the codification of public international law should be gradual and progressive and based upon a draft submitted to the fifth International Conference by the Chilean delegate, M. Alejandro Alvarez, and entitled "The Codification of International Law in America".

The meeting of the Congress of Jurists at Rio de Janeiro this year was thus the immediate outcome of the decisions of the fifth Pan-American Conference.

The work at Rio de Janeiro, however, was preceded by long scientific preparation. As far back as 1912, M. Epitacio Pessoa, the Brazilian jurist, submitted to the first Assembly of Jurists at Rio a draft on public international law, while his colleague, M. Rodriguez Pereira, presented a draft concerning private international law. On the same occasion, M. Alvarez submitted his work on the codification of international law.

These various efforts are evidence of a progressive spirit and a desire not only to codify international law but to reconstruct it and bring it into harmony with new international conditions.

I may perhaps be allowed to outline the results of the last Congress of Jurists at Rio de Janeiro. Owing to its intrinsic importance and to the fact

that the jurists taking part in its work were the official delegates of the American States, this Congress constitutes an official collective effort in the interests of international law — an effort which, on the one hand, does honour to the American Republics and testifies to their progressive spirit and their devotion to the principles of justice and, on the other hand, represents the most important contribution hitherto made by any group of States to the work of codifying general international law.

The Committee of Jurists at Rio adopted twelve draft Conventions on public international law, as well as a draft general Convention on private international law.

The Conventions on public international law related to the following questions: the fundamental bases of international law, States, the pacific settlement of international disputes, treaties, maritime neutrality, the status of aliens, diplomatic agents, consular agents, asylum, the duties of States in case of civil war, the exchange of publications, the interchange of professors and students.

The object of these various drafts, which will be submitted to the sixth Pan-American Conference at Havana in January next, is to define the fundamental bases of international law and to determine its sources and authorities and the rules for its interpretation.

From this point of view, by far the most interesting drafts are undoubtedly those relating to the fundamental bases of international law and States; the latter comprises certain vital questions, such as the recognition of new States and new Governments.

In the main it may be said that the drafts on international law framed at Rio are based on the following great principles of international law, which have been proclaimed and defended from all time by the American States and incorporated by most of those States in their internal legislation. Those principles are the absolute independence and unrestricted internal sovereignty of every State, subject to modifications arising out of voluntarily concluded treaties; political equality as between States; the duty of solidarity and special international co-operation between the States of the New World, which, far from excluding the States of other continents, implies the establishment of closer ties with them; the equality of civil rights as between nationals and aliens, etc., etc.

The general draft convention on private international law framed by the Cuban jurist, Antonio Sanchez de Bustamante, was based on the following principles: the *jus soli* determines the nationality of individuals; their "personal legal status" is determined by the test of domicile; juridical persons owe their existence solely to the law of the country sanctioning them and are therefore neither nationals nor aliens; the recognised jurisdiction is that of the country where the contract is fulfilled, etc. The acceptance of these principles would, in the opinion of the jurists at Rio, constitute a real reconstruction of private international law.

Although the Rio drafts were framed in an eminently American spirit and in the light of circumstances and conditions peculiar to the States of the New World, this does not mean that their learned authors, or the jurists who discussed and adopted them, intended to establish a body of international law different from — still less conflicting with — that of the European States. On the contrary, I think I may say that the jurists at Rio, when voicing the ideas of the Governments they represented, were anxious to

co-operate in the universal task of perfecting, codifying and reconstructing international law. Any new principles discovered in these Conventions should be regarded as proposals submitted by the States of the New World to other States, with a view to securing their introduction into universal international law. These ideas had already been enunciated by public men and eminent writers on international law in America and are in complete harmony with the categorical declarations made on the subject by the fourth Pan-American Conference at Buenos Aires.

When speaking of the codification of international law before this Assembly, it is impossible to forget the eminent services rendered uninterruptedly for more than half a century to the cause of the evolution and progress of international law by the patient and enlightened work of the Institute of International Law, which was founded in 1873 and whose motto has always been "*Pro justitia et pace*". Experts on international law in the different continents have taken part in the work of this Institute, and some of its illustrious members have been heard at the Peace Conferences, the Hague Court of Arbitration and the Permanent Court of International Justice.

The Institute's publications and recommendations are a valuable and trustworthy source of information to all who desire to ascertain what was, at any given moment, the reliable expression of the conscience of the civilised world on specific questions relating to international law. The work of the Institute has been, and still is, primarily scientific in character and, up to a certain point, is connected with international politics. It is, however, a valuable factor in the framing of positive international laws. There is perhaps no single important question of international law that has not been thoroughly studied and discussed by the Institute at its annual sessions, which now exceed forty in number.

Certain resolutions adopted by the Institute have had to be revised owing to changed conditions and the constant evolution of international law. A mere list of the Institute's committees and of the questions studied during recent years will suffice to show the vital character and the value of the Institute's contribution towards the codification and reconstruction of international law. Let me quote the following: the international responsibility of the State for damage caused on its territory to persons and property, nationality, conciliation procedure, the extension of compulsory arbitration and the compulsory jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice, navigation on the high seas, arbitral procedure, draft regulations relating to territorial waters, diplomatic and consular immunities, immunities to be granted to persons discharging functions of international concern, international air navigation, shipping regulations in maritime ports, the codification of international law.

It will be seen that some of these questions, such as nationality, territorial waters, diplomatic privileges and immunities, the responsibility of the State for damage caused on its territory, were examined simultaneously by the League Committee of Experts, the Institute of International Law and the Committee of Jurists at Rio de Janeiro. Instead of regarding these various activities as isolated and independent endeavours, we must bring them into harmony with one another and use them for the attainment of one common object.

The results achieved outside the League in no way detract from the high merit of the work accomplished at Geneva for the codification of international law, especially as the League is not

only endeavouring to promote, but has already promoted, with increasing success, the progressive codification of special subjects, through international Conferences convened under its auspices and through the Conventions resulting from those Conferences.

The Conventions on communications and transit, on navigable waterways of international concern, on maritime ports, on slavery and others I might name represent an important contribution towards the progressive codification of international law. The international conciliation and arbitration Conventions which the League encourages so vigorously constitute to-day a valuable worldwide system of moral links so powerful that it is no exaggeration to say that the principle of international conciliation and arbitration has become a sort of universal law arising out of an international consensus of opinion. Nor must we forget international labour legislation, which protects the once neglected interests of the working classes and serves to consolidate the valuable progress achieved in the matter of social reform.

The League of Nations has successfully continued the fruitful work of the two Hague Conferences, where, to quote the words of our lamented and most eminent colleague, Léon Bourgeois, "the heart-beat of humanity was first felt". The Hague Conferences will go down to history as the first universal effort to codify international law. The fact that these glorious acts, which instituted arbitration, condemned all barbarous methods of warfare, sought to protect defenceless populations, wounded combatants and prisoners, and reasserted the principle of respect for the dead—the fact that on dark occasions those acts were abjured is of but little moment. They will stand for ever as the expression of the thoughts and aspirations of the civilised world.

This, then, is the problem before the Assembly: How is the League to carry on effectively and with universal approval the great work it has undertaken in the interests of international law, work which has found its expression in its acts and in the studies of the Committee of Experts, on which more than thirty States have already pronounced an opinion?

In the light of past achievements, inaction would be equivalent to retrogression, and for the League would mean a failure to fulfil its most imperative duty. The League has contributed towards the strengthening of international justice, and has created the Permanent Court to administer it; as a natural corollary, it remains for it to define and perfect law, which is the inseparable companion of justice, and to secure its application, wherever this is necessary to regulate the life of the States.

The definition of law, the strengthening of justice and the maintenance of peace are the aims of our institution, but the project is so vast that to carry it out we must avail ourselves of all the efforts made, even outside the League, to attain this end. To co-ordinate these efforts, to harmonise and group them together, as is quite feasible in such a task as the codifying of international law, would be to render a great service to humanity. M. Briand, the eminent first delegate of France, when speaking a few days ago before the Inter-Parliamentary Union on the need for educating the public in regard to certain problems of international politics, said: "What we have to do is to establish the peace of the world on a legal basis, to make a legal reality of international solidarity, which is already apparent in fact as a physical reality. The task is sufficiently difficult to require the energetic co-operation of all concerned."

Endorsing M. Briand's words and applying them to the progressive codification of international law, we would repeat: "the task is sufficiently difficult to require the energetic co-operation of all concerned".

It will be for the Assembly, in the course of its coming debates, to find some formula which shall ensure this energetic co-operation, and I am sure, that, conscious of its world-wide mission of civilisation, the Assembly will find such a formula, if it seeks it in the lofty and generous conception of international solidarity and of the benefits to be derived from consolidating and extending the empire of law and justice and perpetuating the reign of peace.

The President:

Translation: M. Moltesen, first delegate of Denmark, will address the Assembly.

M. Moltesen (Denmark):

Translation: Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen—It is a pleasure to me to add my congratulations to those already addressed to the Secretariat and the technical organs of the League.

The story is told of a young Danish peasant who once bought a plot of land and built a house for himself and his wife. All the wiseacres told him it was a bad stroke of business, but he replied: "I have the sun on all sides, the land is well drained, and what is more, I am right in the middle of the world."

The Secretariat of the League seems to me to be in a similar position, and, provided that those directing its activities retain the same optimism and the same good fortune as the Danish peasant in the story, the Secretariat and its organs can count on an auspicious and untroubled future.

The Danish Government and the whole nation follow the League's work with the keenest interest. Every setback, every check, casts a gloom over the whole country.

We earnestly pray for the day when the whole world will come to perceive that it is in the interests of every State to co-operate under the auspices of the League, and when men will realise that nations are like individuals, and that the prosperity of one spells the prosperity of all.

We are gratified to note that during the past year the League has successfully dealt with and found a solution for a whole series of important problems.

Denmark hails with special satisfaction the preparatory work of the Committee of Experts on the Progressive Codification of International Law. This work is essential if the activities of the League and of the Permanent Court are to be established on a permanent and solid basis of unequivocal justice. It constitutes, moreover, one of the principal factors in the maintenance of peace.

It is Denmark's earnest desire that this work shall be pursued as vigorously as possible and we trust that the discussions of this Assembly will ensure its being continued in the form best calculated to secure the attainment of the lofty aim in view.

In this connection I might also mention the efforts made in the past year to strengthen the action of the League under Articles 11 and 16 of the Covenant. These questions are of vital interest to all the Members of the League, and are questions to which the Danish Government has always attached the greatest importance.

I need only remind you of the draft amendments to Article 16 which the Danish Government, in conjunction with the other Northern countries, submitted to the Assembly in 1921, and the principles for the application of that article which were unanimously adopted by the Assembly, and which constitute the most important contribution towards its interpretation.

There are two other questions on which I should like to dwell. The first is the Health Organisation, the continuous progress of which must be a cause of legitimate satisfaction to all the Members of the League. The second is the International Economic Conference which met at Geneva under the League's auspices from May 4th to 23rd, 1927. We regarded the convening of that Conference as a most important step, and consider that the work done there was most satisfactory in every way. It would be an excellent thing if this Assembly could decide upon a means of carrying on the work so successfully begun by the Conference.

I have referred so far to questions which fully warrant our optimism as regards the present position and the future of the League. Truth requires me, however, to mention also problems for which the desired solution has unfortunately not yet been found. I am thinking now mainly of the reduction of armaments.

The country which I have the honour to represent here has not adopted any particular standpoint regarding this question. The smaller States, it must be remembered, have the same interest as the big States in maintaining their security and independence. I can assure you that Denmark is prepared, for her part, to make any sacrifices that the League might be justified in demanding from her as regards this special issue.

At the same time, we must not lose sight of the fact that Article 8 of the Covenant imposes a general obligation to reduce armaments, and that by the very fact of our entry into the League we have all, great and small alike, pledged our honour individually to comply with the undertakings to which we have subscribed.

The enthusiasm with which the Assembly adopted the Geneva Protocol in 1924 still has power to move me, and I accordingly listened yesterday with the greatest interest to the speech of the first delegate of the Netherlands. We shall deem it an honour to associate ourselves with the principles of his draft resolution.

On September 24th, 1926, the Assembly adopted two resolutions, requesting the Council to convene a Conference on the reduction of armaments before the eighth ordinary session of the Assembly, unless material difficulties rendered this impossible, and, should this be the case, to summon a special Conference on the supervision of the private manufacture of arms.

Neither of these Conferences, however, has been convened since the last Assembly met. I venture to hope that, after the necessary preparation, we shall succeed in the near future in approaching the solution of this problem, which is perhaps one of the most important with which the League has to deal.

This Assembly, in my view, cannot pass over the question in silence.

We have assumed a responsibility before mankind. We cannot stand calmly by and watch the whole world being plunged again into the throes of an armaments struggle, with the danger of a world war in the near future—a war already predicted by eminent statesmen and generals, who have even foretold the date of its outbreak.

More discussions on paper and in committee will not suffice. The world wants deeds.

I cannot and will not believe, however, that the so-called failure of our efforts for the reduction of armaments has actually produced a panic. The question has hitherto been studied more particularly from the purely military angle; we ought, perhaps, to examine it from the economic and political, the purely civil standpoint, while proceeding with our technical investigations.

It might perhaps be possible at this stage to ascertain exactly what are the reasons for past failures as regards the reduction of armaments and to discover some more successful method of dealing with such obstacles. I will not stop now to consider certain proposals that have been put forward. I simply wish to try to make the Assembly realise how essential it is to-day that we should find some way out of this *impasse*.

I might mention other considerations which may partly explain why we have not obtained the results that we should perhaps have been able to obtain and for which we had hoped. I regret that certain States are still not Members of the League and that the efforts made through the League to obtain the adhesion of the United States of America to the Permanent Court of International Justice at The Hague have not proved successful.

Nevertheless, despite these negative results, the League is still a factor that counts, a factor that cannot be ignored by non-Member States. Its influence is continually on the increase, for it embodies an ideal that has been cherished by the noblest minds for centuries. The League has now found allies in economic and industrial spheres and in all the smaller States which, let us hope, may serve—to quote the simile of an English statesman—as the consecrated vessels in which the Divinity dispenses the sacred wine.

The President :

Translation : M. Adatei, head of the Japanese delegation, will address the Assembly.

M. Adatei (Japan) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen—I must first of all claim the indulgence of the Assembly on account of the lateness of the hour and also for my very imperfect knowledge of the French language. I shall not detain you long.

Since the last session of the Assembly, the League has done most fruitful work in several directions. It has displayed untiring energy in trying to solve, to the fullest extent at present possible, all the difficulties we encounter in the economic, political and cultural fields.

An International Economic Conference was held here, as you know, in May last. The preparatory work for it was done most carefully and systematically, and even States which are not Members of the League sent delegates and took an active share in the proceedings. The Conference was held under the presidency of the eminent Belgian statesman M. Theunis. After comprehensive and exhaustive debates, resolutions were passed which are of very great importance, especially in matters of trade and commerce. I am convinced that the practical application of the principles embodied in these resolutions will mark the dawn of a new era in the economic life of the world.

Economic forces are a vital factor, whether for the maintenance of peace or as a cause of war. All nations earnestly hope for an era of world peace after the turmoil and difficulties of recent years, but that hope is deemed to disappointment

unless international economic relations are established on a basis of order and equity.

Every one of us must therefore spare no effort to ensure that the recommendations embodied in the maturely considered resolutions of the Economic Conference should be adopted by Governments, with a view to introducing a more equitable regulation of economic forces and so establishing on a firm basis the principle of international co-operation in the economic field.

Ever since the foundation of the League, the Government and the nation of Japan have urged the need of working to carry into effect the principle of equitable treatment of commerce, which is solemnly inscribed in Article 23 of the Covenant. For this purpose we have on several occasions submitted concrete proposals, more especially with reference to the treatment of foreigners and a suitable definition of coasting trade.

I need hardly say, therefore, that we attach great importance to the application of the resolutions which the Economic Conference adopted, after mature consideration, and for that reason our delegation wishes to study the delicate problem of modifying, as far as may prove necessary, the Economic Organisation of the League.

The League has also attacked with renewed vigour the arduous and complex problem of the limitation and reduction of armaments. In spite of all the unavoidable difficulties presented by a question which is of such wide scope and of capital importance for the peace of the world, the Preparatory Commission on Disarmament undertook the task of preparing a draft Convention. This draft was adopted at the first reading, but still contains many contentious points. There is nothing in this circumstance, however, at which we should be either surprised or discouraged.

As has often been said, and rightly, the problem is too vast and too complex to solve in a short time. Here again, as in all human enterprises of great moment, patience, perseverance and the helping hand of time are necessary.

If the League could achieve even a modest result in a question of such peculiar intricacy and such paramount importance, it would have justified its existence and greatly strengthened its position in the world; for even a partial accomplishment of the task would bring relief, morally, politically and financially, and would thus powerfully contribute to the maintenance of peace among nations.

The position of Japan in the question of disarmament is clear and well-defined. We ardently desire that the ruinous competition in armaments should be checked and that a real reduction be effected, a reduction to the strict minimum essential for national security and the discharge of international obligations, since the existence of armaments on a large scale always involves the risk of an appeal to arms for the settlement of any differences which may arise between nations.

On more than one occasion, both in the Preparatory Commission on Disarmament and during the Conference recently held here, our Government clearly expressed its opinion as to the need for a reduction in armaments and as to the procedure which should be followed to achieve this end. We can safely promise our sincere and loyal collaboration in all effective work which the League might undertake in this direction.

Under the auspices of the League, and in conformity with the resolution adopted by the Assembly at its fifth ordinary session, a Conference of Press Experts was held at Geneva, after full and careful preparation. Through this Conference

many well-known editors of newspapers and heads of news agencies from all countries of the world were brought together, and were thus able for the first time to study in common questions of importance to the Press, whose influence for the peaceful evolution of the world it would be impossible to over-estimate in these days.

If public opinion rules supreme to-day, the Press is undoubtedly its most powerful and influential agent. The work of the League and the extension of its beneficent activities depend essentially on the support it receives from the enlightened public opinion of all civilised countries. The immense task of enlightening public opinion and of bringing the *élite* of every country to work together for international concord belongs to the Press.

A better understanding of the conditions necessary to international peace and prosperity will mean a more sympathetic attitude towards the vital needs of nations. It therefore lies in the power of the Press either to strengthen or to undermine the position of the League, according as to whether it champions or challenges the League's cause. The greater the diffusion of just and equitable ideas through the Press, the firmer will become the moral basis on which the League is founded.

The Government of Japan therefore realises the manifest importance of supporting every movement towards concerted action on the part of the representatives of public opinion with a view to establishing better understanding and mutual respect among nations.

On the proposal of a Japanese expert, the Press Conference adopted a resolution designed to prevent the publication or distribution of news items and of articles which are manifestly inaccurate or grossly exaggerated or which wilfully misrepresent facts, and thereby to contribute towards international understanding and good will. The Press should be a real educational force making for international peace. With this object, and in order to give effect to the resolutions and recommendations adopted, the Press Conference, on the proposal of one of the Japanese experts, adopted a resolution that periodical meetings should be held. The Japanese Government itself attaches great importance to the activities of the Press and ardently desires to secure its assistance.

The Japanese Government and with it the whole nation are actively helping the League in its endeavours to create in international relations the degree of moral confidence, national security and economic equity essential for the attainment of the League's final goal, which may be described in the words: "Peace through Justice".

29. — GENERAL ARRANGEMENT OF THE ASSEMBLY HALL AND POSITION OF THE SEATS OF THE DELEGATIONS: REPORT OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly will remember that yesterday afternoon I mentioned some investigations undertaken by the General Committee with a view to improving the general arrangement of the Assembly Hall and the position of the seats of the delegations.

As I informed you, the General Committee appointed a Committee of three members to submit suggestions. That Committee communicated the result of its investigations to the General Committee this afternoon.

The General Committee suggests the following modifications :

1. Some of the seats of the delegations will be moved so that all of them will face the President's chair.

2. The available seats will be so distributed among the delegations as to provide a seat for each delegate and substitute-delegate, but the total number of seats for each delegation may not exceed six.

3. The speakers' platform will be lowered by about a metre so as to reduce the difference of level between the speaker and the audience.

4. The President's platform will be lowered to the present level of the speaker's platform and thus will also be brought considerably nearer the centre of the hall.

The General Committee recommends these suggestions for the Assembly's approval and is of opinion that they are the only possible improvements during the present session.

Before next year's session, however, other improvements will be suggested and studied.

As all the delegations are interested in the efforts to improve the present internal arrangements of the hall, I wished to give you the above details regarding the recommendations of the General Committee in order to afford you an opportunity of giving them your support.

If there are no observations, the modifications recommended by the General Committee will be considered to be approved by the Assembly. (*Approved.*)

The Assembly rose at 7.10 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Eighth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SIXTH PLENARY MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 8th, 1927, AT 10.30 A.M.

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President : M. GUANI.

30. — DATE OF THE ELECTION OF THE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL : COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT ON BEHALF OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda relates to a communication which I am asked to make to the Assembly on behalf of the General Committee concerning the date for the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council.

You will remember that at the beginning of yesterday morning's meeting I communicated to you the letter from the first delegate of Belgium containing a request for the re-eligibility of that State as a non-permanent Member of the Council. I proposed — and you were good enough to agree — to submit the question to the General Committee of the Assembly for the purpose of suggesting a date on which the Assembly should take a decision regarding the request for re-eligibility submitted to it.

The General Committee of the Assembly discussed this question yesterday and found that, according to the third paragraph of Article II of the resolution adopted by the Assembly on September 15th, 1926, regulating the election of the nine non-permanent Members of the Council and fixing the conditions of re-eligibility, requests for re-eligibility must be handed to the President of the Assembly "not later than the day before the date fixed for the election".

Accordingly the Assembly will be asked to take a decision upon all requests for re-eligibility submitted to it on the actual day on which it intends to hold the election of the non-permanent Members.

In consequence the General Committee considered that it would be best to devote the morning session of that day to the voting on requests for re-eligibility submitted to the Assembly, and the afternoon session to the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council.

As the General Committee had to fix a date for the voting and the elections it has thought fit to make a general proposal to the Assembly on this subject. This proposal, if adopted, would to a certain extent, and until the Assembly decides otherwise, be regarded as a rule which the Assembly would follow at future sessions. The election of the non-permanent Members of the Council would take place on the Monday following the opening date of the Assembly — that is to say, at the beginning of the second week of the session.

Adapting this rule to the special circumstances of the present session, the General Committee decided to suggest to the Assembly that the date for the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council should be fixed for to-day week — that is to say, Thursday next, September 15th — and not Tuesday as erroneously announced in the *Assembly Journal*.

If, therefore, the Assembly approves the proposals made, the voting on the Belgian request for re-eligibility will take place on Thursday morning,

and the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council on the afternoon of the same day.

If no delegate wishes to speak on this proposal, I shall consider it adopted.

The proposal was adopted.

31. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT: CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President:

Translation: The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the general discussion of the report on the work of the Council, the work of the Secretariat and the measures taken to execute the decisions of the Assembly.

Professor A. Voldemaras, head of the Lithuanian delegation, will address the Assembly.

Professor Voldemaras (Lithuania):

Translation: Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen—On reading the report which shows the work done by the League during the past year, one is invariably struck by the comprehensive and varied nature of its activities. At the same time a single predominating impression emerges, and, after a survey of the varied and fruitful operations of the League organs, we turn instinctively to the one all-absorbing subject: the problem of peace.

This is easy to understand. When the League was first founded it was hailed more as the long-sought saviour of the world than as a political reality. During the darkest hours of the war the whole world felt that nothing but a league of nations could abolish war and establish for ever the reign of universal peace. Hence the demand that wars should cease with the creation of the League. The League eventually came into being, and, ever since that day, has been a perpetual source of joy and hope, and heartbreaking disappointments.

The first disappointment was that the Covenant failed to prohibit war absolutely, although it contained, it is true, provisions designed to prevent armed conflicts and to render the declaration of war more difficult.

The first ray of hope after this disappointment was the Geneva Protocol of 1924, but this hope soon faded, for the Protocol did not survive its birth.

Locarno buoyed us up again, but our joy was tinged with sorrow, for the onward march of peace, as the work of Locarno might well be called, was taking place outside the League, and voices were heard, outside the League and even within it, demanding a return to the Geneva Protocol.

If the newspapers are to be believed, certain impetuous and ardent spirits even go so far now as to demand the outlawry of war.

These are generous hopes, so far removed from actual reality that disappointment and pessimism are bound to follow, while the League will be discredited as a useless institution.

I do not propose to go into the merits or demerits of such a criticism. It is obviously exaggerated. These reproaches, however, are not without their value, for they act as a stimulant in the direction, if not of perfection, at all events of real improvement, and, as such, serve the interests of the League.

The importance of the problem to be solved, however, cannot be exaggerated. Visionaries may glimpse the beauty of universal and perpetual peace, but men of action must never lose their

grip of facts. Hence the real issue is not whether the conception of universal peace is beautiful in itself but whether it is capable of realisation. Let us not attempt what is beyond our strength. Any scheme to abolish war at one stroke may involve worse things than war, as experience has already shown. Members of the League, in order to elude the provisions of the Covenant when waging war against their neighbours, have even advanced the ingenious pretext that the Commander of the opposing forces is a declared rebel. If, under the present League system, a State can wage war without a formal declaration and even without acknowledging it, and can subsequently reap the ensuing benefits publicly, what would happen if all war were declared illegal? Such a pronouncement, instead of suppressing the evil, would set a premium on what I might call disguised war.

Accordingly, the League's main work must be not to adopt such a formula, attractive as it may appear, but to organise the elements of peace, which are already taking shape. This is a vast and lengthy work, but if the League fails to accomplish it, it is itself doomed. It augurs ill for the League's future that efforts towards the organisation of peace are being instituted outside the League, though it would be unjust not to acknowledge what it has already accomplished in this direction.

The problem of organising peace is a very complex one. It has been approached by the League from various angles—political, economic, legal and military. The League has done remarkable work in the legal sphere by organising international relations, though its efforts in other directions have proved less successful. At the present moment it is grappling with the formidable problem of disarmament and all that that problem connotes.

Enough will never be said or done in regard to this question; it is difficult, however, to accomplish anything. No nation arms lightly, for armaments mean financial burdens. A nation arms through fear of aggression. This brings us to the indefinable problem of security. I say "indefinable", for security changes with changing circumstances. What was thought sufficient for security yesterday no longer suffices to-day.

Nevertheless, I think that temporary solutions might be found—where security is concerned everything is temporary—which should make armed conflicts less probable and hence permit of the limitation of armaments. Whatever the relations between the countries of Central and Western Europe may be, it is clear that there is no danger of hostilities there. In Eastern Europe, however, there are States which owe their existence to the war—a condition of affairs which might easily lead to armed conflicts. In many cases the creation of these States was neither foreseen nor desired, and even experienced statesmen in other countries still question their powers of survival. It has been said, and the rumour persists, that certain neighbours not only desire the elimination of these young States but are even devising the means to bring it about.

Such oft-repeated ideas might easily give rise to conflicts which would soon develop into a general state of war. The security and integrity of these States thus constitute one of the important factors in the problem of general disarmament.

Further, there are in Eastern Europe nationalities—Lithuanians, White Russians and Ukrainians—that are perforce subject to several States; and their aspirations towards national unity— aspirations which no power on earth can check—contain the seeds of future warfare. Solutions

based on force cannot last, and the day will come when a new order will be established in those regions either through the peaceful revision of the present system or by armed force. That is the region in which armed conflicts must be forestalled. Once this has been done the way will be clear for peace, and, once peace is established on a firm foundation, disarmament will automatically follow. This aspect of the problem is deserving of serious consideration.

My task was to sum up the problem, not to submit ready-made solutions. I might mention, however, one solution which, in the Lithuanian Government's view, is calculated to prevent all danger of war. I refer to the neutralisation of the Baltic countries. So far as Lithuania is concerned, this solution has already been partially adopted.

In conclusion, I desire once more to proclaim our profound conviction that the existence of the smaller nations as organised States is bound up with the existence of the League, and that their fate depends essentially on the organisation of peace.

The President:

Translation: M. Hambro, delegate of Norway, will address the Assembly.

M. Hambro (Norway):

Translation: Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — During this discussion on the report on the work of the Council and of the Secretariat, the main interest has been focussed on the question of disarmament, and the seemingly futile Conference for the reduction of armaments. Several speakers have mentioned the feelings of discouragement and anxiety that have been manifest in the last few months. The Norwegian Cabinet wants to express the disappointment of the whole Norwegian nation that those States which were represented on the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference have not succeeded in framing an agreement on the principles of that reduction.

On the other hand, my country recognises the complexity and vast extent of the problems involved and realises that immediate results cannot always be expected from the deliberations that take place. Like the distinguished representative of Japan, we expect much from patience, perseverance and the help of time. It is necessary to try and try again, so that old ideas and prejudices may be loosened and weakened in the minds of men — even of admirals and generals! It is important never to lose sight of those principles that should be fundamental to the League of Nations. In this spirit we welcome the proposal of the Netherlands delegation and attach some importance to the fact that it has been put forward by a State which is a highly respected Member of the Council.

I should like to add that we consider it most important that the Preparatory Commission should continue its work, and we think that the next session should take place in November as planned. We may have failures in front of us. We may make vain efforts and seem to waste our energies, but there is no other way of creating the moral and psychological atmosphere which will some day make success possible. It is our hope and desire that the League may not grow tired.

On various points we are making progress; we are moving forward slowly — imperceptibly perhaps, but we are nevertheless still advancing. I am glad to associate myself with those speakers who have seen in the Economic Conference one of the subjects on which progress has been made,

and who regard its work as a most important factor for the creation of an atmosphere of international understanding and peace. The Norwegian Government gives its full support to the principles laid down in the resolutions of that Conference, and will try, to the utmost extent possible, to realise those principles in the economic policy of the country.

Another subject on which progress has been made is that of the codification of international law. Various speakers have laid stress on this point, and the delegate for Colombia emphasised it with great warmth. The Norwegian Government attaches great importance to the efforts of the Committee of Experts, and we should look with grave anxiety on any attempt to obstruct or hinder the work that has begun and already aroused so much interest.

But in another field we have not advanced. It was well expounded in the eloquent speech of the first delegate of the Netherlands. He mentioned in that speech the fact that a current of opinion is growing more and more strong, especially on the other side of the ocean, towards what is called the outlawry of war.

The principle of international compulsory jurisdiction is an essential factor of these ideas; but in order to realise that purpose it is indispensable that the great Powers should not remain on one side but that they should do their whole duty in this matter. Only 16 States have accepted the optional clause of Article 36 of the Statutes of the Permanent Court of International Justice. One State (Brazil) has made its acceptance dependent on the ratification of the clause by two of the permanent Members of the Council, but so far none of the permanent Members of the Council have ratified. France has made an initial move; but that is all. The other Members of the League like to look to the permanent Members for guidance and would be glad to take them as an example. We are waiting and wondering.

There is another point of still greater importance. It was mentioned by the Netherlands delegation and it was well and strikingly put forward in the interesting speech made by the first delegate of Sweden. It is a question which is a cause of keen anxiety to every small State. An impression has been abroad during these last two years that there is within the Council a supreme Council, which meets at the same time as the Council but in private, to discuss the problems with which the Council itself is to deal later. It has even been said that regular agendas have been prepared for such meetings, and that in this way questions have been decided before they were submitted for consideration to the Council as a whole.

As mentioned by the Swedish delegation, no one would dream of reproaching statesmen with deliberating in private on problems directly interesting their own country, even if those matters concerned the League of Nations. But if this tendency should become accentuated, the League of Nations and its executive organ, the Council, would be exposed to the danger of losing control of affairs and would see themselves deprived of the possibility of accomplishing their high mission as safeguards of peace.

Nothing has more strongly emphasised the importance of the League and its Council than the fact that three great Powers have sent their Ministers for Foreign Affairs to the meetings of the Council and those of the Assembly. It is not unessential to remember, however, that they come to Geneva not only, or even mainly, because they are Foreign Ministers but also because they are members of the Council and under an obligation to the League.

One of the soundest principles of the Covenant is that an interested State is present as a Member of the Council when its affairs are being discussed, and every non-permanent Member has been justified in watching with jealousy the half private deliberations at Geneva.

It has been one of the main objects of these annual meetings to create a world opinion. That opinion has been created. Let us be careful not to provoke it against ourselves.

I do not think that the distinguished members of the Council have quite realised the impression that has been created by this procedure of secrecy, and perhaps I may be allowed to mention one small fact that may have some importance in this connection—a fact that has been commented upon freely in my country when our Parliament has discussed the work of the League. I refer to the strength of the diplomatic element at Geneva. Out of 120 delegates in 1924, 48 were active diplomats: in 1925, 50; in 1926, 54, out of 124; and the element represented by active politicians and statesmen has not been so strong as in the first Assemblies.

Indispensable as it is to have a strong diplomatic element, there still may be a feeling that the traditions of the diplomatic career are not in favour of publicity and openness, and even in the Council the diplomatic element is very strong. Of course it is difficult for oversea nations to send their leading statesmen to Geneva four times a year, but I think that Brazil set a fine example when the Government at Rio appointed a distinguished gentleman as a special representative to Geneva. Other nations have sent active diplomats to the Council. Without in any way detracting from their merits, we cannot but feel that it would perhaps give greater political weight to the deliberations of the Council if its members were not too closely tied to the diplomatic centres of the great Powers.

When venturing upon these critical remarks, I have had before me an example of what can be accomplished by the Council working in full publicity. One of the most difficult questions settled by the Council this year was the Saar problem. It was successfully debated in public, and, thanks to the wisdom and the moderation of M. Briand and Dr. Stresemann and every other member of the Council, a result was achieved which was not only to the credit of the Council but which inaugurated a new tradition in world politics. I think we were all proud of our Council on the Saar Day. It has provided a standard. It is for the Council to live up to it.

We believe in the Council and its work, and it is without enthusiasm that we would receive a proposal to reduce the number of its sessions.

Several delegates have mentioned political questions which had been left alone by the Council. Some of us are under the impression that this inactivity has some connection with the provisions of Article 16 of the Covenant. The highly distinguished first delegate for Persia laid stress on the importance of this article for his country, and I think a declaration from the Council on this point would be of great interest.

Certain questions may come up in connection with the report of the Fourth Committee. New Under Secretaries-General have been appointed. I offer no criticism of any kind but should like to know from the Council whether it has been laid down as a principle that there should be an Under Secretary-General for every great Power, and that no such high position should be filled by a person of any other nationality.

In a notable article in *Le Journal de Genève* the other day, it was said that the debate on the

annual report was tending to become more and more only an exchange of complimentary banalities. I trust that the debate this year will not fall under that epitaph. But there is one thing that tends to diminish the general interest in this debate. We put questions that are not answered. We discuss the work of the Council, but the Council itself keeps silent. We cry into a grey void, but the leading Members stand aloof, observing an attitude which is rather disappointing for those who come here eager, sympathetic, with the greatest belief in the foresight, broad-mindedness, and wisdom of the first statesmen of the age. With great respect we request them to answer our questions, to enlighten our obscurity, to speak those words of hope or of warning which we are all longing to hear.

In the opinion of my country it is important to strengthen the influence of the Assembly as the supreme organ of the League, and it would certainly emphasise the importance of the Assembly if problems were openly discussed and not only brought forward. It is to accentuate the influence of the Assembly that the Norwegian Government has worked for proportional election. It was for the same reason that the Norwegian Government last year had to oppose the proposals for re-eligibility, and it is still its opinion that re-eligibility is undesirable, even where it touches States and individuals we admire and to whose service to the League we all do homage.

It was said in the memorandum presented by the Norwegian Government that under present conditions private conversations, underhand arrangements and agreements, more or less binding, interfere in the preparations for the elections and have a deciding influence as regards their result. This method is neither desirable nor safe, nor entirely dignified. It would be well if elections in the Assembly could not be thus mentioned, and I would suggest that next year the Council or the Secretariat should openly propose—and circulate its proposal for—the Chairmen of the Committees and the Vice-Presidents of the Assembly. There seems at present to be some confusion. Anonymous lists are circulated, and many delegates are more or less at a loss. The choice of somebody behind the veil droppeth as the gentle dew from Heaven, and even if we all believe implicitly in the discernment and discrimination of that somebody, the principle in itself is not a good one. My Government has instructed us to work with a view to assuring that constitutional methods of work are fully observed within the Council as well as in the Assembly.

Many delegates have offered their congratulations to the Council and the Secretariat and seem surprised at the work accomplished. I am not surprised. We are ambitious; we expect much from the Secretariat and from the Council, and in thanking them for what has been done, and has been admirably well done in many cases, we request them to do still more and fulfil our expectations and the expectations of the whole world in such a way that no great Power can long remain outside the League of Nations.

The President:

Translation: M. Politis, delegate of Greece, will address the Assembly.

M. Politis (Greece):

Translation: Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen—I feel it my bounden duty to address this Assembly frankly on the subject of the

criticisms which have been levelled against the League of Nations and the impatience which has been manifested as to its activity. I think it is vitally important to the cause of peace that the world should know there is no real justification for this despondent attitude.

For some time past—in the last three years; in fact, ever since the great effort was made in 1924, which, as you know, was not carried into immediate practical effect—for some time past, I say, pessimism and despondency have been displayed whenever the League has had to grapple with a difficult situation.

It has been said that the League has passed and is still passing through a critical period. It has been described as a period of growing pains and also as a constitutional or organic crisis. Then again we hear on some hands that it is due to a return to the diplomatic practices of the old concert of Europe, with a consequent diminution of the Council's prestige and authority.

Lastly, we hear it said that the world in general, growing more and more anxious on the subject of its own security, is urgently demanding that the League should provide guarantees supplementary to those provided in the Covenant.

It is not my intention here to speak of the critical situation alleged to have arisen through the enlargement of the Council. The changes made last year are still too recent to enable a really useful judgment to be passed on them. That very important matter, which is still far from settled, must stand the test of time, and if the results are not satisfactory it can always be considered afresh.

I desire, however—with your permission—to dwell at some length upon two other questions.

I cannot really credit the charge that the League has declined to deal with serious international questions of outstanding importance to world peace, or that certain States have tried to remove from the competence of the Council political problems of prime importance with which it undoubtedly ought to deal.

This charge might be justified if States interested in a dispute had been hindered or thwarted in their desire to have the matter dealt with by the Council in full accordance with the terms of the Covenant. It might be justified if the Powers which have the greatest influence over the League's destiny had preferred to settle their private differences by direct negotiations among themselves when the cause of peace would have been better served had the matter been brought before the Council.

I do not know of any instance of either kind, and I therefore consider the charge unfounded.

What is interesting, however, is the varied and complex psychology of the people who make these complaints. Some may be actuated by personal motives, not always genuinely friendly to the League; while on the other hand we have authoritative complaints, like those that have just been expressed here, which are made in sincere good faith and out of a feeling of loyalty and devotion to the League.

It seems to me none the less true, however, that the charges made are always based on mistaken conceptions of the part the League has to play and its present possibilities of action. It seems to me that they are falling into the error commonly made by keen lawyers when they regret that law is sometimes sacrificed by individual agreements when it might triumph if the case were settled in court. They forget the wisdom of that well-known maxim, true of all countries and all times, that a settlement out of court is far better than the soundest verdict.

That is true in private matters, and still more true in international relations. The cause of peace has nothing to gain by making every international dispute and difficulty the subject of a public debate, conducted with all the ceremony of the League's procedure. If the countries concerned can come to an understanding between themselves by way of reciprocal concessions, I am sure it would be folly to complain. I think we should rather be glad of it and congratulate ourselves that recourse to the Council, even when desired by one of the parties concerned, is not always in the interest of peace.

Public debates on rather delicate questions which touch on national susceptibilities are likely to aggravate the dispute and at the same time to impair the friendly relations between nations as well as the Council's authority and prestige, which must be so carefully safeguarded.

Recourse to the Council should be regarded as the extreme remedy, to be applied in cases where ordinary diplomatic action has failed. Indeed, even when ordinary diplomatic action is not immediately successful it is not always wise or in the best interests of peace to hurry the dispute before the Council. This should be done only when it is quite certain that the Council can really find a satisfactory solution. If there is any doubt at all in the matter it would be far better for the cause of peace that the question should be left temporarily in abeyance in the hope that time would bring the parties to a more conciliatory frame of mind.

Such, I submit, is the part the League should play, and such are the reasons why, in my opinion, those who complain that the League does not intervene on all occasions are taking too pessimistic a view, especially when they blame countries having heavy responsibilities for endeavouring at the outset to settle their disputes by mutual agreement before applying to the Council.

I explained just now what was, in my opinion, the general psychological reason for such complaints. I think, however, that there is yet another reason which requires to be pointed out, and that is that the nature and extent of the League's powers are much overstated.

There is a tendency to forget that the League is not a super-State or a Power capable of imposing its will on others; it is simply a free association for co-operative action among individual nations for the development and organisation of international life, of which the Covenant laid the foundation.

For the most part the League has no power, no light of its own: its light is mainly a reflection of that of its individual Members. Sometimes this light shines full upon the League, but at other times there falls upon it the shadow of chance obstacles which arise between it and the source of light.

In a word, the League, like every other human society or institution, is and can only be what its Members make it. They provide the driving force and guide the League on its way.

Those who are impatient because the League falls short of their ideals should blame not the League itself but the nations which are not yet sufficiently advanced to demand from it greater activity and power; when they are, these will not be refused them.

Let us not forget that the League's activities are conditioned by the international environment wherein it is placed. It is the environment in which the League acts that determines how it shall go along the path to peace.

In addition to the two reasons I have just given I should like to mention another, which

is a little more technical perhaps but is none the less important. I have often noticed that the waves of pessimism and scepticism on the one hand and of optimism and exuberant enthusiasm on the other which come into conflict in regard to the League both arise from a fundamental misconception due to divergent acceptations of terms, and, in particular, of the term "justice".

There are in fact two concepts of justice. One is the philosophical concept, the general idea which represents justice as innate in human nature and as the supreme force governing the world: that may be defined as immanent justice. I myself am a firm believer in immanent justice, and I am convinced that no human action which runs counter to the principles of our civilisation and our established beliefs will ultimately remain unpunished.

But this word "justice" acquires a narrower meaning when we are thinking, as we must in an organised society, of a special public service which renders justice.

In considering questions relating to the League, this distinction between immanent and distributive justice has not been drawn with sufficient clearness. Hence a confusion has arisen which has led to serious misunderstanding.

Peace, to be lasting, must be based on justice and law, and it is therefore generally assumed that justice must be the precursor of peace. Hence the League is expected to safeguard international justice in order that the nations may finally enjoy the blessings of peace.

In my view, however, this is reversing the situation and asking the League to accomplish the impossible; for if we think, as we should, not of immanent justice — which, I repeat, is the supreme force governing the world — but of distributive human justice, we are forced to acknowledge that in the League, the organisation of which has just been begun, as in all human societies — it is not justice which must be established first, but peace.

In no human society is it possible for a judge to interpret the law if there is no general acceptance of the law if the environment is not sufficiently pacific for the voice of justice to be heard.

We find that in every age, in every country — even the most civilised, even where justice has reached its highest degree of perfection, and where in peace-time it is normally and effectively administered — we find when abnormal conditions arise, when social peace is disturbed, when the atmosphere is tense with passion and with the spirit of war, the voice of the judge is no longer heard, for law is powerless to stem the force that sweeps everything before it. This has been proved in every revolution, in every insurrection, and *a fortiori* in every international war.

During international wars we may talk of immanent justice and often dream of it, and rightly so. We may also talk of distributive justice, but we must wait for the restoration of peace before we can enforce it.

What is true of organised justice, which presupposes the restoration of society to pacific conditions, is even truer when we are dealing with international relations, in which organised justice has hardly begun to make itself felt.

These are the circumstances, and the League cannot accomplish the impossible. All that can be expected of it is that it shall contribute to the establishment of peace and afterwards enforce the principle of justice.

The League will only prove its full efficacy when the desire for peace has definitely taken root in the conscience of mankind. Till then it seems to me vain to seek in mere texts absolute guarantees of

security or practical guarantees against recourse to war.

I should like now to sketch briefly the evolution of the great human law which is urging civilised nations to abandon completely the barbarous weapon of force. The idea of resorting to force to repair an injustice or vindicate a right is inherent in every unorganised society. It is only as society becomes organised that this idea begins to lose ground, and finally, with the perfection of the social structure, falls into abeyance, and then no longer dream of resorting to force in vindication of their rights, since society provides them with other guarantees and other methods of procedure.

For many centuries past men have realised that, although force was unfortunately inevitable in any ill-organised society, it could only be tolerated in a legitimate cause. From the Middle Ages onwards the canonists' main endeavour has been to establish the essential and useful distinction between legitimate and illegitimate wars.

We should have advanced more rapidly towards this ideal of the categorical condemnation of illegitimate wars had it not been that in the sixteenth century the principle of absolute power triumphed in the government of the State, bringing with it as a natural consequence the idea of the unlimited right of the State to declare war whenever it saw fit. Despite, however, this claim of the State to be sole judge of the conditions under which it might resort to force, vital needs have continually reacted against the abuse of this remedy, and towards the end of the last century the general conscience had already become imbued with the idea that to resort to war when a pacific means of settling the dispute existed was an intolerable and unjustifiable abuse.

This idea emerges in the proceedings of the Hague Conference, but sufficient progress had not then been made for it to be possible to frame a law directly limiting the right to resort to war. Such limitations as it was proposed to establish were indirect, and sprang from the desire, expressed with increasing frequency to oblige States to employ pacific procedure.

The advent of the Covenant a few years ago precipitated this evolution. Instead of indirect limitations we had direct limitations, and the Covenant, in principle, prohibits war. It tolerates it — I do not say that it authorises it — it tolerates it only in exceptional cases, and among these cases the most important, the most serious, is the one mentioned in Article 15, paragraph 8, of the Covenant, namely, the case of a conflict bearing on questions which come within the domestic jurisdiction of one of the States concerned. Here, under the existing laws which recognise this principle of exclusive competence, the League is paralysed, the pacific procedure is inoperative, and war is always possible. When we reflect, gentlemen, that these domestic questions include the most serious and vital problems of the day, problems such as those concerning commercial outlets, raw materials, emigration, and the whole question of labour and unemployment, we realise at once what a tremendous gap is still left in the Covenant.

It was this gap that we were trying to fill three years ago when we drew up the Protocol. We had hoped, by making arbitration compulsory in every case and by declaring that a State that refused to submit to a peaceful procedure was an aggressor deserving of sanctions at the collective hands of society, we had hoped to fill in permanently that gap in the Covenant, which still allows of the possibility of war.

But you know what happened. The Protocol was never put into force. It was doubtless in

advance of its age. It was born of the enthusiasm of those who framed it and was probably not sufficiently in harmony with the world conscience to become a practical reality. But, as has been truly said, although the Protocol never came into force, it is not dead. Its principles have gone on living, and, what is more, have become an intrinsic element in the conscience of the nations.

Those principles have come to acquire such force that they led to practical results in 1925, when agreements were signed at Locarno by a number of States, in regard to one specific region, as part of a system which was descended directly from the Protocol.

There is little doubt that the system inaugurated at Locarno will in the near future be adopted in regard to other regions.

Nor is there any doubt — of this I am firmly persuaded — that the principles of the Protocol will gradually come to be applied on a vast scale, and a day will come, which I hope we shall all live to see, a day will come — I know not when, but come it certainly will — when the principles of the Protocol will be the law of the whole world.

Ladies and gentlemen, if such is our hope of the future, what of the present?

Three years ago the Protocol was judged impossible of realisation: can we to-day take up the study of the principles it embodies and apply them, if only in a limited or fragmentary manner?

The honourable delegate of the Netherlands thinks we can, and his belief is reflected in the proposal he submitted two days ago to the Assembly, the proposal that the principles contained in the Geneva Protocol should once more be brought up for study. If I have rightly understood the speech in which he introduced this proposal, the purpose in view, although not mentioned in the draft resolution, is to revert to the idea of general compulsory arbitration. This would be the idea of the Protocol with its fundamental basis of compulsory arbitration but without the system of sanctions.

While deeply admiring the great idea which inspired this proposal, I regret that I am unable to share its author's views. I do not believe that, in the present state of affairs, it would be wise or practicable to bring up the Protocol again. This belief is based on the fact that the obstacles which wrecked its progress in 1924 are still, so far as I can judge, unchanged.

There is not the least ground for supposing — still less for hoping — that those obstacles have become less formidable or that they could be removed by a fresh effort on our part. On the contrary, I believe that the basic idea of the proposal, which is, if I am not mistaken, the extension of compulsory arbitration, would meet with the same opposition as before and with the same results. My belief is based not only on the absence of any sign of real evolution in the attitude of the Governments concerned but also on the fact, of which there is abundant indication, that public opinion, as reflected in the responsible Governments, has not moved one step since 1924.

If you consult the list of States that have ratified the optional clause concerning the compulsory jurisdiction of the Hague Court, you will find that they number only fourteen and that, among those fourteen acceptances, several are still conditional.

These circumstances hardly warrant the hope that there is at present any likelihood of overcoming the obstacles to compulsory arbitration.

There is another point. Granting a change of opinion, it seems probable that there would still be objections to resuming the study of the Protocol without the sanctions, for, as I said three years

ago and as I say again to-day, I cannot conceive of compulsory arbitration as an element of security, unless accompanied by an adequate system of sanctions.

Furthermore, we are faced not only with the impossibility of compulsory arbitration on a general scale, not only with the impossibility of accepting arbitration as an element of security without the accompaniment of sanctions — both formidable obstacles to the realisation of the magnanimous proposal which has been submitted to us — but when we try by means of this proposal to fill the gap in Article 15, paragraph 8 — a gap the seriousness of which I have already indicated — we recognise the inadequacy of the procedure recommended; for compulsory arbitration is inconceivable in the present state of society, and even if accepted in the case of all other disputes, is inadmissible in regard to the special category of questions and affairs of purely domestic import.

This was so evident that three years ago, when we endeavoured to assert the principle of arbitration generally, we had to recognise that we could not modify Article 15 and were indeed compelled to confirm it; the Council unanimously declared that the question submitted to its consideration really came solely within the domestic jurisdiction of one of the States concerned. Your decision is unassailable, and no one could go against it without exposing themselves to sanctions at the hands of the whole League.

There is no reason to suppose that all those States which three years ago asked for this confirmation of the principle of national sovereignty in domestic affairs are now of another opinion or are willing to accept compulsory arbitration in questions of this kind.

A formula prohibiting all wars — that is, all wars of aggression — and seeking to define the aggressor by means of arbitration, while maintaining Article 15, paragraph 8, of the Covenant in its present form, would still leave the gap in that article exactly as it is to-day owing to the absence of sanctions which, under the Geneva Protocol, rendered the system possible. Moreover, in addition to this defect, which I cannot too strongly emphasise, there would be a great danger of giving the public the impression that we had progressed, whereas in point of fact we should have lost ground.

My conclusion on this point is that we should be hindering rather than serving the cause of the Geneva Protocol if we tried to take it up in fractions or segments, eliminating at the same time those features which are most practical from the point of view of application. The time is not yet ripe. Wisdom counsels us to wait, to wait patiently in the belief that public opinion will soon declare itself; and when that day comes we shall see the Protocol an international reality, no longer in fractions or segments but in its full splendour and with its effectiveness unimpaired.

There has been talk these last few days of another scheme, designed, it would appear, to obviate the drawbacks attaching to the Netherlands proposal, and less ambitious and more limited in its purpose, albeit of considerable moral force: it is no less than a declaration by the representatives of the forty-seven States assembled here that the peoples have accepted as a canon of belief the principle that every war of aggression should be prohibited and deemed an international crime.

The proposal appears particularly acceptable at first sight because it would simply mean the confirmation of an opinion enunciated by the Assembly five years ago. It is just five years since the idea of a war of aggression as an international crime first found expression here. That idea has been reflected in our decisions and,

gathering strength in its course, has now entered so deeply into the conscience of mankind that efforts are being made on every side to consecrate it in a solemn text.

It has been suggested that the declaration might be on the lines of the Paris Declaration of 1856 prohibiting privateering. But if this idea takes shape we must beware of over-hasty comparisons. In the Paris Declaration the proclamation that privateering was henceforward prohibited acquired the force of law and had behind it the strength of strict and powerful sanctions. Any privateer who subsequently put to sea in defiance of the Declaration could be held guilty of the crime of piracy and punished under the laws governing that crime.

In the present case, if I have rightly understood the idea, the suggestion is that all wars of aggression shall be declared "illicit", but without any provision for sanctions or compulsory arbitration, or even a definition of "aggression".

What would be the fate of a declaration of principle couched in such vague terms? It would, I believe, bear some analogy to those great principles which, before being incorporated in legislation, were used as a preface or even a preamble to constitutions — principles which possessed a certain mystical significance borrowed from across the ocean and which owed their origin to the peculiar character of eighteenth-century philosophy.

The rights of man were proclaimed before the political foundations of the State were ever established, because those rights were deep-rooted in the conscience of mankind. Until the constitution was adopted and its practical character affirmed these principles were not enforced. They remained as solemn declarations addressed to the human conscience rather than to the instruments of justice.

They were in the nature of moral rather than juridical principles.

A declaration unaccompanied by any definition of aggression and unattended by compulsory arbitration, proclaiming to-day, without any greater prospect of success, that a war of aggression shall henceforward be deemed a crime and shall accordingly be prohibited in the relations between all civilised nations — such a declaration would belong to the same category.

I do not deny that such a declaration would be of moral value. On the contrary, it would, in my view, have just the value of those super-constitutional principles of which I have spoken. Just as those principles require practical force from the constitutions and laws which follow in their train, so a declaration of this nature would derive practical force from the Covenant and from such special agreements as might be concluded between the States parties to a dispute.

As, and in proportion as, the Covenant or such agreements proved instrumental, with the help of sanctions, in enforcing the prohibition to engage in wars of aggression, the principle would pass from the category of moral to that of juridical enactments.

It would also have an educational value, for nations, like individuals, live and learn from day to day, and the great law of imitation rules the world. If some solemn text were adopted, proclaiming war an international crime, this idea, which is derived from the conscience of mankind, would be driven home with added force, and men would gradually learn to look with horror on wars of aggression and would awaken in their Governments an equal horror of such wars.

This educational factor might perhaps prove of greater value in international progress than the moral factor to which I have just referred.

But however wholehearted, however ardent a supporter I may be, within these limits, of a declaration of this nature, it seems to me essential to avoid a misunderstanding which might lead to fatal consequences. Public opinion must not be allowed to believe that such a declaration would in any way serve as a practical guarantee of security. The question of security would be untouched: it would remain just where it stands to-day, under the Covenant and the regional agreements, with just the same guarantees and just the same uncertainties. Nor could we, on the strength of such a misunderstanding, ask the States to make concessions which they would readily agree to if real practical guarantees of security were forthcoming.

This, then, gentlemen, is my conclusion. The more deeply we study the great problem of peace the deeper becomes our conviction that the remedy for the ills which afflict the world is not to be found either in texts or in formulas, however magical the properties we may ascribe to them. The remedy must be sought elsewhere at the very root of the disease. We must manage to formulate rules for the settlement of disputes which to-day, owing to the imperfection of human laws, are left to the discretion of the individual States, or to the outcome of struggles and shifting policies, and which gradually become so embittered that they end in war.

Every aspect of this problem has been examined and discussed here in the course of the last eight years. Our progress has been gradual, but we have now reached the stage where the road lies clear before us. In accordance with the spirit of the Covenant we endeavoured in the first instance to bring about a reduction in armaments as the necessary condition for a genuine and lasting peace. But we soon realised that no reduction in armaments is possible without real security.

Our efforts were then directed to that end. We endeavoured to define the conditions of real security and were led to the conclusion that security cannot exist apart from justice.

That is the idea at the root of the Protocol. But we found, even when drafting the details of the Protocol, that the cycle was not yet complete. If security is a necessary preliminary to disarmament, and if security itself is founded on justice, justice in its turn is based on the existence of law: for it would be a great mistake, where the vital interests of peoples are concerned, to trust to the rather vague and personal feeling of a judge basing his verdict on grounds of equity.

Laws are necessary, precise and unequivocal laws, capable of giving to the Governments sufficient guidance as to the grounds on which a judge would base his verdict when a dispute is brought before him.

And now the conclusion reached after this long and circuitous journey is as follows: There are some who, in their over-eagerness, may think that no useful results have been obtained: but those who reflect see the immensity of the task accomplished in diagnosing the problem of peace and at learning that disarmament leads to security, security to justice, and justice to the complete establishment of the rule of right. In this field the League has a great part to play. It has a great mission which it has already taken in hand with signal success, although without receiving the recognition which, in my opinion, it has deserved.

By the conferences which have met under its auspices, by the diagnoses it has given for the benefit of individual States, as well as by the patient and erudite work of its admirable technical organisations, the League has, in the course of the last eight years, enriched several branches

of international law with new rules, whereby disputes may now be settled which formerly offered insuperable difficulties, because they were held to lie exclusively within the sphere of internal judication. Furthermore, new diagnoses and new formulas for rules of international law are continuously in process of elaboration in the ever-active laboratories of the League. This is the great service which the League is rendering to the nations of the world; and at the same time it is accustoming those nations to see that their individual interests and the general world interest are coincident and interdependent, and is showing them that their own interest lies in helping to create this new system of law.

The peace ideal has long been acclaimed in the name of pure reason; but we can find no firmer basis for the final triumph of that ideal in the name of sentiment than by showing that the interests of the nations ultimately lie in the establishment of peace on a foundation of right and justice.

The League of Nations is thus building up, gradually and stone by stone, a broad and firm foundation for its future edifice, and for that reason we are justified in putting all our trust and confidence in it.

The League is, in my opinion, endowed with

inexhaustible resources and extraordinary adaptability. Adaptability is perhaps its greatest and its finest quality; for this adaptability enables it to adjust itself to all the necessities of the hour without giving up a single one of its appointed tasks or in any way jeopardising its future development. It is like a young oak, which may bend under the storm but in which nevertheless there still rises the rich sap whereon its future strength depends. The life principle of the League is the spirit of conciliation, of justice and of equality, and that spirit daily gains in strength. The uninitiated, the unobservant, may not notice this; but those who have eyes to see know and rejoice in the work which has been going on here day by day for the last eight years.

It is on this fact that I found my unshakable faith in the League's high destinies. In that faith I should like to cry out the strength of my conviction alike to the impatient who chafe at the slowness of progress and to the unbelieving who find in this slowness food for their pessimism. I should like to sum up that conviction in the old maxim which was the solace of my ancestors in their trials and difficulties: "Wait in patience".

The Assembly rose at 1.0 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Eighth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 8th, 1927, AT 5 P.M.

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Continuation of the Discussion.

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President: M. GUANI

32.— REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT: CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President:

Translation: The first item on the agenda is the continuation of the general discussion on the work of the Council, on the work of the Secretariat, and on the measures taken to execute the decisions of the Assembly.

Sir Edward Hilton Young, delegate of the British Empire, will address the Assembly.

Sir Edward Hilton Young (British Empire):

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen—Our discussion hitherto has been chiefly concerned with the widest aspects of the activities of the League. I should like, if I may, for a short time to focus the discussion upon one of the most important events of the past year—I refer to the Economic Conference. My purpose is to give on behalf of the delegation of the British Empire a most cordial welcome to the results of that Conference and to emphasise their profound importance from the point of view of those objects for which this great Assembly exists. So intimately related are the results of the Conference and the cause of the League, which is the cause of peace, that it is perhaps not inappropriate that those results should receive

some attention even at the outset of our deliberations.

We have been concerned with the important direct work on behalf of peace—the question of security. I should fail in the very few observations that I have to make if I did not say something to emphasise the fact that this indirect attack upon the economic problem may be of the same importance to the cause of peace as the direct enforcement of security. And here let me pause for the pleasant task of saying two words of personal congratulation.

I think on this occasion that one should certainly voice the unanimous opinion of the Assembly in congratulating the President of the Economic Conference, M. Theunis. The League has owed very much to him at various times, but never more than for his able pilotage of this most important of conferences. Surely also I shall be expressing the general feeling if on this occasion I speak a word of very hearty congratulation to him who, more than any other man, promoted the success of this vital Conference. I refer to our distinguished colleague, the representative of France—M. Loucheur. He, indeed, may well be proud of the outcome of that initiative which he took, and of the brilliant success which it has achieved: for, indeed, it has been no ordinary achievement.

There have been many Conferences at the League, each of them adding something to the joint stock of international comity, but in this particular Conference there was, I think, something different—something of more importance than anything which had transpired at any other Conference. We have learned from the work of the League, year by year, to understand how, in the realm of high ideas, the interests of humanity are joint and common. But there still remained perhaps some slight doubt as to whether that community of interests was so certain in the region of material things, in the economic sphere. Now our Conference has been held, the nations

have met together, the joint voice of the nations has been heard, and it appears that on this question of material interests also there can be unanimity.

It is a dramatic revelation that in the material sphere, as in the ideal sphere, there is not necessarily any conflict between the interests of nations. Of what great practical use may that not be for the future of the work of the League.

May I for a moment delay the Assembly with a personal experience? It has been my lot since the war to take a humble part in the work of financial reconstruction. I have sat, as it were, by the bedside of sick budgets in various parts of the world, in Europe, in Asia, and in Africa. I have even ventured on to that most difficult of scenes, the reconstruction of currencies. Now what, ladies and gentlemen, has been, to a humble worker in that sphere, of the most practical help? I say without hesitation that it has been the Brussels resolutions of the Brussels Conference concerning Currencies and Finance, in the first place because of the obvious reason that those resolutions were sound and right in substance. In the second place, and this is of greater importance, these Brussels resolutions have been the great instrument of reconstruction, not only because they were right but because they had behind them the authority of the League, expressing the highest opinion of the civilised world.

It was for this reason that they constituted so powerful an instrument for reform.

When we humble labourers in the sphere of economics, remembering the use that would be made of the Brussels resolutions, learned that this great Conference on economic matters was to be held, we lived in an atmosphere of the keenest expectation. We placed our hopes very high as regards the contribution that might thereby be made to help economic reconstruction. At the same time it was clear that a great deal was being risked in an open and free discussion of economic interests. Had it proved impossible to obtain any agreement, the world at large would have drawn the sad conclusion that there was an inherent conflict between the material interests of nations in the economic sphere. But the Conference was held, and we who were onlookers saw this miracle of a wider unanimity—a unanimity in a realm of ideas which was so much vaster, and which went so much deeper than even that touched upon at the Conference at Brussels. We saw also an achievement that provides workers for reconstruction with an instrument even more powerful than that provided by the Brussels Conference.

Ladies and gentlemen, the actual results achieved by the Economic Conference are too well known for me to repeat them in detail. In the first place it was resolved that it was in the interests of all alike that there should be greater liberty of trade between nations, a freer flow of capital, of goods and of labour. We are all very familiar with that inveterate, vexed and vexing controversy between the policies of free trade and protection; but what I would say upon this occasion is that this controversy is connected solely with domestic politics. It has no relation at all with a doctrine laid down by this Conference of the League—at least, so far as I understand it—which declares that, whatever may be good for this nation or for that, it is in the interests of the world at large and of all communities, taking them as a whole, that there should be a greater liberty of trade.

In the second place, useful advice was given as to the better organisation of production. I will not delay the Assembly with this question to-day. It is a matter of detail. I feel bound to say that it is a characteristic, a wholly beneficial

activity on the part of the League that it should thus put its resources (which are the resources of the greatest knowledge, the highest science in the world) at the disposal of all communities for the better organisation of production.

Thirdly, this Conference dealt with the question of agriculture. I feel that this could and should be left more properly to be dealt with by those whose interests are more directly and more vitally concerned with that great industry than our own. I would like, however, to refer in passing to the cordial welcome given to the pronouncement made by the Economic Conference, a pronouncement which to some of us must seem to penetrate directly to the roots of the present difficulties of agriculture in so many parts of the world—I refer to the statement that the difficulties of agriculture, the difficulties of falling and low prices, are an aspect of the difficulties of industry, and that to secure a return of prosperity to agriculture it is necessary, in the first place, to remedy industrial evils.

Let me return and confine myself to the question which is perhaps of most moment—that of the greater liberty of trade. I cannot wholly separate what I have to say upon this matter from the particular point of view which the members of my delegation hold. It would be idle for me to pretend to do so entirely. We cannot but see these things from a somewhat national aspect. It is impossible for me, in welcoming these resolutions, not to give a passing thought to the condition of the great industrial organisation which is the United Kingdom. A glance at that organisation is enough to convince anybody of the cordiality with which we must welcome any pronouncement in favour of greater liberty of trade. Our little island with its swollen population of forty-two millions, nurtured there under special conditions due to the position of that small territory, is a great workshop of the world.

Figures show that we export 25 per cent—that is to say, one-quarter—of everything that we make and that we take one-fifth of anything which any other country exports. Foreign trade is to us the breath of life. The food which we need for our people we cannot grow at home. We have vast interests which are dependent upon universal world connections, our mercantile marine and our great banking system. It is certain that the British Empire must give a cordial welcome to resolutions in favour of greater liberty of trading.

But one side of the picture has always its other side. In demonstrating a national interest we are always demonstrating a world interest too. A great industrial community such as my country, in serving its own interests, serves the interests of the world. The savings of a prosperous, healthy, thrifty people are at the disposal of the world for capital investment. Our markets, as I said, are at the disposal of the world to take one-fifth of all that it exports. We cannot lend, we cannot buy, unless we can also sell. Liberty of trade is beneficial; but the obverse to the medal is that what benefits us benefits all the world. So it ever must be with a great industrial community. It is natural, of course, to find that, such being the interest of the particular nation for which I speak, its policy is in accordance with that interest.

Let me refer to one or two other matters in order rather to show the invaluable and practical nature of the recommendations of the Economic Conference than in any way to blow the horn of my own nation.

As regards the recommendation against export duties, I would say that we have none, that we show no discrimination between States or their nationals,

that we prohibit no imports except those which affect public safety, public health and public morals, and that no import duties are levied as the result of war conditions.

