VIII. Wireless Station of the League of Nations

The statistics of the station for 1938 show that the aggregate volume of private traffic has decreased considerably. This decrease is principally due to the fact that communications with Shanghai remained impracticable throughout the year. The decision taken in December 1938 to send communications intended for parts of China occupied by the Japanese forces via Tokio, was followed by a certain recovery. On balance, private traffic decreased by 25.7%.

The official traffic in Government telegrams decreased in 1938 by about 34%. This decline was probably due to the more restricted activity of the League of Nations during the year.

Press traffic remained trifling.

The total receipts in 1938 were 347,916.93 Swiss francs (as compared with 464,893.07 Swiss francs in 1937), and the expenditure was 356,858.77 Swiss francs (as compared with 443,510.70 Swiss francs in 1937). There was thus a deficit of 8,941.84 Swiss francs (as compared with a surplus of 21,382.37 Swiss francs in 1937).

The transmitters were completely overhauled during the year. Moreover, with a view to the technical supervision of wireless telephonic transmissions, several measuring and control instruments were acquired and installed at the Prangins transmitting station.

At the League building, the installation for recording on wax was completed and began to be used in September 1938.

As in 1937, the Information Section issued a Weekly Wireless Bulletin on the current work of the League. It is given in French, English and Spanish for North America, South America, South Africa, the Far-Eastern countries, Australia and New Zealand.¹

During 1938, the Secretariat of the League of Nations and the International Labour Office organised a number of special broadcasts, which were successfully received.

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HEALTH QUESTIONS

The plan of work for the three years of the Health Committee’s term of office—i.e., until the end of 1939—which was drawn up by that Committee in the early months of 1937, is being systemically carried into effect.

Last year the Assembly’s attention was drawn by its Seventh Committee to the fact that the essential purpose of this plan of work was to help national public health administrations in their efforts to conquer disease and improve health. Its basis is technical and its influence social. It covers three main fields. In the first place, the Committee is endeavouring to introduce some measure of international uniformity into the standards, units of measurement, formulæ, terminology and even methods of investigation used in different countries, which often vary widely. Its second field of action is the campaign against disease, which is the first duty of health administrations. The third is medico-social action, which seeks to provide populations with material conditions of existence in keeping with the principles of hygiene and thus to give free scope for the consolidation and improvement of health.

I. INTERNATIONAL UNIFORMITY

The need for international standardisation has probably been most keenly felt in connection with therapeutic means of action. It is important to place in the hands of a physician a reliable weapon with a known range of action; to provide public health authorities with clear evidence for the rejection of any preparations which are below the requisite standard and, finally, to make the results of treatment and prophylaxis comparable from country to country. The Health Committee’s efforts have been primarily concentrated on so-called “biological” products, and the Commission on Biological Standardisation has been working on these lines for some time past.

1. In the summer of 1938, this Commission organised a meeting of experts to consider what new hormones can at present be effectively standardised. The task was no easy

1 Report by Dr. I. Clunies Ross (Australia), document A.58.1938.
one, for some hormones are more or less known chemically, others have been isolated only up to a certain point, and others again are still much open to discussion. Once the selection had been made, it was necessary to ascertain that sufficient quantities of the substances intended for use as standards would be available, so as to obviate any delay in the distribution of such standards as were adopted. Nevertheless, the experts succeeded in standardising four new hormones. Their report has appeared in the *Bulletin of the Health Organisation.*

The serologist members of the Commission on Biological Standardisation then met in October 1938, to decide on the adoption of standards for *sera* not yet included among the twelve already standardised, to provide for the replenishment of the stocks of certain standard preparations, and to reconsider certain of the previously adopted standards whose use had raised new theoretical and practical problems. Their work was chiefly devoted to tetanus antitoxin, anti-snake-venom serum, gas-gangrene antitoxin, anti-pneumococcus serum and anti-anthrax serum. The Commission also adopted a new standard for tuberculin. Its report has appeared in the *Bulletin of the Health Organisation.*

2. For the last year or so, the Health Committee has been dealing with another category of therapeutic agents, *heroic and galenical drugs.* The purpose here is to determine not standards but common rules applicable to these drugs.

The Technical Commission of Pharmacopoeial Experts, which was set up in 1937, first of all adopted a programme of studies, including the selection of suitable drugs for examination. Its members have agreed to prepare a number of draft monographs on various drugs, of which the Commission had drawn up a list. The Commission met in May 1939 to examine the draft monographs already prepared, which are at present eighty-five in number. When they have been approved in final form, the Commission hopes to have them adopted by the competent national bodies and ultimately incorporated in an international pharmacopoeia recognised by all countries.

