After considering the Opinion given by the President of the Mixed Commission, the Voïvode of Silesia stated that he saw no possibility of complying in full with this Opinion, but that he nevertheless held it his duty to accede to the legitimate claims of the German minority in Polish Upper Silesia in respect of educational facilities and was prepared to discuss matters with the interested parties.

The Voïvode’s statement not having given satisfaction to the Deutscher Volksbund, the latter, in pursuance of Articles 149 and 157 of the Geneva Convention, appealed to the Council of the League of Nations. The appeal was forwarded to the Secretariat through the Polish Government, which submitted observations on it. These may be summarised as follows:

The Polish Government pointed out that the prohibition to dispute or verify, contained in Articles 74 and 131 of the Geneva Convention, only referred to the declaration regarding the child’s language, and did not prevent the authorities from verifying whether this declaration emanated from the person legally responsible for the child’s education and was made with a full knowledge of the consequences attached thereto and without undue influence being exercised. The Government pointed out that it frequently happened that a child entered for a minority school in virtue of a statement having the character laid down in Article 131, once it was admitted to the school, gave proof of only a very slight knowledge of the minority language and frequently turned out to have no knowledge of it at all. If, in these cases, the provisions of Article 131 were applied without regard to the circumstances, these children would be entitled to attend the minority schools, but this right would have been given them by a declaration relating to their language which clearly did not correspond to facts. The person legally responsible for the child’s education would then have obviously abused the right granted to him by Article 131, and as cases of this abuse of right would thus occur to the evident prejudice of the child, who, not knowing the language in which the teaching was given, would be unable to make any progress with his studies, the Polish Government was of opinion that measures were called for to put a stop to this state of affairs. The Government considered that the result of the enquiry carried out by the authorities proved that the supervision thus exercised was necessary; but it declared that it had no intention of adopting this procedure as a permanent system, and that it was fully prepared to consider in a sympathetic spirit any other method which would guarantee the effectiveness of such a supervision.

The Polish Government insisted very strongly on its point of view that the minority schools should serve exclusively for the needs of the minority, and on this point it added Article 69 of the Geneva Convention, which reproduces the text of Article 9 of the Polish Minorities Treaty.

As regards the interpretation of Article 131 of the Geneva Convention, the Polish Government, taking the contrary view to that expressed by the President of the Mixed Commission in his Opinion, asserted that the “language of the child” referred to in that article was not the “school language but the mother-tongue of the child.” The Polish Government considered that, for the entry of a child to a minority school already in existence, account should be taken of the desire expressed by the person legally responsible for the education of the child, but that, furthermore, the conditions provided for in Article 106 of the Convention should be fulfilled, and in particular the condition that the child belonged to a linguistic minority, it being understood that this condition should be determined, in accordance with Article 131, by a declaration made by the person legally responsible for its education to the effect that the language of the child was the minority language.

Finally, the Polish Government declared that it would be glad if the difficulties which had arisen with regard to schools in Polish Upper Silesia could be removed by means of an agreement taking into consideration, first, the needs of the minority inhabiting that territory, within the limits of the Geneva Convention, and, secondly, the necessity of getting rid of all abuses by the strict application of the principle that the sole object of the provisions for the protection of the minorities was the protection of those minorities. The Polish Government declared that it was prepared to take into consideration the wishes of the parties concerned in Polish Upper Silesia for the satisfaction of the scholastic requirements of the German minority within the limits which the Government recognised as compatible with the letter and the spirit of the Geneva Convention and with its primary duty of safeguarding the supreme interests of the State.

The Council examined this question at its meeting of March 8th, 1927. On this occasion, it heard a first report submitted by the Colombian representative acting as Rapporteur. The Rapporteur, after giving a general review of the essential facts of the case, suggested that the Council should appoint two of its members to assist him in studying the question and drawing up the final report. The Council, in compliance with this suggestion, appointed the representatives of Italy and the Netherlands to assist the Rapporteur in drawing up the final report. This report, prepared after a detailed study of the case, was examined by the Council at its meeting of March 12th, 1927, and included the following draft resolution:

“I. The Council, having examined the appeal by the Deutscher Volksbund of Upper Silesia:

“A. Notes the Polish Government’s statement to the effect that children have been admitted to the minority schools whose mother-tongue, according to the
declarations made by the persons legally responsible for their education during the
enquiry held in the summer of 1926, was German.

"B. Directs the Polish Government’s attention to the great importance of
not insisting upon the measures taken by its local authorities to exclude from the
minority schools the following categories of children for whom applications for admis-
sion have been received:

"(1) Applications for admission invalidated because the parents, guar-
dians, etc., did not comply with the invitation to appear at the enquiry held
during the summer of 1926;

"(2) Applications for admission invalidated on the ground that the children
to be admitted, whose mother-tongue was stated at the time of the enquiry to
be both German and Polish, did not belong to the German minority.

"Accordingly, an opportunity should be given to children in these two categories
to enter the minority schools as soon as possible and without fresh application, except
when the child:

"(a) Did not possess Polish nationality;

"(b) Was entered for the minority school by a person who was not legally
responsible for the child’s education;

"(c) Did not belong to the school district;

"(d) Should have attended another school;

"(e) Was no longer of compulsory school age.

"Children who, in view of the above considerations, should be admitted to a
minority school but are at present attending a Polish school may remain there until
the end of the present school year.

"All proceedings therefore should be suspended that may have been taken
against the person responsible for the child’s education by reason of the fact that the
child did not appear at the Polish school when such child, in virtue of the foregoing
considerations, should be admitted to a minority school.

"II. The Council considers that it is inexpedient to admit to minority schools
children who speak only Polish.

"The Council decides to institute a system of enquiry into the concrete cases
falling under the categories, mentioned in No. I, B (1) and (2) above, which may
appear doubtful to the Polish local school authorities.

"A similar system of enquiry might also be applied in the case of any fresh
demands for the admission of children that may subsequently be received from per-
sons legally responsible for their education when such cases appear doubtful to the
Polish local school authorities. The object of the enquiry will be to ascertain whether
or not the child speaks the ‘school’ language used in the minority school so that
it can usefully attend that school.

"The method of enquiry will be as follows:

"In every doubtful case, the local authorities shall refer the question to the
President of the Upper Silesian Mixed Commission, assisted by a Swiss national,
who shall be an expert in educational matters, appointed by the Council of the League
of Nations or by the present Committee. If, in view of the expert’s opinion as to
the child’s knowledge of German, the President declares that it would be useless
for the child to attend the minority school, the child shall be excluded from that school.

"The financial arrangements concerning the expert shall be made by the Rap-
porteur, with the assistance of the Secretary-General, on a basis of payment of costs
by the League of Nations, subject to refund by the Polish Government.

"III. The system of enquiry laid down in No. II above shall also be applied
in the case of children in respect of whom the persons legally responsible for their
education declared at the enquiry held in 1926 that their mother-tongue was Polish,
should these persons express such a desire. In such cases, the child in question shall
be allowed to enter the minority school if, in view of the expert’s opinion as to its
knowledge of German, the President declare: that the child could usefully be admitted
to that school.

"IV. Any question concerning the execution of the above provisions which
the Polish Government or the President of the Mixed Commission may desire to have
investigated shall, for greater convenience, be definitely settled by the Rapporteur
to the Council, unless the Rapporteur considers it necessary to refer it to the Council.

"V. The arrangement provided for in Nos. II, III and IV above shall be regarded
as an exceptional measure designed to meet a de facto situation not covered by the
Convention of May 15th, 1922; it shall not be interpreted as in any way modifying
the provisions of that Convention."
The German representative observed that the report to which the Council had listened left open the legal question raised by this affair. He expressed the view that M. Calonder’s Opinion gave an absolutely exact ruling on the legal situation and that, legally speaking, there could be no question that even a child which knew no language but Polish must be allowed admission to a minority school. The German Government, as its representative declared, made no objection to the report notwithstanding this legal situation, because, as the last paragraph of the report stated, the solution in the present case was only to be regarded as an exceptional measure and applicable to an exceptional situation. The German Government could not agree to the report if the examination of children proposed in it were also to apply to subsequent disputes and if the result of the present settlement were to introduce any new permanent factor into the Geneva Convention.

The Polish representative stated that the Polish Government had never contested any provision of the Geneva Convention regarding the minority schools, and that the reason why it had adopted the measures which gave rise to the request made by the representatives of the German minority in Polish Upper Silesia was solely because it had found itself bound to deal with the matter in the way the German authorities had requested. He expressed the view that M. Calonder’s Opinion made use of the methods proposed in the report laid before the Council.

In execution of this Council resolution, the Committee and the Secretary-General made the necessary arrangements to nominate a Swiss national, an expert in education, to assist in the exercise of the supervision provided for in the resolution. For this purpose, the Committee appointed M. Walter Maurer, Inspector of Primary and Secondary Schools in the Canton of Lucerne. M. Maurer, following the suggestion of the Committee, put himself in direct touch with the President of the Mixed Commission for Upper Silesia with a view to exercising the functions entrusted to him by the resolution of the Council.

B. Petitions regarding the Minority Schools at Wilcza-Gorna, Laziska-Gorna and Bytkow.

In three petitions, the first of which was dated January 13th, 1927, and the remaining two January 18th, 1927, the Deutscher Volksbund of Polish Silesia, in virtue of Article 147 of the Geneva Convention, submitted to the Council the case of the three minority schools of Wilcza-Gorna, Laziska-Gorna and Bytkow, which had been closed by the Polish authorities. The explanations given in the observations of the Polish Government show that the reason why these schools were in the situation which gave rise to the Deutscher Volksbund’s petitions was that, as the result of an enquiry made by the authorities, almost all the applications for entry were declared invalid as being contrary to the provisions of Articles 106 and 131 of the Geneva Convention. This raised the same question as had been raised by the appeal submitted by the same petitioner regarding the general question of admission of children to the primary German minority schools in the Voivodie of Silesia, which was examined above.

For this reason, the Colombian representative on the Council, in his report on these three cases, which was submitted to the Council at its meeting of March 12th, 1927, after explaining the essential facts of each question, confined himself to referring to the proposals submitted to the Council by himself and his colleagues, the representatives of Italy and the Netherlands, regarding the other appeal by the Deutscher Volksbund. The Council having adopted these proposals, the President stated that the settlement reached therein automatically applied to the petitions regarding these three schools.

III. MOSLEMS OF ALBANIAN ORIGIN IN GREECE.

The Council at its meeting on December 11th, 1924, had appointed as its mandatories for the protection of the Albanian minority in Greece the three neutral members of the Mixed Commission for the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations. At its meeting on June 9th, 1926, the Council instructed the Secretary-General to despatch a letter to the mandatories stating that, in view of the declarations made by the Greek Government at the Council’s session in March 1926, the Council considered it very desirable that the mandate established by the resolution of December 11th, 1924, should be brought to an end. On this occasion the Council expressed its opinion that the mandates, considering their work to be at an end, might at once forward for the information of the Council a final report on the special cases still outstanding before the Mixed Commission for the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations, and expressed the hope that those cases would soon be settled satisfactorily.

On July 14th, 1926, the mandatories despatched to the Council their final report which contained a list of the cases still outstanding before the Mixed Commission. The Council, at its meeting on September 16th, 1926, approved a report submitted by the Japanese representative, in which the Rapporteur, after mentioning the fact that the mandates had sent their final report to the Council, suggested that the latter should express to the mandates its most cordial thanks for the work done.
MANDATES.


The documents relating to the work of the ninth session of the Permanent Mandates Commission, together with a report by the Swedish representative on the subject, were examined by the Council on September 3rd and 4th, 1926. Sir Francis Bell, representative of New Zealand, and Mr J. S. Smit, representative of the Union of South Africa, together with M. Van Rees, Vice-Chairman of the Permanent Mandates Commission, took part in the Council's discussions.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE VARIOUS TERRITORIES UNDER MANDATE.

As regards the special observations of the Commission on the administration of the eight territories under mandate with which it dealt at this session, the Council decided to forward them to the Government of the mandatory Power concerned in each case, and to request it to take the necessary action.

PETITIONS.

The Commission's conclusions on the petitions which it had examined relating to Palestine were approved by the Council, and the Secretary-General was instructed to bring them to the knowledge of the mandatory Power and of the petitioner concerned in each case. As regards the petition relating to Togoland under French mandate, the Council requested the mandatory Power to furnish the Commission with the supplementary information desired.

STATISTICAL TABLES.

The Council also asked the Secretary-General to communicate with the mandatory Powers for the purpose of securing such supplementary information and explanations as might be necessary to complete the statistical tables required by the Mandates Commission.

HEARING OF PETITIONERS AND LIST OF QUESTIONS WHICH THE COMMISSION DESIRES SHOULD BE DEALT WITH IN THE REPORTS OF THE MANDATORY POWERS ON TERRITORIES UNDER B AND C MANDATES.

Two subjects dealt with in the Commission's report gave rise to observations and statements on the part of several members of the Council. The first was the hearing of petitioners, in certain exceptional cases, by the Permanent Mandates Commission, a question which had been raised by the latter in the following paragraph of its report:

"The Commission has again carefully considered the procedure in force with regard to petitions. Experience having shown that sometimes the Commission has been unable to form a definite opinion as to whether certain petitions are well founded or not, the Commission is of the opinion that in these cases it might appear indispensable to allow the petitioner to be heard by it. The Commission, however, would not desire to formulate a definite recommendation on this subject before being informed of the views of the Council."

After relating the circumstances in which this question had arisen in the Commission, the Rapporteur, the representative of Sweden, while inviting the opinions of his colleagues on this subject, said that he personally was inclined to think that the Commission should be authorised to draw up a proposal establishing certain rules for the hearing of petitioners in certain exceptional cases.

1 See Supplementary Report to the Seventh Ordinary Session of the Assembly, Official Journal, No. 44, page 299.
In the second place, the Commission had drawn up a list of questions which it desired should be dealt with in the annual reports of the mandatory Powers on territories under B and C mandates, a document which was intended to replace the questionnaires for these territories adopted at the first session of the Commission. The representative of Sweden, in his capacity as Rapporteur, proposed in this connection that the Council should forward a copy of this list of questions to the mandatory Powers, and to commend their consideration the request of the Commission that the annual reports should be drawn up in accordance with the general plan of the revised questionnaire.

The representative of the British Empire, after paying a tribute to the Mandates Commission, stated the grave objections which appeared to him to be raised by the adoption of a questionnaire as detailed and extensive as that which had been drawn up by the Commission. He added that the British Government and other Members of the League had the impression that there was a tendency on the part of the Commission to extend its authority to a point where the government would no longer be vested in the mandatory Power but in the Mandates Commission. He was sure that was not the intention of the Covenant. It was clear from that document that these territories were to be put under the tutelage of the advanced Powers, and that they would exercise their authority under the supervision of the League, for which purpose the League would have a Commission to assist it. The British representative therefore asked that, before the Council took any decision, the questionnaire should be submitted to the consideration of the various mandatory Governments which would be invited to submit their observations.

As regards the second point — the possibility of hearing petitioners — the representative of the British Empire put forward objections against such a procedure, which he thought would be difficult to apply to the different categories of mandates and particularly to the territories under C mandates, which were administered as an integral portion of the territory of the mandatory Power. He therefore urgently begged the Council not to take a decision without having before it the observations of the Governments which were directly and immediately responsible for the peace and good administration of the mandated territories and without having given full attention to whatever they might have to say on the matter.

The French representative, while recognising that the League's supervision of the administration of the mandated territories should be effective, associated himself with the remarks of the British representative and emphasised the abuses and dangers of a procedure which might lead to the creation of a sort of tribunal which, in serious circumstances, would institute a kind of oral inquisition of the mandatory Powers. He drew the Council's attention to the fact that the action of certain petitioners might sometimes tend to make it still more difficult for the mandatory Power to perform its duties.

The Belgian representative pointed out that the right of petition, although generally recognised in all countries which had representative institutions, was strictly limited in these countries and could not be treated otherwise in the case of the countries under mandate. He was sure that these Territories would no longer be vested in the mandatory Power but in the Mandates Commission. He was sure that was not the intention of the Covenant. It was clear from that document that these territories were to be put under the tutelage of the advanced Powers, and that the representatives of the British Empire and France, who had made were in no way intended to call in question the value of the Commission's work. The representatives of Japan, New Zealand and South Africa associated themselves with the observations of the representatives of the British Empire and France. Mr. Smit drew particular attention to the drawbacks attendant upon any development of the powers of the Permanent Mandates Commission with regard to the territory for which the Union of South Africa had a mandate, this territory forming an integral part of the territory of the mandatory Power and already possessing representative institutions.

M. Van Rees, Vice-Chairman of the Commission, first recalled the fact that the latter had always shown a very cordial spirit of co-operation with the mandatory Powers. He added that, in his opinion, Article 22 of the Covenant and particularly its last paragraph did not in any way limit the competence of the Mandates Commission. The representatives of Japan, New Zealand and South Africa associated themselves with the observations of the representatives of the British Empire and France. Mr. Smit drew particular attention to the drawbacks attendant upon any development of the powers of the Permanent Mandates Commission with regard to the territory for which the Union of South Africa had a mandate, this territory forming an integral part of the territory of the mandatory Power and already possessing representative institutions.