I can at any rate flatter myself that I render no lip service to these great resolutions when I reflect that we tax, apart from revenue taxes which are countervailed by revenue duties, only between two and three per cent of our total imports, and we thus provide, I think, the largest and the freest market in the world. But this, as I have said, is but a proof of good faith as regards the words which I am about to speak; we welcome these resolutions not only because of the position and the policy of the British Empire, but we welcome and emphasise them here because they express the ideas which are fundamental in the League—the ideas of harmony between nations. They not only express those ideas; they give the most practical assistance in pointing out the path which will lead away from war.

It is not always the most direct path which leads straightest to one's given objective; neither is it the path that seems to be the straightest. This is well known to those who have rambled in the wonderful mountains which surround this charming city. In the high Alps it is not very often that the summit can be reached by walking in a straight line. Now, if the summit which the League has to reach is the achievement of our ideal of established peace, it sometimes seems, as at the present moment, that it cannot be most easily reached by proceeding straight ahead. The course of disarmament, of direct reduction of military armaments, seems to be crossed by some very difficult precipices; but there are skilled guides to show the way round. Is it not possible that the skilled guides of the Economic Conference are actually showing the path by which permanent and established peace will be achieved sooner and more directly than by any proceeding straight through difficult country? I know not. We do, however, know this—that the instincts of hostility which lead to war are the result of many different causes; and amongst them economic causes are not the least important.

The natural history of war is surely a most proper study for the League. We know from bitter experience what its ancestry is. It is the outcome of error and of fear. But those two evil spirits, unfortunately, are not single. There is no one error, and there is no one fear. Their name, like the evil spirit in the Bible, is legion, and amongst that hierarchy of devils economic error and economic fear are not the least.

The most prevalent of economic errors is the error that States can exist separately, independently of each other, without close mutual relations. The greatest of economic fears and the most foolish of them is the fear lest the prosperity of one nation should detract from the other, whereas the truth is that the prosperity of each nation increases that of every other one.

There appears to be a constant conflict not only in the minds of men but in the States, between the forces of individualism and nationality, which drive people into separate existence, and the social forces which join them together.

After the war, the separating forces were too powerful. They produced that state of affairs with which the Economic Conference has dealt, namely, too strenuous an effort on the part of most individual nations to live too widely separated from each other. They produced that strain which is the result of exaggerated tariffs, and surely we can be convinced that the League could have no higher, no more direct occupation, no aim, than to attempt to remove that economic

strain to which exaggerated tariffs so powerfully contribute and which is the direct outcome of the causeless fears that were left by the war.

Before I conclude, let me say but one word as to the future. The above results, if there is anything in what I have said, open a new era of activity for all the organs and resources of the League. They will lead a flank attack upon the forces of fear and error, which are the causes of war. There is, however, much to be done. All the practical work necessary to reap the harvest of these results still remains to be done. We have in the results so far obtained a powerful weapon, but that weapon is yet to be wielded.

One word more. We should be unworthy of the great opportunity which is afforded us by the work of the world experts at the Economic Conference if we were content with any small achievement as a result. We must not be content unless we take advantage of the impetus that has been given to the achievement of the utmost extension of the liberties of international trade of which the world is capable. On the other hand, we must realise that in this sphere it is certainly impossible to proceed by one large jump. The conquest must pass from position to position.

The first thing which needs the most careful attention, the most anxious provision, is the machinery by which the initial task of carrying forward the work initiated by the Conference should be undertaken. Let me say in this connection that, in the opinion of my delegation, the Economic Committee has proved itself, as indeed is clear to all of us, to be an organisation of the utmost value and efficiency, and it would be sacrificing a great good to a very speculative advantage if the Committee did not continue to perform the invaluable functions which it has performed for the League in the past. Modifications may be necessary in its constitution; that is a matter for the most careful scrutiny. It may in particular be desirable to put that Committee in some way more closely into touch with the practical organisations which are concerned in industry, commerce and finance. I am sure, however, that I shall be appealing to the practical sense of all those who are used to administration if I express the opinion that, as a rule, the smaller the number of members of a Committee to which work is entrusted the more efficiently and the more rapidly it is done.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, it has been my intention on this occasion, on behalf of my delegation, to call attention to the fact that this year there has been a great step forward in that co-ordination of the nations which it is the task of the League, and that step forward has been achieved for us by the Economic Conference. There always seems to be a sort of vicious circle of economic fears and military fears. Nations attempt to live in too great a degree of separation economically, and they provide themselves with great armaments in order to maintain that separation. Fears are produced by the existence of great armaments, and under the influence of those fears the nation is impelled to attempt to maintain an impossible degree of economic self-sufficiency because of the possible perils of war. Against that vicious circle it is necessary to strike at various points.

Last year a great blow was struck against it in that dramatic scene of the admission of a new Member to the League, of which so many here were witnesses. I do not think I exaggerate if I say that, in receiving and accepting this declaration of existence of inherent peace in the economic interests of mankind, we strike this year a blow against that vicious circle which is at any rate of the same order of achievement as

that which was struck last year; and amongst the white-letter days which the nations of the future will mark in the calendar of the League, not the least important will be that on which it is recorded that for the first time the joint voices of the civilised world were heard to proclaim that in the material sphere, as in the moral sphere, men do ill to be enemies and do well to be friends.

The President :

Translation : Count Apponyi, first delegate of Hungary, will address the Assembly.

Count Apponyi (Hungary) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — The aim of this Assembly, as of all previous Assemblies, is to determine exactly how far we have progressed in the execution of the great aims for which the League was created and in the achievement of the objects which it has resolved to attain. These aims and objects are clearly set out in the Preamble to the Covenant. A consideration of their magnitude is sufficient to show that it is not humanly possible to realise them at one stroke, or even within a comparatively short time.

Those who know human nature, those who have studied history, however superficially, those who lived through the catastrophic happenings of the late war — God grant it may be the last — will realise that, human nature being what it is, progress towards the state of affairs when peace shall be assured by the reign of justice, when, in the words of the Preamble to the Covenant, open, just and honourable relations shall be established between nations on the basis of their mutual rights — such progress can only be achieved by a more or less slow and gradual process of evolution.

Hence the criticism levelled at the League on the grounds that these great ideals are far from being fulfilled is manifestly unjust.

What we have to determine is whether we are advancing towards these ends; exactly where we stand; whether we have not perhaps lost ground; and what stage we have reached in the march of progress, which, despite the slowness of its pace — because of the slowness of its pace — must be continuous and uninterrupted.

This I shall now try to determine, without undue optimism or pessimism, simply in the light of facts.

Some of us are perhaps too eager to declare, and do their best to prove, that all is for the best in the League. Such unqualified praise to my mind arouses suspicion and is not calculated to inspire confidence. Everyone knows that it is Governments on the point of collapse that publish daily bulletins to the effect that their position has never been stronger, while parties on the verge of disruption take pains to inform the world that never has such perfect unanimity been found as in their midst.

What reassures me in this present discussion is the absence of the customary overdose of mutual compliments, and the fact that the voice of criticism has been heard; for criticism — or rather the courage to criticise — is proof of self-confidence.

In the course of this discussion we have heard a number of remarkable speeches, and, without referring to them all, I should like to mention among others those of the Netherlands Foreign Minister when introducing his proposal — to which I shall have occasion to revert — of the first delegate of Sweden, the first delegate of Finland, the Estonian representative, the first delegate of Japan, and, to-day, the speeches delivered by the Norwegian Minister for Foreign Affairs and by M. Politis.

I may perhaps be allowed to touch upon the matter of some of these speeches.

It has been my privilege to speak almost immediately after M. Politis. This involves perhaps the drawback of comparison with him, but at the same time entails this advantage: that I can profit by the wealth of eloquence and wisdom which he pours forth, stimulating the flow of such illuminating ideas as each one of us, according to his lights, may have to contribute towards this discussion.

M. Politis counsels patience; in confirmation of what I said at the beginning of my speech, he shows us once again that immediate results are not to be expected, and — what rather astonishes me as coming from him — betrays more scepticism to-day on the subject of arbitration than he has ever before displayed in League discussions.

The first delegate of the Netherlands has submitted a proposal which falls into two distinct parts: the one which I think has met with general approval is to the effect that the Assembly should give an impulse to the work of the Committees engaged in preparatory studies for the reduction of armaments; the other represents, as it were, a reversion to the mentality that produced the famous Protocol of 1924. It is suggested that, without reviving the Protocol itself in all its details, a new document might be drawn up embodying certain of its principles.

My personal feelings in regard to the Protocol are known to all those with whom I had the honour to collaborate when it was being submitted to the Assembly. My Government had not at that time taken up a definite position with regard to that important document. While it was considering the question and deciding what attitude it ought to adopt, there occurred the famous difference of opinion between two great Powers which resulted in the abandonment of the Protocol. In the circumstances, my Government decided not to express its views, since, without the consent of those two Powers, and as long as their disagreement lasted, there was no practical use in considering the question at all. I see no reason to depart from the attitude of reserve adopted by my Government on that occasion.

I should like now to consider whether, when we come to take stock of these last few years, we can congratulate ourselves on having a credit balance or whether we have to record a deficit. This is a difficult question to decide, since it depends largely on the estimate of the relative importance of the results obtained and of the objects still to be achieved.

Our assets are very considerable. There is the success of the Economic Conference, which was convened by the League pursuant to a proposal submitted two years ago by a representative of France. The resolutions adopted by that remarkable Conference have not yet, it is true, been embodied in Government legislation. They have not yet been put into practice. But the Conference revealed such single-mindedness of purpose, such a definite and clear perception of the root evil of the present economic situation, and of the lines along which remedies might be applied, that I think I am justified in saying that it offered a very considerable contribution towards the cure of the present worldwide economic ills.

Another asset which I desire to mention here is the *rapprochement* embodied in the Locarno treaties. We are not concerned here with details or with this or that special agreement, but with the fact that a *rapprochement* is beginning to take shape between two great European nations, each of which possesses immense resources, great wealth and enormous intellectual and moral forces.

The absence of understanding between these two great nations, which resulted in the late war, was perhaps one of the greatest calamities that could ever have befallen humanity.

I was quite a young man at the time of the 1870 war, and since the peace which concluded that war was not calculated to bring about a reconciliation, and I saw in it—like many wiser than myself—the elements of permanent antagonism, I have from my youth up looked on the mortal conflict between those two great peoples as the greatest evil that could ever afflict the civilised world.

Those statesmen who are making courageous efforts to overcome this evil, who are ready to brave the effects of certain prejudices and feelings in their own country, who are endeavouring—already with partial success—to dissipate or attenuate the evil, deserve the gratitude not of their own people alone but of all mankind.

These, then, are our assets, not to mention the progress achieved in non-political spheres, such as health, intellectual co-operation and humanitarian questions—progress which would have been far less considerable without the League's authority.

As to the liabilities, I will be brief.

I must mention first, on the debit side, the lack of success attending the League's activities in regard to the protection of national minorities. This is due to the present system, which is, in my view, most unsatisfactory. Two years ago I submitted proposals with a view to its revision, but the Council, after due consideration, found itself unable to approve them.

I should like to remind you of a statement made on that occasion by the Brazilian representative, whose absence from this Assembly we all deplore. He made a statement defining the problem of national minorities in terms which I cannot accept in the sense that has generally been attributed to them. He said that the object of the treaties for the protection of minorities was not to preserve the heterogeneous minority elements composing the new States but to proceed by a slow process of absorption until, with due respect for the rights of the individual, a homogeneous whole could be obtained.

This statement requires explanation before it can be accepted. If by absorption—the word is perhaps ill-chosen, being somewhat ambiguous—is meant simply the strengthening of loyalty towards the State on the part of citizens of every race, I have no complaint to make, for every State is entitled to demand that its citizens, whatever their race or tongue, shall manifest their loyalty and obedience to the laws. But if by this term is meant the disappearance of racial and cultural characteristics, the substitution of an easy death for a violent one, I must protest most emphatically against any such interpretation. I feel inclined to think—I am even convinced—that the enlightened members of the Council have never understood the word "absorption" in this sense, but that they were thinking of political absorption or assimilation and the loyal accomplishment of a citizen's duties towards the State.

I am glad to see from signs of assent from a competent member of this Assembly that my interpretation is correct. It is essential, in view of the interests at stake, that the statement to which I have just referred should receive an authoritative interpretation to this effect.

The second and perhaps heavier liability is the extraordinary slowness with which the question of disarmament, or, to be more exact, of the general reduction of armaments, is proceeding.

Here I agree in principle that we cannot obtain immediate results without certain guarantees. But, I ask, are not the guarantees of security, stipulated as necessary conditions for a general reduction in armaments, already supplied by the agreements concluded by the Great Powers of Western Europe? All the conditions of security usually found in treaties appear to be forthcoming.

As regards the eastern part of Central Europe, the part to which I belong, only one country, in point of fact, is still in need of security guarantees, and that is my own, which is completely disarmed itself and has around it nations armed to the teeth.

Yet we ask for no pledges of security other than those provided by existing treaties, and those entailed by the loyal execution of Article 8 of the Covenant of the League, which holds out to us the promise of general disarmament, or of a progressive reduction of armaments, with due regard to the geographical situation of each individual State. We ask no more than this.

My own excepted, the only States in need of special guarantees of security are those which have a common frontier with Soviet Russia. I believe that under a system of complete general disarmament such guarantees will readily be given, subject to a further guarantee that these supplementary military forces shall not be used for purposes of aggression.

Is it not possible then to take a more decisive step towards the reduction of armaments? As to details, let me mention just one or two points in the history of this question.

When the Protocol was wrecked, when the trilogy—arbitration, security and disarmament—put forward by the then Prime Minister of France, M. Herriot, proved impossible of realisation, the question of disarmament seemed doomed to failure. The Assembly, however, did not wish to create the impression that it had set aside a question of such fundamental importance, and accepted a proposal submitted by the delegate of Spain and amended by myself. In this proposal the Council was invited to appoint a special Preparatory Commission to study the question so that a general Conference on disarmament might in due course be convened, which would have the necessary material at its disposal and be able to proceed rapidly with its work.

In the spirit of this proposal and of the resolution adopted on that occasion, the Preparatory Commission engaged upon its task under the auspices of the Council.

I have carefully read the Preparatory Commission's report, and I feel it my duty to tell you frankly the impression I gathered from it—for this report was circulated with the express idea of enabling members of the Assembly to voice their opinions and put forward suggestions for subsequent consideration by the Preparatory Commission.

Let me now say, in fulfilment of this duty, though without entering into details, that the impression which I have derived from the report is most unfavourable. First, on almost every important point the Commission has failed to agree on a single text, and there are sometimes as many as three texts on which no decision has been taken and which represent so many divergent points of view.

This situation prompts us to demand most urgently that there shall be no delay over the second reading, when we hope that these conflicting views may be reconciled. It would be deplorable if public opinion in Europe received the impression that the League is not prepared to take serious action in the matter.

M. Adatei, in his remarkable speech, pointed out that the League's prestige would be enormously enhanced if it could get something done in the matter of general disarmament. He is a diplomat, but I am not and never was one. I am an old parliamentarian, accustomed to employ speech not as a means of disguising or obscuring my thoughts but with the sole object of conveying them as clearly as possible: and I say that it would mean bankruptcy for the League if it proved unequal to the solution of this problem, which is one of the self-imposed tasks enumerated in the Covenant.

I have no intention of entering into details or of defining my views on all these controversial questions. I have formed my opinion on most of them, but it would serve no useful purpose to discuss them now in this Assembly. There is one point, however, to which I must call your attention, for, fraught as it is with danger, it is a source of deep concern to me.

I refer to the article which declares that the new Convention on the Reduction in Armaments would in no way affect countries which are already disarmed under existing treaties. This means that, as far as those countries are concerned, there is no hope of putting an end, within a measurable distance of time, to the truly deplorable situation in which they are placed, and which in my opinion is contrary to the spirit of the treaties themselves. For the inequality involved by a state of complete but one-sided disarmament was imposed upon us by a treaty the Preamble of which nevertheless declared that situation to be only provisional; and when the League has fulfilled the duty devolving upon it in virtue of Article 8 of the Covenant, when it has drawn up a scheme for the general reduction of armaments, the rules laid down in that scheme — which will take into account the political and geographical situation of the individual countries — must be identical for every nation. For it is inconceivable that the great principle which all nations, great and small, are equally concerned in defending and which France has so emphatically asserted in her proposed military reforms — that all possible measures shall be taken to prevent wars of aggression, while every country shall be left free to defend itself in case of attack — it is inconceivable that the application of this principle, which is inborn in every people and constitutes an integral part of its national honour and dignity, should permanently be denied to the nations which were vanquished in the great war. Such a policy may be adopted provisionally; it may be pursued for a time, long or short according to circumstances: but it cannot be regarded as final.

I remember a rather dramatic incident which took place during the discussions on the draft Protocol in the First Committee, of which I was a member. The Rapporteur, in the part of his report where he justly stigmatised a war of aggression as an international crime, declared that the right and the duty of every nation to defend itself when attacked were in no way prejudiced by that conclusion.

"It may and should . . . defend itself" — those were his very words. One of the other members of the Committee thereupon remarked that it was well to assert the right but not the duty of every nation to defend itself. The delegate of Belgium then rose and urged the retention of the words "and should", so that the assertion of the right of self-defence should remain in the text. In his eloquent address on that occasion, he declared that this right constituted an integral part of the national honour, that a nation which

could no longer defend itself, a nation compelled to appeal to foreign protection in order to repel an invasion, must forfeit every claim to consideration. He was perfectly right. I listened to him then in silence, but I now claim that what is true of every other nation is also true of ours.

Our honour is no different from that of other nations, great or small, nor do I think that it is consistent with the principle of honour to force dishonour upon another nation.

As a matter of general principle, it is in flagrant contradiction with the spirit of peace to uphold the disparities between nations laid down in the treaties of peace. I repeat: these disparities are quite reasonable as transitional measures which cannot be avoided after a great war, and are explicable on psychological grounds. But the permanent establishment of a state of affairs, of a belligerent attitude towards certain countries, of discrimination between nations according to the side they took in the great war — this is nothing but the perpetuation of a state of war. I never lose an opportunity of proclaiming this truth, which requires no demonstration but does not nowadays receive due recognition: peace, true peace — that is moral disarmament, the allaying of social unrest and voluntary acceptance of the established legal order — such peace is impossible in this world so long as inequalities exist in the legal status of the nations.

That is what I wanted to say as regards the present position of disarmament, and I appeal to the members of the Preparatory Commission to bear this conception in mind. Above all, I appeal to those who, according to the classification still employed — I am speaking not of historical classification, which nothing can change, but of legal classification — belong to the victorious side, and who assert, undoubtedly in entire good faith, their desire for peace — that true peace which spells moral disarmament — I appeal to them not to press for the maintenance of this psychological obstacle. The root of most political evils is to be found in psychological errors. In this instance an attempt was made to force upon certain nations a system which may perhaps be accepted for a limited period but which there can be no question of admitting for ever.

There is another fallacy: the belief that, if we can define the premises, we can also determine the consequences. Make no mistake. The greatest power in the world cannot do more than define the premises. Once these are postulated the consequences follow a law of their own. They are determined by natural laws, by the inexorable laws of logic and of national psychology, which are as binding and as compelling as the laws that govern the physical world.

Only by adapting ourselves to those laws, by setting up institutions and creating situations in harmony with them, can we create a lasting work and lay the foundations of true disarmament. So long as the war mentality lasts and prevents the statesmen responsible for the destinies of the great nations from following this policy, we may talk of peace, we may employ palliatives — I do not deny their usefulness and have even helped to create them — but of this we may be sure: we shall never produce anything useful, anything of historical value, anything durable or real in the true sense of the term.

This brings me to the remarkable speech of M. Politis, who spoke of immanent justice and organised justice and showed, in his usual lucid and interesting manner, how slowly the idea of organised justice developed even in the internal affairs of a State, and how much slower still it was in making headway in international relations.

What he said is perfectly true. He also brought out another equally sound theory: the difference between organised justice, or positive law, and immanent justice, the abstract idea to which it is the duty of positive law to give expression. The idea of immanent justice is gaining ground. Not that I support the theory of the relativity of morality and justice; the laws of morality and of justice are by their nature eternal, being part of the divine essence. But our knowledge of those laws is in process of evolution, and in order to ensure peace and respect for positive laws, both national and international, organised justice and positive law must be brought into harmony with the generally accepted notions of immanent justice and with the great national interests.

When a divergence exists and positive law no longer corresponds with the current and generally accepted idea of immanent justice, then there is a contradiction between the form and the content, and sooner or later the content destroys the form. What we call revolution in the life of a nation is called war in international life. The only conservative policy is that of constant evolution, the policy which keeps perpetually in view the relation between the positive law of the day and the prevailing conception of immanent justice.

It behoves the rulers of nations and, in a greater measure, those who rule the collectivity of nations and are concerned in international relations — it behoves them to bear in mind the possible divergencies that may arise between material

or positive law and the essential idea of justice.

I make bold to say that those pledges of security and permanent peace which we seek will only be forthcoming if we apply ourselves to a constant criticism of law, both national and international, judged by the criterion of immanent justice. Only when — the time has not yet come, since that evolution too must follow the laws of national psychology — only when the League has braced itself to the task of probing the depths of international law and judged it in the light of immanent justice and of the interests of individual nations — only then shall we have achieved a genuine, enduring and final work of peace.

I do not know if I shall live to see that day, but of this I am persuaded — only by its advent can we hope to arrive at mutual understanding between the nations and to eliminate war for ever. When we try to visualise that day the word with which M. Politis concluded his eloquent speech this morning comes instinctively to our lips: "Wait".

An impressive word, and yet inadequate for our whole purpose. To wait is to prepare oneself for some future evolution. But if there is no limit to our waiting it becomes a state of stupor or of despair. To wait, to hope: these are correlative and inseparable terms. Ladies and gentlemen, we can wait, for we still have courage to hope.

The Assembly rose at 7.30 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Eighth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 9th, 1927, AT 10 A.M.

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33. — ITALIAN PROPOSAL FOR THE CREATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL CINEMATOGRAPHIC INSTITUTE AT ROME: REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : Ladies and Gentlemen — The first item on the agenda is the reports of the Agenda Committee on various questions which were referred to that Committee.

The Assembly will remember that it was decided at our meeting on September 7th to refer to the Agenda Committee the Italian Government's proposal with regard to the creation of an International Institute of the Educational Cinema at Rome.

I do not think it is necessary to read out the text of the Italian delegation's proposal as it has been distributed to the delegations. I shall therefore simply read the Agenda Committee's report on the question :

“ The Agenda Committee met on Thursday, September 8th, 1927, under the Chairmanship of M. de Brouckère (Belgium). It examined the draft resolution which had been referred to it by a decision of the Assembly dated September 7th, 1927. Pursuant to this preliminary study, it was unanimously decided to propose to the Assembly to refer to the Second Committee the Italian Government's proposal with regard to the creation in Rome of an International Institute of the Educational Cinema. ”

If no objections are raised I shall consider that the Assembly is in favour of this question being placed on the agenda of the present session and desires to refer the Italian Government's proposal to the Second Committee.

This was agreed.

34. — QUESTION OF THE INCLUSION IN THE AGENDA OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS : (a) WORK OF THE CONFERENCE OF PRESS EXPERTS ; (b) WORK OF THE INTERNATIONAL RELIEF UNION : REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly, at its meeting of September 7th, decided to refer to the Agenda Committee a letter of the same date from the Acting President of the Council requesting that the following items might be included in the agenda of the present session of the Assembly : (1) a resolution regarding the Conference of Press Experts ;

(2) a resolution regarding the International Conference for the Creation of an International Relief Union.

The letter from the President of the Council was printed and distributed to all the delegations. I think, therefore, that it is unnecessary to read it again.

I will simply communicate to the Assembly the Agenda Committee's report on the question. It is as follows :

"The Agenda Committee met on Thursday, September 8th, 1927, under the Chairmanship of M. de Brouckère (Belgium). It examined the two resolutions which had been referred to it by a decision of the Assembly dated September 7th, 1927. Pursuant to this preliminary study it was unanimously decided to suggest to the Assembly to refer to the Sixth Committee the following proposals :

"The Council communicates to the Assembly the resolution of the Conference of Press Experts and requests it to include in the budget of the Organisation for Communications and Transit the supplementary credit necessary for the enquiries and other work entailed by these resolutions."

"On the other hand, it was unanimously decided to propose to the Assembly to refer to the Fifth Committee the question relating to the International Conference for the Creation of an International Relief Union."

If no objections are raised, I shall consider that the Assembly agrees to include these two items in its agenda and to adopt the proposals of the Agenda Committee.

This was agreed.

35. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT: CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the general discussion on the report of the work of the Council, on the work of the Secretariat and on the measures taken to execute the decisions of the Assembly.

His Excellency M. Vandervelde, first delegate of Belgium, will address the Assembly.

M. Vandervelde (Belgium) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — It was not without some hesitation and even misgiving that I made up my mind to address you for the first time from this platform.

If I were speaking here in a purely personal capacity I should have much to say concerning that feeling of anxiety which now pervades the world, concerning its causes, and above all the persistence in certain quarters outside this Assembly of the deplorable spirit which divides the world into victors and vanquished, into States that are free to arm as they like and States on which disarmament is forced, into regions where compulsory arbitration is established and regions where conciliation is deemed sufficient, and others, again, where the right to employ armed force is still maintained.

I am not, however, entitled to speak here in a personal capacity. This is an Assembly of States, and I am here to speak in the name of my Government. The opinion I voice must accordingly be

the opinion which is common to all whom it is my privilege to represent.

Speaking in this capacity, I wish to associate myself wholeheartedly with the representatives of other small States which have expressed before this Assembly their cares, their chief preoccupations and their hopes.

You will remember that in 1924 Belgium enthusiastically supported the Protocol. Since then we have associated ourselves with every proposal designed to enforce its principles. When, to our joy, the moment came to sign the Locarno Agreements, we regarded those Agreements not only as an end in themselves, constituting though they did sovereign guarantees of our independence : we saw in them the beginning of a wider application of the principles which had just been proclaimed.

Belgium has acceded to the optional clause concerning compulsory arbitration and has already concluded with a number of countries treaties in which this principle is unreservedly accepted. We have done all that lay in our power, and I should like here to pay a tribute to M. de Brouckère and others, to M. Paul-Boncour, Lord Cecil and M. Benes, for their efforts to bring the work of the Preparatory Commission on Disarmament to a successful issue.

In this same spirit and with this same purpose, Belgium to-day expresses herself in entire agreement with the efforts which other delegations have already made or are contemplating with a view to the wider application of the principles of the Protocol. A proposal has already been submitted by the delegation of the Netherlands. Other proposals may still be brought forward.

It is not my intention to go into the details of this or that proposal, or to indicate which proposal appears to be most suitable or best adapted for the statement of certain problems and for accelerating their solution. But I declare, with profound conviction, on behalf of the whole Belgian delegation, that this Assembly owes it to itself to take these proposals into serious consideration, to study them exhaustively, and not to set them aside by a hastily considered vote, a vote by acclamation. I see no reason — indeed, I would welcome such a measure as a prelude to that study — I see no reason why the Assembly should not record its feeling again on certain principles. For the moral factor, in my view, is anything but a negligible quantity, and I should be happy to see the representatives of the forty-nine States assembled here reassert in a solemn declaration the dictum of Jaurès that wars of aggression are crimes against the human race.

A mere profession of faith, however, is not enough. Something tangible must follow, and it is for the Committees of the Assembly to determine what can actually be accomplished at the present day.

I know that this suggestion is open to objections, the importance of which I am far from underestimating. We listened yesterday to words of wisdom and caution, and I readily admit the force of the arguments put forward by the speaker. There is always a danger — and I fully appreciate the point — that incomplete or fragmentary solutions, based upon a spirit of compromise, may seem to indicate not progress but retrogression.

When, however, we have an intimate conviction that certain problems are ripe for solution and admit of no evasion, that to attempt to evade or postpone their solution would be to jeopardise world peace, we must take stock of the obstacles, face the difficulties and, while listening to the counsels of prudence and wisdom, must still remember the words of that great man in whose veins German, French and Dutch blood flowed,

the words of William the Silent: "I need no hope to spur me to endeavour, nor do I need success to persevere."

To those who incline to pessimism I emphatically declare that when I consider the work done since last year by the Council — for it is the report of the Council and that report only that we are now discussing — I see every reason for hope and every pledge of future success.

I am not referring now to the work of the Secretariat or to the huge work of preparation accomplished by the permanent staff and League Committees. Nor shall I refer — though the Assembly ought to discuss them — to such works of mercy as financial aid for certain nations or assistance to refugees and victims of disasters.

But was not the Economic Conference, as Sir Edward Hilton Young showed us yesterday, a fact of the first importance? Is not the limitation of nationalist protectionism in itself a momentous matter?

Again — and this is a point I would urge most emphatically — I challenge the assertion of those who see failure in the relative setback of the Disarmament Conference. It was not a failure, for definite facts already stand to our credit. First and foremost there is universal recognition of the principle of disarmament, of the reduction of armaments. This, as M. Paul-Boncour said, is not only a moral but also a legal obligation.

Yet another point demands consideration. We must disarm, because we cannot remain at a standstill. We have to choose between reduction and competition. We must disarm because competition in armaments sooner or later means war — war which, if it occurred a second time, would bring disarmament to all by a general process of universal ruin.

I say, then, that we must disarm, and I may also add that disarmament is now a recognised possibility. The limitation of armaments has ceased to be a mere catchword for public meetings or a vague formula for propaganda purposes.

The importance of the results achieved by the Preparatory Commission lies in the fact that agreement was reached on a large number of points, and something approaching agreement on others, and that we now possess a definite, complete and detailed programme which may be accepted or rejected but the practicability of which is beyond doubt or question.

Hence we must disarm. We can disarm. What, then, still remains to be done?

The Governments must agree to disarmament. They will agree when their peoples demand that they should, and this will be the will of the peoples when they have not only obtained guarantees of security but are themselves convinced of their security.

Yes, guarantees are indispensable to security: and here we have the whole network of legal devices which the League is continually supplementing and urging us all to perfect.

Again, we have to redress the righteous grievances of certain nations and to settle disputes in both the political and the economic sphere.

But this alone will not suffice if, when these guarantees have been obtained, the nations continue to live in mutual ignorance, in distrust and fear of one another; and I consider that the League, that this very Assembly, could exercise a decisive influence for good. Here it is that the accredited representatives of States learn to know one another: here they meet to discuss together such problems as may arise. The importance of every discussion, whether in the Council or in the Assembly of the League, lies not so much in the actual subject under

discussion as in the fact that formerly such problems were solved only by moral pressure or armed force, whereas to-day their solution is often found in voluntary agreements arrived at after free discussion.

For these reasons, when people begin talking about the unrest pervading the League or cast doubt upon the successes achieved by the Council, or compare this Assembly with the 1924 Assembly, which left such ineffaceable memories in all our hearts, for these reasons I make bold to answer: Yes, the Assembly of 1924, the Assembly of the Protocol, marked a date that will live for ever in the annals of history. Yes, indeed, it was truly inspiring to hear the representatives of France and England proclaim the great trilogy: arbitration, security, disarmament, holding out the hand of friendship to one another and to Germany. Germany was not there that time, was not yet come. But to-day we have Germany among us: she is represented in the Assembly, in the Council. She discusses with the other nations on a footing of equality problems which are her problems as well as ours, and this is a fact of such vital importance that whatever fears one may have, whatever regrets one may feel as regards the inadequacy of the Council or the Assembly's activities, this Assembly of 1927 is still entitled to say: "We humbly admit our own shortcomings, but have cause for pride when we compare this Assembly with other Assemblies".

I am not deaf to the voice of criticism: I know that in many quarters the Council is held during the past year to have evaded certain difficulties and to have hesitated to intervene in more than one dispute.

Do not misunderstand me. It would be most disturbing if the Council acquired the habit of dealing only with minor cases or really desperate situations. But one point must always be borne in mind when discussing the activities of the Council and the work of the Assembly of the League. We must not forget, as M. Politis reminded us so opportunely yesterday, that the League is not a super-State, that the Council is not a Government, and that it has no authority beyond the authority conferred upon it by its Members. It cannot dictate the Tables of the Law, although the nations look to it to do so. The Council, like the League itself, is an association of free sovereign States which are prepared to conclude agreements with their fellow States but will be dictated to by none.

In order that such agreements may be brought to pass — and this is why I think we should take into consideration the Netherlands proposal and others like it — it is essential that the Assembly or its less formal Committees should prepare solutions, which may not be for to-day or even to-morrow but will be the solutions of the future.

Yesterday, Sir Edward Hilton Young spoke of the nations which stand to-day in the dark shade of the valley but can already see the light of dawn on the hills.

Need we wait for the rays of the sun to reach us and scatter the darkness? I do not think so. If we aspire to reach the summit we must rise before dawn, light our lantern and clamber up the mountain track and we shall reach the crest as the sun appears in all its glory.

Ladies and gentlemen, we ask you not to evade problems, not to try to solve them by means of formulas void of content because they omit whatever might serve to divide us. We ask you to study these problems, to discuss them, to prepare solutions and then to offer these solutions to the nations and leave it to the nations to give effect to them.

The President :

Translation : M. Cavazzoni, delegate of Italy, will address the Assembly.

M. Cavazzoni (Italy) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — I have read with great interest and profound satisfaction the annual report on the work of the Council and of the Secretariat of the League. It is a striking record of manifold and enlightened activities carried on in all fields of international life. These activities, which are the outcome of judicious co-operation between experts and savants, will leave a deep mark on the institutions, laws, customs and culture of peoples, and will be a sound and lasting contribution to world unification. The League is fortunate in possessing a Secretariat which is admirably organised and which works with perfect smoothness, and I should here like to pay it a tribute. Under the wise and able guidance of Sir Eric Drummond, in close co-operation with the Under Secretaries-General, the whole personnel of the Secretariat has proved its capacity for hard work of a very high order.

All the tasks taken up by the League show gradual but continuous success. Every one of the branches of its work deserves detailed description, but I shall here confine myself to mentioning, on behalf of the Italian Government, a few general ideas and a few detailed remarks on the League's social work.

The Italian Government has followed for some time past the action taken and the investigations carried out by the League's social organisations, the lofty aim and successful results of which it fully appreciates. In its vast scheme of social reform, and particularly in its legislative action, my Government has often learned much from the investigations, experiments and suggestions of the social Committees of the League. It has given proof of the esteem in which it holds this work by its constant co-operation — which it desires to extend still further — with the League in the latter's social activities. This is in accordance with the fundamental principles on which the Italian Government's policy is based. It is convinced that enlightened national reconstruction must be based on a social policy having the widest possible scope.

Its attention is therefore mainly devoted to this policy. If the tree of life is to bear fruit in abundance the roots must be well watered, and if civilisation is to flourish the deepest springs of social life must be fed. Such considerations, which I am sure every Government strives to keep in sight, must inspire the social work of the League. The League's social Committees have sometimes — and wrongfully — been criticised for endeavouring to do the work of idealists and failing to achieve any appreciable results. Idealism is the main-spring of life, and without it the League would never have come into being at all. On reading over the clauses of the Covenant which govern the League's social activities I realise once more the great wisdom which inspires that document. The League's social programme is in complete harmony with the other tasks entrusted to it, and is, in my opinion, the firstfruit, and to a great extent the complement, of all its other work.

What is the aim and end of the League? It is the defence and development of civilisation. Its high ambition is to conserve the forces which maintain and enlarge all the forms of a higher life. This ambition is not of to-day's growth. Always and everywhere where centres of civilisation have existed there has been a tendency to establish

close co-operation between them wherever any social work had to be undertaken. Whatever form this co-operation took, civilisation sprang from it like a flame from the embers. But we must be clear as to what we mean by that much-abused word "civilisation". Civilisation means more than material well-being; according to the Christian tradition by which we live it is a synonym for morality. A more civilised humanity is only another way of saying a more moral humanity.

This is the road along which we must advance. Contemporary society is unfortunately a prey to vices which weaken it and drag it down. Just as the action of destructive parasites is most deadly and rapid in a fertile plot of land, where vegetation is thickest and most luxuriant, so in the most prosperous societies, where culture has reached its most refined point and material well-being is most prevalent, there is an ever-present fear that the forces of destruction may be unloosed. Unfortunately, morbid tendencies often arise in the least healthy parts of society and suddenly develop into corrupt habits which infect the healthy centre and exhaust its civilising power.

The particular social evils of which I have just spoken are the drug habit, the traffic in women, the desertion of children, child criminality and the sale of obscene publications. Some of these scourges are more or less prevalent in every country. They are plagues which stop at no frontier and which individual Governments are often powerless to check unaided. Hence the necessity for concerted action. The time has passed when sceptics could say that a principle which was honoured by one nation was condemned by another. Everywhere we find the same ideal and the same consciousness that, in order to check and diminish the danger, the great spiritual principles which keep the centre of civilisation healthy and inspire the younger generation with a worship of great ideals must be preserved.

Not only do the movements inaugurated by the individual States harmonise but they blend in a work of co-operation which finds scope for development in the social and humanitarian activities of the League.

It is well, therefore, to lay down certain principles which may be at the same time both the directives and the boundaries of the League's social activity — principles which will inspire the Italian Government in its co-operation in this field.

The training of the individual takes place within the framework of the great natural units — the family and the nation. Family, country and humanity are, according to the principles of our forerunners, three concentric circles. In defending family and country we are also defending all that is of greatest value in humanity as a whole. A healthy family provides the State with healthy citizens. A sound and well-organised State is a rampart of civilisation. A bad citizen is a bad soldier in the cause of humanity.

National or international action for the protection of children and of youth is consistent with those principles and respects and strengthens that framework.

On account of those very principles, however, the Italian Government cannot remain indifferent to the spread of a false doctrine which, with its specious economic theories and its opposition to the sound traditions of the Church, is tending to sterilise the family, to corrupt youth and to depopulate the nations which are the basis and bulwark of civilisation.

The State, as we see it, is a higher and perfected form of civilisation which carries out its duties to its citizens from the moment of their birth and

endeavours to make of them a vital force for the progress of humanity.

The State supplements family guardianship wherever this is defective and helps educative action by every possible means, by promoting all institutions which co-operate in the development and improvement of the family circle.

An enquiry carried out by the League on the position of illegitimate children in various countries is now in progress. The child, who is not responsible for the fault of its parents, should enjoy every possible measure of protection, except, of course, that the legitimate family, which is the basis of society, should have prior rights.

A question which it would be very interesting to place on the agenda of the Child Welfare Committee is that of the social effects produced through mothers of families being engaged in work outside the home. Could it not be ascertained whether infant mortality and morbidity are higher in families which are disorganised by the continual absence of the mother, and whether child criminality is not more frequent in such homes?

On the first of these points, interesting information may be gained from the replies to the questionnaire drawn up by the Sub-Committee of Health Experts on Infant Welfare for its enquiry into the causes of infant mortality.

The second point should be made the subject of special research.

I fully realise that the economic needs of present-day society, due to its commercial and industrial development, involve the employment of large numbers of women in factories, and I quite admit that even work carried out at home, though in certain respects it meets the needs of the family more satisfactorily, presents serious difficulties which call for careful study.

I am glad to see that the Advisory Committee for the Protection of Women and Children has already considered this problem. The protection of children in the home is bound up with the movement to abolish slums. Has the Child Welfare Committee, which deals more especially with the protection of children from a legal and moral point of view, yet realised that all its efforts will be nullified as long as families are crowded together in dwellings where even the elementary rules of decency cannot be observed?

Children live there almost constantly in conditions which make it impossible to instill any moral principles into their minds. In order to protect children, too, we must combat alcoholism, which leads to mental and physical degeneration and deficiency and often to desertion and ill-treatment.

In this connection the Italian Government has enacted a complete series of laws to which I should like to draw the Assembly's attention. In particular, the law on the protection of mothers and children is one of the boldest efforts yet made to establish a bond of practical solidarity among the different classes for the strengthening of family life.

Under this law a national organisation has been set up for the protection of mothers and children, the guiding principle of which is not to supersede private enterprise but rather to promote fresh efforts, to stimulate those private organisations which are already in existence, to put sufficient means at their disposal, and above all to co-ordinate their action.

The objects of this law are many; first of all, it aims at assisting necessitous women during the whole period of maternity. This assistance takes many forms and includes admission to hospital, medical assistance, food and grants of money.

Assistance is given both to the mother and to the child, accommodation, maintenance and

physical, moral and religious education being provided. The law deprives of their *patria potestas* all who forfeit their title to it through immoral conduct. Special regulations have been issued containing a series of measures for the physical improvement of the race.

Sport is organised and encouraged, and children's colonies, open-air schools, palestras and stadiums have been established everywhere by the seaside and in the mountains. Thanks to these measures, hundreds of thousands of children were sent this summer to the mountains or sea to enjoy the benefits of sunshine and sea air.

This beneficent law also provides for the protection of young people against dangers to their physical and moral health. It thus prohibits the employment of minors in theatres, cabarets, and dancing-halls, in the production of films or for the sale of alcohol. The sale of tobacco and alcohol to children under sixteen is prohibited.

The funds placed by the Government at the disposal of the National Organisation for the Protection of Mothers and Children are very considerable. Apart from the grant of an initial sum, certain sources of revenue, yielding a given amount which runs into fairly high figures, are earmarked for this purpose. Among these the best known — I might almost say the most popular — is the tax on bachelors.

The organisation of the scheme is simple and at the same time decentralised. In each province there is a provincial committee organised by the Central Council at Rome, and in each commune a committee for the protection of mothers and children, organised by the provincial committee. There are branches throughout the country. These committees are composed of voluntary workers, many of them women. Mention should also be made of the importance of other welfare institutions, such as charity organisations, homes, day nurseries and orphanages. I think it may be said that the law on the protection of mothers and children plays a social and economic part which is to a certain extent comparable with the famous poor-law of England.

The particulars I have given provide a rough idea of the scope of the social reforms effected in Italy. With this experience behind it, the Italian Government desires to co-operate in the work of the Advisory Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People.

Another problem which, since the early days of the League, has claimed the close attention of the Assembly and of the Secretariat is the campaign against the traffic in women and children. It is well known what interest has been excited throughout the world by the work of the League on this question. This work must end in the disappearance of one of the most distressing features of present-day civilisation, one which deeply degrades mankind and reduces the women who fall a prey to it to the humiliating position of slaves.

And here I venture to recall the name of one of the pioneers of the abolitionist movement, Giuseppe Mazzini. To-day, this problem has reached a very critical point. The relaxation of morals which occurred in practically every country immediately after the war led to a recrudescence of the evil. The traffic, which was reduced during the war owing to the closing of frontiers, reached disquieting proportions shortly after the end of hostilities.

The enquiry undertaken by the League has come at a particularly opportune moment. The experts' report, which you have no doubt studied, has furnished striking details on the extent of the traffic. It has brought to light the ruses and the violent methods employed by traffickers to recruit

their victims and exploit them. These individuals, who are utterly devoid of conscience or any sense of honour, assume false names, employ forged passports, promise the unhappy women work and an assured position, and appeal to their gentler feelings, even going so far as to offer them the protection of their name and the joys of marriage and family life, as a means of conveying them without risk out of their own country or overseas, only to deliver them subsequently into the hands of their own vile accomplices.

According to the experts, the majority of the women who fall victims to the traffic are professional prostitutes, although there are a number of minors. A certain proportion come from the borderland of society, where they are in contact with professional prostitution. Sooner or later they fall a prey to the trafficker. Cabaret artistes form a third class, and lastly there are the girls who have been seduced. They may be offered marriage and subsequently forced by those who marry them to engage in their degrading profession abroad.

Twenty years ago domestic servants and home workers supplied the traffickers with the majority of their victims. At the present day, so the experts declare, numbers of recruits are drawn from among women more or less superficially engaged in intellectual work. Obviously in such cases low wages play an important part. These problems are deserving of serious consideration.

The experts' report contains a series of recommendations which will doubtless be examined by the various Governments with the attention that this grave question demands. If there is one sphere in which vigorous action is called for it is surely this. I cannot sufficiently stress the urgency of giving effect to the experts' suggestions without delay.

This brings me to another scourge to which I desire to draw the Assembly's special attention. It has become so widespread owing to the illicit traffic in drugs that it is now one of the worst vices of society. The disease has spread more particularly among the elite; it attacks the brain and paralyses those whose education had fitted them to be leaders of the masses. No danger constitutes such a menace to modern society. I must confess that I have found it impossible to obtain exact statistics as to the extent of the evil; too many interests are concerned in concealing its gravity. We do not know, even approximately, what is the world production of drugs — this shows the difficulties inherent in the campaign against the illicit traffic — but everything goes to prove how terribly the drug evil is increasing. The Secretariat report contains the following passage:

"The Committee considered a statement giving, in tabular form, information as to the illicit traffic, with special reference to seizures. A rough summary of the first six pages of that document indicates that the transactions recorded only in that very small portion of the return include consignments of raw opium amounting to more than 65 tons, of over 3,520 ounces (100 kilogrammes) of heroin, 10,195 ounces (290 kilogrammes) of morphine, 625 ounces (18 kilogrammes) of cocaine. Figures on a similar scale are quoted in other parts of the same document."

Other parts of the document mention equally high statistics. Traffickers endeavour to smuggle through consignments amounting to hundreds of kilogrammes of drugs.

In Italy the vigilance of the maritime Customs authorities led to the seizure at Genoa in October

last of 152 kilogrammes of morphine, heroin and cocaine intended for American consumption. Over 1,000 kilogrammes of raw opium were seized in the port of Naples during March, and 13 kilogrammes were seized there quite recently. In every case the goods came from abroad, as no drugs are manufactured in Italy. These figures speak for themselves.

Gentlemen, may I first point out that 152 kilogrammes of cocaine (the amount seized at Genoa) are sufficient to supply 70,000 addicts with doses to last them for ten days!

The evil is not confined to the western nations: it rages with equal if not greater violence in the East. A well-known writer on opium questions told me that in certain regions it is calculated that there is, on the average, one addict in every family. Everyone knows that the numbers to-day run into thousands.

We have only to consider the average profit that an illicit dealer makes out of his business to realise the enormous interests upholding the traffic. Recently 200,000 francs was paid for one kilogram of cocaine which had originally been bought for 20 francs. A trafficker arrested by the French police admitted that he had hoped to resell for about 10,000 francs a kilogram of cocaine found on him.

According to the information collected by the Advisory Committee, regular smugglers' syndicates exist with funds which run into millions, so that the sums available for purposes of corruption are enormous.

The gravity of this scourge demands energetic remedies which would strike at its very roots. The Italian Government has repeatedly urged that the true remedy lies in rationing. The problem is very simple. On one hand there are thousands of victims — the consumers; on the other, there are barely 50 factories — the producers. Hitherto, we have concerned ourselves chiefly with the idea of eradicating the evil by attacking the consumers. Experience, however, has proved the uselessness of such efforts.

We must reverse the procedure and fight the factories. Production, over-production — that is the real enemy.

Efforts must be concentrated against the actual manufacture of drugs. The Hague Convention requires the signatory countries to control the manufacture, sale and use of opium and cocaine derivatives.

The problem of limitation cannot be radically solved except by rationing. The League must first find a solution for this central problem, for its solution alone can put an end to the illicit traffic in drugs. Any other measures are mere palliatives.

We could understand the utility of the Central Board, as provided for in the Geneva Convention, if the question of rationing were to be entrusted to it. The Italian view is: no Central Board without rationing.

Such is the very definite view which my Government takes, and we shall continue to press it until this principle has been adopted.

This is not, perhaps, the time to give details as to how the Italian Government thinks a rationing system should be set up. I will only say that, thanks to the admirable work accomplished by the Health Committee and by the Office international d'hygiène publique, we know approximately what are the world's legitimate needs as regards manufactured drugs. It only remains to divide this total quantity among the various producing countries. This task would undoubtedly be facilitated by the establishment of a Central Board. The Board would have to ascertain from what manufacturing countries the consuming countries

could obtain the quantities necessary to meet their medical and scientific requirements. In this way every manufacturing country would know how much to produce, and production would be adjusted to legitimate requirements. This would be a practical method of rationing.

Meanwhile, the Italian Government is quite prepared to consider the question of supervision. It is indeed for this purpose that, at its request, an extraordinary session of the Advisory Committee has been convened for the end of this month to study the complex problem of the illicit drug traffic. The Italian Government reserves the right at that time to submit definite proposals with a view to tightening up supervision, but it still maintains that the problem will not be fully solved until the rationing system has been adopted.

My Government is fully alive to the drawbacks of a solution which only attacks over-production indirectly and concentrates solely upon the campaign against smuggling. It must be confessed that this campaign presents considerable difficulties. The ruses to which traffickers resort are legion. It is, I think, no secret that to-day the smuggler deals in products which, having no narcotic properties in themselves, are not covered by the existing conventions. Once arrived at their destination, however, these products are, by a very simple process, transformed into narcotics. In a word, the technical side of the illicit traffic has been brought to a high pitch of perfection, and it is therefore easy to elude present methods of supervision.

In its report to the Council the Advisory Committee points out that the League can only attack this tremendous problem if it receives the support of the various Governments.

That is all I have to say. Every nation must always keep before it the ultimate aim: international solidarity. My Government recently gave tangible evidence of its devotion to these humanitarian ideals when it accorded its full support to the noble proposal of one of my fellow-countrymen: Senator Giovanni Ciralo. The League has, I consider, evinced its lofty nobility of purpose and also its great wisdom by its successful completion of this beneficent work.

The Governments represented here are, I am sure, anxious to assist in the speedy realisation of the International Relief Union. The signing of this Convention will be a great and generous act bringing us nearer to the brotherhood of nations, and it will also be a tribute to the principles of the League.

No single step forward along the path of social and humanitarian reform is ever retraced. It is a stage further on the road, leading to yet greater heights. In the political field the questions which fill our minds to-day will to-morrow give place to other and equally transitory questions. But social reforms last. They become the common heritage of mankind, the foundation for fresh reforms, the starting point for further progress. The League's humanitarian work is like the work of the artist, whereby the shapeless or rough-hewn marble is fashioned into the perfect statue which is the incarnation of the artist's ideal. Our ideal is the world of to-morrow, a world whose salient characteristic is goodness. The principles which are so often reaffirmed here — justice, peace, the brotherhood of man, good will — are all comprised in that great human and Christian word "goodness".

We must take action to fulfil this aim before any success in carrying out the political programme of the League Covenant can be achieved. Political agreements and understandings among the nations will be easy when individual and collective morality has progressed towards a higher ideal of perfection.

The efforts we make to build a noble dwelling to house our ideals of peace and justice will never be successful unless, before we undertake this work, and side by side with it, we apply ourselves to social and humanitarian action on the widest scale, and above all unless the moral and spiritual standards of the nations have been raised high.

The house we are to build must rest on a solid foundation. We must labour and dig deep ere we find a rock on which to found the ramparts of the fortress of peace.

So long as humanity is divided by hatred, weakened by physical and moral evils, disunited by the slackening of family ties, engrossed in the fevered pursuit of material well-being, a prey to subversive propaganda of all kinds, and estranged from the great Christian ideals which have been its life blood in past generations, it can never become the solid foundation which is essential to the realisation of our dreams. Only by remedying these evils, only by obtaining mutual understanding among nations, and more especially moral disarmament, shall we achieve material disarmament and allay jealousy and ill-will; only then shall we accomplish a lasting work of peace.

All races, all peoples, all men of good will will lend their aid to this work, just as in olden times men from all classes of the people brought each his stone and his labour to the building of our beautiful cathedrals. Then and only then will be fulfilled the saying of the great Latin poet: "*Sic itur ad astra!*"

The President :

Translation : Dr. Lange, delegate of Norway, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Lange (Norway) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — Yesterday we had the great privilege of hearing a masterly speech in the real and the full sense of the word. I refer to the speech of the Greek delegate M. Politis, who has proved anew to this Assembly that he is a worthy descendant of the race of such orators and men of law as Demosthenes, Æschinus and Isocrates.

I wish to pay M. Politis a sincere and most respectful tribute for his eloquent, clear and enlightened speech. The contentions which he advanced, however, — particularly towards the close of his speech — seemed to me to call decidedly for serious and immediate reservations, and I therefore venture to address you on the subject, as I should not like it to be thought that such contentions are accepted by the whole Assembly. This does not mean that I am in entire disagreement with M. Politis; on the contrary, I fully share his admiration for the system of the Geneva Protocol. I am a sincere partisan of the principles of that great instrument of peace. I am convinced, like M. Politis and many other members of this Assembly, that the Protocol is not dead, that it will one day rise again, and that until the dawn of that great day it will remain like a lighthouse in the midst of the stormy seas of this present time.

I likewise share my distinguished colleague's conviction as to the inestimable value of the incessant work done by the League, of its technical organs and admirable Secretariat.

This work has laid the foundation for co-operation among States which will ultimately form an insuperable barrier against a fresh outbreak of war. M. Politis has developed this idea with a masterliness which I should certainly not presume to think I could equal. On the other hand, I think I may say that he will find me rivalling him in my faith in the League and its great future. M. Politis has

occasionally heard, in the course of our present debates, and indeed sometimes in previous Assemblies, what he has referred to as recriminations—criticism even; yet I hope he will believe that this criticism was only inspired by sincere devotion to the League and its work. In saying this I think I am voicing the feelings of most of my colleagues.

It is M. Politis' philosophy of peace and justice, which he defined towards the end of his statement, that has led me to disagree with him and to formulate the special reservations of which I have just spoken.

I think we should be grateful to our eminent colleague for having raised this question here. It is certainly useful for us to revert from time to time to what the English call first principles and to discuss the first principles of the League. I think, however, that M. Politis was carried away by his enthusiasm for logic and system and that he pushed his deductions too far. There is great truth in the old saying that nothing is more dangerous than a logician who starts from a false angle. His very logic leads him further and further away from facts, and in the end he runs the risk of losing himself in a void. There is certainly something attractive for a compatriot of Ibsen in the great alternative: "all or nothing". Without wishing to dogmatise, however, I take leave, in all modesty, to doubt whether this is a wise political maxim, for, as Cavour has said, politics consist in practising the art of the possible.

M. Politis dwelt more especially on the importance and indissolubility of the Protocol trilogy: arbitration, security and disarmament. He has even gone further; he has added a factor which he considers to be indispensable—that is, law, written law, codified international law.

These are the four factors which, according to M. Politis, form a cycle which must either be complete or not exist at all. The whole Protocol and nothing but the Protocol, with the addition of "law"; not a fragment or a section of the Protocol, not even a stage towards the system of the Protocol. I am very much afraid that, if we follow this method in our work, this ideal cycle will become a vicious circle from which we shall never escape, and we might as well write at once on the pediment of the new League building which is to be constructed by the lake-side those despairing words written over the gate of the Inferno: "Abandon hope, all ye who enter here".

Must we really resign ourselves to this? I cannot think so.

With your permission I will briefly sketch M. Politis' theory and its underlying arguments in the light of facts and of history.

Yesterday M. Politis reverted to a favourite argument of his which three years ago he advanced in this hall when the Protocol was being drawn up. He said then, and he repeated to-day, that though sanctions are not needed for optional jurisdiction they are absolutely necessary where compulsory jurisdiction is concerned. The argument is certainly attractive, and I confess that it seems to me to be rather specious. We do not know, however, whether it is really true, and we may at any rate venture to doubt it.

What we do know is that a number of States have not hesitated to bind themselves by undertakings involving obligatory jurisdiction without any other sanctions than those provided by the Covenant.

We also know that for more than a century arbitration has been employed in more than two hundred cases (I take my statistics from the interesting and masterly work by M. Politis himself, entitled "*La Justice internationale*"). We know,

also, that all the awards were, without exception, carried out in good faith.

M. Politis cites the parallel of the development of law within the frontiers of States. Comparison is no argument, however. A community of States is a society *sui generis*, which is hardly comparable with a national society—that is to say, with a State. This community is not composed, as is a State, of millions and sometimes even hundreds of millions of persons who can easily ignore the stigma of a purely moral sanction should they break their pledges; it is not composed of individuals with an ephemeral life of a few score years.

A community of States is composed of sixty or seventy entities at the most, all of which have, humanly speaking, perpetual life, and which cannot therefore ignore a moral stigma, since it would involve incalculable consequences for their moral and economic future. Failure to keep their word or to carry out an award would, in the eyes of the nation itself, entail a loss of moral prestige—an indignity which it could never outlive.

M. Politis will perhaps reply that naturally we can only quote examples of optional arbitration, and that the few examples which we have of the practical results of obligatory arbitration are hardly conclusive as yet.

If a further instance is needed, here is one which in my opinion is conclusive. Within the great federation of the United States of America, compulsory jurisdiction between States members of the federation exists and has been in force for the last century and a-half. There is not a single case in which a State has ignored the award given against it by the Supreme Court. In the face of these examples, in the face of these historical facts, can we say that sanctions are indispensable to the working of compulsory arbitration? I think not. That is why I think that my eloquent colleague's contentions might prove fatal to the great cause of international justice. He has furnished those who waver in the matter of international arbitration—I will not say its opponents—with arguments which I am firmly convinced have no basis in reality and are fundamentally wrong.

Unfortunately, M. Politis did not stop there. He advanced another astonishing theory that international jurisdiction is impracticable except on the basis of written and codified law. This is a very strange theory indeed. I am strongly inclined to think that M. Politis did not say quite what he meant, and I should be very glad to hear that I have wrongly interpreted his arguments.

Nobody knows better than he that written law does not suffice and never will suffice in any country as a complete basis for jurisdiction.

I should certainly be the last to underestimate the importance of the work for the progressive codification of international law which has been so successfully inaugurated by the League. On the contrary, this work is one of the questions with which we are primarily concerned here. But we all know that it will be a work extending over generations and generations, a work which will never be complete and which we shall never be able to complete, because international, no less than national, life is always and will always be throwing up new problems in the field of legislation.

Life is a constant evolution, and we must ceaselessly and without respite adapt legislation to its changing conditions.

By deferring the realisation of compulsory international arbitration until a code of international law has been framed we should defer all progress in this field until the Greek Kalends—

if my distinguished Greek colleague will pardon the term.

In order to avoid misunderstanding at the outset, I desire to state explicitly that, more especially where arbitration is concerned, I consider the system of sanctions to be, if not superfluous, at any rate not indispensable.

On the other hand, I think that such a system is indispensable as a factor in the scheme of the Covenant to prevent illicit war. Where armaments exist, I think sanctions are indispensable.

I do not wish to go into this question more deeply. I merely say that here, as elsewhere, we must face facts.

M. Politis spoke truly when he said that the League can only be what its Members make it. I agree with him there. As long as there are a large number of States which, for psychological and historical reasons, cannot conceive of international society without a system of sanctions, so long must we continue to accept this fact.

Because the League can only be what its Members make it, because certain of its most influential Members do not wish — I venture to say: do not yet wish — for the perfection which M. Politis has urged, must we therefore give up all efforts in the spheres of jurisdiction, of disarmament, security and the codification of international law? I can hardly imagine a more fatal policy. I regret to say that in this respect I entirely disagree with my eminent colleague.

M. Politis has said that we must not be content with mere fragments. I say emphatically that, on the contrary, we must concentrate all our efforts on any fragment upon which we can lay our hands. In my opinion we must literally approach the goal by any path which seems to offer a hope of success.

Any stage reached, however small, represents, in my opinion, definite progress. Over the heads of the hesitating Governments we appeal to the peoples of the Great Powers to force their Governments to sign the optional clause of Article 36 of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice.

As a beginning of compulsory international arbitration, we welcome all regional arbitration agreements, all new Locarno treaties. On this question M. Politis and I are, I am glad to say, in agreement. We must begin in this Assembly the work of codification under the League's direction. We must pursue the technical study of the

problem of security and probe still deeper into the problems of disarmament. The technical study of these problems, which up till now has never been squarely faced by responsible persons, is of supreme educative interest both to public opinion, which has never had to consider it, and to statesmen, who have neglected it. Technical preparation of all kinds must be ceaselessly and continuously pursued in order that, when a "Protocol atmosphere" again descends upon the Assembly, we shall be able to seize that vital moment.

In conclusion, therefore, I affirm that we must not say, with M. Politis, "wait!"; nor is it enough to say, with our venerable colleague Count Apponyi, "Wait and hope!" This Messianic attitude, with its tinge of fatalism, is not enough. We must say simply, but firmly and with conviction: "Act!"

36. — MANDATES: DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE PORTUGUESE DELEGATION.

The President:

Translation: The Portuguese delegation has just handed me the following draft resolution:

"The Assembly,

"Following the precedent already established in previous years:

"Decides to refer to the Sixth Committee the annual reports of the mandatory Powers, the reports of the Permanent Mandates Commission, and all other documents dealing with the mandates question which have been distributed to the Members of the League since the last ordinary session of the Assembly."

This draft resolution will be printed in the *Assembly Journal* and distributed to the delegations.

At a later meeting I shall venture to make suggestions as to the steps to be taken in regard to this proposal.

If there is no objection this course will be adopted. (*Adopted*).

The Assembly rose at 12.50 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Eighth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

NINTH PLENARY MEETING

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 9th, 1927, AT 4.30 P.M.

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President : M. GUANI

37. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the continuation of the general discussion of the report on the Work of the Council, the Work of the Secretariat, and on the Measures taken to execute the Decisions of the Assembly.

Dr. Stresemann, first delegate for Germany, will address the Assembly.

Dr Stresemann (Germany) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — From the discussion of the last few days three questions emerge which mark the direction the League's work is taking and point to its ultimate goal. I refer in the first place to the initiative which the League is taking in the matter of the World Economic Conference, and further to those two great questions which dominate the League's policy, and which are profoundly stirring public opinion throughout the world — the questions of security and disarmament. I now venture to offer as my contribution to this discussion a general account of Germany's position in these questions.

The honourable representative of the British Empire, Sir Edward Hilton Young, rightly called attention yesterday to the immense importance of the World Economic Conference and its results. The public is often sceptical of big international conferences, but scepticism is certainly misplaced in the case of the Economic Conference. The credit for initiating this great step is shared by a prominent statesman and another eminent personality, both of whom combine great statesmanlike qualities with wide practical economic experience. Indeed, in the work of that Conference politics and economics went hand in hand.

The much-discussed question as to which is the more important, politics or economics, is in itself a purely theoretical one. I myself take the view that big material questions, however important, never influence or sway the minds of men — which ultimately mould the destinies of peoples — as much as political questions. Nevertheless, those who hold this opinion must recognise and acknowledge that never have economic considerations influenced international political relations so much as they do now. Unfortunately, this influence does not always take the form of co-operation ; it has often brought about the clash of great conflicting interests. Side by side with war, there is economic war. Side by side with strife, there is economic strife ; and it is fully in accord with the efforts of the League of Nations to make mutual understanding and co-operation practical realities in this field also.

At this stage of our proceedings I cannot go into details as to the results of the Economic Conference ; but I venture to say this — and it is a belief shared by German experts, and, I think, by French experts also — that the conclusion of the Franco-German Commercial Treaty was greatly facilitated by the co-operation effected at the Economic Conference and by the ideas to which that Conference gave birth. No commercial treaty between these two countries has existed for more than sixty years. The divergent tendency of

economic activities makes it all but impossible to conclude such treaties, with the thousands of different items which have to be discussed, if the policy of the contracting parties is confined to the defence of their own interests against the interests of the other party. The saying: "The spirit creates the body", is equally applicable to work of this kind in the domain of economic relations.

Despite the most obstinate conflicts of justifiable and often directly opposed interests, the spirit of conciliation and the determination to reach an understanding have triumphed. Let us therefore hope that this spirit of mutual understanding and co-operation, which is ever seeking new international fields, will conduce to international understanding through the fusion of economic communities. Let us give further practical effect to the work begun here: let us hope that those States which have been impoverished as the result of the world-wide events that have taken place, whose citizens are having to pay far greater taxes than any State has ever before demanded, will not regard their own country as a citadel to be defended from all foreign aggression, but that the oft-expressed criticism of Foreign Ministers, that they are regardful of the interests of others, may become a feature of international trade.

May I also voice the hope that the Economic Conference will not be looked upon by the world as a massing together of what has often been called the capitalist interests of the nations. We shall never attain peace in the social life of nations unless it is realised that capital and labour are not mutually antagonistic, but that neither can prosper except under the joint auspices of a reasonable economic policy of production and adequate social legislation.

Those who are in command of industry must lead. Those who, by their intellectual or manual contribution to the work, are essential to its success, must be paid a fair wage and be granted social assistance. To this end we must have a common standard of social expenditure, in order that fair play may be possible in international competition.

These ideas, which lead us from the League itself to the International Labour Office, will, it is to be hoped, be amongst those eventually adopted when the work of the Economic Conference is carried into effect by co-operation between employers and workers. I will say no more on this subject for the present. The work of the Council and of the Committees will certainly afford better qualified persons than myself an opportunity of re-examining this question.

Although, as I have reason to believe, we are largely in agreement on the above question, it is clear from the discussion that considerable differences of opinion exist as to what course seems desirable in the other two questions — security and disarmament. These two questions are interdependent, and unfortunately the work of peace which has been carried out hitherto has been hampered by the fact that at times one problem has somewhat unjustifiably been played off against the other.

Unquestionably, great anxiety has everywhere prevailed, particularly in political circles, and more especially during the past few months. That in itself is not surprising. The age in which we are living is characterised by spiritual upheaval. The World War must be regarded as one of the most revolutionary events which has taken place for centuries. It produced a violent outbreak of the warlike spirit. It produced that "mystic effervescence" among the nations to which M. Briand referred only recently in an article he wrote on peace. It brought out great qualities in the individual, who counted life of little worth in

comparison with the ideals of home and fatherland; but it ended with a vast note of interrogation which, far from solving the problems of mankind, raised new ones. It brought the glittering fame of heroic deeds; but it also brought devastated countrysides, human misery and such unsolved problems as have never before existed in the world. The upheaval led to the overthrow of whole States and the birth of a new social structure, often entailing social revolution. New ideas arose as to the relationship between State and individual; constitutional developments of the most varied and extreme kinds took place. We may be sure that we have not yet reached the end of this great spiritual, economic and social revolution which the Great War ushered in, but the ultimate consequences of which we have not yet seen.