3. The Health Organisation has assisted in the preparation of the *Fifth Decennial Revision of International Lists of Causes of*
Death, for which the French Government summoned an inter-Governmental Conference from October 3rd to 7th last. These lists are utilised in the preparation of national statistics of causes of death and enable comparisons to be made between the different countries. The technical preparation of the Conference for Revision was entrusted to a Joint Committee set up by the International Institute of Statistics and the Health Organisation.

A *Manuel international des nomenclatures*, which contains the Minutes of the Conference and a list of the terms for inclusion in each of the titles, has just been published under the auspices of the French Government, with the assistance of the International Institute of Statistics and of the Health Section of the Secretariat.

The International Institute of Statistics and the Health Organisation will continue this collaboration in drawing up nomenclatures of diseases, which will enable comparable statistics in hospitals, health administrations and military health services to be prepared.

4. In the field of international standardisation, mention may also be made of the report which the Malaria Commission is at present preparing with a view to standardising *malarial terminology*, and also the work of the Nutrition Commission on the methods to be applied in *nutrition studies.* The Health Committee has organised similar studies on the methods to be employed in investigations undertaken to assess the state of health of a community. The *Health Indices*, which are at present being applied experimentally, constitute the first draft outline of a standard report such as might be used in urban or rural health investigations.

II. The Control of Disease

The Health Organisation's fundamental task consists in providing public health administrations with information on the epidemiological situation, on health statistics and on the means of solving their technical problems.

1. The *Service of Epidemiological Intelligence and Public Health Statistics* continues to furnish regularly rapid information on the incidence of the principal diseases; in particular, the Singapore Bureau broadcasts daily and weekly to Eastern countries a radiotelegraphic message for the purpose of informing

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1 See below under "Nutrition".
port health services and ships at sea on the incidence of smallpox, cholera and plague.

As some health authorities in the Near East, on the East African coast and in Australia were unable to pick up this message, which the Bureau accordingly had to send them specially by cable, the Radio-Nations station at Geneva has undertaken since February 1939 to make new short-wave broadcasts once a week. This experiment already seems to be giving the results anticipated. Certain ports situated in the zone of silence have succeeded in picking up this message, and the experiment is to be continued. It will mean an appreciable saving to the Singapore Bureau.

The annual report of the Bureau contains a general account of the incidence of infectious diseases in the Bureau's area in 1938. This survey, which is illustrated by maps and graphs, provides a complete picture of epidemic developments in the Far East during that period. The part played by shipping (infected ships), the quarantine measures adopted by the authorities concerned and the health problems arising out of pilgrimage movements may be specially noted among the subjects discussed in this section of the report.

2. The efforts of the Malaria Commission are largely directed towards reducing the cost of collective treatment and promoting the consumption of anti-malarial products in such a way that the largest possible number of patients may benefit by the treatment. The ultimate objective is to check endemic disease, which affects, not only the general health, but also the social and economic welfare of far too many malarial districts.

Investigations have shown that consumption of quinine has remained far below the minimum necessary for treating known cases of malaria. So far, it has not been possible to replace quinine by new synthetic drugs—the use of which has been studied by the Commission—to any appreciable extent. There can be no doubt that the available and potential supply of anti-malarial drugs is now much more abundant than in the past. Indeed, this quantity is greatly in excess of the present consumption capacity of the malarious countries.

Taking the view that the time has now come to approach these problems on practical lines, the Health Committee has proposed the convening of an international conference on anti-malarial drugs. Nineteen countries have approved this proposal.

1 Document C.H.1421.
2 As regards the Bureau's activities, see also Section III, "Rural Hygiene", below.
The Committee suggested that the conference should be held at the end of 1940.

A questionnaire covering the present state of production in relation to world requirements, price to buyers and retail prices and methods of distribution has been sent to all health administrations. With the information thus obtained, the proposed conference will no doubt be able to contemplate immediate and effective action by means of agreements between producing and consuming countries.

At the same time, the Malaria Commission is pursuing co-ordinated research into treatment, prophylaxis and epidemiology, the campaign against malaria-carrying mosquitos and the standardisation of terminology used by malaria specialists.

3. In June 1938, the Egyptian Government asked the Health Organisation to undertake work on bilharziasis similar to that of the Malaria Commission. It argued that it was manifestly essential, in view of the dangerous spread of the disease, to organise international collaboration in order to ensure preventive action by the administrations concerned.