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The Rapporteur, the Swedish representative, said that he fully understood the very legitimate apprehensions expressed by the representatives of the mandatory Powers with regard to the hearing of petitioners and that he shared these apprehensions to a certain extent. He added that he willingly associated himself with the British representative's proposal that the mandatory Powers should be consulted on the two questions which had given rise to discussion. As regards the adoption of the list of questions, he pointed out, however, that the final decision lay with the Council, since the terms of all the B and C mandates contained a provision according to which the mandatory Power should make to the Council of the League of Nations an annual report to the satisfaction of the Council, and containing full information concerning the measures taken to apply the provisions of the mandate.

The representative of Italy made certain reservations on certain points raised during the discussion and referring to the general interpretation of Article 22 of the Covenant. The representatives of the British Empire and of France said that the observations they had made were in no way intended to call in question the value of the Commission's work. They had merely desired to point out, in the interest both of the mandatory Powers and of the Commission itself, the drawbacks of attempting to extend the latter's powers indefinitely.

On behalf of the Council, the President asked the Vice-Chairman of the Mandates Commission to communicate to his colleagues the Council's thanks for the zeal and devotion which they had displayed in the accomplishment of their task.
Lastly, the Council adopted the following resolution with regard to the two questions under discussion:

"The Council instructs the Secretary-General to request the mandatory Powers to inform the Council of their views on the question raised in the report of the Permanent Mandates Commission with regard to the hearing of petitioners in certain cases.

"The Council instructs the Secretary-General to communicate copies of the list of questions to the mandatory Powers with the request that they forward for the information of the Council, if possible before December 1st, 1926, any observations that they may desire to make on the subject."

* * *

On December 10th, 1926, the Council, having received the observations of all the mandatory Powers on these two questions, decided, in pursuance of the report of the Rapporteur, the representative of the Netherlands:

"To request the Permanent Mandates Commission, having before it a record of the discussions on the matter at the sessions of the Council and the Assembly last September and the recent communications from the mandatory Powers, to consider afresh the list of questions for annual reports on territories under B and C mandates."

The consideration of the question of the hearing of petitioners was postponed until the March session of the Council.

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On March 7th, 1927, the Council took cognisance of the replies of the mandatory Powers with regard to the hearing of petitioners and of a report on this subject by the Netherlands representative. The mandatory Powers had unanimously opposed the hearing of petitioners by the Mandates Commission, on the ground that such a procedure would weaken their authority and would be incompatible with the very nature of the mandates system. The Rapporteur recognised the justice of many of the objections put forward. He recalled the fact that the procedure for handling petitions was instituted by the Council in order that the Commission might thereby have a further means of securing information on conditions in the mandated territories and it would therefore be undesirable to seek to attain this object by means which might alter the very character of the Commission. Should the Commission desire further information on any particular points in connection with a petition, it could always apply to the Government concerned, which would certainly not fail to accede to its request. If, in any particular case, the circumstances should show that it was impossible for all the necessary information to be secured in this way, the Council could decide on such exceptional procedure as might seem appropriate and necessary in the particular circumstances.

The Council accepted this view and expressed the opinion that there was no occasion to modify the procedure hitherto followed by the Commission in regard to this question.

II. WORK OF THE TENTH SESSION OF THE PERMANENT MANDATES COMMISSION.

A. WORK OF THE COMMISSION.

In the course of its tenth session, held at Geneva from November 4th to 19th, 1926, the Commission examined, in the presence of the accredited representatives of the mandatory Powers, the following annual reports: Western Samoa, 1925-26; Pacific Islands under Japanese Mandate, 1925; Iraq, 1923-24 and 1925; Cameroons under British Mandate, 1925; Togoland under British Mandate, 1925; Syria and the Lebanon (Final Report), 1925.

The Commission also took note of a large number of petitions which had been laid before it, particularly with regard to the administration of Syria and the Lebanon, and studied them in the light of the observations supplied in writing by the mandatory Power and verbally by its accredited representative.

Lastly, the Commission dealt with three questions of a more general nature.

1. Definition of Terms concerning the Liquor Traffic.

The Commission, which had been asked by the Council 1 to consider the views expressed by the mandatory Powers with regard to the definition of the terms concerning the liquor traffic

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which are found in the mandates (a question previously raised by the Commission) and to inform the Council of such conclusions as it might reach as a result of its further examination of the question, gave its careful attention to the observations of the mandatory Powers and recommended the following interpretation: The expression “spirits” (the term “spirituous liquors” being identical) used in the B mandates and in the Convention relating to the Liquor Traffic in Africa signed at St-Germain-en-Laye on September 10th, 1919, shall be taken to mean:

(a) All distilled beverages;
(b) All fermented beverages to which distilled products have been added so as to contain over 20 degrees of pure alcohol by weight.

The expression “trade spirits of every kind” used in Article 2 of the Convention of St.-Germain shall be taken to mean “cheap spirits utilised as articles of trade or barter with the natives”.

The expression “intoxicating beverages” employed in the C mandates should be taken to mean “any beverage containing more than 3 degrees of pure alcohol by weight”.

2. Agreements concerning the Boundary between the Mandated Territory of South-West Africa and Angola.

The Commission, which had repeatedly emphasised that it would be in the interest both of the Portuguese and of the South African Governments to settle the question of the frontier between the mandated territory of South-West Africa and Angola and the use of the water of the Kunene River, learned with satisfaction that the two Governments had signed agreements on these subjects.

At the same time, it considered that it should draw the Council's attention to the second paragraph of the Preamble to the first of these agreements, which reads as follows:

“...And whereas, under a mandate issued by the Council of the League of Nations in pursuance of Article 22 of the Treaty of Versailles, the Government of the Union of South Africa, subject to the terms of the said mandate, possesses sovereignty over the Territory of South-West Africa (hereinafter referred to as the Territory) lately under the sovereignty of Germany.”

The Commission doubted whether the expression “possesses sovereignty”, even when limited as in the above passage, could be held correctly to define, having regard to the terms of the Covenant, the relations between the mandatory Power and the territory placed under its mandate.

3. Supervision of the Frontier between Syria and Transjordan.

The Commission expressed the hope that an understanding would be reached between the mandatory authorities of Syria and Transjordan for the supervision of their common frontier.

Observations with regard to Certain Territories under A, B and C Mandates.

1. Iraq.

(Representative of the mandatory Power: Sir Henry Dobbs, High Commissioner for Iraq, assisted by Mr. J. H. Hall and Mr. T. I. K. Lloyd, of the British Colonial Office.)

At its first examination of the reports of the mandatory Power concerning Iraq, the Commission paid special attention to the fundamental provisions of the Organic Law adopted by the Constituent Assembly of Iraq and to the practical application of the clauses of the Anglo-Iraq Treaty of Alliance and the agreements by which it is supplemented. On this occasion, the accredited representative of the Mandatory, in a preliminary statement which was much appreciated by the Commission, explained the guiding principles of the policy pursued by the British Government, which he summarised in the words: “Iraq governed for Iraqi and by Iraqi, helped by small numbers of British advisers and inspectors”. He emphasised the spirit of cordial co-operation which characterises the relations of the national Administration of Iraq and the staff of its British advisers.

Sir Henry Dobbs also laid stress on the fact that, despite political complications, both internal and international, which marked the early days of the mandate, and despite the failure of a first attempt at direct British administration, the representative system had been introduced into the country without any serious disturbance of public order, and this although Iraq was little prepared for such a system by its traditions and its history.

In accordance with the Council’s recommendation of March 1926, the Commission examined the measures taken by the British Government for the administration of the Kurdish districts.

1 See Report to the Sixth Ordinary Session of the Assembly, Official Journal, Special Supplement No. 33, pages 221 and 313.
It noted that the Iraq Government, in agreement with the British High Commissioner, had pursued the policy recommended by the Mosul Commission.

As regards provisions to ensure the pacification and equal protection of all sections of the population, the Commission noted that statements in the recent Treaty concluded between Great Britain, Iraq, and Turkey, that the inhabitants who had declared themselves in favour of Turkey had not been molested in any way, and that the agitation noted by the Mosul Commission had subsided. The Commission also noted that Articles 13 and 16 of the Organic Law proclaimed freedom of conscience and authorised the various communities to establish schools where instruction was given in their own language, but that the position of the Assyrians—a point raised by the Mosul Commission—was not yet quite clear.

As regards commercial measures, the Commission took note of the conclusion of a Transit Convention between Iraq and Syria, but observed that commercial relations with Turkey were for the moment interrupted. It expressed the hope, however, that the situation would improve as a result of the work of the Commission provided for in the recent Treaty with Turkey. It noted with interest the High Commissioner's views in regard to the determination of Crown lands and the promulgation of the Tribal Disputes Law for the prevention of blood feuds and the settlement of quarrels in a manner understood and accepted by the Sheiks and their people.

The Commission asked the Mandatory for additional information in its next report on the reform of taxation and Iraq's debt to Great Britain, on labour and on education. It expressed the hope that the final delimitation of the frontier between Iraq and Syria might be undertaken without undue delay.

2. Syria and the Lebanon.

(Representative of the mandatory Power: M. Robert de Caix, former Secretary-General of the French High Commissariat in Syria and the Lebanon.)

The Commission took note of the final report of the French Government for 1925, and of various reports on the investigations communicated to it by the French Government with regard to the causes of the Syrian revolt and the responsibility for it, and with regard to certain political, administrative and military acts reported to the League which had occurred during the period 1920-26. These documents, as the Commission observed, were the work of well-known persons, who had guaranteed the accuracy of the facts reported and the reliability of all the positive conclusions therein contained. This, in the opinion of the Commission, lent particular weight to the conclusions.

In its report, the Commission stated that it had been favourably impressed by the conscientious manner in which the enquiries had been conducted and by the special care taken to exhaust every means of investigation and enable the reader of the reports to form an opinion as to the soundness of the methods employed to discover the truth. It considered that "no enquiry carried out by officials of the mandatory Power could have furnished fuller guarantees of impartiality".

The political and administrative events preceding the Jebel Druse rebellion had already been examined by the Commission at its meeting in Rome. It accordingly confined itself to noting that both the facts established by the investigation and the final report of the Mandatory for 1925 confirmed several of the opinions expressed at its preceding session, and it expressed the hope that in June 1927, when examining the next annual report on the administration of Syria, it would be able to record the tranquillising effect of the policy of the mandatory Power under the direction of the new High Commissioner in Syria and the Lebanon.

On the other hand, the Commission paid special attention to reports on the enquiry regarding the suppression of the rebellion. These documents, the information furnished by the mandatory Power and the explanations given by the accredited representative enabled the Commission to form a general opinion as to the allegations contained in the various petitions, without, however, making any definitive pronouncement on individual cases. The Commission, after careful consideration of the reports submitted by the mandatory Power, came to the conclusion that there was "no reason to affirm that the suppression of the revolt was carried out in an abnormal manner or was accompanied by reprehensible excesses. If there had been acts of harshness", it added, "if there had been distressing incidents, if there had been innocent victims, these facts were unfortunately such as usually occur in the course of all forcible measures of this kind". The hope was expressed that such measures would never again be necessary and that a lasting state of peace would promptly be established.

The Commission, finally, noted that the 1925 report contained information on almost all technical points previously mentioned, but that the legislative texts for 1925, the communication of which was provided for in Article 17 of the mandate, had not yet been received. It asked for supplementary information in the next report on the representative councils, public finance and administrative staff. The Commission expressed the hope that it might be possible in the near future to proceed to the final delimitation of the frontier between Syria and Iraq.
1. **British Cameroons.**

(Representative of the mandatory Power: the Hon. W. G. Ormsby-Gore, M.P., Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, assisted by Mr. W. E. Hunt, "Resident in the Nigerian Administrative Service", and Mr. T. I. K. Lloyd.)

The Commission noted with particular interest the measures contemplated for the improvement of native agricultural methods and, in general, for ensuring the well-being of the natives of the mandated territory.

It expressed its satisfaction that the British and French authorities are in close co-operation on the northern frontier for the purpose of stamping out the slave trade.

It asked for additional information on the position, particularly as regards matters of health, labourers employed in plantations, on mission schools, and on the child-welfare work of the African health visitors.

2. **Togoland.**

(Representative of the mandatory Power: the Hon. W. G. Ormsby-Gore, M.P., assisted by Mr. T. I. K. Lloyd.)

The Commission noted that the quantity of spirits imported into the Gold Coast had increased considerably of recent years. The accredited representative stated, however, that the bulk of the alcohol imported was consumed in the Gold Coast, a very small quantity being consumed in Togoland.

The Commission requested the mandatory Power to give in its next report statistics regarding the number of labourers employed by Government departments and private enterprises, and supplementary information on the public health service, the constitution of native tribunals, and public finance.

** Territories under C Mandate.**

1. **Western Samoa.**

(Representative of the mandatory Power: the Hon. Sir James Parr, High Commissioner for New Zealand in London.)

The Commission noted with satisfaction the continued prosperity of the Islands. It will follow with interest the further development of native administration through such organisations as the "Fono of Faiupes" the District Councils and Village Committees. It asked for additional information with regard to native labour regulations in the various districts, education, public health, the medical work of the administration and missions, land tenure and public finance.

2. **Pacific Islands under Japanese Mandate.**

(Representative of the mandatory Power: M. Naotake Sato, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Poland.)

The Commission asked the Mandatory for certain information regarding public finance and the methods employed in securing the necessary labour for the maintenance of village sanitation and the upkeep of public roads.

It also noted the new information concerning the system for the cultivation and the refining of cane sugar and declared that it would follow with interest the evolution of this system, from which it trusts the natives will derive nothing but benefit.

It asked also for certain information regarding public finance.

**Observations of the Accredited Representatives.**

The accredited representatives of the British and New Zealand Governments communicated to the Council certain comments with regard to the observations of the Permanent Mandates Commission on Togoland, the Cameroons and Western Samoa.

**Observations on Petitions.**

The Commission’s conclusions regarding the various petitions examined may be summarised as follows:

1. **Syria and the Lebanon.**

The Commission drew attention to the fact that, of the very large number of petitions sent in, only one came directly from the mandated territory. Complaints regarding the administration of the mandatory Power usually reached the League through persons living outside Syria. The Commission considered that this practice was highly regrettable, since it was prejudicial not only to the interests of the population but also to the satisfactory working of the mandate system. If the inhabitants of the mandated territories desirous of lodging a petition with the League applied direct to the representative of the mandatory Power, their complaints could be more speedily considered by the local authorities and by the Commission itself.
As regards the numerous petitions concerning Syria and the Lebanon, the Commission considered that those of a general nature and complaints concerning the various aspects of the policy of the Mandatory (1920-1925) had received their answer in its report on the work of its Rome session 1.

The examination of several complaints regarding the general policy of the mandatory Power after the arrival of M. de Jouvenel in Syria was postponed until the next session of the Commission, while petitions concerning certain incidents between 1920 and 1925, and measures of repression in 1925-26 were dealt with at its October session.

Most of the facts alleged in these petitions had already been the object of enquiries, the conclusions of which had been communicated to the Commission by the mandatory Power. In many cases the latter disputed the accuracy of the allegations of the petitioners; in others it stated that facts complained of were inevitable in warlike operations of this kind. The Commission noted that the Mandatory imputed a large number of atrocities, including fires over large areas, to the insurgents.

The Commission, with certain reservations regarding the use of Armenian and Circassian auxiliaries and measures such as air bombardment, burning and destruction of villages, and collective fines, came to the conclusion that nothing justified it in supposing that the operations of repression were carried out with an avoidable and hence reprehensible severity. The distressing accidents of which certain inhabitants of the mandated territories might have been the innocent victims were, in its opinion, particularly regrettable as affecting a population administered in the name of the League. It expressed the hope that if, contrary to its expectations, it again proved necessary to take military measures, the military authorities of the mandatory Power would always bear in mind the particularly delicate character of their mission.

The representative of the Mandatory having stated that it was possible for every inhabitant to bring his complaints against native officials before an administrative or judicial tribunal, the Commission expressed the hope that "the policy followed in Syria would always be such as to convince all the inhabitants that their legitimate interests would in every case receive prompt and effective protection from the authorities". It expressed its satisfaction at learning that the High Commissioner intended to give his special attention to this matter, "whose importance from the point of view of the prompt and complete pacification of the country could not be exaggerated".

As regards petitions submitted by the Lebanese Committee of Paris concerning the conditions of option for Lebanese nationality, and by certain inhabitants of Aleppo regarding the northern frontier of Syria, the Commission was, in general, of the opinion that the explanations of the mandatory Power were satisfactory.

2. South-West Africa.

In 1924, the Commission declared itself incompetent to deal with a petition from Mr. Gramowsky claiming indemnity because his license for the retail sale of spirituous liquors in a hotel in Windhuk had not been renewed. The Commission has since received a new petition, but as the latter was not founded on any provision of the Covenant or of the mandate, the Commission decided that it could not take it into consideration.