Out of this conflict of opinions, this universal confusion, out of the worldwide economic revolution, which in many respects has entirely changed the mutual economic relations of the different continents, there arises one fact, the truth of which must be acknowledged and its consequences faced, whatever developments may take place among States and nations. That fact is that war cannot pave the way to a better future, nor can it in any way regulate human progress. All men must realise that it can only bring fresh misery, further confusion and, finally, complete anarchy.

It is true that this view is not universal. When we speak of the attitude of a nation we cannot vouch for every one of its members. In every country advocates of the old ideas and opinions are contending with those who seek a new way. The harmonious conception of peace and conciliation is often marred by discordant notes of mistrust, by outbursts of hatred, by the unwarrantable fulminations of nationalists who cannot see beyond the frontiers of their own country. Moreover, wherever such voices are heard, they are amplified a thousandfold by the loud speaker of the Press; and in an age when a common-sense view of things is often obscured by the craving for sensation, they give an entirely false impression of the actual strength and significance of this feeling.

There can be no doubt whatever that public opinion in Germany entirely concurs with the fundamental principle of peace and mutual understanding. Germany, more than any other country in Europe, needs security if she is to support a growing population in a reduced territory. Accordingly, we are anxious not merely to co-operate, but to become pioneers, in the work of bringing about universal peace which the League of Nations is striving to accomplish.

The lofty solemnity of the idea is, of course, a very different thing from the humdrum daily task of pacification. It is not eloquent speeches but deeds that count. Nevertheless, I think Germany is entitled to claim that she is taking her share in this work of progress. No less a person than the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs, our honoured colleague M. Briand, some months ago expressed his high appreciation of the great psychological sacrifice which Germany made by the Treaty of Locarno, and questioned whether any other country would have been capable of such a sacrifice after defeat.

Count Apponyi yesterday drew special attention to this event, and I thank him for the appreciative words he used in referring to those who had helped to bring it about. He rightly placed the conclusion of the Locarno agreements on the credit side in the balance-sheet of the League's achievements. The Locarno Agreements stand not outside but inside the League, and indeed it

was the conclusion of these agreements that brought Germany into its fold. It is incomprehensible that doubts should have been expressed — as they often have been — as to whether the work of Locarno applies only to some or to all of the nations concerned.

In this matter I must entirely concur in the views expressed a short time ago by the French and British Foreign Ministers, that these agreements are as widely effective in the West as in the East. By these agreements the great fundamental ideas underlying the League were brought into concrete application. We consider that these guarantees of peace, which have their roots in the League, are, in present circumstances, the best means of providing safeguards against war and strife: we think, too, that they will enable future international relations to develop naturally by peaceful means, so that the greatest possible measure of mutual understanding between nations will be brought about through the removal of existing differences.

We fully realise, of course, that the methods which the League has hitherto followed do not fully satisfy some of us; but the League is, after all, a human institution compounded of ideals and realities. Those who criticise it and those who deplore the slow progress that is made in many directions must not withdraw their co-operation, even if all their cherished wishes are not fulfilled. They must offer constructive criticism, thereby stimulating the work of the League and helping to bring into being the laws and ideals that they desire.

In the course of this discussion a great variety of suggestions has been made as to how this development which we all desire is to be promoted. I am not blind to the difficulties which naturally retard such development; but I should like to say that I cannot rest content with the pessimistic "Wait!" which formed the rather sceptical conclusion of the erudite and informative speech made by the honourable delegate of Greece. Nor should I like to believe that this appeal to "wait" is adequately supplemented by Count Apponyi's appeal to us to "hope".

What I especially regret is that the Greek delegate showed so little confidence in the productive power and the influence of a solemn declaration by the League. As we all know, the present Assembly has already discussed the idea of a solemn declaration laying down the principle of the abandonment of resort to force and aggression. Can it really be that a solemn declaration of this kind by the nations represented here would have no effect upon the present situation? Many of you may, of course, prefer to work by means of conventions having binding force; but I feel that faith in an ideal can be as important as a legal formula. It is not the mere clauses of a treaty which bring about peace, but the spirit of the peoples and the conscience of their responsible leaders.

Nor can it be said that disarmament depends upon security, that security depends upon law and that law depends upon morality, so that we end in a *non possumus*. Over all the discordant voices which have recently been heard, a clear lead could be given if the responsible statesmen could agree to proclaim their determination to control the destinies of the world by once more making known, in solemn and binding form, their determination to abjure all that leads to violence and aggression. I do not know whether our discussions will lead to a statement of this kind, but I consider it my bounden duty, as the representative of the Reich, to say that I fully subscribe to these views.

I now turn to another question. Regrets have been expressed that very few nations have as yet accepted the Optional Clause of the Hague Court of Arbitration. The policy of the Reich is entirely

in keeping with that clause. We have given evidence of such a policy for many years past by the large number of arbitration treaties which we have concluded with other countries. I therefore desire to state that I shall append my signature to the Optional Clause on behalf of the Reich during the present session of the Assembly.

At the beginning of my speech I stated that the questions of security and disarmament are interdependent. But however strongly the will to peace may be manifested in every nation, we should lay ourselves open to criticism, and the world might well be sceptical of our intentions, if we did not at once apply ourselves with all our energies to the task which Count Apponyi rightly described yesterday as the touchstone of the moral vitality of the League, namely, the question of general disarmament. We cannot banish war and, at the same time base our security on the maintenance of armaments. The moral influence which the League has to exert will in the future, as in the past, depend upon the practical progress which it makes in this field.

We cannot disregard the solemn promise which was made to the world, and which constitutes the moral basis whereon the League was originally founded. That promise was that the disarmament of the nations which were vanquished in the war should be a preliminary to general disarmament. If you believe that faith in great ideals is an important factor — as it is — in international progress, do not betray the faith that has been placed in the sanctity of this pledge from which the League sprang. The elements that many of you still regard as essential to cover the existing gaps in the guarantees of peace will gladly be provided when universal peace, to the cause of which the League is committed, rests no longer upon bayonets but upon the spirit of faith and confidence.

May I conclude my brief remarks with a reminiscence?

It is almost exactly a year since I first entered these halls. The memory of that event is still vivid in the minds of all who witnessed it. It remains vivid more particularly on account of the speech made on that occasion by the representative of France, who told us, in unforgettable words, that the two nations, France and Germany, have reaped such an ample harvest of military glory that they need give the world no further proof of their heroism; he hoped that henceforth they would rival each other only in the higher planes of civilisation and human progress. When M. Briand exclaimed: "Away with machine-guns, away with cannons!" the whole Assembly thundered its applause. I hope these words will retain their significance for all nations.

If we are to build up a new world, it will, I earnestly hope, be realised that that world cannot be founded on mistrust, but on mutual respect and equality of rights, and that no nation can be expected to become fully imbued with this spirit so long as it is exposed to violence from outside. If we solemnly abjure war, we must found the security of the nations on the spirit animating such a declaration.

Since the time when the nations were locked together in a life-and-death struggle a new generation has grown up, a generation which looks out upon the world with clear eyes. It loves the sun; it loves nature. It sees side by side with the spiritual influences working in the body a godlike ideal of strength and beauty which it is ever striving to maintain and intensify, and which will inspire it to achieve still greater things. We are witnessing exploits such as have never before been imagined. Oceans no longer prevent men from

defying death to bring us greetings from the far corners of the world, and never has the old Greek saying been truer than to-day, that "there are many mighty things in the world, but none mightier than man". If, then, man is the masterpiece of creation here below. let him devote all his strength of mind and body to develop all that is in him to the utmost for himself, for his own, for his home and for his country, but also, and above all, for the greater needs of international co-operation and mutual understanding.

Let the whole world watch us in our rivalry to attain our ultimate ideals; but never again let it see the nations arrayed in battle against each other. Let us all co-operate in this campaign, the hardest, the most arduous, but the most honourable of all — the campaign to win peace, the campaign for the progress and development of the nations, the basis of which is peace and justice.

The President :

Translation : M. Sokal, delegate of Poland, will address the Assembly.

M. Sokal (Poland) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — The discussion on the Secretary-General's annual report on the work of the Council has always afforded the representatives of States Members of the League an opportunity of stating their country's attitude towards the League and the numerous branches of its activity.

In accordance with this tradition, I now desire to say a few words on the Secretary-General's report. First of all, on behalf of the Polish delegation I should like to convey to the Secretary-General and his colleagues our appreciation of the important and successful work done during 1926.

Before passing on to those questions which have formed the subject of noteworthy speeches by certain of our colleagues, I would venture to direct the Assembly's attention to one of the chief events of the year — the International Economic Conference.

The Polish delegation will in due course state its Government's views on the work of that most successful Conference. I cannot, however, pass over one aspect of this event which is, in my opinion, especially significant and encouraging, and which I hope foreshadows the valuable co-operation of the great American democracy in the League's work.

The participation of the United States in the work of the International Economic Conference, which we all welcomed, was not an isolated case. Similar instances have occurred, and I might mention, in particular, the appointment of a United States delegate to the Financial Committee and the active co-operation of an American delegation in the work of the General Conference on Communications and Transit, which augurs well for the future.

The League is now embarking upon a scheme which is bound to have far-reaching effects on world economic consolidation, and it is of particular significance that the United States should be co-operating in this work. The place which that great Republic occupies in the world, its immense moral and material resources, and the great part which it has to play in the progress of civilisation make it a precious ally in the accomplishment of the League's vast economic and financial mission.

The League's activities will stand a better chance of success and will meet with wider support, even from persons not closely associated with its daily work, when those activities can be carried on under peaceful conditions, in an atmosphere of mutual

confidence which shall guarantee the nations an opportunity of working in freedom unhaunted by the paralysing fear that the fruits of their labour may be destroyed by war.

To eliminate war, to destroy the germ of war in the mind of every nation — that is one of the League's essential tasks.

Yesterday, in a most impressive speech to which we listened with unbroken attention and appreciation, M. Politis explained to us quite logically that the surest and in fact the only real way to make war impossible was to devise, in opposition to it, a complete legal system which should include compulsory arbitration and definite rules for the application of sanctions.

In other words, M. Politis, who was one, and by no means the least active, of the framers of the Protocol, reminded us that a complete solution of the question of security was inconceivable without some such system, which might be regarded as destined to become one day the universal law of civilised mankind.

The Protocol, however, which M. Politis extolled in such unqualified terms, never came into force. That is a fact, and it is useless to complain. The burning question now is : What is to be done ? M. Politis, with optimistic resignation, advises us to wait ; in fact, I rather received the impression that it was a matter of urgent necessity that we should wait.

I very much regret that on this point I cannot agree with our distinguished colleague, for whose eminent talents I have, nevertheless, the most profound admiration.

When discussing the possibility of a declaration by the Assembly proclaiming the illegality of war, the delegate of Greece referred to the great principle which, before being embodied in law, was written at the head of constitutions, and ranked in value even above constitutions, in virtue of a certain mystic quality coming from across the ocean.

Far be it from me to enter into a discussion with M. Politis concerning his legal analysis of the question now before us. Nobody realises more strongly than I the justice of his views as to the indissoluble connection which exists between security on the one hand and arbitration and sanctions on the other, and the necessity of linking these three terms together in law. Legal rules, however, are not the only things that count in the life of nations. There still remains the mystic element of which M. Politis spoke, especially when we come to those deep currents of the national soul which, in the last resort, determine war and peace. Those who have harnessed all their strength to combat war cannot but agree that the legal methods usually employed must be reinforced by moral, and even — to use a term employed by M. Politis — educative means.

If States Members of the League could be persuaded to declare that in no circumstances will they resort to war in settlement of their disputes, their declaration would help to impress upon men's minds those great moral principles of which M. Politis spoke, which have in them the germ of written constitutions, and which appeal to the conscience of mankind rather than to the instruments of justice — I would say myself to the conscience of mankind as well as to the instruments of justice — and so have power to inspire the nations with a horror of war, and thus pave the way for and herald the birth, the re-birth rather, of the comprehensive, systematic and coherent charter of security, which is the final goal of our endeavours.

I repeat, a conviction has undoubtedly taken root in many minds — a conviction which almost amounts to an article of faith — that the real

task, the chief mission, the great object of the League is the abolition of war, the consolidation of peace.

The letter and the spirit of the Covenant alike serve to strengthen this conviction and justify this faith, but the more ardent and the more exalted our beliefs, the more liable they are to turn to doubt and discouragement, as promises fail to materialise in definite fulfilment.

Once before, public opinion went through a similar period of doubt and discouragement. It was realised that arbitration in itself was not sufficient to guarantee security, and that sanctions must be employed to crown the work.

According to some, disarmament could only follow on security, while others held that this natural order of things should be reversed, and that security must be sought in disarmament.

Since then, under the influence of this latter view, the attention and hopes of mankind have hung upon the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference. Were we really wise to concentrate general attention on this one solution? It is not for me to answer that question now, nor do I think, indeed, that any reply is possible at the present moment. It will be for the calm and dispassionate judgment of posterity to decide that point. Still less do I think that we should waste time to-day in criticising the results actually achieved in the matter of disarmament. Such criticism would be premature, for, after all, the Commission has not yet concluded its discussions. It is only fair to point out that the Commission has an extraordinarily complex task to perform, and it is not surprising therefore that reason should counsel patience in so delicate and difficult a matter.

The counsel of reason, however, will not dispel the doubts of those who had faith, nor will it lessen the bitterness of those who, by means of sanctions, which often were generous, sought to realise their objects too hastily, or of those again who, while expressing their disappointment, exaggerate it, and propose in their own hearts to exploit for egoistic aims the situation thus created and, on the ruins of this new-born faith, erect an altar to their ancient gods.

We have no right to allow this atmosphere of doubt and suspicion to thicken around us, especially as there is no justification for it.

The Assembly, during its seventh ordinary session, foreseeing what might happen, pointed out, in its resolution of September 25th, 1926, the methods which, properly employed, would be calculated to create that atmosphere of confidence which alone has power to react against the influence of systematic and premature doubt.

I use the term "properly employed" because, in my opinion, the invitation to conclude arbitration treaties should be supplemented by a general declaration of confidence in the maintenance of peace, of which these treaties are the instrument, by a universal condemnation of all wars of aggression, and by a solemn renunciation of this violent method of settling disputes of any kind.

I hear you saying that this is simply a repetition of the Covenant. Perhaps there are still people who contend that repetition means weakening and attenuation. I cannot accept this view, in the first place because it does not seem to me consistent with the actual legal situation.

The Covenant does not absolutely exclude war. It is our intention, accordingly, to appeal to all nations to renounce for ever their right to make use of this privilege, of which the Covenant did not divest them but which is, in very truth, an odious privilege.

Let it be clearly understood that our proposal is not designed to modify the Covenant in any way whatsoever. It aims simply at eliminating wars of aggression and not at tampering with the just right of legitimate defence, of individual or collective sanctions or the obligations resulting from treaties of guarantee and mutual assistance.

There is another reason why I cannot agree with those who criticise this proposal. I think that when so many minds are filled with doubt, it is especially valuable to repeat a profession of faith, because repetition is calculated to fortify rather than to shake the foundations of that faith. Precisely because we have to contend with certain difficulties, we should proclaim our firm resolve to overcome them. The present time, when we are faced by an obstacle, is the moment to appeal for a great world declaration of confidence, so as to create a state of mind in which all future work in the sphere of security and peace, and hence of disarmament, may be successfully pursued, freed from the noxious influence of doubt, suspicion and mutual recrimination.

After all, was not this one of the most important effects of the Locarno Treaty? It is our desire, if possible, to ensure that all Members of the League shall enjoy these benefits and blessings.

I repeat, this idea is already embodied in the resolution adopted by the Assembly during its seventh session which, after rightly estimating the importance of the Locarno Treaty, emphasised the desirability of giving the widest possible application to the principles on which that Treaty is based.

We would ask the Assembly during its eighth ordinary session to develop this idea still further. Realising as we do the difficulties that would stand in the way of the immediate creation and universal application of legal instruments of guarantee equal in scope to the Locarno Treaty, we yet think it possible, by proclaiming the renunciation of the principle of a war of aggression, to create a suitable basis for the application of the principles of arbitration postulated in the Covenant. Just as some public demonstration of the wish for mutual understanding often precedes the conclusion of an alliance between two States, so the solemn renunciation of all acts of aggression would constitute a solid foundation for the great mechanism of guarantees and security which I trust that we shall ultimately succeed in erecting.

The League is not yet universal, so that we can only proclaim the outlawry of wars of aggression as between its Members, but it is obvious that by this very act we should be undertaking to introduce the principle throughout the world, in our relations with countries which do not yet belong to our community.

It is with this same idea in view that Poland is endeavouring to establish the principle of non-aggression in her relations with the Soviet Government.

When the renunciation of all acts of aggression has become incorporated in the political conscience of mankind, when a coherent system of security has been erected on the solid foundation of this pacific conscience, then the work of disarmament can really get under way, and the issue is a foregone conclusion, for it only remains to deduce the technical consequences from a *de facto* moral situation.

Let me make myself clear. The fact that the nations have not yet definitely reconciled their respective points of view on the question of disarmament by no means precludes the possibility of a declaration proclaiming their final and solemn renunciation of all acts of aggression.

There is no inconsistency in this. Faith in the impossibility of war and complete guarantees against war are two distinct things, although they are closely connected in this sense, that the first is bound in my opinion to precede the second, whereas the second must simply be the legal reflection of a moral situation.

In this spirit, then, I have the honour, on behalf of the Polish delegation, to submit to the Assembly the following draft resolution :

“ The Assembly :

“ Recognising 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. ”

The President :

Translation : The Assembly has just heard the draft resolution submitted by our colleague, M. Sokal, delegate of Poland. This draft resolution will be distributed to the delegates and inserted in the *Assembly Journal*. I shall offer suggestions at one of our future meetings as to the action to be taken in regard to it.

M. Scialoja, first delegate of Italy, will address the Assembly.

M. Scialoja (Italy) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — Whenever I mount this platform I have to ask for your indulgence, but I especially need it to-day, because I am so bold as to address you without having prepared my speech beforehand. I only wish to make some observations which have occurred to me while listening to some of the previous speeches. I have asked to speak mainly out of the great love I bear to the League, of which I am to-day the oldest veteran. I believe I am the only representative here who was a member of the original Commission to which the League owes its birth. My feelings towards it are therefore those of a “ co-parent ” — if I may coin the word, for there were a number of others equally responsible for it.

I am filled with apprehension at the tone of some of the speeches I have heard. I can hardly imagine them likely to increase or even to maintain the credit which is the chief source of the League's strength. Several speakers appear to be obsessed with fear in regard to the League's future ; they seem to doubt its ability ever to realise its chief ideal.

This is the opposite extreme of the error committed formerly, namely, that of being over-sanguine. Excessive hopefulness and excessive

doubt and distrust of the future both represent abnormal mental outlooks which may prove exceedingly harmful to the League.

At the time when the Protocol was adopted — I contributed my share to it and both M. Benes and M. Politis will remember the long evenings we spent together in drafting it, a fact which I mention for the benefit of those who were not then present and in order to convince them that I did all that lay in my power — when the Protocol was adopted and submitted to the Assembly as a remedy for all the future ills of mankind, I made a speech which failed to meet with the approval of the Assembly, although I think that I might to-day, without fear of contradiction, repeat everything I then said.

To-day I need only refer to that speech and read out a few lines of it which, you will agree, amply bear out what I have just said. After paying a deserved tribute to the initiative taken, I then went on to say :

“ However great the progress we have made, we must not claim to have found a remedy for all possible conflicts ; if we did, we should dangerously mislead the world. ”

These are the words which failed to find favour at that time :

“ Just as the physician must not merely treat the symptoms of a disease, but must seek the underlying causes, so in international relations we must endeavour to discover the great causes of unrest that have at all times influenced the life of nations.

“ History has at all times been a more powerful force than actual law. Social and economic necessities are as unescapable as physical necessities.

“ If we really desire universal peace, we must prevent conflicts from arising by endeavouring to stem the currents that lie beneath the surface of movements which convulse mankind.

“ This is a new task, which the League must undertake in concordance with the fundamental rules of the Covenant. ”

I need not tax your patience further. I need only add that the speech continued in the same tone. Well, who was right, I ask ?

We have indulged in excessive hopes. This may be a very fine and very noble way to have erred ; but it was an error all the same, and an error we must not commit again. *Non bis in idem*.

Yet we must not despair either. We must be neither too optimistic nor too pessimistic.

What has actually happened to make us despair of the future ? What has happened to-day to create doubt, from which we were happily free yesterday ? I cannot tell. But I think there is a misunderstanding. The event that has taken place and that has created an unfavourable impression on the public mind is the failure of the Naval Conference.

It was said at the time that the League was not capable of solving the great problem of disarmament.

The League ! But who then was at that Conference ? Certainly not the League ! There were the United States, which is not a Member of the League, and two other great nations which were not present in their capacity as Members. I am glad to see that the distinguished representative of the British Empire agrees with me on that point.

The failure of the Naval Conference cannot therefore be attributed to the League.

Have we then, apart from the Conference, any other ground for despair ? It is perfectly true that the failure of the Naval Conference

is a fact to which we cannot close our eyes; for if three countries animated by such high intentions have failed to come to an agreement on a relatively simple point of the disarmament problem, namely, naval disarmament, which, especially when restricted to three countries, is obviously less complex than the problem of the total disarmament of all nations—if these three countries, I say, had to part without arriving at any useful conclusion, that is an event which calls for serious reflection on our part as to the present state of the problems and the means of finding a gradual solution for them; for I too think that they cannot be solved at a single stroke.

Then, again, when we turn to the facts set forth in the report we are now discussing, we can only find cause to rejoice at the steady progress which the League has made.

M. Sokal has just been telling us that the League should pass a solemn recommendation exhorting States to conclude conventions for arbitration and conciliation. But we have already done so, and for my part I see no reason at all for repeating it.

In recent years Italy has concluded some ten arbitration conventions of this kind, and, although she holds the record, there are many other States with an almost equal number of such conventions to their credit. There is an implied censure in reminding someone of a task he still has to do, a censure which in the present instance I cannot accept, for I have done more than M. Sokal! Why should he presume to tell me I ought to do something which I have already done?

The League has made far greater and more substantial progress than is involved by the mere adoption of rhetorical recommendations by the Assembly, for that progress is the outcome of legal acts which are binding upon us, and which are of far greater moment than a mere recommendation by the Assembly.

I strongly fear that such futile recommendations would be a source of danger to the League, and I think I can prove this to you with almost mathematical precision.

Let us consider, for instance, the most comprehensive of all the recommendations submitted, namely, the one just read out by M. Sokal. What does it say? That we ought to declare every war of aggression illegal. But Article 10 of the Covenant reads as follows:

“The Members of the League undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League. In case of any aggression or in case of any threat or danger of such aggression, the Council shall advise upon the means in which this obligation shall be fulfilled.”

There you have something much stronger than anything M. Sokal has proposed. I say “much” stronger because it is accompanied by a sanction. It is also of far greater consequence, because it is an article of the Covenant—that is to say, a clause of the international treaty concluded by all the States Members of the League.

A recommendation by the representatives gathered here, however, would, even if unanimous, still remain a mere recommendation from us as individuals, and we have so often seen our recommendations disregarded by the countries to which they were referred that we should endeavour to avoid, for the sake of the League's dignity, anything tending to create such a conflict of views between the delegates to the Assembly and the States themselves.

I have come here as a defender of the Covenant, not only because I am one of its authors but because I am impelled to do so by considerations of pure logic. For I hold that it is entirely valueless to repeat year by year the stipulations of a Covenant which embodies the very life-principle of the League and establishes our origin, while being at the same time an international treaty which all the States represented here not only wish, but are bound, to respect. Such repetition is even dangerous, for the public might thereby be led to infer that the Covenant stands in need of some such fresh confirmation; but, although the public may be unaware of the fact, a confirmation of this kind is void in law, whereas the Covenant is not only valid in law, but represents a State obligation binding upon all the nations concerned.

But it will be objected that there is a gap in the Covenant and that this gap must be filled up.

Surely the Covenant cannot be altered by discussion within the Assembly. We know already what the introduction of an amendment to the Covenant means, for almost without exception all the amendments adopted by us have failed to receive final acceptance.

What then is the nature of the gap in question? It is this. A dispute may arise between two States, and the Council may find itself unable to say which of the States is in the right. Now here there is little indeed to be done, for is the State which is not in the wrong, because the Council has been unable to prove it wrong, *ipso facto* an aggressor State? No.

There will be a danger of armed conflict, but there will be no aggression in such a case, because, when we speak of aggression, we are perfectly aware of what it means. We know that it means nothing at all. We realise the difficulty of formulating a definition of aggression, and the joint efforts of jurists, diplomats and politicians have so far failed to arrive at any acceptable definition of the term. Furthermore, a State which is resolved to coerce its neighbours by armed force will never be the apparent aggressor, for, however unskilled its diplomacy, it will always manage to make its neighbour begin the attack.

Therefore, in our attempt to fix the responsibility for the aggression we must not dwell too much on appearances. We must subject to a close scrutiny all those relations between the States concerned which have in the past given rise to differences. That is far from easy. The difficulties inherent in such problems, even where historical facts are concerned, are known to all; but these difficulties become insuperable when we are considering facts belonging either to the present or to the future.

We must not play with words. We must not lead the public to believe that we are finding solutions to problems of immense importance, when in reality the solutions are already provided by the Covenant, and cannot in any case be determined by mere Assembly decisions, which are not necessarily approved by all Governments.

It was for that reason I said that, for the sake of the League itself, which is the very breath of our life and the reason of our existence, we should not only avoid all futile demonstrations, but should keep repeating what I have again and again tried to convey in the words I have just uttered, namely, that the Covenant has never been affected by whatever we may have done, wisely or unwisely, that the Covenant remains in full vigour and is still the League's guarantee, the surest warranty for peace. Let us beware of weakening its structure.

But it will be urged that much time is needed before that security, which will lead to disarmament,

becomes an accomplished fact, and much time also for the accomplishment of various other tasks enumerated in the articles of the Covenant.

That is so; but we should be false to ourselves, and we should be giving the public very real grounds for profound mistrust of the League if — I say "if" because we shall never do so — if, instead of actually solving the problems, we are content with misleading the public into the belief that we have already solved them.

Time is needed; for the tasks we undertook in creating the League of Nations are of such wide moral and political scope that they may be said to be almost religious in character.

• And I ask you, gentlemen, what is the strongest word in the religion which is professed by the majority of the nations represented at this Assembly? Surely, the word of Our Saviour!

• And how many years did it take for His word

to triumph? It took three centuries at least, if we go back to the time of Constantine. Things move quicker to-day than they did in that bygone age, but if it only takes us thirty years we shall still have moved very rapidly. If, however, we attempt to do in one year or two what we might perhaps accomplish in thirty, we shall meet with disaster and shall accomplish nothing, and that is what I want to prevent.

People may say of me what they will, and I know that many foolish things are said of me; but I will not betray the public, I will not lie to the public, or hold out promises which in my opinion cannot be fulfilled.

Such are my aims, and it is with this object that I have addressed you now. I have perhaps been too outspoken; yet what I have said still falls short of what I feel.

The Assembly rose at 7.25 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Eighth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

TENTH PLENARY MEETING

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10th, 1927, AT 10 A.M.

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38. — MANDATES : REFERENCE TO THE SIXTH COMMITTEE OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE PORTUGUESE DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : Before beginning the agenda of the present meeting I wish to make a proposal to the Assembly.

You will remember that at yesterday morning's meeting I said that I might have suggestions to put forward as to the action to be taken with regard to the draft resolution submitted by the Portuguese delegation, the text of which reads as follows :

"The Assembly, following the precedent already established in previous years, decides to refer to the Sixth Committee the annual reports of the mandatory Powers, the reports of the Permanent Mandates Commission, and all other documents dealing with the mandates question which have been distributed to the Members of the League since the last ordinary session of the Assembly."

In accordance with the procedure adopted at the last ordinary session of the Assembly, I propose that the Assembly should adopt this resolution and should accordingly refer to the Sixth Committee the various documents dealing with the mandated territories.

If no objections are raised, this procedure will be adopted. (*Adopted.*)

39. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the general discussion 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.

His Excellency M. Mensdorff-Pouilly-Dietrichstein, first delegate of Austria, will address the Assembly.

M. Mensdorff-Pouilly-Dietrichstein (Austria) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — During the course of these most interesting debates, mention has repeatedly been made of the necessity of moral disarmament as a preliminary to all other forms of disarmament. The Netherlands Minister for Foreign Affairs, in his impressive speech, spoke with authority on the subject, and a number of the speakers who succeeded him followed his eloquent example.

If I venture to touch upon this question again to-day it is certainly not with the idea of going over arguments with which you are already familiar or repeating truths admitted by everyone in this Assembly. I simply wish to direct your attention to the fact that the League already possesses an organisation which is, in my opinion, essentially

qualified to cope with this particular task. I refer to the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation.

In the pursuit of general co-operation, which is the first stage towards moral disarmament, no course, to my mind, could be more effective and more inspiring than to begin work in the sphere of thought, in the company of intellectual workers and orators, in universities and schools, among men of letters, among even such dreamers as poets, among artists and men of science in every country.

It has been my privilege to represent Austria at the International Institute for Intellectual Co-operation in Paris, and through the courtesy of my colleagues I have been invited to preside at some of the meetings of delegates of various countries. I accordingly venture to make a few brief observations on the work done at those meetings.

This is a long and laborious task. No ukase, no treaty, no covenant, has power, as in political, legal, or even economic matters, to proclaim that intellectual co-operation exists as from a given date and has become an accomplished fact. Perseverance is required, but the longer the work, the more reason we have to hope that the foundations will prove sound and lasting.

You will see from the report on the work of the Council which you have before you that the preparatory stage through which this organisation first had to pass, the period of study and research — theoretical research — has come to an end, and we now possess a body which has taken more definite shape and can already congratulate itself on having obtained practical, tangible results.

Obviously this success could never have been achieved had the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation of the League not found a permanent collaborator in the International Institute for Intellectual Co-operation in Paris, the creation of which we owe to the generous and far-sighted action of the French Government.

Other States have co-operated in this action by means of regular contributions, and I am glad to say that my country, the financial position of which is a matter of common knowledge, did not hesitate to associate itself with all who are contributing, according to their means, to the maintenance of the Institute.

The report and its annexes contain numerous important details, but I propose to dwell only upon certain points of special interest.

We have to note first the value, from the point of view of mutual understanding, of meetings of experts such as those which have been held this year at the International Institute and which the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation would like to see more frequently held if funds permitted. Let us hope that this will soon be the case.

As regards the individual problems of international organisation, these have been studied not only by the permanent officials of the International Institute but also by the most competent and the most eminent experts in every country. First-class experts of every nationality have thus acquired the excellent habit of co-operating in the examination of highly important questions.

Of all the questions dealt with by this organisation, one of the most attractive is undoubtedly the instruction of youth. I should like to draw your special attention to the admirable report on this subject by the Sub-Committee of Experts to be found in Document A.26. Many of you, I am sure, when reading this report, will be glad to note that the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation of the League prudently abstains from encroaching upon State ground and

declines to interfere in the general education of youth. It confines itself to seeing that instruction is given in the existence and aims of the League.

In this connection the report contains remarkable practical proposals, and I would emphasise the one relating to the creation of an educational information centre, which will certainly meet with the Assembly's approval. As regards university relations, I note with pleasure that in university circles in Austria — as, no doubt, in every country, — Madame Curie's proposal concerning international post-graduate scholarships has been most gratefully received.

The establishment of closer ties between the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation at Geneva and the Institute in Paris on the one hand, and the university student organisations on the other, has also been a cause of keen satisfaction, as indeed was mentioned in the report of the Sub-Committee on University Relations.

As regards the work of the Sub-Committee on Bibliography, we already have to record one important success: a co-ordination service of national information offices attached to libraries has now been established, which will be of benefit not only to librarians but also to scholars and students in every country. Under this exchange service, to which 600 libraries now belong, scholars and students from all parts can make use of documents in public and private libraries all over the world. By means of this organisation a student at Geneva, for example, can obtain, within a comparatively short time, information concerning documents at the other end of the world, perhaps in some big library in Asia or Australia. Only a few years ago such a thing would certainly have appeared almost incredible.

Lastly, the International Museums Office has entered on the stage of practical achievement. This important institution has already established effective liaison between several hundreds of museums — a fact that is bound to have a salutary influence on all matters concerning museums and on problems whose solution is of interest to lovers of art and beauty. The latter will see with satisfaction that here again the League can help towards the achievement of man's highest ideals.

A study of the report and its annexes will, I think, sufficiently show that intellectual co-operation is well on the road to progress. Regrets have been expressed that, so far, it has not been found possible to throw the meetings open to the public, but this will undoubtedly be done in due course in the interests of public opinion, which is just as important in this sphere as in any other.

I thought that I might venture, in view of the criticism which is sometimes heard concerning the activities, or inertia, of the League, to take the opportunity afforded by this discussion on the report on the work of the Council to direct attention to one of the League's technical organisations which has already given regular tangible proof of its capacities, and this without publicity or self-advertisement.

Compared with the eloquent speeches already delivered and still to be delivered by the most eminent statesmen of our times and by the Ministers of the Great Powers, these observations on intellectual co-operation may perhaps seem somewhat colourless. But I offer no apology, persuaded as I am of the immense importance of interesting the intellectual elite all over the world in the work which is being done in this field. That elite, and that elite alone, can influence youth, and it is essential to inculcate into the rising generation the great principles and the lofty ideals with which these walls have so often resounded. We must

inspire young people with a hatred of war and a love of peace. We must create in them a lasting attachment to the principle of arbitration. It is through youth and the generous impulses of youth that we must look to achieve the realisation of the League's ideals.

The President :

Translation : M. Briand, first delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. Briand :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — I should like, with your permission, to tell you quite simply and frankly — without attempting to conceal or shroud my thoughts under a cloak of rhetoric — the result of my reflections after listening to the discussion which has taken place in this Assembly during the last few days.

I may say at the outset that I take an optimistic view, and the present discussion has, if possible, strengthened and confirmed the confidence I have always felt and which I feel more strongly than ever in this international family of ours.

As one idea succeeded another on this world platform, as speaker after speaker expressed his views — sometimes divergent views — gradually the heavy cloud of pessimism in which some had tried to envelop us from the start lifted and vanished from my sight. And after the great debate of yesterday I can truly say that that final gleam of light has dispelled the last of the dark mists that still lingered above us.

First let me pay my tribute to the noble speech of our colleague Dr. Stresemann and to his courage in delivering it. To those who affect to regard the League as a barren, fruitless institution I say: Think of the League's position a year ago and ask yourselves what its detractors would have said then had they been told that ere long Germany and France would be found sitting in the same Assembly, that their representatives would be discussing the most intricate subjects, subjects of the greatest moment to both countries. What would they have said if they could have heard in advance the magnificent speech to which you listened yesterday ?

I listened eagerly to every word that fell from Dr. Stresemann's lips. I realised how courteously he tempered what he had to say; I appreciated the shades of meaning which — and very naturally — he wished to convey. No passage in his speech disturbed or startled me. I saw in it encouragement to pursue our work together here, and it confirmed my belief that whatever obstacles may still stand between our two peoples are bound to disappear one by one.

All that is necessary is that we should show equal loyalty, that our countries should support us in our joint endeavour, and, lastly, that we should interpret our reciprocal undertakings single-heartedly.

We have discussed here all the grave problems calling for our consideration, the problem of security, the problem of disarmament and the economic problem; and let me say at once how gratified I am that the French delegation, in the persons of my colleagues M. Loucheur and M. Jouhaux, should have taken the initiative in placing these grave problems before the League.

The League attacked these problems boldly and studied them in detail. It has already collected a mass of valuable documentation and is well on the way towards evolving solutions which will contribute not a little to world peace.

Economic tension inevitably results sooner or later in war. Bad feeling grows between countries which have sharply conflicting interests. It manifests itself in irritating controversies and gradually excites men against one another, until suddenly some event occurs to add fuel to their hatred and bring the two nations face to face; and in a trice they fall upon one another.

It is no small thing, then, that these big problems should be carefully explored with a firm intention on the part of all concerned to find a suitable solution. France, you may be assured, will use her best endeavours towards this end.

The speeches here, whatever may have been said, have certainly not been confined to mutual congratulations. At one point we all felt in the Assembly the existence of a certain uneasiness which, had it not been dispelled by frank and open speaking, might have been exploited and might have jeopardised the very existence and future of the League.

Our enemies are lying in wait. They are on the watch for the slightest possibility of disagreement between us. They are ready to exploit the slightest manifestations of ill-humour, and they would obviously have liked to create, or to accentuate if it already existed, two separate currents of feeling which might have involved the disruption of this Assembly.

Unhappily for those who cherish such hopes, we have here a platform from which we can speak and say what we think, from which we can ventilate our grievances if we have any, and give vent to our ill-humour if we feel ill-humoured. It is a magnificent outlet for getting rid of all elements of discord. These elements gradually work themselves out, and suddenly, after having listened to recriminations and expressions of exuberant enthusiasm or unwarranted pessimism as the case may be, we find ourselves just as we were before: members of one family working for the same cause. This cause, ultimately, is what brings us together and obliges us to come to an understanding; and in this Assembly, with its unique constitution — a constitution that may create seemingly inextricable difficulties — where unanimity is required for any big resolution, in this Assembly, despite all, even in the darkest hours, we can be sure that in the end we shall all come together in the pursuit of our common object: to strengthen the League and to increase its vitality; and, when we separate, our faith in the League is more firmly established than ever.

Our real power, and at the same time the token of our supreme and sacred duty, lies in the deep instinctive confidence in the League felt by all our peoples, who may not always reason but whose instinct, happily, is generally sounder than their powers of reasoning. They feel that without the League all sorts of dangers would be hovering over them. They feel that if the League should go, the horror of armed conflict would be upon them again. They are ready to defend the League with a tenacity which should proclaim our duty, and their confidence never fails even in the darkest hour; it is for us, then, to point the way for them and persevere.

I said just now that certain currents in the Assembly had taken a definite trend, judging by various eloquent speeches that we have heard, and that we must not overlook them. A feeling exists in every country, and is especially marked here, that our debates — if I may use a term which, though inelegant, exactly conveys my meaning — should not be faked; that everything should be done in the light of day. That is the way to cure certain ills.

The sun cure is fashionable at the moment, and I am convinced that the League would enjoy

better health if it made up its mind to take a cure.

The impression prevailed at one point that there were so-called great Powers here, Powers whose representatives might conceive the idea — as the result of continual mysterious contacts — of drawing up schemes and forcing them on the Assembly. I admit I have established such contacts; I have established them in what is called an atmosphere of mystery — though I do not know exactly what that means. They were established in a council chamber which was necessarily smaller than this, because there were fewer of us. But I can assure you that not once did the thought occur to us to dissociate ourselves from the policy of universality adopted by the League to which we all belonged. Our efforts, on the contrary, were consistently devoted to eliminating the difficulties which beset its path. It is only fair, moreover, to say that we had been asked to do this.

The danger of war which hovered over Europe and even appeared as of menacing proportions, stirred us all; anxiety was felt by all alike; and the Assembly, with the unanimity, I might say, of one enthusiastic purpose, invited the representatives of the nations most likely to become embroiled in fresh strife to talk to one another, to exchange views and to seek in common some means of ensuring peace between themselves.

We all deferred very naturally to this quite legitimate desire; and that is, when all is said and done, the explanation of those mysterious interviews, with which, however, it would not be true to say that the public was not to a very large extent conversant.

We succeeded; we returned to the Assembly which had invited us to undertake this task, and we said: Here are our papers, here are our agreements, here are the precautions we have taken against war. We deposit them with you, and henceforth the duty of trusteeship devolves upon you. It is for you to back our signatures and see that we loyally fulfil the undertakings to which we have subscribed.

I ask how this action can possibly harm an association such as ours. I think, on the contrary, that the League has every reason to rejoice. How can it blame us? Once before, you will remember, we found ourselves in a difficult position. We had to decide how Germany was to enter the League and be given the place which was her due.

There were many obstacles in our way. You have perhaps forgotten them, though not all of them, I am sure. You will remember that Assembly at which the spectre of doubt appeared in our midst and we realised that we could not possibly achieve our object. You must have shared the dismay which we, as signatories to the Locarno Agreements, could not but feel when in the end our first attempt miscarried.

But we maintained the contact which you recommended, and we met again, the same who had met before. We looked one another squarely in the face and said: Yes, this is an unfortunate setback, a matter for regret, a matter for anxiety. But has our feeling changed? Have we lost confidence? Is our work in the true interest of our peoples? Is it in the interest of peace? Yes! Then let us go on. And immediately we solemnly proclaimed that negotiations would continue.

We appointed a fresh meeting with you. In the meantime, our Foreign Offices — oh, those Foreign Offices! — got to work. They exchanged telegrams. They tried to overcome the difficulties which had checked our course. They could not agree all at once. It took days, it took weeks and months;

but one day we came back to you and — the thing was settled.

It was settled. It only awaited your consecration. That was a moment of unforgettable emotion. Truly, we can say: All the peoples of the earth felt that, in the face of enormous difficulties, a veritable work of peace had been consummated. We had left no stone unturned to overcome those difficulties.

Do you think that we who represent — we almost owe you an apology for it — what are called the great Powers — do you think that if we had not felt around us the affection and the anxiety of what are called the smaller Powers, the "medium" Powers — I must confess that I have not yet found an instrument to measure their dimensions when international work has to be done — if we had not felt around us that atmosphere of universal brotherhood; if we had not felt that we were working not only for ourselves but for all the peoples of the earth, do you think we should have found courage to persist in our endeavour? The secret of our success lay perhaps in that inward conviction.

There are here, I agree, quite a number of diplomats. There really are a lot of them! I am told that there are a score of Foreign Ministers. Such persons obviously cannot remain unacquainted with one another: they naturally gravitate towards each other. They think that a talk together may perhaps do more to settle a difficulty than the exchange of a whole sheaf of telegrams. And so they talk and settle their affairs in the united interests of the whole world.

Does it really do the League any harm, the mere fact that its deliberations take this form, or that it is used as a meeting-ground for busy statesmen who cannot always live beside a lake, far from the worries of home politics which go on at home despite their absence and perhaps even thrive the more for it? Is not the fact that they come here to share in our debates for days and weeks, is not this a tribute to the greatness of our institution?

Other delegates may come next time. Statesmen, I admit, are not the sole depositories of secret truths, nor do they alone possess the gift of finding solutions. But their presence here in no way detracts from the merits of others. Take myself; it is in my view highly desirable that statesmen should establish contact with the unattached delegates to the League, who have not the same responsibility in their own countries, and I have been struck by the judicious observations advanced from this platform. I have, indeed, acknowledged to myself the force of some of the criticisms put forward and have found myself searching my conscience to see if they were all equally unjustified.

We thus have an exchange of ideas, a reciprocal readjustment, which is for the good of all. The important thing is that all this should take place in an atmosphere of courtesy and cordiality, in an Assembly which is free from any sinister mental reservations, and that we should make it our object, as I say, to part from one another in a fraternal frame of mind. I feel sure now that we shall.

France realises to the full the importance of the obligations she assumed by signing the Covenant of the League, and Article 8 is, in her view, by no means the least sacred. Having undertaken solemnly to limit armaments, it is the duty of all the States Members of the League to pursue this object single-heartedly, loyally and conscientiously.

But while I agree with some of the previous speakers here that we may have stumbled on our path, that certain hopes, unwarranted too, perhaps, have resulted to some extent in disappointment, it would be wrong to conclude that nothing has been done.

We have brought with us here a constructive ideal, a positive ideal. We mean to produce a solid structure. And we are right, though we have not always the necessary material at our disposal. The edifice which goes by the name of Disarmament is an imposing structure and cannot be built in a day. It was only to be expected that a few of the stones should occasionally come falling down upon us. It is for us to put them back.

Surely, however, we have already achieved one magnificent result, since this most difficult question, which is arousing such feeling in every country and is viewed by so many countries as an attack upon their jealously guarded national sovereignty, has been brought up for general discussion, has formed the subject of debates lasting days and even weeks, with the whole world as audience.

Those debates did not result in immediate success, but all the material is ready now to hand, and all that time — I shall revert to this point later, because there has been rather a tendency to overlook it under the influence of a positive spirit which I admire and always encourage but which must not be carried too far — all that time, I say, the impelling force of propaganda, inspired by our work, was playing its part. Thanks to your discussions the idea of dropping all competition in armaments — not to speak of limitation — was steadily gaining ground.

Let me give you some examples :

Wherever legislators have had to organise — or rather reorganise — the military forces of their country, the force of public opinion has made itself felt, and it has been found necessary to consider gradual reduction in regards to length of service and the number of combatant units. Any reforms carried out have been in this direction, and you may be sure that it was under the influence of your propaganda, it was because you were dealing with the problem, because you had set out to find a solution. There was already an attempt on the part of the nations to give you preliminary satisfaction by means of legislation. But are we to be content with this ? No ! It would mean failure, it would mean bankruptcy, unless sooner or later we carry out the provisions of Article 8 of the Covenant.

I would ask you to note, however, that when you assumed this sacred obligation, you also assumed another no less sacred duty. You have no right to wreck illusions, to destroy unfounded hopes. When you do at length reduce armaments, you must not forget the weakness of your constitution ; this I have always maintained, and I repeat it, even though men may say I am heedless of the sovereignty of the individual State. *Weakness*, I say ; for though you can frame rules, though you can dictate, not orders — you had to employ a milder word — recommendations, you have no secular power, you have no power to ensure the enforcement of your recommendations.

I have still ringing in my ears the eloquent words of one whom we all admire — I mean Count Apponyi — who spoke to us in moving terms of the peoples and their moral status, and of immanent justice in which all should receive an equal share. I still hear him, with his exquisite and subtle power of conveying his meaning in vivid terms, extending to us an appeal which, though indirect, reached us none the less and was understood by us all.

Justice ? Yes, happily, over and above the justice of man there is a kind of justice — how shall I describe it ? — an atmospheric, immanent justice, which permeates the conscience and which should suffice alone to govern the relations between men.

But who can say that it has governed their relations in the past or that it is widely diffused enough to govern them now ?

Indeed immanent justice, desirable though its reign may be in itself, is not evenly distributed. Some nations are more advanced than others, they have evolved on nobler lines, though not perhaps without having had better chances. I have no desire to indulge in recriminations ; that is the fact, and we are here to register facts.

On the pretext of justice, are these nations to be victimised ? Are they to suffer for their nobility of character ? Are they to be sacrificed ?

No, I say ; doubtless it is difficult to appreciate these shades of difference and how delicate the League's task of discrimination is bound to be. The League has an onerous duty before it, and when it comes to examine these problems it almost requires the laboratory of some incorporeal chemist to analyse individual elements one by one so that it may guard against what would be world-wide disappointment.

Does this mean that we need despair of success ? By no means ; I am convinced that we already possess the elements of success, and that we can hope for tangible results in the near future. I heard the eloquent speech of my friend and colleague M. Politis, so carefully constructed on sound legal principles. His conclusion was the logical conclusion of his speech, because M. Politis is prudent and far-seeing, and because he is a jurist. We all possess these qualities, or would like to possess them, and, although I know what his conclusion conveys to liberal minds, it may, I fear, be misunderstood or misinterpreted by the peoples in general.

Everyone likes a catchword. Public speakers pride themselves upon them. We like to think that this or that pithy phrase, this or that aphorism, well-turned and eloquently stated, will be impressed and graven in bronze.

Yet what fragile things such sayings are ! How easily they break beneath the stress of national life and national hopes !

The peoples are prepared to wait, but naturally they do not want to wait indefinitely. Men like to think, even though their hopes partake of the nature of universal hopes, that what is best in them will come to pass during their brief lifetime, and it is only natural that they should strive to bring this about.

I think that what we want here is an ardent, impassioned act of faith — what we want is to say : " I believe that this will happen, and I will go on until it does happen".

This act of faith and loyalty I proffer in my country's name, for France is set on peace. She has borne untold suffering in the past. I have said so before and I say it again — and with reason, for, since history records the story of our perpetual martyrdom, we can at least derive a little moral satisfaction from it. France has suffered ; she has been sacrificed ; she cannot forget all the past. Such things must never happen again, and we are prepared to do everything to serve the cause of peace. Disarmament, I realise to the full, is anything but a negligible factor, but who can blame us if we say : Let us take precautions ; and who can reproach us if we remind you that the League has a certain duty and certain obligations in the matter ?

We have chosen this way. M. Paul-Boncour is here and is resolutely attacking the problem. I am convinced that, by means of a conference in the not too distant future, we shall get well on the way towards a solution, and this is my heart-felt hope.

My friend and colleague M. Scialoja, to whom we listened with such pleasure yesterday — he is the doyen of this Assembly, and deservedly so in

virtue not of age but of wit — whose good advice we have always appreciated on the many difficult occasions on which he has so courageously given it us — M. Scialoja was right when, speaking of the recent Conference which ended not in failure — such efforts never result in complete failure but pave the way for fresh efforts that will stand a better chance of success — he was right when he declared that this was not a blow to the League's prestige.

As French Minister for Foreign Affairs, I regretted that I could not accept the invitation to take part in that Three-Power Conference. It was a matter of real regret to me that I was obliged to decline the invitation extended by the President of a great and noble country which I still hope may one day be represented in this Assembly. But so profoundly convinced was I that the undertaking, confined as it was to a few States outside the League, was doomed not to failure but to non-success, that I thought it no less than my duty to say frankly what I felt.

I am convinced that the League, and the League alone, can achieve success. Every Power, the big Powers, the little Powers, the "medium" Powers, must participate in this undertaking, which will prove perhaps the League's greatest act. It must bear the mark of every country.

Who would deny to-day that war does not make victims only among the belligerent States? We may sometimes be tempted to deny this; non-combatants may congratulate themselves upon escaping a terrible calamity, but they do not really escape, they share in it in spite of themselves, and experience its dire effects like everyone else. The great law of human brotherhood arises above the corpse-strewn battlefield and its shattered ruins and extends its sway even over the countries which believe themselves to be under the shelter of peace; they still have to bear their share of suffering and distress. Their natural energies are held in check. They too have been weighted down by the war. We are all prisoners bound by the same chain; we must bear it together that it may weigh more lightly upon us; we must march together on our crusade against war and make a united effort to crush it, to stamp it out for ever.

How easy it is to scoff at words such as these! When I leave the shores of this charming lake and return to my own country, what scornful glances — even amidst congratulations and words of hope — will rest upon me! Not that they will come from the people. Happily, we are borne up by the approval of the great masses when we set out to champion causes such as these. Nevertheless, scepticism is easy; scoffers will not be wanting.

I myself have made up my mind. I am philosophic about it — not *too* philosophic though — and beneath this philosophic exterior, whatever some may think, I am still passionately set on certain ideas. After all, every flower does not grow in the open, as a statesman once said when he was taken to task for his reserve. Everyone must act according to his nature, and my old Breton nature does not tend to expansiveness; it sometimes even takes refuge in apparent scepticism as a mask to conceal the emotion aroused by profound convictions. But enough that the conviction is there, and that the force of it is felt!

Obviously, it is easy to be sceptical on the subject of peace. But peace is strong; and if we realise its power, if we are not afraid, as I said only yesterday at the banquet offered by our colleagues the journalists, the mystic virtue of that word will soon, be sure, take effect. To day I say to you, I say to the League: you are engaged on a constructive, positive task, but a difficult task. Simply because, requiring unanimity for certain resolutions, we

cannot always obtain it, are we to abandon hope? When we attempt to build a solid structure; when we have a juridical scheme such as our friend M. Politis loves, and our friend M. Scialoja too; when we find that we cannot complete our building all at once but must stop at the first or second or third storey whereas the completed building is to be perhaps six, perhaps twenty, storeys high, are we to give up our undertaking? I say: No! We must go on, but we must find some other way. We must use another means: the League's power of propaganda.

And here I regret that I do not quite see eye to eye with my friend M. Scialoja. He said: We have here a draft resolution inspired by the noblest sentiments. Our colleague M. Sokal presented it with eloquence and feeling, and, after all, when we are talking together we must appreciate one another's individual preoccupations; we must understand them and enter into them. My friend M. Scialoja went on to say: But this is in the Covenant already; it is in Article 10; you are suggesting nothing new. This resolution resembles what is called in my country a resolution of a Conseil général (such resolutions have their uses sometimes) or the resolution of a congress or public meeting. And what of it? If we raise a great cry at the close of a meeting after the speeches, we know quite well that it will not remain unheard. It awakens echoes in the conscience of the individual. It fixes itself in men's minds. It is re-echoed and spread abroad and duly achieves its purpose.

Do you think it is worth while for this Assembly to utter such a cry, whether it has any legal value or not? Or that we should feel issuing from the soul of the Assembly an aspiration, even if it have no juridical value, towards the ideal of peace?

We must not be discouraged. I agree: the Protocol was a magnificent effort; I helped to frame it, and I regret that it came to nothing; nevertheless, I quite appreciate other people's difficulties.

Then again, it is certainly difficult to find a definition that will make it possible to determine the aggressor. Aggression, it is only too true, can be disguised by means of all kinds of subterfuges.

But are we, then, to abandon hope, and are the noblest hearts, the noblest peoples, of the world to resign themselves to their fate? I cannot think so. Difficult though it may be to determine the aggressor, it is not an impossibility. Aggression has a way of betraying itself. After all, a cannon shot is a cannon shot. You can hear it and it often leaves its traces.

The first to fire — it is surely fair to say that his act is not favourable to the cause of humanity, and if we can find the guilty party and bring him before the world tribunal and say: This blood, this havoc, are his work — well, that is something after all.

Are we to give up any attempt to do this? I cannot think so. We must not be guilty of injustice in the matter. We must not allow ourselves to be misled by over-hasty judgments, but we may still hope to accomplish our purpose.

And when the first shot is fired, and the League arises and says: "Cease fire!" — well, if one of the adversaries refuses, we can surely say that he is not really very anxious about peace, and we can all see who he is.

To turn now to the achievements that the League has to its credit. Something once happened which in the old days would have been thought impossible. I was there and have a right to speak of it.

One day a telegram was handed to me in my office. I was at that time President of the Council of the League. Two nations were engaged in battle: frontiers crossed, cannon-shots, rifles, machine-

guns. How far might it not go ? What might not happen in the state of suffering, unrest and suspicion which still prevailed in Europe ? I consulted the Secretariat and summoned the Council of the League. The Council met next day, and the two States appeared at the bar.

I addressed them in the name of the Council. I said : Cease fire ; withdraw your forces ; we will examine your quarrel when you have done so.

All honour to them, they obeyed at once. Their forces were withdrawn and the moment of tension was past.

Then we said to these two States : Do you accept us as judges to settle your dispute ? And both accepted.

Directly afterwards the League representatives visited what had once been the battlefield and was now a scene of peace. The war was over.

If an institution like the League could perform such an act in the space of forty-eight hours, I ask its detractors : Can they find anything to equal this act in history ? I ask them what would have happened if the League had not been there.

Well, if this institution, which was founded on the morrow of the war in the midst of apparently insuperable difficulties, which has been in existence for only a few years and has hardly had time to realise itself or to settle down — it has not settled down even yet, for we are only just starting on its new home — if, I say, an institution like the League can succeed in accomplishing such an act, in framing in such circumstances a formula prohibiting war and in enforcing respect for that formula, is not that, I ask you, a sufficient justification of its existence, is it not to its credit ?

I say : Yes !

And when, after a disastrous war, we see poor, miserable remnants of humanity — old men, women, children — with their humble belongings piled on their wretched broken-down carts, forlornly dragging their weary bodies from the shelter of one tree to that of the next, along the highroad, not knowing where they shall lay their heads, or whether, having escaped the horrors of war, they dare venture to hope for life ; when these poor people come humbly, moving us by the very modesty of their demands, and say to the League : " You are an association, a brotherhood of peoples. We, to, are brothers, flesh of your flesh, stricken by the war. Give us a home, give us some hope of life " ; when the League, not content with its political prowess, at once throws itself heart and soul into this work ; when we see it, with the good will of the nations, setting up committees, calling for money, sending out its emissaries to the relief of these poor remnants of humanity ; and when, a year later, we can point to rebuilt homes, old men with the light of family love in their eyes, women clasping their little children in their arms, confident that they will not fall a prey to destitution ; I ask : Is this nothing ?

Surely it is to the credit of the League that it should have power to do such things.

And now, what of sanctions ?

We must have them ; we have none as yet, but we shall have them ; we need only go on. This international family which is being founded, which is becoming daily more united, will find one day that all its member nations are prepared to abide by its decisions. The citizens of a country, however attracted to the idea of absolute liberty, nevertheless realise the need for sacrificing a certain portion of their personal liberty to ensure the liberty of the community and they are generously-compensated afterwards by the benefits they derive from the common stock. Similarly every individual nation will come to realise that

it must make sacrifices in order to strengthen the League of Nations. And will all this mean nothing ?

I remember the solemn words, the noble and courageous words uttered by Dr. Stresemann when, as the loyal representative of a great country, he came here before the forty-seven assembled States, in the eyes of the whole world, and said : When I signed the Locarno Agreements I made no distinction between one war and another. My country has decided not to resort to force in Europe, either in the East or in the West.

When he said that, when he proclaimed his adherence and his country's adherence to the principle of legal methods of settlement, and legal methods alone, was that nothing ?

His gesture, I need hardly say, had a greater, a moral, significance. It was only a spoken word, of course, and Dr. Stresemann may be succeeded by others who, borne on the moving tide of internal politics, may perhaps have different ideas. But solemn engagements like these, registered by the nations themselves, cannot be lightly set aside. Over and above courts of law, over and above judicial institutions and established codes, there are moral laws, there is another tribunal — the world conscience which gives only moral judgments, and has no officers of the law, no police to enforce them. Yet its judgments cannot be ignored.

I challenge any country that has given a solemn undertaking not to resort to war to break that pledge without wrecking its own future. It may perhaps reap the benefit of its act ; it may win what is called a victory. But, after this last war, who can say what victory is ? Who can say that the suffering is all on one side or that only triumph falls to the other ? Who does not realise to-day that every country must of necessity agree to international interdependence, even countries which are anxious to break away from the rest ? A country which did such a thing would bear the mark of Cain. It would live in such an atmosphere of reprobation that it could not but be conscious of its infamy. Is that a moral barrier ? Let us agree that it is. Some may think it puerile to erect it, but never mind — let us do so. We must neglect nothing ; and if I were invited to share in a reaffirmation of peace — for the tenth time if need be — or were asked to proclaim to the world, on my country's behalf, that she will never resort to war to settle her difficulties with other nations, I would do so. I should consider that in so doing I was entering upon a solemn undertaking, binding every nation so closely that, if it attempted to evade it, it would run the risk in time to come of dangers even worse than defeat. That is why I should enter upon such an undertaking.

Arbitration is gaining ground, and when Dr. Stresemann informed us yesterday that Germany, like France, was acceding to Article 36 of the Statute of the Permanent Court, the whole Assembly applauded his announcement. We must adopt legal methods of settlement. France has already turned her attention to these methods, and has not been content with words alone.

Quite recently a dispute arose between France and another country. All at once — I was at Geneva at the time — it developed into a violent controversy, and the outlook seemed black. We went to the Permanent Court of International Justice. We considered it no dishonour to a country to seek judges to try its cause. I have learnt while here that we have lost our case. Naturally, we are not pleased. When a country loses its case it must be excused if at first — for a day or two — it is ill-disposed towards its judges ; that's perhaps how we feel ; it is simply one method of emphasising a decision. If, however, I had to choose between

that course and the extreme course, I would choose the same way again without hesitation.

My country is determined to press on on these lines, and this, I am delighted to find, is the prevailing feeling of the Assembly.

And though in these judicial encounters we cannot have the last word, there is no disgrace. We constantly hear it said: "But what of national prestige?" Gentlemen, if that is what is meant by national prestige, if it hangs upon a mere judgment, then it is of very little account. The word "prestige" is greatly abused; people try to invest it with a moral significance in international relations.

When Germany entered this Assembly I said that we must beware of victories of prestige. I repeat those words to-day with added emphasis. A victory of prestige creates a poisoned atmosphere; it sets the national pride of one country against that of another; it adds to the difficulty of settling the grave problems which arise between country and country. Those who seek prestige are like actors who solicit the applause and deprecate the hisses of the public. We must not be afraid of occasional hisses; we must accustom our ears to the sound. My own ears have heard both hisses and applause, and I cannot even say whether the applause has been more frequent. In any case, I have had both, often from the same audience at the beginning and end of a speech.

We will not allow ourselves to be deterred by such considerations.

I must crave your indulgence for having detained you so long. I have given you the views that are uppermost in my own mind. I say that peace can never be firmly established in the world until the League has consolidated its existence, until all the Members of the League feel that they belong to one brotherhood, until they realise that they are members of one family, one human family, one world family, with universal aspirations, anxious to work in the open light of day, engaged, indeed, in work which merits the brightest light of day for its accomplishment, since it is the work of peace.

Gentlemen, let our aim be peace — peace through arbitration!

The President :

Translation : Sir George Pearce, first delegate of Australia, will address the Assembly.

Sir George Pearce (Australia) :

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — I ask for your consideration in view of the fact that the few remarks I have to make follow after that magnificent oration from the distinguished statesman, M. Briand, to which we have listened with so much interest. My apology must be that this League takes its decisions after listening to the representatives of all nations, and that all have something to contribute to the sum of its progress.

Australia is, from the point of view of population, one of the small States represented in this Assembly. It is a country that is far removed by time and space from Europe and its distractions, but nevertheless we are keenly and sympathetically interested in all proposals that will make for disarmament and peace. We have a large country that is as yet only partially developed, and we therefore desire to be able to devote our energies to the great task of the development of our country.

We, as a participant in the Great War, realise only too well what a terrible scourge war is, and the thousands of our countrymen whose bodies lie buried in the war cemeteries of Europe constitute

for us an obligation to assist to the uttermost all the efforts made to render such awful calamities impossible in the future. We believe that it is the great mission and the solemn duty of the League of Nations to accomplish this end.

The task of deciding upon the means by which this great end may be attained is a difficult one and needs the service and the good will of all civilised nations. It is imperative, however, that every proposal shall be fully considered, and it is also essential that the League, in its enquiries, should not be stampeded into hasty decisions, and also that it should remember that the nations of the world are looking to it for guidance and leadership.

It is necessary, if the League is to succeed in its great task, that it shall command the respect and the confidence of the nations. Nothing will do more to impair that confidence and lessen that respect than vacillation in the pursuit by the League of its enquiries into the means to peace, or the exhibition of a desire to bow to passing phases of public opinion, or to cater to the demand for the sensational and the dramatic.

I ask those who are impatient with the progress which has been made by the League on this its most important work to consider this Assembly to-day. Who could have believed that within ten years of the close of the greatest war in history we should see the representatives of nearly all the great nations who were the antagonists in that great struggle meeting here, as I believe, honestly and sincerely striving to find the way to disarmament and peace? This, in itself, is a miracle of accomplishment, and should hearten and inspire every friend of peace.

The League, at a previous Assembly, has already given long and serious study to one method of attaining peace that had been proposed. I refer to the scheme known as the Geneva Protocol. The Protocol which was drafted has not been able to command the necessary support to enable it to be adopted as the means to the desired end. The League then proceeded to explore another field; that of disarmament by agreement. The Preparatory Commission which it has set up has made certain progress, but it has not yet completed its work, and therefore no definite proposals have been submitted by it for adoption by this Assembly.

It is now proposed, in a motion submitted by the first delegate for the Netherlands Government, that the League should commence a re-examination and study of the principles of the Protocol. I ask the Assembly to consider what will be the effect, if this course is adopted, on the minds of the peoples of the world. Will it not constitute a declaration that we have abandoned the investigation of the plan of disarmament by agreement and are reverting to the position of 1924? Will it not exhibit uncertainty and lack of confidence by the League in itself, and can we be surprised if the result is to communicate that feeling to the nations? It may be that the Protocol was a counsel of perfection, but there are some of us who have serious doubt and misgiving on that point.

We in Australia, fortunately for ourselves, are not called upon too frequently to deal with international diplomacy and probably are not skilled in that art. I believe, however, that human nature is much the same in all nations, and that by a study of the application of certain principles in human affairs within one's own nation one is able to appreciate something of the effect of the application of those same principles on relations between the nations.

I wish to apply this method of reasoning to the question of compulsory arbitration, which is one of the main principles of the Protocol. We in Australia are probably unique in that we have applied the principle of compulsory arbitration to

industrial affairs. We have done this by legislation covering the industrial field and the relations between employer and employed. We have established courts of arbitration and empowered them to promulgate awards and have clothed them with power to secure the compulsory enforcement of those awards. In the discussion of these measures we adopted the very arguments and reasons that I have heard urged on behalf of the adoption of the Protocol.

I draw attention to the term "compulsory arbitration". Does it not contemplate ill-will and dispute? Does it not contemplate force? If that is so, are we proposing to substitute one form of force for another? I am not prepared to say that our industrial arbitration systems have failed, but none can claim that they have been an unqualified success. What have been some of the results of this system? Because compulsory arbitration presumes a dispute, the system has encouraged the organisation of employers and employed into separate armies which tend to regard each other with hostility and suspicion. It has led to the propagation of what we call paper disputes — that is, artificial disputes, generated by one or other of the parties, inspired with the hope of gaining something by an award and consoled by the fact that, even if the reference fails, the party creating the dispute is in no worse position. Because of these results, opinion in Australia is turning from the compulsory principle in the direction of conciliation and conference.

One of the conditions precedent to compulsory arbitration is that there shall be a dispute upon which to arbitrate. The main aim of the League, as I take it, should not be to settle disputes but to try to prevent disputes arising, and, if they do arise, to encourage measures which will prevent differences from growing into disputes which will cause the intervention of the League or of the Court of Arbitration at The Hague. Moreover, it seems to me that the League should encourage the settlement of differences arising between the nations by friendly negotiation and without recourse to the League.