In response to this request, the Health Committee decided, after consulting a number of experts, to undertake a critical survey of the literature hitherto published on this subject. While the basic principles of preventive action are well known, various local factors exercise a preponderating influence on a disease which cannot be considered as an isolated problem in the health of a community.¹

4. For many years past, the Health Organisation has been regularly publishing an analytical survey of the results of vaccination against rabies. Numerous methods of vaccination have been introduced since that discovered by Pasteur himself, but impartial data are lacking as to the comparative results which may be expected.

This point was emphasised by a conference which met at Bucharest in May 1938. It drew the Health Committee's attention to the need for an international conference to be attended by representatives of anti-rabic institutes throughout the world. Before considering the possibility of convening such a conference, the Health Committee felt that it should have

¹ Professor R. T. Leiper, Director of the Department of Parasitology of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, has kindly consented to be responsible for the direction of this study.
further information as to the main problems calling for attention at the present time in the field of rabies prevention.\footnote{Professor G. Proca, former Director of the Babes Institute at Bucharest, has kindly undertaken to prepare a general report on the question.}

Furthermore, the Health Committee is taking steps to organise closer co-operation between the anti-rabic institutes of Central and Eastern Europe. One of the results of this collaboration should be that facilities will be provided for members of the scientific staff of one institute to spend some time at other institutes in order to study their special methods of vaccination.

5. The Health Organisation has, for some time past, been studying the effects of radiological treatment of cancer of the cervix uteri. This is the site of cancer which has most frequently occasioned the use of X-rays and radium, while leading to considerable differences of methods and opinions.

The original intention was to publish information about the methods employed in the principal clinics which had favourable results to record. But the conclusion was soon reached that it would be useless to attempt to utilise the data published by the clinics without first standardising the classification of the various stages in the growth of cancer of the cervix uteri, the methods of observation and the methods employed by the various clinics in the statistical assessment of recurrences and survivals. The essential purpose of the enquiry now proceeding is accordingly to obtain a uniform statistical presentation of the results of treatment. These are published in annual reports, the third of which appeared in June 1939.

Thanks to this enquiry, it should for the first time be possible to have access to scientific and objective information of very great value to gynaecologists. It may be taken as a model for efforts in the sphere of statistics of diseases to be used as a basis for analysing the degree of success obtained by different methods of treatment.

The Health Committee has also been asked to give a preliminary opinion on a proposal which the Government of the Argentine Republic intends to lay before the 1939 Assembly. The proposal is to set up a Cancer Commission to study the organisation of the campaign against cancer, with special reference to the responsibility devolving upon the public authorities. There can be no doubt that this question is engaging the attention of public health authorities to an ever-increasing degree, and that it presents itself as a real problem of social
medicine. The Health Organisation might undertake work similar to that which it had successfully carried out on such subjects as tuberculosis prevention and the campaign against infant mortality.

The Health Committee declared its readiness to undertake new studies, the exact scope of which will be delimited later on in the light of the supplementary information to be supplied to the Assembly by the Argentine Government. Such studies will be carried out within the limits of the resources available to the Committee, in liaison with international bodies already dealing with questions of cancer.

III. MEDICO-SOCIAL ACTION

Rural Hygiene.

The Inter-Governmental Conference of Far Eastern Countries on Rural Hygiene, which met at Bandoeng in August 1937, had asked that the Health Organisation, and, in particular, the Singapore Bureau, should collaborate in the action it had suggested, with a view to establishing international co-operation and providing for the comparison of methods and results.

During the two years which have elapsed since the Conference ended, most of the Far Eastern countries have taken steps, in liaison with the Singapore Bureau, to give effect to the Conference's recommendations. Health surveys are in progress or are about to be set on foot—notably in India, the Netherlands Indies, Hong-Kong, the Philippine Islands and Malaya—based on the plan attached to the Conference's report. Burma, India, the Netherlands Indies, Indo-China, Hong-Kong, Malaya and the Philippine Islands are taking steps to organise the campaign against tuberculosis. The same countries, together with Australia, New Zealand and Siam, are working to improve general nutrition and propose to undertake enquiries and technical studies which will be co-ordinated by the Nutrition Laboratories at Coonoor (India). Experts have suggested a plan of campaign against pneumonia, and the Singapore Bureau organised this year an international course of malariology, not only for doctors but, as the Bandoeng Conference had asked, for anti-malaria engineers. This course, which was held in Malaya in April and May, was attended by thirteen doctors and twenty-five members of rural engineering services, of Ceylon, Indo-China, the Netherlands Indies, Malaya, the Philippine Islands and Siam.
At Geneva, work is chiefly being devoted to the preparation of the *European Conference on Rural Life.*

So far as the Health Organisation is concerned, the essential part of this agenda is that dealing with medico-social policy. This item covers direct action by the national administrations to raise the standard of health, and hence the lines which it is desirable, and even necessary, that such action should follow. From the technical point of view, it is a synthesis of the results obtained by the Health Organisation in its studies on rural hygiene and sanitation, nutrition, housing and rural planning.