B. Measures taken by the Council.

As it had not been possible to distribute sufficiently early to the Members of the Council the Minutes of the Commission's tenth session, and as all the accredited representatives of the mandatory Powers had not yet stated whether they had any comments to make on the observations contained in the report regarding the territories under their countries' mandates, the Council, at its session of December 1926, decided to postpone until March 1927 the consideration of the Commission's work. On this occasion, the British representative made a few remarks in explanation of a point referred to by the Commission with regard to commercial relations between Iraq and Turkey.

On March 7th, 1927, the Council adopted without discussion the report of the Netherlands representative on the work of the tenth session of the Permanent Mandates Commission. The Council took note of the Commission's recommendations as to the definition of certain terms concerning the liquor traffic and instructed the Secretary-General to forward them to the mandatory Powers. It also instructed him to express to the Governments of Portugal and of the Union of South Africa its satisfaction at the conclusion of the recent agreements concerning the boundary between South-West Africa and Angola. While it refrained from expressing an opinion on the question where sovereignty over a mandated territory resides, the Council also requested the Secretary-General to forward for the information of the mandatory Power concerned, the passage in the report concerning the use of the expression "possesses sovereignty".

Finally, it instructed him to call the attention of the mandatory Powers for Syria and Trans-Jordan to the Commission's recommendations concerning the supervision of the frontier between those territories.

As regards the Commission's observations on certain separate territories, the Council decided to forward them to the Government of the mandatory Power concerned in each case and to request it to take the requisite action.

Furthermore, it approved the Commission's conclusions with regard to petitions concerning Syria and the Lebanon and South-West Africa. These conclusions were forwarded to the mandatory Powers concerned and, in the case of Syria, were communicated to the petitioners.

III. SYRIA.

DECLARATIONS BY THE FRENCH REPRESENTATIVE ON THE COUNCIL WITH REGARD TO THE POSTPONEMENT OF THE DEPOSIT OF THE ORGANIC LAW FOR SYRIA AND THE LEBANON.

Article I of the mandate for Syria and the Lebanon, which was confirmed by the Council on July 24th, 1922, and which entered into force on September 29th, 1923, stipulates that: “The Mandatory shall frame within a period of three years from the coming into force of this mandate an organic law for Syria and the Lebanon. This organic law shall be framed in agreement with the native authorities and shall take into account the rights, interests and wishes of all the population inhabiting the said territory”.

On September 20th, 1926, the French representative on the Council said that the French Government had intended to deposit before September 29th, 1926, the draft Organic Law which it had prepared. It did not, however, wish to proceed with the deposit of this Law until agreement had been established between the local populations and the mandatory Power, in accordance with the desire expressed by the Mandates Commission. The consultations with the local assemblies required for making the agreement final naturally took time and the French Government had therefore been obliged to ask the Council to be good enough to grant a delay of six months. The Council took note of the declaration made by the French representative.

On March 12th, 1927, the French representative made a fresh statement to the Council regarding the Organic Law for Syria and the Lebanon.

He emphasised the fact that the mandatory Power had endeavoured above all things to bring about an agreement between the populations concerned and to reconcile their conflicting desires and laid stress on the difficulties encountered in this respect, especially after the events which had disturbed the peace of the mandated territory. For these reasons, the framing of the Organic Law had not yet progressed beyond the stage at which it was found possible to bring into harmony the interests of the previously constituted autonomous States. A provisional statute had therefore been drawn up for each of those districts in which a sufficient measure of agreement had been reached among the various groups of inhabitants. These special statutes were a first and important step towards the drafting of the general law, which was to ratify the necessary powers for the exercise of the mandate as well as the internal organisation of the autonomous regimes recommended by the mandate and the relations to be established between them to ensure the administration of their joint interests. To achieve this end, there was not only an organic work to be undertaken within each State but negotiations had also to be opened between them by their authorised representatives. It had not yet been possible to bring to a successful conclusion the work undertaken for this purpose, but the mandatory Power was actively pursuing its endeavours to reconcile the interests and desires of the populations and it hoped that the work of pacification and restoration of order, which had progressed considerably since its last communication to the Council, would facilitate its task and enable it to carry out as soon as possible the recommendation contained in Article I of the mandate.

The Council took note of the French representative’s statement.

IV. DOCUMENTS REFERRING TO MANDATES.

A. DISTRIBUTION AND SALE OF THE ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE MANDATORY POWERS AND OF OTHER DOCUMENTS RELATING TO MANDATES.

The Secretariat continued to give effect to the resolution adopted by the Assembly at its fifth ordinary session, by buying from the mandatory Powers a certain number of copies of their annual reports for distribution to the Governments Members of the League applying for them, and for sale to the public through the Publications Sales Department.

In the course of the year, several mandatory Powers asked the Secretariat to supply them with copies of the reports on territories not under their mandate for communication to their local administrations.

In pursuance of a recommendation made by the Permanent Mandates Commission at its sixth session and approved by the Council, several Powers also asked for a certain number of copies of the documents relating to mandates published by the League of Nations and in particular, the Commission’s Minutes and reports, for distribution among the officials employed in the mandated territories.

B. ANALYTICAL TABLES OF THE DOCUMENTS OF THE PERMANENT MANDATES COMMISSION.

In pursuance of the recommendation adopted by the Assembly at its fifth ordinary session, an index of the Minutes and reports of the first five sessions of the Permanent Mandates Commission was published in December 1925.

A supplementary index covering the sixth to tenth sessions of the Commission is in preparation and will be published in the course of the year.

1 See Report to the Sixth Ordinary Session of the Assembly, Official Journal, Special Supplement No. 33, page 225.
3 See resolution adopted by the Assembly on September 22nd, 1924, Official Journal, Special Supplement No. 29, page 134.
8.

SLAVERY.

CONVENTION RELATING TO SLAVERY: COMMUNICATION TO THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE.

In a resolution adopted, during its seventh ordinary session, on September 25th, 1926, the Assembly requested 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.

On December 6th, 1926, the Council, in pursuance of a report by the British representative, instructed the Secretary-General to give effect to this resolution of the Assembly.

9.

WORK OF THE TECHNICAL ORGANISATIONS.

1. ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ORGANISATION.

A. Work of the Economic Committee.

The Economic Committee held its twenty-first session in Rome from February 25th to March 2nd, 1927.

1. ABOLITION OF IMPORT AND EXPORT PROHIBITIONS AND RESTRICTIONS.

The Council, in a resolution adopted on September 7th, 1926, approved the proposal of the Economic Committee that an international conference of Government delegates should be convened to conclude an international agreement for the abolition of import and export prohibitions and restrictions, and the Economic Committee, during its session held in March 1927, discussed the date on which the Conference should be convened. It noted the opinion of the Secretary-General and that of the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the International Economic Conference to the effect that no date should be fixed for the Diplomatic Conference for the Abolition of Import and Export Prohibitions and Restrictions until the results of the general Economic Conference were known. It drew the Council’s attention, however, to the fact that it would be of considerable advantage to fix a provisional date for the meeting of the Conference, that date to be October or November 1927, on the understanding that the Council, at its June session, could postpone the meeting if circumstances should render this course advisable. The Council gave effect to this suggestion on March 11th, 1927, by adopting a resolution provisionally fixing November 14th, 1927, as the date of the Diplomatic Conference, to consist of duly authorised representatives of the Governments Members and non-Members of the League.

2. APPLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION RELATING TO THE SIMPLIFICATION OF CUSTOMS FORMALITIES.

Since the last ordinary session of the Assembly, the following States have ratified the Convention: Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, France, French Protectorate of Morocco, Norway, Regency of Tunis (French Protectorate) and Switzerland. The number of States which have now ratified the Convention is twenty four and one State has acceded to it.

In pursuance of Article 9 of the Convention, by which States undertake to forward to the Secretary-General summaries of the measures which they have taken with a view to simplifying Customs formalities, a Sub-Committee of the Economic Committee has examined these summaries and submitted a report showing the striking progress which has been made under
the influence of the Convention. The Committee considers that the information obtained by this examination justifies it in stating that the Geneva Convention has been attended with the most fortunate results. The Committee further notes that the provisions of the Convention are being increasingly used as a basis for the settlement in bilateral treaties of questions of a similar character.

The Committee has urged the Governments to make as complete as possible the information which they give in the summaries required under the terms of Article 9.

3. TREATMENT OF FOREIGNERS.

The Committee noted that only ten States had forwarded observations on the recommenda-
dations made by it in January 1923 with regard to the treatment to be accorded to foreign persons and organisations duly authorised by law to pursue their occupations in the territory of any State. The Committee decided to await further replies before making a definite report to the Council on this question.

4. FALSE DECLARATIONS.

The Committee, in its report to the Council, recalled the decision whereby it had been deemed desirable to widen the scope of the enquiries into the question of false declarations so as to include fraudulent declarations made in the course of commerce to the prejudice of bodies or persons or administrations other than Customs authorities. The Committee ascertained that the existing law of some countries does not always regard as a punishable offence the making of a false declaration to the prejudice of a foreigner or a foreign State, even when such a declaration would be punishable if made to the prejudice of a national or a national Administration. Consequently, any international arrangements for facilitating the punishment of such false declarations would, in some countries, need an alteration in the criminal law. The Committee, though it had received some useful information on the law of certain countries regarding false declarations generally, thought it better to await the results of the general Economic Conference, which would probably consider the whole question of unfair commercial practices.

In the interval, however, it suggested that the Council should invite the opinion of a few carefully selected jurists and Customs experts, and, in particular, persons possessing admini-
strative experience of ad valorem duties, on the judicial and technical aspects of the question of the suppression of false Customs declarations. It accordingly asked the Council to authorise the Secretariat, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee and the Rapporteurs on the question, to invite a limited number of such experts to meet at the earliest possible date.

The Committee emphasised that it had made this suggestion merely with the object of clarifying the problem and facilitating an eventual decision. It desired to make it quite clear, however, that it had not yet approved, either in principle or in detail, any of the proposals submitted to it regarding false declarations.

The Council on March 11th, 1927, approved the above suggestion.

5. EXECUTION OF ARBITRAL AWARDS.

The Committee noted the interim report of the Committee of Legal Experts which met in January 1927. This Committee had to consider the possibility of framing supplementary articles to the Protocol of 1923 for the purpose of making better provision for the execution of foreign arbitral awards in connection with commercial contracts.

The Committee met again at the end of March 1927, and succeeded in drawing up a draft Protocol concerning the execution of foreign arbitral awards.

The Council, following the examination of this draft and of the report of the Economic Committee which accompanied it has been asked to consider a request that the question of the opening of the Protocol for signature by all the States desiring to adhere to it should be placed on the agenda of the next ordinary session of the Assembly. Pending the decision of the Council on this point, the documents have been communicated to all the States Members of the League, with a request that they should regard them as a basis for the discussion of the question, and inviting them to forward any observations which they may wish to make at a sufficiently early date for them to be examined, if necessary, by the Economic Committee during its next session. This procedure will enable the Assembly to note these observations, together with any comments which the Economic Committee may think it advisable to make. Moreover, it will not prevent the Governments from giving to their delegates any instructions which they may consider necessary as a result of their examination of the documents submitted to them.

6. BILLS OF EXCHANGE.

The Committee examined the report submitted to it by the experts who had been asked to give information as to the really grave difficulties encountered by bankers and merchants in the course of their daily business owing to important divergencies between the laws of different countries in regard to bills of exchange and cheques. The experts had drawn special attention
to the difficulties which, in their opinion, justified an effort to bring these laws into closer harmony. They did not however, feel able to put their suggestions in the form of definite texts, considering that this work should be performed by jurists.

The Economic Committee noted that the experts agreed with its own view that any efforts undertaken should primarily be directed towards an attempt to assimilate or harmonise the laws of countries belonging to the Continental group, and further, that, if such a result could be achieved, a move in the direction of closer harmony between the Continental and Anglo-Saxon systems would be facilitated.

The Committee, now being in possession of a list, drawn up by highly competent authorities, of the principal difficulties caused in practice to international commerce by the existing diversity of laws in the matter of bills of exchange, proposed to convene another meeting of experts, the majority of whom should be jurists, and to request them to proceed to draft the necessary texts of articles to serve as a basis of an international understanding, either in the form of a Convention or of recommendations.

The Council on March 11th, 1927, approved this suggestion.


The Economic Committee took note of the report drawn up by the Joint Committee on Economic Crises, which met in December 1926. This report was reconsidered by the Joint Committee at its meeting on May 1st, 1927.

8. Economic Relations of Different Countries.

The Committee held a preliminary exchange of views on the question submitted to it by the Council on December 8th, 1926, to the effect that it should collect methodical and precise information regarding the economic and financial relations of the various States with a view to the possible application of Article 16 of the Covenant.

The Committee appointed a special Sub-Committee to examine this problem in the interval between its twenty-first and twenty-second sessions. It informed the Council that it had been much impressed by the close connection between this question and certain other economic aspects of the problem of the application of Article 16 of the Covenant. Some of these questions had been referred to other organs of the League, and the Committee hoped that before making a final report it might be in possession of the results of the studies to be carried out by those organs.


The Committee noted that the Preparatory Committee on Statistical Methodology had completed reports with reference to current international statistics, stocks of cereals, etc., and that such reports would be submitted to the International Institute of Statistics for discussion at its next session, to take place at the close of 1927.

The Committee thought it would be better to postpone, until after the Economic Conference had finished its work, a decision as to the fields of economic statistics in which effective action could be attempted with the greatest hope of success. It recommended, however, that further action should be taken with reference to the very considerable number of resolutions already sent to the International Institute of Statistics on the recommendations of the Preparatory Committee. These resolutions covered international trade, fisheries, prices and indices of economic conditions, censuses of industrial production, etc.

The Economic Committee further suggested that steps should be taken to bring to the notice of the various Governments the importance of adopting uniform methods in the compilation of economic statistics and accordingly recommended that a Conference, to which all Governments should be invited to send official statisticians, should be convened during the course of the year 1928.

The Council, on March 11th, 1927, approved in principle this proposal of the Economic Committee.

B. Work of the Financial Committee.

I. Settlement of Bulgarian Refugees.

The preliminary measures necessary for putting into effect a scheme for the settlement of Bulgarian refugees were summarised in the Supplementary Report to the seventh session of the Assembly.

The negotiations conducted for this purpose have been successfully concluded and the scheme is now in process of application. It is thought desirable to include in the present report a history of the scheme, a summary of its provisions and a note on the measures which have been taken to carry it into effect.

1 See Official Journal, Special Supplement, No. 44, page 313.
1. HISTORY OF THE SCHEME.

During the almost continuous fighting from the outbreak of the Balkan war of 1912 to the end of 1918, and throughout the troubled post-war period of shifting populations in the Balkans, considerable numbers of refugees entered Bulgaria from the neighbouring countries. In some cases they left their former homes as the result of international conventions to which Bulgaria was one of the parties; in others the departure was unorganised. The official Bulgarian statistics for the period from 1913 to 1925 record that 221,191 refugees of Bulgarian nationality had arrived and remained within the narrowed frontiers of the new Bulgaria. Many of them remained unsettled and continued in the greatest misery. Internally, they naturally formed the material ready to hand for any revolutionary and disruptive forces threatening the social order. As regards external relations, they were not less dangerous. They provided recruits for, and gave shelter to, the comitadjis, whose activities led to so many frontier incidents. Moreover, the presence of so many destitute and miserable refugees, with vivid memories of their expulsion or forced abandonment of their former lands across the frontier—sometimes scarcely out of sight—necessarily constituted a standing menace of more far-reaching and ambitious movements.

It has been obvious for some years, to those who have watched the Balkan situation, that a settlement loan, with the aid of which these refugees could be securely settled in their new country, among those of their own race, would not only relieve an immense mass of human misery but would have a stabilising effect on the whole Bulgarian—indeed the whole Balkan—situation altogether out of proportion to the sum involved.

Till recently, however, the internal situation of Bulgaria, and some factors in its external relations, were not favourable to the successful undertaking of such a scheme through the League. The situation was followed carefully, but as an unsuccessful application for assistance or an abortive attempt to help would have done nothing but harm both to Bulgaria and to the credit of the League, on which ultimate success would depend, no encouragement to make a formal demand was given in earlier years. By the spring of 1926, however, the conditions seemed favourable and the Bulgarian Government made formal application on May 3rd, 1926. The proposals put forward on the responsibility of the Government contemplated the settlement of 30,180 families on the land and the assistance of some 5,000 families in the towns. The standard sum for the full settlement of a family was fixed at 50,000 levas (or about £75) to cover the provision of a house, an ox or cow, a half use of a plough and cart and a fourth use of a harrow, minor implements, seed and subsistence for eight or nine months. This sum compares with the standard figure of about £100 in the Greek refugee settlement scheme, the difference resulting from variations in local conditions and standards. Only 36 per cent of the refugees, however, were believed to be entirely destitute; 20 per cent had the means of subsistence for a few months; 17 per cent had a house and 27 per cent had a house and implements. Allowing for this, it was calculated that about £1,625,000 would be required for settlement on the land (excluding the cost of preparation of land where suitable land was not available). In addition, it was calculated that, if the 5,000 urban families were to be assisted, £150,000 would be required.