It seemed to us that the Protocol had adopted and extended this dangerous phase of our industrial arbitration laws to which I have referred. The operation of this part of those laws has had, as I have said, a tendency to drive employers and employed into opposing and hostile camps. This is not the spirit that will help the cause of international peace, and it is, therefore, not the road which the League should tread in its march towards its ideals.

I should also like to invite the delegates to ask themselves whether the nations they represent will be prepared in every contingency and on every question to submit themselves and their cause to compulsory arbitration. If we are candid we must acknowledge that every nation knows that there are some questions that it cannot so submit. Let us pursue the study of disarmament by agreement with a sincere desire to succeed, and success will come. Let us continue energetically and earnestly the exploration of the means by which this can be accomplished.

I wish now to refer briefly to the work of the Economic Conference and to associate my country with the appreciative remarks of previous speakers regarding the spirit that has animated the deliberations of that Conference. We welcome anything that may result from that Conference that will, as has been said by previous speakers, lead the nations to peace.

I beg to remind the Assembly that the country I represent is in a somewhat different position, in the economic sphere, from most of the countries represented here. Many of those countries have had centuries in which to develop and expand their primary and secondary industries and in which to build up those accumulations of capital which are so necessary for the development of the industries of a country. We are a young country, and, as regards the greater part of it, we have had less than a century in which to develop. We cannot reconcile with our national view of growth that we should be satisfied with being merely "hewers of wood and drawers of water" for the older and economically more advanced countries.

We learned in the Great War how necessary it is that we should be able in certain essentials of economic life to supply ourselves with those essentials of national life and security. Freedom of trade and freedom of immigration must be conditioned by something approaching equality of standards of living and economic status. We therefore, whilst welcoming the resolutions of the Conference and promising that they shall receive that earnest consideration that is their due, must reserve to ourselves that power to safeguard our national and economic life which is recognised in the Covenant of the League as the right of all nations.

Finally, Mr. President, I would say that it is well, in the pursuit of an ideal, to "hitch your wagon to a star", but whilst we are making our way to that celestial aim we must remember that our vehicle must first demonstrate its capacity to withstand the bumps and ruts of this terrestrial sphere. Therefore, let our aim be high but let our methods be practical.

The Assembly rose at 12.35 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Eighth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

ELEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10th, 1927, AT 4.30 P.M.

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40. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the continuation of the general discussion 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.

Sir Austen Chamberlain, first delegate of the British Empire, will address the Assembly.

Sir Austen Chamberlain (British Empire) :

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen—It requires some courage to come to the tribune after the magnificent speech to which we had the pleasure of listening this morning, and, for my part, I should have been well content to close the general debate, in respect of those great questions of world-wide interest with which it has been chiefly concerned, upon the speech of the Foreign Minister of Germany and the reply of the Foreign Minister of France. But my silence might be misinterpreted, and, besides, I desire to join my tribute to that paid by M. Briand to the statesmanship, large-mindedness and courage of the Foreign Secretary of the Reich, who once again has shown himself a champion of appeasement and peace, and to name with him the Foreign Minister of France himself, who, with the same courage, the same foresight and sagacity, has once again in our presence taken the hand that was stretched out to him and registered a vow of peace between their two great nations.

Ladies and gentlemen, did I hear whispers of anxiety earlier in our meetings ? Did voices suggest that the League was losing its authority, that instead of making progress we were moving backward, and that peace is less secure to-day than it was a little time ago ? The speeches to which I have just referred are the answer to those recreant fears. The strength of the League, the strength of the resolve of us all to use the League in the great work of international peace, has had no setback, has been subject to no reaction, and our debates of yesterday and to-day confirm and strengthen the resolve which we have more than once registered before.

For my part, I welcome the motion of the honourable delegate of Poland. I welcome it, not

because it says anything new, but because once again it invites us all to join with those two great statesmen in the solemn resolution to pursue the ways of peace and to eschew the path of war.

I fear to continue on this line lest I should expose myself to the criticism which the first delegate of Norway addressed to us in the early days of the debate. He said that we were too much given to exchanging compliments among ourselves. At any rate, I may congratulate him on not having fallen into that error. He found fault with the Council; he did not spare the Assembly, whose underhand ways he held up to condemnation. He even thought it necessary to criticise the composition of other delegations, and to regret the presence of so many diplomats in this Assembly.

I cannot, I fear, express my agreement with this criticism. The League owes too much to the diplomats who have sat and who still sit among us for me to wish their number less than it is, and if I mention to you (not the names of any here present, for that would be invidious) the names of two of our recent colleagues who, alas! have now left us, and for different reasons — if I mention Viscount Ishii and M. Quiñones de León, those two names speak for all that the diplomatic members of the Council and the Assembly have been able to contribute to our work. May I add that, if they bring into our discussions something of the suavity, something of the consideration of the point of view of others, which they practise in diplomacy, I think that our debates will lose nothing either in their force or virility.

A more serious criticism was offered by the first delegate of Norway. It is one to which M. Briand has already replied, but it is one to which I am sensible, for if the fear or suspicion expressed by him were widely shared it would, I think, do grave injury to the League. I refer to the suggestion that, in the meetings of some of the representatives of great Powers, there is some attempt to withdraw from the Council or the Assembly the decisions which properly belong to them and to them alone, and to substitute a kind of inner cabal for the Council of the League itself.

Why, may I ask in passing, are the representatives of the great Powers and they alone to meet with this criticism? Are no other meetings held at Geneva except those in which Dr. Stresemann, M. Briand, M. Scialoja, M. Vandervelde and I take part? I have heard the rumours of the lobbies. I have read in the *Journal* that all other members of the League may meet as they please and when they please, and it is thought natural and proper that they should do so. Why, then, to us alone is it to be refused to meet in friendly converse and to try to improve our mutual relations?

If you think that in those conferences we have been occupied in the main in discussing the work of the Council, you are mistaken. We have many affairs of our own with which we hope that we may never have to trouble the Council, because we can settle them among ourselves, and if on any rare occasion, among the subjects which we have had to discuss, has been one which concerned the agenda of the Council, I venture to say that the work which we have done, the conversations which we have held, instead of impeding, have facilitated the work which it still remains for the Council to do. I would remind you that, whatever we may decide among ourselves, nothing that we can do could, nothing that we can do should, limit in any way the freedom of every other member of the Council to bring what subject he likes before that body, to press whatever solution he likes upon that body. Nothing that we may say or do, unless it commends itself to the whole body of the Council, can have any effect, except among ourselves.

I say so much upon this subject because, in the first place, I desire for myself and for the country which I represent, the good will and the confidence of this great gathering; and, in the second place, because anything which tends to sow distrust or dissent between the Council and the Assembly must be destructive of the influence of both and injurious to the vigour and usefulness of the League.

That part of the debate to which I wish to refer — for the Economic Conference and its great achievement has already been dealt with by another member of our delegation — concerns the twin questions of security and disarmament.

It would be idle to pretend that the failure of the recent Three-Power Conference on Naval Disarmament has not caused a certain disquiet and anxiety lest the failure to reach agreement should be the prelude only to a larger failure in the Preparatory Commission of the League. No one can regret more than my country — and my country does regret — the failure to reach agreement in the Three-Power Conference. But even from failure we may draw hope; even from failure we may in time win success; even in failure we may find encouragement, as in this case, that three great Powers should have met to discuss so vital a question, that they should have found themselves sustaining opposite and irreconcilable theses, that they should have carried on their discussions under the eye of the public, not always helped by the Press, and that when, after all, they were unable to agree, their cordial relations of amity and respect should remain unimpaired and their confidence in the peaceful intentions of each other should receive no check.

Has not the failure of that Conference perhaps a lesson for us all? I took part in one great Conference — and to have done so, I, like my friend M. Briand, shall always regard as the honour of my career — I took part in one great conference which had been preceded by nine months of anxious, careful preparation; yet we who took part in it know what difficulties we had to overcome before the Treaties of Locarno were signed, treaties which helped, as Dr. Stresemann said — and I thank him for the words — to make Germany a Member of our League.

May it not be that the failure to agree in the Three-Power Conference came from a lack of preparation, from the failure to secure a sufficient basis of agreement before the Conference met, thus rendering its discussions futile, and may we not draw from it the resolution to be patient, to work surely even if we work slowly, and that it is not always by hurrying that the greatest or even the quickest results are achieved?

My country yields to none other in its desire to see a real and a large restriction of armaments. I am reminded of a sentence which M. Clemenceau wrote in the album which was presented by France to Great Britain the other day: "S'aimer, ce n'est pas se le dire, c'est se le prouver".

Our interest in disarmament, our effort for disarmament lies not only in words or speeches, it lies in facts. We have proved it by our deeds. The British army was reduced, immediately peace was secured, to less than its pre-war level, to a strength which is only sufficient to discharge the great responsibilities we carry on our shoulders in so many parts of the world. Our navy cannot be compared with the navy which we maintained, I do not say during the war, but before the war. Year by year, the budget for the armed forces of our country has grown less.

I beg you to ask yourselves: Which of you, carrying our load of responsibility for the peace of so many and such scattered countries, in such

varied conditions, would have done more ? Is there any country, I would even ask, that would have done as much ?

Our interest is shown by the risks that we have taken and are taking, by the reductions which we have already made. Far be it from me to say that there is no further contribution that we can make to the cause of disarmament and peace. Only two days ago I had the honour, before the Council, to declare the acceptance by my Government in principle, and provided that others will do their share and that our joint effort produces a real limitation of armaments, of the Finnish proposal to constitute a fund or guarantee for giving financial assistance to a State which is the subject of aggression. We are urged to do more. I confess that I had hoped, when I made that statement, that some of those who were urging us on would at least have done the same as we, and that I should have heard at any rate from one voice on the Council the immediate resolution of his Government to join in our efforts.

I turn from disarmament. I speak for a moment of arbitration. Again I would beg you to bear in mind the special conditions of the British Empire. Ours is not a unitary system of government such as prevails in your countries. We are a great community of free and equal nations, each autonomous, united in the oldest league of peace in the world. It is not easy for an Empire so constituted always to accept the obligations that can be readily undertaken by a State homogeneous, compact, and speaking by the voice of but a single Government.

It is not easy, and it would not be right, to accept obligations unless we not only have the intention, but know that we have the power, to fulfil them. We are sometimes thought to be backward. There is an undercurrent of suggestion that, because we cannot participate in all the plans that are framed, we are stopping the progress of the League and are an obstacle in its way. I beg you to think of what we have done.

I do not know whether we have signed more treaties of arbitration than Italy or any other country or not. I think we have arbitrated more grave problems than any other country in the world. Only the other day the Council of the League was occupied for no small time with a decision as to what was to be the frontier of Iraq. We had accepted the Council of the League not as conciliator but as judge. We had bound ourselves in advance to accept and to obey the decision of the Council whatever it might be, for us or against us. It was rendered in our favour. What use did we make of it ? Did we use it to say : " Those are our rights. The Council of the League of Nations has awarded them to us ; about them there can be no negotiation " ? No, ladies and gentlemen. That very award given in our favour we used to open negotiations with Turkey and to make concessions to her that had not been required by the Council, and in that way to make acceptable to her an award which, rigidly enforced, she might have found it difficult to regard with anything but dislike.

Then, as regards security. Here I approach difficult ground. I speak to an audience the greater part of which finds the famous Protocol exactly suitable to their conditions and cannot understand why anyone else should be unable to accept what is so advantageous to them. But have we done nothing for security ? In the first place, we have accepted all the obligations of the Covenant which are common to us all. I beg you, I implore you, with all the earnestness in my power, not to cast doubt on the extent or the sacredness of the obligations which all of us have signed. Have a little more confidence in what we have done. Have

a little more confidence in yourselves. I think you scarcely realise how far the work of consolidating peace has already gone. I say that we have accepted all the obligations of the Covenant. We have done more.

We were party to the negotiations at Locarno. Thus we helped, I hope I may say, to bring into existence that system of treaties which, whether on the West or on the East, is recognised to-day and yesterday as the safeguard and the guarantee of the maintenance of peace. To the treaties which protect the frontiers of the West we gave our guarantee, and we gave it knowing the responsibilities which we undertook.

If I touch for a moment on history it is not, I beg you to believe, to awaken old controversies or to suggest blame. Once, long years ago, we signed a treaty of guarantee of the integrity of Belgium. That integrity was attacked and from the moment it was attacked our people were united to uphold our word and fulfil our pledge. The flower of our youth flocked to the colours as volunteers, and not of our youth only in England, but from every Dominion, from India, from every colony, from every scattered British community throughout the world the youth and hope of the young generation came to honour the word of Great Britain, pledged to Belgium for her integrity and safety. You know what it cost us — a million of our men. The hope of our land lie buried in the fields of France and of Flanders, in Gallipoli, in Palestine and Iraq, or deep under the waters of the ocean. We know what it is to give a guarantee and we know what it is to keep a guarantee. We know the price that we have paid. We know the price that we might be called upon (God forbid that it should be so !) to pay again.

Knowing all this, for the sake of peace, in order to help to bring three nations together, to give them the security which makes their mutual agreement possible, we have pledged our word once more to do, in the case of aggression on the Western frontiers, for Germany, for France, for Belgium, as the case may be, what we had pledged our word to do before — a pledge which we were called upon to keep.

Yet, you ask us to do more ! Could not some of you do as much before pressing us to go further ? Is there no other troubled frontier which those so anxious for this international action could take under their protection, to which they could give their guarantee, as we have pledged ours on the Western frontiers of Europe, and, by so doing, bring together two other nations at present regarding each other with mutual suspicion and fear ?

I repeat, you say it is not enough. You invite us to take for every country and for every frontier the guarantee which we have taken for one by the Treaty of Locarno. If you ask us that, you ask us the impossible. Our strength, great as it may be, is not equal to the task with which you would charge us. If I held out to you the hope that we can undertake such extensive obligations, I should deceive you. If we were to undertake in the present state of the world and at this time such extensive obligations, we could not keep them. You do not know what you ask us. You are asking nothing less than the disruption of the British Empire. I yield to no one in my devotion to this great League of Nations, but not even for this League will I destroy that smaller but older league of which my own country was the birthplace and of which it remains the centre.

Think of what is involved. I would beg the first delegate of the Netherlands to give ear to my appeal. Think of what is involved in the invitation to take up again the principles of the Protocol without reopening its discussion. He (the first

delegate of the Netherlands) will permit me to say that there is a certain contradiction of ideas in his resolution, for it is obviously impossible to take up the principles of the Protocol and not to reopen the discussions to which the principles give rise. Keep all your hopes for the revival of the Protocol! Keep all your hopes that its principles may in time prevail to the full, and universally! Keep such hopes by all means, and work to that end. But what useful purpose could we serve, what evil consequences might we not incur, if we reopen those troubled debates before there has been, from any quarter, any indication of a change of mind?

All the old controversies, all the old differences of opinion, are still expressed. There is no possibility of agreement until, on the one side or on the other — or perhaps on both — there has been some approximation of the views of the parties.

Observe, ladies and gentlemen, the Covenant is not enough. If you add the Protocol to the Covenant, will you all be satisfied? I listened, as we all did, with immense interest to the speech of M. Politis. I am not very fond of logic in politics, as I have once before said at this tribune, but I am grateful to M. Politis for the ruthless logic with which he pursued the argument of the Protocol. The Covenant is insufficient; the Protocol is insufficient. There are gaps in the building now. There would still be a gap in the Protocol. Above all, nothing is finished, nothing is accomplished, until you have multiplied sanctions. Ah, ladies and gentlemen, we talk about organising the work of peace. Does it not sometimes occur to you that the organisation of peace singularly resembles the old preparation for war?

I am a little afraid of the use of metaphors like filling up the gaps and blocking the cracks and fissures in the building. There are openings in every building. There are openings which give us power to breathe. There are passages which give us power to move. It is just those openings which make the difference between a habitation and a tomb. Beware how you so draw tight the bonds, how you so pile obligation on obligation and sanction on sanction, lest at last you find that you are not living nations but dead States.

Who has more authority to speak about the Protocol than M. Politis? Who contributed more to its formation? Yet he came to this tribune to tell us that our work will never be complete until we have made of this association, of this League, not what it is now — an assembly of sovereign States meeting in council — but a super-State giving orders to us all, not only for the conduct of our external affairs, but regarding the way we must behave, and what we must do within our own boundaries and among our own people. That way danger lies. It is not, so far as I see it — and above all not at present — the path of the future of the League.

The League does not depend only on the parchments which we have signed. The League does not depend only on the sanctions which we may enforce. The League — the judgment of the League — is the judgment of the highest tribunal to which here on earth any nation can appeal to justify its action, and of whose approval any nation will have infinite need in the moment of trial and trouble.

Do not underrate the authority which the League has already acquired. I have been among you only three years, but since I held my present office, I have made it my business, because I have felt it to be my duty, to attend every meeting of your Council and each meeting of your Assembly. I have done so because my Government bases its whole policy upon the League; because no country, however powerful, even to-day can disregard your

moral judgment, or can be deaf to the advantage of being able to come here before you, or to your Council, to plead its cause, to receive your approval, and to justify itself before the world.

We have accomplished much; we shall accomplish more. That which is not possible to-day may, as the peaceful atmosphere spreads, be attainable to-morrow. The work may be accomplished in two ways and from both ends. The growing reconciliation between ancient enemies or former enemies makes the risk less and makes whatever guarantees you want easier to give. Is there not as much to be done on the path which Germany and France have chosen of a direct reconciliation as by any amendment of Covenant, or addition of Protocol, or heaping up of sanctions? I give more for such speeches as those — not merely speeches but great acts of peace, solemn declarations of the determination to pursue a peaceful course and to eliminate war and all its horror from their future relations — I give more to their willing assent, their mutual assent, to those great principles than I give to all the sanctions we could apply to either, if it broke the pledge which it has taken.

Perhaps we do not all view the future of the League in quite the same way. Our faith in it is the same; our purpose is the same; the way in which we would reach our purpose varies with our circumstances, our temperaments and our responsibilities. I look to no hasty and dramatic way. I look to no series of sensational steps to make the League what, in time, we all hope that it will be.

I think of the words of the Psalmist when he speaks of the grass of the fields, "It grows green and cometh up in the morning; in the evening it is cut down, dried up and withered." Wherever you look in the organic world, it is not those organisms which come most quickly to maturity which reach the greatest strength or last the longest. I think of the League rather as an acorn that some man of good will and imagination planted less than ten years ago, which, we know not how, is now a sturdy sapling, though at no particular moment could we mark its growth. I think of it as ever-growing and expanding until it becomes a mighty oak under which all the nations of the world shall find their secure and constant shelter.

The President :

Translation : M. Caballero, delegate of Paraguay, will address the Assembly.

M. Caballero (Paraguay) :

Translation : Before the conclusion of the general discussion, I desire, as delegate of the Republic of Paraguay, to address the Assembly.

Eminent speakers before me have described in eloquent terms how during the past year the League has extended its ever-increasing activities to fresh spheres of usefulness. After their clear and lucid statements there is no need for me to draw up a balance-sheet.

I shall confine myself to certain matters on which the League's influence might be brought to bear to an even greater extent. Numerous difficulties are being caused by the diversity which exists between the various systems of legislation, in a world where relations of every kind are increasing and becoming more closely interconnected. The work of co-ordinating the laws which govern these various questions could beyond doubt be successfully carried out under the auspices of the League. The League alone is in a position gradually to overcome the obstacles, arising out of State sovereignty, which prevent freedom in the legal and economic relations between the nationals of different States.

Such a work would be in keeping with the League's essential mission, which is to procure the maximum of security. The world looks to the League to complete the work of international co-operation, in matters of law, of which the foundations have already been laid. We might advance step by step and succeed, if not in unifying, at all events in bringing into line the legal systems of the different States. Thus, while leaving each individual State to settle the details of its national legislation, it would still be possible to crystallise the principles common to them all and to establish as it were a secondary legal system to serve as a guide to legislators in their constructive task, and also to judges in their work of interpretation.

The League might render signal service both in establishing a common legislative system and in unifying or assimilating private law so far as this may be desirable and feasible.

Our grateful thanks are due to Italy for taking the lead in this direction and laying the foundation of an International Institute for the Unification of Private Law.

No society can live without positive laws, without a recognised code of order applicable to all its members. Similarly, no League of Nations can live and prosper and become a truly international community without some system of laws to govern its activities. Justice presupposes judges, and if the uncertainties of judicial administration are to be done away with, we must have a positive system of law to apply.

As you are aware, two methods, two conceptions, exist in regard to the codification of international law. The first consists in the framing of rules for international relations, the ultimate object being the complete codification of international law.

This is the method followed in America. The International Committee of American Jurists, which met for the second time at Rio de Janeiro, from April 17th to May 22nd, 1927, framed a draft for the codification of public international law, and this, if adopted by the Sixth Pan-American Conference, which is to meet at Havana in January 1928, will come into force in America.

The second method is the one adopted by the League Committee of Experts. It consists in examining the questions which, in the Committee's opinion, are already sufficiently ripe in the legal conscience of the nations to form the subject of international conventions. This method results only in partial and gradual codification. I will not venture to choose between the two methods, both of which are excellent in their way. Considerations of expediency alone may decide as a temporary measure in favour of one or other.

It is important, however, in my view that, if a scheme for codification is adopted in America, the League should immediately set about framing a second scheme for the codification of international law. The Committee of Experts should be instructed to submit to the League, quite soon, if possible, a draft scheme for general codification.

This is the only way to prevent a break in international law as the result of the adoption of different systems of codification in the two continents. Law, once codified in America, might develop along quite different lines from the international code, adopted later for the rest of the world. It is no doubt necessary in America to codify the international law governing certain specific questions, but it is essential to preserve the unity of international law. There is nothing to prevent the American States from adopting a unified system; but they will still remain free to settle this or that point of detail in accordance with their particular conditions.

The world has hitherto had a single system of international law, and it would be truly regrettable if this should divide into two divergent currents. It seems advisable, therefore, when instructing the Committee of Jurists to prepare a draft plan for general codification, as I have just suggested, to recommend it to take into account the work which is proceeding simultaneously in the New World. The League of Nations, which has already given evidence of its activity in the field of international law, ought to take up this work of codification, since, if successfully completed, it would not only be of great value from the moral point of view but would establish legal unity throughout the world.

It would subsequently be quite feasible and comparatively easy to combine the two systems and thus ensure the universality of international law.

In view of these considerations the delegation of Paraguay has the honour to submit to the Assembly the following draft 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."

The work of the other organs of the League affords further tangible and incontestable proof of its activity.

We find fresh undertakings, some of which have been completed, while others still await completion. We may congratulate ourselves especially on the results of the International Economic Conference, and on the steady growth of the Health Organisation, which this year, for the first time, extended its activities to Latin America. In this connection the Health Committee, by sending a mission to America, has played the part of forerunner.

The Assembly would do well to arrange for the continuation of this work, which has begun so auspiciously, and the initiative for which, I am glad to say, was taken by the delegation of Paraguay.

But while our technical balance-sheet undoubtedly augurs well for the League's future, can we say the same of our moral position? Material prosperity is a factor in the success of any organisation, but, in order that its success may be complete, a sound moral reputation is no less essential.

Let us look at the future without bias. Let us gaze dispassionately around us. We have to admit that, at the moment, confidence in the League is wavering. Of those who had placed all their faith in it, some have given way to doubt. The fact that certain committees engaged in studying particularly delicate problems have not arrived at definite results has been taken as a proof of impotence.

Such criticisms are deserving of attention, not for any element of truth they may contain, but simply because, erroneous though they be, they may react unfavourably on supporters of our cause.

The Geneva organisation, like all human institutions, is not yet perfect. In point of fact, however, this impotence with which the League has latterly been charged is, as it were, the "dead centre" of the mechanism, and is not due to any irremediable defect in its design. The public should be taught, for example, that in political matters all right of initiative rests with the associated nations,

and that no body exists which has power to take conservatory measures in the interests of peace. This is explicitly provided in Article 11 of the Covenant. The public should know that the League organisation is not at all equivalent to a judicial tribunal or public prosecutor responsible for the application of the law. The League, therefore, is not responsible for the inaction for which it has been blamed.

Those who publicly accuse it of impotence should rather blame the sovereignty of the States which limited the Council's power of initiative. They might also, perhaps, blame last year's reform of the Council, which unfortunately did not prevent us from losing most valued collaborators. The enlargement of the Council, it is alleged, has resulted in a tendency among the great Powers — which is to a certain extent natural and inevitable — to confer with one another and come to decisions among themselves, so that a kind of super-Council has now been formed. Experience would thus appear to have justified the fears originally expressed by certain delegations.

But, even if we were to fill in this gap, to rectify this organic error, we should still have done little to serve the cause of peace through justice, on which we are all so passionately set.

Institutions are of no account without a moral code, and there will never be any international morality or a true international community until the Members of this free association of nations are possessed of the spirit of solidarity, the international spirit — in the sense in which this term is employed by Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, the eminent President of Columbia University.

Another matter on which I should like to dwell is the question of international committees of enquiry, which are a kind of magistrates' bench, responsible for obtaining evidence. It seems to me that, in the interests of a practical policy of organised peace, it is very desirable that the procedure for any international enquiry should be settled beforehand. The League did much to promote the development of international conciliation when, in 1922, it framed a text which has been used as a model for the numerous conciliation conventions concluded during the last few years. The same system might be adopted in regard to the procedure for enquiries.

A certain procedure in the matter, it is true, was established by the Second Hague Conference, and formed the basis of the "Wilson-Bryan Peace Plan" and the "Gondra Covenant". But it would be a good plan to turn again to the 1907 Convention for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes and adapt it to the special requirements of enquiries carried out by order of the Council.

I desire to draw the Assembly's special attention to this suggestion concerning international committees of enquiry, and I would ask the Council to examine the question.

Lastly, I need hardly say that, as one of the signatories to the Geneva Protocol, Paraguay warmly supports the proposal of the Netherlands delegation to assume the study of the principles of the organisation of peace on which that Protocol was based.

Before concluding my remarks, may I say from this platform how much we regret the absence from the Assembly of certain Latin-American States? We hope, however, for the return of those who — only temporarily, we hope — have left the League.

When recognising the American Republics, the great English statesman, Canning, once said: "I have called the New World into existence in order to restore the balance of the Old". To restore the

balance — that is the essential task which since then has devolved upon Latin America.

As Members of the League, the Latin-American Republics exercise a very great influence in the direction of moderation and conciliation. Those distant States, which are lovers of justice and seekers after ideal truths and progress, can employ their disinterested intervention to facilitate the application of the law in doubtful cases. That is the historic and essentially humanitarian duty laid upon Latin America from the beginning, and that duty she owes it to herself to accomplish at Geneva.

All the Latin-American States should be here to assist in the performance of this solemn task.

The President :

Translation : The draft resolution just read by M. Caballero, first delegate of Paraguay, will be distributed and published in the *Journal* of the Assembly.

As regards the procedure to be adopted, I will, at the end of this meeting, submit a proposal concerning the further action to be taken with regard to this draft resolution.

M. Morales, first delegate of Panama, will address the Assembly.

M. Morales (Panama) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — After having heard for several days eloquent and authoritative speeches by the most distinguished statesmen in the world, who have expressed in the most striking terms their ideas on the grave and burning problems of disarmament and peace, you may perhaps turn with especial interest to something new, something different, which concerns a Latin-American country, and it is in this hope that I now address you.

It would not surprise me if my appearance on this platform as head of the Panama delegation should cause many of you to ask yourselves in what part of the globe the country I represent is situated, and what part it can take, what interest it can have, in the activities and fate of the League.

Panama is, it is true, a small nation, which was practically unknown to Europe until a few years ago, and its existence as an independent State dates back a bare quarter of a century.

If, however, you take a map of the world and look carefully for the narrow neck of land separating the two great oceans, you will find that this region forms the most prominent central part of the American continent, and can without exaggeration be accorded the unique distinction of being the geographical centre of the world.

The territory in question, which covers an area of 32,000 square miles, is that of the Republic of Panama.

Within its boundaries a canal has been constructed, linking the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and through this artificial channel more than 4,000 merchantships, flying nearly every known flag, pass every year, bound for all the ports of the world, carrying people of all races and the industrial products of every continent.

Panama is therefore a country having the advantage of a unique geographical position, to which its present existence as an independent nation is largely due. For the same reason, it will doubtless ultimately be called upon to take a prominent part in the peaceful concern of nations.

This exceptional position confers upon Panama equally exceptional privileges and advantages, but imposes on it corresponding obligations which are new and extraordinary in modern international law.

The whole of our territory is a place of transit, a thoroughfare essential to the world's trade, and our most obvious and imperative international duty is to permit this natural right of way, which has been perfected by human ingenuity, to be used on a footing of absolute equality by all nations without let or hindrance.

Clearly, then, Panama is the least isolated country on the face of the earth. It is in daily contact with every industrial and commercial country in the world, and it is beyond question possible that it may be brought into contact with every nation, far and near.

The international position of Panama does not resemble that of any other country. It would be easy to find two countries between which contact is improbable; the Kingdom of Bulgaria and the Republic of Paraguay, for instance, being divided by land and water, would find it difficult to discover interests which link or separate them or causes for changing their indifferent or friendly attitude. This, however, cannot be said of Panama, since the possibility is evident though the probability may be remote.

Since the position of the Republic of Panama is as I have briefly described, since Panama recognises and accepts it as its international duty that its territory should be used for the benefit of the trade and industries of the world, it is natural that it should take a deep and permanent interest in membership of any universal international association the object of which is to establish equality among nations, to base the peace of the world on mutual respect between States, to guarantee security to weak nations, and to submit international disputes and differences to judicial settlement as the final resort.

It is on account of this interest that my country appears as one of the founders of this association, and has taken part in its annual Assemblies in the firm conviction that the path forward is one that will lead the world to the perpetual enjoyment of the benefits of peace.

This conviction has in no wise been weakened during the years of the League's existence, notwithstanding the work that has been and is being done against it daily in some parts of the world. It is sometimes represented as the docile tool of the great Powers, sometimes as a dangerous institution striving to become a super-State and to destroy the sovereignty of its own Members, but mostly as a useless organisation without prestige, energy or life.

The obvious incompatibility of these various objections reveals to the impartial mind that the adversaries of the League have failed to realise that it is the most important international experiment in the history of mankind. Its present shortcomings, therefore, should not give rise to despair or disappointment; rather should they serve to promote the study of methods for perfecting its organisation, which will, no doubt, be discovered within a comparatively short space of time.

That is the attitude of the people of Panama. They are confident that the work is essentially sound and profitable, and they hope that the work of the League may be carried on with a sure faith in its ultimate success.

Since the formation of the League, other plans have arisen for the establishment of continental Leagues or regional Leagues, apparently compatible with the present League. I find it difficult to conceive the value of a League of Nations which is not essentially universal, since it is upon this universality that its efficiency and permanency, its utility and impartiality ultimately depend.

Let us take, for instance, the plan of a League of American nations based on the mistaken idea that

there is a single spirit representative of America, and that all the nations of the New World are linked by common interests stronger and more numerous than those that bind them to European countries. Is this true? And if it were, would this community of interests alone justify the creation of a separate League? No. In the first place, facts go to prove that the Argentine Republic and Guatemala, for instance, have fewer interests in common than exist between the Argentine and England, or between Guatemala and Germany.

The belief in common continental interests is an illusion. But even if such a belief were borne out by the facts, we must admit that this would not justify the creation of a special League. The fundamental object of an international association of this kind is not to seek to harmonise that which is already in harmony — that would be worse than puerile — but to endeavour to harmonise that which is discordant, to settle conflicts, to prevent an appeal to arms as the final argument and resource and to do all this by means of impartial agencies and instruments supported by the public opinion of the whole world.

Any League requires as its essential complement a Court of Justice, and an American League would therefore be compelled to organise an American Court. In the case of a serious dispute between American countries, would an American Court offer greater hopes or afford a stronger guarantee of impartiality than the Permanent Court of Justice already created under the auspices of the League of Nations?

The fact that purely American interests were at stake would surely mean that the Court, consisting as it does of distinguished jurists from all parts of the world, including an appreciable number of Americans, would be likely to afford a more complete guarantee of impartiality than any local organisation. Moreover, what would happen in the case of dispute between a European and an American nation? Which League would take upon itself the pacific settlement of the matter? Which Court would be competent to deal with the dispute? Would not this lead to a graver conflict between two Leagues, each upholding its own jurisdiction?

I have dealt with this matter at some length, and would say, in conclusion, that my country has not yet discovered any strong and convincing reasons for altering its belief that universality should be the essential characteristic of a League of Nations which aspires to play the part of an effective instrument of justice and peace in the world.

The League of Nations, in the universal form in which it exists to-day, and which we trust it may retain and strengthen by the accession of those countries that do not yet occupy the places left open for them, presents, as far as the weaker States are concerned, an aspect the essential importance of which has not yet been fully realised — I mean the moral aspect, the influence of reason and justice in the formation of a stern world public opinion in the face of which arms and armies are impotent.

This annual Assembly, at which the world's most distinguished men meet together, is a great forum — nay, more, it is the only forum in which those in need of protection and support may proclaim their wrongs, confident that at least the opprobrium of humanity's silent censure may fall upon the oppressors.

As I have already said, my country, being one of the founders of this League, has a deep and sincere interest in it, and hopes that it may continue to prosper, respected by all nations, and in possession of all the requisite authority to enable it to carry out the aims so ably set forth in the

Preamble to the Covenant. I therefore consider that it would be well to introduce and maintain the practice of inviting the Members of the League to come here from time to time and explain, possibly without any definite intention of their discussion or settlement, circumstances and conditions which in any way influence their international life, so that all the Members of the League may thus obtain first-hand authoritative information upon all matters affecting the safety and the political life of each of the associated nations.

Panama desires to inaugurate this practice as a proof of her profound respect for the League, and as the best means of explaining certain facts which have been misrepresented in the Press of various countries, in regard to the relations and links existing between Panama and the United States. That great country has vital interests in Panama. Under a Treaty concluded by the two countries in 1903, the United States have undertaken at their own expense the most remarkable piece of engineering of modern times, the canal which provides a through passage from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean in seven hours.

In order to facilitate the construction of this canal, which it was considered twenty-five years ago would prove a ruinous enterprise for whomsoever should undertake and complete it, Panama renounced considerable financial interests and also accepted, as a sacrifice, obligations imposed upon it by the essential need of ensuring its independence. Included in those sacrifices was the granting to the United States in perpetuity of the use, occupation and control of a zone ten miles wide across its territory for the construction, administration, maintenance, sanitation and protection of the Canal, and the exercise of all rights, power and authority over that zone by the United States as if they possessed sovereignty over the territory.

The complexity of the numerous matters dealt with in the Treaty of 1903 has led to conflicting interpretations by the two countries since its ratification. The cause of the most essential and profound disagreement, that relating to trade in the Canal Zone, was settled by diplomatic means in 1904, when it was established in substance that the United States Government had the right to import into the Canal Zone, free of duty, all machinery and materials required for the construction, maintenance, operation, sanitation and protection of the Canal, and all necessary articles for the employees and workmen and their families. Other residents in the Canal Zone may not import goods without paying duty to the Republic of Panama.

After this agreement had been in force for twenty years, the United States Congress authorised the President to abrogate it, and, although Panama pointed out that it could not be abrogated without its consent, as no definite or contingent date had been fixed for the termination of the Convention between the two countries, it was nevertheless abrogated, the United States Government declaring that its object was to conclude a new Convention on a more permanent basis than the old one.

This new Convention was negotiated in Washington by joint Commissions appointed by the two Governments, and, after discussions lasting more than two years, a Treaty was finally concluded on July 28th, 1926.

During the discussion of this Convention, Panama enjoyed full liberty of action, and, despite the fact that the negotiations took place between one of the most powerful and one of the weakest countries in the world, there was not the slightest tendency to impose onerous or humiliating conditions upon Panama. On the contrary, these negotiations were marked throughout by a spirit of mutual

consideration and respect, a fact which, in itself, is deserving of mention.

The Treaty naturally contains a number of concessions made by each of the parties in return for certain advantages obtained from or certain sacrifices made by the other, and for this very reason it can be regarded impartially by those who study it as a whole, whereas it is looked upon with disfavour by persons who see only the disadvantages or sacrifices, and are anxious to magnify and condemn them.

There is, however, a serious question in regard to which no compromise is possible between the two Governments, because it cannot be settled unless one of the parties changes its view wholly and completely and adopts the other's view.

The United States maintain that Panama has transferred to them its right of sovereignty over the Canal Zone, while Panama maintains that it has only granted them such rights and authority as they would possess if they were, in fact, the sovereign Power, for the specific purpose of constructing, maintaining, operating, sanitating and protecting the Canal.

Panama takes the view that sovereignty does not consist of one right only but of many rights, and that accordingly it was within its power to grant the United States the right to administer justice, to maintain order, to sanitize and protect the Canal Zone, but neither in intention nor in fact did it grant them the whole of its sovereign rights. Sovereignty is too essential and important a thing to be transferred by implication. Although it may be argued that the sovereign rights retained by Panama over the Canal Zone are but a shadow, they are yet substantial enough to prevent the United States from having a legitimate claim or title to transfer the Canal Zone or the Canal itself to any other country, and this is sufficient to justify Panama in its view.

This essential divergency in the interpretation of the Treaty of 1903 has not been settled in the Treaty of 1926, but, as the latter has not yet been ratified by the Legislature of Panama and the Panama Government hopes by further negotiations to effect a change and to obtain decisions favourable to Panama, it would not be surprising if the United States Government, whose friendship for Panama has always been sincere and cordial, should finally accept the latter's interpretation, which in no wise prejudices the vast interests which form a perpetual bond between that country and ours. If this is not the case, however, the two nations would still have the resource of submitting this and any other dispute to an impartial Court of Justice for its decision, trusting that a correct and equitable interpretation would be given for all time.

The United States has always been a just country, a lover of peace and an enthusiastic supporter of international arbitration. It is unthinkable, therefore, that in a dispute with a small, weak country it should refuse to submit to impartial judges a matter arising out of the interpretation of a treaty, and still more unthinkable that it should attempt to impose its own interpretation by some extrajudicial means.

I have given you the above details in order to explain the origin of the Treaty signed at Washington last year, and in reply to the criticism that this Treaty violates the Covenant of the League of Nations.

By Article 11 of the Treaty, Panama agrees to co-operate, by all possible means, with the United States in protecting and defending the Panama Canal, for which purpose it agrees to regard itself as at war in any conflict in which the United States are involved as belligerents.

As Panama sees it, this clause can have no other meaning than that, under its terms, it offers its assistance for the defence of a part of its own territory in which another country possesses vital interests. Panama maintains that it has not renounced or transferred to the United States the whole of its sovereign rights over the Canal Zone, and that, consequently, if the Panama Canal were attacked by any other country, it is the right and duty of Panama to defend it. This is a purely defensive provision to meet the eventuality of an attack on the Panama Canal involving the United States as a belligerent — an eventuality which we hope will never occur. It does not refer to a conflict involving Panama as one of the principal parties, in which case the Covenant of the League provides, in Articles 12 and 13, as amended in 1921, the procedure to be followed for the settlement of the dispute before a final resort to war. On the contrary, it relates to the defence by Panama of its territory in the event of a war arising out of a dispute in which it is not directly involved.

Panama maintains, therefore, that, even if the Treaty in regard to which negotiations are still proceeding at Washington should be finally approved and ratified, with the inclusion of the clause relating to her co-operation in the defence of the Canal, that Treaty would not constitute any violation of the engagements she has contracted under the Covenant. In that event, however, the matter will be considered when the Treaty is registered with the Secretariat of the League.

The United States have been accused of forcing Panama to accept this clause, but my Government solemnly declares this allegation to be false. The essential part of the clause was proposed by the Panama Government as a proof of solidarity with the United States in regard to the defence of the Canal and of its own territory, and was accepted by them in a magnanimous spirit and with a clear comprehension of the intention underlying Panama's proposal.

Such is the explanation which my Government desires to give to the Assembly of the League of Nations, in order to define its attitude to the League and to serve as an authoritative statement regarding the development of its special relations with the United States.

But, before concluding, I think it essential, in strict justice, to say this: that these relations between a State that is in every respect great and powerful and another that is small and weak have always been marked by firm, sincere and constant respect and friendship on both sides, and that the United States have at all times shown a genuine anxiety to contribute to the stability and progress of Panama without diminishing its independence.

Widely divergent views have been taken by the two countries, such as those which I have broadly indicated, and the energetic defence by Panama of its rights and the attitude it has adopted have not given rise to any resentment or rancour. Our faith in the existence of a spirit of justice in the United States is complete, for in that great democracy justice always wins over public opinion and finally prevails. For this reason, Panama is fully convinced that all its differences with the United States will be settled by diplomacy or by a Court of Arbitration or of Justice.

In conclusion, I would say that my country has watched with satisfaction the patient work of the Council and of the Secretariat during the year which has elapsed since the seventh ordinary session of the Assembly, and is proud to belong to an association the primary object of which is to place world peace on a firm and unshakable foundation, to which it adds secondary activities

directed towards the happiness and prosperity of all nations, irrespective of race, religion or custom.

41. — STUDY OF THE PRINCIPLES OF THE GENEVA PROTOCOL AND OF THE QUESTION OF DISARMAMENT: AMENDED TEXT OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE NETHERLANDS DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly will remember that last Tuesday the following draft resolution was submitted by the Netherlands delegation :

“ 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 Disarmament,

“ 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.”

You will remember that I then reserved the right to offer certain suggestions to the Assembly on the procedure to be adopted in respect of that draft resolution. In order to expedite that procedure, I have consulted the General Committee of the Assembly, which has approved my suggestion to refer this draft resolution to the Third Committee.

If no objections are raised, I shall consider that the Assembly has decided to adopt this procedure. M. Beelaerts van Blokland, first delegate of the Netherlands, will address the Assembly.

M. Beelaerts van Blokland (Netherlands) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — The very illuminating speech of the first delegate of the British Empire seems, I think, to be based on a certain misconception of the Netherlands delegation's proposal.

In the first place, I should like to point out that a discussion of the principles of the Geneva Protocol by no means entails a revival of the discussion on the Protocol itself. I carefully emphasised that fact both in my first speech and in the draft resolution.

Sir Austen Chamberlain was somewhat alarmed at the idea of resuming the discussion of the three great principles which form the basis of the Protocol. Moreover, the distinguished delegate of the British Empire urged that we must realise that the Covenant itself already gives us everything we need.

I fully appreciate that view; but Sir Austen will also agree that the provisions of the Covenant dealing with disarmament, security and arbitration are not enough in themselves. The work for disarmament, for the execution of Articles 11 and 16 of the Covenant and for extending the use of pacific methods in the solution of international disputes, bears out my contention.

The aim of the Netherlands delegation's proposal is simply to initiate in the appropriate Committees of the Assembly a calm and reasoned discussion of the problems raised by the Covenant.

The marked development which has taken place in those three problems since the failure of the

Geneva Protocol is ample justification for such a discussion.

In order to remove the objections advanced by the first delegate of the British Empire as regards the desirability of considering whether the time has not come "to resume the study of the principles on which that Protocol was based", as stated in the draft resolution, I wish to amend my proposal by deleting those words and substituting the following :

" 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."

Similarly, in the third paragraph of the draft resolution, the words: ". . . . of the fundamental principles of the Geneva Protocol" should be replaced by the following: ". . . . of the above-mentioned principles".

The draft resolution will now read 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 of disarmament, security and arbitration as provided for 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."

A slight correction has been made in the last sentence, which in the original draft did not fully concord with the statement made by my colleague, M. Loudon, at an earlier meeting.

The President :

Translation : The Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands has submitted a new draft resolution to supersede the draft which was laid before you last Tuesday.

I think that, this question being a very important one, the draft resolution should be distributed to the various delegations and published in the *Assembly Journal*.

On Monday morning I will suggest the action to be taken regarding the amended resolution which our colleague has just submitted.

If there are no objections, I shall regard the proposal as adopted. (*Adopted.*)

42. — SETTLEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL DISPUTES : REFERENCE TO THE THIRD COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : You will remember that, on September 9th, a draft resolution was submitted to the Assembly by M. Sokal on behalf of the Polish delegation, and I decided to propose at a later date what action should be taken in regard to that resolution, which reads as follows :

" The Assembly,

" Recognising 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."

I consulted the General Committee of the Assembly, and it approved my proposal to refer this draft resolution to the Third Committee.

If there is no objection, I shall regard my proposal as adopted. (*Adopted.*)

43. — PREPARATION OF A CODE OF INTERNATIONAL LAW : DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE PARAGUAYAN DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : M. Caballero to-day submitted 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."

When this draft resolution was submitted, I told the Assembly that, in order to expedite procedure, I would, before the end of the meeting, suggest the action to be taken in regard to it.

My proposal will not, I think, give rise to any objection, as there are a number of precedents for it.

I propose that this draft resolution be referred to the Agenda Committee, which will be requested to report on it as soon as possible.

If no plenary meeting of the Assembly is taking place when I receive the report, I shall regard myself, with your consent, as empowered to transmit this draft resolution to the Committee designated by the Agenda Committee.

Is there any objection ?

The proposal was adopted.

44. — WORK OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR THE CREATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL RELIEF UNION : REFERENCE TO THE SECOND COMMITTEE INSTEAD OF TO THE FIFTH COMMITTEE : LETTER FROM THE AGENDA COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : I have received from the Agenda Committee the following letter, dated September 10th, 1927 :

"The Assembly referred to the Agenda Committee a letter from the Acting President of the Council asking that the question of the work of the International Conference for the Creation of an International Relief Union should be placed on the agenda of the Assembly. The Agenda Committee examined this proposal on Thursday, September 8th, and decided to suggest that it should be referred to the Fifth Committee of the Assembly. You thereupon communicated this suggestion yesterday morning, September 9th, to the Assembly, which approved it.

"Since then, however, my colleagues on the Agenda Committee and myself have reconsidered the allocation of the various questions to the Committees, and have come to the conclusion that it would have been better to refer the above-mentioned question to the Second Committee, because it was that Committee which, at the last session of the Assembly, examined the preparatory documents of the International Conference for the Creation of an International Relief Union.

"In these circumstances, and although our first impulse was to try to lighten the somewhat heavy task of the Second Committee, we think it would be better to recommend to the Assembly to revoke its original decision and refer this question to the Second Committee.

"I shall be obliged if you will be so good as to consult the Assembly on this point and enable it to take a decision in regard to the change suggested.

(Signed) L. DE BROUCKÈRE,
Chairman of the Agenda Committee."

The proposal of the Agenda Committee is to refer the question not to the Fifth Committee, as suggested by the Assembly, but to the Second Committee. The Assembly is therefore asked to revoke its original decision and to refer the question to the Second Committee.

The Assembly has to consider the reasons which prompted the Agenda Committee's proposal.

If any member wishes to raise an objection his remarks will be duly noted.

Mr. Dandurand, Chairman of the Second Committee, will address the Assembly.

Mr. Dandurand (Canada), Chairman of the Second Committee :

Translation : The Second Committee already has a large number of questions to examine, and has even thought that it might advantageously refer the question of alcoholism to the Fifth Committee. We have not yet, however, brought this point before the Assembly. I know that the Fifth Committee too has a very large agenda.

Since neither the Second Committee nor myself has been consulted, I have no authority to accept the suggested proposal.

The President :

Translation : I note what our honourable colleague has said, and I now ask if other members of the Assembly have any observations to make. If not, I think the Assembly should approve the Agenda Committee's proposal. In other words, if there are no other observations, I shall take it that I am to refer this question, as the Agenda Committee suggests, to the Second Committee.

The Chairmen of the Committees concerned will be duly informed of the change that has been made.

The proposal was adopted.

45. — QUESTION OF THE NEW LEAGUE BUILDING : PROPOSALS OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly will remember that when, at the second meeting on Monday afternoon, September 5th, it was asked to decide upon its agenda, I proposed, and you kindly accepted my suggestion, to divide up the question of the new League building according to its various aspects. The Assembly then decided that, apart from budgetary matters, which would be dealt with by the Fourth Committee, these aspects of the question should be examined first of all by the General Committee of the Assembly, which should also be instructed to make proposals as to the procedure, to be followed.

In accordance with the Assembly's decision, the General Committee has carefully studied the various aspects of the question and has asked me to inform you of its conclusions.

It thinks that the best course would be to ask a small Committee of five members to formulate suggestions as to the desirable procedure. In order to help that Committee, the General Committee of the Assembly has thought it advisable to indicate which questions should be examined, and has accordingly prepared a note enumerating the various points. This note reads as follows :

"The Committee entrusted with the task of examining the procedure to be followed in regard to the League building will have to study the following points :

"1. Ascertain the cost of the various plans and compare it with the funds available.

"2. Examine the position resulting from this comparison. To what extent should the cost of plans which exceed the financial limits indicated in the programme be regarded as an eliminating factor ? Where these limits are exceeded, is there any possibility of modifying plans so as to bring their cost within the limits ?

"3. Consider the prize plans from the point of view of convenience and administrative requirements.

"4. If a suitable plan cannot be selected under satisfactory conditions, owing to the rejection of a large number of plans or the impossibility of bringing them within the required limits of expenditure, should the Assembly be asked to increase the credit vote ?

"5. If this proposal is not thought expedient, or if the Assembly does not agree to it :

"(a) Should further consideration be given to the question of a building to accommodate the whole of the services ? or

"(b) Should a building be erected for the Assembly alone and the building occupied by the Secretariat be retained for use as at present ?

"6. No matter what decision is adopted regarding the financial conditions, a complete or a limited plan must be selected. Should a choice be made from the prize-winning plans ? If so, by what method, taking into account considerations of a financial, administrative and aesthetic character ? If not, what procedure should be followed as regards the action to be taken ?

" 7. If no final decision is taken before the close of the present session of the Assembly, must the matter be held over until the next session or who will be empowered to take a decision in the interval ?

" To determine these various points, the Committee might consult all the members of the Jury of Architects or some of their number, the Swiss authorities — in particular, the authorities of the Canton of Geneva — the members of the Building Committee, the Secretary-General and his representatives, and, in general, any experts whose opinion might appear to be desirable."

This, then, would be the work of the proposed Committee, and the General Committee hopes that its suggestions will meet with the Assembly's approval.

The General Committee, anticipating the Assembly's wishes, also ventures to offer suggestions as to the membership of the Committee.

It has selected candidates who, by their great abilities and entire impartiality, are, in the Committee's opinion, eminently qualified to carry out this delicate task on sound lines and with high authority.

The following are proposed as members of the Committee :

M. ADATCI (Japan) ;
M. OSUSKY (Czechoslovakia), President of the Supervisory Commission ;
M. POLITIS (Greece) ;
M. URRUTIA (Colombia) ;
Sir Edward Hilton YOUNG (British Empire).

In offering the Assembly these suggestions as regards the membership and terms of reference of the proposed Committee, the General Committee wishes to say that the Committee should not regard itself as strictly bound by its terms of reference. The General Committee thinks that the Committee should be given wide discretion, so that it may be able to offer the Assembly any suggestions it may think desirable in the circumstances, which, as you know, are somewhat difficult.

If there is no objection to the General Committee's proposals, which I have laid before you, I shall take it that you approve the proposed Committee's terms of reference as defined and interpreted.

I presume that this Committee, with the membership indicated and the terms of reference laid down, will set to work at once and report direct to the Assembly.

The above proposals were adopted.

The Assembly rose at 7.55 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Eighth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

TWELFTH PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 12th, 1927, AT 10 A.M.

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46. — STUDY OF THE PRINCIPLES OF THE GENEVA PROTOCOL AND OF THE QUESTION OF DISARMAMENT: AMENDED TEXT OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE NETHERLANDS DELEGATION: REFERENCE TO THE THIRD COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly will remember that, at its afternoon meeting on September 10th, an amended draft resolution was submitted to it by the Netherlands delegation in place of the previous draft submitted by the same delegation on September 5th.

This is the text of the amended draft :

“ 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. ”

I reserved the right to submit to the Assembly suggestions as to the steps to be taken with regard to this draft resolution.

In order to expedite the procedure, I propose that the Assembly should refer this draft resolution immediately to the Third Committee.

If no one has any remarks to make, I shall consider that the Assembly has decided, without further procedure, to refer this draft resolution to the Third Committee. (*Assent.*)

47. — GIFT BY MR. JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, JUN., FOR THE CONSTRUCTION AND ENDOWMENT OF THE LEAGUE LIBRARY.

The President :

Translation : I have now the pleasant duty of reading to the Assembly a communication sent to me by the President of the Council on September 9th.

This communication reads as follows :

“ I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a resolution unanimously adopted by the

Members of the Council of the League of Nations together with the memorandum by the Secretary-General to which it refers, and to request you on behalf of the Council to be so good as to submit it for consideration by the Assembly as soon as possible."

This is the text of the resolution adopted by the Council on September 9th, 1927, which accompanied the letter from the President of the Council :

" The Council,

" Having taken note of the Secretary-General's memorandum informing it that, should the League of Nations desire to establish a library on an extended scale, an American group would be prepared to furnish funds up to two million dollars for the construction and endowment thereof ;

" Being convinced that the establishment of such a library is in the best interests of the League and cannot fail to contribute to the efficiency of the work done under its auspices, particularly in the technical fields, and will further be of the utmost value to the students of international relations who are already more and more coming to the seat of the League as a natural centre for such studies ;

" Extends, on behalf of the League, its warmest thanks for the gift and its profound appreciation of the generous and enlightened spirit which prompts it.

" Being further convinced that the purpose for which this gift is made can be adequately carried out with the certainty that no liabilities will, in future, be imposed on the Members of the League on account of its acceptance ;

" Decides in principle to accept the gift ;

" Requests the Assembly, in view of the importance and permanent value of the gift, to confirm the acceptance thereof, and to take such measures as it may consider desirable in order to ensure that it is used to the best possible advantage. "

I will state later my own views regarding this communication from the President of the Council.

I will first call upon the members of the Assembly who have asked to speak, and who, I think, are particularly well qualified to state the various reasons for the great pleasure we all feel.

M. Motta, President of the Swiss Confederation, will address the Assembly.

M. Motta (Switzerland) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — The applause with which you have received this good news is evidence of your satisfaction and gratitude. I wish to associate the Swiss Confederation and the Canton of Geneva with your expression of gratitude to the generous donors. This gift is not merely of great material value, it is also especially significant as showing that in the great Republic of North America there are those who appreciate, encourage and support the magnificent work of the League. I consider that this gift creates a strong link between peace and intellectual development, and I see in it a further pledge of future prosperity for the League.

The President :

Translation : M. Osusky, delegate of Czechoslovakia and Chairman of the Supervisory Commission, will address the Assembly.

M. Osusky (Czechoslovakia), Chairman of the Supervisory Commission :

Mr. President — It had not entered my mind to speak on this occasion as the representative of Czechoslovakia, but I rise to say a few words as Chairman of the Supervisory Commission, to which the Assembly has entrusted the control of its financial affairs.

It has been said, and also written, that the habit of financiers is to reduce human beings to figures. Such a description is not a very flattering one if it is applied to the function of the Supervisory Commission. Nevertheless, even in such a highly idealistic society as the League of Nations it can do no harm, and must indeed do good, to have a body which is charged with the measurement of support for the League in terms of figures.

You will expect to hear from me as to the position of this gift in view of the financial regulations which you set out in 1923. Article 23 (a) provides that gifts which may directly or indirectly involve an immediate or an ultimate financial liability for the Members of the League may only be accepted after authorisation by the Assembly. Gifts not involving any financial liability for the Members of the League may be accepted by the Council if the Council is satisfied that acceptance will not undesirably affect the general character of the League and will be in accordance with the general policy which the League has pursued.

The Council, in the resolution which has just been read from the Chair, has stated that it is satisfied that the gift corresponds to the stipulations laid down in your financial rules, and that the gift, so far from having an undesirable effect on the character and work of the League, has an effect which is extremely desirable and gratifying. The Council has thus declared itself in full agreement with the acceptance of the gift. Therefore from the point of view of the financial rules of the League of Nations the gift and the object of the gift are in perfect agreement with the purposes of the League.

Having thus disposed of the technical aspect of the gift, permit me to say that, although the United States and the people of the United States, in the exercise of their sovereign rights, decided not to take their place among us, I never believed that the people who, after their war for national independence towards the end of the eighteenth century, introduced arbitration into their relations with other nations could remain indifferent to the work of the League of Nations for peace and international justice.

The citizens of America have now given us tangible proof that they reserve in their hearts a very warm corner for the efforts which we are making. This will certainly stimulate and encourage those who have set their hands to the plough. It will be at the same time an admonition never to stop or to look or turn backwards, but to go forward calmly, yet hopefully and resolutely. I am confident that the library which is going to be created will be a fountain of enlightenment and faith, the two deadly enemies of war and injustice.

The President :

Translation : M. van Eysinga, delegate of the Netherlands and Chairman of the Fourth Committee, will address the Assembly.

M. van Eysinga (Netherlands), Chairman of the Fourth Committee :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — The gratifying message which the President has just communicated to us leads me to say a few words as Chairman of the Fourth Committee. First of all, however, I should like, on behalf of the Netherlands delegation, to associate myself wholeheartedly with the expressions of

satisfaction and gratitude voiced by the first delegate of Switzerland and by M. Osusky.

So the great international centre of Geneva is to have its library, thanks to the public-spirited generosity of a group of American citizens!

No one can appreciate better than a citizen of the Netherlands the value of a great library to an international centre. That other international centre, The Hague, which is the seat of two international Courts, also possesses a library, and we fully realise its immense importance for the progress of the international legal activities carried on there.

I need not remind you that the Library of the Peace Palace at The Hague also owes its existence to the generosity of an American, Mr. Carnegie. And now Geneva is to enjoy a similar privilege!

The Fourth Committee of the Assembly shares with the Council and the Supervisory Commission the thankless task of asking, whenever a new event occurs in the life of the League, whether this event is such as to involve the Members, either now or in the future, in direct or indirect financial obligations. This is a particularly delicate matter, and indeed a somewhat ungracious one in the case of a gift like that which has just been offered us. The Financial Regulations must, however, be observed.

I am therefore particularly glad that the Council itself has already performed this disagreeable task, and informs us that the gift in question is so liberal, so regal, if I may say so, that, without doubt, it could not involve Members of the League in any direct or indirect financial commitments, either now or in the future.

Although, therefore, I have received no instructions on the subject from the Fourth Committee, I can wholeheartedly invite all members of the Fourth Committee here present to approve, without any reservation of a financial or budgetary nature, the resolution which the President has just read.

The President :

Translation : Ladies and Gentlemen — After the spontaneous demonstrations of gratitude which several eminent members of this Assembly have just made, I desire to add a few words, not so much on my own behalf as on behalf of the forty-seven States here represented.

The liberal offer which you have just greeted with applause honours alike the institution to which it is made and the donors.

Thanks to this gift, the seat of the League will become an international and intellectual centre of information, almost unique in the world, and will thereby enhance the League's prestige and add to its usefulness.

I should like the donors to realise from what has been said that we all understand and appreciate the significance and the import of their offer. It is therefore with deep emotion that, on behalf of this Assembly, I express to them the gratitude of the States represented in this hall.

I think that the Assembly will unanimously wish to confirm the acceptance of this gift and accordingly to refer the letter and the Council's resolution to the Fourth Committee, which will consider at one of its next meetings the various practical steps that the organs of the League will have to take as the result of the acceptance of this gift.

If no one has any remarks to make, this course will be adopted. (*Assent.*)

Now that the Assembly has decided to confirm the acceptance of this gift by the Council, there is no longer any reason why the name of the

generous donor should not be revealed. It is Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jun., of the Rockefeller Foundation, who has made the League the offer which you have just acclaimed in a common impulse of gratitude. You will remember that the name of this Foundation is already associated with the League's other work in humanitarian and social spheres.

48. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND ON THE WORK OF THE SECRETARIAT: CLOSE OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the continuation of the general discussion of the report to the eighth ordinary session of the Assembly, on the Work of the Council, on the Work of the Secretariat, and on the Measures taken to execute the Decisions of the Assembly.

M. Motta, President of the Swiss Confederation, will address the Assembly.

M. Motta (Switzerland) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — I must begin by apologising for speaking in this important discussion after you have heard the first delegates of the Great Powers, M. Adati, Dr. Stresemann, M. Scialoja, M. Briand, and Sir Austen Chamberlain.

I thought that it would perhaps serve some useful purpose if I spoke after them, but I fully realise how ill-equipped I am for this great responsibility, and I thank the President for his courtesy in having of his own accord prevented the general discussion from ending at a late hour last Saturday.

Now that we have come to the end of this long discussion, we cannot but realise, I think, one fact — that the discussion has fulfilled our expectations : it has proceeded throughout in an atmosphere of frankness, freedom and high idealism.

The fears of those who thought that we had come here to deliver monologues and that there would be nothing contradictory in our discussions have not been justified. On the contrary, there have been differences of opinion and I am glad of it.

Last year the opening of the discussion suffered because, at the time when the Assembly met, the minds of all were preoccupied with the question of the admission of Germany to the League and to the Council, and with the problem of the enlargement of the Council. This preoccupation was such that the general discussion was influenced by it, and was cut somewhat short.

The Assembly, however, must remain mindful of the part it has to play. This year I think it has done so, and to a remarkable degree. The Assembly is a higher controlling body, and must be vigilant and active.

If the development of the League shows signs of coming to a standstill, it is primarily the Assembly's duty to point out the fact. If obstacles arise, it is primarily the Assembly's duty to endeavour to find means of overcoming them. The great impulses which urge the League forward to the bright future that lies before it should spring primarily from the Assembly as a whole.

It is my privilege — one which few among you now possess — to have been present at every session of the Assembly of the League. If I had time and were not afraid of abusing your patience, I could mention the special characteristic of every session ; I will, however, confine myself to two.

The first session of the Assembly is deeply imprinted upon my memory. Then, only the victors of the war and the neutral nations were present. I remember that grey day, November 15th, 1920. Owing to circumstances quite independent of personal merit, I was then for the second time President of the Swiss Confederation, and it fell to me to welcome the Assembly on behalf of the Federal Council and the Swiss nation.

Switzerland itself had just held a big plebiscite in which the friends and foes of the League had met face to face. Some — and their views were worthy of respect — urged us to be cautious and to hold back; others, more liberal and more just, urged us to go forward. How many times have I thanked Providence with all my heart that the Swiss people did not, then, shut their eyes to those great events and remain deaf to the appeal of the nations which had won the war and of the neutral nations — an appeal which was so consonant with the free and pacific nature of the Swiss people.

The atmosphere at that time was, however, heavy; the wounds caused by the war were still raw and could only be touched, so to speak, by a woman's hand; even the most discreet and best-intentioned reference to the possibility of one day admitting the conquered nations to the League provoked resentment, uneasiness and sometimes even protest.

To-day all is changed; but that first great Assembly, despite the circumstances in which it met, despite the echoes of war that still were heard in it, set itself to found the administrative organisation of the League, laid down our methods of work, and accomplished a task of incomparable value by framing the statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice at The Hague.

Then again, the fifth session of the Assembly is still fresh in my memory: that was the Assembly of the Protocol.

I had the equally unmerited privilege of presiding over those important discussions, and I still remember the wave of enthusiasm which swept over the Assembly. We were all pervaded by the mystic influence of peace, and we thought that by drawing up the Protocol we were going to provide sure and unshakable guarantees of peace.

Yet I confess that, even when I heard the magnificent speeches that were made, even while listening to the speakers and arranging the work, doubts had already crept into my mind, and — if I may recall the fact, though I know there is nothing more displeasing than the habit of quoting one's own words — I put these questions in the speech with which I closed the Assembly: Have we been too ambitious? Have we mistaken the measure of our strength? Are we not preparing for ourselves a great disappointment?

In truth, disappointment followed. It was not found possible for the Protocol to come into force. Nevertheless, to-day, if we put the question to ourselves calmly, and in the cold light of reason — has this disappointment been really as great as has been suggested? Though so much has been said about it, is it entirely justified?

The Protocol is waiting to be accepted. But even before acquiring definite form and existence it has produced astonishing effects by the atmosphere which it has created.

It has become a commonplace to say that without the Geneva Protocol the work of Locarno would never have seen the light. This Protocol had led everywhere to a wonderful crop of treaties for judicial settlement and for conciliation. These treaties for judicial settlement and similar clauses of other treaties numbered in September 1924 about 120. To-day the number of such international undertakings is 220.

I venture to dwell for a moment upon the example which Switzerland has given. At the time when the Protocol was drawn up, that is, on September 20th, 1924, Switzerland concluded with Italy a treaty for judicial settlement and conciliation which goes as far as such a treaty between two States can go. This treaty is a model and may serve, I venture to say, as an ideal for other States.

Shortly afterwards we concluded a treaty with France, and later, with Spain, with Roumania, with Belgium. Recently, again, I had the pleasure of signing at Berne a treaty with Colombia with our eminent colleague, M. Urrutia, who is here representing that country. This treaty recognises the compulsory jurisdiction, in case of dispute, of the Permanent Court of International Justice. When we signed this treaty, M. Urrutia and I, we reflected that it would never be applied in practice; that it was inconceivable that any disputes should arise between us, as our countries are too far away from each other; but that we were setting a fresh example, and that, if all the States were to follow that example and strengthen their mutual relationships by means of treaties for judicial settlement and arbitration, as Switzerland had done with her neighbours, a network of treaties would in time spread over the whole world, and thus the fundamental idea of the Geneva Protocol would indirectly be realised.

Who among you was not filled with emotion on hearing the first delegate of Germany declare here that Germany accepted the clause of Article 36 of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice relating to compulsory arbitration? And only a few hours afterwards, the first delegate of France associated himself with this act and concluded his speech with the words: "Peace through arbitration".

Two countries which measured their forces on the battlefield and freely shed the blood of their heroic sons have come here a few years after the Great War to proclaim the virtue, the necessity, of arbitration. We should have to be physically blind or morally insensible not to be moved by the greatness, the immense significance of this act.