The basic document, prepared at the instance of the Health Committee, is entitled “General Survey of Medico-social Policy in Rural Areas.” This deals in turn with the part played by preventive medicine and curative medicine, the question of social insurance, nutrition, housing and physical training in relation to rural populations. It also discusses the need for technical training for doctors and male and female nurses, so that hygiene may constitute an integral factor in the life of rural populations.

Moreover, the Health Section is preparing for the Conference a general medico-statistical survey covering vital statistics, general mortality, infant mortality and the incidence of the principal diseases in rural areas in Europe. Particular prominence is given in this documentation to tuberculosis and typhoid fever. This publication will appear in August 1939.

Lastly, as regards the technical problems of nutrition and housing, which form separate items of the Conference’s agenda, the Health Committee has mobilised the resources of its technical commissions to prepare documentation, which will be dealt with below.

The Health Committee has received a communication from the Medical Adviser of the British Colonial Office, to the effect that the Governments of Kenya, Tanganyika and Uganda desire to hold another *Pan-African Health Conference* at Nairobi in March 1940. This proposal gives effect to one of the conclusions of the Conference held at Johannesburg in 1935 as to the desirability of holding conferences of this kind at regular intervals.

Having been consulted in a preliminary and informal manner, the Health Committee expressed a favourable view and offered its technical assistance.

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1 See page 98.
Nutrition.

At the end of 1937, the Technical Commission of the Health Organisation had laid down general principles for the composition of a correct diet calculated to ensure optimum growth and body maintenance.

During the past year, it began to deal more particularly with the conditions peculiar to the Far East and tropical and sub-tropical countries. At a first meeting, held in August 1938, it found that the standards laid down in its previous reports were universally applicable, and that they could be expressed in terms of the dietary habits of the various peoples. In certain parts of the world, however, they must be regarded as representing an ideal to be aimed at though not within immediate reach. With particular regard to the Far East and to tropical countries, it is essential to obtain fuller information on dietary habits, the incidence of diseases connected with deficiencies and the nutritional value of local foods. The Commission reached certain conclusions regarding national programmes of action with a view to improving nutrition, and undertook to co-ordinate and assist in the carrying out of surveys by the various competent institutions. Thus it is taking part in the execution of the work recommended by the Bandoeng Conference (1937).

The studies carried out up to date by the League of Nations have shown that, even in the most progressive European countries, there is a lack of exact information as to the conditions governing the diet of populations. It is therefore essential that exhaustive investigations should be carried out in order to determine the extent and real scope of defects of diet. In carrying out these investigations the national authorities will have at their disposal a handbook entitled *Guiding Principles for Studies on the Nutrition of Populations.*¹ This handbook will be placed at the disposal of the European Conference on Rural Life, as well as a monograph which is the outcome of investigations conducted by Dr. E. J. Verzar-McDougall on behalf of the Technical Commission on rural dietaries in Europe and on bread in several European countries.

It may further be mentioned that the Commission was asked last August to suggest emergency diets for use in the event of a serious shortage of foodstuffs, as in the case of refugee populations.

¹ Document C.H.1401, published in April 1939. This handbook was prepared under the auspices of the Technical Commission by Dr. J. Bigwood, Professor at the Free University of Brussels.
Housing.

Coming to the third stage of its programme, the Housing Commission speeded up its work with the object of preparing for the European Conference on Rural Life technical documentation on the special questions arising out of rural housing and planning. This resulted in the publication of a report\(^1\) entitled *Rural Housing and Planning*, which examines in turn the conditions for the rational planning of the rural dwelling and its outbuildings, with due regard to the health, comfort and work of the agriculturist and of the housewife. It next deals with the organisation of the communal life of the village: public works, buildings and the equipment required to provide for the common needs of a more or less closely settled community. It then turns to questions which are of concern alike to villages and to isolated farms: supply of drinking-water, gas and electricity, and disposal of sewage and refuse. The last section describes forms of propaganda at the disposal of health administrations to popularise the reforms recommended, and to awaken a desire for such reforms in rural populations.