The question of the land required for settlement presented a greater difficulty than in Greece, where the departure of the Turks had left recently cultivated land available and where it was possible to find land for practically all the refugees without reclamation work. In Bulgaria the position was different. The standard allowance per family, under the Bulgarian land law, is 5 hectares. Some 10 per cent of the refugees will, however, be settled in districts of intensive cultivation (vines, orchards, tobacco, silkworms), where only half this land will be required to support a family. The general average may therefore be taken at 4 hectares, or a total of 132,000 hectares.

The full plan of expenditure, presented by the Bulgarian Government comprised:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country settlements</td>
<td>1,625,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town settlements</td>
<td>150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expropriation</td>
<td>75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clearing</td>
<td>125,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drainage</td>
<td>225,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>450,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,650,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This total was ultimately reduced by the Financial Committee to £2½ millions, mainly by the omission of the less urgent railway line and the elimination of the estimate for town settlements.

The Financial Committee, at its meeting in June 1926, pronounced definitely in favour of the League proceeding with the enterprise. Before, however, the Council could be properly asked to associate the credit of the League with a loan operation, some important negotiations,
needed to be undertaken. It was necessary that the reparation authorities (the Reparation Commission and the Inter-Allied Commission at Sofia) should agree to release from the general reparation charge the revenues on which it was desired to place a first charge in favour of the new loan, and to institute a system which would safeguard the Bulgarian currency (and consequently, the assigned revenues) from losing their value through reparation payments. At the same time, the Committee recognised the extreme urgency of securing money for expenditure before the winter, which would be impossible if it could only be obtained from a loan issued after the next ordinary session of the Committee and Council in September 1926. The Committee therefore proposed to meet again in special session in July, and asked the Council to authorise negotiations for immediate advances for urgent needs if the result were satisfactory.

The Council on June 10th, 1926, approved this proposal, fixing the limit of the advances at £400,000. The three Member States which are neighbours of Bulgaria — Greece, Roumania, and the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes — represented to the Council that it was of interest to them that the system of control should be such as to ensure that the proceeds of the loan would be devoted solely to the objects in view and that the plan of settlement should be such as not to involve danger of frontier trouble. The Council undertook to consult these States in determining the definite form of control.

The required negotiations continued and from July 19th to 23rd, 1926, the Financial Committee met in special session in London, and was able to recommend the President of the Council to authorise the Bulgarian Government to begin negotiations for an advance of £400,000. This sum was obtained in the form of an advance from the Bank of England to the Bank of Bulgaria.

In the meantime, one of the other main obstacles to the issue of a loan had been overcome. Bulgaria owed considerable sums in respect of pre-war loans and, while some payments were being made in respect of these obligations, only short-term arrangements had been made, and the Committee took the view that, unless a definite settlement were reached, the issue of a loan would be difficult or impossible. Early in September 1926 an agreement covering the major part of these debts was concluded, and the problem was so far reduced in dimensions as to present no obstacle to the final approval of the main scheme of settlement at the September session.

On September 2nd, 1926, the Financial Committee met at Geneva. Anxiety had been expressed as to the settlement of refugees near the frontiers. The Committee proposed that, “in principle, the land chosen for new settlement should be a considerable distance (50 kilometers) from any frontier of the three neighbouring States”. Exceptions to this principle were, however, contemplated where the characteristics of the region served as an effective natural barrier. Roumania at once agreed to such an exception in a region south of the Danube, and the exact definition of further exceptions in other regions of Bulgaria was deferred till the December session. The principle was also laid down that no expenditure was to be allowed on communications “designed, not for the necessary requirements of the refugees, but for strategic purposes”. The main importance of this latter provision was its application to the proposed railway line from Haskovo to Mastanly, to which Greece raised certain objections. On September 20th, 1926, the Council was, however, able to note that Greece had, as the result of declarations made by the representative of Bulgaria, withdrawn its objections to the construction of this railway.

The Committee’s report included also a draft Protocol for signature by Bulgaria, embodying the obligations undertaken by Bulgaria and the system of control.

The scheme so recommended was approved by the Council on September 7th, 1926, and the Protocol was signed by the representative of Bulgaria on the following day, September 8th, 1926. The Assembly on September 24th, 1926, approved the work which had been done.

2. SUMMARY OF THE SCHEME.

The outlines of the scheme so negotiated and approved may now be described.

(a) Object.

The purpose of the scheme is the establishment on the land of refugees exclusively of Bulgarian nationality.

The refugees to be so dealt with have been estimated provisionally as comprising about 30,180 families (or 60,360 persons capable of work, or some 120,000 persons altogether, including children and other dependants).

The scheme is exclusively one of land settlement, and does not, like the Greek scheme, include provision for urban workers. It is contemplated that the Bulgarian Government will be able to assist, from its own resources, the relatively small number of urban workers requiring assistance.

Settlement will consist of the provision of land, of housing, of supplies in kind of agricultural implements, cattle, seed and in some cases subsistence for a limited period. In addition, expenditure will be allowed in certain cases for purposes of drainage, clearing and communications.
The total loan is to be devoted “as to about two-thirds to the provision of houses, initial equipment and advances, and as to one-third to the preparation of land, so as to make it suitable for settlement and communications”. The latter category of expenditure includes some £125,000 for clearing, £225,000 for drainage and £225,000 for communications (mainly the Haskovo-Mastanly railway line).

(b) Land for Settlement.

The Bulgarian Government has undertaken (Article VIII of Protocol), to provide not less than 132,000 hectares of land which is, or may be made, suitable for agricultural settlement (exclusive of pasture land) and the character and situation of which must be approved by the Commissioner. This land must be unencumbered property of the Bulgarian Government. It is contemplated that of the above total about 36,000 hectares may require some work of clearing and deforestation and some 21,000 hectares some work of drainage, for which provision has been made in the estimates of expenditure. The remainder will be land immediately available for cultivation without such preparatory work.

(c) Issue of the Loan.

The loan was successfully issued in London and New York on December 21st, 1926.

The sterling block amounted nominally to £2,400,000, of which £1,750,000 were offered for public subscription on the London market, the rest being subscribed by financial undertakings in Italy, Switzerland and the Netherlands. The American block amounted nominally to 4,500,000 dollars. The net yield of the two blocks amounted to £2,873,091. Of this, £925,889 11s. 6d. was used to satisfy the claim of the holders of Bulgarian Treasury Bills issued in France in 1912 and 1913.

The loan was paid into a special account of the National Bank of Bulgaria, and placed under the control of the Commissioner of the League.

(d) Securities of the Loan.

The loan is secured by a first charge upon:

(a) The excise duty on salt;
(b) The excise duty on alcohol;
(c) The net receipts of the match monopoly;
(d) All sums received after September 1st, 1928, in respect of rent or interest due from refugees (sums received from refugees in payment for the purchase of land, buildings or material, or as repayment of advances, will be applied to amortisation);
(e) Other additional revenues to be specially assigned if the above revenues should at any time fall below 150 per cent of the annual sum required to meet the service of the loan.

The competent reparation authority (the Inter-Allied Commission at Sofia) has released the above revenues (a) to (d) and has undertaken to release the further revenues mentioned in (e) if required, and the Bulgarian Government has undertaken to give the necessary first charge.

The Bulgarian Government has undertaken that the assigned revenues shall not be used (i.e., even on the basis of a second charge) as a security for any new loan without the consent of the Trustees (Protocol, Article III, §3).

Trustees have been appointed by the Council of the League to represent the interests of the bondholders of the settlement loan.

The assigned revenues as they are collected are paid into a special account controlled solely by the Commissioner (Protocol, Article IV, §2). After the termination of his office, this account will be controlled by the Trustees. The sums required for the service of the loan are retained and devoted to that purpose and the balance returned to the Bulgarian Government.

The terms of issue include provision for an amortisation fund and a reserve fund (Protocol, Article IV, §3).

(e) Bulgarian Finances and Currency.

Apart from the specific securities of the loan, two special precautions have been taken to safeguard the stability of the Bulgarian currency against a depreciation which might diminish the gold value of the assigned revenues.

The scheme is one of refugee settlement, as in Greece, and not of financial reconstruction as in Austria and Hungary, and direct responsibility with regard to the general finances of Bulgaria is not undertaken by the League. Nor is such a responsibility required, for the Bulgarian budget has been balanced (with a surplus) since 1922, and the leva has been stable for about the same period.
Nevertheless, the Financial Committee has taken the opportunity afforded by the settlement scheme to strengthen the position in two important respects.

In the first place, the powers of the National Bank have been carefully examined and, as a result of prolonged study and negotiation, new draft statutes, in harmony with the accepted principles of central banking, have been agreed by the Government. The Committee considers that as a result of these measures the Bank will be established on a satisfactory legal basis.

The second new safeguard is of no less importance. The reparation payments of Bulgaria are prescribed in an agreement of March 1923. The payments last year amounted only to 8 million gold francs, but the annual obligation increases in later years till it reaches in 1934-35 a maximum of a little over 43 million gold francs. The Financial Committee considered that, unless provision was made to secure that demands for such considerable payments in foreign exchange were not pressed without due regard to the exchange position, the stability of the currency might be endangered. After prolonged negotiation, a satisfactory arrangement has been made with the Reparation Commission, which has taken a decision under which payments of reparation will, if the need arises from the point of view of their effects on the exchange, be controlled by a Transfer Committee. The Bulgarian Government may request the suspension, "in whole or in part, in the interests of the stability of the exchange", of the purchase of foreign currency necessary for reparation payments. A Transfer Committee, consisting of three “experts on questions of exchange”, will then be appointed: one of these members (the Chairman) being a citizen of the United States of America, or of a country which was neutral in the war, to be appointed by the unanimous vote of the Reparation Commission, or, failing unanimity, by the President of the Permanent Court of International Justice at the Hague; one by the Reparation Commission (after consultation with the Committee at Sofia), acting if necessary by a majority; and a third by the Trustees of the settlement loan. This Transfer Committee will then be responsible for purchasing foreign exchange for reparation payments “to the extent to which it considers that the stability of the Bulgarian currency allows”.

(f) Control.

In Bulgaria. — The control of the execution of the scheme is in the hands of a Commissioner appointed by, and responsible to, the Council of the League. He resides in Sofia and reports at least every three months to the Council. He has authority to engage personnel, including inspectors, within a budget limit fixed by the Council. The proceeds of the settlement loan and of the advance of £400,000 are paid into an account controlled by him. He is responsible, subject to such instructions as he may receive from time to time, for agreeing to the choice, or the establishment, of the central and local organisations through which the work of settlement will be effected; for taking all precautions to ensure that the money is expended only upon the specified purposes; for certifying the land prepared for settlement as suitable both in character and in position (in relation, for example, to any rules relating to settlement near the frontiers), and for controlling the assigned revenues account.

M. René Charron has been appointed to this office till November 1928. When the work of settlement is completed, the control of the assigned revenues account will pass to the Trustees.

In Geneva. — Normally every three months, and at other times should occasion require, the general progress of the scheme will be examined by the Financial Committee, and by the Council on its advice. The Committee and Council will have before them the reports of the Commissioner, who is likely normally to be present in person to give further information and explanations.

The Council has recognised that the three neighbour Member States are interested in certain aspects of the settlement work, in particular, the choice of land for settlement in the frontier zones. It has recognised the right of these three States to form an advisory committee which may meet in Geneva or elsewhere, but not in Bulgaria. The three States, or any one of them, can ask for information from, or present observations to, either the League or the Commissioner, and will receive copies of official documents submitted by the Commissioner to the Council on such questions as they claim to affect specially their interests. Any one, or all three, may (with or without prior consultation in the advisory committee) send a letter to the Council on a subject affecting its or their interests in the sense of Article 4 of the Covenant, and in that case the State or States concerned would be present at the Council as Members during the consideration of such a letter.

3. Progress in the Application of the Scheme.

(a) Legislation of the Bulgarian Government.

A considerable portion of the legislation required to carry out the settlement scheme was passed by the Bulgarian Parliament on September 30th, 1926. It provided for the ratification of the Protocol, the acceptance of an advance of £400,000 from the Bank of England in anticipation of the loan, and the assignment as security for this advance of certain specific revenues. Full powers were conferred on the Cabinet to take by decree all necessary measures for the
employment of the advance and for the settlement of the refugees. Further legislation, relating to the new statutes of the National Bank, as approved by the Financial Committee, was passed in November 1926, and came into force on January 1st, 1927.

The Bulgarian Government, under Article 6 of the Protocol, undertook to centralise all its existing services and organisations dealing with refugees under one authority in such a manner as to establish to the satisfaction of the Commissioner an organisation capable of ensuring the proper utilisation of the loan. This organisation was set up by the Bulgarian Government under a law voted on December 9th, 1926, and promulgated on December 14th. Under this law a Director-General for the Settlement of the Refugees was appointed, with wide powers, under the authority of the Prime Minister. The Director-General was made responsible for all work connected with the execution of the plan, either directly through his own staff or through certain Government departments.

(b) Preparation of the Plan of Settlement.

The first duty of the General Directorate established by the Bulgarian Government was to draft the plan of settlement and this work was carried forward in January and February 1927, the provisional results being available for consideration by the Financial Committee during its session held in March.

The plan included a census of the families in need of relief, a description of the relief to be granted to each family, particulars as to the amount of land available and the work to be done in preparing it, together with an approximate estimate of the cost of settlement under each of these items.

The total estimated expenditure for the scheme as thus provisionally planned was estimated at about 1,221 million levas, or £1,817,000. In that figure, however, certain expenses which could not at that early stage be estimated were not included.

The total area of land included in the plan and available for settlement was 175,000 hectares, which was in excess of the area required under the Protocol. Part of this total area, however, could not be used, either because its preparation would be too costly or because its situation rendered it unsuitable for settlement in view of certain decisions taken by the Council.

(c) Execution of the Plan.

The Bulgarian authorities, working in co-operation with the Commissioner of the League, proceeded at once with the preliminary work of settlement without waiting for the general plan to be finally established. In the period between November 15th, 1926, and February 15th, 1927, 1,547,065 kilogrammes of seed were distributed to 4,110 families at a total cost of over 10 million levas. The General Directorate also prepared plans and estimates for the construction of dwellings, and issued instructions to the competent services to draw up plans for the draining of marshes or flooded areas, and the construction of the railway from Rakowsky to Mastala.

These activities were reviewed by the Financial Committee and approved by the Council in March of the present year.

(d) The Frontier Question.

The Council in September 1926 recognised that certain special questions, such as the situation of the refugees in relation to the frontiers were questions affecting the interests of the neighbouring States. It laid down that, in principle, the land chosen for new settlement should be at a considerable distance (50 kilometers) from any frontier of the three neighbouring States, and that exceptions should only be made to this rule in the case of the settlement of unimportant numbers of refugees, or the settlement of a large number in a district where the characteristics of the region served as an effective natural barrier.

This question of settlement in the neighbourhood of the frontiers has given rise to a good deal of negotiation and discussion, and the Financial Committee has found it necessary to consider carefully the application in detail of the principle laid down by the Council. During its sessions in December 1926 and March 1927, it submitted to the Council recommendations in regard to the application of the principle and the exceptions which might reasonably be allowed in particular districts. These recommendations, made after considering letters and observations from the representatives of the neighbouring States and the reports of the Commissioner, were adopted by the Council in March 1927.

II. SETTLEMENT OF GREEK REFUGEES.

The Financial Committee, in its report to the Council in June 1926, suggested that its next session might furnish an appropriate opportunity for a comprehensive report upon the progress of the work of settlement.

The Committee, however, on meeting in September 1926, in view of the recent change which had taken place in the Government of Greece, considered it advisable to postpone its more detailed report on the future of the settlement work until its next session in December. It observed, however, that the general progress had been good and that the relations between
the Government and the Commission had been very satisfactory. There was only one matter to which the Committee felt it necessary to draw attention, namely, the contract of a loan by the Greek Government during the summer with a Swedish company, in order to meet the outstanding deficit in the Greek budget for 1925-26. The Committee pointed out that the Greek Government, under Article 6 of the Protocol for the Settlement of the Refugees, had undertaken not to create any charges on its revenues by way of security for any loans not intended either for productive purposes or for carrying out its obligations under the Peace Treaties.

The Financial Committee again considered the progress of the work of settlement during its sessions held in December 1926 and March 1927. In December 1926, no question arose in regard to which a decision appeared to be necessary. In March 1927, the Financial Committee carefully examined information supplied by M. Dendramis, Chargé d’Affaires at Berne, and M. Manjavinos, Director in the Ministry for Finance, with regard to the general budgetary and financial position of Greece, and, in particular, to Article 6 of the Protocol of September 1923, under which the Greek Government had undertaken to make and to persist in making every effort to secure as soon as possible a complete equilibrium between the ordinary receipts and the expenses of the State. The Committee reported that in this connection it was desirable in any case to have fuller information than was then available, and it requested the Secretariat of the League to collect as complete information as possible before the next session of the Committee in June. But it also noted the statement of the Settlement Commission that the work of establishment could not be satisfactorily completed without an additional loan, and added that, though no application for such a loan had been made by the Greek Government, it was essential that the Committee should, if such an application were made at some future time, be in a position to form a clear picture of the whole financial situation.