I understand that, as a result of this conciliatory atmosphere, two proposals have been submitted, by the Netherlands and the Polish delegations respectively. Both proposals have been referred to the Third Committee, in conformity with the Assembly's Rules of Procedure. The First Committee will perhaps also have occasion to deal with the legal questions appertaining to these proposals. I myself regard the Netherlands proposal as a means of stimulating the investigations on the question of the reduction of armaments, which seem to have arrived at a deadlock, or at any rate to have encountered a serious obstacle. I congratulate the Netherlands delegation on its initiative, and since that delegation has, as you know, amended its proposal, I no longer think that there should be any reason why the investigations for which it asks should not be carried out in a spirit of the greatest sympathy and good will.

I should also like to say a few words on the proposal submitted by the Polish delegation. I was extremely interested to hear the eloquent speech which Senator Scialoja, the first delegate of Italy, made on the subject. Listening to him, I had before my eyes, as it were, a vision of a Roman jurist. He spoke not only with subtlety and sound reasoning but also with real generosity of heart. At that moment he exemplified to my mind the classical definition of the orator: *vir bonus dicendi peritus*.

I afterwards heard M. Briand, Sir Austen Chamberlain and Dr. Stresemann, who all approached the question from a point of view not so much legal

as moral. From the legal point of view I thought that M. Scialoja was right, but I wondered if I should follow his line of reasoning to the very end and I told myself that, if the first delegate of Germany and the Polish representative thought that this fresh condemnation of wars of aggression, which was formulated here after solemn discussion, could have a useful effect, the Swiss delegation could not refuse to add its small stone to the edifice of peace.

I therefore hope that the Polish proposal also will be examined by the Third and First Committees with all the good will and sympathy which it deserves.

Before touching upon a point which I know to be a delicate one, I wish to say that the Swiss Confederation, like all the other countries, cordially welcomed the International Economic Conference, that it noted with pleasure the recommendations adopted by that Conference and that it will endeavour to bring its policy into line with them.

I am glad that before the Council itself comes to deal with the question of the action to be taken with regard to certain resolutions adopted by the Conference, the Second Committee will have an opportunity of opening a general discussion on the principles underlying these resolutions and of stating its views. The Council will thus be in a position to take into account in its subsequent decisions any recommendations which may have been expressed either by the Second Committee or by the plenary Assembly. This fact seems to me to be evidence of a spirit of useful and valuable co-operation between the Assembly and the Council.

I now come to the delicate point to which I wish to refer.

First, I think I am voicing the feelings of the whole Assembly in thanking M. Briand and Sir Austen Chamberlain for having been good enough to discuss some of the remarks made during this discussion on the subject of what I will call — to use a term which is perhaps too bald — the methods of the Council. I think it would be a pity if certain observations which have been made were passed over unheeded. It would certainly not leave a good impression.

I do not speak here of conversations between delegates or between States. I must admit that both the first delegate of France and the first delegate of the British Empire expressed themselves with loftiness of view, frankness and candour to which I am impelled to pay a sincere tribute.

I am glad they set us all such a great example. The fact that they so often leave their country to come to Geneva, to the meetings of the Council and of the Assembly, is the most striking proof of the high importance they attach to the League. I hope that this example will continue to be followed, and that members of Governments, especially Ministers for Foreign Affairs, will come to Geneva in ever greater numbers; for the presence of such statesmen, with the very definite responsibilities they bear, is a guarantee that our proceedings will have due weight and effect.

But the point I desire to touch upon, though not to discuss, is the publicity of the Council's discussions. I beg the States and Members of the Council to believe that I have not the least intention of offering criticism. I am speaking in entire good faith and good will, and with the best intention. I consider that this form of criticism — if indeed, objectively speaking, it can be called criticism — is one form of the necessary co-operation between Assembly and Council.

Much has been said on the subject of the publicity of the Council's discussions. I know how delicate a question this is. I myself belong to a Government

which, like other Governments, does not deliberate in public. I know how necessary it is that matters should be studied, prepared, and brought, so to speak, to a certain degree of maturity before facing public discussion.

The Assembly, however, conducts its discussions in public, as do its Committees. I will give you a striking example. Last year a grave crisis arose in connection with the reorganisation and enlargement of the Council. At first the question was discussed not publicly but in private; but afterwards the Council conceived the happy idea of appointing a Committee of fifteen members. This Committee set to work; it held fifteen public meetings, with what results you all know.

Is it time yet to say whether the decision regarding the composition of the Council taken by the Assembly last year has resulted in the formation of a useful institution? I will not venture to discuss such a subject. Here, above all, we should apply the maxim with which M. Politis ended his eloquent speech: "Wait!" It will be some years before we shall know whether what we did last year is really viable or successful.

I for my part would like to see the experiment which has been begun carried on under the best conditions, in order to give it a chance of success. But for that reason I am inclined to the belief that the Council would do well if sometimes it met not merely to confirm results already achieved but to help to arrive at the results themselves.

The Council has done so on more than one occasion, and whenever after a public discussion it has successfully brought about unity, peace and justice, public opinion has welcomed its action with special cordiality.

I know that this is a question of method with which it is difficult to deal, but for that reason it is one that should be studied. I make no claim to have solved it. I merely wished to state the problem frankly and objectively, and I hope the Council will be good enough to give it its attention.

In any case, the Council may be certain that I shall never favour any move which would set the Great Powers and the other Powers against each other, as I consider this would be most harmful and dangerous. I realise only too well how much the nations which are not Great Powers owe to the League. I know that their presence here is their most effective means of wielding their influence in international life. A Great Power can perhaps afford to do without the League, but a small Power can no longer do so nowadays if it hopes to play a part in world affairs.

I therefore beg those members of the Council who are present to have no fear. My message is a message of faith and trust — trust in ourselves, trust in each other, faith in the power of the League's ideals. Only by this means shall we find immanent justice; for if its source is in the creative spirit that rules the world, its material instrument on earth is man.

Those who sometimes disparage our work should be accorded our thanks. We should not regard them with disdain; they are doing us service, they are useful to us, because they give us food for reflection.

On the other hand, when I see those who are trying to destroy our good will and paralyse our action by stirring up discord, dissension and hatred, I would remind them of the words of one of the greatest poets of German Switzerland, Gottfried Keller. Writing in praise of international peace, he says: "As for them, it were better that they had never been born, for they think they live, and they are already on the edge of the grave."

The President :

Translation : M. Lupu, delegate of Roumania, will address the Assembly.

M. Lupu (Roumania) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — Although I am a Parliamentarian of many years' standing in my own country, it is not without deep emotion that I now address from this platform the foremost Parliament of the world. When I see the distinguished veterans of the Assembly who have preceded me on this platform, I feel that I am only a younger brother to whose remarks you may perhaps be good enough to listen.

We have had the privilege of hearing the representatives of the Great Powers and the smaller States. We have heard the voices of our neighbours in Europe and those of distant countries in Asia and South America. Words of wisdom and prudence, of scepticism and of enthusiasm, of faith and of suspicion, have fallen upon our ears.

I listened to the speech, so shrewd in its fine scepticism, delivered by the doyen of our Assembly, M. Scialoja, to the sound speech of Sir Austen Chamberlain, so full of practical wisdom, to the criticism, severe yet eminently friendly, of M. Hambro, to the measured, statesmanlike speech of Dr. Stresemann, to the inspired and pleading words of that apostle of peace, M. Briand, and to the speech, full of sound common sense and ripe experience, delivered by M. Motta.

From the synthetic whole of all these speeches there emerges one clear and definite fact — the fact that here under one roof all the peoples and races of the earth are met in order to pursue one common ideal — to establish peace and safeguard the future of mankind.

This moral phenomenon, coming as it does after the cataclysm of the war, is the most significant that has ever occurred in the collective life of the nations. What the great founders of religions, the thinkers, and the sages of antiquity — in China, in India, in Greece, in modern Europe — only dared to dream of or but dimly glimpsed, we are now helping to make a living reality.

The organisation of any human society is generally slow, and only follows long after the thought or idealistic conception that determined it.

Independent of all visionary hopes, the League stands to-day as the outcome of a profound historic impulse in the evolution of mankind.

The war brought out into clear relief two great truths. The first is that modern scientific discovery has proved that war is no longer a practical means of solving disputes between nations, that victors and vanquished alike remain for years exhausted. In the second place, the war has shown that the close economic interdependence which exists between the nations makes it impossible now for war ever to be localised. A spark in one corner of the world may set the whole world aflame, and bring sorrow and suffering both to those who fight and those who keep out of the fray. Henceforth there can be no more neutrals.

With the reorganisation of national economic life we have all come to look upon war not merely as an absurd anachronism, a distressful relic of the past, but as an actual crime against humanity.

It has been the sad privilege of our generation not merely to record the truths which I am now trying to bring before you, but also to experience them and suffer from them.

Since the Great War the whole world has become profoundly imbued with the feeling that what happened then cannot, must never, be allowed to happen again.

To the present generation, which has known the full measure of human suffering, falls the great privilege of abolishing war for ever.

Future generations may perhaps be tempted to begin again, since they will not have known the suffering through which we have passed. But we, who have lived through years of agony and despair, when the very earth seemed to give way beneath our feet, we must work heart and soul to put an end to war.

On us lies a grave responsibility towards our peoples and towards the future of mankind — an even greater responsibility than rests on those who made the war, for they had the excuse perhaps that they could not realise what its consequences would be, while we no longer have that saving plea.

The history of the world contains records of many a vanished civilisation. Dare we assume responsibility for the destruction of the most splendid civilisation the world has ever known? For this would be the consequence of any failure to do our duty.

Viewed in the light of the great task it is called upon to fulfil, the League cannot claim as yet to be either a complete or a perfect organisation. Some Powers have forsaken us. May I venture, while expressing my regret, at the same time to express the hope that they will return to our midst? Moreover, one great nation — the nation which produced Woodrow Wilson, the spiritual father of the League — is not yet a Member of the League.

But we need not despair, for henceforth no State, however powerful, can live in isolation. The power of truth, morality and world opinion is infinitely stronger than the material power of any people, however great. I feel confident that the great nation across the sea, a nation in which the ideals of justice and humanity are deeply rooted, will before long take the honourable place to which it is entitled.

Our institution, as I have said, is far from perfect, but is it asking too much that, at least among the present Members of the League, war shall be forbidden even in cases in which it is tolerated by the Covenant?

Let us duly respect national pride and national interests, let us avoid all difficulties. The fact still remains that that should be our object: it will be the strongest link to bind us together in the League of Nations.

Can it be true that the nations are not yet ready for such a step? Ask those who fought in the war, the war cripples, the widows and orphans, the parents of those who now lie gloriously buried in every quarter of the globe. Their reply is a foregone conclusion. But in case there may still be some whom it fails to convince, we must first exert all our efforts and institute propaganda in favour of moral disarmament.

Those who are anxious to increase their armaments could certainly not share such propaganda. But we can count on precious allies in many representatives of the world Press, who are keeping in touch with our efforts. Let us join with them in a great crusade, having for its slogan: "War on war!" Let us add to the ten commandments of the Scriptures an eleventh commandment, yet more sacred: "Thou shalt not make war".

The evil forces of the past are still powerful, and unless we can annihilate them our civilisation is doomed to disappear like so many before it. War on war! And the first war must be against the evil that is within us, against false pride, in individuals and in nations. Just as the individual sacrifices himself for the family, the family for the city and

the city for the State, so now the nations must offer their sacrifice on the altar of humanity.

In my own country, at the foot of the Carpathians, stands a wonderful monastery, the gem of our national art. The legend is that the master-builder, whose task it was to raise it, saw the work which he produced in the day destroyed in the night by the forces of evil. In his despair, one night he heard a distant voice saying: "If you desire that your labour shall not be in vain, wall up your wife in the edifice which you are now raising". The poor builder submitted and sacrificed what he held dearest in the world. The temple was built at length and has majestically withstood the hand of time. Let us follow the example of that master-builder, let us sacrifice on the altar of peace, for the greater good of mankind, all that is unworthy in our pride.

The President :

Translation : Mr. Dandurand, first delegate of Canada, will address the Assembly.

Mr. Dandurand (Canada) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — Representatives of every continent have spoken in the course of this debate, and it is perhaps desirable that the voice of North America also should be heard. I shall not, however, detain you long.

Canada, as you know, is a wholehearted supporter of the League and its aims. It requires no effort on our part to respond to your appeal for disarmament. The minimum fixed by the League, however low, will never be as low as ours: for we are in the fortunate position — one which the nations of Europe might well envy us — of being quite free from fear and mistrust.

We have a neighbour as pacific as ourselves, a neighbour who, like ourselves, thinks in terms of peace. This probably accounts for our sense of entire security, which recently led a well-known Oxford professor to declare that Canada is a producer but not a consumer of security.

Such being the case, it need hardly be said that Canada is in favour of arbitration as a means of settling her disputes with foreign countries. We have not been fortunate as regards the awards given by the courts of arbitration to which we have submitted questions affecting our territory. In east and west alike we have lost immense tracts. In Alaska, the United States have grown rich at our expense, and quite recently we had to cede to Newfoundland a whole province on the Atlantic whose area exceeds that of Italy. Like M. Briand and his compatriots, we did not swallow that pill without pulling a wry face! But Canada, notwithstanding, remains a firm supporter of the principle of arbitration, and we still think that it is preferable to run the risk of an injustice than to have recourse to arms, for even an unfavourable settlement is better than a victorious war.

You may perhaps be astonished that, despite this attitude of mind, Canada should have rejected the Protocol, and I feel that I owe you an explanation on that point.

Canada is separated from the United States by a chain of lakes and by the River St. Lawrence. Both countries use this waterway, which leads to the sea, and their commercial relations are of the closest. Among the reasons which prevented us from adhering to the Protocol was the necessity of taking into account the consequences which would ensue from the non-participation of the United States in the application of economic and military sanctions.

But in the telegram despatched by the Canadian Government on March 10th, 1925, to the Secretariat of the League, we said that we were still firmly convinced that it was essential to submit international disputes to arbitration. We also added that we were prepared to consider the compulsory jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice in legal disputes, subject to certain reservations, and to study the means whereby the provisions of the Covenant might be supplemented with a view to the settlement of non-legal disputes, without prejudice to our right of final decision in internal questions and without assuming any additional obligations in regard to the application of sanctions.

Although we have no military barriers on the vast frontier line which runs from the Atlantic to the Pacific, we have Customs barriers, and these are much higher on the American than on the Canadian side, despite our neighbour's highly specialised industrial development.

I believe that Canada is the only country that has lowered its tariff since the war. She has done so on four separate occasions and has also signed a number of treaties containing the most-favoured-nation clause.

Even before the Economic Conference, then, we had been shaping our course according to the conclusions subsequently recommended by the Conference itself. We hailed those conclusions with the greatest satisfaction, for they are in agreement with the general trend of our policy, and we are glad to note that they were also accepted by the United States representatives. The development of our manufacturing industries is ever present in our minds, but we are also concerned at the same time with the problem of satisfying the requirements of agriculture and reducing the cost of living. Canada's foreign trade, although our population is under ten millions, places us sixth among the nations of the world.

I now turn to a question which I consider of great importance for the restoration of peace in Europe. This is the problem of minorities, which exists in almost every quarter of the world, but is nowhere so acute as on the European continent. I spoke on the question at the Inter-Parliamentary Conference recently held in Paris.

The problem assumes different forms in different countries, so that it is difficult to find a general solution applicable to all alike. There is, however, one principle which should govern the attitude of every State.

There are certain elementary truths which cannot be repeated too often. The first duty of every Government is to promote its people's happiness. This is a duty not only towards the majority of the people but towards the whole nation. When I consider a nation as a whole and see it divided into a number of ethnical groups, my sympathies go out, I freely confess, to all the minorities in that nation.

The race to which I belong is a minority within the Canadian Confederation, but is at the same time the dominating group in the Province of Quebec. In the Confederation the provincial legislatures have sole authority in matters of education and of civil law, and I can quote my province as an example to the whole world. We have set up an Education Council, consisting of a Catholic section for the French majority and a Protestant section for the English minority. Each section has absolute authority as regards the teaching given in its schools. The School Commissions under these respective sections fix the education tax as they think fit, and the provincial grants are divided, for every category

of education, according to the numbers of the two respective groups.

Minorities are generally sensitive and inclined to be suspicious. They should be treated not only justly but even generously so that they may forget that they are minorities.

This, in my view, is the highest manifestation of civilisation.

It is our constant endeavour to maintain peace on our frontiers, and our success will be all the surer if at home, in our dealings with our compatriots and brothers, we apply those fundamental principles which make for the upward evolution of mankind.

The President :

Translation : M. Villegas, delegate of Chile, will address the Assembly.

M. Villegas (Chile) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — During the general discussion the Assembly has had the privilege of listening to several of my colleagues from Latin America. In bringing my contribution to this debate, I am urged by a desire to say a few words on the problem which constitutes, as it were, the axis on which our thoughts revolve: I refer to the problem which in 1924 was summed up in the trilogy, Arbitration, Security, Disarmament.

I have already dealt with this important problem in my opening address to the Assembly. But perhaps you will not be unwilling to allow me, as representative of Chile, to revert to it again. Chile is for the moment the only one of the American countries represented at this Assembly that has co-operated actively and steadily in the problem of disarmament, a problem which, so far as we are concerned, narrows down to the reduction of armaments.

Chile has the honour of having been associated from the start with the disarmament work, for one of my colleagues and subsequently I myself were appointed by the Council as members of the Temporary Mixed Commission. Our collaboration has continued, in various forms, in all the commissions appointed to carry on the task of the Temporary Mixed Commission. Both in these commissions and in the present Assembly Chile has expressed her views on the problem, and while recommending, as we do, a system of special or regional agreements, we have given proof of our attachment to the more general work undertaken by the League and its efforts towards peace.

Chile has shown herself a consistent supporter of the principle of arbitration, and, not content with the examples so often quoted here, not content with signing and ratifying the admirable treaty of conciliation among the American States known as the Gondra Covenant, she has this year concluded with Italy and with Spain conciliation treaties and treaties for the judicial settlement of disputes no less comprehensive than the treaties just quoted by M. Motta in his brilliant speech.

Remembering our attitude in the past, you will, I am sure, find it quite natural that I should now express the profound satisfaction experienced by the Chilean delegation on hearing the moving declarations made by the eminent European statesmen in our midst.

These declarations, in our view, and the spirit which inspired them constitute the surest guarantee of progress in the work which we all have at heart, the work of moral pacification, without which security is but an idle fancy, disarmament a Utopian dream. If we had to choose between texts,

signed and ratified, but devoid of the spirit which inspires those speeches, and the spirit of those speeches without signed and ratified treaties, not one of us, I believe, responsible as we are for the policy of our respective countries, would hesitate to choose the living spirit, with its binding and compelling force, in preference to the written word.

Not that the Chilean delegation fails to realise the importance attaching to international agreements. Far from it! My delegation listened with the keenest interest to the proposal submitted to the Assembly by the first delegate of the Netherlands. These meetings which bring us together at regular intervals would lose one of their essential *raison d'être* if we neglected the opportunity thus afforded of exploring with perfect freedom and good will the practical possibilities inherent in every one of the ideas contributed by our colleagues.

The Chilean delegation will be happy, therefore, to collaborate in any study that the Assembly may desire to undertake on the lines suggested by the Netherlands representative. In this same spirit, convinced as we are of the moral significance of solemn declarations which represent the unanimous views of these international gatherings, where all the States Members of the League are represented, we shall be proud to support the principles voiced in the declaration now submitted by the first delegate of Poland.

In thus proclaiming from the tribune of the Assembly its readiness to collaborate and its international good will, my delegation desires to affirm its faith in the League before the whole world.

During these last few days we have heard counsels of boldness and counsels of prudence: some would have us act, while others urge that we should wait. The contradiction between these apparently divergent counsels is only superficial, and disappears on closer examination. At bottom, they are all simply manifestations of the intense vitality of our international association. The extreme diversity of the elements which make up so vast a body as ours may, must perforce, find expression in the great variety of ways in which present-day problems are understood and the manner in which their solution is envisaged. These differences of method are all to the good, for contrast and comparison serve to improve our methods, and this we may well consider the surest guarantee of success. The League can give no greater proof of its vitality than by showing, as in the past, vigour and variety of method, and at the same time the closest unity of purpose in the pursuit of its ultimate goal — peace.

The President :

Translation : As no one else is down to speak, the general discussion on the report to the eighth ordinary session of the Assembly of the League of Nations on the Work of the Council, the Work of the Secretariat, and the Measures taken to execute the Decisions of the Assembly is now closed.

49. — PREPARATION OF A GENERAL AND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF CODIFICATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW : DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE DELEGATION OF PARAGUAY : REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE : REFERENCE TO THE FIRST COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly will remember that it decided, at its afternoon meeting on September

10th, to refer to the Agenda Committee a draft resolution submitted by Dr. Caballero, delegate of Paraguay, concerning the preparation of a code of international law.

I do not think it is necessary for me to read this draft resolution, as the text was circulated to the delegations. I will simply read the letter addressed to me by the Chairman of the Agenda Committee with reference to the resolution. It is as follows :

“ At the close of the meeting held on the afternoon of Saturday, September 10th, you proposed and the Assembly agreed that the draft resolution submitted by the delegate of Paraguay concerning the preparation of a general plan for the codification of international law should be referred to the Agenda Committee and that that Committee of which I am Chairman, should be requested to report on the question as soon as possible

“ I have consulted my colleagues, and am now in a position to inform you that the Agenda Committee, after a preliminary examination of the draft resolution, proposes that the question should be placed on the agenda of the present session, and should be referred to the First Committee.

(Signed) DE BROUCKÈRE.”

If no objections are raised, I shall consider that the Assembly is in favour of the proposal to place on the agenda of the present session, and to refer to the First Committee, the draft resolution submitted by the delegate of Paraguay concerning the preparation of a general plan for the codification of international law. (Approved.)

The Assembly rose at 12.55 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Eighth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

THIRTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15th, 1927, AT 10 A.M.

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50. — WELCOME TO THE PRESIDENT OF LIBERIA.

The President :

Translation : I feel sure that I am voicing the feelings of all in welcoming among us His Excellency Mr. King, President of the Republic of Liberia.

This distinguished statesman has desired to show his interest in and his sympathy with the League by coming specially to Geneva to attend some of the meetings of the Assembly.

I need not remind you that the Republic of Liberia, one of the original Members of the League, has constantly collaborated in all the important work of the League.

During its Seventh ordinary session last year, the Assembly showed how much it appreciated this collaboration by electing Baron Lehmann, the distinguished representative of Liberia here, to be one of the Vice-Presidents of the Assembly.

I hope that Mr. King will take away from Geneva an assurance of our feelings of sincere cordiality towards himself, and our best wishes for the prosperity of the nation of which he is so distinguished a representative.

51. — VOTE ON THE REQUEST BY BELGIUM FOR RE-ELIGIBILITY FOR ELECTION TO THE COUNCIL.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the vote on the request for re-eligibility submitted by Belgium.

The Assembly will remember that on September 8th it adopted the proposal of the General Committee regarding the date when the vote would take place on the request for re-eligibility submitted on September 6th by the Belgian delegation.

As M. Vandervelde's letter has been communicated to all the delegations, there is no need for it to be read again.

In conformity with the Assembly resolution of September 15th, 1926, laying down the rules for the election of the nine non-permanent Members of the Council, their term of office and the conditions of re-eligibility, the Assembly must now vote upon this request.

I would remind you of the relevant rules, which are defined in Article II, paragraphs 1 and 2 :

“ A retiring Member may not be re-elected during the period between the expiration of its term of office and the third election in ordinary session held thereafter unless the Assembly, either on the expiration of the Member's term of office or in the course of the said period of three years, shall, by a majority of two-thirds of the votes cast, previously have decided that such Member is re-eligible.”

“ The Assembly shall pronounce separately, by secret ballot, upon each request for re-eligibility. The number of votes cast shall be determined by the total number of voting tickets deposited, deducting blank or spoilt votes.”

The Assembly must therefore pronounce upon this request by secret ballot.

Each State will be called by name and a representative of the delegation will come up and place his voting paper in the ballot-box.

I will ask M. Adatci, first delegate of Japan, and M. Scialoja, first delegate of Italy, to be good enough to take their places on the platform and act as tellers.

Members of the Assembly in favour of the request for re-eligibility should write “ Yes ” on their

voting papers, and those opposed should write "No".

(M. Adatei and M. Scialoja took their places on the platform as tellers).

The President :

Translation : We will now proceed to a ballot by roll-call.

(The ballot was taken.)

The result of the ballot is as follows :

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of votes cast | 48 |
| Number of votes valid | 48 |
| Majority required for acceptance | 32 |
| Votes in favour of granting the request | 29 |

The majority required for re-eligibility has not therefore been obtained.

I desire to thank M. Adatei and M. Scialoja for their kind assistance in acting as tellers.

M. Vandervelde, first delegate of Belgium, will address the Assembly.

M. Vandervelde (Belgium) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — I asked to speak in order to make a very short statement.

A number of countries had thought that it would be desirable, particularly for the purpose of the application of the Locarno Agreements, for Belgium to remain on the League Council for a further period of three years. A majority of the Assembly shared this opinion, but the statutory majority was not obtained. In these circumstances I desire to say two things :

Firstly, the Belgian delegation is firmly convinced that those members of the Assembly who gave negative votes did so on grounds of principle which command respect, and which had nothing to do with the feeling of the Assembly towards Belgium.

Secondly, I need hardly say that the result of this vote will not prevent Belgium from continuing to give her most active, devoted and ardent support to the great work of peace on which the League is engaged.

The Assembly rose at 10.45 a.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Eighth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FOURTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15th, 1927, AT 5.45 P.M.

CONTENTS :

52. ELECTION OF THREE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

President : M. GUANI.

52. — ELECTION OF THREE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the election of three non-permanent Members of the Council.

First of all, I would remind you of the provisions of the Assembly's resolution of September 15th, 1926, defining the rules for the election of the nine non-permanent Members of the Council, their term of office and the conditions of re-eligibility.

Article I, paragraph 1, runs as follows :

" The Assembly shall each year, in the course of its ordinary session, elect three non-permanent Members of the Council. They shall be elected for a term commencing immediately on their election and ending on the day of the elections held three years later by the Assembly."

Before opening the ballot I would again remind you of the provisions of Article 22 (a) of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, which are relevant to this case.

This article reads as follows :

" 1. The Members whose representatives are to sit on the Council as non-permanent Members of that body shall be selected by the Assembly by secret ballot.

" 2. Where several seats are to be filled, the election shall be made by voting a list of names. Any ballot-paper containing more names than there are seats to be filled shall be null and void.

" 3. No member shall be elected at the first or at the second ballot unless it has obtained at least the absolute majority of the votes. If, after two ballots, there still remain seats to be filled, a third ballot shall be held upon a list consisting of the candidates which obtained most votes at the second ballot, up to a number double that of the seats still to be filled, and those Members shall be elected which obtain the greatest number of votes.

" 4. If two or more Members obtain the same number of votes and there is not a seat available for each, a special ballot shall be held between them ; if they again obtain an equal number of votes, the President shall decide between them by drawing lots."

In computing the absolute majority prescribed for the first and second ballots, I think the Assembly will agree that we should here, by analogy, apply the rule contained in the Assembly resolution of September 15th, 1926, concerning "the rules dealing with the election of the nine non-permanent Members of the Council, their terms of office and the conditions of re-eligibility."

This resolution lays down that the Assembly shall pronounce separately, by secret ballot, upon each request for re-eligibility. The number of votes cast shall be determined by the total number of voting tickets deposited, deducting blank or spoilt votes. It would appear that, in electing the non-permanent Members of the Council, blank or spoilt voting-papers must not be counted when the number of votes is reckoned ; the absolute majority should be calculated on the basis of the total voting-papers valid.

If no one has any remarks to make, I shall consider that the Assembly shares my views on this subject. (*Assent.*)

I would add that, to be valid, voting-papers must contain the names of States and not the names of representatives of States.

Further, any voting-paper containing more than three names will be void.

I will ask Sir Austen Chamberlain, first delegate of the British Empire, and Dr. Stresemann, first delegate of Germany, to be good enough to take their places on the platform as tellers.

(*Sir Austen Chamberlain and Dr. Stresemann took their places on the platform.*)

The President :

Translation : We will now proceed to a ballot by roll-call.

(*The ballot was taken.*)

The result of the ballot is as follows :

| | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| Number of votes cast | 49 |
| Absolute majority | 25 |

The votes obtained by the States were as follows :

| | | |
|-----------------------|----|-------|
| Cuba | 40 | votes |
| Finland | 33 | " |
| Canada | 26 | " |
| Greece | 23 | " |
| Portugal | 16 | " |
| Uruguay | 3 | " |
| Denmark | 2 | " |
| Siam | 1 | " |
| Switzerland | 1 | " |
| Haiti | 1 | " |

The following States have obtained the absolute majority required and are therefore elected non-permanent Members of the Council for a period of three years : Cuba, Finland and Canada.

I wish to offer my sincere congratulations to the three States which have just been elected by the Assembly.

I also desire to thank Sir Austen Chamberlain and Dr. Stresemann for having kindly acted as tellers.

His Highness Mohammad Ali Khan Foroughi will address the Assembly.

Mohammad Ali Khan Foroughi (Persia) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — I venture to remind you that last year, when the non-permanent Members of the Council were elected, Persia was honoured with a large number of votes. We know that this was due to at least three causes : Firstly, remembrance of the fact that Persia has belonged to the League from the very beginning and has been a faithful and devoted Member, respecting all the obligations which her adherence entailed, and that, moreover, it is due to Persia that Article 10 of the Covenant, the importance of which the first delegate of Italy emphasised in his speech to the Assembly, has been maintained in its integrity ; secondly, to the desire to satisfy millions of Moslems who regret to see that the only sovereign State of Mohammedan culture which is a Member of the League has not been given an adequate opportunity of representing them ; thirdly, to the anxiety to secure a just equilibrium between the other continents and Asia, which has the largest population of all.

We believe that these reasons still exist and will continue to exist, and — more especially with reference to the third — we consider that ethnical, geographical and historic considerations all militate in favour of our candidacy. In Europe there is a certain similarity of culture between the various peoples, and in America there are only two different zones of civilisation ; but Asia contains entirely distinct types of civilisation, which divide it into zones from Far to Middle East, which in common justice demand special representation.

It would therefore be desirable to increase the number of Asiatic States among the non-permanent Members of the Council. In any case, it would only be right to grant a seat to a State whose language and civilisation have penetrated every other State in the Middle East.

Nevertheless, after a careful examination of the circumstances attending this year's Council elections, and, being anxious to avoid adding to the difficulties of a situation which is already unduly complex, we informed you before the voting took place that Persia would not put forward her candidature.

We reserve the right, however, to reconsider these factors next year, to draw the appropriate conclusions from them, and put forward once again our claim to a seat on the Council.

The Assembly rose at 6.45 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Eighth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FIFTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12th, 1927, AT 10 A.M.

CONTENTS :

53. WORK OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE TRAFFIC IN OPIUM AND OTHER DANGEROUS DRUGS.

Report of the Fifth Committee.
Resolution.

54. WORK OF THE COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY REGARDING THE CULTIVATION OF THE OPIUM POPPY IN PERSIA.

Report of the Fifth Committee.
Resolution.

55. WORK OF THE TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN COMMITTEE.

Report of the Fifth Committee.
Resolution.

56. WORK OF THE CHILD WELFARE COMMITTEE.

Report of the Fifth Committee.
Resolution.

57. PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN THE NEAR EAST.

Report of the Fifth Committee.
Resolution.

58. QUESTION OF ALCOHOLISM.

Letter from the Chairman of the Second Committee.

59. WORK OF THE HEALTH ORGANISATION.

Report of the Second Committee.
Resolutions.

60. RESULTS OF THE MISSION CARRIED OUT IN CERTAIN LATIN-AMERICAN COUNTRIES BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE HEALTH COMMITTEE.

Report of the Second Committee.
Resolution.

61. ITALIAN PROPOSAL FOR THE CREATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL CINEMATOGRAPHIC INSTITUTE AT ROME.

Report of the Second Committee.

62. WORK FOR THE SETTLEMENT OF BULGARIAN REFUGEES.

Report of the Second Committee.
Resolutions.

63. WORK OF THE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE.

Report of the Second Committee.
Resolutions.

President : M. GUANI.

53. — WORK OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE TRAFFIC IN OPIUM AND OTHER DANGEROUS DRUGS : REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : In order to prevent loss of time, and in accordance with precedent, may I suggest that, as the reports have already been distributed, the Rapporteurs might merely touch upon those points in the reports to which they particularly wish to draw attention, and thereby avoid reading the whole report.

The first item on the agenda is the examination of the report of the Fifth Committee on the Work of the Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs (Annex 4, document A.64.1927.XI).

(On the invitation of the President M. Hambro, Chairman of the Fifth Committee, and Mme. Larsen-Jahn, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : Mme. Larsen-Jahn, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Mme. Larsen-Jahn (Norway), Rapporteur :

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — In having the honour to submit to the Assembly

the report of the Fifth Committee on the work of the Advisory Opium Committee, I shall only detain you for a few moments, in order to draw your attention to a statement made by the Advisory Committee which is specially addressed to the individual countries and their Governments.

For several years now the League of Nations has carried on a vigorous campaign in order to combat the drug evil. Through the energetic work of the Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium, the immense extent of the illicit traffic has been made clear to all the world, and we have before us a very dark picture of what that traffic means, in terms of human suffering, misery and degradation. Remedies to combat this great danger to humanity have been worked out through the resolutions passed by the Council and the Assembly, and through the Geneva Opium Convention of 1925.

The League, however, can only fulfil the obligations imposed upon it by Article 23 of the Covenant in so far as it receives the support of the different Governments. The very serious statement has been made this year by the Advisory Committee that action by the Governments falls far short of their contractual obligations. The Advisory Committee has very strongly emphasised the fact that it is impossible for it to grapple with the difficulties of the drug problem, except to the extent to which it is aided by the good will and direct executive action of the individual Governments.

Year after year earnest appeals have been made from this platform to all States Members of the League to put into force in their respective countries the measures recommended by the League. In the name of the Fifth Committee, I beg once more to repeat that appeal in the strongest possible way, in view of the grave charge now made against Governments that they do not live up to their obligations, and in view also of the danger of the present situation as shown by the documents published by the Advisory Committee. In the name of the Fifth Committee, I also appeal to all the Assembly delegates to take upon themselves the duty of urging upon the competent authorities in their own country the necessity for immediate drastic action, in order that results may be obtained in the combat against the drug evil.

The conscience of the peoples has been awakened with regard to their responsibility in this matter. What is required is that the action of the peoples should be brought up to the level of their conscience.

With these few remarks, I have the honour to submit to the Assembly the following draft resolution, unanimously passed by the Fifth Committee.

"The Assembly notes with approval the report of the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs and the resolutions contained therein, and earnestly recommends them to the attention of the States Members of the League."

The President :

Translation : Lord Lytton delegate of India, will now address the Assembly.

The Earl of Lytton (India) :

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — I have asked leave to say a few words on the report of the Fifth Committee which has just been submitted to the Assembly by Mme. Larsen-Jahn, the Rapporteur, not with the object of criticising or dissenting from any of its recommendations, but rather with the object of underlining, as it were, some of its passages which seem to me to be in

danger of escaping the attention which their importance deserves.

The fact that the Fifth Committee has accepted with unanimity and practically without discussion the report of the Advisory Committee in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs may be evidence of the efficiency and the businesslike methods of that Committee. But it has also had the effect of preventing the recommendations of the Advisory Committee from receiving that measure of publicity which they deserve when we remember the gravity of the problems with which the report deals and their immense importance for every country in the world.

The report of the Fifth Committee which has just been presented to us is a short one, and, though it contains some sentences of grave import, there is a risk, I think, that it may be adopted by the Assembly without a full knowledge of the obligations upon those who accept it. I speak as the delegate of a country that knows this evil, whose people are very much alive to its gravity and very much in earnest in their determination to put an end to it. This is one of those questions in regard to which India looks to the League of Nations for help.

I am anxious, if possible, that the members of this Assembly should not accept the report of the Fifth Committee without realising two things which that report brings out very clearly. First, the enormous extent of the continued illicit traffic in drugs; and, secondly, the grave human importance of that trade. Though I am anxious that those two things should be realised, I speak not on behalf of India alone and I address myself not merely to my fellow delegates as representatives of their respective countries. I address you, ladies and gentlemen, as men and women. It is to your human sympathies that I appeal rather than to your national interests.

The passage I want first of all to emphasise is that contained in the second paragraph of the report of the Fifth Committee, where we are reminded that the Advisory Committee has stated that a broad examination of the reports received from the various Governments shows that an illicit traffic, which can only be fairly characterised as enormous, still exists. Do you realise what those words mean? Let me endeavour to make them clear.

The country which I represent — India — imports a small amount of cocaine for medical purposes, but the illicit traffic in cocaine in India is stated by the Advisory Committee, in its report, to be as much as forty times the legitimate imports, and this, too, in spite of the existence of vigorous and efficient administrative efforts to suppress it. In paragraph 16 of its report the Advisory Committee describes this illicit traffic from ascertained statistical facts. You will see from that paragraph that opium is there mentioned by the ton, and heroin and morphine by thousands of ounces. Single consignments of over 4,000 ounces (125 kilogrammes) of morphia and 8,000 ounces (230 kilogrammes) of heroin are cited.

Now, it is possible that these figures — mere statistics — scarcely convey to you their full human import. Let me try and translate them into terms of human misery. Let me ask you whether you have ever known from personal knowledge a single case of a man or woman who has fallen a victim to this drug evil? If you have, you need only recall that one case to your memory, and you will realise that the figures I have mentioned, translated into terms of single injections, run into millions. One consignment alone mentioned by the Committee would amount to over three million injections. Think what that means.

If you have not personally had this experience, let me ask you to think of some friend, someone who is dear to you, some man or woman in the prime of life, with full physical efficiency, with a sound and clear mind, and then consider what would happen to such a person in little more than a few months if once he or she fell a victim to this drug habit. That might well happen quite innocently, perhaps in the first instance merely because a search was made for relief from some temporary physical or mental distress. The process may be slow but the end is certain, and that end is in every case absolute destruction, physical, mental, and moral — the lowest depths of degradation to which the human being can sink.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, with that picture in your mind, with your friend rotted to death before your eyes, what, I ask you, would be your feelings if you were told that there are individuals who make their living out of this trade, that there are Governments which have it in their power to put an end to it and yet allow it to continue? Yet this is what the Committee tells us. It tells us in words so restrained that their full import might well be lost upon those who read them. Let me quote the passage which follows these statistics which I have just mentioned. It is contained in paragraph 17 of the Committee's report:

"These [say the Committee] are striking and alarming facts. They show the appalling extent and the very widespread ramifications of this illicit traffic. They are the more striking, and probably the more alarming, when it is recalled that fifty-four nations — and among them are included all the manufacturing and distributing countries — are parties to the Hague Convention — which includes as an obligation accepted by all the signatories a provision to the following effect:

"The Contracting Powers shall enact pharmacy laws or regulations to limit exclusively to medical and legitimate purposes the manufacture, sale and use of morphine and cocaine and their respective salts . . . They shall co-operate with one another to prevent the use of these drugs for any other purpose."

This brings me to the second point which I wish to emphasise in the report which has been submitted to us. I have spoken of the extent of this illicit traffic. Let me remind you of the obligations under which we already are in this matter. This is not one of those human problems which cannot be solved, which must be tolerated because no remedy for it can be found. On the contrary, it is one which all the nations of the world have recognised, have already discussed among themselves and have pledged themselves to remove. It is one of the evils of the world which this League of Nations of ours is competent to remedy, Europe, America and the Far East are being deluged with these deadly narcotic drugs. The individual efforts of no single nation can stem the tide, but the combination of all nations can produce that result. By such a combination the tide can be stemmed swiftly and effectively. The States Members of this League are already bound by an international Convention to do this, but it still remains for public opinion in several countries to insist on the fulfilment of that obligation.

This, ladies and gentlemen, is the task which you are now asked to undertake. The Advisory Committee has expressed the opinion that a "clear statement as to the enormous value and wide extent

of the illicit traffic, and a vivid appreciation of what that traffic means in terms of human suffering, misery and degradation, are essential to progress and reform".

This Committee has told us the facts. It has tried to give us this appreciation. The remedy is now in our own hands.

This brings me to my last point. With this knowledge in our minds — knowledge of the extent of the traffic, knowledge of the obligations already undertaken to put an end to it — what remains to be done?

There are probably not more than thirty factories in the world in which these drugs are manufactured. If the Governments concerned would put a ring fence round them so as to prevent the products from those factories ever getting into the illicit markets, the evils would cease and this reproach to our civilisation would be removed.

The Advisory Committee has urged, with all the insistence at its command, that the most valuable single step which can be taken at present to control this huge illicit traffic with all its disastrous moral, social and physical consequences, with all its vast train of suffering, misery, degradation and vice, is to secure the enforcement of the Geneva Convention of 1925 at the earliest possible moment. The Fifth Committee has accepted that recommendation and has proposed its acceptance to the Assembly. I have intervened for the sole purpose of emphasising that report and of appealing to you, in your individual as well as in your representative capacity, to accept the advice and to help to put it into operation.

I do not suggest that the Convention of 1925 is perfect, that it exhausts the subject, that there may not be some provisions in it which will give rise to difficulties when they come to be put into operation. But this Convention represents the farthest point yet reached by the collective wisdom of the nations of the world. It represents the most effective weapon which has been put into our hands for controlling this evil. If we use it, it may be possible to put a stop to the evil within a single year. If, when you return to those countries which you represent here, you will tell your countrymen what you have learnt from the report before you, if you will tell them what those facts mean and secure a public opinion in every country which will insist upon action, it will be possible for Mme. Larsen-Jahn, when she comes to this tribune next year, to say, in those memorable words used by M. Briand last year in another connection, "It is finished".

But if we are indifferent, if we neglect to use this weapon which has been put into our hands, we cannot escape our responsibility for the loss of life which it was in our power to save

The President:

Translation: If no one else wishes to speak I will put to the vote the resolution of the Fifth Committee, which reads as follows:—

The Assembly notes with approval the report of the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs and the resolutions contained therein, and earnestly recommends them to the attention of the States Members of the League.

The resolution was adopted.

54. — WORK OF THE COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY REGARDING THE CULTIVATION OF THE OPIUM POPPY IN PERSIA. : REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the report of the Fifth Committee on the work of the Commission of Enquiry regarding the cultivation of the opium poppy in Persia (Annex 5, document A.66.1927.XI).

(On the invitation of the President M. Hambro, Chairman of the Fifth Committee, and M. Veverka, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform).

The President :

Translation : M. Veverka, delegate of Czechoslovakia, will address the Assembly.

M. Veverka (Czechoslovakia), Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — In submitting to the Assembly, in the manner suggested by our distinguished President the report of the Fifth Committee regarding the cultivation of the opium poppy in Persia, I feel that, having now been three times Rapporteur on the question of opium, I cannot refrain from adding a few reflections on the evolution of the problem during this Assembly.

Since the question was first placed on our agenda, all the efforts of the League's organs have been directed towards the analysis and diagnosis of this great problem, which is one that affects the whole world. Speaking of the same question in 1925, I pointed out that the two Opium Conferences themselves represented only the first, the analytical and preparatory, stage. I expressed on that occasion the conviction that another stage — that of realisation and achievement — would follow as a logical result of certain principles which had already been established.

In submitting the 1925 report on the same special and concrete question with which we are dealing to-day, I expressed the hope that that report would show that progress had been made as regards the decrease of the production of opium and the conviction that everything must be done to decrease production.

At the same time I emphasised the fact that the only way to lessen the danger would be for all other producing countries to enter into a loyal engagement not to increase their production and not, by seeking to win new markets, to increase the misery of the human race.

The 1925 Assembly, which approved this report and my conclusions on the decrease of production, brought about further practical and positive solutions and showed what new roads were to be followed.

The Committee of Enquiry in Persia is therefore the first practical attempt to attack, by scientific and empirical methods, one of the causes — over-production — in order to lessen the effect — the promotion of consumption.

I am glad to submit to the Assembly a positive and concrete result in the form of recommendations drawn up by experts, in agreement with a liberal-minded and far-seeing people. The Persian Government stipulates, of course, that its final acceptance will in large measure be dependent on its obtaining liberty of action in tariff affairs and on the removal of the restrictive tariffs on Persian products which must be substituted for opium.

The Fifth Committee, having found this interdependence both just and equitable, unanimously expresses the hope that the

Governments concerned will give their earnest and favourable attention to those conditions, especially as regards tariff matters. But, in the spirit of the 1925 report, it also, and very logically, recommends all countries concerned with the production and manufacture of dangerous drugs and their raw material, the enactment of legislation similar to that now proposed by the Government of Persia, or such equivalent action as will ensure the necessary reduction of raw material and the manufacture of drugs.

The first practical step towards combating the scourge by concrete methods and on a definite plan has been taken. We most earnestly trust it will succeed. Public opinion will thereby be strengthened in its hope that other producing and manufacturing countries will follow the path indicated.

Thus the primitive man, seeking in opium forgetfulness of his wretchedness, and the highly-strung modern man, avid for drugs to calm the diseased and over-developed brain of to-day, may alike hope for redemption.

Of course, this cannot come about without certain changes in the economic situation of the countries concerned. I have already had occasion, however, to show from this platform how much this great humanitarian, social and economic problem depends, and will always depend, on the willingness of all nations to give their help and to make sacrifices.

I therefore congratulate the pioneers of to-day, and I greet the pioneers of to-morrow with those old classical words of encouragement to posterity : " *Vivant sequentes.* "

The President :

Translation : His Highness Mohammad Ali-Khan Foroughi, delegate of Persia, will address the Assembly.

His Highness Mohammad Ali-Khan Foroughi (Persia) :

Translation : As the agenda is a very long one, I shall only say a few words to express my thanks to the Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee for having so admirably summarised the position as regards this question. I should also like to thank the Fifth Committee for its appreciation of the great sacrifice which the Persian nation is prepared to make and for having supported the Persian Government's view by stating that, if we are to succeed in this work, Persia needs to be helped and encouraged in her economic development.

We also felt we ought to draw your attention to the very great importance of the question of the manufacture of dangerous drugs, and on this point we entirely agree with the very eloquent observations of the delegate of India.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak I will put to the vote the resolution of the Fifth Committee, which reads as follows :

The Assembly takes note of the report of the Commission of Enquiry into the production of opium in Persia, of the observations of the Persian Government on that report, and of the letter from, the Chairman of the Commission of Enquiry to the Secretary-General dated April 23rd, 1927.

It expresses its sincere thanks to the members of the Commission for their valuable work, and its high appreciation of the good will shown by the Persian Government in co-operating with the League in its attempts to reach a solution of the difficult and complicated problem of narcotic control.

The Persian Government having declared that the success of its programme will, in large measure, depend on its obtaining liberty of action in tariff affairs and on the removal of the restrictive tariffs on Persian products which must be substituted for opium, the Assembly expresses the hope that the Governments concerned will give their earnest and favourable attention to those conditions and that the Persian Government will keep the League of Nations informed of the progress made in carrying out the scheme proposed for the gradual diminution of the cultivation of the opium poppy in Persia.

It earnestly recommends to all countries concerned with the production and manufacture of dangerous drugs and their raw material the enactment of legislation similar to that now proposed by the Government of Persia, or such equivalent action as will ensure the necessary reduction of raw material and the manufacture of drugs.

The resolution was adopted.

55. — WORK OF THE TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN COMMITTEE : REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the report of the Fifth Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children (Annex 6, document A.73.1927.IV.)

(On the invitation of the President M. Portela, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Portela, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Portela (Cuba), Rapporteur :

Translation : Gentlemen — The Fifth Committee was good enough to appoint M. Martinez Ortiz, Minister for Foreign Affairs and delegate of Cuba, as Rapporteur to the Committee and to the Assembly on the question of the traffic in women and children. By doing so, the members of the Fifth Committee no doubt wished to express their appreciation of the work done by the Cuban Government for some years past for the purpose of carrying into effect the recommendations which are constantly being formulated here with a view to protecting women against adverse circumstances, against the ruthless egoism of immoral men, and even against their own weaknesses, passions or errors.

As M. Martinez Ortiz is unavoidably absent, it falls to me to have the honour of submitting this report.

The report of the Traffic in Women and Children Committee gave rise to a very full and interesting discussion in the Fifth Committee, which centred on the question of licensed houses and the question of measures in force with regard to *souteneurs* and procurers. A number of delegates emphasised the importance of the employment of women in the police. Several delegates made interesting statements concerning the situation in their own countries, and urged the importance of employing women police to patrol public places.

Certain delegates expressed a wish that the age of consent should, in no case, be lower than the age of marriage.

The German delegate on the Committee informed her colleagues that a new law, which provides for severe penalties, was to come into force on October 1st, abolishing licensed houses in Germany within

the limits of its power. The delegate of Hungary also mentioned the fact that the system of the licensed house had recently been abolished in that country. Several delegates gave it as their opinion that the abolition of licensed houses in their countries had been fully justified.

The delegate of Cuba stated that licensed brothels had long been abolished in Cuba, and that very stringent laws, regulations and police measures were enforced for the protection of young female emigrants and the prosecution of their habitual exploiters.

The delegate of France stated that his country was also moving towards the abolition of the system of licensed houses, but that it must be given time. He pointed out that the suppression of regulated prostitution could only be effected by attacking not only the licensed-house system but all the different factors involved. He added that this was the policy adopted by France.

The delegates of Roumania, Japan and Hungary stated the opinions prevailing in their own countries with regard to this most difficult question.

The Committee was unanimous in recommending that the strictest possible measures should be taken against *souteneurs* and procurers. The British delegate laid stress on the desirability of adequate punishments being provided for in regard to sexual assaults on children, and also for persons who for the sake of financial gain stimulate the graver forms of vice.

A special tribute was paid by the Committee to the excellent work of the Special Body of Experts on the traffic in women and children.

The Fifth Committee has the honour to submit to the eighth ordinary session of the Assembly the following resolution.

"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."

The President :

Translation : The Honourable Mrs. Alfred Lyttelton, delegate of the British Empire, will address the Assembly.

Dame Edith Lyttelton (British Empire) :

I have to ask for the indulgence of the Assembly. It is not very easy for anyone to stand up here and talk on the topics with which I have, as shortly as possible, to deal, but I think it is necessary, though I regret it, to speak with considerable frankness.

One of the things which has been brought home to us by the recent investigation is that, below our respect for women, our respect for the home,

our respect for purity, there lies a substratum of the grossest possible indulgence leading to very degrading vices.

We have to thank the expert Committee, under the chairmanship of Dr. Snow, for the extraordinary report with which it has provided us. I hope that every one who has the opportunity and has not already done so will read that report because the reading of it is a considerable experience — at least it was to me. When we think what was done by the people who worked for that Commission, it is, I think difficult to express sufficient admiration and gratitude. Many of them must have taken their lives in their hands, because they had to enter the underworld of great cities, disguised as members of that underworld and as traffickers in the infamous trade which the League of Nations and other bodies are trying to suppress.

It seems to me that in this report — and there are many points which could be brought up — there are three main ones, which I propose to examine. I do not think that anyone who reads this document with an open mind, can fail to see that the existence of licensed houses is undoubtedly bound up with the traffic in women. You have only to think for one moment, if you were engaged in procuring young girls and bringing them to other cities, to see how much easier it would be, from the point of view of organisation if there existed in the cities to which you were going houses into which to put those girls.

It is both cheaper and easier, and the experience of people who have examined this subject is that in those places where licensed houses are abolished the traffic in women and children also dies down. We cannot put too great emphasis on that fact.

Another point which, I think, is brought out by the report is the very great importance of raising both the age of consent and the age of marriage. I think it is hardly necessary to emphasise that point; it must be so obvious to everyone.

A third point is the one which happens to move me most and which, I think, is in a sense less recognised by the world at large, namely, the enormous influence of what is called in the report "the third party", the degraded man or woman who profits by ministering to the vices of others. These men and women — and first I am going to speak of the *souteneur*, the man — stick at nothing at all to procure what they want. I do not think — and I think the report says so — that there is evidence of dramatic abduction, or anything of that sort, though no doubt such things do occur, but there are many, many other methods which are employed. There are sham marriages, there are sham engagements in a cabaret or a theatre, there are sham domestic engagements and all sorts of other ways of moving girls from one country to another. I think it is also made clear in the report that it is rare for perfectly innocent girls to be brought into the traffic. They are almost always prostitutes in the first place, though that fact does not reduce the horror of the traffic in the least.

It is only fair to say that there is no very strong evidence that quite innocent girls are being abducted and carried off to other countries. The point made with such terrible persistence in the report is that the girls who are brought from one country to another and left defenceless are taught the vilest and most degraded forms of vice. Why is this done? It seems almost incredible that efforts should be made of this kind to teach and train girls in the most terrible forms of perversion. Why is it done? It is done for no other reason than money. A girl may make for her employer three or four times as much money if she is skilled in these degrading practices than if she is not. I think that

this mere fact shows the quagmire of degradation on which we are bound to step if we investigate this subject at all. It is bad enough to do these things, but what are we to think of the people who batten on the vices and weaknesses of those who do them, entirely and solely for money?

But this is not all. The demand has to be stimulated — the demand for which these people can provide the supply. Therefore, in order to create the demand by which they can make money they stimulate in all kinds of ways every form of vice. If you go through the gamut of drink, drugs, obscene pictures, suggestive entertainments, of actual exhibitions of degrading practices, and think what this means, you cannot but feel an absolute horror of the race of men and women who, for the sake of gain, will exploit the ordinary passions of men and women, degrade them and stimulate them, and then make their fortunes out of supplying those people with the bodies and souls of the women whom they put into this traffic.

We often remember — and talk with people of them — the misgivings that fathers and mothers have when they send out their boys, and their girls (but perhaps more particularly their boys) into the dangerous and glorious adventure of life. It is difficult enough in any case, seeing the way in which we are constituted — the strange mixture of the animal and the soul that is in us — it is dangerous enough for young people in any case, but when we must add the possibility that an ordinary innocent desire for an evening's amusement may lead him (for your boy may be slightly weak-willed, hysterical, neurotic) into one of those places where perhaps before him is placed every possible kind of temptation, every possible form of education in vice, it is no wonder that people are afraid.

This is a matter that concerns every one of us, men quite as much as women. It is the duty of everyone to do their utmost to destroy this terrible effort to stimulate and educate the worst possibilities of our nature, an effort which does not make money for the victims and for the vicious, but for the third party who exploits them.

I should like to appeal to all the delegates here — and I will undertake to do this myself also — to use every influence in their own country against these things, against *maisons tolérées*, for the raising of the age of consent, and, above all, for the investigation of the measures taken, by means of legislation, to punish these traffickers.

When a man commits a murder, when he kills another man, he is executed; when he murders the spirit of a man or a child he gets a few weeks' imprisonment.

I am aware that no legislation can cure the world of these dangers. Of course it can not, but it will help, and the real cure must begin at home, it must begin in the home, it must begin in the nursery.

I remember once having the opportunity of speaking to a man — I need not go into the reasons why he was in a pecuniarily dangerous position, but he was — and he described to me his struggles and the difficulties he had experienced. I said to him "Well, what helped you through it?" He said, "Simply this, that I felt that I would not add one little stream to the immense influences of want of control and degradation which are making the existence of these people necessary". That one thought had kept that man straight, because he would not add this other element to it.

I feel that if we can ensure that legislation and suppression will be really universal, we must then look to the young for the next generation. We all belong, at least most of us belong, to the generation that has made the war, which has the inheritance behind it of all the years of struggle which the

human race has known. We have to look with hope to the young, but we have to help them. There are welcome signs beginning to show; there are associations of young men in several countries — in Hungary, in France, in England, in Switzerland, and I daresay in many others — who have bound themselves to try and live a pure life. I say: "All welcome to them, and all help to them in the future."

"I must apologise again for having spoken with great plainness, but I have been told that there are certain microbes which kill the human organism which, if you expose them to the sun, shrivel up, turn up their toes and die at once. Well, that is the reason why we want publicity on all these horrible things. In the light of knowledge and publicity, they will not, and cannot, live, and that is why I say from this platform: "Thank God for the League of Nations".

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution of the Fifth Committee, which reads as follows :

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 ;

Having learnt 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, 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 ;

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.

56. — WORK OF THE CHILD WELFARE COMMITTEE: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the report of the Fifth Committee on Child Welfare. (Annex 7, document A.62.1927.IV.)

(On the invitation of the President M. Janson, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Janson, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Janson (Belgium), Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — The Fifth Committee of the Assembly has asked me to report on the question of child welfare, and in particular on the work of the Child Welfare Committee during its third year.

During the past year this Committee has had an important task to fulfil. It has carried out systematic and detailed investigations on a number of subjects, such as the position of blind children and of illegitimate children, the effects produced on children by the cinematograph, or, in another connection, by the system of family allowances,

and the effects of certain physical and mental recreations on the welfare of children.

Moreover, the Committee has recorded certain results of previous investigations on the age of consent and the age of marriage and their possible consequences in so far as they affect child welfare.

Lastly, the Committee has continued its work on the question of the repatriation of children and the execution of judgments relating to the enforcement of the obligation to provide for the maintenance of children.

Such has been, in broad outline, the work of the Child Welfare Committee.

Almost without discussion — for it was not difficult to reach unanimity — the Fifth Committee noted the work of the Child Welfare Committee, expressed its appreciation of it and instructed me to submit for your approval the following resolution :

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.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I shall regard the resolution of the Fifth Committee as adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

57. — PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN THE NEAR EAST: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the report of the Fifth Committee on the Protection of Women and Children in the Near East (Annex 8, document A.61.1927.IV.)

(On the invitation of the President Mlle. Forchhammer, Rapporteur, took her place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : Mlle. Forchhammer, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Mlle. Forchhammer (Denmark) :

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — The question of the protection of women and children in the Near East is on the agenda of the Assembly for the last time. Already at the first session of the Assembly this question was raised: Could not the League of Nations do something for the women and children in the Near East, most of them Armenians, who had been separated from their families during the war and were still detained among people of a different race, a different religion, and different customs from their own ?

A Commission was constituted consisting of two branches, one at Constantinople and the other at Aleppo in Syria. The Constantinople branch came to an end last year, so that this report relates only to the work done at Aleppo by my compatriot Miss Jeppe.

In 1922 Miss Jeppe opened a receiving home at Aleppo under the auspices of the League and under the protection of the mandatory Power. During the five years following she has rescued 1,600 people, and before the end of this year, when the work will officially come to an end, she reckons that approximately 2,000 will have been rescued. About 75 per cent of those rescued have been able to find relatives; of the rest most have been trained

and have become self-supporting. For this work Miss Jeppe has had the whole hearted support of the mandatory Power — France.

During the discussion in the Fifth Committee, a tribute was paid by several representatives to the excellent work done by Miss Jeppe, and among those who paid this tribute was the representative of the mandatory Power. I cannot do better than repeat the words spoken at the seventeenth plenary meeting of last year's Assembly by Dame Edith Lyttelton: "The bravery, courage and resource that she has shown are worthy of the highest praise". We are proud to have been associated with her in her good work. Although Miss Jeppe is severing her official connection with the League of Nations, as she feels that her work of rescue is completed, she is, it is understood, continuing, in a private capacity, her efforts to restore these unfortunate people to a normal life. She considers that, until this task is completed, she will have to remain responsible for at least 400 people.

It is therefore to be hoped that the generous financial support which has been given by voluntary organisations will continue till the work has been brought to a satisfactory conclusion. The Committee considers that Miss Jeppe should be allowed to retain the furniture and equipment of which she is at present making use until her work for the rescued is definitely at an end.

The Fifth Committee proposes the following resolution to the Assembly:

The Assembly approves 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 organisations in the past will continue in order that she may be enabled to restore to a normal life those who have been rescued.

Allow me in conclusion to read to you the following words with which Miss Jeppe concludes her final report: "And now nothing remains but to thank the League of Nations and the mandatory Power for Syria for their enduring sympathy and most valuable aid in this work . . . and our friends at home for their very generous contributions. It has been a light in the darkness and a source of happiness to many people who have suffered terribly from those evils which it is the special aim of the League of Nations to root out or at least to mitigate".

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I shall regard the resolution of the Fifth Committee as adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

58. — QUESTION OF ALCOHOLISM: LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : Before beginning the items on the agenda with which the Second Committee has dealt, I will read to the Assembly a letter, dated September 17th, which I have received from the Chairman of the Second Committee:

"I have the honour to inform you that the letter on the question of alcoholism addressed to the Secretary-General of the League by the

Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Finland, Poland, and Sweden — with the adhesion of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Belgium, Denmark and Czechoslovakia — and referred to the Second Committee, was the subject of the following resolution submitted on September 16th by the signatory delegations to the Second Committee:

"After an exhaustive debate which has shown the complex nature of the problem; and considering the difficulties of principle and procedure which have been raised, the signatory delegations, while maintaining the principle of their motion, declare that they propose to submit it in another form."

You will remember that this question was included as Item 12 in the agenda of this session of the Assembly and that it was referred to the Second Committee following a decision taken by the Assembly on the afternoon of September 5th.

If there is no objection, I shall consider that the Assembly has noted the statement made by the Chairman of the Second Committee.

The statement was noted.

59. — WORK OF THE HEALTH ORGANISATION: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the report of the Second Committee on the work of the Health Organisation (Annex 9, document A.69.1927.III).

(On the invitation of the President Mr. Dandurand, Chairman of the Second Committee and Sir Ramaswami Ayyar, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform).

The President :

Translation : Sir Ramaswami Ayyar, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Sir Ramaswami Ayyar (India) :

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — I have been charged with the task of presenting to the Assembly the report of the Second Committee on the work of the Health Organisation. The report is before you and, as has been already ruled, I do not propose to read it.

I think, however, it would be useful and in many ways helpful if I placed before you certain considerations which tend to demonstrate the universality of the work of the Health Organisation and the comprehensiveness of its labours. Allow me to divide the work of the Health Organisation into two categories, one, particular, and the other, general.

Dealing with the second aspect first, let me point out that the Health Organisation, in regard to the new Health Committee that has been appointed, has made a notable departure in appointing expert assessors from such countries as Australia and Japan, this procedure proving, if proof were wanted, that the League is anxious and willing to enlist support from every quarter of the globe and to invite co-operation from everywhere for the work it has to do.

The other aspect of the general work upon which I desire to dwell for a few minutes is the system of the interchange of health personnel, which has been inaugurated. Persons occupied in the elucidation and solution of health problems from every country have the opportunity to meet and discuss questions of common import which interest other nations; in fact, all nations alike.

This procedure has already been fruitful of great results. Speaking specially for my country, I welcome a departure which will be of inestimable value to such distant countries as mine.

The third general aspect of which I wish to speak for a moment is the system of international health courses, of studies and instruction in health problems, which are given to people of all countries in selected centres.

These are the general aspects of the work ; I now come to the particular.

The Health Organisation, through its various bodies, has carried out valuable work in the matter of sleeping-sickness — the research into which is of especial benefit to vast tracts in Africa. It has conducted a Conference on Rabies, and this also will be of benefit to many lands.

There are, however, two matters of which I wish to speak with special emphasis. I will first refer to the malaria enquiry. Malaria is an almost universal disease. It has been pointed out that even in a country like England, where it is generally supposed that malaria does not exist, this disease has not been entirely eradicated. But to a country like mine research into malaria is a matter of the greatest import.

The Malaria Commission has visited Europe, Syria, and Palestine, and hopes to visit India. On behalf of the Government of India a very cordial invitation has been extended to the members of that Commission, and I trust that this useful work will be continued in India to the mutual benefit of that country and the rest of the world.

I now pass to the Singapore Bureau. I attach special importance to the work of that Bureau, not only because it is efficacious in giving early intimation of the spread of epidemics and serving as a centre for research, but because it is a visible link between the life of the tropics, the life of the Orient and the life of the League, as forming an invaluable liaison between the work done at Geneva and that carried out in far-off countries.

The Singapore Bureau is not only valuable in itself, it is expressive of the ideals of the League, the ideals of universal service, of universal work.

These problems do not loom very large in the public eye, but they are as significant as the ostensibly greater problems which are the topics of journalistic encounters and debates. It is not least through such organisations as the Committee for Communications and Transit, the Economic Conference, the Health Committee, and the League's other technical organisations that world unity, for which the League stands, will be achieved.

With your permission, therefore, Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, I will move on behalf of the Second Committee the following resolution :

“ The Assembly :

“ Having taken note of the reports (documents A.9.1927.III and A.13 A.13 (a) (Extract No. 1)) dealing with the work of the Health Organisation of the League during the past year, expresses its gratification at the continued development of its international activities ;

“ Notes with satisfaction the growth and increasing usefulness of the work of the Epidemiological Intelligence Bureau at Singapore, due in large measure to the sympathetic co-operation of all Eastern Administrations, in whose interest it was primarily created ;

“ Notes with satisfaction the terms of the Agreement concluded between the League of Nations and the Permanent Committee of the Office international d'hygiène publique, whereby the services of the Singapore Bureau will be made available in the discharge, on behalf of the Office, of certain of the obligations imposed by the

International Sanitary Convention of Paris 1926 and also the further agreement recently concluded with the object of increasing the mutual co-operation in other directions between the Health Organisation and the Office international d'hygiène publique ;

“ Expresses its appreciation of the work accomplished by the Malaria Commission, the Sleeping-Sickness Commission, and the International Rabies Conference, and of the progress made in the investigations now being carried out with regard to infant mortality and health insurance.

“ 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 Organisation 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.

“ The Assembly records its unqualified approval and appreciation of the services rendered to international public health by the Health Committee and its expert Commissions.”

The President :

Translation : Major Elliot, delegate of the British Empire, will address the Assembly.

Major Elliot (British Empire) :

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — I should not wish the occasion of the submission of the report of the Health Organisation to pass without one or two words of comment, because these reports, though of great interest to the peoples of the world, if they do not receive any discussion in this forum of the nations, are occasionally apt to fall and not receive full attention in the countries which will receive the greatest benefits from them.

We have received in the past few weeks the report of the Economic Conference. That has been canvassed, discussed and considered in the Press of the whole world. It has been considered here at length and the debates on it are not yet concluded. The report of the Malaria Commission, to which the Rapporteur has just referred, is a document of, it may be, even as great importance to the world.

The economic disadvantages of malaria are so great and this scourge is so universal that it may be no exaggeration to say that the consideration of this problem by the Health Section of the League may be as important to the prosperity of the world as the consideration of currency by the Conference of Brussels, or the consideration of tariff barriers by the Conference which was called on the happy initiative of the delegation of France, and in particular of M. Loucheur. That may seem to be an exaggerated claim. But when we remember that historians have said that it may be that the civilisation of Greece and the civilisation of Rome were brought down by the tiny microbe of malaria, that it was this disease that brought down those two great and ancient countries with the tremendous cultural world which surrounded them, we can see that even a disease may be of as great importance to the prosperity of the world as a tariff barrier or even a disordered currency.

There are further points to which I want to refer. The work of the Health Organisation has been happily freed from many of the disadvantage which other sections of the League have had to encounter. Nobody desires malaria, nobody desires tuberculosis. Some countries desire armies, some countries even desire navies. I will not linger upon that point

because, if I did, I should get into the regions of controversy on the vexed question of disarmament and might even be led into the question of the Protocol, which, as everybody knows, stops all other discussions in Genevese circles as soon as it is raised!

The main point is that here we have a working model of what we desire in the future for the League organisations. We have the Health Section of the League, we have its simple and easy relations with the old body, the Central Organisation in Paris. We have the organisation in Paris acting as the Advisory Committee to the Health Section of the League, acting as its organ of liaison, gathering information and considering problems which it is well for the League of Nations to investigate. What is more, we have, by this means, succeeded in gaining the co-operation of all nations. The resolution to be proposed by Dr. Luis Mackenna in relation to the recent visit of two representatives of the League to South America is an example of this.

We find that, not only is the Health Organisation of the League recognised as of the highest standard the world has to show to-day, but that its imprimatur on the standard of, let us say, a powerful drug is taken as final, even more final than the League's pronouncement on an economic or political question. In fact, in view of the length of time spent on political questions which are discussed in the League, I would say that, if we could receive the same universal consent for all its judgments as we have been able to obtain for its health judgments, our meetings here might be very considerably reduced in their duration. In statistics, in surveys, in tours such as the Malaria Commission has carried out, the work of the League has been of the highest importance.

These remarks bring me to the one point that we are here working out — the future possibilities of turning the attention of the younger generation to something more fitted for our twentieth century than the activities of hostility, of war and of combat. The attraction of battle is not simply to be dismissed by a pious resolution. Those of us who have experienced the terrific pressure of national sentiment which culminated in the Great War, those of us who were combatants on one side or the other, know the enormous appeal which those things make to young people who are just growing up. We know that the sound of a military band, that the sight of one's regiment, that the memory of the great achievements in battle of one's country, are not things which can be dismissed merely by a resolution of the League of Nations to the effect that these things, are no longer worthy of our attention. They must be supplemented; there must be something else, some nobler ideal, substituted for them. The ideal of science, the ideal of co-operation, the ideal of battle with the forces of nature, which is long enough and difficult enough to occupy all the attention of mankind — these are the ways by which we shall go beyond the difficulties of militarism and national hostility rather than by the negative way of passing resolutions against these difficulties or calling shame down upon them by people of more or less good intentions.

On the whole we find, in the work of the League of Nations, many hopeful aspects, many hopeful avenues of co-operation between the nations in this sense. The co-operation between the nations which is offered by the Health Section and by the work of the Health Section is worthy of our best and closest attention, because I believe, and believe firmly, with all the strength that I have, that only by advance along the avenues which science reveals to us shall we be able to escape from the merely negative attitude which will never

succeed in destroying the evils of militarism and national hostility which this League is here to prevent.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution of the Second Committee which reads as follows :

The Assembly :

Having taken note of the reports (documents A.9.1927 III and A.13 and A.13 (a) (Extract No. 1)) dealing with the work of the Health Organisation of the League during the past year, expresses its gratification at the continued development of its international activities ;

Notes with satisfaction the growth and increasing usefulness of the work of the Epidemiological Intelligence Bureau at Singapore, due in large measure to the sympathetic co-operation of all Eastern Administrations, in whose interest it was primarily created ;

Notes with satisfaction the terms of the Agreement concluded between the League of Nations and the Permanent Committee of the Office international d'hygiène publique, whereby the services of the Singapore Bureau will be made available in the discharge, on behalf of the Office, of certain of the obligations imposed by the International Sanitary Convention of Paris 1926 and also the further agreement recently concluded with the object of increasing the mutual co-operation in other directions between the Health Organisation and the Office international d'hygiène publique ;

Expresses its appreciation of the work accomplished by the Malaria Commission, the Sleeping-Sickness Commission, and the International Rabies Conference, and of the progress made in the investigations now being carried out with regard to infant mortality and health insurance.

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 Organisation 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.

The Assembly records its unqualified approval and appreciation of the services rendered to international public health by the Health Committee and its expert Commissions.

The resolution was adopted.

60. — RESULTS OF THE MISSION CARRIED OUT IN CERTAIN LATIN-AMERICAN COUNTRIES BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE HEALTH COMMITTEE: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the report of the Second Committee on the results of the Mission carried out in certain Latin-American countries by the President of the Health Committee (Annex 10, document A.68.1927. III).

(On the invitation of the President M. Mackenna, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Mackenna, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Mackenna (Chile), Rapporteur :

Translation : Ladies and Gentlemen — In conformity with the President's recommendation, I shall confine myself to submitting to the Assembly the conclusions of the Second Committee's report.

I feel, however, that I must emphasise the extreme importance of the League's participation in the public health activities of South America. Although a recent development, this participation has already produced promising results the beneficial effects of which may be felt even outside the domain of public health.

I cannot now describe in detail the work of the mission carried out in certain countries of South America by the President of the Health Committee, Professor Madsen, and the Medical Director, Dr. Rajchman. The results obtained are mainly concerned with the campaign against infant mortality, for the principal aim of this mission was to define the work of the International Group of Experts in Child Welfare, which met at Montevideo last June.

The members of this mission were not able to extend their visit beyond the Argentine, Brazil and Uruguay, but it is abundantly clear that other countries are equally interested in and devoted to the health work of the League, and for that reason I think that the plans proposed will be widely accepted and will be extended in the near future.

The report emphasises the importance of the establishment and maintenance of tangible and organic links between the Health Organisations of Latin America and the Health Committee. Having myself co-operated for nearly twenty years in the campaign against infant mortality in my own country, I can, as representative of Chile, express my firm conviction that great benefits would result from closer co-operation between the vast public health and social welfare organisations in Chile and the health work of the League.

The resolutions which I have the honour to submit to the Assembly on behalf of the Second Committee read as follows :

The Assembly :

(1) *Having taken note of the report of the President of the Health Committee on the possibilities of technical co-operation with public health and medical authorities in Latin-American countries, and also of the report on the work of the Conference of Health Experts on Infant Welfare held at Montevideo ;*

(2) *Notes with satisfaction that the activities of the Health Organisation of the League of Nations have extended to several countries of Latin America and that fruitful co-operation may be anticipated as the result of the Health Committee's mission ;*

(3) *Welcomes the practical suggestions for continued co-operation which have been made by the health authorities and experts of Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay ;*

(4) *Considers that the realisation of these suggestions would result in creating links between the health work of the League and the activities of national health administrations in these countries and would represent a good method of developing the work of the League's technical organisations in Latin America ;*

(5) *Request the Council, after having obtained the Health Committee's advice on these different suggestions for co-operation with Latin-American countries, to consider how they may be put into practice.*

The President.

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I shall regard the resolution of the Second Committee as adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

61. — ITALIAN PROPOSAL FOR THE CREATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL CINEMATOGRAPHIC INSTITUTE AT ROME: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE :

The President.

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the Second Committee's report on the Italian proposal for the creation of an International Educational Cinematographic Institute at Rome (Annex 11, document A. 65. 1927. XII).

(On the invitation of the President M. Gallavresi, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform).

M. Gallavresi (Italy), Rapporteur, read his report.

The President :

Translation : The Committee has not submitted a resolution, but the Assembly is requested to note with gratitude the generous offer of the Italian Government under the conditions indicated in the Second Committee's report.

If no one wishes to speak, I shall consider the report as adopted.

The report was adopted.

62. — WORK FOR THE SETTLEMENT OF BULGARIAN REFUGEES: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the report of the Second Committee on the work for the settlement of Bulgarian refugees (Annex 12, document A. 67. 1927. II).

(On the invitation of the President Major Elliot, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform).

The President :

Translation : Major Elliot, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Major Elliot (British Empire), Rapporteur : I shall not take long in presenting this report, which is a report of progress made in accordance with the desires of the Assembly of the League. At the last ordinary session of the Assembly the second Committee had before it a record of the initial stages of the League's scheme for the settlement of Bulgarian refugees. Certain directions were given and agreed to by the Assembly, and since then the work has fortunately been uneventful.

The loan has been floated. The Commissioner for refugees, M. Charron, has been appointed and his relations with the Bulgarian Government are of the happiest. He reports that he has received the utmost assistance from the Bulgarian Government in every way. There is, in addition, the fact that in this matter Bulgaria has had the co-operation of her neighbours, and that, in agreement with her neighbours, she has been able to settle certain difficult questions which arose on such points as, for example, how near to the frontier refugees might be settled. As you can imagine, that is a point which might very well raise

difficulties These difficulties have been happily surmounted and the work of preparation is complete.

We are now at the beginning of the stage of accomplishment. There has not so far been time for great progress to have been made in the way of actual settlement.

The work, however, is now in hand and relations have been established. The money has been found — two and a quarter million pounds sterling — and therefore there is every reason to hope that the Rapporteur who takes my place at the next meeting of the Assembly will be able to report, not merely that preparations have been made, as I am able to tell you to-day, but that an actual serious beginning of the work has been effected and that real steps have been taken towards the settlement of this very difficult problem.

I have simply to propose the resolutions which you will find at the end of the report of the Second Committee and which read as follows :

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 already 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 appreciation of the courage and resolution displayed by the Bulgarian Government and the Commissioner of the League of Nations in carrying out the scheme.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I shall regard the resolution of the Second Committee as adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

63. — WORK OF THE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the report of the Second Committee on the work of the Economic Committee (Annex 13, document A. 70. 1927. II).

(On the invitation of the President M. Gliwic (Poland), Rapporteur, took his place on the platform).

The President :

Translation : M. Gliwic, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Gliwic (Poland), Rapporteur :

Translation : The work accomplished in the domain of economics in the course of the last year by the League of Nations, the Council, the Economic Organisation, under that eminent economist Sir Arthur Salter — a work of which the League of Nations has every right to be proud — was as you know, the preparation and groundwork of the International Economic Conference. Of this Conference, our distinguished colleague, M. Loucheur, will speak to you with that authority which attaches to all his pronouncements. Owing to the preparations for the International Economic Conference, this Committee has only held two sessions this year, one of which was devoted to the work entrusted to it by the Council and the other to the work devolving upon it in consequence of certain resolutions of the International Economic Conference referred to it by the Council.

You have before you the summary of this work. I shall not, therefore, read the report, but, before submitting to you the draft resolution on the work of the Economic Committee, I wish to express my admiration for the brilliant and assiduous work which has been so competently carried out by the Economic Section of the Secretariat — work the value and extent of which I have had the good fortune to observe at close quarters.

The Second Committee has the honour to submit to the Assembly the following draft resolutions :

The Assembly :

(1) Reiterating its conviction that the conclusion of an international convention for the abolition of import and export prohibitions and restrictions would greatly facilitate the recovery and future development of world trade, appeals to all Governments to send duly authorised representatives to the Conference which will take place at Geneva on October 17th, 1927, and expresses the most earnest hope that no efforts will be spared to bring the work of the Conference to a successful issue ;

(2) Notes with satisfaction that steps have already been taken by the Council to set in motion the preparatory work connected with the execution of certain urgent resolutions of the International Economic Conference, in particular those relating to tariffs and commercial treaties, to the unification of Customs nomenclature and to the treatment of foreign nationals and enterprises duly admitted to carry out their activity on the territory of a foreign State ;

(3) Takes note of the ratifications of the International Convention relating to the Simplification of Customs Formalities and of the Protocol of 1923 on Arbitration Clauses during the past year, and expresses the hope that those States which have not yet found it possible to adhere to these two international Acts will do so at an early date ;

(4) Notes with satisfaction that it is proposed to convene a Conference in the near future with a view to achieving greater uniformity in economic statistics ;

(5) Notes with approval that the recommendation that the Economic and Financial Section of the Secretariat should issue a Statistical Yearbook has now borne fruit, and recommends that this valuable volume should become one of the annual publications of the League ;

(6) Observes with satisfaction the progress which the Economic Committee has made in the study of the question of false declarations in Customs matters, of the progressive assimilation of laws relating to bills of exchange and cheques, and of economic barometers, and hopes that no effort will be spared to bring this work to a successful issue ;

(7) Notes with satisfaction the progress made in the Economic Section's enquiries regarding the direct and indirect means placed at the disposal of foreign purchasers in the different countries for the purpose of satisfying themselves of the quality of the goods which they acquire in those countries ;

Recommends that these enquiries should be pursued on the lines indicated in the provisional pamphlet communicated to the Second Committee and that the Governments should assist the Secretariat in order that a further publication, which should be as complete as possible, may be issued at an early date.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I shall consider the resolution proposed by the Second Committee as adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

The Assembly rose at 1 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Eighth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SIXTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 22nd, 1927, AT 10 A.M.

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64. — RELATIONS BETWEEN THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND INSTITUTES OR BODIES SET UP UNDER ITS AUTHORITY : DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE BRITISH DELEGATION : REFERENCE TO THE AGENDA COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : Before we begin the agenda, the Honourable Mrs. Alfred Lyttelton, delegate of the British Empire, desires to submit a proposal to the Assembly on behalf of the British delegation.

The Hon. Mrs. Alfred Lyttelton (British Empire) :
Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — The draft resolution which I wish to move is a very simple affair and, with your permission, I will read it to you at once. It is as follows :

“ The Assembly considers that the moment has arrived when the general question of the relations between the League of Nations and institutes or bodies set up under its authority, but not forming part of its organisation, should be studied, and the principles which should govern their acceptance by the League be laid down by the Council. ”

As everyone knows, there are already three or four bodies of this kind affiliated to the League, and there are many rumours that other generous offers are going to be made. It seemed to me to be important that the rules and conditions under

which such institutions should be placed under the League should be studied by the Council. I desire therefore to move this draft resolution.

The President :

Translation : In order to expedite matters, I suggest that the proposal made by the British delegation be referred immediately to the Agenda Committee, which might meet as soon as possible.

If this were done, I might perhaps be able to place the Agenda Committee's proposals before the Assembly at this morning's meeting.

If no one has any observations to make, this course will be adopted. (*Assent.*)

65. — WORK OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE ON INTELLECTUAL CO-OPERATION : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the examination of the Second Committee's report on the work of the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation (Annex 14, document A.63.1927.XII).

(*On the invitation of the President Mr. Dandurand, Chairman of the Second Committee, and Dr. Breitscheid, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.*)

The President :

Translation : Dr. Breitscheid, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Breitscheid (Germany), Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — I have the honour, as Rapporteur, to submit the report on the work of the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation and to ask you to approve the resolutions proposed by the Second Committee, which I will now read :

"The Assembly has noted with satisfaction the favourable reports presented by the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation and the Governing Body of the International Institute for Intellectual Co-operation. These reports show that the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation has now in hand a large number of definite and practical undertakings of international co-operation in regard to various scientific, artistic and literary activities, and that results have already been obtained.

"The Assembly observes that, during the past year, several nations, in response to the appeal it made in the previous year, have made a grant to the International Institute for Intellectual Co-operation. The countries making such grants are at present as follows : Austria, Czechoslovakia, France, Hungary, Italy, Monaco, Poland, Switzerland. The Assembly hopes that their example will be followed by the other nations. The reports now before it show clearly that it is only the smallness of its financial resources which prevents the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation from rendering all the services which may now be expected of it.

"The Assembly is glad to see the increase in the number and activity of National Committees on Intellectual Co-operation. The regular co-operation between well-organised National Committees and the International Committee is of ever-increasing utility to the work of intellectual co-operation. The Assembly would

therefore refer to the recommendation it made in 1924 and invite the States Members of the League which have not already done so to consider the possibility of providing the necessary funds to meet the expenses of their respective National Committees.

"The Assembly notes, as being particularly worthy of attention and encouragement, the proposals of the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation in regard to the following points :

"1. The creation at the International Institute for Intellectual Co-operation of an international co-ordination service of information offices attached to libraries. The Assembly emphasises the importance in this connection of national information offices, and trusts that such offices may be established in those countries where they do not already exist.

"2. The proposals for co-ordination between the organs of bibliography for the various sciences drawn up by the Committees of experts under excellent technical conditions, in such a way as to give every satisfaction to the persons concerned.

"3. The recommendation made by the International Committee in favour of the International Office for Annual Tables of Constants and Mathematical Quantities. Governments, scholars and industrial organisations are equally interested in the continuance of this enterprise, which is at present in danger owing to lack of funds. An understanding between Governments is extremely desirable in order to ensure the regular publication of the Tables.

"4. The steps taken with a view to :

"Preparing for the Popular Arts Congress ;

"An international agreement with regard to casts ;

"An extension of the work of museums as a means of artistic education, etc.

"The Assembly thanks the Czechoslovak Government for the subsidy so generously granted in order to facilitate the holding of the Popular Arts Congress at Prague. It congratulates the Swiss Federal Government, and more particularly the city of Berne, on the initiative regarding an International Exhibition of Popular Arts to be held in that city. The Assembly requests the Secretary-General of the League of Nations and the Institute for Intellectual Co-operation to render every assistance in their power to the promoters of this enterprise.

* * *

"The Assembly has noted the remarkable report presented by M. Jules Destrée on behalf of the Sub-Committee of Experts for the Instruction of Children and Youth in the Existence and Aims of the League of Nations. It approves the recommendations made by the experts, and instructs the Secretary-General to communicate them to the Governments of the States Members of the League of Nations, requesting them, so far as may be possible in each particular case, to take the necessary measures to give effect to the recommendations. The Assembly approves the creation of League of Nations Educational Information Centres under the conditions laid down by the Sub-Committee of Experts. It decides that the Sub-Committee of Experts shall continue its work on the lines

suggested by the French representative in his report approved by the Council at its meeting of September 2nd, 1927."

Count Mensdorff, delegate of Austria, has already addressed the Assembly on the subject of this organisation in his eloquent speech during the general discussion, so that I need not, I think, emphasise its importance now.

Let me say this, however: The League's work and aims in this sphere form a necessary corollary to its efforts towards a lasting peace.

Art and science are national in their origin but international in their effects. Each country may emphasise, and is in duty bound to emphasise, what it has done in this sphere. But we must try to collect what each one has to contribute in the interests of mankind. This, intellectual co-operation can do; it can bring together scholars and artists, and teach them that, national frontiers notwithstanding, they have a common field of action and are all servants of the same ideal.

Again, in the education of the younger generation, intellectual co-operation has a part to play.

After the devastating catastrophe which overtook the world, a number of countries have joined together to form the League. The new generation must learn from its earliest years to respect this institution and to realise how necessary and how natural its existence is. Intellectual co-operation must help in the work. It must strive to make the responsible elements in every country realise that the education of youth should be based not on national hatreds but on mutual understanding.

Every country should be proud of its great men. Every nation should have a natural pride in itself, but without despising or underestimating other nations. No State should ever forget that disputes must be settled by some means other than violence or armed force.

The older generation, it is true, finds it hard to accustom itself to these new ideas, to visualise moral disarmament; but youth must be won over, and we shall win it over if we only persevere.

I have said enough, I hope, to remind you of the importance of intellectual co-operation. Support it, support it morally and — what is very necessary — support it materially. Open your hearts, and open your purses too.

The President:

Translation: Mlle. Vacaresco, delegate of Roumania, will address the Assembly.

Mlle. Vacaresco (Roumania):

Translation: Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — Every day we have to record fresh triumphs won in the cause of peace. Peace uses weapons hitherto unknown, in her battle against war, and the League, to its lasting glory, has realised that its magnificent work can never prosper until its ideal has taken hold of the imagination of the peoples and materialises in ever-increasing and varying forms.

To-day the peace idea is marching to conquer the world, for peace bears a changed countenance. She is no longer humble; she has taken the offensive. Is this warlike tone a matter for alarm? Shall we blunt the edge of our attack, or shall we rather employ in the service of our ideal the warlike legacy of centuries?

Rising on all sides we behold around us the arsenal of peace. Within that edifice the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation and its effective instrument, the International Institute in Paris,

represent the League's supreme effort to penetrate to the in most core of international life.

It is not my intention now to describe to you the immense activities of the Paris Institute. I shall endeavour simply to concentrate on certain points in the vast programme already spread before you.

Like all fruitful ideas, the idea which governs the activities of the Paris Institute may be summed up in a few words: the co-ordination of all means that may serve to promote culture, whether of the intellect, the conscience, or the heart. This seemingly arid formula possesses peculiar force, and its application has enabled the Institute to become a centre of data, information, bulletins and catalogues, to develop into one of the most pregnant spots in the whole world, and to form, as it were, a depository of intellectual truths.

Moreover, with the help of the staff recruited by M. Luchaire, its zealous Director, and the busy services housed in the Palais Royal, regular compilations have been made and contact has been established between countries and between ideas which it has undoubtedly never been thought possible before to bring so closely into touch with one another.

Times have changed, and the day has gone by when the scholar, the thinker or the student, when undertaking any work, was obliged to confine himself for his material to his own country. Now that the material is scattered over every quarter of the globe, the needs of modern science have increased. During the last thirty or forty years the comparative method has gradually been ousting the so-called historical method. A hundred years ago the historical mind held undisputed possession of reality, of facts and their concatenation. By a purely ingenuous effort, it conquered the world of phenomena and established itself uncontested. Then came the comparative method and drove it out — the comparative method, which is the outcome of the historical mind but which extended its horizon, developed the synthetic sense and rendered it intelligible.

It was at once realised that in the vast frescoes which he loved to trace, the historian of yesterday — even great men like Augustin Thierry, Hume, Macaulay or Mommsen — missed the main point, which was to indicate and elucidate the direction towards which facts and events were tending, and, first and foremost, the connecting links between them.

This can never happen again. From the midst of that national truth which some flattered themselves they held in the hollow of their hand, an international truth has emerged, strong and imperious, but how difficult to control!

When we attempt to describe a fact, that fact, situated in its true and proper place in the world scheme, reaches out and connects with countless other facts, and its very root-fibres are seen, as it were, to be both universal and particular. This, henceforth must be the chief care of science, of research and of the human intellect.

In response to this preoccupation, this fundamental emotion — the outcome of the real feelings and requirements of the peoples — the Paris Institute for Intellectual Co-operation came into being at the crucial moment. It has had, on the one hand, to follow movements and, on the other, to seek to guide them.

Over this immense field, where faint glimmerings were dimly seen, it has poured a flood of light, and has become the centre, the point to which the whole world turns for guidance. While in this sense the Institute has done no more than what the age expects of it, there is another sphere in which, surpassing itself, outrunning its own ambitions, it has assumed a more creative function. Let me

ask you to follow me for a few minutes while I explore this other region.

We find in it three great portals, opening upon the boundless aspirations of mankind; yet we find, too, that it keeps those very aspirations within the bounds of order.

The first portal is the International Museums Office. This Office makes it possible to catalogue, as it were, the nations in the domain of the arts; it enables the nations to respond to one another, by making known their precious possessions; it serves as a means of communication between museums, brings enquirers into touch with one another, collects lists of private collections and infuses life into the smallest work of art.

The International Museums Office has many projects in view; one of them has already taken concrete shape in the simultaneous exhibitions of prints at Paris, Madrid and Rome, which have produced a great impression. Later, continuing this great cultural campaign, the Office will be able to place at the disposal of the public not only catalogues, of which I spoke just now, and publications, but also engravings and photographs, for it intends to suggest exchanges. It will exert itself to arouse interest in foreign art, to recruit art-lovers and to create a state of mind conducive to the diffusion of artistic interests and undertakings of every description.

We now pass to the Congress which has been arranged by the Paris Institute — the Popular Arts Congress to be held at Prague next year. Popular art! There, ladies and gentlemen, we have the sphere *par excellence* in which the peoples can be brought together, in which their spirits come into contact and reach out and are most intimately intermingled. Popular art sprang from the very sources of national life. It accompanied the different races in all their wanderings, in song and in picture, even in the embroidery of the woman who sits sewing by the hearth.

Popular art attended the nations in their cradle, and accompanied them in all the vicissitudes of triumph and adversity. Popular art represents the very essence of the nation and yet something above and beyond the nation. The Congress will show its international character, for, as you know, the folklores of all countries ultimately go back to a common source. Their colouring varies in the lays which our ancestors in every country have handed down to us; but they have all issued from the vast womb of the universe wherein the human ideal took shape. They are all flowers sprung from one parent stock. They form, as it were, widespread foliage, sheltering birds of one great family, though their notes and hues may vary with climate, time and circumstances. The Popular Arts Congress will prove that henceforth the national and international can live in close communion when they realise one another, when it is found that they display barely dissimilar features, and that their vision is fixed upon the same ideal.

The Paris Institute has taken up another important question: the cinema, whose world-output comes second after that of wheat; the cinema, the ruler of the hour; the cinema, that mute universal tongue, which, having ousted speech, now dominates it.

The masses will one day be what the cinema may choose to make them — the masses, with whom we must concern ourselves because they are, at one and the same time, ourselves and other people; the masses whom we must not allow to injure either us or themselves; the masses, towards whom the gaze of the élite is turning more and more, for the élite of the future will be drawn from their midst; the masses to whom we owe all and who in their turn, owe much to us.

The cinema has an extraordinary power over them and over youth. Just think, as one of my French colleagues remarked the other day — just think how, during a cinema performance, the film unwinds before the eyes of the child or the young; and the youthful spectator, yielding up his personality, drawn and held by the spectacle before him, remains passively receptive to instincts, feelings and thoughts which may perhaps never leave him and will probably guide him in all his future life.

The cinema is springing up at every point of the earth; it is a very forest of multiple images. We must remember, too, the influence which it is now undoubtedly exercising on literature. After using literature, it now dominates it. Just think of some of those elliptical novels, and pictures, which would be unintelligible without the cinema to explain them. Even music, in its most fevered, pulsing rhythms, owes much — at all events owes something — to the cinema. Nevertheless, the cinema is determined to remain independent, to constitute a free art, to employ the weapons it already possesses; it is for us to bring home to it the influence of its subtle effects and its responsibility for the wounds which those weapons may deal to future generations.

I am an admirer, though not an apostle, of the cinema. But I would have the League turn its attention to this problem, just as it has to all the big influential questions on which the future hangs. I would have the League associate itself with all the efforts of the International Institute in Paris which are designed to increase the influence of the cinema when good and to hinder it whenever it may seem harmful.

I think I have said enough in favour of the Institute to make you realise in what esteem we hold it, and to make you realise — but this you already know, for nothing escapes your acute powers of observation — how essential it is to support it in its innumerable yet carefully directed efforts in every direction — efforts carefully calculated and estimated to a nicety.

The Paris Institute is rich in ideas, desires, aspirations, acquisitions and victories, and already rich in hopes. But it is not rich in material realities; it is anything but rich, because, like so many others, it has felt the baneful influence of currency depreciation. Nevertheless, it enjoys great prestige among the arts. We trust that this will work in its favour, and that after it has been told: Knock, and it shall be opened unto you — for every door will be thrown open to it — we in our turn shall be able to say: Ask, and it shall be given you. Ask: for the States, and after them the big donors, and after the big donors the anonymous donors, must realise that any assistance designed to aid the Paris Institute in impressing its already significant personality is a contribution towards the cause of peace, which will form the true foundations of the glorious edifice already outlined on the horizon.

“We are in the throes of an intellectual crisis” — these words occur in one of the brilliant essays of the eminent French writer whom the Institute for Intellectual Co-operation is proud to number among its collaborators; and we echo the words “intellectual crisis”, because we have reached a crisis in the evolution of dogmas. We are living in a world the international realities of which escape us. Our vision has not yet succeeded in grasping its precise limits or its vast extent. The flood of modern phenomena is breaking around us, beating down the age-long barriers of categories and classes; these classes and categories it is for us to seize upon; it is for us to rescue them, and by the forceful sway of circumstances these new dogmas will

all eventually teach us the same lesson: the solidarity of mankind as the creative and conservative force in world peace.

The President :

Translation : M. Marcel Plaisant, delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. Marcel Plaisant (France) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — If the League's interest in the International Institute for Intellectual Co-operation were not already amply proved by the lengthy discussions in the Second Committee and the speeches delivered on the subject of the Institute's activities by a number of delegates in the Assembly, the eloquent speech of our gifted colleague, Mlle. Vacaresco, would undoubtedly convince us.

Mlle. Vacaresco displayed a profundity of thought in regard to those points which are of special interest to us, and her remarks are certainly most illuminating as an indication of the direction in which the Institute's future activities should lie.

We may congratulate ourselves, too, upon the fact that the report on the International Institute was entrusted to Dr. Breitscheid, delegate of Germany. Germany is a country where culture is held in particular esteem and assumes profound and definite forms which constitute an indispensable contribution to the intellectual development of mankind.

Two conclusions may be deduced from Dr. Breitscheid's acceptance of this duty and from his observations. We have, on the one hand, a pledge of Germany's moral interest in the future work of the Institute and, on the other — if I have rightly understood the German delegate's speech — a pledge of the material interest by which she proposes to mark her association with that work.

The French delegation is in a particularly delicate position. France is content simply to act as hostess to the International Institute for Intellectual Co-operation; and, rather than add the slightest eulogy which might be interpreted as patronage, we shall confine ourselves to recording here the outspoken praise of others, which constitutes the best proof that the Institute has remained faithful to its original vocation.

The International Institute for Intellectual Co-operation, now housed in the Palais Royal in Paris, has preserved intact the international spirit which governed its foundation.

This was affirmed by all the delegates in the Second Committee, and has been stressed by more than one speaker in this Assembly. M. Destrée referred very specifically to the same point in the report to the Council and Dr. Breitscheid has just mentioned it again. France, then, as guardian of the integrity of this international spirit, is gratified to find that all the States are agreed in testifying to this most important fact.

The Institute has proved itself truly international; it has thrown open its doors to all nations; it has carried out its investigations in a truly objective spirit, always seeking the soundest solutions, solutions that may be of service to every nation and play their part in the harmonious working of the national life.

What, then, remains ?

To repeat what has already been said — the Institute must concentrate its efforts and apply them to more definite purposes. It must first examine itself frankly and make up its mind to study problems within certain specific limits, thus achieving results which shall serve to promote the international spirit.

Then again — and here we appeal to all of you — it must obtain the help and enlightened sympathy of all the States through the National Committees, so as to prevent the formation of fresh organisations, for this would mean a division of labour and the dispersion of intellectual energies which are individually well-nigh helpless, but whose union demonstrates the power of the mind to overcome force.

It must be admitted that, if it plays such a part and achieves this task in its entirety, the Institute will be overstepping the limits originally laid down for it. Eloquent voices have been heard on every side in this Assembly — and their words still echo here — proclaiming that moral disarmament must precede material disarmament, and that only by disarmament of the spirit can material disarmament be achieved in perfect sincerity and for all time.

Well, the Institute is working to achieve this end; it is working steadily to co-ordinate efforts in the domain of science, literature and art; it is seeking to promote intellectual co-operation, to throw into relief and place at the service of the world all that which is purest and noblest in the minds of thinking men, and to destroy the last seeds of discord and bring to maturity the precious fruits of peace. That is the work of the International Institute for Intellectual Co-operation; that is the work we are all pursuing here in the interests of peace.

In this spirit, then, France gladly associates herself with what has been said in praise of the International Institute at Paris, firmly convinced as she is that the Institute has it in its power to gather together the manifold expressions of human thought to form a truly harmonious whole.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolutions proposed by the Second Committee, which read as follows :

The Assembly has noted with satisfaction the favourable reports presented by the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation and the Governing Body of the International Institute for Intellectual Co-operation. These reports show that the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation has now in hand a large number of definite and practical undertakings of international co-operation in regard to various scientific, artistic and literary activities, and that results have already been obtained.

The Assembly observes that, during the past year, several nations, in response to the appeal it made in the previous year, have made a grant to the International Institute for Intellectual Co-operation. The countries making such grants are at present as follows: Austria, Czechoslovakia, France, Hungary, Italy, Monaco, Poland, Switzerland. The Assembly hopes that their example will be followed by the other nations. The reports now before it show clearly that it is only the smallness of its financial resources which prevents the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation from rendering all the services which may now be expected of it.

The Assembly is glad to see the increase in the number and activity of National Committees on Intellectual Co-operation. The regular co-operation between well-organised National Committees and the International Committee is of ever-increasing utility to the work of intellectual co-operation. The Assembly would therefore refer to the recommendation it made in 1924 and invite the States Members of the League which have not already done so to consider the possibility of

providing the necessary funds to meet the expenses of their respective National Committees.

The Assembly notes, as being particularly worthy of attention and encouragement, the proposals of the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation in regard to the following points :

1. The creation at the International Institute for Intellectual Co-operation of an international co-ordination service of information offices attached to libraries. The Assembly emphasises the importance in this connection of national information offices, and trusts that such offices may be established in those countries where they do not already exist.

2. The proposals for co-ordination between the organs of bibliography for the various sciences drawn up by the Committees of experts under excellent technical conditions, in such a way as to give every satisfaction to the persons concerned.

3. The recommendation made by the International Committee in favour of the International Office for Annual Tables of Constants and Mathematical Quantities. Governments, scholars and industrial organisations are equally interested in the continuance of this enterprise, which is at present in danger owing to lack of funds. An understanding between Governments is extremely desirable in order to ensure the regular publication of the Tables.

4. The steps taken with a view to :

Preparing for the Popular Arts Congress ;

An international agreement with regard to casts ;

An extension of the work of museums as a means of artistic education, etc

The Assembly thanks the Czechoslovak Government for the subsidy so generously granted in order to facilitate the holding of the Popular Arts Congress at Prague. It congratulates the Swiss Federal Government, and more particularly the city of Berne, on the initiative regarding an International Exhibition of Popular Arts to be held in that city. The Assembly requests the Secretary-General of the League of Nations and the Institute for Intellectual Co-operation to render every assistance in their power to the promoters of this enterprise.

* * *

The Assembly has noted the remarkable report presented by M. Jules Destrée on behalf of the Sub-Committee of Experts for the Instruction of Children and Youth in the Existence and Aims of the League of Nations. It approves the recommendations made by the experts, and instructs the Secretary-General to communicate them to the Governments of the States Members of the League of Nations, requesting them, so far as may be possible in each particular case, to take the necessary measures to give effect to the recommendations. The Assembly approves the creation of League of Nations Educational Information Centres under the conditions laid down by the Sub-Committee of Experts. It decides that the Sub-Committee of Experts shall continue its work on the lines suggested by the French representative in his report approved by the Council at its meeting of September 2nd, 1927.

The resolutions were adopted.

66. — SETTLEMENT OF GREEK REFUGEES AND FINANCIAL RECONSTRUCTION SCHEME : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the report of the Second Committee on the settlement of Greek Refugees and the financial reconstruction scheme (Annex 15, document A. 91. 1927. II.).

(On the invitation of the President M. Suvich, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Suvich, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Suvich (Italy), Rapporteur, read his report and the accompanying draft resolution.

The Assembly :

Has learned with great interest of the successful result of the negotiations which have taken place with a view to the issue, under the auspices of the League of Nations, of a loan to enable the Greek Government to take measures of financial and monetary reorganisation, and to proceed with the settlement of the refugees ;

In particular, expresses its appreciation of the plan which has been drawn up for the creation of a new bank of issue and for the stabilisation of the Greek currency ;

Expresses its appreciation to all those who have collaborated in these investigations, and especially to the Greek Government and to the Financial Committee ;

Approves the progress made in the refugee settlement work and expresses the hope that this work will soon be successfully brought to a close ;

In conclusion, expresses the hope that the entire scheme which has now been elaborated will be fully successful.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I shall consider the resolution of the Second Committee as adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

67. — SLAVERY CONVENTION : REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the report of the Sixth Committee on the Slavery Convention (Annex 16, document A. 74. 1927. VI.).

(On the invitation of the President M. Bech, Chairman of the Sixth Committee, and Sir Edward Hilton Young, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : Sir Edward Hilton Young, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Sir Edward Hilton Young (British Empire) :

Ladies and Gentlemen — I feel it is not wholly inappropriate that the next report to be presented should be that upon the work of the League in connection with slavery. We have heard this morning most eloquent addresses upon what I

may call the activities of the League in their most developed aspects. The assistance of intellectual co-operation is the work of the League at the top end of the chain, and now I have, for a moment only, to call your attention to that other kind of work which is done by the League at the other end of the chain, work on behalf of the lowliest, of the most defenceless, of human beings.

This, as we know, is work which is just as appropriate, if not more appropriate, to the great common purposes of this organisation, because, in raising up slaves and in protecting those who were the masters of the slaves from the degradation resulting from the imposition of that odious status upon any of their fellow men, we are most particularly furthering the objects which we all have at heart.

This year I have nothing to report but continued prosperity and a steady advance towards the final achievement of our object when slavery shall exist no more throughout the world. Your Committee has received the most valuable information from many States. It has heard with interest and sympathy from some States that they will not be able year by year to go on furnishing long reports because their legislation is already in harmony with the principles upheld by the League, and any further change which can take place as regards the situation of slavery in their territories can only be very slow.

There is one matter to which I should like to make particular reference to-day because it concerns my own country. In the year 1896 a new Protectorate was founded in Sierra Leone. In that Protectorate there existed, at the time of its foundation, a modified form of domestic servitude which was, nevertheless, inconsistent with the principles of our British culture and civilisation. My Government had thought that the recognition of that status had been eliminated from the laws of the territory; but, as sometimes happens, the judges of the senior Tribunal of the territory found a gap, a hiatus, in the legislation. Owing to that hiatus it appeared that it might be possible to say that there was some recognition of this status of domestic servitude in the legislation of the Protectorate.

As I have already mentioned to the Committee and as is stated in our report, immediate and urgent measures were taken to close this gap and I am now happy to be able to give the further news that the Legislative Assembly of the Protectorate of Sierra Leone has already adopted at a first reading the Bill which will have the effect of abolishing absolutely and finally, the legal recognition of that modified form of domestic servitude, as from the first of January next year. There is every prospect that this legislation will be brought to a successful issue, so that, even in this trifling matter, legislation will be brought into conformity with the great principles of our laws in Great Britain, namely, that as soon as a slave treads British soil his chains at once fall from him and he becomes wholly and for ever free.

One aspect to which constant attention should be called regarding the Slavery Convention is the unfortunate delay in the ratification of that Convention by, perhaps one must still say, the majority of States, particulars of which are given in the report which is now before you. I have one gratifying circumstance to record — that since the drafting of this report the number of the non-ratifying States has been diminished and the number of the ratifying States increased by one, the Convention having been ratified by the Kingdom of Norway.

In conclusion, we must not indulge merely in pleasant congratulations, so long as it is still to be

admitted that the same high standards of practice have not yet been pursued all over the world, and cannot yet be enforced, as regards the abolition of this most odious of human institutions. It remains only for your Rapporteur to emphasise that membership of the League imposes the highest obligations in this respect, and that the public opinion of the League will ever demand their observance.

I beg to move the adoption of the following resolution :

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 September 25th, 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.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I shall consider the resolution of the Sixth Committee as adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

68. — SYSTEM OF THE SINGLE TRANSFERABLE VOTE, AND THE PRINCIPLE OF PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION IN GENERAL IN CONNECTION WITH THE PROBLEM OF THE ELECTION OF THE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL : REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the report of the Sixth Committee on the system of the single transferable vote, and the principle of proportional representation in general, in connection with the problem of the election of the non-permanent members of the Council. (Annex 17, document A.75.1927.VII).

M. Bech, delegate of Luxemburg, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Bech (Luxemburg), Rapporteur, read his report and the accompanying resolution; which reads as follows :

The Assembly adopts the report of the Sixth Committee.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak I shall consider the resolution of the Sixth Committee as adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

69. — RESULTS OF THE CONFERENCE OF PRESS EXPERTS: REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the report of the Sixth Committee on the work of the Conference of Press Experts (Annex 18, document A.77.1927).

(On the invitation of the President M. de Brouckere, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. de Brouckère, Rapporteur of the Sixth Committee, will address the Assembly.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium), Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — The conclusions of the Conference of Press Experts were discussed at length in the Sixth Committee.

You have before you the report, in which these discussions are summarised. I think that I shall be meeting your views if in order to save time I confine myself to reading the unanimous conclusions at which the Sixth Committee arrived.

I have the honour to propose the adoption of the following resolution :

The Assembly,

Noting the success of the Conference of Press Experts, and conveying its thanks to the representatives of the Press for their collaboration ;

Expresses its satisfaction that the Council has considered the steps required for promptly giving the necessary effect to the resolutions of the Conference ;

Trusts that the technical organisations to which the Council has submitted a number of these resolutions will undertake as soon as possible the special enquiries relating, in particular, to the questions of telegraphic and telephonic rates, the improvement of communications, the conveyance of newspapers, identity cards for journalists and visas for journalists' passports ;

Trusts that the Council, at its December session, will take the most suitable measures to enlist the sympathetic attention of Governments for the other resolutions adopted by the Conference in order that effect may be given to them ;

Notes with satisfaction that the Council, taking into account the recommendation made by the Conference, has declared that, should it at some future time appear necessary and should developments in the technical international problems which affect the Press make it seem desirable to those concerned, it will in principle be willing to lend the assistance of the organisations of the League for the study of these questions, and to organise a consultation or call a Conference for this purpose.

The President :

Translation : M. Sérot, delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. Serot (France) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — The French delegation desires to state briefly its reasons for accepting this admirable report, which sums up so concisely the work of the Conference of Press Experts.

First, be it noted, the Press, in asking for facilities which would enable it to enlighten public opinion and thus help to dispel misunderstandings, is pursuing a purpose which, though it may seem merely technical, is really in the interests of peace.

Moreover, there is no question of special privileges, but rather of their abolition, since these measures are intended to apply to the Press as a whole ; that is, to small papers as well as to influential ones, and the facilities for obtaining information would be the same for all alike.

The League can gauge the gratifying interest taken in its activities from the number and standing of the Press experts who attended this Conference at Geneva. Distinguished representatives came,

for example, from North America, Latin America and distant Japan. We must make it quite clear in this Assembly how greatly their generous effort has been appreciated.

At the same time the Conference gave tangible proof of the confidence which the Press, so rightly jealous of its independence, feels in the League. Public opinion is a real power, but a power that will brook no restraint. This mutual confidence is a matter for general congratulation.

Now that the League has a list of the requirements of the Press, it can take measures, through its technical organs and the Governments of the States Members, to give effect to them.

Purely technical though these requirements may seem, they have a far-reaching and important bearing. The object is to promote the cheap and rapid dissemination of news in every country.

Rapidity and cheapness, it must be remembered, are the surest guarantee against false news and tendentious campaigns which might one day endanger world peace.

It has often been suggested that news should be checked and that a central office should be set up to verify all information and, as it were, to stamp it as authentic. Such a scheme, I confess, appears to me impossible in actual practice. How could a central office of this sort have at its disposal means so perfect or complete as to enable it to assume the eminently difficult and dangerous rôle of censor ?

Other methods must be employed to protect the public against erroneous, false or tendentious news. The best remedy for false news is to swamp it and publish other news simultaneously that contradicts it. Hence the need for increased telephonic and telegraphic facilities ; hence the need for reducing telegraph and telephone rates.

In time of crisis public opinion is very apt to go astray, and it should not be necessary to wait twenty-four hours before the truth can correct erroneous information.

Between big centres, it is true, a misleading telegram is not likely to remain long uncorrected, but this is unfortunately not yet the case in many parts of the world.

I am glad to think that the Assembly has realised the political bearing and pacific significance of this Conference. Let us hope that the League's technical organs will arrive at prompt and satisfactory results. We must not forget that by giving effect to the requirements of the Press we shall be working, as the Chilian delegation mentioned at the outset, for a better understanding between the peoples.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I shall consider the resolution of the Sixth Committee, which has just been read, as adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

70. — RESULTS OF THE CONFERENCE FOR THE CREATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL RELIEF UNION: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE. RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : We will now consider the report of the Second Committee on the results of the Conference for the Creation of an International Relief Union (Annex 19, document A.89.1927.VIII.)

(On the invitation of the President M. Dandurand, Chairman of the Second Committee, and M. de

Baranyai, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

M. de Baranyai (Hungary), Rapporteur, read his report and the following draft resolution :

The Assembly,

Highly gratified at the success of the Conference for the Creation of an International Relief Union ;
Convinced that the Governments, before which the results of the Conference have now been laid, will definitely decide to co-operate in this work of international solidarity :

Offers its thanks to Senator Ciruolo, to the President of the Conference, and to the members of the Preparatory Committee for the scheme on which the Conference's work was based, and requests the President of the Conference and the members and experts of the Preparatory Committee to hold themselves at the Council's disposal to propose to it all measures that may be calculated to facilitate the putting into force and the application of the Convention concluded by the Conference.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I shall consider the resolution of the Second Committee as adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

71. — WORK OF THE FINANCIAL COMMITTEE: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the Second Committee's report on the work of the Financial Committee (Annex 20, document A.85.1927.II).

(On the invitation of the President M. Djouritch, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Djouritch, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Djouritch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes) :

Gentlemen — I propose to give you a brief summary of my report on the work of the Financial Committee, the text of which has been distributed.

The Financial Committee is one of the most active Committees of the League, and since its inception its work has been of outstanding importance.

At the time of its formation it was not clear which direction its activities would take, and, curiously enough, it has often had to depart from the principles and ideas which prevailed at the time when it was set up.

In fact, the distress and financial disorganisation in Europe were such that this Committee had to take measures which were quite unanticipated, but were nevertheless very successful. The outward manifestation of this action was the conclusion of a series of loans issued under its auspices to different countries which were in financial difficulties.

The total of these loans amounts to £70,000,000. They were intended to establish a solid financial basis for the economic development of the various States for which they were issued.

The fundamental principles for effecting the financial reconstruction of these countries are, firstly, to stabilise the currency, and, secondly, to effect budget equilibrium.

As regards the stabilisation of currencies, the proposals and plans of the Financial Committee have been concerned mainly with the creation of national banks, entirely independent of the Governments, for the issue of fiduciary currency.

Under the Financial Committee's plan organisations have been set up which have to-day become models of their kind, and have indeed been copied by most of the States which have had to stabilise their currency.

The second problem with which the Financial Committee has had to deal concerns budget equilibrium. In this field also all the proposals made have aimed at indicating reasonable economies and at increasing receipts with a view to establishing a sound financial position.

The results which the Financial Committee obtained by means of these reforms (most of which, be it noted, were adopted by the States concerned) were so satisfactory that its methods have been followed even by States which did not appeal to it for help.

These methods found their principal application in the most important plans for reconstruction which we have seen in Europe — those for the reconstruction of Germany. It may therefore be said that the Financial Committee's investigations have led to the practical realisation of economic principles which are to-day followed by the majority of States which have had to take in hand the financial restoration of their financial position.

During the financial year 1926-27, with which we are principally concerned now, the Financial Committee dealt with Bulgarian refugees and the financial reconstruction of Greece. As the two special reports relating to the work done in these two fields have been circulated to all the members of the Assembly, I shall not pause here to discuss these questions.

I have now to describe briefly the work of the Financial Committee as regards, first, the Free City of Danzig and then Estonia.

The Financial Committee's work in regard to the Free City of Danzig, has been particularly interesting; the Committee has had to deal with questions which were very complicated because they involved negotiations with other States, particularly Poland, and also because certain obligations arising out of the Peace Treaty had to be fulfilled.

All these negotiations were carried out very satisfactorily, and last June a loan for the Free City was arranged and issued.

The stabilisation of Estonian currency, too, is very interesting because, although the Estonian budget had already been stabilised in 1922, the financial situation of the country was, if not exactly difficult, at all events unsatisfactory.

In its negotiations with Estonia, the Financial Committee drew up a Protocol — which was adopted — establishing a gold monetary standard for Estonia. A loan was issued last year, which enabled the National Bank of Estonia to stabilise its position and to ensure the gold standard.

The Financial Committee also dealt last year with general questions, such as double taxation, fiscal evasion and the question of counterfeiting currency. It was engaged in special activities in a hitherto untouched field, namely, the Finnish proposal for financial assistance to States victims of aggression, and the Committee succeeded in establishing a practical method of mobilising the financial resources of the States Members of the League against a State guilty of aggression, thus affording a striking demonstration of the solidarity of League opinion in its opposition to such a State.

Lastly, I propose to the Assembly, on behalf of the Second Committee, the following resolution, which I will read :

The Assembly takes note of the activities of the Financial Committee and expresses its great satisfaction with the highly useful work accomplished by it.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I shall consider the resolution of the Second Committee as adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

72. — CONTRIBUTIONS IN ARREARS: REPORT OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the report of the Fourth Committee on Contributions in Arrears. (Annex 21, document A.71.1927.X).

(On the invitation of the President M. van Eysinga, Chairman of the Fourth Committee, took his place on the platform).

The President :

Translation : As M. Vennersten, delegate of Sweden, Rapporteur, who was to have submitted the report on behalf of the Fourth Committee, is unable to be present, M. van Eysinga, Chairman of the Fourth Committee, has kindly undertaken to submit this report.

M. van Eysinga (Netherlands) read the report on Contributions in Arrears and the accompanying 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.*

M. van Eysinga then continued as follows : The words "in due course" in the third paragraph

of the resolution mean (the Committee was unanimous on this point) "before the ninth ordinary session of the Assembly". No mention was made of the June session of the Council, as the times of the Council sessions may possibly be altered in the near future.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I shall regard the resolution of the Fourth Committee as adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

73. — RELATIONS BETWEEN THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND INSTITUTES OR BODIES SET UP UNDER ITS AUTHORITY: DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE BRITISH DELEGATION: REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : You will remember that at the beginning of this meeting I suggested that, in order to expedite matters, the proposal submitted on behalf of the British delegation by the Honourable Mrs. Alfred Lyttelton should be referred at once to the Agenda Committee, in order that the latter might transmit its proposals to us as soon as possible.

I have just received the following letter from the Chairman of the Agenda Committee :

"With reference to your letter of to-day's date, you were good enough to inform me that at your suggestion the Assembly decided to refer to the Agenda Committee the draft resolution submitted to it by the Hon. Mrs. Alfred Lyttelton, delegate of the British Empire, on the subject of the relations between the League of Nations and institutes or bodies set up under its authority but not forming part of its organisation.

"I have consulted my colleagues on this point, and have now to inform you that the Agenda Committee, after a preliminary examination of this draft resolution, proposes that it be placed on the agenda of the present session and referred to the Second Committee."

If there is no objection, I shall consider that the Assembly agrees to place this draft resolution on this session's Agenda and to refer it to the Second Committee. (*Assent*).

The Assembly rose at 12.30 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Eighth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SEVENTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 23rd, 1927, AT 4.30 P.M.

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75. QUESTION OF ALCOHOLISM.
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President : M. GUANI

74. — ACCESSION OF GERMANY TO THE OPTIONAL CLAUSE RECOGNISING THE COMPULSORY JURISDICTION OF THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE.

The President :

Translation : Before beginning to-day's agenda, I have the honour to inform the Assembly that the German delegation, in conformity with the announcement made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, has just signed the optional clause recognising the compulsory jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice.

I think I am voicing the feelings of all in the Assembly in expressing our great satisfaction at this action, which undoubtedly marks a big step forward in the application of arbitration and conciliation in the settlement of international disputes.

May I venture, on this occasion, to offer my very cordial congratulations to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Reich ?

Dr. Stresemann, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Reich, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Stresemann (Germany) :

Translation : Mr. President. You have been good enough, to refer to the fact that Germany has just signed the optional clause recognising the compulsory jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice.

I desire to thank you most warmly for your cordial words both to Germany and to myself. May I also thank the Assembly for its kind reception of this announcement ?

75. — QUESTION OF ALCOHOLISM: AMENDED PROPOSAL BY THE DELEGATIONS OF FINLAND, POLAND AND SWITZERLAND.

The President :

Translation : Ladies and Gentlemen — I will now read a communication accompanying a draft resolution submitted by the delegations of Finland, Poland and Sweden concerning the question of alcoholism.

The Assembly will remember that, on September 20th, 1927, it noted the statement of the Chairman of the Second Committee with reference to that Committee's discussions on the question of alcoholism.

The delegations signatories to the proposal which was placed on the agenda of the present session of the Assembly signified their intention of submitting it in another form.

Accordingly, the delegations of Finland, Poland and Sweden have now transmitted to me as President, the following communication :

" At the seventh ordinary session of the Assembly of the League it was decided, at the suggestion of the first delegates of Finland, Poland and Sweden (see document A. 62. 1926), to include in the agenda of the eighth ordinary session of the Assembly the question whether the problem of alcoholism should be included in the League's programme of work.

" A more detailed proposal on the same question, drawn up by the Governments of Finland, Poland and Sweden and supported by the Governments of Belgium, Denmark and Czechoslovakia, was submitted to the present Assembly (see document A. 19. 1927). During discussion in the Second Committee, however, it was realised that this detailed proposal could not be accepted in its entirety by every delegation. In these circumstances, the delegates of the Governments which had signed the proposal decided to withdraw it, while, however, adhering to the principle embodied in it and reserving the right to submit it to the Assembly anew in another form.

" With reference to the decision of the seventh ordinary session of the Assembly, the delegates venture to submit a fresh proposal. The object of this proposal is to co-ordinate and centralise international scientific and practical studies on the problem of alcoholism.

" By 'alcoholism' is understood, for the purposes of this proposal, the abuse of alcoholic beverages and the harmful effects on the individual and society resulting therefrom. In this sense, alcoholism is unanimously recognised to be a severe social scourge, and several aspects of this question clearly call for international investigation and action.

" The problem of alcoholism is so complex that the study and solution of its different aspects call for the assistance of experts in various fields: certain aspects come within the medical sphere, others fall within the domain of social economics and statistics, others again, such as smuggling, are essentially legal. The result is that hitherto the various problems relating to alcoholism have been partially dealt with by the various organs of the League, including the International Labour Office. To a certain extent, this method of work has proved to be fairly successful, and it is desirable to persevere in this direction and to leave the technical work to the services of the League.

" The undersigned delegates, however, draw attention to the fact that these investigations have mostly been carried on independently of each other, without a general plan, and hence without a general view of the whole question of alcoholism. Closer co-ordination in the work relating to this problem is certainly very much to be desired.

" For this purpose, the co-operation of various experts is necessary for the successful study of so complex a question. The best method of providing for this co-operation would undoubtedly be to set up a Committee of experts on alcoholism. This Committee would have to determine what work the various services of the League Secretariat and the International Labour Office could undertake.

The undersigned delegates venture, therefore, to submit to the Assembly the following draft resolution:

" Whereas it is desirable to co-ordinate the work which the League of Nations has undertaken or will be called upon to undertake on the question 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 the question of alcoholism which come within the competence of the League of

Nations and which might be made the subject of scientific or practical work.'

" The undersigned delegates have the honour to submit to the Assembly the above proposal and request that it should be placed on the agenda of the ninth ordinary session of the Assembly of the League.

" Geneva, September 21st, 1927.

(Signed) Väinö VOIONMAA.
F. SOKAL.
Eliel LÖFGREN.

" Desiring to join in the action already taken by certain States to combat alcoholism, and convinced that such action cannot be really effective unless developed on the widest possible basis, the Belgian, Danish and Czechoslovak delegations give their full adherence to the request contained in the present note.

(Signed) Dr. Eduard BENEŠ.
Herluf ZAHLE.
L. DE BROUCKÈRE.

The Assembly will note that the three delegations originally associated with the proposal have been joined by the Belgian, Danish and Czechoslovak delegations.

The Assembly therefore has to consider a request from these six delegations that the draft resolution which they have proposed may be placed on the agenda of the ninth ordinary session of the Assembly.

If no one has any remarks to make, I shall consider that the Assembly approves this request, and the item in question will accordingly be placed on the agenda of the ninth ordinary session of the Assembly in its present form. (Adopted.)

76. — MANDATES.

The President:

Translation: The first item on the agenda is the examination of the report of the Sixth Committee on Mandates (Annex 22, document A.76.1927.VI).

(On the invitation of the President M. Bech, Chairman of the Sixth Committee, and Dr. Nansen, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President:

Translation: Dr. Nansen, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Nansen (Norway), Rapporteur:

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — I do not propose to read the report of the Sixth Committee on the question of mandates, as it has been distributed in both French and English and is now before you.

I do not know that there is any necessity for me to make any particular comment on behalf of the Sixth Committee. I may perhaps be permitted however, to make a few personal remarks which have come to mind as I look back over the period since we first met in this hall, eight years ago, and considered the task entrusted to the League by Article 22 of the Covenant.

At that time, none of the mandates under which these territories are administered had even been confirmed by the Council of the League; while during the past year the Permanent Mandates Commission has for the first time completed the cycle of its regular duties by examining the annual reports relating to all the fourteen territories to

which Article 22 of the Covenant applies. The mandates system has now, therefore, passed through what I may perhaps term the introductory period of its development, and during these eight years great progress has been made. A few examples will serve to illustrate this.

The annual reports of the mandatory Powers have grown from relatively short documents, in some cases not even printed, to volumes of considerable size amounting, as a rule, to one to two hundred printed pages, and the mandatory Powers have more and more adopted the practice of sending to the meetings of the Mandates Commission to collaborate with the Commission not only officials from their Colonial Offices but high administrators from the territories themselves.

As the result of its work during this period the Permanent Mandates Commission has made a high place for itself in all circles which deal with colonial questions, and the Minutes of the meetings of the Commission, as the Sixth Committee has pointed out, bear witness to the increasing value of the work which is being done by the members of that Commission, who willingly devote in this way so much of their time to the service of the League.

The Commission has of course had to deal with many difficult problems, some of which are still far from a solution, while others, such as the great increase in the importation of spirituous liquors into certain territories under B Mandate, to which the Sixth Committee also refers, show that there are weak spots which require urgent attention.

The Mandates Commission has not only had the collaboration of the Mandatory Powers but also the support of the Council in its work. In addition to giving its continued approval to the normal work of the Mandates Commission in examining the annual reports and a large number of petitions concerning conditions in the different territories, the Council has, at various times during this period, taken specific decisions on questions of a general character with regard to the execution of Article 22 of the Covenant. The importance of certain of these decisions which concern the legal relationship between the mandatory Powers and the mandated territories has just recently been emphasised in the report of the Netherlands representative which was adopted by the Council on September 8th, 1927, and in which the nature of this relationship, a new one to international law, is explained in general terms.

The record of these eight years is, I think, a very satisfactory one, and the continued interest and support of the Assembly in the work done by the mandatory Powers, the Permanent Mandates Commission and the Council is clearly evidenced by the annual discussion in the Sixth Committee whose report and resolution for 1927 I now have the honour to submit for your approval.

The resolution proposed by the Sixth Committee reads as follows :

The Assembly, having taken note of the work accomplished since its last session by the mandatory Powers, the Permanent Mandates Commission and the Council in the execution of Article 22 of the Covenant, renews the expression of confidence voted last year and adopts the following resolution on certain specific points :

1. Liquor Traffic.

(a) *The Assembly congratulates the Permanent Mandates Commission on its success in defining the important terms concerning the liquor traffic used in the B and C Mandates and in the Convention of St. Germain of September 10th, 1919, and expresses the hope that all the mandatory Powers*

will soon be able to indicate their acceptance of these definitions :

(b) *It asks the Council to request the Permanent Mandates Commission, in collaboration with the mandatory Powers, to continue to give serious consideration to the causes of the increased importation of spirituous liquors into certain territories under B mandate, and to the steps which have been taken to deal with this problem.*

2. Minutes of the Permanent Mandates Commission.

The Assembly expresses its appreciation of the value of the Minutes of the meetings of the Permanent Mandates Commission, which constitute the record of the fulfilment by the Commission of its duties under Article 22 of the Covenant, and which are communicated at the request of several of the mandatory Powers to a considerable number of their officials in the mandated territories.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I shall consider the resolution of the Sixth Committee as adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

77. — ACCESSIONS TO INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS GIVEN SUBJECT TO RATIFICATION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the report of the First Committee on the question of accessions to international agreements given subject to ratification (Annex 23, document A.95.1927.V).

(On the invitation of the President M. Adatci, Chairman of the First Committee, and M. Motta, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Motta, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Motta (Switzerland), Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — The report of the First Committee is before you.

I shall now give you a few very short verbal explanations and shall endeavour to make them even briefer than the Committee's technical report.

International practice admits two procedures or, if you prefer it, two formalities, whereby States enter into undertakings with one another ; these are respectively signature and accession. Of the two, signature is, of course, more usual and more widely used ; it is adopted when a State participates in an international Conference and, on the conclusion of the deliberations, signifies its acceptance of certain undertakings by signing the Act framed by that Conference. It has become customary, at the moment of signing a Convention, to allow States which cannot immediately decide upon this procedure a time-limit within which they may still sign in due form. In the case of the League and the Conferences convened under its auspices, the time-limit is usually fixed at six and sometimes at nine months.

If a State has not participated in a Conference or if, after having so participated, it has not signed

within the time-limit specified in the final Protocol, the only method by which it can still become a party to the Act, with the other States, is by accession.

When a country adopts the procedure of signature, it does so on the understanding that its signature is subject to ratification, since, before the executive or the head of the State can definitively pledge the State; a whole series of internal constitutional formalities must first be complied with. Hence it is perfectly reasonable that a State should append its signature subject to ratification.

In the case of accession, the position is different, and the usual practice has hitherto been for a State acceding to an Act to do so definitively and not subject to ratification. The State is not bound by any special time-limit, it is free to accede whenever it thinks fit to do so, and can consequently choose the moment best suited for the application of its internal constitutional procedure. It appears reasonable enough, therefore, that a State which has not adopted the procedure of signature but desires to adopt that of accession should, when signifying its accession, do so definitively.

Latterly, however, a new practice has crept into international usage. A number of States have acceded to international conventions subject to ratification. The question has arisen whether this procedure is lawful and admissible.

At the Council's request the First Committee examined the question and arrived at the conclusion that States should not be encouraged to adopt the procedure of accession subject to ratification, though this should not be forbidden or discouraged.

There may be cases when a Government which has not adopted or has been unable to adopt the procedure of signature and wishes to adopt that of accession, desires, before consulting the competent authorities from the point of view of its internal constitutional law, to make a declaration of accession, to be accompanied by a reservation in regard to ratification. This sometimes places it in a stronger position as regards its Parliament, for example, which is then called upon to approve a *de facto* declaration of accession.

This delicate point, however, must be made perfectly clear, and the First Committee proposes that you should declare that accession, unless accompanied by an explicit reservation in regard to ratification, shall be regarded as definitely binding on the State.

I do not think there is anything unusual in this procedure. I do not think that any States would have reason to complain of the conclusion now submitted to you by the First Committee. If a State which adopts the procedure of accession does not wish to bind itself definitively it has only to mention that its accession is subject to ratification, and it will then be bound as regards the international convention only when it supplements its declaration of accession, by a declaration of ratification.

I have endeavoured, ladies and gentlemen, to explain this delicate point of international law as clearly and simply as I could, and I may say, in conclusion, that in my opinion you need have no hesitation in adopting the First Committee's proposal.

I therefore beg to submit the following resolution proposed by the First Committee :

The procedure of accession to international agreements given subject to ratification is an admissible one which the League should neither discourage nor encourage.

Nevertheless, if a State gives its accession, it should know that, if it does not expressly mention

that this accession is subject to ratification, it shall be deemed to have undertaken a final obligation. If it desires to prevent this consequence, it must expressly declare at the time of accession that the accession is given subject to ratification.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I shall consider the resolution of the First Committee as adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

78. — RESULTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CONFERENCE. ECONOMIC ORGANISATION OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the report of the Second Committee on the International Economic Conference and the Economic Organisation of the League of Nations. (Annex 24, document A. 92. 1927. II).

(On the invitation of the President M. Dandurand, Chairman of the Second Committee, and M. Loucheur, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Loucheur, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Loucheur (France) Rapporteur :

Translation : I do not think that I need read the report, which has already been distributed to the Assembly; I shall simply give you a brief commentary on behalf of the Second Committee. In order that you may have all the facts before you, I might perhaps remind you first of the way in which the idea of the Conference originated. I shall then describe what the Conference did, say frankly what it was not able to do and, lastly, sketch the League's future economic programme.

A proposal to convene an international economic conference was submitted to the sixth ordinary session of the Assembly in 1925. The reasons for that proposal, as stated from this platform, were the unrest then prevalent in Europe and the economic ills resulting from the war—ills common to belligerent and non-belligerent States alike — and due perhaps also to some extent to pre-war causes, such as over-industrialisation in certain countries.

However this may be, the guiding principle at that time, a principle repeatedly propounded from this platform by speakers of various nationalities was to strike at the root causes of war or, rather, one of the main causes of war, namely, economic unrest.

Last year, at the seventh ordinary session of the Assembly, after a keen debate, you decided to leave the matter to the Council, to let it convene the Preparatory Committee and to give it a perfectly free hand in fixing the actual date of the Conference.

It is for us now to thank the Council for what it has done. The Preparatory Committee was duly convened and got together a mass of documents, all of them extremely important and of the greatest assistance in the work of the Conference. Finally, in May, the Conference itself met at Geneva. You are already aware of the chief results achieved by it; its decisions, as you know, were received all over the world with the greatest satisfaction.