III. FINANCIAL RECONSTRUCTION OF AUSTRIA.

1. Issue of Austrian Treasury Bills.

The Financial Committee, in September 1926, approved the text of the draft law for the issue of Austrian Treasury bills which the Council had, in principle, approved during its June session. The Federal Government is authorised to issue bills of not more than six months’ duration to an amount not exceeding 75 million schillings; the proceeds to be used only to meet temporary needs of the Treasury and not to cover final expenditure. It was also provided that six months after the first issue of these bills, the State debt to the Bank should be reduced by 50 million schillings taken from the proceeds of the reconstruction loan.

2. Releases from the Balance of the Reconstruction Loan.

The Financial Committee, during its session held in September 1926, agreed in principle, and subject to the submission of a detailed programme of expenditure, to a request from the Austrian Government for the release, in accordance with the Council resolution of December 9th, 1925, of the available balance of the reconstruction loan for productive expenditure within the limits of the budget for 1927. This balance was estimated at about 60 million schillings, a figure which included the Swiss Government loan of 20 million Swiss francs. A detailed programme for the expenditure of this sum was approved in December 1926, and the balance of the loan has been released in accordance with the request of the Austrian Government.

IV. FINANCIAL RECONSTRUCTION OF HUNGARY.


The Financial Committee, during its session of September 1926, considered the final report of the Commissioner-General for Hungary, which gave a summary of the results of the whole reconstruction plan. The Commissioner-General stated that, while the level of the budget was higher than that contemplated in the reconstruction plan, there appeared to be no reason why it should not be permanently maintained. He pointed out, however, that Hungary would henceforth be assuming full responsibility for the management of its own finances, and that great pressure would doubtless be brought to bear upon the Government to increase the level of all forms of expenditure. The Financial Committee, in noting these observations of the Commissioner-General, expressed the conviction that the Hungarian Government would firmly and consistently resist any measures which might imperil the results which had been achieved.

Mr. Royall Tyler has been appointed as representative of the Trustees of the reconstruction loan in Budapest and as the agent of M. ter Meulen, the member of the Financial Committee in charge of the account of the balance of the reconstruction loan.

2. Balance of the Reconstruction Loan.

The Council, on the recommendation of the Financial Committee, authorised in March 1927 the allocation of a further 50 million gold crowns from the balance of the reconstruction loan for productive investment during the financial year 1927-28 in accordance with a definite programme. It was understood that the conditions as to the release and supervision of this further sum would be the same as those in force since July 1st, 1926, in connection with previous releases.

V. BANKING AND CURRENCY REFORM IN ESTONIA.

The Estonian Government, as early as September 17th, 1924, requested the Council of the League to procure an authoritative opinion on the financial and monetary position of Estonia. The Financial Committee was accordingly asked by the Council to study the matter, and two members of the Secretariat of the League visited Estonia in January 1925 and submitted a report, which was approved by the Financial Committee and adopted by the Council in March of that year.

The report of the Financial Committee contained recommendations that the existing statutes of the Bank of Estonia should be amended so as to make the Bank completely independent of the State, that the metal reserve of the State should be handed over to the Bank of Estonia, and that the State note circulation should be transferred and amalgamated with the Bank. Moreover, the Financial Committee expressed the view that, before the situation could be considered normal, it would be necessary to relieve the Bank of the large quantity of frozen credits with which it was burdened, and it suggested that the Estonian Government might consider the question of founding a mortgage institute to take over all long-term operations hitherto effected by the Government.

Two years later, the Estonian Government, in order to carry out these recommendations, again approached the Financial Committee and requested its advice. M. Janssen, a member of the Committee, visited Estonia in November 1926, and submitted a report to the Committee, supplemented by verbal explanations. The Committee received, in addition, further explanations from M. Sepp, the Finance Minister of Estonia, and Mr. Williamson, Financial Adviser to the Estonian Government.

The Committee noted that the Estonian budget had been balanced since 1922, and that the economic condition of the country had materially improved during the past two years. The Central Bank, however, was burdened with a large amount of frozen credits. In order to carry out the monetary reform, and to render liquid the position of the Bank, it would be necessary for the Estonian Government to raise a foreign loan secured by specific revenues.

The Financial Committee agreed with the Estonian representatives upon a scheme which included a currency law and the reform of the statutes of the Bank of Issue. The Committee recommended that the currency system should be based on the gold exchange standard, that the Bank should have the sole right of issuing notes, that the long-term assets of the Bank should be transferred to a special mortgage institute under the direct control of the Government with a view to their gradual liquidation, and that the foreign loan should be an international loan yielding a net sum of £1,350,000. The Committee suggested that the loan should be secured by the excise duties on tobacco, beer, matches and other minor articles.

A Protocol regarding currency and banking reform in Estonia was drafted by the Committee. It contained provisions for the raising and employment of the proposed loan, the assignment of securities, the appointment of a Trustee to act on behalf of the League, the legislation required for the necessary financial reforms and the appointment of an Adviser to the Bank. The Protocol was signed on December 10th, 1926, by the Estonian Minister for Finance.

The Financial Committee at the same time appointed a Sub-Committee to approve on its behalf the draft laws which the Estonian Government undertook, under the Protocol, to submit to the Estonian Parliament. This Sub-Committee, in co-operation with experts of the Estonian Government, approved the texts of these laws, and submitted to the Financial Committee in March 1927 a report on the results of its work.

The Financial Committee thereupon authorised its Chairman to approve the conditions of the loan on its behalf in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 4 of Article 1 of the Protocol.

The Council of the League had in December 1926 approved the issue of the loan, subject to the fulfilment of the conditions recommended by the Financial Committee, and during its March session (1927) it further approved the arrangements made by the Financial Committee in regard to the issue of the loan and the banking and currency reforms.
VI. FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE FREE CITY OF DANZIG.

The Financial Committee, during its session held in September 1926, examined the progress made in carrying out the suggestions which it had put forward in July with a view to securing the restoration of budgetary equilibrium in the finances of the Free City of Danzig.

The Committee was unable at that time to make a definite recommendation for the issue of a loan on behalf of the Free City. It noted that the Danzig authorities, while they had adopted a supplementary budget for the current financial year with a view to reducing the estimated deficit, were taking measures which would have the effect of increasing taxation rather than reducing expenditure. The Committee felt, moreover, that, before it could recommend the issue of a loan, arrangements would have to be made for the settlement of certain outstanding questions. These included an elucidation of the position of Danzig regarding its liabilities under the Peace Treaty, a definite conclusion of the negotiations with Poland for the distribution of Customs duties, and arrangements for the organisation of the tobacco monopoly, on which a portion of the prospective revenue of Danzig would depend.

The Committee stated in September that, if the Free City were able by December to report definite arrangements on these points, it would be prepared, subject to the Treaty rights of the Polish Government and to the assignment of the necessary securities, to recommend a loan of approximately 30 million gulden, provided the Free City submitted a definite and satisfactory plan of further economies such as would secure budget equilibrium.

The Committee observed that the necessary reforms should include the following points:

(a) A detailed scheme for securing budget equilibrium, fixing a maximum figure for budgetary expenditure in 1927 and 1928;
(b) Reduction in the number of officials, amounting, together with any reduction found possible in the number of members of legislative bodies, to a total of not less than 400 in each of the next two financial years;
(c) The reduction in salaries, adopted for a period of four years only, should be made without a time-limit;
(d) A simplification of the budget and accounting system, and the periodical publication of returns of cash revenue and expenditure and of liabilities by the Free City and the Municipality of Danzig.

The Committee, in December 1926, noted that substantial progress had already been made.

(a) The negotiations with Poland regarding the allocation of Customs duties had led to the signing of an agreement in Geneva on September 20th. This agreement, which had already been put provisionally into force, though it still awaited ratification, gave a satisfactory basis for the balancing of the Danzig budget.
(b) The Senate had adopted an amended budget for the financial year 1926 and had limited the total net expenditure for 1927 and 1928 to specified sums, which the Committee regarded as satisfactory.
(c) The Senate had undertaken to reduce the number of officials by 400 in the budget for 1927 as compared with the budget for 1926, and 200 in the budget for 1928, whilst it thought a further reduction of 200 might be possible.
(d) The Senate had submitted to the Financial Committee certain suggestions as to the simplification of the budget and the accounting system which the Committee considered would be an improvement. An agreement had also been reached regarding the form in which the returns of cash revenue and expenditure and of liabilities would be periodically published in future.
(e) The Senate had obtained from nearly all the State and municipal officials a declaration that they abandoned voluntarily a part of their salaries (in certain cases up to 13 per cent). This arrangement was to be binding till the Senate declared that the exceptional financial difficulties had ceased to exist.
(f) The Senate had obtained from the Volkstag full powers to take the necessary measures for the introduction of a tobacco monopoly. The Senate had adopted a decree on this subject.
(g) The Senate had submitted to the Volkstag a Bill relating to unemployment relief, with a view to reducing the fiscal burden of the State.

Further, the Danzig Government was about to negotiate with the competent authorities for a settlement of the Peace Treaty liabilities, and had asked that the amount of the loan should be increased in order to meet payments under this head. The Committee said that it would agree to an appropriate increase of the loan.

It further recommended that the securities to be assigned for the service of the loan should be the receipts of the tobacco monopoly, and, if necessary, the excise on spirits, it being understood that further revenues would be assigned if these should amount to less than 150 per cent of the sum required for the service of the loan.

Though the Committee was unable definitely to recommend the issue of a loan, it asked the Council to give the loan a conditional approval, to take effect as soon as the Committee was satisfied that the necessary measures had been taken. These included a final approval of the Customs Agreement of September 20th, 1926, by Poland and Danzig, the definite conclusion between Poland and Danzig of a satisfactory agreement for the introduction of the tobacco monopoly, an undertaking by the Senate that the number of officials would be reduced by a further 400 during the financial years 1927 and 1928, and the notification of an agreement between Danzig and the competent authorities as to the settlement of the obligations of the Free City under the Peace Treaties.

When the Financial Committee met in March 1927, two important conditions remained to be fulfilled. Difficulties had arisen between the Governments of Poland and Danzig in regard to the execution of the Customs Agreement of September 20th, 1926, and the two parties were still not agreed as to the means of forming an international consortium with a view to the introduction of a tobacco monopoly. The Financial Committee succeeded in framing recommendations in regard to these points to which the Polish and Danzig representatives were asked to accede. The Danzig Government accepted the recommendations and the Polish Government stated that it was prepared to communicate them to the Polish Customs authorities in order that the latter might give them sympathetic consideration.

The Danzig Senate submitted to the Committee during the March session a programme of expenditure of the proceeds of the loan. The Committee expressed the view that the proceeds should not exceed 40 million gulden, exclusive of incidental expenses. Of this sum, 14 million gulden are to be applied to the consolidation of the floating debt, 15 million to a settlement of the claims of the Conference of Ambassadors and the Reparations Commission, and 11 million gulden to the construction of houses.

It was understood that the loan contract would provide for a system of control designed to ensure that its proceeds were used in accordance with this programme, and that this control would be exercised by one or more trustees appointed by the League. The trustee or trustees would also control the securities assigned to the service of the loan.

The Committee authorised its Chairman to approve the loan contract on its behalf, and recommended that the President of the Council should be authorised by the Council to appoint the trustee or trustees on the proposal of the Chairman of the Financial Committee if it should be necessary to make the appointment in the interval between Council sessions.

The Council approved the recommendations of the Financial Committee during its session held in March 1927. At the same time, it noted a request submitted by the Senate of Danzig, in a letter dated March 4th, asking for authority to devote a sum of £16,000 from the loan for the enlarging of the Kaiserhafen municipal wharf. The Council decided to ask the Financial Committee for its advice on this question.

VII. DOUBLE TAXATION AND FISCAL EVASION.

The Committee of Experts on Double Taxation and Fiscal Evasion has held three sessions. The first two sessions took place at Geneva from May 17th, to May 22nd 1926, and from January 5th to January 12th, 1927. The third session was held in London from April 5th to April 12th, 1927.

The work done by the Committee during the first of these sessions was summarised in the Supplementary Report to the seventh ordinary session of the Assembly.

The work on double taxation and fiscal evasion may be divided into three phases:

1. A theoretical study of double taxation entrusted to four expert economists (report published in March 1923, document F.19).
2. An administrative and practical study of double taxation and fiscal evasion entrusted to high officials in the fiscal administrations of the various countries (resolutions and report presented to the Financial Committee in February 1925, document F.212).
3. The framing of draft conventions by an enlarged Committee (report and draft conventions, document C.216.M.85.1927.II).

The draft conventions are four in number:

(a) Convention for the prevention of double taxation;
(b) Convention for the prevention of double taxation in regard to the special question of succession duties;
(c) Convention on administrative assistance in matters of taxation;
(d) Convention on Judicial assistance in the collection of taxes.

Further, in order to permit of a systematic and continuous international co-operation in this field, the Committee suggests the appointment, under the auspices of the League of States, of a permanent intergovernmental committee of experts for the purpose of considering all questions of a legal nature arising out of the provisions of these conventions.

1 See Official Journal, Special Supplement No. 44, page 316.
Nations, of a technical body whose principal task would be to hasten the solution of problems of double taxation and of administrative and judicial assistance. The report of the Committee contains a special chapter in which the duties of this body are indicated.

The Committee, after a thorough discussion, was obliged to recognize, in reference to the conventions which it framed, that, owing to the diversity at present existing between the legal and fiscal systems of the various countries, the time did not yet appear to be opportune for the conclusion of collective conventions between States. The Committee thought, however, that it was possible to prepare model bilateral conventions, and it considered that the generalised adoption of these conventions would in itself constitute an appreciable progress towards the unification and codification of the rules followed in the various countries.

One of the principal preoccupations of the Committee was to decrease as far as possible the barriers to the free development of international relations which at present resulted from numerous cases of double taxation and cases of fiscal evasion which are inseparable from excessive taxation.

The Committee was helped in its task by a delegation from the International Chamber of Commerce, which attended its meetings in an advisory capacity with the authority of the Council of the League. The Committee was also assisted by members of the Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit.

The Committee of Experts submitted a provisional report to the Financial Committee in March 1927. This report was embodied by the Financial Committee in its own report to the Council. The Council, during its session held in March 1927, adopted the report of the Financial Committee.

VIII. COUNTERFEITING CURRENCY.

The Financial Committee had decided last year to send a questionnaire to banks of issue in the various countries in order to obtain their opinion on a proposal submitted to the Council on June 10th, 1926, by the French Government for the preparation of a draft convention to deal with the crime of counterfeiting currency.

The Financial Committee, during its session held in December 1926, examined replies which had been received from twenty countries. It noted that nearly all the banks of issue which had replied were in favour of the conclusion of an international convention, and it took the view that such a convention should contain proposals both for legislative measures and for measures of co-operation between the judicial authorities and the police in the different countries.

The Committee did not think it necessary to insist upon the unification of the laws of the different countries, but that it would suffice if, under the convention, the various States accepted certain common principles, namely:

(a) All practices of counterfeiting should be covered by the law.

(b) All these practices should be prohibited and penalised without its being necessary to prove intent to defraud; in the absence of intent to defraud, the penalty might be lighter.

(c) All counterfeiting or uttering of counterfeit money should be regarded as an ordinary criminal offence for which the State would prosecute.

(d) A State on whose territory the offence of counterfeiting or uttering the currency of another State was committed must punish this offence with the same severity as if the criminal acts had concerned its own currency. Such treatment should depend neither upon reciprocity nor adhesion to a convention.

(e) A State whose nationals counterfeited or uttered foreign money outside the country must punish such nationals as if the crime had been committed in the country. An exception to this obligation would be made in the case of a State which undertook to extradite its own nationals who had committed the crime of counterfeiting abroad.

(f) The principle of extradition for counterfeiting must be regulated on a uniform basis. The convention might — by distinguishing between the State on the territory of which the crime was committed, the State whose currency was counterfeited and the State to which the criminal belonged — fix the order in which States could demand extradition.

The Financial Committee recommended that a small mixed committee should be appointed, consisting of specialists in international criminal law, prosecution authorities, delegates of the banks of issue and one or two representatives of the Financial Committee, in order to study the question in detail and to elaborate a draft Convention.

The Council adopted this recommendation on December 9th, 1926.

IX. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO STATES VICTIMS OF AGGRESSION.

In connection with the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference, the Council, on December 8th, 1926, requested the Secretary-General to ask the Financial Organisation of the League to consider proposals submitted by the Finnish delegation with a view to the establishment of a common scheme of financial assistance in support of a State which was the victim of aggression.

The Committee examined the Finnish memorandum during its session held in March 1927, and invited the representatives of Finland, M. Erich, M. Holsti, and M. Ryti, to explain the ideas underlying their proposals.

The Committee thought it desirable, in view of the great importance of the question and the technical character of the considerations involved, to devote further time to its study before expressing any opinion as to the financial scheme which would be best calculated to achieve the desired object. The Committee hoped that it would be in a position to submit a report on the subject in June 1927.

X. PUBLICATION OF MONETARY AND BANKING LAWS.

The Financial Committee, during its March session, considered a suggestion that a collection of the monetary and banking laws of the world should be made and published by the League of Nations.

It expressed the view that, in any case, these documents should be available in the Secretariat, and that the Secretariat should make a collection, in the original languages and so far as already available in French and English, of monetary laws, central bank laws, central bank statutes and conventions between the central banks and the Governments, in so far as these documents were published and in force.

It deferred its opinion whether the information collected should be translated and published until it might be in a better position to estimate the work and expense involved.

II. ORGANISATION FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSIT.

Since the seventh ordinary session of the Assembly, the Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit and the various bodies constituted by it have been particularly concerned with the preparations for the Third General Conference on Communications and Transit, which, in conformity with the decisions of the last session of the Assembly, has been summoned by the Council, and is to meet at Geneva on August 23rd, 1927. The Assembly, during its eighth session, will learn the results of this Conference and can then form an idea of the whole of the work done in this connection. It will be sufficient for the moment to mention the agenda of the Conference.

The Third General Conference on Communications and Transit is to undertake the revision of the Regulations for the Organisation of General Conferences, and those of the Committee for Communications and Transit, and also of the Rules of Procedure for General Conferences. These texts were adopted at the Barcelona Conference and since then have been very little altered. It appears advisable, and even necessary, to re-draft a large number of the provisions in the light of the experience acquired. Definite proposals have been drafted by the Legal Committee of the Transit Committee and by the Committee itself, and on these the discussions at the Conference will be based. The Conference will likewise have to renew the membership of the Advisory and Technical Committee.

The Advisory and Technical Committee also had to act on a suggestion made by the Assembly during its last ordinary session. On the proposal of the Rapporteur to the Assembly, the Colombian delegate, the Assembly asked the Advisory and Technical Committee to organise an exchange of information with distant countries, and expressed the hope that the Conference would give particular attention to the question of improving technical liaison between the work of the Organisation for Communications and Transit and non-European countries. The Committee for Communications and Transit adopted the following resolution in this connection:

"The Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit;

"Taking note of the resolution adopted at the last Assembly of the League;

"Desirous of securing the closest possible liaison between the Committee and competent authorities and bodies in the different countries and of exchanging with such authorities and bodies the most practical and mutually beneficial services, while

1 This chapter constitutes the report submitted by the Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit to the Council, to be forwarded to the Assembly, on the work of the Organisation for Communications and Transit between the seventh and eighth sessions of the Assembly.
providing for the receipt by the Secretariat of general information essential for the performance of the work entrusted to the Communications and Transit Organisation:

"Considers it necessary to arrange accordingly for the regular collection and exchange of such general information on communications and transit as is likely to affect international co-operation.

"It is, however, understood that no fresh work would thereby be requested of any Government and that duplication of the work of any existing organisation would be strictly avoided.

"The Committee is of opinion that this work, which could not be performed without the co-operation of all the competent bodies and authorities in the various countries, would be greatly furthered by an examination of the problem by representatives of these countries at a General Conference on Communications and Transit.

"And decides, for that purpose, that the question of the action to be taken on the present resolution should be placed on the agenda of the Third General Conference on Communications and Transit."

The work of the Conference with regard to this question has been prepared by the Committee and the various permanent specialised committees, which have drawn up a concrete programme of the information to be collected and exchanged with the various administrations concerned. The Third Conference will be asked to examine this programme and the methods of carrying it out.

Lastly, the Passport Conference held at Geneva in May 1926 adopted the following resolution:

"The Conference considers it desirable that certain facilities for travelling should be granted to persons without nationality, and requests the League of Nations to prepare, with the assistance of experts of those States most immediately concerned, a draft arrangement based upon the principle of the introduction of an internationally recognised identity document."

On the proposal of the Advisory Committee, this question was entered by the Council on the agenda of the Third General Conference. The Conference will have at its disposal not only the texts prepared by the Committee of Experts but also a statement of views expressed at the discussions of the Committee for Communications and Transit when it examined the report of the Committee of Experts.

* * *

Apart from the preparatory work for the Third General Conference, the Advisory and Technical Committee and its various special Committees have carried on the enquiries in hand, which have already been reported to the Assembly, in the various spheres of communications.

1. Transport by Rail.

The Permanent Committee on Transport by Rail held a session in London on October 29th and 30th, 1926. It examined certain questions submitted by the Council regarding the application of Article 304 of the Treaty of Trianon. This article concerns the conditions of operation of the railway system of the former Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, which was divided among several States. The Committee assisted not only in examining the general questions regarding the exchange of information mentioned above but also in studying the problems of combined transport and of communications concerning the League of Nations in times of emergency. It settled the conditions under which the users of railways could co-operate with the work of the Committee.

The Committee is carrying on its work in liaison with the International Railway Union and with the International Chamber of Commerce.


The Committee for Ports and Maritime Navigation met in London from February 3rd to 5th, 1927. All its resolutions were confirmed later by the Advisory and Technical Committee itself. The following questions, in particular, were examined.

(a) General Duties of the Committee.

The Committee wished to clear up all misunderstanding about its duties with regard to the examination of technical questions. It considered that:

(1) In a general way, technical questions relating to instruments and means employed in transport services, such as the construction and equipment of ships and ports, should not, as such, be dealt with by the Committee;

(2) That, nevertheless, difficulties of a technical character connected with such instruments and means of transport might have an embarrassing effect on international traffic and that, in such a case, they might be examined by the Committee and, if necessary, brought to the notice of the competent authorities or dealt with in another manner.
(b) Buoyage and Lighting of Coasts.

The Permanent Committee for Ports and Maritime Navigation, during its first session, considered that any progress made in drawing up a uniform system of regulations applicable to buoyage, the lighting of coasts and the setting-up of signals and tide staffs, etc., would assist maritime transport, and, in order to prepare the work of an ultimate international conference, it appointed specialists to examine these questions.

A Technical Committee was set up, and held several sessions in co-operation with the International Hydrographic Bureau at Monaco. The Permanent Committee for Ports and Maritime Navigation has taken note of its report, which contains a very thorough study of the question, and which is to be supplemented, with regard to enquiries into certain special aspects of the problem affecting countries situated on the Baltic Sea, at a meeting to be held at the end of June, in Sweden and Finland. The Committee for Ports and Maritime Navigation has asked the Transit Committee to forward the report to all the States concerned. The remarks of the technical services of these States are expected by the end of the year.

(c) Maritime Tonnage Measurement.

The Technical Committee which had previously been set up by the Committee for Ports and Maritime Navigation to deal with the unification of maritime tonnage measurement held its first session in the autumn of 1926, and was composed of experts from the various maritime countries concerned, including the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. Its task was defined by the Committee for Ports and Maritime Navigation, which asked it:

1. To ascertain the extent to which differences arise in the ascertainment of the tonnage assigned by the competent authorities of different nationalities to the same ship or to ships of substantially the same class or type under the existing systems.

2. To suggest what steps can be taken to secure practical equality to ships under all flags under the existing systems. If the Committee considers that, in practice, the equal treatment of ships of all flags cannot be obtained by applying the methods and rules now in force, the Technical Committee will forward a reasoned report on the subject to the Permanent Committee for Ports and Maritime Navigation, in order that the situation thus brought about may be examined.

By thus defining the Technical Committee’s duties, it was possible to clear up a certain amount of misunderstanding and to make this Committee more completely representative of all the interests involved. Since the meeting of the Committee for Ports and Maritime Navigation, a Sub-Committee appointed by the Tonnage Committee, comprising members of this Committee who had special practical experience of tonnage measurement, has met in London, under the Presidency of the chief of the competent department in Great Britain.

(d) Treatment of Captains and Crews of Ships in Port.

The Committee for Ports and Maritime Navigation considered various notifications regarding certain difficulties affecting the normal relations in ports between captains and crews and the shore. The following resolution on the subject was adopted:

"The Permanent Committee for Ports and Maritime Navigation is of opinion that it would be desirable to draw the attention of the Governments to the necessity, in the interests of international commerce, of giving captains and crews of ships in ports all reasonable facilities for going ashore in the ports at which the ship touches, so long as the general legislation concerning police regulations, emigration, etc., is complied with."

3. Water Transport.

(a) Standardisation of Inland Navigation Statistics.

At the instigation of the Permanent Committee for Inland Navigation, a special Committee has begun an enquiry into the question of the standardisation of inland navigation statistics which had previously been mentioned in the Assembly. Such standardisation, especially if co-ordinated with the similar work in progress with regard to transport by rail, or with any work that might be contemplated in connection with Customs nomenclature, would be of genuine importance to international trade.

(b) Unification of Private Law in Inland Navigation.

As the Committee on Private Law in Inland Navigation met at the end of May 1927, the report of its meeting will be included in the Supplementary Report on the work of the Council, to be submitted to the Assembly.
The Permanent Committee on Inland Navigation was to enquire, at its last session, into the regulations laid down by the Lithuanian Government for timber-floating on the Niemen. In the hope that a general improvement in the present state of affairs would result from negotiations between States, the Committee adjourned the examination of this question.

4. ROAD TRAFFIC.

The Permanent Committee on Road Traffic met at Vienna from April 25th to 28th, 1927. It dealt in particular with the question of standardising road regulations. The Conference on Road Traffic held in Paris in April 1926 drew up a Convention on the subject, which has so far been accepted by only a small number of States, and which contains only a few general principles. Extensive work in connection with the comparison of the different systems of regulation in force, especially in Europe, is necessary, and has been undertaken by the Committee, which adopted the following resolution:

"The Committee,
"Referring to its previous declarations as to the great importance for public safety of unifying the rules of the road;
"Whereas this unification is of special importance for the road systems which cross the numerous frontiers of the States of Continental Europe:
"Urges once more that in these States the rules of the road regarding the side to which traffic is directed should be unified at the earliest possible date;
"Without considering the question whether keeping the traffic to the left or the right side of the road offers the greatest advantages, but taking into account solely existing facts,
"It is of opinion that unification of the rules of the road regarding the side to which traffic is directed could be most expediently and easily effected in the States of Continental Europe by the adoption of the rule of keeping to the right, this rule being already in force in the great majority of these States."

The Committee likewise submitted various recommendations for the standardisation of signals on the road and in towns. It appeared to the Committee that the hoped-for progress towards the standardisation of regulations relating to road traffic was particularly desirable from the point of view of the safety of motor traffic.

5. COMBINED TRANSPORT.

The Assembly is aware of the circumstances in view of which the Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit considered that it was one of its special duties, as a co-ordinating organisation in respect of transport matters, to enquire into and promote every advance which would lead to the extension of combined transport between different methods of transport, by the institution of a single transport document covering the whole distance.

A Special Committee was set up, composed of experts on railway, inland water, motor, air and sea transport. The International Chamber of Commerce and the International Railway Union were also represented on the Committee, which held its first session on December 20th and 21st, 1926.

The Committee, after this first meeting, was of opinion that, although opinions might vary as to the best means of assuring co-operation between the various methods of transport, the principle of such co-operation and any attempts that might be made in the interest of shippers to promote it by establishing, whenever practicable, a single transport contract must meet with the Committee's approval.

It should, however, be clearly understood:

(a) That the fact that the League of Nations is dealing with this problem does not imply any preconceived idea as to the methods most suitable for bringing about the settlement of the problem, nor that the work undertaken should necessarily involve, in every case, the conclusion of agreements between Governments or even the making of recommendations for Government action. Conventional or legislative measures or free commercial agreements might be provided for, according to the circumstances of each case, and perhaps also according to the various means of transport concerned;

(b) That the study of the problem as a whole should be continued, if necessary by stages, the various forms of combined transport being dealt with separately and in succession. In respect of the various means of transport, conditions may be very different, and the problems connected with some combinations may be more easily and more speedily solved than those connected with others;

(c) That the possibility that in certain cases single transport contracts may be provided for in no way implies any necessity to change the extent and the nature of the responsibility of the carriers as at present laid down in respect of each means of transport;

(d) That the solutions which may eventually be proposed should never, either directly or indirectly, encourage the establishment of transport monopolies or of discrimination as between flags or nationalities.
For the purposes of the studies to be undertaken, the special Committee has divided combined transport into five different categories: combined transport between railways and inland navigation; combined transport between railways and maritime navigation; combined transport between railways and motor vehicles; combined transport between railways and air navigation; combined transport between maritime navigation and inland or air navigation.

The special Committee noted that, in the case of certain traffic, some practical experience has already been acquired in respect of these categories of combined transport. Combined transport between railways and maritime navigation seems, however, to raise particular difficulties, except in the case of certain special and regular traffic and in that of shipping companies whose traffic may be regarded as a mere extension of transport by rail or which are in close administrative connection with the railway administrations.

The remarks made by the Committee for Ports and Maritime Navigation had confirmed the necessity of special precautions with regard to combined transport by railways and maritime navigation, but an enquiry can be undertaken immediately in regard to combined railway and inland navigation and combined railway and air or motor transport.

6. COMPETITION BETWEEN RAILWAYS AND WATERWAYS.

Acting on Mr. Hines' reports on the Rhine and Danube, the Advisory and Technical Committee considered the particular difficulties from which navigation is said to be suffering by reason of the competition between waterways and railways.

The special Committee appointed to examine all the details of these difficulties is composed, with a view to complete impartiality, of a navigation expert, a railway expert, and an expert on general economic questions who acts as chairman, none of the members being nationals of the countries concerned. It has already held two sessions and a preliminary statement of its work will be included in the Supplementary Report to the Assembly.

7. RESULTS OF THE PASSPORT CONFERENCE: TRANSIT CARDS FOR EMIGRANTS.

The International Conference on the Passport Regime asked the Committee for Communications and Transit to enquire into the question of granting to emigrants transit cards, to be issued by the shipping companies and requiring no visa. There is no need to emphasise the importance of this arrangement for emigrant traffic and for the conditions of life of the emigrants during their journey. A draft international agreement has been drawn up by experts and is at present being examined by the various Government departments concerned. The discussions of the Committee of Experts showed that a certain number of European countries would undoubtedly be ready to agree to this proposal. Bilateral agreements to this effect have already been concluded. If the replies from most European countries are favourable, the proposed agreement will be submitted for signature by the Governments without a special Conference being necessary, and the question will thus be settled.

8. COMMUNICATIONS OF IMPORTANCE TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AT TIMES OF EMERGENCY.

At the Council's request, the Advisory and Technical Committee submitted to the Council at its December session 1926 a first general report on the steps which might be taken to facilitate communications of importance to the League of Nations at times of emergency.

The Council approved the proposals of the Advisory and Technical Committee, which are now being examined by the various Governments. A report on the improvement of telephonic communications in Europe is to be submitted to the Council later and will doubtless be ready for the September session, so that the Assembly may be acquainted with it.

At the request of the Council, the Advisory and Technical Committee also undertook an enquiry into the question of establishing a wireless station at the seat of the League of Nations. It is likewise considering the facilities for aircraft to land at Geneva, and, in co-operation with the International Commission for Air Navigation, it is enquiring into the means for the identification of aircraft making journeys of importance to the League. More definite information regarding the state of these enquiries will be available next September.

III. HEALTH ORGANISATION.

The seventh ordinary session of the Assembly, in its resolution concerning the Health Organisation, noted with satisfaction the growth and increasing usefulness of its work with its tendency to universality. The Assembly further requested the Council to refer to the Health Committee for its consideration three proposals put forward by the delegations of Cuba, Czechoslovakia and Uruguay respectively. Further reference to these is made below.
1. The Health Committee.

The first permanent Health Committee of the League of Nations held its eighth and last session in October 1926. Its third year of office terminated on December 31st, 1926, and the Council, at its session of December last, requested the Secretary-General to forward to all members of the Committee an expression of its gratitude for the work done.

The new Committee was appointed in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of the Health Organisation of the League. The President of the Permanent Committee of the Office international d'hygiène publique, the Advisory Committee of the Health Organisation, is ex officio a Vice-President of the Health Committee. Nine other members of the Health Committee are elected by the Permanent Committee of the Office international in such a manner that each State permanently represented on the Council of the League is also represented on the Health Committee. The members of the new Health Committee, thus elected, are as follow:

Sir George Buchanan, Senior Medical Officer of the Ministry of Health, London;
Dr. H. Carrière, Director of the Swiss Federal Health Service, Berne;
Surgeon-General H. S. Cumming, Chief of the United States Public Health Service, Washington;
Dr. C. Hamel, President of the Reichsgesundheitsamt, Berlin;
Dr. N. M. Josephus Jitta, President of the Health Council of the Netherlands, the Hague;
Professor Ricardo Jorge, Director-General of Public Health, Lisbon;
Dr. A. Lutrario, Late Director-General of the Public Health Administration at the Ministry of the Interior, Rome;
Dr. M. Tsurumi, Representing the Sanitary Services of Japan, late Director of the Health Service of the South Manchurian Railway Company;
Dr. L. Raynaud, Inspector-General of the Health Services of Algeria, Algiers;
M. O. Velghe, Secretary-General of the Ministry of the Interior and of Health, Brussels, Vice-President of the Health Committee by virtue of his position as President of the Committee of the Office international.