Are those results such that we too are entitled to congratulate ourselves? That is the question before you to-day.

Fifty States met at Geneva; Brazil was there again — to our great satisfaction — and for the first time the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics and Turkey were represented.

What did the Conference do? M. Theunis, who directed its proceedings with such competence and authority, summed up its work in his closing speech, in which he declared that the Conference had achieved "a real and permanent result".

One and all came to discuss the burning questions of the hour without wasting time over divergencies of doctrine. All discussions that might have brought the different existing economic systems into conflict were systematically avoided; certain facts were registered and an attempt was made to harmonise them and to determine how their evolution could, if necessary, be modified.

The Conference investigated three main fields: commerce, industry and agriculture.

I, propose now to give you a rapid survey of the results achieved in each of these.

As regards commerce, the Conference proclaimed at the outset, the necessity not of free trade but of reverting as soon as possible to liberty of trading; that is, of abolishing all the import and export restrictions and prohibitions which are, for the most part, the fruits of war and post-war difficulties. The Conference requested the League to convene a diplomatic conference as soon as possible to abolish all such restrictions and prohibitions.

The Conference, further, framed a programme for the just economic and fiscal treatment of foreigners and foreign enterprises.

After these questions — undoubtedly important in themselves, but not the main object of its proceedings — the Conference faced the question of Customs tariffs. I need hardly remind you what the position was a year ago. A kind of tariff competition was in progress, something like the pre-war armaments competition.

The Conference declared categorically that this competition must cease, and that even if tariff reduction proved impossible — desirable as it was in certain cases — there must at all events be no further increase. Protectionists and free-traders alike agreed on this point, without abandoning their particular standpoint, simply because they all recognised that Europe could not be allowed to continue in the dangerous path she was treading.

The Conference also recommended the simplification of Customs tariffs and, above all, the unification of Customs nomenclature. I know that to many uninitiated minds this may appear a matter of minor importance. Its importance is, however, very considerable.

When we come to examine all the inter-State commercial negotiations of recent years, we find difficulties everywhere in connection with the so-called most-favoured-nation clause. Quite recently in the Second Committee the Swedish delegation was again urging the merits of this clause. But in almost every case its application is hampered by the complexity — or, may I use a somewhat unacademic expression and say, the "cooking" — of Customs nomenclature.

Accordingly, if we wish to see this important and very popular clause applied, we must first settle the question of Customs nomenclature and get it uniform all over the world. On this point the Conference passed specific and definite resolutions. It also recommended that Customs tariffs should remain stable for a time.

Customs tariffs have of late been continually changing, so that trade between two nations might, at a day's notice, become impossible. The

Conference was of opinion that tariff stability should be established for a time, and that commercial treaties should be concluded on more or less stereotyped lines in order to avoid lengthy discussions and — more important still — what are often considerable difficulties in regard to interpretation.

As regards this very point — the interpretation of such treaties — the Conference for the first time enunciated the principle of arbitration. It even recommended that, if need be, a special department of the Hague Court should deal with commercial cases. As you see, the Commerce Committee faced the problem squarely and aimed at finding as practical a solution as possible.

The agenda of the Industry Committee included two important questions. The first was what is called — barbarously enough, as Dr. Breitscheid very truly said — rationalisation; the second was industrial agreements.

As regards rationalisation — that is, the reduction of the number of existing types with a view to simplifying and regularising manufacture — the Conference, it must be confessed, did not get very far. It did no more than note that in many cases rationalisation was necessary and desirable and indicated that in applying this principle, the interests of the parties concerned — in the main, the working class — must be borne in mind. The Conference then urged that every encouragement should be given to efforts designed to improve the distribution of production.

This brings us to the vital question of industrial agreements, cartels and trusts. Here it was found impossible — for it is just as important to say what the Conference did not succeed in doing — to arrive at very satisfactory conclusions in the matter of principle.

Trusts, it was said, could not be ignored; their existence was an established fact, and industrial agreements might be good or bad according to the mentality of those responsible for them and according to the ideas on which they were based. In any case, certain dangers had to be avoided. What dangers? First, the artificial raising of prices which often follows upon an industrial agreement; next, the possibility of restricting the supply of materials to certain countries which, not possessing raw materials, might not be able to continue their transforming industries; and, lastly, the perfectly reasonable demand of certain countries that the present situation should not be allowed to become crystallised.

Such was the work of the Committee on Industry. As regards the Agriculture Committee, let me draw your attention again to a fact of great significance in modern economic life, the fact that for the first time agriculture was placed on the same footing as commerce and industry and that questions relating to it were discussed with equal vigour and authority.

The Agriculture Committee quite naturally arrived at conclusions which were closely allied to those of the Committees on Industry and Commerce. It was universally recognised that the prices of agricultural products were in many cases determined by those of industrial products and that the recent drop in agricultural prices was not without danger to the future of production.

This, very briefly, is what the Conference achieved. Let me now tell you what, in my view, it failed to achieve.

I have already pointed out that, as regards industrial agreements and the actual work of rationalisation, the Conference arrived at somewhat inadequate conclusions, and never really got to the root of the problem.

But in my view it is chiefly in another direction that the Conference, although it did not actually fail, had no time to arrive at practical conclusions. I refer to the question of the workers' standard of living, or, to be more precise, the contrast between two systems of political economy — the American system under which, as the result of adapting industry to some extent, wages are high, but goods are cheap, and what I might call the European system, under which cheap production has been achieved by reducing salaries to the lowest minimum consistent with the requirements of the working population.

The Committee did not have time to go thoroughly into the question whether it would be possible to transpose as it were, certain parts of the American system and graft them on to the European system. In my opinion, this should be made the object of future research, for the American system, it may be noted, has obviated many social difficulties, and this can perhaps hardly be claimed for the European system.

This is merely a passing glimpse into the future and its possibilities; but it should make us think, and it will, I trust, eventually lead to definite action.

Now we have to consider what we are going to do. Has anything yet been done since the Conference ended? Here again allow me to pay a tribute to the Council, which lost no time in acting. It first decided to convene a Diplomatic Conference to consider the abolition of import and export restrictions and prohibitions. This Conference, as you know, is to meet in the middle of October, and the Second Committee has asked me to express on its behalf the hope that as many nations as possible will send representatives, in order that really sound and useful conclusions may be reached.

Then, without waiting for this Conference to meet, the Council appointed a Committee of Experts to engage in preparatory researches into the unification of Customs nomenclature, and I am happy to inform the Assembly that they have laboured to such purpose that more than half the work is already done, and it should soon be possible to submit to the technical Committee a model Customs nomenclature which can then be transmitted to all the States.

We thus already have to record two important acts since the Conference met.

You are asked to-day to accomplish yet another. Before adjourning, the Conference expressed a hope that the existing Economic Organisation of the League might be modified. Some of our colleagues thought that the present Economic Committee should be kept as a nucleus and further developed with extended powers, and that the Conference's decisions might be carried out by the Economic Committee as thus modified.

I have never thought this a very practical suggestion. After a most courteous exchange of views in the Second Committee, we unanimously agreed upon the scheme which is submitted to you to-day and which I will briefly summarise.

The present Economic Committee will be maintained; it will be composed of about fifteen members, with the same powers as it now possesses. In addition, a second Committee will be created, which will be known as "the Consultative Committee", and will be similar in composition to the Preparatory Committee of the Conference; that is to say, it will include persons competent in agriculture, commerce, industry, finance, labour questions and questions relating to consumption. It will be composed of about thirty-five members, five of whom will be delegates of the Economic Committee. It will report directly to the Council,

and will receive its instructions from the latter, sending copies of its decisions to the other technical organs, of the League in order to keep them informed and to obviate discussion later.

You have to decide to-day whether you approve this organisation. We, for our part, submit the scheme unanimously, though, I repeat, after long discussion.

You will note in the text before you that the International Labour Office is to be invited to co-operate directly with the new organisation, and even to submit to the Council the names of three labour members, and that the International Chamber of Commerce and the International Institute of Agriculture at Rome are also to be asked to assist.

But there is one special point that I have been asked to stress, and that is the importance which all the members of the Committee attach to the representation of agriculture in this new organisation. We think, as the World Economic Conference had already demonstrated, that it is essential that agriculture should be adequately represented on the new Consultative Committee.

This, then, is the Assembly's task; and this is what will be the future task of the Council.

In the meanwhile, what have the Governments done? The Governments, which are so fully represented here, have already made known their entire agreement with the recommendations of the Conference, and will, I am certain, support them. I think, however, that they have gone even further, for some of them have already taken steps to carry out these recommendations. Dr. Stresemann said in his speech here that, but for the Conference, it might have been impossible to sign the Franco-German Treaty of Commerce so quickly or under the terms actually agreed upon. I may say that that is our firm conviction also. The World Economic Conference had not only laid down principles, but had created an atmosphere, and I should like briefly to explain to the Assembly — I would not say as an example to be followed, but as proof of what Dr. Stresemann said, and of what I have just repeated — what are the main features of the Franco-German Economic agreement, and how it demonstrates that the recommendations of the Economic Conference have already been followed on several points.

The Franco-German commercial agreement is remarkable, firstly, because it is concluded for a definite period — a period which can be considerably extended. It provides for the abolition of import prohibitions, and — for the first time in any commercial treaty — for recourse to arbitration.

As from a certain date, the most-favoured-nation clause will be applied to France and Germany; in this connection be it noted, France has accorded a 75 per cent reduction on certain items, while Germany, has made considerable reductions in her tariff figures.

Lastly, the Treaty contains a series of clauses relating to commercial and industrial property, the regime of ports, and maritime and inland navigation — questions which had already been the subject of deliberations at Geneva.

Dr. Stresemann was right, therefore, in saying that the Franco-German agreement is practically a direct consequence of the World Economic Conference.

After the Governments have decided, by adopting the resolutions which are before you, to accept the recommendations of the Conference, what still remains for us to do?

M. Theunis, in his closing speech, to which I cannot do better than refer again, said that we were perhaps not working for ourselves but for the

generation after us, and that while we ourselves might perhaps see the first leaves of the tree, the fruits would be for our children. This, however, was no reason why we should not resolutely follow the course so successfully mapped out by the League.

I am not of those people who believe that everything will be settled once economic problems have been solved, for economics and politics pursue one another in a vicious circle. I think, however, that if these causes of embitterment can be removed, there is every likelihood that disputes will disappear with them.

A French poet once wrote that our real duty lies hidden in the shadow, awaiting the will to carry it out.

The League has in many cases pointed out our real duty, and the Economic Conference has helped it to do so: it now remains for us to supply the will.

The President :

Translation : M. Suvich, delegate of Italy, will address the Assembly.

M. Suvich (Italy) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — There are two facts which are clear from the discussion that took place in the Second Committee on the subject of the Economic Conference, they are :

1. That general agreement on the results of the Conference is becoming more and more evident ;

2. That the different countries are showing a great spirit of conciliation and of mutual understanding in their efforts to achieve ends which are manifestly of great general value, such as the carrying out of the recommendations of the Conference.

As regards my own Government, I need only refer to the statements of the Minister of National Economy, which were communicated to all the Governments and which evince entire agreement with the principles laid down by the Conference.

Indeed, I might say that my Government had already signified its approval of these recommendations when in 1924 it submitted a proposal for an agreement to abolish import and export prohibitions, which I hope will be the outcome of the Diplomatic Conference next October.

Having noted the agreement on the results of the Conference and on the necessity of putting these results into practice, the Second Committee endeavoured to find a method which would help to promote this.

Opinions differed on this subject ; some desired purely and simply to preserve the existing organs and employ them to apply the principles laid down by the Conference ; others wished the League's economic services to be entirely remoulded and adjusted to the new work.

A middle way was chosen which preserved the balance between well-intentioned impatience and legitimate caution.

The solution contemplated and submitted to the Assembly — as set forth by M. Loucheur in his masterly report — seems a desirable one because it takes into account both the necessity of leaving untouched the present organisation, which has given such excellent results, and also the advantage of enabling the Council to follow the work — which must needs be done stage by stage, but which we all

hope will be as speedy as possible — of applying the principles laid down by the Conference.

In order to help the Council here it was considered desirable to set up a Consultative Committee, to include all the interests which were represented at the Conference.

The duties of this Consultative Committee will be limited and the time at its disposal will be short in comparison with the task to be fulfilled, but it will enjoy great authority, thanks to the high standing of its members ; and it will render invaluable assistance to the Council by giving the latter a general view of the progress made in the work of carrying out the Conference's recommendations and by proposing the necessary measures for expediting this work.

For these reasons we think that the solution submitted to the Assembly by the Committee may be regarded as an important step forward on the road towards economic peace.

The President :

Translation : M. Veverka, delegate of Czechoslovakia, will address the Assembly.

M. Veverka (Czechoslovakia) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — The great economic repercussions which followed upon the war, together with the underlying factors which existed before it, led to a state of affairs that insistently called for joint deliberations followed by concerted action to apply remedies in keeping with the gravity of the situation.

When the first step was taken towards this great achievement, the results of which we are discussing to-day, scepticism was freely expressed in certain circles.

Czechoslovakia was from the outset among those who believed that it was possible to indicate and find the remedies required, and primarily, to make a true analysis of the causes of the present unrest by a candid, frank and general exchange of views.

I had the honour to say then how greatly the Czechoslovak delegation valued what might be called the diagnosis which the future Conference would have to make, and I am especially glad to be able to say that the hopes we placed in this diagnosis and analysis were amply justified.

With a real appreciation of the work before it, the Conference set itself the twofold task of defining and making known the nature of the difficulties, and of indicating how they might be overcome or lessened by international economic co-operation.

The conclusions of the Conference, which we have before us, show definite success in both these fields.

As regards the first part of the work, I welcome chiefly the constructive and scientific methods by which the Conference has been able to draw a clear and definite picture of the position as it is now ; my satisfaction is particularly great because different aspects are constantly being stressed by different interests, and as an inevitable consequence the real position has often been obscured.

Propaganda, sometimes tendentious, has been carried on with the object of disseminating ideas, often wrong ideas, regarding economic unrest and its causes. However, the Economic Conference starting from premises which were scientifically defined and laid down, succeeded from the outset in laying bare, with unerring accuracy and precision, from among the mass of conflicting ideas and interests, the real origin of the unrest, in defining the existing causes of this unrest, and in reducing these causes to their proper proportions. The Conference will always enjoy the indisputable merit of having applied a corrective to these wrong and

sometimes confused ideas, and I feel it my bounden duty to offer it the sincere thanks of the countries concerned.

As regards the Conference's method of work, I especially wish to draw attention to its happy idea of securing the co-operation of agricultural circles, since agriculture takes such a prominent part in production, and of having consulted the workers, both as producers and as consumers.

The second part of the work before the Conference was to seek a method of remedying the present position. Thanks to well-devised action, in which the complexity of present conditions was kept in view, the Conference was able to reach agreement on a number of principles, the adoption of which it considers to be a sure means of eliminating economic unrest. The fact that before long all the countries concerned will have acceded to these principles shows how just and appropriate the remedies were.

On behalf of the Czechoslovak delegation I desire to give my Government's unreserved accession to all these conclusions, though indeed in doing so I am only repeating what the Czechoslovak representative on the Council said at the June session.

Dr. Stresemann, in one of his brilliant speeches, declared that it is for us to see that these decisions do not remain purely platonic but soon become realities.

As regards my own country, I may say that my Government has already been able to bring its economic policy into line with the principles laid down by the Conference. In fact, the three commercial agreements concluded by Czechoslovakia since the Economic Conference — with Austria, Hungary, and Spain — are inspired by the spirit of the resolutions adopted by that Conference.

Czechoslovakia is prepared to continue this policy for she is firmly convinced of the need for close co-operation between all nations, and especially between those political entities whose common economic interest is dictated by the common static forces of nature and by the dynamic forces of historical evolution. It considers, as it has always done, that the collective application of this principle is the surest method of achieving world economic prosperity. And it is this prosperity alone which can, in my opinion, give birth in the brain and heart of man to the desire of attaining the ultimate goal, the greatest blessing of humanity — peace.

The President :

Translation : M. Jouhaux, delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. Jouhaux (France) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — I must claim your indulgence for beginning my speech at such a late hour, but I wish to put before you a point of view which, though it may perhaps seem somewhat individual, is, in my opinion, of very great importance ; for without it there can be no full comprehension of the problems before us, no complete acceptance of the solutions demanded by these problems, and hence, the results may be less fruitful.

On the conclusion of the work of the International Economic Conference, I came to this platform to announce our accession to the resolutions which were about to be passed. Not that we considered the resolutions submitted to the International Economic Conference to be wholly satisfactory to us — in fact I applauded the Rapporteur just now when he said that the Conference had perhaps

lacked boldness. At the end of the Conference we especially emphasised this lack of boldness because we thought it necessary to do so ; nevertheless, we gave our accession because the Conference had not finished its work, because it was asking for the institution of a new organ to complete the work already begun, to go more deeply into the questions which had been raised and thereby reach more rational solutions of the problems submitted for general consideration.

Our attitude is the same to-day. We are giving our accession to the resolutions of the Second Committee because these resolutions aim at creating the organ which we thought, and still think, essential to bring to a successful conclusion the work of the Economic Conference and of the League.

I should like, in giving our accession, to express our confidence as well ; for though we agree that something has already been achieved we may certainly regret — and I for one deeply regret — the slowness of its achievement. Yet, despite all, we must recognise that the work accomplished the results obtained, are full of promise for the future.

A few years ago, immediately after the war, when we were facing the prospect of unemployment and industrial crises ; when we were pointing out economic difficulties which were bound to arise ; when, in view of these very difficulties, we were asking for an economic organ which could cope adequately with the new conditions, we were told that economic interests conflicted too sharply and were too varied ever to allow such an organisation to be established.

Facts, however, have laid bare the weakness of these arguments, and peoples and Governments have had to adopt the course which we pointed out, in order to avoid the aggravation of the evils from which we are still suffering.

Thus, industrial agreements were formed ; the Franco-German Commercial Treaty was signed, in order, I believe, to meet these necessities. I should like, in my turn, to welcome this treaty as marking a beginning, and I venture to think that it will be a lasting achievement.

One fact must be recognised : the Governments have been obliged to accept the growth of the economic interdependence of nations side by side with the development of international solidarity, and in particular the development of European solidarity. But — though I say it with no ill intent — Governments or States may note these facts, but they cannot as yet act. To enable them to act special machinery must be set up.

A continent like Europe, over-populated and over industrialised as compared with other continents, cannot possibly prosper unless it breaks with the old economic methods. Europe is still too much wedded to pre-war tradition and to the post-war economic policy. Divided as it is into some thirty States, it cannot exploit its wealth on a great scale ; it cannot rationalise its production ; its enormous market — a population of 400 millions — cannot be thrown open. Methods must be changed, a way must be found. What is that way to be ? This, clearly, is the crux of the problem before us. The main problem lies in introducing in old Europe modern methods of organising work which, while guaranteeing the working classes an eight-hour day will enable cost prices to be lowered in all branches of production.

What must be done to achieve this ? We must rationalise production, that is to say, divide it among the different branches, in all countries, according to potentialities and needs ; improve machinery so as to eliminate waste ; liberate all the forces of production by lowering tariffs (this is the first stage towards Customs unity, which, we

admit, will not be brought about until the various countries are free from the fear that their home industrial interests will be injured by freedom of trade); find suitable and gradual methods of eliminating all the parasitic industries which have sprung up in the periods of economic or financial disequilibrium.

As we are all aware, this vast evolution can only be accomplished with careful management if we are to avoid dangerous shocks during this transition period between two phases of European production. In particular, we must prevent the rationalisation of production from ending in the formation of trusts, the activities of which would conflict with the aim we have in view.

This evolution must therefore be effected, as the Economic Conference recognised, under the supervision of national and international public opinion, which is the guarantee, indispensable for the general community, of that international economic peace which is indissolubly linked with political peace.

International economic peace is indissolubly linked with political peace, which cannot exist for long without it. I go so far as to say that, if we examined to-day the underlying causes of all the difficulties in the way of security and disarmament, we should find that the policy of most countries is actuated by undisclosed motives of an economic character.

I venture now to dwell for a moment upon another aspect of the same problem.

The working classes undeniably play a most important part in the achievement of peace. They suffered cruelly from the consequences of the war, and from the chaos in production and in trade, caused by the many violent economic and financial crises which have shaken the world. To give back to the working classes social security to enable them to benefit by the advantages of rationalisation, to ensure to them in every country the wages to which they are entitled and which, by their general level and higher purchasing power, will increase their material prosperity and power of consumption, to free them from the haunting fear of unemployment — such is the great work of peace which it is our duty to accomplish.

In order that rationalisation, such as I have defined it, very briefly and doubtless incompletely, may have full effect, in order that it may lead to a kind of rejuvenation of all the vital forces of Europe, increased production must find a European outlet through a general increase of consumption. This cannot be attained unless the consuming power of the peoples is raised, and this consuming power cannot be raised without increasing the purchasing power of wages, without appreciably lowering prices. International equilibrium will only be placed on an unshakable foundation when the working classes of every country feel in their daily life that this political peace which we are endeavouring to make permanent, and this international economic peace which we are endeavouring to bring about, give to them the social security to which they have a sacred right.

• What means are we offered to accomplish this task?

M. Loucheur has told us in his very full and lucid statement.

The Consultative Committee is certainly not the international economic council which we had had in view. In spite of all, however, it marks a beginning, and the various interests are to play a part in it which, though small at present, must

necessarily increase as the work of the Consultative Committee proceeds.

We could wish that the great corporate and therefore responsible interests had occupied a larger place in this Consultative Committee. We could wish that the different interests created by the Peace Treaty had been more fully represented on it; we could wish that the League's technical organs had been associated more closely with the Committee's future work; we could wish, too, for recognition of the important fact that the idea of the International Economic Conference sprang not only from ever-growing economic unrest, but was also the outcome of movements which had already begun in various countries and which in some had called for the constitution of new bodies to study current economic questions — I refer to the national economic councils which are doing such admirable work in Germany and other countries, which are beginning to operate in France and which will, I hope, shortly be set up in other European countries as well.

I could wish, for my part, that more heed had been paid to this social fact and that the Consultative Committee should somehow be so constituted as to enable the national economic committees of each country to become its correspondents and keep it informed, so that, in the light of these investigations and reports, it could more easily co-ordinate and harmonise the various national economic systems — for that, after all, is our real aim.

It has been alleged that such harmonisation is Utopian. I will not repeat here what M. Theunis, the President of the world Economic Conference said when he condemned economic nationalism in such forcible terms. I will say this, however, that the clash of economic interests is much more apparent than real, and that if only the excessive individualism of national interests is curbed, a stage can be reached when national interests are fused in the general international interests.

You will say that this is a Utopian ideal.

My reply is that the Utopia of to-day will be the real world of to-morrow, just as the Utopia of yesterday is the reality of to-day; and I add that no national solutions for the economic problems before us can be reached except within the framework of a general plan involving international co-operation.

For all these reasons, therefore, we are fully confident, and also because the Council of the League would not, we feel sure, wish the Consultative Committee to pass like a fleeting comet through the firmament of the League. It will wish it to be effective and stable both in its constitution and in the work entrusted to it.

We accept the resolution submitted to us — although we could have wished it to be clearer and bolder — because we are convinced that the will of the peoples, which remains the prime and ultimate moving force in all social progress, will take this feeble and skeleton body, clothe it with flesh and breathe into it the breath of life.

The President :

Translation : The discussion will be continued at 10 a.m. to-morrow.

The Assembly rose at 7.20 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Eighth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

EIGHTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24th, 1927, AT 10 A.M.

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President : M. GUANI.

79. — RESULTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CONFERENCE : ECONOMIC ORGANISATION OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the continuation of the discussion on the report of the Second Committee on the World Economic Conference and the Economic Organisation of the League of Nations. (Annex 24, document A.92.1927. II.)

(On the invitation of the President Mr. Dandurand, Chairman of the Second Committee, and M. Loucheur, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : His Excellency M. Neculcea delegate of Roumania, will address the Assembly.

M. Neculcea (Roumania) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — The results of the great World Economic Conference, consisting of experts summoned by the League to discuss economic phenomena due mainly to the post-war disturbance of financial and economic equilibrium, exceeded our most sanguine hopes.

This was undoubtedly one of the most remarkable Conferences ever convened by the League, and will rightly be regarded as one of its chief claims to fame.

It was, in fact, the first practical attempt to view the economic life of the peoples as a whole, with the object of determining how it can best be adjusted to post-war conditions.

In other words, it denoted a realisation of the fact that economic phenomena can no longer be considered unilaterally, within the geographical frontiers of each individual country, but must be viewed in relation to the economic life of all the civilised countries of the world. This is really a definite recognition of the economic interdependence of the nations.

The task of the Economic Conference was, therefore, to determine and state in clear and precise terms the nature of the economic difficulties from which the world is suffering, to isolate the factors and causes of those difficulties, and to indicate how, by co-operation and mutual assistance — while taking duly into account the national requirements of each country — it might be possible to abolish or at all events to attenuate them.

The economic phenomena resulting from the present ill-balanced conditions have often been likened to actual diseases. It was only natural,

therefore, that the Conference should have been called upon to supply specific remedies. It replied frankly that economic science is not as far advanced as medicine, and that all it could do for the moment was to look after the patient's general health before experimenting with remedies, of which neither the exact powers nor the proper dose is yet known.

The first thing is to restore world economic equilibrium. What a tremendous undertaking that is, with all that it entails! M. Theunis, the eminent President of the Economic Conference, rightly said that no machinery for the settlement of international disputes could be relied upon to maintain peace if the economic policies of the world were allowed to develop unilaterally, since economic disputes and varying economic interests were perhaps the most serious and most permanent dangers to world peace.

An extremely interesting point has already been mentioned by M. Loucheur, the eminent Rapporteur of the Second Committee, namely, that, in spite of the variety of questions raised, the diversity of theories and the legitimate national sentiments of all who took part in the Conference, one definite fact emerged — the unanimous desire to make sure that international trade will successively overcome all obstacles in its path and resume the general upward movement which is at once a sign of the world's economic health and the necessary condition for the development of civilisation.

The findings of the Conference on the rationalisation of production, on industrial agreements — subject to certain conditions and guarantees — on the collection and exchange of information and on other subjects were also extremely important. Lastly, how significant it is that, for the first time, agriculture should have been placed on the same footing as industry and commerce in the general examination of the world economic situation.

Actually, the principal causes of the world economic unrest are to be found mainly in the disorganisations caused by the war, and not in the inadequacy of natural resources or the lack of human energy to exploit them. The potential economic resources of the world are undiminished, but defective methods have prevented full use being made of the existing powers of production.

To contemplate the removal of the present economic difficulties, with the object of restoring world economic equilibrium, is of course to view the problem in its widest bearing, but even the most optimistic and the most courageous would undoubtedly be afraid of being ridiculed if they attempted to maintain that a complete solution of this very complex and most difficult problem was likely to be immediately forthcoming.

Accordingly, we are obliged to consider the achievement of world economic equilibrium through the juxtaposition and superposition of equilibrium as achieved within national limits.

Each country must first regain its own economic equilibrium — as determined by the economic factors peculiar to it — by appropriating the relevant resolutions and recommendations of the Conference. After this first stage all must co-operate to the best of their ability and means in putting into effect those resolutions which are international in character.

Bilateral agreements will facilitate the spread of economic equilibrium from country to country, and will pave the way for negotiations and the conclusion of conventions, agreements and international protocols which will constitute as it were the international economic charter recommended by the Conference.

This cannot be accomplished in a day or even in a year, but it will be accomplished, certainly and inevitably, to the greater glory of the League, which raised the problem, placed it under exhaustive examination, and is even now being entrusted with the application of the more general recommendations for its solution.

The International Economic Conference also indicated to the Council the main lines for the constitution of the body appointed to carry out its recommendations so as to ensure their success.

The Roumanian Government will make a point of going carefully into the important resolutions of the Conference and will devote to them the sympathetic attention which they deserve. It wishes to state, here and now, that the resolutions relating to agriculture, improved methods of work, the development of the co-operative system and the re-organisation of agricultural credit are in agreement with the essential principles of the policy which it has long followed and to which it fully intends to adhere.

The President :

Translation : His Excellency Hussein Khan Alâ, delegate of Persia, will address the Assembly.

His Excellency Hussein Khan Alâ (Persia) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — Having taken part in the important work of the Second Committee, I should like, on behalf of the Persian delegation, to express our great appreciation of the spirit of justice, solidarity and practical co-operation which has characterised that Committee's deliberations.

I should like at the same time to pay a tribute to M. Loucheur for his lucid and masterly report and for his clear, precise and very full statements.

I have already had occasion in Committee to explain my Government's attitude in regard to the results of the International Economic Conference.

I should like to say again that Persia cordially welcomes the principles adopted by that Conference, which marks the beginning of a new era in the life of nations. Persia, as much as any other country desires the stability and prosperity of the world, which a better economic understanding will not fail to promote and regards the resolutions of that Conference as an ideal which we must all endeavour to attain if we wish to assuage the ills of humanity. But in the general enthusiasm we must not lose sight of the special circumstances of certain countries such as my own, where industry is comparatively undeveloped, where tariffs are very low and where the economic situation is precarious and even critical: such countries while desiring to co-operate as far as possible with others, must for a time do their best to foster their home industries.

As you know, Persia has consented to great sacrifices of revenue in her earnest desire to co-operate in the humanitarian scheme of the League of Nations; but on the other hand she claims tariff autonomy, and the Assembly recognises the justice of her claim.

We are deeply grateful for this act of justice, and we have no intention of abusing this autonomy.

As you see, I have no wish to strike a discordant note in the atmosphere of harmony and unanimity in which the Second Committee's resolutions should be welcomed. I simply wished to state clearly and frankly my country's special situation, which is quite different from that of European States, and which obliges us to make certain reservations. We are sure, however, that all the Members of the League, with their spirit of

fraternity and co-operation, will understand our difficulties and help us to overcome them.

The President :

Translation : Count Mensdorff, first delegate of Austria, will address the Assembly.

Count Mensdorff (Austria) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — The Second Committee's report is a further proof of the great importance of the resolutions adopted by the Economic Conference last spring.

In spite of the vast and complex problems with which that Conference was faced, it was able to indicate practical methods by which international economic life, which was so rudely shaken by the war and its results, could be brought back to healthier and more normal conditions.

The Economic Conference also succeeded in proving that international co-operation in the economic sphere is an absolute necessity for the economic development of nations, and hence for the maintenance of peace.

The unanimous desire expressed by all the members of the Economic Conference to surmount economic obstacles in the common interest was the first condition of success, and the unanimity of this desire in itself constitutes an important success for the Conference.

The experts who composed the Conference indicated what objects had to be achieved. It remains now to carry out the Conference's recommendations ; this is the most important and perhaps, the most difficult task before the Governments which we represent here.

In the masterly statement which he made to the Second Committee, M. Theunis said that, when closing the Economic Conference last May, he recommended delegates to champion in their own countries the ideas which they had just adopted. There is no country for which international co-operation in the economic sphere is more important than for Austria. A vast territory which, in the course of centuries, had become an economic unit, was suddenly split up in such a manner that new methods, new forms and new organisations had to be found in every field of economic life.

Austria was one of the first countries which unhesitatingly and unconditionally acceded to the Conference's recommendations. In June last the Federal Chancellor, Monsignor Seipel, stated, before the competent Parliamentary Committee to which the work of the Economic Conference had been referred, that Austria adhered without reservation to the recommendations and suggestions of the Conference, adding that he would endeavour to come to agreement with other Governments with a view to facilitating the execution of these recommendations.

He also said that Austria would have no difficulty in complying with the invitation to extend the system of tariff treaties, to refrain from introducing autonomous tariffs before negotiating with other States, and to grant the most-favoured-nation clause.

Austria's commercial policy is wholly in conformity with these principles.

The Austrian Government will also take into account the recommendation to diminish excessively high Customs duties and will make a beginning, even before any international action has taken place, by reducing duties already established by reason of temporary abnormal conditions following on the war. The departments concerned will be instructed to revise the whole Customs tariff in the light of these principles.

As regards the conclusion of conventions and the other resolutions of the Economic Conference, the Federal Chancellor declared, on behalf of the Government, that the latter approves them without reservation. These resolutions give voice to ideas which have always inspired the policy of Austria, but which we were not in a position to effect single-handed.

The Federal Government will enter into negotiations with the other Governments with a view to putting these resolutions into practice.

Since the Economic Conference, Austria and the United States of America have initialled a treaty, for a period of eight years, which contains the most-favoured-nation clause. A new Treaty of Commerce with Czechoslovakia has come into force. Negotiations with Hungary are proceeding satisfactorily with a view to the conclusion of a supplementary tariff treaty : this will be the first long-term treaty of its kind, since, under present conditions, short-term treaties are unfortunately the general rule.

The Austrian Government notes with keen satisfaction that the League has taken constructive measures to give effect to the recommendations of the Economic Conference ; the League has convened an International Diplomatic Conference, which is to meet in October, to deal with import and export prohibitions and restrictions, and also a Diplomatic Conference to determine the criteria for defining the status of foreigners, to abolish unjust discrimination between foreigners and nationals, to prevent double taxation, and to deal with the unification of tariff nomenclature.

Austria is prepared to co-operate in all these activities both through her Government and through her principal economic organisations.

From the outset the Austrian National Committee of the International Chamber of Commerce exerted itself to assist in the preparatory work for the Economic Conference.

For instance, the well-known scheme of the International Chamber of Commerce for the economic and fiscal treatment of nationals and companies of one State admitted to settle in the territory of another was due largely to the efforts of the Austrian National Committee of the International Chamber of Commerce.

The Conference noted the essential interdependence of industry, commerce and agriculture. Austria is an agricultural and industrial country and will do her best to ensure that the interests of agriculture are safeguarded as closely as those of industry and commerce, when the recommendations of the Conference come to be put into practice. I am glad to note that the report makes special mention of the importance of agricultural interests.

Austria gives her full adherence to the resolutions submitted by the Second Committee, and trusts most sincerely that all these proposals relating to economic co-operation will be crowned with success, and that the first step, as attested by the work of the Economic Conference, will be followed by further progress in this direction.

The President :

Translation : Jonkheer Loudon, delegate of the Netherlands, will address the Assembly.

Jonkheer Loudon (Netherlands) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — I have only a short statement to make and a recommendation to offer you.

At the beginning of the session, the first delegate of the Netherlands stated here that the Netherlands Government had given its full adherence to the conclusions and resolutions of the Economic

Conference, on behalf both of the Netherlands and of the Dutch East Indies and West Indies. The Foreign Minister declared that the approval with which the resolutions of the Conference had been received on all sides augured well for their future realisation.

Since then, further manifestations of approval have been forthcoming. Several speakers have made similar announcements in the plenary meetings and, during the discussions on the subject in the Second Committee, the representatives of practically all the States Members declared that their Governments desired to associate themselves with the resolutions of the Conference.

These statements promise well for the prospects of economic disarmament — one of the essential conditions for moral disarmament, without which the limitation and reduction of material armaments is impossible. I therefore regard it as an excellent sign that the Assembly should have shown so much interest in this vital question.

One point I should especially like to stress, and that is the responsibility entailed by these official statements. Members of the League must show that they realise the responsibility devolving upon them by reason of their unanimous approval of the Conference's decisions, for if, despite this general agreement, despite all these declarations of approval, despite all our mutual congratulations on the results of the Conference, economic policies still persist in the dangerous path they have hitherto followed, there is the danger that a wave of profound discouragement may spread throughout the world. Murmurs will be heard: What good is the League if, in spite of all its declarations and resolutions, no practical results are forthcoming?

Let us do all in our power to prevent such disappointment, which would certainly react most unfavourably on the work of the League as a whole. No one, I am sure, in this Assembly will agree more heartily with what I am saying than M. Loucheur, to whose initiative the Conference was due, and to whom I should like to pay a further tribute for the work which he has set on foot.

Thanks to his initiative, the nations have for the first time joined hands. The work is only just begun — it only represents the first step. But the road is marked out and we know now that the different countries will always tend to co-operate even more closely, in order, as I said in 1925, in this very hall, to avoid the dangers of economic anarchy, which would constitute a menace to world security.

The President :

Translation : Major Elliot, delegate of the British Empire, will address the Assembly.

Major Elliot (British Empire) :

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — We are now in the closing stages of this discussion. It has been of such great importance to Europe, in particular, and has raised such lively interest among its peoples that I may be allowed in a few words to give the impressions of the British delegation.

I cannot claim to speak on the matter with the authority and experience of many present in this hall, and still less with the authority of those who took part in the great Conference, whose report we are now considering. But this is a matter which touches us all and of which we must all be judges.

We have seen in the past, in the case of the Brussels Conference, an example of the most successful working of the spirit of the League. Without any coercion, without executive authority, the great wisdom of its pronouncements was such that they penetrated the minds of men and left

them spontaneously to follow the course that had been recommended.

In the present case we have another Conference whose judgments have equally been recognised as wise, and it is to be hoped, and indeed confidently anticipated, that they will in their turn form the basis of the public policy in future to the same extent as the pronouncements of the Brussels Conference have done in the past. We have heard the speeches and read the reports on the decisions of that Conference, and I do not intend to recapitulate what has been said or what has been written in the reports which have been printed or circulated.

I should like to say how strikingly has emerged from the report and from the discussions, the importance of agriculture in the economy of the world as a whole, and the British Empire, in particular, with its giant production of agricultural products, is interested in that aspect of the matter. The representative of India, during the discussions, said that, of the three hundred million inhabitants in his country not less than one hundred million live directly by work upon the soil — a colossal thought. Moreover, our Empire as a whole supports over two hundred million cattle and two hundred million sheep. These figures serve to give some slight indication of the enormous importance of agriculture, even in connection with the economy of the British Empire, of which agriculture is not always considered as one of its primary interests.

On the question of industry, the verdicts of the Conference are not those on which I wish to speak at any length, because the problem on which the Conference spoke with the clearest voice was that of commerce. I only wish again to repeat the fundamental fact that, of all the exports which are sent out from any country in the world, one-fifth are sent to the British market; out of every five men working in the world for export one man is working on an article for the British market. This shows how fundamentally Great Britain is interested in the matters which are being raised here.

We repeat again our declaration that the British Government is wholeheartedly in favour of the principles of the report, and willing and anxious to play its part in co-operating to secure the practical application of these principles.

I would adhere to the declaration which has been made by the Netherlands Government, both in Committee and here from this tribune, that a grave responsibility falls on the signatories to this report and the Governments of the States to take practical steps towards bringing about results which, in principle, we have accepted here.

The delegate of the Netherlands emphasised in Committee the pressure felt by all low-tariff countries just now — the pressure of circumstances and, even more, the pressure of example. There is in every country a Protectionist school of thought. In some countries it is in power; in other countries it is not in power; but it is certainly enormously reinforced by the examples to which it can point throughout the world of great, enlightened, yes, and prosperous States, which hold rigidly to a protectionist policy.

It is undoubtedly difficult for the low-tariff countries to lay their hands upon their hearts and say that in them is enshrined true wisdom and that the path they are following will not eventually lead them to ruin and degradation; although, of course, their paths have not yet led them to the ruin and degradation which is so confidently prophesied.

We find already that many practical steps have been taken. We find that the Conference on the abolition of import and export prohibitions is to meet this autumn. Even at the present session

of the Assembly you will have laid before you a Protocol dealing with the enforcement of arbitral awards throughout the world, which will be opened for signature.

It may be that we shall see M. Paul-Boncour coming to the feet of M. Loucheur and supplicating him to find out how it is that he has succeeded in getting England to approach a thing called a Protocol; still more, to sign anything which agrees to sanctions for the enforcement of arbitral awards. This only shows that practical steps have already been taken and that more practical steps will follow.

This is a parting of the ways. We have to make, and, more particularly, as the report itself says, Europe has to make (for it is a responsibility which especially rests upon Europe) a choice between the freeing of economic currents and the damming and the dyking and the barring up of economic currents.

Europe, which has solved so many problems, now has this problem to solve. The thirty frontiers, the thirty watertight compartments of which M. Jouhaux spoke in his powerful speech from this tribune yesterday, the thirty watertight compartments of small States which it is impossible to call in every case self-supporting, are one ideal which cannot be combined with the ideal of the wide and free play of the great economic currents of the world which has been adopted with such success in many other parts and particularly in the United States of America.

We in Europe have our own problems and our own ideals. We do not in every case desire to see uniformity of mass production, even though it produces that great material prosperity which is such a striking feature of the economy of the New World. We have to find how to combine political questions with an economic co-operation. Such is the choice which is laid before Europe now. It is a choice which each country in its turn has to make in its own way. But we must realise that a country cannot choose both. We cannot at one and the same time choose a narrow economic and national particularism, and the enormous material prosperity which flows from a throwing down of all barriers in the direction of a uniformity of standards and ideals. Europe has not yet chosen. It has now an opportunity of choosing, which will not for ever remain open.

I end my speech as I began. There is a chance before us to follow a certain road, the road of the free play of economic forces. We see before us, on the other side of the Atlantic, the great results which have come from allowing the free play of economic forces, and I think that many nations, particularly the Western European nations, have decided to follow the way of material prosperity, whether for good or for evil, and they are looking for some great economic synthesis into which to fit themselves. Well, Europe has now the chance of bringing about such an economic synthesis. It may be that she will decide against it. In that case a step will have been taken from which there can be no going back. At this moment, great economic combinations are being formed in one part or another of the world. Unless we make up our mind one way or the other, now, these economic combinations will be formed, and once they are formed it will be very difficult for their frontiers to be recast.

Finally, on the point of organisation, I would say that we have had many long debates in the Second Committee on that subject. I think we have come to a wise decision and I think that we have been able to meet the views of both parties. As M. Loucheur has said, the discussions of the Economic Conference have not ended; they have only begun. We have to find a forum in which

can be discussed the great questions which still have to be discussed to which M. Loucheur referred in his lucid exposition of the matter in his introductory speech. A forum has been set up and an arena for discussion has been opened. I believe that organisation will be a good thing. But organisation is only a machine, and the work of the Economic Conference will be judged not by the machine which it has set up but by the articles which the machine eventually produces.

The President :

Translation : M. Gliwic, delegate of Poland, will address the Assembly.

M. Gliwic (Poland) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — In his most interesting speech to the Second Committee, our Japanese colleague stated emphatically that he regarded the International Economic Conference as marking an epoch in the economic history of the world.

Although my enthusiasm for the Economic Conference does not go as far as this, I must admit that it constitutes a considerable advance, a turning-point, a decisive step, in the new direction of world economic policy.

I shall not repeat here any technical terms, or quote any of the admirable resolutions adopted by the Conference, but I must strongly emphasise this salient point: the Conference has permanently established the axiom that the prosperity of one nation cannot be founded on the destitution and ruin of another. It showed clearly that a return to pre-war tactics in international economic relations is impossible. It endeavoured to demonstrate, by its very constitution and composition, the principle of international economic equity and justice, and throughout its work took this idea as the underlying basis of its resolutions.

In a word, the Economic Conference became the most striking, the most imposing, and the most effective manifestation of peace; and that is why all the nations, even those which, for one reason or another, cannot for the moment carry out unreservedly all the recommendations of the Conference, welcome the principles underlying its resolutions. That is why the immediate realisation of these ideas is eagerly awaited, and why it is imperative that this splendid work, conceived by M. Loucheur, fostered by M. Theunis, the distinguished President of the Conference, developed by the efforts of the Preparatory Committee and by the Economic Section of the Secretariat, and brought to perfection by the Conference itself, should be duly crowned with success.

The resolutions of the Economic Conference cannot remain a dead letter; but, if they are to be applied successfully, account must be taken of the differences, even slight differences, presented by the various national organisations.

The organisation mentioned in M. Loucheur's draft resolution must therefore be set up with the utmost despatch. The Council must deal with the question as soon as possible. We must all give this organisation our wholehearted support, and the services of the most experienced and distinguished experts must be secured for it.

This organ is not precisely that which many members of the Economic Conference had in mind. There is a wide difference between the Consultative Committee now projected and the World Economic Council of which certain over-eager economists had dreamed. But this Consultative Committee is only a first tentative step, the outcome of a general compromise. We must wish

it with all our hearts a fruitful and brilliant future.

Poland has emerged safe and sound from her financial difficulties, and is marching with firm step towards the great economic future which, she confidently believes, lies before her.

We, as much as other nations, realise that the interdependence of nations reigns supreme to-day in the world economic domain, and guides our destinies.

In anticipation, therefore, of her own economic development, Poland is attaching herself closely to the new economic organisation of the League, to which we give in advance all our faith and confidence.

The President :

Translation : Dr. Breitscheid, delegate of Germany, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Breitscheid (Germany) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — I do not intend to examine now in detail all the questions which have been raised either by the deliberations and recommendations of the World Economic Conference or by the discussions in the Second Committee, or by the interesting speeches which we heard here yesterday and to-day.

Time is short, and, moreover, M. Loucheur has given us so full a statement of what has passed that I should weaken the impression he made if I again reviewed in detail all the points with which we have dealt as regards this matter.

Neither do I wish to speak of the reorganisation of the League's economic services. M. Jouhaux has made a number of important and admirable suggestions, not only in regard to the actual work of the two Committees, but also as regards their actual organisation.

The time will come, I trust, when the League will be able to devote more attention to putting these suggestions into effect. I also hope that henceforth when Governments submit to the Council proposals relating to the composition of the Consultative Committee, they will see to it that the interests and opinions of the working-classes and of labour are adequately and sufficiently represented, as indeed is intended in the resolution submitted to us.

What I am instructed to say on behalf of the German delegation refers especially to two points :

The first is the oft-quoted recommendation of the World Economic Conference, namely, that the time has come to put a stop to the growth of Customs tariffs and to adopt a directly opposite economic policy in this connection.

We are about to embark upon a great enterprise, and in beginning any enterprise optimism is needed ; otherwise, success is jeopardised at the very outset.

All the speeches which we have heard here have been marked by such optimism, and we Germans of course share this feeling. If I am apprehensive on certain points you may be sure that it is not because I wish to dash our hope and zeal, but because I am anxious to remind you that at this grave moment words must be followed by deeds.

Let us speak frankly. Let us openly recognise the fact that during the four months since the Economic Conference Customs policy has not everywhere taken that opposite direction which is recommended by the Conference.

While in no way seeking special praise here, I would point out that when Germany signed the oft-quoted Treaty of Commerce with France, she reduced many of her tariff duties, and that, as you are aware, my Government has instructed the

Economic Council of the Reich to consider the possibilities of a further reduction of tariffs.

I only mention what my country has done because I want to appeal to you all, as Dr. Strösemann appealed to the Governments at the last session of the Council, to put into practice resolutely, notwithstanding even the opposition of the parties concerned, this decision of the Economic Conference, which is certainly its most important one.

You are here as ministers or deputies, and you have the power of carrying out the decisions of the Economic Conference. Do not forget that every country which, contrary to the recommendations of that Conference, proceeds to increase its tariffs will encourage further resistance on the part of all those countries which are opposed to the new principles recommended by the Conference.

The second resolution to which I wish to draw your special attention recommends an enquiry, on the subject of collective action, to encourage the extension of international commerce on an equitable basis by removing or diminishing those barriers that excessively high Customs tariffs oppose to international trade.

This recommendation differs from the other resolutions of the Conference in that, in reality, the other recommendations only repeat old truths and reiterate previous demands, whereas this one introduces a new feature — collective action.

Let us consider, for example, France's position after the conclusion of the Franco-German Commercial Treaty. France is now obliged to negotiate with two or three other States on the same items of her Customs tariff and on the same questions as she has previously discussed with Germany.

Would it not have been more convenient and more practical to have discussed these questions and to have arrived at an agreement with five Powers in the first place ? It is true that the time has not yet come to make detailed proposals on this subject. For the moment, the Economic Conference only contemplates an enquiry. I should now like to revert to a matter which will play an important part in this enquiry, and to draw your attention to the differences which characterise economic development in the United States of America and in Europe.

The chief reason why the United States have been able to outstrip Europe in the economic sphere is because, in America, production, trade and consumption do not encounter a new frontier every hundred kilometers ; there is, one great home market. On the other side of the Atlantic there is one single economic system ; in Europe, production and consumption are organised in a thousand different ways. This is true of iron and coal and other products as well. For example, it would not, I think, be too much to say that Europe could supply all her own needs in bread cereals if these were raised in places where natural conditions are best.

As regards iron and steel, collective private action has been inaugurated under the auspices of the Governments of the States concerned. In Could not something similar be done for coal and other branches of production, provided however — and I strongly emphasise this point — that such collective action should be in the general interest and should not be detrimental to the interests of workers and consumers.

In what circumstances should States associate themselves with private initiative in taking collective action ? This is a question which I recommend to the consideration of the League's economic organs. I will merely express the hope that in the near future the Council will have an opportunity of studying a report on the results of this enquiry.

Let me, before concluding, add a general observation. We must realise that economic problems have an important bearing on the supreme political aims of the League. Economic activity is not a mere matter of profits and dividends. Behind the dry and dispassionate figures relating to production, trade, the yield of capital and wages, there are the men who run the economic machine and who are always asking themselves the old biblical question: "What shall we eat? What shall we drink? Wherewithal shall we be clothed?"

Behind the figures there is the desire which claims not only the satisfaction of daily needs but a share in the material and spiritual wealth of civilisation. The happiness of the individual and of nations depends as much upon the solution of economic as upon that of purely political problems. We might even go so far as to say that a just equilibrium in meeting the needs of these millions of human beings who form the various nations is an essential condition of pacific international co-operation.

We shall therefore be accomplishing a task in full accord with the League's ideals if we approach the solution of economic problems resolutely and in a spirit of conciliation and mutual understanding.

The President :

Translation : M. Vennersten, delegate of Sweden, will address the Assembly.

M. Vennersten (Sweden) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — In drawing up the balance-sheet of this Assembly, no one can deny that its chief characteristics have been hard work and a keen interest in the tasks to be taken in hand; but it must be recognised that, owing to the difficulties which have had to be surmounted, the practical results have been somewhat meagre.

The manifestation of the general desire to advance has been limited mainly to recommendations for the further study of various problems. Indeed, the respective Committees have considered studies which had already been undertaken, or have initiated fresh studies with respect to the great problem of disarmament in its relation to questions of arbitration and security.

The principles underlying military disarmament are still the subject of controversy, but the principles of economic disarmament are now established and recognised. All that remains to be done in this field is to find methods of application, and I venture to express the hope that the Assembly's recommendation and the decisions of the Economic Conference will produce definite results in the near future.

A proposal submitted by the Swedish delegation to the Second Committee contained a recommendation even more definite than that proposed by the Committee. I am glad, however, to find that the draft resolution submitted to us indicates the necessity of abandoning the policy of excessively high tariffs and of encouraging a more equitable and freer commercial policy.

The Second Committee did not see its way to accept the Swedish proposal, which underlined the extreme importance, if such a policy were to be rendered possible, of agreeing upon a universal definition and a general and uniform application of the most-favoured-nation clause. I thank the Rapporteur, however, for having recognised the special importance of this clause, and I wish to point out that the chief reason advanced by those members of the Committee who could not support the Swedish proposal on this point was that they

desired to include all the resolutions of the Economic Conference in a single recommendation, without making special mention of any particular resolution. I bow to this argument, and, referring to a remark made by the Rapporteur in his admirable statement, I would point out that our proposal was in no way intended to interrupt the preparatory work of unifying tariff nomenclature, which is already well advanced.

What we wished to emphasise, however, is the vital importance, in carrying out the programme of the Economic Conference, of a clear definition and uniform application of the principle of the most-favoured-nation clause. In this connection, therefore, I venture to stress my Government's hope that this question will receive special attention during the investigations which are to be made in the matter.

The present period is one of commercial negotiations between many European countries and also between European countries and the United States of America. We hope that during these negotiations the new commercial policy, which has already been recommended by the Economic Conference and which will, I hope, be recommended to-day by the Assembly will be loyally put into practice.

The Assembly will shortly be called upon not only to approve the bases of future economic policy, but also to set up the technical organs to carry out this programme. This fact in itself shows that the League at any rate is resolved to fulfil the task it has undertaken. Afterwards the various States will also have to act.

Let me add that I entirely share the opinion of certain former speakers as to the urgency of our task. We must set to work at once if we wish to achieve the general restoration of the world's economic position.

Finally, if you will allow me a personal reflection, I would remind you that I took part two years ago in the work of the Second Committee and that I then saw the admirable work of our Rapporteur. I know that he has already accomplished miracles, and I am fully convinced that he will do so again in the future.

The President :

Translation : Ladies and Gentlemen — The delegate of Sweden was the last speaker on the list. I, personally, have nothing to add to what has been said on the subject of the Second Committee's valuable work with reference to the results of the Economic Conference or the work of the Economic Organisation of the League. I should like, however, to add my congratulations to those already addressed to M. Loucheur, whose activity, high ability and bold initiative have unquestionably contributed very largely to the success of the work which the Assembly has just been discussing.

If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolutions of the Second Committee which read as follows :

I. International Economic Conference.

The Assembly :

Takes note of the report of the Economic Conference held in May last, in accordance with the initiative taken by the Assembly at its sixth ordinary session ;

Congratulates sincerely the President and the members of the Conference appointed by the Governments of fifty countries upon the fact that, comprising so many qualifications, and representing every variety of responsible opinion,

they were able to agree unanimously upon recommendations at once definite in character and wide in range, whose adoption would effect a substantial improvement in the present economic policies of the world;

Notes with satisfaction that many Governments have already made declarations accepting the principles laid down by the Conference and stating their intention of co-operating in their application, while no declaration in the contrary sense has been made:

Believes, therefore, that there is every reason to hope for universal approval when the public opinion of all countries has been sufficiently instructed:

Recommends the resolutions of the Conference, as the Council did in June 1927, to the favourable consideration of all Governments, and trusts that those Governments which have not yet declared their support will shortly be able to do so;

Invites the Economic Organisation of the League of Nations to prepare as soon as possible a summary of the replies of the various Governments as to their attitude to the recommendations of the International Economic Conference, and to make known the action that the various Governments have taken or may take in pursuance of the recommendations of the Economic Conference;

Trusts that the economic policies of all countries may develop in accordance with the principles laid down by the Conference and desires that the Economic Organisation of the League should take these recommendations as the basis of its work;

Trusts, in particular, that the recommendations of the Conference relating to tariffs and commercial policy will be put into effect, not only by national action and bilateral agreements but also, whenever practicable, by collective conventions reached by means of international conferences of accredited representatives with the aim of gradually evolving among the trading nations of the world, and particularly among those of Europe, common lines of policy beneficial to all and not subject to the uncertainties of purely bilateral bargaining, careful attention being given to the special conditions existing at any moment and to the necessity of realising this policy by stages and without undue disturbance;

Expects the Council of the League of Nations and the Economic Organisation to devote their untiring efforts to the realisation of this urgent task and hopes that the Governments will give to it their cordial support and active collaboration.

II. Economic Organisation of the League of Nations.

Whereas, in addition to the economic tasks hitherto undertaken by the League, much important and extensive work will result from the recommendations of the Economic Conference; and

Whereas it is essential that the different interests and organisations which collaborated in the preparation of the Conference should continue to give their support and advice in the work of securing effect to its recommendations; and

Whereas the Conference took the following resolution:

"The Conference wishes in the first instance to express its high appreciation of the work of the Economic Committee and the Secretariat of the League.

"The Conference is of opinion that the success of its work will depend upon the execution of the principles laid down.

"With regard to the action to be taken on its recommendations, the Conference, while offering no suggestion as to a permanent organisation

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 of the Conference":

The Assembly considers:

(a) That the Economic Committee should continue to be, as at present, the organ through which the Council deals with economic affairs and that it should be constituted — under such rules as the Council may consider appropriate for its effective functioning — so as to be best suited for its principal work which, in the near future at least, will lie within the sphere of the economic relations between States and their economic policies so far as they have international aspects; it should consist of not more than fifteen members.

(b) That the Economic Committee should have the power to appoint temporary sub-committees of experts for preparatory work and, subject to Council approval and in consultation with the States in question, to name economic correspondents in countries which have no member on the Committee.

(c) That a "Consultative Committee", the object of which is to follow the application of the Economic Conference recommendations, should be constituted by the Council.

It might be composed of about thirty-five members, as was the Preparatory Committee, and the conditions of equilibrium attained in the latter between the various elements should be maintained as far as possible.

It should therefore include, among others, persons competent in industry, commerce, agriculture, finance, transport, labour questions, and questions relative to consumption.

The International Labour Office should be invited to submit the names of three labour members for this Committee.

The Council will doubtless also wish to secure for the Committee the co-operation of the International Institute of Agriculture and of the International Chamber of Commerce.

Five members chosen by the Economic Committee should take part in the work of the Consultative Committee with the same rights as the other members.

The Consultative Committee should submit its report directly to the Council of the League of Nations. At the same time, it would forward a copy to the Economic Committee and to the other technical organisations concerned.

The resolutions were adopted.

80. — DECLARATION CONCERNING WARS OF AGGRESSION: RESOLUTION OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE.

The President:

Translation: The next item on the agenda is the examination of the Third Committee's resolution with reference to the declaration concerning wars of aggression (document A.109.1927.IX).

(On the invitation of the President M. Benes, Chairman of the Third Committee, and M. Sokal, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform).

The President:

Translation: M. Sokal, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Sokal (Poland), Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — The draft resolution which I had the honour to submit to the Assembly on September 9th was referred to the Third Committee and was unanimously adopted by the Committee, with acclamation, on September 19th. The Committee has done me the honour of asking me to act as Rapporteur to the Assembly on the subject of this draft resolution, to which it has given its full adherence.

The Committee was of opinion that, at the present juncture, a solemn resolution passed by the Assembly, declaring that wars of aggression must never be employed as a means of settling disputes between States, and that such wars constitute an international crime, would have a salutary effect on public opinion, and would help to create an atmosphere favourable to the League's future work in the matter of security and disarmament.

While recognising that the draft resolution does not constitute a regular legal instrument, which would be adequate in itself and represent a concrete contribution towards security, the Third Committee unanimously agreed as to its great moral and educative value.

Being convinced that the League's work in the matter of security and disarmament can never prove successful or result in the establishment of a complete system of organised security, until all mutual suspicion and fear of aggression are removed, your Committee decided to recommend the adoption of this draft resolution, which testifies to the desire of the States Members of the League to renounce all wars of aggression and which is calculated to impress on public opinion a further desire for international conciliation. I have accordingly the honour to ask you to adopt the draft resolution now before you which reads as follows :

The Assembly,

Recognising 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.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly is asked to give an opinion on the draft resolution submitted by M. Sokal on behalf of the Third Committee.

The General Committee of the Assembly, being anxious that the importance of this declaration should be fittingly marked, decided, at its last

meeting, that the proper procedure for its adoption would be a vote by roll-call.

Accordingly, if the Assembly agrees, the vote will be taken by roll-call. (*Assent*).

In conformity with Rule 20, paragraph (a) of the Rules of Procedure, the name of each delegation shall be called and one of its members shall reply from his place in the hall " Yes " if in favour of the declaration, " No " if opposed to it, or " Not voting ".

The result of the voting will be recorded and announced to the Assembly.

(The vote was then taken.)

The President :

Translation : All the delegations having pronounced in favour of the declaration submitted by the Third Committee I declare it unanimously adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

81. — PRIVATE MANUFACTURE AND PUBLICITY OF THE MANUFACTURE OF ARMS AND AMMUNITION AND OF IMPLEMENTS OF WAR. REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the report of the Third Committee on the supervision of the private manufacture of arms and ammunition and of implements of war (Annex 25, document A.104.1927.IX).

(On the invitation of the President M. Guerrero, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

M. Guerrero (Salvador) read his report and the accompanying 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 of the Conference for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in 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.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak on this report I shall consider the resolution proposed by the Third Committee as adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

82. — ARBITRATION, SECURITY, DISARMAMENT AND THE WORK OF THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION FOR THE DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE. REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the report of the Third Committee on arbitration, security, disarmament and the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference (Annex 26, document A.108.1927.IX).

(On the invitation of the President M. de Brouckère, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. de Brouckère, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium), Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — The work of the Third Committee is always of a very special character. I do not mean that it is necessarily pre-eminent, but that it is special because it goes straight to the goal towards which other Committees travel by indirect roads. Whether we consider the First Committee and its legal work, the Sixth Committee and the political resolutions which it adopts, the humanitarian work of the Fifth Committee, the great organisations controlled by the Second Committee, or even the work of the Budget Committee to ensure the satisfactory working of this institution — always, by indirect methods — the aim in view is to bring the nations closer together and to consolidate peace.

In the Third Committee, however, this aim is avowed and direct ; and the earnest desire of us all, to attain the actual ideal of peace, a peace firmly and finally established, is more manifest.

The Third Committee is for the eighth time presenting a report on the various problems which may be merged into one single problem, that of peace.

I think of some of my predecessors — I was going to say, refer more especially to some of them — I think of my splendid predecessors. What noble thoughts they expressed ! What great hopes they awakened in all hearts ! What lofty, elaborate and clear schemes they reported upon here !

In thinking of these things, some of us cannot perhaps help feeling somewhat sceptical. They will say to themselves : " What great hopes — and what great illusions ! " I do not agree that these hopes were illusions, and I shall endeavour in a moment to show how far they have been fulfilled.

I should like to begin my statement to-day on a new note of hope. I will not say that peace is now assured ; I will not even say that it is better assured than it was a few years ago ; I will not say that in this vast forest from which mankind has not yet emerged the wild beast of war has ceased to howl. What can be said, however, is that here, around us, under the influence of the League or in the League itself, forces are being mobilised which ultimately will penetrate into the forest and slay the beast.

But we do not live by hope alone. Some, if not all, of our great aspirations have been realised.

It has often been said that the first condition of peace is moral disarmament. This has not yet been achieved ; nevertheless, every year the number of men of good will increases, and it may be said that the most valuable result of each and all of our sessions is that some of the misunderstandings amongst nations, have been

dispelled, that good feeling between us is strengthened, and that through us and through peace, good will is strengthened between all the nations.

It is true that the idea of international justice, the idea of entrusting to a tribunal the settlement of all justiciable disputes has not yet been realised. Yesterday, however, seventeen nations had formally bound themselves by Article 36 of the Permanent Court of International Justice, and, since then, their number has been increased to eighteen by the addition of a great Power.

It is true that we have not yet fulfilled our dream of compulsory arbitration between all nations, but every year the number of arbitration treaties increases.

It is true that the Protocol is as yet only a hope, but already Locarno is a reality.

We must be reminded of these things because they are directly and immediately connected with the subject of our deliberations. We have achieved progress in the way of mutual understanding, we have achieved progress in the field of arbitration, we have reached a higher degree of security.

According to the actual letter of the Covenant, according to Article 8, progress in the sphere of disarmament should result, and, at least in regions where a greater degree of security has been attained, the meaning of paragraph 1 of Article 8, by which the States undertake to reduce their armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety, acquires a new force.

And here it must be clearly stated that the League has always been most anxious to respect the imperative obligation fixed by Article 8. A few facts will demonstrate this. In 1924, the year of great hope, when we thought we had succeeded, when, in a great wave of enthusiasm, the Protocol was acclaimed here, one of its chief results was that it led to a Disarmament Conference in the following July.

The following year, circumstances were less favourable : the Protocol had not been ratified ; Locarno had not yet been achieved ; but in spite of that, in spite of the set back to our work, in spite of the fact that the hopes of Locarno had not yet been realised, the Assembly made it a point of honour not to abandon the idea of a Disarmament Conference. Without further delay it set up the Preparatory Commission to undertake the technical work which was necessary before the Conference could be held.

Shortly after the 1925 session of the Assembly, the Locarno Agreements materialised, and, carrying out the will of its predecessor, the Assembly, during its ordinary session in 1926 affirmed in its turn the necessity of completing the preparatory work and of convening without delay a Disarmament Conference, under the then existing conditions as regards security, and — unless material difficulties prevented it — before the present session of the Assembly. I would point out that the only condition attached to the meeting of the Conference was the material accomplishment of the technical work required to render it possible.

This technical work has not been completed — a fact which should claim our attention for a moment. The third Committee also considered this point when dealing with the part of the Secretariat's report relating thereto.

The technical work, as I say, has not been completed. Why ? It would perhaps be presumption on my part to seek a reason, and in any case it would be premature ; what I wish to emphasise however, is that we have at any rate done something. We have carried out investigations and thereby rendered the idea of disarmament

more concrete. Certain points stand out very clearly and, in particular, the fact that armaments are of different types and vary from nation to nation, and that, whatever our wishes in the matter may be, this is a fact which must be taken into account.

One fact has clearly emerged, namely, the importance, at any rate in countries where conscription is in force, of shortening the period of service, and the considerable reduction of armaments which would result therefrom. We have been able to give concrete form to the idea of reducing military expenditure, thanks to the technical work of the Commission which discovered a method of drawing up the military budgets of the various countries, I do not say on an identical plan, but at any rate on a comparable plan. We have learned to recognise clearly the importance of the question of material and of construction and the daily increasing value of the new idea which is called industrial mobilisation.

Certainly, the views of the various members of the Commission have not yet been brought into line, but all those who have attentively followed the work know that they have drawn closer together and that the columns separating the various texts no longer form insuperable barriers. It has been said: What meagre results after so much effort! The Commission has only brought forth a three-headed monster which will never survive. This proves at least one thing — that the Commission is not sterile. One more effort and it will bring forth a fine, healthy child that will live.

The great result obtained is that public opinion now no longer thinks of disarmament as something vague and indefinite. Its features have become plain; it has become, as it were, incarnate. The nations know what their aim should be. They have a clear idea of what disarmament really is.

This result is, if I may say so, sufficient in itself. When once the idea of disarmament becomes clear the nations will achieve disarmament.

Something, therefore, has been done; but we must now know what we are to do in the future. I do not wish to add a fresh command to those already proposed. I think, however, I am voicing the general feeling in saying that, after this partial, this very partial, success which we have attained, in spite of resistance, in spite of difficulties, our duty is to persevere.