The Council of the League of Nations, after consultation with the Standing Health Committee, appointed in December 1926 the following six members:

Dr. Araoz Alfaró, President of the National Health Department, Argentine, Buenos Aires;
Professor Léon Bernard, Professor of Hygiene at the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Paris;
Dr. Carlos Chagas, Director of the Oswaldo Cruz Institute of Rio de Janeiro, Director-General of the Health Service of Brazil;
Dr. Witold Chodzko, Late Minister of Health for Poland, Director of the School of Public Health, Warsaw;
Lieut.-Colonel John Drummond Graham, Health Commissioner with the Government of India;
Dr. Th. Madsen, Director of the National Institute of Serotherapy of Copenhagen.

The sixteen members thus appointed met at Geneva in February 1927 and recommended to the Council the appointment of the following four assessors, who are fully effective members of the Committee:

Dr. Jean Cantacuzène, Professor of Bacteriology and Director of the Institute of Experimental Medicine at Bucharest (Roumania);
Dr. Bernhard Nocht, Rector and Professor of the University and Director of the Institute of Tropical Hygiene and Medicine at Hamburg (Germany);
Dr. Dottorio Ottoleghi, Professor of Hygiene at the University of Bologna (Italy);
Dr. Gustavo Pittaluga, Professor of Parasitology at the University of Madrid (Spain).

The Council, at its March session, approved the above recommendations. It also accepted a recommendation made by the Health Committee that expert assessors should be invited to take part in the work of the Committee in an advisory capacity, and it approved the following nominations:

Dr. Alice Hamilton, Professor of Industrial Hygiene at Harvard University, Cambridge (United States of America);
Professor C. E. A. Winslow, President of the American Association of Public Health and Professor of Biology and Bacteriology at Yale University, New Haven (United States of America);
Dr. J. H. L. Cumpston, Director-General of the Commonwealth Department of Health, Melbourne (Australia);

and a Japanese assessor who has not yet been appointed.
The new Health Committee held its first session in February 1927 and a short extraordinary session in April 1927.

2. Co-operation with the Office international d’hygiène publique in respect of the International Sanitary Convention, 1926.

In the Supplementary Report to the seventh ordinary session of the Assembly, reference was made to the International Sanitary Convention of 1926, which was adopted by the International Sanitary Conference that met in Paris in May and June 1926, and more particularly to Article 7 of that Convention. This article empowered the Office international d’hygiène publique to negotiate an agreement with the Health Organisation of the League of Nations whereby the Epidemiological Intelligence Service of the League, including its Eastern Bureau at Singapore, might assist in carrying out the obligations imposed on the Office by the Convention. Negotiations between the Health Committee of the League of Nations and the Permanent Committee of the Office international d’hygiène publique have resulted in the adoption by both Committees of the following agreement:

“In execution of Article 7 of the International Sanitary Convention of June 21st, 1926, which reads as follows:

‘In order to facilitate the accomplishment of the task entrusted to it by the present Convention, the Office international d’hygiène publique, because of the value of the information which is furnished by the Service of Epidemiological Intelligence of the League of Nations, including its Eastern Bureau at Singapore and other similar bureaux, as well as by the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau, is authorised to negotiate necessary arrangements with the Health Committee of the League of Nations as well as with the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau and other similar organisations;’

The Permanent Committee of the Office and the Health Committee of the League of Nations have agreed on the following arrangements:

I. Governments may effect the notifications and communications provided for by the Convention and intended for the Office international d’hygiène publique by means of one of the regional bureaux of the Health Organisation of the League of Nations, subject to a special agreement being made between the Office international d’hygiène publique and the League of Nations for each particular bureau.

II. Governments which adopt the above procedure will be termed ‘Governments associated with (ressortissants) the regional bureaux’. Regional bureaux will undertake the transmission of information addressed to them in conformity with rules which will be fixed in the particular agreement which relates to each bureau.

III. The Office international d’hygiène publique will determine the official communications, according to the requirements of the case, which should be sent to Governments signatory to the Convention. These communications will be published in the name of the Office on the first page of the Weekly Record and of the periodical bulletins of the Epidemiological Intelligence Service of the League of Nations.”

A second arrangement, concluded in accordance with Article 1 of the above agreement, contains a detailed description of the manner in which the Eastern Bureau of Singapore will discharge these international obligations on behalf of the Office international d’hygiène publique for the countries within its sphere of activity.

The two Committees likewise agreed on the following method of work:

I. All questions relating to the exercise of the duties entrusted to the Office international d’hygiène publique by Article 5 of its Statutes annexed to the Rome Arrangement of December 9th, 1907, as well as by the International Sanitary Convention of June 21st, 1926 (subject to any agreements which may be concluded in virtue of Article 7 of the said Convention), are within the sole competence of the Permanent Committee of the Office.

II. The right of initiative for bringing up questions for insertion in the agenda of either Committee belongs in each case to every member of the Committee in question.

Any question raised in a Committee by one of its members shall be made the subject of a preliminary discussion in that Committee in order that it may be taken into consideration and the methods appropriate to dealing with it examined.

III. Subject to what has been said above, the agenda of the work of each session shall be settled by its President after consultation with the President of the other Committee.

IV. In accordance with arrangements previously concluded, the Committee of the Office international d’hygiène publique, acting as the Advisory Committee of the Health Organisation of the League of Nations, will continue, in that capacity, to receive information on the work of the Health Committee of the League of Nations.
"The Committee of the Office international d'hygiène publique will regularly furnish the Health Committee of the League of Nations with information on its work.

"The Medical Director of the League of Nations and the Director of the Office international will make arrangements in consultation regarding the inclusion in their respective publications of such information and documents as are likely to be of interest to the public health authorities."

3. EPIDEMIOLOGICAL INTELLIGENCE AND PUBLIC HEALTH STATISTICS.

Reports to previous Assemblies have described the scope, aims and objects of this branch of the League's health activities. Current reports are received regarding the appearance and progress of notifiable communicable diseases from all countries in the world where such information is available. This information is received either at the Head Office of the Epidemiological Intelligence Service at Geneva or at its Far Eastern Bureau at Singapore. Considerable progress has been made during the year under review both with regard to the completeness of information submitted by the various health administrations and the promptness of its submission.

Epidemiological intelligence received by the Health Section is published in the form of weekly, monthly and annual reports. The Weekly Record is a brief summary of up-to-date information regarding the prevalence of plague, cholera, yellow fever, typhus fever, smallpox and other serious epidemic diseases. Facts are given without any explanatory note. The object of this publication is to place in the hands of all health administrations information which may be of value to them in their daily work.

The first part of the Weekly Record contains information which has been cabled from the Singapore Bureau, consisting of summarised telegraphic information regarding the prevalence of the more important diseases in the ports of Asia, Australasia and the East Coast of Africa during the previous week ending Saturday at midnight. This information is also broadcasted each week from the Nauen Station, Germany, so that the message may be picked up by all Europe and North America.

The second part of the Weekly Record contains additional information received at Geneva since the previous issue.

During the early months of 1927, the Weekly Record was considerably enlarged by the inclusion of up-to-date information regarding the progress of the influenza epidemic then prevailing — for a time, indeed, it was issued twice a week. Short summaries of the information received regarding the progress of the influenza epidemic were likewise broadcasted by the Transocean Wireless Service from Nauen. All European health administrations furnished the Health Organisation with telegraphic summaries of the progress of the epidemic throughout its duration.

The Monthly Epidemiological Report continues to give a description of the march of epidemics throughout the world, together with a statement of the births, deaths, infant mortality rates and the chief causes of death in some 700 cities of the world.

The Annual Epidemiological Report for 1926 will be issued in September 1927.

4. THE EASTERN BUREAU OF EPIDEMIOLOGICAL INTELLIGENCE AT SINGAPORE.

During the seventh ordinary session of the Assembly considerable attention was given to the work of the Eastern Bureau of the Epidemiological Intelligence Service at Singapore, the first institution of the League of Nations in the Far East. The Assembly decided to make provision for the expenses of the Bureau in the budget for 1927, in view of its utility not only for Far Eastern countries but also for other States Members of the League.

Since the last Assembly the work of the Bureau has continued to develop and expand. As already explained, it will be entrusted with certain of the duties of the Office international d'hygiène publique under the terms of the Sanitary Convention of 1926 in so far as countries in its sphere of activity are concerned. These duties comprise the reception, centralisation and dissemination of information. All countries participating in the work of the Bureau have been asked whether they are willing to transmit, by means of the Bureau, information demanded by the Convention.

The Health Committee approved suggestions of the Advisory Council of the Bureau with regard to broadcasting in clear each week a résumé of the Bureau's weekly bulletin concerning the prevalence of epidemic diseases. The offer of the Government of the Netherlands East Indies to broadcast these résumés from Bandoeng and that of the Government of British India to re-broadcast them from Bombay and Madras have been gratefully accepted. It is hoped that this information will be of considerable use to ships at sea.

Two expert Sub-Committees have been set up in connection with the work of the Singapore Bureau with the object of initiating and co-ordinating investigations into problems of great public-health importance to the countries concerned. The first of these Sub-Committees is concerned with the efficacy of vaccines given by mouth as a prophylactic against cholera and other intestinal diseases. The second Sub-Committee is concerned with certain epidemiological problems in connection with plague.
The Council of the League approved the suggestions of the Health Committee regarding the constitution of the Advisory Council of the Singapore Bureau. The Health Committee recommended that the opinion of interested administrations be obtained on a draft proposal that all autonomous public health administrations in the area of the Bureau’s activity should be represented by one or more delegates at periodical conferences called to discuss the work of the Bureau, but that the Advisory Council of the Bureau should consist of representatives of the following countries: Australia, China, Dutch East Indies, French Indo-China, India, Japan, Siam, Straits Settlements (or some other British Colony). The expenses incurred by members attending the sessions of this Advisory Council should be charged against the budget of the Bureau.

The Weekly Fasciculus published by the Bureau contains a large amount of useful information. Considerable progress has been made with the collection and dissemination of information regarding the movements of infected ships. A second edition of the special Telegraphic Code, issued for communications to and from the Bureau, has been prepared and published.

The administrations of the following countries have expressed their intention of contributing to the budget of the Bureau for 1927 and 1928: Ceylon, China, Federated Malay States, French Indo-China, Hong-Kong, Japan, Straits Settlements.

5. COMMISSION OF EXPERT STATISTICIANS TO CONSIDER THE REVISION OF THE INTERNATIONAL LIST OF CAUSES OF DEATH.

In accordance with a recommendation made by the Health Committee of the League at its session of October 1926, which was approved by the Council, a Commission of Expert Statisticians was formed to assist the Health Committee in work preparatory to the revision of the International List of Causes of Death. This Commission met at Geneva in March 1927.

The Commission established a provisional International List of Causes of Death, consisting of ninety rubrics, for the consideration of Governments and a second shorter list of twenty-seven rubrics which might be found useful for the purpose of provincial or other local classification. Recommendations were also made regarding the classification by causes of still-births. Consideration was also given to standard death certificates, to the classification of joint causes of death and to the tabulation of deaths by age and sex. The Commission directed the attention of the Health Committee to the importance of obtaining morbidity statistics and, in that connection, to the desirability of establishing a nomenclature of diseases suitable for international adoption. These important questions necessitate a large amount of preparatory study. A beginning has been made with the collection of information from the various health administrations and other organisations interested.

6. COMMISSION ON HEALTH INSURANCE.

In the report to the seventh ordinary session of the Assembly, reference was made to the steps then being taken to carry out the proposals which the Czechoslovak delegation presented to the Assembly during its sixth ordinary session. During its ninth session in February 1927, the Health Committee recommended the formation of a commission of experts to consider the most effective methods of collaboration between health insurance organisations and the public health services. An Expert Commission of twelve, half of the members of which were nominated by the Health Committee of the League and half by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, met at Geneva on April 11th and 12th, 1927.

The Commission recommended that appropriate surveys of certain aspects of public health and social assurance from the point of view of preventive medicine be carried out in selected countries. These surveys, which have already begun, are being supervised by members of the Commission working in pairs, a representative of public health and a representative of social insurance. The enquiries in each case are being carried out by competent investigators. The special subjects being studied are: Education of insured persons in hygiene; the protection of maternity, infancy and the child of pre-school age; the prevention of tuberculosis; the prevention of venereal diseases; the protection of the child of school age.

7. CONFERENCE OF HEALTH EXPERTS ON INFANT WELFARE.

In last year’s Report on the Work of the Council and of the Secretariat, information was given as to the steps then being taken to give effect to the resolution adopted by the Assembly at its sixth ordinary session on the proposals put forward by the Netherlands delegation with regard to infant welfare.

To assist in this work, the Health Organisation enlisted the co-operation of experts from various countries, selected by reason of their special competence in this branch of public health work. These experts met in conference in October 1926 and again in January 1927.

As a result of these two conferences, investigations into the outstanding problems connected with infant mortality have been started and promise to give results of considerable importance.
The main purpose of the enquiries now being carried out is to secure exact information in regard to the causes of infant deaths. Certain urban and rural areas have been selected in Austria, England, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Norway. Some of these districts have high and others relatively low rates of infant mortality. The direction of the clinical aspects of the enquiry has in each case been entrusted to a specialist in children's diseases. Special attention is being paid to the influence of environmental factors on the incidence of infant mortality. Still-births are also being taken into account. The enquiries in these different areas are being carried out on exactly comparable lines and a uniform nomenclature of causes of death will be used.

The Health Committee also invited experts in Latin-American countries to participate in the studies proposed by the conference. Professor Araoz Alfaro and Dr. Velasco Blanco (Argentine), Professor Figueira (Brazil), Dr. Calvo Mackenna (Chile), Dr. Gubetich (Paraguay) and Professor Morquio (Uruguay) have been kept informed of the work being done in Europe and will hold a meeting in Montevideo in June which the President of the Health Committee and the Medical Director will attend.

8. MALARIA COMMISSION.

The Malaria Commission, to whose activities reference has been made in previous reports, undertook a tour of investigation and study in Sicily from September 28th to October 8th, 1926. Ten members of the Commission and associated experts participated in this tour. This study tour in Sicily is the last of the series of tours which the Malaria Commission has undertaken, during which nearly all the malaria-infected regions of Europe have been visited. The Commission has drawn up a report summarising the observations made during these tours and the conclusions that may be drawn therefrom. The report will be issued shortly.

Two members of the Commission are leaving Europe in June 1927 for the United States of America, where a comprehensive study will be made of anti-malaria measures in those states in which malaria is an important cause of morbidity.

The special courses in malaria organised by the Health Organisation of the League of Nations that were held for the first time last year in the Public Health Institute, Faculty of Medicine, Paris, at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and at the Institute of Maritime and Tropical Medicine, Hamburg, are being repeated. In each case, the theoretical and laboratory courses will be followed by practical work in the field in some selected district of Southern Europe.

Last year, the number of medical officers attending these courses was as follows: Paris, 29; London, 7; Hamburg, 10.

The epidemiological investigations referred to in last year's report and the enquiry into the value of certain of the secondary alkaloids of cinchona in the treatment of malaria are being continued.

9. INTERNATIONAL SLEEPING-SICKNESS COMMISSION.

The origin of this Commission was described in reports made to the sixth and seventh ordinary sessions of the Assembly.

Provision was originally made for the Commission to work in Central and Eastern Africa for a period of one year. Thanks to generous contributions from the Governments of Great Britain, France, Belgium, Italy and Portugal, it has been possible to extend this period by six months, namely, to June 30th, 1927. A report has already been published which contains a large amount of interesting information. It is hoped to arrange a meeting of the members of the Commission in Europe in the early autumn, when an endeavour will be made to frame recommendations that will be of value to all administrations of countries in which sleeping-sickness is a serious menace to public health. These recommendations will be submitted, in the first instance, to the Governments represented at the first Conference on Sleeping-Sickness, in London, which put forward concrete proposals for the creation of the Commission and defined its programme of work. A second Conference will be convened if necessary.

10. PERMANENT STANDARDS COMMISSION.

The work of the Permanent Standards Commission includes:

(1) The standardisation of sera and tuberculin;
(2) The biological standardisation of certain drugs;
(3) The standardisation of certain serological tests for syphilis.

The Commission, and its Sub-Committees concerned with the standardisation of anti-tetanus and anti-dysenteric sera, met at Geneva in October 1926. A new international unit for anti-tetanic serum was agreed upon.

The Commission decided to continue its experimental work on the question of anti-dysenteric serum; it is probable that agreement will be reached regarding the adoption of an
international unit for this serum also. The Commission entrusted the study of the diagnosis and treatment of, and immunisation against, scarlet fever by new specific methods to the American, British and Polish institutes represented on the Commission. These institutes, in collaboration with the Copenhagen Institute, will submit a report at a subsequent session.

With regard to the biological standardisation of certain drugs, the insulin standard which has been agreed upon has been widely distributed to the competent authorities in different countries and a unit of insulin has now everywhere the same meaning. Similarly, the preparation of a standard digitalis has been completed and distributed.

11. INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RABIES.

In May 1927, the Health Organisation of the League convened an International Conference on Rabies at the Pasteur Institute, Paris. The directors of the principal anti-rabic institutes in the world were invited to attend and there were sixty-five officially designated delegates. A very comprehensive questionnaire had previously been addressed to all anti-rabic institutes and the detailed replies received thereto constitute a most valuable addition to rabies literature. At the Conference, the experiences of different countries with regard to anti-rabies vaccination and to the prevention of rabies among animals were compared and discussed. The technical conclusions of these discussions are of great value.

The Conference recommended that the Health Organisation of the League should act as a co-ordinating agent for researches to be carried out in the various anti-rabic institutes of the world regarding the relative efficiency of certain modifications of the original Pasteur method of treatment and other matters of practical and scientific importance. The Conference further asked the Health Organisation to publish statistics of the results of anti-rabic treatment in the different institutes of the world. To this end, every institute will be asked to send its statistics each year, tabulated according to a schedule to be drawn up by the Health Organisation. The opportunity which the Conference afforded directors of anti-rabic institutes in different parts of the world to meet and discuss matters of mutual interest was greatly appreciated. The Health Organisation of the League is greatly indebted to the Director of the Pasteur Institute, Paris, and the members of his staff for their co-operation, which did so much to ensure the success of the Conference.

12. INTERCHANGES OF PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS.

Interchange of Port Health Officers in the Baltic and North Sea.

The object of this interchange, which was held from September 12th to October 13th, 1926, was to enable port health officers to study the administrative organisation of the ports visited, their sanitary equipment, methods of deratisation and fumigation and other matters of importance to port health procedure. There were seventeen participants from countries most immediately interested, and visits were paid to the ports of Riga, Libau, Danzig, Stettin, Copenhagen, Hamburg, Bremen, Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Antwerp, Southampton, London and Liverpool. During the three-day Conference at Geneva, where the tour terminated, each participant submitted a report on one of the ports visited and a general discussion followed.

Interchange in Great Britain.

This interchange began in London on February 21st, 1927. After a week in London devoted to the study of the various activities of the British Ministry of Health, the twelve participants divided into groups of two. Each of these groups was given an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the daily work of a medical officer of health in urban and rural areas during a period of four weeks. During the sixth week of the study tour the whole group was re-formed in London, where health organisations and institutions of interest to all were studied. As usual, the final conference of the participants was held at Geneva.

Interchange in Germany.

An interchange is being organised to begin in Germany on September 19th. The programme of this study tour has been drawn up by the health administrations of the Reich and of the States of Prussia, Saxony, Bavaria and Hamburg; it will extend over a period of seven weeks. Visits will be paid to several large towns, a mining area, certain watering places and representative urban areas and small towns. In each of the places visited some special subject of public health interest and importance will be studied.

Interchange in British India.

A study tour for medical officers belonging to administrations in Asia and Australasia will take place in India. This will be the second interchange to be held in Asia, the first having taken place in Japan at the end of 1925. It is hoped that sixteen medical officers holding responsible posts in national health administrations will attend. Participants will meet in Delhi on January 2nd, 1928; thereafter visits will be paid to the Punjab, United Provinces,
Bihar, Bengal, Assam, Madras, Bombay and probably one Indian State. The medical and health organisation in India will be studied and special attention will be paid to the more common epidemic and communicable diseases of India, such as malaria, plague, cholera, smallpox, relapsing fever, kala-azar, etc.

13. INTERNATIONAL HEALTH COURSE.

The first international health course organised by the Health Organisation of the League of Nations was held at the Institute of Hygiene of the Faculty of Medicine, Paris, from January 17th to March 5th, 1927. It was attended by twenty-six medical officers of health departments of countries in Europe and Latin America. Lectures were given by experts of numerous countries on the main problems of public health and preventive medicine. These lectures were followed by discussions. One day each week was devoted to visits to public health institutes and organisations in and around Paris. This theoretical part of the course was followed by individual studies in two or three countries selected by the health administration of the official in question.

This course, the first of its kind, was so successful that a second course has been organised in London for November 1927. The lectures will be delivered in English and will deal with the application of the results of scientific research to public health administration. Visits to special organisations will illustrate the subject-matter of the lectures.

14. PROPOSALS OF DELEGATIONS TO THE SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY.


In conformity with a request made by the Council, the Health Committee has considered how it might enlarge its scheme of international enquiry on the subject of infant mortality and the protection of children to include other problems of eugenics. The Health Committee, while recognising the importance of the proposal, decided that the moment was not opportune to undertake a study of this nature.


The Health Committee, during its session of October 1926, considered the inclusion in its programme of work of an international investigation of physical culture, including school hygiene, in conformity with the desires expressed by the Czechoslovak delegation. The Health Section has been entrusted with the task of preparing a technical report, after consultation with experts in physical culture, and this report will be made the basis for a detailed examination of the question at a subsequent session of the Health Committee.


The Health Committee, during its eighth session, held in October 1926, recorded its recognition of the extent and importance of an enquiry into the problem of nutrition from the standpoint of race improvement. It decided to study the subject in detail at one of its subsequent sessions.

15. INTERNATIONAL PACIFIC HEALTH CONFERENCE.

An International Pacific Health Conference was convened by the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia and held at Melbourne from December 15th to 22nd, 1926. A representative of the Health Organisation of the League of Nations attended, together with the medical representatives of the administrations of Australia and New Zealand and of the various island groups of the Pacific. In accordance with a resolution adopted at that Conference, the Health Organisation of the League has been invited to give all practical assistance to epidemiological and preventive work in the Austral-Pacific zone and, in particular, to consider the possibility of initiating or promoting schemes of co-ordinated research in that zone.
HUMANITARIAN QUESTIONS.

I. PROTECTION AND WELFARE OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE.

A. TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN.

(a) REPORT OF THE SPECIAL BODY OF EXPERTS: ACTION BY THE COUNCIL.

The Special Body of Experts, which was created by the Council in 1923 in order to collect information concerning the conditions under which the traffic in women and children is carried on, adopted its report to the Council on February 18th, 1927. The report consists of two parts, of which the first is a concise account of the facts disclosed by the enquiry and a statement of the conclusions based upon them. The second part contains a more detailed statement of the evidence derived from various sources and arranged according to countries.

This report was considered by the Council during its meeting on March 9th, 1927. It was then decided that Part I of the report should be published immediately. With regard to Part II, the Council considered that it should first be sent confidentially to the Governments of the various countries with which it deals, so that they may have an opportunity to make such observations as they may wish.

The Council decided at the same time that both parts of the report should be referred to the Traffic in Women and Children Committee; Part I in order that it might consider what action it could recommend, and Part II for confidential information until such time as the Council had received the observations of the Governments to which it was being sent.

The Council expressed its thanks to the Chairman of the experts, Dr. William Snow, and to each of the experts, as well as to Mr. Bascom Johnson, the Director of Investigation, and his staff. The thanks of the Council were also conveyed to the American Bureau of Social Hygiene, which had contributed the money for the enquiry, and to the American Social Hygiene Association for the loan of the valuable services of members of its staff.

(b) WORK OF THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN COMMITTEE

The sixth session of the Traffic in Women and Children Committee was held at Geneva from April 25th to 30th, 1927.


The greater part of the session was devoted to the consideration of the report of the Special Body of Experts appointed to enquire into the extent of the traffic in women and children. As regards Part I of this report, the Committee was of opinion that it furnished information of the greatest value, not only to the competent departments of the several Governments but also to the voluntary organisations. It expressed its sincere thanks to the Special Body of Experts.

The report contained various suggestions as to the measures which might be taken to improve the existing situation. These measures were discussed by the Traffic in Women and Children Committee, which passed several resolutions on the subject. In particular, the Committee considered the following points:

A. International Conventions.

The Committee felt it necessary again to draw the attention of the Council to the fact that there were still many Governments which were not parties to the international conventions and agreement on the traffic in women and children. It pointed out that, without fuller co-operation, the international machinery for the suppression of the traffic could only be partially effective.

B. Central Authorities.

The Committee invited the Council to draw the attention of the Governments to the great value of direct administrative co-operation by means of regular communication between the central authorities of the different States on all matters connected with the traffic in women and children.
C. Employment of Women abroad.

The question of the employment of women in foreign countries was carefully considered by the Committee, which devoted particular attention to the question of contracts for artistes in music-halls and other similar establishments. It requested that an enquiry should be undertaken by the Secretariat, with the assistance of the International Labour Office, regarding the methods adopted in the different countries, in connection with the material and moral protection of artistes travelling abroad under contract of employment in music-halls and similar places of amusement. Another resolution was adopted, inviting the Governments to supervise the conditions under which girls under 18 years of age were allowed to go abroad with contracts of employment, and to insist, where necessary, on the strict enforcement of emigration laws and regulations in this matter.

D. The Trafficker.

One of the most serious questions discussed during the session concerned the methods of preventing the exploitation of women by traffickers and souteneurs. The experts stated that certain countries had not yet been able to take effective action against these persons and their infamous methods. The Committee recommended that Governments should take stern measures in regard to foreign procurers and souteneurs, who should be refused admission to the country, or, if found after entrance, should be deported, in addition to any punishment to which they may be liable.

Further, the Secretariat was requested to prepare a résumé of the laws of different countries in their possession dealing with the punishment of persons who live wholly or partly on the immoral earnings of women. When the Committee has received this summary, it will be in a position to study the question, and, if it thinks fit, to make further enquiries regarding the efficacy of the laws or the difficulties met with in their application.

E. System of Licensed Houses.

With regard to the system of licensed houses, the Committee took note of the experts' observations. In view of the fact that Part II of the report has not yet been published, and that certain members of the Committee require further documentation, it was decided to postpone the discussion until the next session.

F. Question of the Extension of the Experts' Enquiry.

A similar decision was taken regarding the question of extending the experts' investigations to countries which had not yet come within the scope of their enquiries. The Committee unanimously agreed that it could not express an opinion on this matter until it had thoroughly examined Part II of the report.

The Committee took note of the desire expressed by the voluntary organisations for an early publication of Part II of the experts' report.

G. The Effects of Low Wages.

The Committee recognised that the low wages paid to women in certain branches of employment was a factor which could not be disregarded in considering the problem of prostitution in its relation to the traffic. It considered that the work undertaken by the International Labour Office on the subject of minimum wages would throw light on the methods adopted by various Governments to secure the payment of an adequate wage in the lowest-paid employments. The Secretariat was asked to examine the matter with the International Labour Office and report to the Committee at its next session on the question whether any aspect of the question should be explored by the Committee.

H. Age-limit as laid down by the Conventions.

With regard to the limit of age laid down in the Conventions of 1910 and 1921, the experts emphasised the importance of this point, since it had been noted that a large number of minors were included among the victims of the traffic. The Committee decided to place on its agenda for the next session the question whether it was desirable to remove the age-limit from the Convention of 1910 as amended by the Convention of 1921.

2. Education in Sex Matters.

The experts had drawn attention in their report to the importance of education in sex matters from the point of view of morals and health. The Committee recognised the great importance of this question and recommended that the Secretariat should follow the progress made in this matter and should report thereon. The members of the Committee and the assessors were requested, for their part, to obtain all possible information on the subject. They recognised that an enlightened public opinion was one of the most powerful factors in the campaign against the traffic in women.
3. Legal Age of Marriage and Age of Consent.

The Advisory Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People, consisting of the Traffic in Women and Children Committee and the Child Welfare Committee, met in order to consider the question of the legal age of marriage and consent. The Commission was of opinion that this question should continue to be examined jointly by the two Committees, since the problems which it involves were concerned both with the traffic in women and children and with child welfare. It was convinced that the fixing of too early an age as the age of consent was likely to encourage the traffic in women and children and to lead to the corruption of young persons, and it requested the Council to draw the attention of Governments to the imperative need of fixing the age of consent sufficiently high to ensure the effective protection of children and young people.

As regards the legal age of marriage, the Commission thought it important that the age of marriage should reach an adequate standard. It decided to postpone to its next session further consideration of this question and its possible relation to the age of consent.

4. Examination of the Annual Reports from Governments.

The Traffic in Women and Children Committee expressed its regret that certain countries had not submitted an annual report for the year 1925. It instructed the Secretariat to send reminders to all States Members of the League and Parties to the 1921 Convention at the beginning of each year, requesting them to send their reports in time for the Secretariat to draw up a résumé of them before the meeting of the Committee.

5. Digest of Laws and Regulations.

The Committee was informed that the digest of laws relating to the traffic in women and children which the American Social Hygiene Association had kindly undertaken to prepare would shortly be complete. It recommended that the digest should be sent by the Secretariat in proof form to the Governments in order that they might have an opportunity of reviewing and, if necessary, of completing the text.

The Committee noted with interest a draft law, prepared in France by an “Extra-Parliamentary Commission on Venereal Prophylaxis”, which abolishes the regulation of prostitution, though it establishes preventive measures against any attempts to subvert public order and morals and offences against public health.

6. Reports from Voluntary Organisations.

The assessors representing voluntary organisations on the Committee submitted their annual reports on behalf of the organisations which they represent. The Committee expressed its due appreciation of the efforts made and the results obtained by these organisations, and noted with satisfaction the co-operation existing between the authorities and the private organisations.

7. Licensed Houses.

The Secretariat had prepared a systematic abstract of the reports from Governments with regard to licensed houses in conformity with the instructions given by the Committee last year. The Committee took note of this document and decided that it should be made public.

8. Expulsion of Foreign Prostitutes.

The Rapporteur for this question drew attention to the fact that some countries whose information would have been of special interest had not yet replied to the communication addressed to them on the subject of the policy followed with regard to the expulsion of foreign prostitutes. The Secretariat was instructed to continue to collect information on this subject and the discussion of the question was deferred to a future session.


The Committee was interested in the information already collected, and noted that women were employed in the police forces of an increasing number of countries. The Secretariat was requested to continue to collect information on this question.

10. Obscene Publications.

The Committee examined the document submitted by the Secretariat and noted the reference contained in the experts’ report to the connection existing between the traffic in obscene publications and the traffic in women and children. The Committee wished to draw special attention to the facts ascertained by the experts regarding thinly veiled advertisements appearing in certain newspapers. It was decided to recommend to the Council that the Governments of those States which are not yet parties to the Convention for the Suppression of the Circulation of and Traffic in Obscene Publications should be invited to become so; and that the Governments which had not sent information on the matter should be invited to reply before the end of January 1928.
11. Propaganda.

The Committee noted that the propaganda resulting from the work of the Committee was one of the most helpful factors in furthering the work of voluntary organisations.


The Committee noted the remarks contained in the experts' report with regard to the connection existing between alcoholism and the traffic in women and children, and considered that it confirmed the need for the further study of the problem.

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The report of the Committee was placed on the agenda of the June session of the Council. The resolutions adopted by the Council as a result of the examination of this report will be summarised in the Supplementary Report to the Assembly.

B. CHILD WELFARE.

The Child Welfare Committee held its third session at Geneva from May 2nd to 6th, 1927.

1. Creation of an Agenda Sub-Committee.

In view of the opinions expressed in the Council and the Assembly with regard to the report on the work of the second session of the Child Welfare Committee, and in particular with regard to the manner in which its work was organised, the Committee decided to set up an Agenda Sub-Committee. This Committee will take up the work entrusted to the Liaison Sub-Committee and effect more methodical classification of the questions to be studied. It will meet at the close of each session to prepare the work for the following session; it will also meet at the opening of each session, and if necessary, between the sessions.


The Liaison Sub-Committee, which met last August, had proposed to place on the agenda of a future session of the Child Welfare Committee the following question: "Enquiry into the most adequate methods of treatment of the feeble-minded child". After discussion, the question was referred to the Agenda Sub-Committee for consideration. The Sub-Committee decided to place it on the agenda of the next session.

3. Effects of the Cinematograph on the Mental and Moral Well-being of Children.

In order to comply with the decision taken by the Assembly during its seventh ordinary session, the Committee decided to select for the question of the cinematograph a Rapporteur who, making use of the information collected, would submit a draft report in the course of the next session. Moreover, it requested the Council to instruct the Secretary-General to communicate to all Governments a draft questionnaire for the purpose of obtaining information as to whether any arrangements could usefully be made for the exchange of information between different countries in regard to films which were good or bad for children and young people, and whether any facilities could be given for the better international circulation of films which were specially suitable for children and young people, either for instruction or amusement.

4. Protection of Life and Health in Early Infancy.

The Committee took note of a communication submitted by the Health Section and of documents explaining the activities of the Sub-Committee of Experts on Infant Welfare. After discussion, the Committee decided that it would rely on the Health Committee to study all the medical aspects of the matter and requested the Health Committee to forward to it the documents dealing with all social aspects of the question which interest the Child Welfare Committee.

5. Mental and Physical Recreation of Children and Young Persons.

Several members of the Committee having emphasised the importance of continuing the investigation of the question of the mental and physical recreation of children and young people, the Committee decided to retain on its programme this question, the importance of which it fully appreciated. It appointed three Rapporteurs to submit a joint report at the