We must persevere, and I will now put before you the concrete proposals submitted to you by the Third Committee with a view to indicating how we can persevere in the work of security, arbitration and disarmament.

We have just heard one of these concrete proposals eloquently explained by M. Sokal. The Third Committee wished to detach it from the other proposals in order to throw it into relief and make its true character clear. It was M. Politis, I think, who said the other day that this proposal has the value of a statement of principle; it has the value of those declarations of right which are placed at the head of certain Constitutions. It represents, in fact, an act of faith.

The Third Committee thought, however, that the time had come to remember that, despite the importance of faith, despite the moral value of an affirmation, faith without works is a dead faith, and that, having affirmed our faith, we must, at once and without delay, set ourselves to act.

Before this Assembly met we hoped to achieve much. What hopes we had! The work of disarmament was to have been finished. The Conference was to have taken place. The Rapporteur was to have come here bringing to the Assembly

the text of a disarmament treaty, which would finally give practical effect to Article 8.

We expected an abundant harvest. Yet I am here before you, I will not say with empty hands, but at any rate bearing only a few poor ears of wheat.

I am, however, neither ashamed nor discouraged. I am not ashamed because we can do no more than our best; and when, after an effort into which we have thrown all our heart to achieve definite success, difficulties have proved too much for us, we may remember the proverb: "Do your duty, come what may". I am not discouraged, because I tell myself that if these poor ears of wheat will not suffice to assuage our hunger they will at least serve as seed for future harvest.

We are like a farmer whose crops have been spoiled by the weather, but who, with the same hope and courage as he displayed a year before, sets himself anew to fertilise his field, knowing that his determination will conquer, and that one day he will fill his granary.

In the meanwhile, these few ears of wheat that I bring you are, I repeat, poor meagre things; but they must be devoutly and carefully kept, for in such a matter small things mount up, and nothing must be wasted.

Some of the resolutions submitted to you by the Third Committee show that, even in the realm of facts, the work of the Preparatory Commission has not been altogether fruitless; if it has not done much it has at least done something.

The first resolution to which I wish to draw your attention concerns the important, I might say the burning, question of civil aviation.

This question engaged the close attention of the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference; it was said that it would be extremely difficult to limit military aviation forces unless some method were found of preventing all the forces of civil aviation from being used to supplement fighting squadrons at the time of mobilisation. Experts on civil aviation were asked to study this problem, and their work clearly showed that, by the natural force of events, types of civil aviation would develop along increasingly dissimilar lines from those of military aviation if civil aviation were allowed to develop freely and without military control. It has always been apparent that the danger to peace which might arise from the existence of great civil aviation undertakings would progressively decrease as the links between undertakings in different countries were strengthened and if aviation, like other industries, became international.

These were theoretical conclusions. Those whose opinion was asked were, however, business men, men of action, who do not care to waste their time in drawing up mere resolutions, and who, once their discussions were completed, set to work to endeavour to put those resolutions into practice.

The first resolution is intended to place the help of the League Transit Organisation at the disposal of aviation undertakings, in order that an initial result may be achieved on this definite, minor, limited, but very real point.

Another resolution concerns a secondary, relatively unimportant, but likewise very real aspect of the problem of security.

In the League, the whole organisation of security depends on the decisions taken on the Council's initiative. I use this cautious expression in order to avoid raising any question of principle. This organisation of security depends upon the meetings of the Council, which may be summoned at times of emergency. These meetings can only achieve their aim, the desired result, if they are prompt;

and experience proves that in one case at least, when the League acted at extraordinarily short notice, it did so none too soon, since an hour later war would have broken out.

It is therefore highly important that the League should be able to act quickly.

Methods have been studied for enabling this to be done, and certain results have been obtained. On this subject also you will find a resolution in the report, which I think I need not read now.

A third question relates to the application of certain articles of the Covenant — in particular, Articles 16 and 11.

The work of the Committee of the Council, in conjunction with that of the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference, elucidated a certain number of important points, and showed that Article 11 afforded many more resources for the settlement of disputes and the assurance of peace than had at first been thought: it was believed that these resources could be systematised, and a form of procedure created, a system by which better and more effective use might henceforth be made of all the instruments of peace contained in the Covenant.

Here let me point out another result closely connected with the investigations on the subject of Article 16. This article, as you know, refers to the material and economic assistance which States are called upon to supply if one of their number should be the victim of an act of aggression.

In the opinion of a delegation whose views are particularly sound, and whose suggestions have often assisted us — I refer to the Finnish delegation — this provision should not be left in its present vague form. It should be defined in concrete terms, and the assistance referred to thus generally should be translated into francs and centimes — into hard cash.

Thanks to the Finnish proposal, which has already been submitted for examination to various organs of the League, we now have a carefully considered scheme which has been favourably received by a great many of the delegations. Some delegations, it is true, have submitted reservations, but the scheme is such that we have real grounds for hoping that we may soon arrive at concrete results.

This, then, is the outcome of our work of last year. From hope, I repeat, we are now proceeding to achievement.

We had to consider another proposal, quite independent of last year's work, the proposal submitted by Dr. Nansen on behalf of the Norwegian delegation. You are familiar with this text and with its object; it involves a most important legal problem, on the principle of which I think we are all agreed, but which calls for lengthy and exhaustive study.

The Third Committee requested the First Committee to undertake this task. For various reasons, the First Committee was unable to complete the work, and could only give the Third Committee a summary opinion recommending further consideration of the matter. Let me say, however, that this need not involve any great delay, as the study can be continued by a new Committee about which I shall have to say a few words.

In addition to these proposals, the Committee had to consider the Netherlands proposal. While this was under discussion, two further proposals were submitted to the Committee by the French and German delegations respectively.

Fortunately, from the very outset, the Committee realised that the three proposals — Netherlands, French and German — were not in the least contradictory, but supplemented one another in a most satisfactory way, had many useful features in

common, and when combined, resulted in a fusion of ideas producing a perfectly harmonious whole. The Committee decided, therefore, that, instead of drawing up separate reports it would be better to merge these three proposals and thus bring out the prevailing unity of views on the subject. I now have to report to you on this matter.

Let me first emphasise two fundamental points: the first is that we have to keep strictly to the 1926 resolution, which, as I have already reminded you, provides explicitly that the Disarmament Conference is now to be convened — under existing conditions as regards security — as soon as the preliminary work can be completed.

We unanimously agreed that the terms of this resolution must be adhered to and that the technical preliminaries must be continued.

The date fixed for the meeting of the Preparatory Commission is November 17th. The President of the Preparatory Commission, M. Loudon, delegate of the Netherlands, alone has power to decide whether or not it shall be altered. I think, however, that I am voicing the general feeling, probably the unanimous feeling, of my colleagues in urging that the meeting of the Commission should not be too long delayed and that, in order to demonstrate the strength of our purpose before the world, we should meet again and make a fresh effort this year.

But a further point on which we were unanimously agreed was that, supposing the Disarmament Conference could actually meet now, even in the existing circumstances, its chances of real appreciable success would be all the greater if security were on a sounder basis.

Ah! ladies and gentlemen, if only, when the Conference meets, we could somehow, by some means, succeed in creating in this unhappy world a feeling of greater security! If we can by some conceivable means do something, however little, to improve conditions of security, then, beyond all manner of doubt, every State will be prepared to accept a lower limit for its armaments and the success of the Conference will be proportionately enhanced.

Then, however great our optimism, while we may not have to wait long before taking what has so often been called the first step, yet after that first step, as every one of us knows quite well, other steps, many other steps, will have to follow. Would not each one be simpler, more effective and more rapid if conditions of security also could be improved?

An exchange of views has once again revealed the truth, that indisputable truth which has forced itself upon eight Assemblies in succession, that security, arbitration and disarmament are closely and indissolubly linked together, that they form, as it were, three avenues of approach and that no real progress can be made in any one of them unless we keep abreast in the other two.

And here, if I might venture to employ a simile borrowed from war — and this we shall always do even when talking of peace! — experience has proved that no offensive against war stands any chance of success unless it is on a front that embraces all three avenues at once.

We wondered what could be done then in each of these directions to extend the principle of arbitration and increase the factor of security. Many possibilities at once presented themselves. Why did we not think of beginning with agreements on the lines of the Locarno Treaty? The very fact that we are discussing these questions to-day, and that the convening of the Disarmament Conference has now become a burning question is directly due to Locarno and to the unanimous recognition that Locarno has somehow changed the whole situation in Western Europe.

Surely it was only natural that we should think of extending to other parts of the world, to other regions, the procedure adopted on the Rhine, and thus reinforce security and add to the number of nations willing to reduce their armaments ?

First, then, we have to consider the possibility of concluding further treaties of arbitration and security.

There is another way open to us. It has been realised — and to this we shall constantly have to revert — that the Covenant itself offers many possibilities which have not yet been sufficiently exploited.

I do not mean that we should begin to "interpret" the Covenant; we have no right to do so. Nor do I mean that we should arbitrarily increase the obligations to be made incumbent on the States. Nothing short of an amendment to the Covenant ratified by all the States could make this possible.

But side by side with the obligations of the individual States, there are the obligations of the League itself, the innumerable acts which the League has to perform to set the whole mechanism in motion.

The League is young, and life brings it face to face with fresh problems every day. It is still too young to have put its house in order. Its spiritual temple is still unfinished, like the earthly mansion which is one day to be its dwelling-place. This spiritual dwelling must be built up according to the rules of the Covenant and by dint of persistent endeavour.

Every one of the articles of the Covenant offers possibilities that have not yet been fully exploited. If we can explore them all we are bound to achieve something worth while.

To quote one case closely connected with the idea of arbitration, to which I referred a moment ago : Article 13 provides that the League shall take measures to ensure the carrying out of arbitral awards. Is not this an obligation which the League should bear in mind and make preparations to fulfil ?

There is a third possibility, perhaps somewhat difficult to define. I shall endeavour to explain it very briefly.

The last paragraph of the resolution really contains two distinct proposals, the first of general application, formulating a general principle, and the second of special application.

What am I to say of this general principle ? I am afraid of using words that people may be tired of hearing, and yet, though the word "Protocol" has disappeared from the text, we cannot help reading it between the lines.

Something very closely related to the Protocol is present here — not the Protocol as we adopted it, in its rigid form, with not a single provision, not a comma missing, but what has often been called the common spirit of the Protocol, the spirit of arbitration, organised security and disarmament, the spirit of the Protocol which gave birth to Locarno.

Here I wish to avoid all misunderstanding. When we allude to the great hopes awakened by the Protocol we none of us have any idea of trying to force it, even indirectly, on any nation that is unwilling to accept it. Not one of us but realises the tremendous sacrifices which certain great nations have made in the interests of world solidarity.

Sir Austen Chamberlain reminded us of this the other day. He told us what Great Britain has done, what the British Empire has done. We all listened to him with a sense of profound gratitude and with a desire to understand the position of the British Empire.

The idea of forcing the hand of the British Empire or manœuvring it by underhand methods to take action which it does not wish to take is quite foreign to our intentions. We thought, however, that there might be individual groups of nations prepared to apply among themselves not only the principle of Locarno but, in a wider sense, the actual principles of the Protocol, and that it would be wrong to neglect the opportunity thus offered of creating between such nations ties which would lead to the consolidation of peace.

After making this general affirmation of principle, we tried to define a special case of application, and put forward a suggestion which has a considerable bearing on it, namely, that a systematic study should be undertaken in order that the Council might ascertain what assistance any given State could expect from other States prepared to enter into undertakings and to assume commitments without constraint or pressure. A clear definition of commitments would obviously add enormously to the sense of security because, when the Disarmament Conference does finally meet and every State has to declare what armaments it requires for purposes of security, we can point out that, side by side with the security resulting from the individual armaments, additional security exists in the assistance formally promised to the individual State.

I must not take up too much of your time, but there is one question on which I should like to say a few words.

You will have realised, when I was describing the work we have in view, that it will be a lengthy, I might almost say, a permanent undertaking. We said to ourselves that we should need time and persistent effort to achieve our final goal by means of arbitration, security and disarmament. It must be clearly understood, however, that when we said that the task would take time, we did not mean that there should be any delay in setting to work.

Although some time must elapse before a complete system of arbitration or absolute security can be established, as the principle of arbitration comes to be further extended and security gradually increases, a further measure of disarmament will become feasible.

But with disarmament, as with security and arbitration, we must begin at once. Systematic studies will have to be carried out, and for this we must have the necessary organisation.

It is a somewhat thankless task, just when the world is looking for great achievements, to have to come forward with a suggestion for a Committee, a new organisation, but I am not so discouraged as others might be, for I know the value of organisation. If we can organise peace we shall one day bring it to pass.

If I might forget for a moment that I am here simply as your Rapporteur and turn to my ordinary activities and duties in connection with social work, I should be tempted to dwell on the position of the working classes all over the world; fifty years ago they were a negligible quantity, but to-day they are a tremendous factor in the political and economic scale. They owe their progress to the slow development of their institutions; and, just as Labour has become a force by means of organisation so organisation will make of peace a veritable power in the world.

I have said that, despite the relatively unimportant results achieved, I do not despair. We must be optimistic if only for the reason that optimism is the mainspring of action. Our optimism, however, must be enlightened and reasonable — not the optimism of the ostrich which hides its head in the sand so as to avoid facing facts.

For we are progressing, though slowly, so slowly as to arouse amazement and perhaps anger in our peoples. They ask: "Why?" I hear it whispered round me in every country I go through, and in my own country the sound is growing in volume.

My countrymen ask "Why?" and they are right, for they know what war is. For well over two centuries war has been perpetually recurring. They have lost their riches; they have been drained of their life's blood. They have lost more. Under the destructive influence of war their intellectual treasures have become exhausted and the warmth of their soul has died down in their breasts. Suddenly, they became afraid when, looking round on their cathedrals and museums, they thought of the heights they had once attained and of the abyss into which war had plunged them.

For a hundred and twenty-five years during a period of peace which was singularly unsettled and frequently broken by disastrous storms, they made an almost superhuman, sometimes an almost despairing effort, to raise themselves again to their normal stature. But whenever a fresh war threatens, you can well understand that the ineffaceable memory of that far-off past comes back to them. They ask why peace should be so slow in coming.

I would ask the same question. Why is peace so slow in coming? What are the obstacles in its way?

How is it that every time we set foot on what appears to be a broad, clearly marked track, after the first few steps we suddenly become entangled in the undergrowth and cannot advance?

Is it because man is still a primitive brutish cave-dweller? No! The mere sight of a stranger no longer makes us wish to fly at his throat. We are civilised and can have civilised relations with men of all countries. Then is it because our national sentiments are in opposition and because, in order to save our own soul, we feel it necessary to crush or to stunt our neighbour's soul? But, gentlemen, at all events as regards the European peoples, when we study our distant past, when we examine our origins and seek the sources of life from which we spring, are they not the same for all of us? Did not Rome and Athens hand down to all of us the treasures of the civilisations of what we now call the near East? Is there to-day a man of learning, a thinker, a scholar, who could pursue his studies without the work that has been done by all the other nations? Is there even an artist who could express the national soul without borrowing something from the soul of other nations?

As Dr. Breitscheid so eloquently expressed it the other day, art and science are national in their

origin, but international in their aims. Our souls have all drunk deep of the same source.

Then does the reason lie in the economic differences between us? Here it behoves us to stop and think. Undoubtedly economic antagonism can be very acute and has often led to war. But I might almost speak of it in the past tense, and surely the discussion which has just been concluded proves that economic solidarity is gathering strength. It shows production being carried on, on a vast scale, embracing a whole group of States, while economic interests are drawing the peoples together instead of dividing them.

Is it because there are insoluble political difficulties between us? Every statesman to-day knows that the most successful war can only lead to disaster, so that he cannot hope to exalt his country's prestige by waging war on a neighbouring State.

My own hope is derived from the fact that all the forces that still make for war appear to be survivals of the past, old habits of mind, which are fast disappearing. Yes, the greatest obstacle of all is that, in inter-State relations, the old tenacious idea of force still survives in many cases, and we have not yet got into the habit of treating all peoples alike, or learned to respect the dignity of every nation. But this method of solving problems is growing here at Geneva, and its true name is international democracy.

Now, may I say, in conclusion, that international democracy is only conceivable between nations in which the principle of democracy is already firmly established? In the last resort democracy is what counts, and on it I set my hopes. The other day in his eloquent speech M. Briand expressed a very similar idea — if not the same idea — when he spoke of the irreparable harm resulting from a policy of prestige.

A policy of prestige is neither more nor less than a policy of force, the policy of nations who think themselves superior to other nations, the aristocratic policy which is radically opposed to the spirit of democracy.

And now, having recalled M. Briand's vivid utterance, may I in conclusion remind you of a great Belgian, perhaps the greatest artist and poet that Belgium has ever produced, who expressed this same idea in the magnificent line: "*Tout sera simple et grand quand l'orgueil sera mort*".

The President :

Translation : The discussion will be adjourned until this afternoon, at 3.30 p.m.

The Assembly rose at 1.20 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Eighth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

NINETEENTH PLENARY MEETING

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24th, 1927, AT 3.30 P.M.

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President : M. GUANI.

83. — ARBITRATION, SECURITY, DISARMAMENT AND THE WORK OF THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION FOR THE DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE: REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS: CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the continuation of the discussion on the Third Committee's report on arbitration, security, disarmament and the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference.

(On the invitation of the President M. Beneš, Chairman of the Third Committee, and M. de Brouckère, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : Jonkheer Loudon, delegate of the Netherlands, will address the Assembly.

Jonkheer Loudon (Netherlands) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — The welcome which the Assembly accorded to the proposal of the Netherlands delegation, which was referred to the Third Committee, entitles me, I think, to say a few words on the work which has been done.

It was necessary, on the one hand, to give a stimulus to the work of the Preparatory Commission. Public opinion, especially after the unfortunate outcome of the Three-Power Naval Conference, had become accustomed to regard the preparations for disarmament as having broken down, and some were even wondering whether it were worth while to go on with work which, as they wrongly said, had failed utterly.

Moreover, the debates in the Preparatory Commission seemed to show that as regards disarmament no satisfactory result could be expected so long as other factors, which would increase the sense of security, were left untouched.

There were sound reasons for believing that an examination of the three principles of arbitration, security and disarmament as a whole — an examination which had been dropped since 1924 — might facilitate the technical work of the Preparatory Commission. In the view of the Netherlands Government, the developments which had taken place in the field of arbitration and security since the drawing up of the Protocol justified the hope that a fresh study of these principles would enable a further step to be taken in the organisation of international co-operation, without the need to reopen the discussion on the Protocol or to attempt to convert those States which were not disposed to accept it.

Thus the wishes of the partisans of the Protocol would largely be met, while the objections of its opponents would also be taken into account.

The question we put — whether it would be desirable to examine afresh the three great principles of the Covenant which dominated the whole

discussion of the Geneva Protocol—received a definitely affirmative answer from the Third Committee.

How should this investigation be begun? The Third Committee unanimously agreed at once that the Preparatory Commission itself, as our eloquent Rapporteur has told us, should be entrusted with this task, and that it could not carry it out without the help of a special Committee composed of political persons, appointed by the States Members having seats on the Preparatory Commission, to which jurists could also be attached if necessary. This Committee would deal with the questions of arbitration and security.

The Council, which had set up the Preparatory Commission, would, of course, be free to increase the number of its members.

Should any non-Member States decide to take part in these fresh discussions, they would be very welcome, and we should be glad of their valuable co-operation. I said "States non-Members", and I see no reason for not specifying in so many words the United States.

This Committee on Arbitration and Security would first of all study every aspect of arbitration and more especially the concrete proposal which the Norwegian delegation has submitted to us.

I wish, on behalf of the Netherlands Government, to second the general idea of this proposal, whilst reserving our opinion on the exact contents of the Protocol as contemplated in the Norwegian proposal. The Netherlands delegation is of opinion that such an instrument would widen the scope of compulsory arbitration, especially if it could be stipulated that it would not bind each signatory with respect to all the others, but that two States would be able to sign it on such terms that they would only be bound as between themselves.

As regards security, Finland has submitted a very special question, that of financial assistance to be given to States victims of aggression.

Referring to a statement which I made on this subject before the Third Committee, I am happy to repeat here that in principle the Netherlands Government supports the Finnish proposal.

As regards security, we are faced by still further possibilities. If any States so desired, they could tell the Council how far they were ready to participate in common action taken by the League. Other Members not wishing to specify exactly how far they would participate in measures of force against an act of aggression, of which they would remain the sole judges, would not need to make any such statement to the Council.

In this vast field of possibilities I venture to point out a special kind of Convention which does not figure explicitly in the draft resolution submitted, although it accords with one of the ideas expressed in the preamble. I refer to treaties for the outlawry of war, treaties of non-aggression, which *ipso facto* exclude all resort to war.

The eighth session of the Assembly, which is taking such vigorous steps to affirm its desire for peace, cannot but commend the conclusion of such Conventions, especially between Members of the League and non-Members. The American idea of the "outlawry of war", therefore, merits the warmest welcome on the part of the Assembly.

The Polish proposal is already one important step in this direction, but it has in the main a moral value. This first step necessitates a second, the forbidding of all war, since it is clear that in certain cases resort to arms, in fulfilment of the duty of the League itself, as, for example, in the exceptional cases provided for in the Locarno Treaty, cannot be regarded as a resort to war in the strict sense of the term.

It would therefore be advisable for the new Committee to give close attention to the evolution of this idea in Europe and elsewhere, and to invite States to put it into practice.

The study of arbitration and security must not be made a pretext to defer either the continuation of the technical work of the Preparatory Commission or the summoning of the Disarmament Conference itself.

The Preparatory Commission and its new Committee will work simultaneously. We maintain the view, adopted by the Assembly of 1926, that a first step towards disarmament could be effected on the present basis of security and under the present system.

Nevertheless, constant progress along the road to arbitration and security will make the succeeding stages easier. It is indeed essential if subsequent developments are to take place. Thus there can be no question of only one Disarmament Conference; after the first a second must follow, and then a third. After the first Conference, therefore, new disarmament agreements must be prepared either by the Preparatory Commission or by some other organisation.

At the last session of the Preparatory Commission, my colleagues were kind enough to allow me, as President, a certain latitude in fixing the date of the next session. At that time, I contemplated the middle of November. At first, realising the anxiety which was felt on the subject of disarmament, this date appeared to me to be too near. To-day, however, I feel that our work and the draft resolution which summarises it have given a fresh impetus to the Preparatory Commission.

M. de Brouckère, our eloquent Rapporteur, confirmed me in this opinion in his clear and virile speech this morning.

I have no hesitation in saying therefore that if the Council which is now sitting would be good enough to give the Preparatory Commission the necessary instructions to form a new Committee, I should like to summon my colleagues towards the end of November for a short session, at which we would appoint the Committee of Arbitration and Security, so as to enable it to begin work at once.

At the same time we could consider what points in the text adopted at the first reading are ripe for fresh examination. We might perhaps even begin the second reading of these points and fix a date for a session when the second reading might be undertaken as a whole.

I think it my duty to repeat here what I have already stated more than once, that it is for the Governments whose views were the most divergent during our last session to come to an agreement beforehand in order that the success of the work we are about to undertake may be ensured.

That the move made by the Netherlands delegation has borne fruit, that the resolution proposed by M. Paul-Boncour, which reflects and elaborates the idea of our own delegation, has been unanimously accepted, is due to the co-operation of the members of the Third Committee who held opposite views on certain important points, and also largely to the great tactfulness of M. Beneš in his office of Chairman of the Committee.

We all feel that the Preparatory Commission has received the new impetus it needed. When we separate, the League of Nations will have placed the three great problems of arbitration, security and disarmament in the very forefront of its work as a group of questions which will remain on the agenda of many future sessions.

The outcome of our discussion will strengthen confidence in the League's future, and this confidence is of capital importance for the organisation of peace.

I repeat, in conclusion, that the limitation and reduction of armaments will be a very lengthy task. Many obstacles stand in the way. Do not let us forget that. But, once the determination to succeed is manifest, no one need despair of final success.

The President :

Translation : Dr. Stresemann, German Minister of Foreign Affairs, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Stresemann (Germany) :

Translation : When I had the honour to address this Assembly in the opening days of the present session, I drew your attention to the very great importance of the problem of disarmament. I agree with what other speakers have said here, namely, that this is one of the fundamental problems which the League of Nations has to solve.

It has been solemnly announced to the world that the disarmament brought about by the world war in the case of those States which complied with the conditions of peace laid down by their adversaries would be followed by voluntary disarmament on the part of other nations ; that thus the peoples of the world would be freed from the nightmare of fear, hate and mistrust, and that the foundations would be laid for the development of the highest faculties of mankind through peaceful emulation. World public opinion will judge the League according to its method of approaching this problem and of putting into practical effect the solution it proposes.

It is therefore very natural that at this session our discussions should have been concerned with disarmament and security. They have plainly shown that the Assembly feels that with this problem the League has come to a critical stage in its development and must determine whether it is really on the road to ultimate success.

There would appear to be two conflicting principles. Germany has emphatically declared that the beginning of general disarmament need not wait for fresh guarantees of security. That, too, was clearly the standpoint taken up by the Assembly in the resolution it adopted last year. On the other hand, the view which would of late appear to be held is that fresh guarantees of security must precede the beginning of disarmament. It is only natural, therefore, that the public should have received the impression that the disarmament problem has led the League into a dangerous *cul de sac*.

Accordingly, I am most happy to find that since then, after most difficult negotiations, it has been possible to prepare the way for practical work. I do not at all regret that in these discussions differences of opinion have arisen, or that, instead of wasting time in compliments, we have, by clear statements of the policies of the various countries, eventually arrived at an agreement after long discussion and controversy. I am convinced that the more the very natural differences of opinion which are inevitable from the very composition of the League find expression and are openly and publicly voiced, the more the practical value of the League's work will be enhanced.

We have now before us, in the resolution moved by the Rapporteur, a programme in which the principles of disarmament and of security are placed in their true relation to each other. The method which has been devised of extending the already existing guarantees of security seems to me likely to be highly successful. I need hardly say that it is the desire and intention of Germany to collaborate actively in the work contemplated.

The principles put into practice in the Locarno Treaties as regards both West and East will also be applied, in the same or a similar form, with suitable adaptations to the special circumstances of each case to the conditions existing in other regions.

The discussions in the various Committees have once more shown the important part played by the idea of arbitration. Let us hope that Locarno will become the symbol of the security of neighbouring peoples and of the ideal of friendly understanding and mutual confidence between nations.

But however wide the possibilities before us in this field, we must not lose sight of the immediate task of the League. I am very glad to see that this task is clearly set before us in this resolution. Whatever developments take place in our work in the sphere of security, the resolution lays down that the first Disarmament Conference shall be convened as soon as the preparatory work of a purely technical nature which is still necessary has been completed. If, as I am sure, the decision which the Assembly now takes is carried out both in letter and in spirit, we shall have gone far on the road towards our goal.

As soon as general disarmament has really begun in all fields, fewer difficulties will be encountered in making further progress, and every step forward will itself provide fresh elements of security for the whole world. We shall thus realise the fundamental principle of the Covenant, namely, that the reduction of armaments is essential for the maintenance of peace.

Security cannot and must not be based on armaments. They are not even the most effective form of protection, and they inevitably constitute a threat to neighbouring countries. This is an absolutely certain outcome ; it cannot be entirely avoided even by the most peaceable dispositions on the part of the Governments. We in Germany to-day are often tempted to say to our neighbours what was once said in the forum of ancient Rome to a citizen of that city. When he appeared armed to the teeth in the midst of a peaceful crowd and tried to justify his arms on the ground that he feared to be attacked, he was simply asked : "*Quis tibi sic timere permisit ?*" "Who gave you leave to be so afraid ?"

I am perfectly well aware of the inevitable obstacles that stand in the way of disarmament. I recall the words pronounced not long ago by M. Briand, who observed how arms and battle are celebrated in poetry and find expression in heroic sentiments, and how much more difficult it is to enshrine the idea of peace in any comparable form.

For this reason, it will readily be understood how the idea of disarmament must have affected the soul of a people like the German people, with a military tradition dating back five centuries, particularly when we remember the condition of coercion to which I referred in my speech during the general discussion. Germany surmounted these psychological obstacles under inconceivably difficult circumstances. That she ultimately succeeded in doing so was due to the fact that she was fully imbued with the conviction that this disarmament did not connote an antithesis between militarism and disarmament, but was in reality no more than the application of a principle which would introduce new methods and a new morality into international life.

The faith of mankind in a better future after the dark days of the present constitutes a power and a force the value of which the League is best qualified to appreciate. Do not, I beg of you, do

anything to shake that faith. The country which was formerly regarded as the greatest military Power in the world is now disarmed, and it should therefore be all the easier for other countries to follow suit.

We are faced by an imperative duty, and serious consequences would result if that duty were not discharged. We have no choice. The institution of the League itself cannot live, cannot be really effective, until the obligation of general disarmament has been discharged and until, in consequence, the conditions necessary to create the atmosphere required for a common and collective guarantee of peace — a guarantee to which all the peoples represented in the League subscribe — have been fulfilled.

The President :

Translation : Lord Onslow, delegate of the British Empire, will address the Assembly.

Lord Onslow (British Empire) :

I do not propose to occupy the time of the Assembly by inflicting upon you a lengthy speech, but I feel that I cannot allow this occasion to pass without saying a few words, especially as I had the honour of representing my delegation on the Third Committee.

This has been a notable session, and we have been engaged in the consideration of very important matters, such as the general economic situation, which occupied our attention this morning, and many others. But among all these questions I do not think there is one which can compete in importance with that which we are discussing now, namely, the question of disarmament.

I think the Assembly can well claim that distinct progress has been made towards the objects which the League has in view. I am glad to say that I have been confirmed in that opinion by the eloquent words which have just been spoken by the distinguished statesman who preceded me on this platform. Not only have we made a distinct and an important step forward, but we have cleared our minds regarding what we wish to do, and we have put forward a careful and well-thought-out plan of action.

Before I venture to touch for a few moments upon that plan, I hope you will allow me to refer to the resolution proposed by the delegate for Poland. My country welcomes that resolution — not, indeed, that its terms are new; far from it. The terms are familiar to us, but it restates clearly and distinctly the principal object which the League has before it, namely, the maintenance of peace. The very solemn and emphatic manner and the well-chosen words in which M. Sokal has couched his resolution fittingly re-echo the feelings of this Assembly.

I come now to the fifth resolution of the Third Committee. Under this resolution, the Assembly will lay down a regular course of procedure for the further progress of the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference. When that Commission meets — which its distinguished Chairman, M. Loudon, told us just now will be in a few weeks' time — it will at once proceed to put these proposals into effect, but nothing will be done to negative the decision of the Assembly of last year. Indeed, the resolution of last year is embodied again textually in this particular resolution, and the Council is again asked to urge the Preparatory Commission to press forward its work with all its energies so as to facilitate the meeting of the Disarmament Conference as soon as the technical work is done.

This year, however, the recommendations of the

Committee go considerably further than those put forward by the same Committee last year. During the discussion this year the view was strongly held and ably sustained that it was necessary to widen the powers of the Preparatory Commission — that the work of that Commission had reached the stage where further effective progress would not be made unless some steps were taken to develop international security. It was held that unless guarantees in that respect were developed it would be impossible for States to fix the lowest possible figure for their armaments. To meet these views it was decided to attach a new body to the Preparatory Commission; in fact, this new body is to be a creation of the Preparatory Commission — done by action of the Council, it is true, but still a creation of the Preparatory Commission.

The new body will be a Committee entrusted with the duty of examining the question of security and offering advice and guidance to the Preparatory Commission on that subject. It would, however, serve but very little purpose to constitute a body of this nature and to entrust it with duties of this kind unless the Assembly were prepared to give it a direction in regard to the methods by which these guarantees of security can be obtained.

Therefore in the last paragraph of the resolution — and this is a paragraph which to my mind is a most important one — the Assembly is invited to establish these methods. The resolution recommends three: first, action by the League; secondly, systematic preparation of the League's machinery; and, thirdly, action by individual States.

May I be allowed for a moment to explain how, in my opinion at least, these three steps may be usefully taken in accordance with the terms of the resolution. First, as regards action by the League. The League is asked to use its influence in promoting and co-ordinating agreements regarding arbitration and security. Well, I do not think I need discuss that point at length. It is an old principle and one which has always had the support and good will of the Government of my country.

I come next to the systematic preparation of the League's machinery, preparation with a view to enabling the Members of the League to perform their obligations under the Covenant. During the discussions in the Third Committee when this point was raised, fear was expressed in some quarters lest steps of this kind might lead to a review of the obligations of the Covenant, and consequently to a possible increase in them. I had no such fears, and I think that after the discussions in the Third Committee no member of the Committee has now any such fears. Moreover, it was put very plainly in the report of M. de Brouckère, who says quite clearly — and the Committee endorsed his statement unanimously — that the obligations of the Covenant remain unaltered, neither diminished nor increased.

There is, however, room for improvement in the machinery of the League. Indeed, we have another resolution before us, the third, which deals with the machinery for facilitating the rapid meeting of the Council in the case of emergency.

Lastly, I come to the action which it is suggested may be taken by individual States. In the first place — because this paragraph is divided, as M. de Brouckère clearly explained, into two parts — States are invited to consider the conclusion, where possible, of agreements among themselves. M. de Brouckère has described in his report the kind of agreements which the Committee had in mind; I might perhaps describe them myself as further pacts on the model of the Locarno Treaty. It is also suggested that the various nations should be

invited to inform the Council of the measures they would be prepared to take to support the Council's decisions or recommendations in the event of a conflict breaking out in a particular region in which they may be specially concerned. To put it in perhaps more concise language, more colloquial language, the States are to tell the Council that in such a case their forces would be available to support the Council's recommendations or decisions. Of course, States will have all possible liberty as regards their reply. This is made very plain. They need not reply at all unless they wish. But as regards the cases in which States may be prepared to act in support of the Council, it will not be the Council but the States themselves that will formulate these cases. Again, there is, I understand, the contemplation of further agreements on the lines of the Treaty of Locarno.

I feel that no inconsiderable step has been taken this year, and under this resolution we have come to a unanimous agreement on our future lines of policy, on the manner in which that policy is to be carried out. But, if I may say so, there is a more notable fact still. Our discussions began by the presentation of draft resolutions from the Dutch, French and German delegations, and there were others — my own delegation included — who put forward suggestions, counter-suggestions and modifications of the suggestions of others.

At first sight it seemed as though there were wide differences of opinion, wide divergencies of view among us, that perhaps we should have great difficulty in arriving at a solution agreeable to us all. I have had several years' experience of Geneva and of negotiations conducted under the auspices of the League of Nations, and I am bound to say never have I seen an agreement so quickly reached. It was not because any delegation surrendered entirely its point of view. By no means, and I think that the view which all the delegations held, perhaps not in every detail but in the main and in principle, is correctly represented in the findings of the Third Committee and the resolution which is before you. The discussions showed that we were all imbued with the same idea. We might, indeed, have clothed it in different words; we did; but at the back of our minds the same opinion existed, and we found out that such was the case very soon after we had begun to discuss the matter.

We may now hope that the Preparatory Commission will begin its work with fresh heart and fresh vigour; we may hope and hope with confidence that this time next year, when the Assembly meets again, a great stride will have been made in the progress of disarmament, and a real and important contribution added to the League's first duty, the maintenance of peace.

The President :

Translation : M. Paul-Boncour, delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. Paul-Boncour (France) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — It was the privilege of the French delegation to place before the Third Committee a draft resolution to which the delegation of the Netherlands, finding that it incorporated its own views, immediately gave its cordial support. This draft resolution was subsequently combined with the German proposal and the British suggestions, and now forms the basis of the final resolution on which you will be asked to vote.

In judging this resolution I shall try to beware of all self-delusion and to give you, as it were, an under-estimate of what I conceive to be its

real value. Too many Assemblies have ended with triumphant acclamations, out of all proportion to their achievements.

Those whom we must always bear in mind, those who have waged war and never wish to see it again, know that the work of peace cannot be achieved simply by exchanging compliments, by mutual congratulations or fictitious enthusiasm. Peace, like war itself, is a long and difficult undertaking, which calls for patience and unremitting endeavour.

The proceedings of this Assembly are drawing to a close, and we now have to consider the resolution which sums up as it were the problems entrusted to the Third Committee — the problems which form your chief preoccupation. The position, in my view, is precisely this. We were in an impasse, the horizon seemed hidden from our sight; now we have issued forth, the road lies clear before us. That is what we have done, neither more nor less, but it represents no mean achievement.

The road lies clear before us; who is ready to follow it? The number of nations that engage upon this enterprise and the definite contributions they are able to offer will determine the conditions for the final success of what is still the League's most vital problem, a problem of which the real and symbolic value is of such magnitude that, if the League were to succeed in every other respect and be found wanting in this, world opinion — unjust though this might be — would say that it had failed to meet its obligations.

Those of you whose special duty it is to find a solution for the problem of disarmament have certainly a thankless task before you. The problem is such that the nations do not appear to realise how difficult it is for us to solve it. At the same time its solution presupposes a development of the League, an extension of its powers, and progress which, as the first delegate of France said with his philosophic serenity, we must beware of precipitating lest we endanger it. But it is not within our power to evade the issue. We are bound in virtue of an explicit provision in the Covenant.

A certain group of nations in this Assembly, those who have already been subjected to a limitation and reduction of armaments under the Treaties of Peace, are perfectly justified in insisting, as we are justified in repeating, that those limitations and reductions and their maintenance must be the starting-point of general limitation and reduction; and we are equally justified in repeating that it is the duty of every State to co-operate in ensuring favourable conditions with a view to the success of the Conference towards which our work is directed.

There is no possible doubt on this point: in 1926 the Assembly passed a formal resolution, which is embodied in the resolution now before you. The work must be carried on. The Conference must be convened. Where are we now?

May I repeat precisely what I said in the Third Committee? It so exactly expresses my view that I cannot put it in any other way.

There has been talk of failure, of partial failure. I cannot accept either the original expression or the qualification. There has been no failure. There are stages; the first we have already completed, and we are now entering upon the second.

The one we have completed is represented by our long study of technical conditions. The Rapporteur, M. de Brouckère, was quite right this morning when he maintained the importance of determining these technical conditions — long as the process might be — as being the essential condition for the limitation and reduction

of armaments, and said that the League was simply fulfilling its obligations in drawing up and stating precisely the results of its lengthy researches.

That is the stage we have completed.

Then, after the technical experts, political experts met together, men who were empowered to speak in the name of their Governments and to accept commitments for their countries; men who, consequently, were more circumspect in their method of approaching a subject which it had hitherto been customary to discuss exclusively in terms of national sovereignty. They did not merely attempt to draw up a programme and plan for the proposed Conference to be held in virtue of the 1926 resolution. They did more: they tried to frame a preliminary draft Convention to serve as a basis for the deliberations of the Conference, so that the latter would simply be left with the task — certainly a difficult and by no means negligible one — of filling in the figures for effectives and material in the spaces left blank in our Convention. Can anyone wonder, then, that the Preparatory Commission should have encountered difficulties which the Conference itself would have encountered had not the Commission endeavoured to settle them for it beforehand?

That is why I will not hear of failure or partial failure, for in the framing of this preliminary draft Convention — as all who co-operated in the work are well aware — agreement was reached on a large number of points. The reservations to be found on certain pages have a diplomatic significance. It is simply a matter of precaution. We have many diplomats on our Commission, and as long as the scheme is incomplete and it is uncertain what will be decided in regard to this or that important section, they insist on being free to reconsider decisions which everyone can regard as virtually adopted already.

It is fair to say that for practically all the questions — most important questions — concerning land forces, and for most of the air questions, real agreement, even if not yet incorporated in the enacting clauses, is now in sight and will soon be placed on paper.

I said that I had no intention of hiding the truth behind mere forms or compliments. Undoubtedly, fundamental differences do exist at present on other points — most serious points — such as the limitation of budgetary expenditure, arrangements for the application of the Convention and the necessary factor of supervision. Lastly, and this is the most important point of all, there is the rock, the reef on which our hope-laden vessels has temporarily come to grief — the naval programme.

I quite agree with the President of the Preparatory Commission, the delegate of the Netherlands, that diplomatic conversations and inter-governmental negotiations may serve to reconcile divergent points of view, and that it is essential to have recourse to this procedure. Some of the difficulties encountered, however, lay outside the scope of purely technical considerations; they were due to the fact that, when these various standpoints were under discussion, what we had in mind was the actual Conference, when we should all be sitting round the table and submitting our figures and fixing the limits. It became clear at this stage of our discussions that, while our technical achievement had already reached a degree of perfection never before attained, the political conditions for the limitation and general reduction of armaments were not yet such that every State could take its place at the Conference table entirely free from care and with a sufficiently open mind.

This fact emerged at the very beginning of the present session of the Assembly and explains the Netherlands proposal. This essential consideration

formed the main preoccupation of the Third Committee, whose task at times, as Lord Onslow very rightly said, was a most difficult and thankless one.

The difficulty was this: on the one hand there was the necessity of solving the problem, the formal undertaking, which no one can disavow, to proceed with the work and convene the Conference. We are all agreed; that point must be quite clear, so that there shall be no misunderstanding as regards our future collaboration.

But if the Conference is to be a success, if the peoples are not to be most cruelly disillusioned, and if, around the table where politicians and diplomats, generals and admirals are to meet, something approaching mockery or righteous indignation is not to take shape, we must realise that a state of mind very different from that which prevailed at our discussions in March and April is absolutely essential.

Those attending the Conference must come with a feeling not of perfect security — in this, of all matters, the absolute is out of the question — but with the feeling that general organised security due to the very existence of the League justifies the relinquishment by the States concerned of a certain proportion of their individual security.

There you have the problem. That is how it presents itself, that is how it has always presented itself, and the difficulties that emerged in March and April were due not to forgetfulness of that indissoluble bond but to the fact that political conditions had not progressed as rapidly as technical conditions.

What then?

You already know the word that rises irresistibly to my lips, because that word is the expression of my profound conviction, because with my last breath I shall fight for it, because I truly believe that it is the only condition for true peace and true disarmament: the Protocol.

Not that the Protocol constitutes in itself a sacred text that must remain inviolate, not that its title is of such incomparable value that no other can take its place, but simply because, as the result of our joint work in that year which M. de Brouckère so truly called the year of great hopes, we succeeded in framing a series of provisions sufficiently comprehensive, exhaustive and precise to ensure the organisation and application of what I may call a system of general arbitration with guarantees.

For the principles laid down in the Protocol are these: general arbitration, so that no manner of doubt shall exist as to who is attacked or who is the aggressor; guaranteed arbitration, for general arbitration without sanctions might perhaps create an atmosphere but could never create the perfect security which every State will require when it comes to take its bearings and make its reductions.

Some States had serious and fundamental reasons, of which they alone are entitled to judge, for not accepting the Protocol, at all events in its present form.

What, then, are we to do now? Are we to wait? Gentlemen, the world cannot wait. It cannot wait, for it is shattered by the repercussions of war. The new world which arose from the ruins is still a fragile erection, and some of the more recent edifices, unless they can be insured under a general pact, must inevitably constitute a real cause of danger and anxiety.

The first delegate of Germany quoted just now a passage from a Latin author describing how a citizen appeared armed among his unarmed fellow-citizens in the Forum and was asked: "*Quis tibi sic timere permisit?*" "Who gave you leave to be so afraid?"

Well, I see many reasons for fear in Europe to-day: this was what hampered the work of the Commission in March and April.

These reasons must be removed at all costs, without waiting for the texts in which we all place our faith to be drawn up; we must stop the gaps, we must build dykes and throw up barriers. This, surely, is just what the resolution proposes, first of all by carrying on the work past the point reached by the great achievement of Locarno, which is itself a regional application of the Protocol. And I may say this, that none of the Locarno negotiators, to whom peace owes such a debt of gratitude on that account, none of them, however eminent, despite their undeniable good will, despite the important preliminary diplomatic conversations which took place, can deny that Locarno was only possible because the Protocol itself, and the ideal set in motion by it in 1924, had created the political and moral atmosphere necessary for such an achievement.

We must repeat that achievement. We must re-examine those ideas and reaffirm our faith in them, and so enable the Governments concerned, wherever other similar danger-points exist, to frame agreements like those of Locarno, that is, to enforce the partial application of the principles of the Protocol.

There is another way — to employ the League itself as a means of promoting and co-ordinating such agreements. We felt — and this is embodied in the resolution — that the League should not be content to fold its arms and simply register agreements when concluded and pigeon-hole them indiscriminately. When the League sees that certain misunderstandings, whether brought before the Council under the Covenant or not, are constantly occurring, so that in some part of Europe or of other regions of the globe permanent possibilities of conflict exist, it should be its duty — in a form to be determined hereafter — to invite the States in question to conclude agreements on similar lines. The multiplicity of these agreements, with the risk of confusion which they involve, must somehow be co-ordinated, so as to make them perfectly clear and simple; then if a dispute should arise, it can be stopped at the outset, or, if this prove impossible, the whole system of agreements will at all events make it easy for the Council or some arbitral body to determine the aggressor.

And now, if I speak in hypothetical terms, it is because here, again, it is not for us to settle the programme; that will have to be drawn up by the Preparatory Commission for its Committee. I am simply describing the possibilities and trying to give concrete examples, so that you may see the realities with which we have to grapple, the realities which lie behind the text submitted to you. It is quite possible, in my view, that Article 18 has a very definite meaning, and that the authors of the Covenant never meant that the League should simply register, as an act of purely moral significance, agreements of any and every kind, some of which may be only very remotely connected with the Locarno agreements and the principles of the Protocol.

That is one of the roads open to us. A second is the one specially urged by our Rapporteur in the Third Committee — to study the means for the systematic application of the articles of the Covenant. Not — as he emphasised in his speech this morning — a fresh interpretation; that would be childish, and if we tried this method we should once more be faced with precisely the same difficulties as we encountered in regard to the application of the Protocol. For the Protocol itself simply amounted to a general interpretation of the Covenant. But we can seek practical and

rapid means for putting the Covenant into effect in its present form and enforcing the obligations of the Covenant as understood by the various Members of the League.

Lastly, there is a third way. This, frankly, is to my mind the most difficult and at the same time the most hopeful of all. Let the League itself take up the question of security, let it take up this fragment of the Protocol without trying either, directly or indirectly to impose more definite obligations, leaving it to the individual States to decide whether they will or will not accept them. This means that States which feel drawn to one another by closer ties would be free to conclude agreements; but — let us proclaim this aloud to the world — these agreements must have nothing whatsoever to do with the old alliances, the old systems of influence, the old coalitions of interests.

Thus, parts of the Protocol could be adhered to freely, in the true Protocol spirit and in application of its principles, if certain nations feel moved by a sense of solidarity to conclude such agreements. The contracting parties would be perfectly free, but would at the same time come under one comprehensive scheme. In a word, the Covenant would be more closely defined and would be brought into operation through the intermediary of the League's organs.

I have, of course, traced no more than the bare outline of the scheme. It will be left to the Committee appointed by the Preparatory Commission to lay down the exact procedure to be followed and the means to be adopted — a most complex task.

Obligations such as those we have in view, serious commitments entered into beforehand with the Council, commitments which would constitute an important, indeed a decisive, factor in this statement of security — and nothing but such a balance-sheet will enable the nations to come before the Disarmament Conference with large-scale proposals for the reduction of their armaments — these obligations, I say, must obviously be so framed as to avoid wounding national susceptibilities or interfering in any way with the freedom of States which prefer to stand aside. That is the task that lies before the Committee.

In fact, the Committee, if I might so phrase it, is to set the seal on the resolution and — I think our Rapporteur agrees with me here — is really what gives the resolution its full significance. The force of an idea depends upon the institution which carries it into effect. This, in the main, constitutes the fresh step to which the British delegate referred just now — and I welcomed his words — this represents the progress achieved by the present Assembly, and in estimating it I have, as you may see, proceeded with studied caution.

Arbitration, security, disarmament — these are inseparable, and progress in all three must be simultaneous. We must not wait for complete achievement in regard to one before beginning on the other two. The three terms react upon one another — disarmament upon security, security upon disarmament, security confirming arbitration, arbitration in itself helping to reinforce security. All these terms, I repeat, are inseparable, both in their nature and in time.

At the moment when you adopt our resolution, a body will be created which will give concrete form to this interdependence. There, in my opinion, lies the chief value of the resolution we are asking you to adopt. This new body will not be distinct from the Preparatory Commission. I think people have been under some misapprehension on that point; and the public, which does not always regard us with an entirely friendly eye, is inclined to ridicule our accumulation of committees, sub-

committees, drafting committees, and back again to sub-committees and committees.

We claim to have obviated this danger. According to the scheme, the Preparatory Commission itself will continue, and will also appoint from among its own members this Committee, which is to make a special study of questions relating to security. The Committee, however, will simply be the Commission in another form, so that there can be no complication or duplication, still less any inconsistency in the policies or instructions of the Governments.

That, then, is how we propose to wind up the present session, which, as regards this problem at all events, might have encountered difficulties.

I have more than once used a simile which seems to me a very apt one, and with your permission I will repeat it now. We were stopped by a wall, but now we have found a door. In fact, there are three doors, and our aim has been that the three paths now open to us shall not be alternative but shall be used simultaneously, since we do not know which will prove the best or lead the farthest, and only experience can really teach us. We must take all three paths together.

Who is ready to set out? I repeat what I said at the beginning of my speech. Upon the reply to my question will depend not the holding of the Conference — that must meet — but the success of the Conference, for which we must all be prepared to work together.

To those nations which are interested in the problem of disarmament, not so much on account of reductions that they themselves might effect as they are exempt by their geographical situation or historical evolution from a consideration of the problem — at all events in this form — but because they are naturally liberal-minded, have very small armaments, and are quite rightly averse to seeing citizens like Dr. Stresemann's Roman in the Forum straying about Europe — to those nations I would venture to suggest — in an undertone, of course, and most discretely as becomes me in giving a delicate hint of this sort — I would venture to suggest that the success of the Conference, bound up as it is with guarantees of security, will depend very largely on what they themselves may be prepared to do.

The international spirit can be expressed in two very different ways, both of which, however, are very necessary and serve as it were to supplement one another. On the one hand, States which are prepared to reduce their armaments might do so, knowing that henceforth they need not rely solely on their own national resources but can also count on the League's collective organised system of security. The second way is to provide these guarantees of security to swell the credit column, and unless this is done, unless every individual State exerts itself to do what it can — no more, but all it can — to help a State which is the victim of aggression and has been declared such beyond a doubt by arbitral award or by a decision of the Council, then the resolution which we are preparing to adopt will simply be one more added to the existing scrap-heap of sterile resolutions.

I ask you, as my last word, not to let this happen.

A wall once blocked our way; now we have found a door. "The Door in the Wall" — that is the title of one of the finest examples of English literature. A great English writer tells the story of a little boy, quite young — about the age of the League and just as frail — who passed every day beside a high wall which shut out the horizon from his child's eyes. One day a door in the wall stood open. He saw a wonderful garden where every flower that grows was to be found, where all the

birds were singing, and the most beautiful trees in the world reached upward towards the sky. He passed on on his way to work or play. The door closed; and then in the course of his youth it opened once more, and once again. The calls of everyday life kept him from passing that way again; and all his life he went about filled with a hopeless longing for the wonderful garden into which he had never decided to penetrate. Let us take care not to do the same.

The President :

Translation : Sir George Pearce, delegate of Australia, will address the Assembly.

Sir George Foster Pearce (Australia) :

Ladies and Gentlemen — We have listened to some very interesting and informative speeches delivered by representatives of Great Powers in Europe whose frontiers march with those of each other and where the feelings engendered by the late war yet have their echo. Those older nations speak from centuries of experience of the aftermath of the greatest disaster that human nature is heir to, that of war; but this Assembly speaks with a composite voice, and I speak as representative of a young country which has no land frontiers with other nations, and which can therefore look at these questions with perhaps a more detached mind than the older countries.

It is indeed reassuring to hear the statesmen who represent the countries to which I have referred speaking in appreciative and encouraging terms of the resolution that is presented to you for your acceptance. I wish to express our pleasure at the prominence given in this report to the great value of conciliation as an important factor which should be studied and further developed as a means of settling international disputes. Such methods, I may remind you, need no sanctions or compulsions, and, under the guidance and direction of the League, should play a much more important part in the future than even compulsory arbitration. Conciliation is, in my opinion, much more in accord with the spirit that should animate the League than any method which must derive its effectiveness from compulsion and sanctions.

I am glad to be able to associate my delegation with the acceptance by the League of the series of resolutions now before us. They constitute, in our opinion, a successful reconciliation of different methods of attaining the one great goal we are all seeking, that of a stable and lasting peace. It may be that they do not fully satisfy everybody, but they do embody and co-ordinate the practical and the possible. The definition of principles and of the methods by which it is proposed they should be attained will be of great value to the League and to the world to the League, by enabling it to settle down and work out by practical and definite proposals the necessary agreements and undertakings under the three headings by which we hope to translate our ideals into action; to the world the resolutions will be of great educational value, because they constitute a comprehensive survey of this great problem with which the League has to deal. They set out in general terms its complexity, and they give some idea of the vastness of the issues to be dealt with. The sober, practical nature of the resolutions will temper and steady undue and over-enthusiastic optimism, but at the same time they constitute an effective reply to that despondent pessimism that has in recent months begun to assert itself in the world. The resolutions will give a much-needed stimulus to the League in this, its most important field.

As representing one of the young nations of the world, and one that has already felt the dire effects of war and which desires above all things to advance the cause of peace, we hail the resolutions as an important and practical step in that direction.

The President :

Translation : His Excellency M. Iñiguez, delegate of Chile, will address the Assembly.

M. Iñiguez (Chile) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — I should like quite briefly to define my country's attitude before the close of this most important and comprehensive debate which, like the resolutions now before us, should be of the greatest assistance to the League in its future work in the twin spheres of disarmament and security.

My country has always been ready to second useful or practical efforts designed to promote the object we have all had in view for so many years. Our collaboration has known no other limits than those imposed by our geographical situation or the absence from Geneva of the majority of Chile's neighbours.

On the wise initiative of the French, German and Netherlands delegations, the Third Committee has now submitted to us the text of a resolution in which all the aspects of this most complex problem are presented. We find encouragement to pursue the work in which by no means negligible results have already been obtained, approval of methods which have already been tested, and suggestions for the establishment of a new mechanism, of which the need was so much felt in our work in the Preparatory Commission.

On examining Resolution V we find in the very first recommendation a confirmation of the policy which my country has always followed, even before the advent of the League. Chile, as the Assembly knows, has furnished in the course of her independent existence innumerable proofs of her faith in the principle of arbitration, and has often had resort to that procedure, agreeing at times to sacrifices which came near to endangering the vital interests of the country.

Chile, it need hardly be said, also approves the second paragraph of the resolution, for she has not only lent her support but has co-operated wholeheartedly in the technical preparations for the Conference on the Limitation and Reduction of Armaments, while emphasising the special aspect of the problem from her standpoint as compared with that of the other American States. Our armaments are already below the level of requirements for purposes of national security, so that for us, I need hardly say, the only real point at issue is to come to an agreement with our neighbours with a view to preventing competition in armaments.

The 1926 resolution mentioned in paragraph 2 of Resolution V provides that the programme of the Conference for the Limitation and Reduction of Armaments shall correspond "to existing conditions in regard to regional and general security".

I attach great importance to paragraph 3 of the same draft resolution, suggesting the creation of this Committee on security, which would work side by side with the Preparatory Commission and whose duty it would be to show what guarantees of arbitration and security are necessary — indeed indispensable — to enable all States to fix the level of their armaments at the lowest possible figures in an international agreement.

Two of the measures recommended in paragraph 3 of Resolution V concern, respectively, action by the League with a view to promoting,

generalising and co-ordinating special agreements, and agreements which may be concluded between States Members of the League with a view to making their commitments — to employ the felicitous phrasing of the draft — proportionate to the degree of solidarity of a geographical or other nature existing between them and other States.

In order to show exactly what we mean by the Chilean delegation's acceptance of this part of the draft resolution, I cannot do better than refer to the memorandum which I submitted to the Preparatory Commission urging the following conclusions :

1. To recommend a system of regional agreements designed to prevent resort to war ;
2. To subordinate the limitation of armaments to the requirements of security which may differ as between America and Europe ;
3. To let geographical and political factors outweigh economic and demographical considerations in the case of under-populated countries whose exploitation is still proceeding.

The last sentence in Resolution V concerns information as to the measures that the States would be prepared to take in the event of a conflict breaking out in a given region. Here we desire to emphasise the explanations given in the report, which we regard as the authorised interpretation of this text. The resolution, as we understand it, is simply referring to one of the subjects suitable for investigation by the Committee, without prejudice to the other enquiries already arranged for, which would be of value when estimating the degree of regional security necessary to facilitate the acceptance of commitments.

Having placed our views before you, I beg to support the resolutions now submitted to the Assembly in the sense which I have just indicated.

No nation in the world can be indifferent to the problem of the limitation and reduction of armaments. The extent of their direct interest in this problem may vary, as may the attendant circumstances and methods of application, but it is essential to bear in mind that even the countries least touched by the burden of armaments must be desperately anxious to find a regional and general solution. Moreover, the growing inter-dependence of interests between countries all over the world is becoming more evident every day, chiefly as the result of economic factors, and unsuspected consequences, disastrous or the reverse, may ensue according to whether our efforts prove sterile or lead to the conclusion of the series of agreements which the League is striving to bring about.

I am convinced that these resolutions, which we shall certainly adopt, will be a powerful lever in our hands and give a fresh impulse to our efforts.

The President :

Translation : M. Erich, delegate of Finland, will address the Assembly.

M. Erich (Finland) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — I wish to thank the Rapporteur, M. de Brouckère, for the very detailed, exhaustive and well-documented report which he has just submitted to us with such eloquence and authority. I desire to thank him especially for his favourable view of the Finnish proposal concerning financial assistance, to which I shall have to refer again later.

The Rapporteur's views and conclusions are identical with those which Finland has always advocated. Our delegates have supported them

consistently in the Assembly and the various League organisations, as may be seen, for example, from the official publication of the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs concerning the problem of security.

The firm intention expressed in Resolution V of pushing forward the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference and entrusting to it duties which will not be confined exclusively to the preparations for the future Conference for the Limitation and Reduction of Armaments will afford the greatest satisfaction to those States which have urged the necessity of continuing the useful and necessary work of this important League institution.

Resolution V very rightly goes on to emphasise the importance of bringing about political conditions calculated to assure the success of the work of disarmament.

The Finnish delegation would urge the importance of Resolution IV, not because this idea of specifying beforehand the extent of the financial assistance to be relied on — within the bounds of possibility — in a crisis was first brought forward and worked out on the initiative of the Finnish Government, but rather because of the general utility of the scheme, which aims, in accordance with the terms of Resolution V, "chiefly at forestalling or arresting any resort to war and if need be at effectively protecting any State victim of an aggression".

The observations and declarations of various Governments on this point, as incorporated in the findings of the Third Committee, are viewed with the greatest satisfaction by the Finnish Government, which is firmly convinced that the League will carry to a successful conclusion the work begun under such happy auspices.

The favourable reception given to the Finnish proposal in the Third Committee and again to-day proves conclusively that the Members of the League understand and appreciate the purely pacific and constructive intentions by which the authors of this proposal were governed.

Further — and this is an additional matter for satisfaction — from the very outset of the discussions on financial assistance, experts belonging to various big economic and financial Powers have consistently admitted the practical value of this proposal.

It seems fair to say that, of all the suggestions and proposals put forward in regard to the maintenance of peace and guarantees of security, our own proposal concerning financial assistance is perhaps the most satisfactory and the easiest to put into effect.

On the whole we may congratulate ourselves on the favourable reception given to the various ideas of this kind by the present session of the Assembly. The happy suggestion put forward by M. Sokal has received the unanimous approval of the Assembly, and the resolution just adopted augurs favourably for the success of other suggestions and proposals of the same kind.

The Finnish delegation regards the formation of a special Committee to study the measures capable of giving the States adequate guarantees of arbitration and security as conclusive proof of the good will of Members of the League and of their firm intention to surmount all difficulties and to consolidate our vast international and well-nigh universal community, a community established on the solid foundations of the Covenant.

Now, this word "universal" recalls the gaps which still exist in the League as regards its membership. When we speak of non-Members of the League, we would hardly care to apply the term to those great States which, to our intense regret,

have notified their decision to withdraw from the League but whose tendencies and sympathies will undoubtedly soon lead them back. We mean rather the States which have not yet taken any part in the work of the League as actual Members of that body.

The Third Committee rightly drew our attention to the importance, as one of the essential guarantees of peace, of security agreements between States Members and States non-Members of the League. In so doing, it touched upon an incontestable and indestructible principle of the Covenant, a principle inherent in it, in virtue of which the League cannot remain indifferent to the relations between its own Members and States non-Members in so far as those relations are liable to affect the peace of the world.

The Assembly has just reminded us of the force of this principle. We have just passed a resolution forbidding all wars of aggression. Now, this principle, by its very nature, is of universal implication, that is to say it implies universal recognition and application, for it would itself be incomplete and even ineffective if its application fell short of the terms so plainly specified in this morning's resolution.

If this, then, is the scope of the resolution, it is only natural that the League should endeavour, as provided in the Third Committee's report, to bring about political conditions favourable to the enforcement of this principle — in other words, it should encourage in time of peace agreements calculated to prevent war.

As a corollary, then, to this prohibition of wars of aggression, the Committee recommends to Members of the League the conclusion of security agreements between Members and non-Members as being of the first importance for the maintenance of peace.

If these efforts are crowned with success, there is every reason to hope that the States non-Members will realise, to their own advantage, what valuable services the League is capable of rendering to humanity, and that their experience will subsequently assist in making of the League what its inherent purpose and our common desire would have it be — a universal institution.

The President :

Translation : M. Cornène, delegate of Roumania, will address the Assembly.

M. Cornène (Roumania) :

Translation : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen — In weighing up the League's activities, historians of the future will surely declare that the eighth ordinary session of the Assembly ranks with that of 1924, the year of the Protocol, as one of the most significant from the point of view of the organisation of peace.

In actual fact, in a magnificent impulse of idealism, the Assembly of the Protocol went far beyond the most optimistic prophecies. The world apparently was not yet ready. The evolution of the political principles by which it is governed rarely proceeds by leaps and bounds. After those days of enthusiasm came deep discouragement. The Assemblies which followed, if not actually a reversion to earlier conditions, only marked time.

Yet the seed sown in 1924 did not fall on barren ground but took root and lived. Many of the ideas incorporated in our work have filtered little by little into the conscience of the world. One of these creative ideas, the keystone of the whole edifice, has now begun to make itself emphatically felt and is receiving growing recognition. I refer

to the interdependence, the indissoluble unity which exists between disarmament and security.

This fact has stood out even more clearly, even more sharply to those who, like myself, have had the privilege of working on the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference.

We realised perfectly how impossible it was to arrive at positive results, results which should be something more than an attempt to deceive the nations, unless we were prepared to offer some equivalent for security to certain countries, in a particularly exposed position, which were being called upon to disarm.

This fact, which was beyond dispute, led certain delegations to submit suggestions, not that the Protocol should be revived but that the problem of security should be taken up again and gone into more fully.

We realised that we had perhaps been too precipitate in 1924, that various constitutional questions arising out of this grave problem in certain States had not been taken into consideration, that certain psychological factors in the different nations which composed the League had been somewhat under-estimated.

Now that some experience has been gained in the matter, the Third Committee thinks that the time has come to set on foot a fresh scheme for security which will enable the Preparatory Commission to make really definite progress.

At the meeting of September 14th, I suggested that a body should be created to study the problem of security side by side — I said, at the time, simultaneously or on parallel lines — with the Preparatory Commission. The Third Committee, I am happy to say, was unanimously in favour of forming a Committee to consider the measures capable of giving all States the necessary guarantees of arbitration and security.

Together with the Polish proposal, which we unanimously voted this morning, and the Finnish proposal, which we shall presently adopt, the constitution of this Committee is, in my opinion, the first effective step towards the solution of the disarmament problem. That is why I venture to say just now that this Assembly would prove to be one of the most significant from the point of view of peace, which is our ultimate aim.

I venture to declare that we have now found a method which will enable Governments and peoples alike to see clearly at last and to understand what is asked of them and what is offered in exchange. I think I may safely say that the problem with which we are dealing is at length leaving the empirical to enter upon the scientific stage. We are now within measurable distance of the time when we shall be able to submit to the world a scheme based neither on unwarranted claims nor on self-delusion.

The discussion was adjourned to the next meeting.

80. — DECLARATION CONCERNING WARS OF AGGRESSION: ACCEPTANCE BY BULGARIA OF THE POLISH PROPOSAL.

The President :

Translation: Before adjourning the meeting, I have two communications to make.

The first is a letter from M. Wladimir Molloff, delegate of Bulgaria, dated September 24th, 1927, which reads as follows:

"I was engaged this morning in a discussion at the Secretariat and was therefore unable to take part in the vote on the Polish proposal concerning wars of aggression. I should be most grateful if you would be good enough to announce to the Assembly of the League of Nations that Bulgaria gives her unqualified assent to that proposal.

(Signed) W. MOLLOFF,
*Minister of Finance,
Delegate of Bulgaria.*"

81. — SETTLEMENT OF ARMENIAN REFUGEES: REQUEST BY DR. NANSEN TO MAKE A STATEMENT ON THIS QUESTION BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation: I have received a letter from Dr. Nansen, which reads as follows:

"In agreement with the Council of the League, I should be grateful if opportunity could be given me before the close of the present session of the Assembly to make a brief statement, in my capacity as High Commissioner for Refugees, on the situation regarding the proposal for a settlement of Armenian refugees in the region of Erivan.

(Signed) Fridtjof NANSEN,
*High Commissioner
for Refugees.*"

The Assembly will certainly desire to hear Dr. Nansen's communication, and I propose therefore to call upon him at the next meeting. (*Assent.*)

The Assembly rose at 7.15 p.m.