The Housing Commission met again from June 26th to July 1st, 1939, to consider, with the assistance of a number of experts, the health aspects of planning in the broadest sense of the term. These comprised the planning of space (including town and country planning), the planning of water resources, including water supply and sewage disposal, measures against air pollution and the problems of hygiene connected with the organisation of communications and transport.

The Commission took advantage of this meeting to review the whole of the work on the hygiene of housing accomplished in the last three years, and consider its future plan of action.

Physical Fitness.

At a first meeting in July 1938, the rapporteurs of the Commission on Physical Fitness drew up a programme involving the collection of information and laboratory research on physiology, anthropometry and psychology considered from the point of view of physical fitness. They also drew up the text of a form for the medical examination to which all persons taking part in physical education should be subjected.\(^2\)

Their report has been communicated to the health administrations and national committees on physical education, and

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1 By M. Vignerot, Chief Engineer of the Service du Génie rural of the French Ministry of Agriculture.
they are meeting at Geneva in August 1939 to examine the observations received from those bodies and to draw practical conclusions with regard to the Commission's future work.

IV. Other Work

Pursuing its studies on the teaching of hygiene, the Health Committee considered the question of the museums which, at schools of hygiene, are used for the instruction of future public health officers. It is proposed to place at the disposal of these museums the epidemiological and demographical material possessed by the Health Section. This would be presented in the form of tables, maps and graphs, which the Section would periodically bring up to date.

The Health Committee also decided to study the training of visiting nurses. To this end, it intends to enlist the assistance of directors of institutes and schools of hygiene and directresses of schools of nursing. The studies are to be carried out in 1940 in liaison with the Advisory Committee on Social Questions, which is dealing with the training of persons intending to take up social work.

As regards the campaign against narcotic drugs, the Health Committee, in virtue of Article 10 of the 1925 Opium Convention and Article 11 of the 1931 Convention, has submitted to the Council conclusions recommending that the international Conventions should be applied to a new substitute of morphine—desomorphine—and to preparations containing extract and tincture of Indian hemp (with the exception, however, of those which are capable only of external use).

The Committee transmitted to the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs a study, for which the latter had asked it, on the comparative pharmaco-dynamic properties of certain drugs used as substitutes for morphine—namely, eucodal, dicodide, dilaudide and acedicone.

At the Advisory Committee's request, the Health Committee undertook investigations into the question whether codeine is liable to produce addiction. Having noted a report on the subject, it requested the Permanent Committee of the Office international d'Hygiène publique to examine the question as well as the international preventive measures which might ultimately be considered desirable.

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I. Anti-Epidemic Work

Last year, an account was given of the circumstances in which, and the reasons for which, technical collaboration between the League of Nations and China was mainly concentrated on anti-epidemic work. This work was carried on throughout 1938, and a resolution adopted by the Assembly last September provided for its continuance in 1939.

The organisation established in the autumn of 1937 was maintained in force, not only until October 31st, 1938, as had been originally intended, but for two months more.

No. 1 unit continued its work in the north-west of China, and Nos. 2 and 3 units in the provinces assigned to them, until, at the end of the year, military developments obliged them to retire to the south and south-west.

The beginning of summer (1938) was marked by a recurrence and extension of the cholera epidemic, chiefly in central and southern China; the epidemic even spread to northern China, where cholera had hitherto been virtually unknown.

Supply of Vaccines.

The resulting serious situation led the Chinese Government to make, through the Head of the Public Health Administration, an urgent appeal to the League of Nations for gifts of anti-cholera vaccine. Though operating at maximum capacity, the Government’s own laboratories and those of the Epidemic Commission’s units were unable to produce the necessary quantities. The Government therefore asked for the urgent despatch of six million doses.

This telegraphic appeal reached the Secretariat on July 7th. Before the end of that month, the Secretariat had received promises of gifts of more than eight million doses.¹ One million doses were also purchased from the Pasteur Institute, Hanoi. All these gifts, in accordance with the Chinese Government's instructions, were sent to the interior of China.

**Work of the Epidemic Commission.**

The task of the Epidemic Commission in China was to assist the Chinese Government in the urgent and difficult campaign against the epidemics which it was feared would follow mass migration from the theatre of military operations. The Commission was to advise the Chinese Health Services in organising this campaign, and, with the help of the material with which it had been specially supplied, to assist, and where necessary replace, the technical services.

The work done by the units, which have been mainly staffed by Chinese, has enabled the foundations of a permanent and more up-to-date health organisation to be laid, by giving practical demonstrations of the various elements of which it might be composed. It has afforded the Chinese technical staff an opportunity of better practical training, and familiarised them with modern scientific methods. It has helped to establish more effective co-operation between the authorities and the central, provincial and local administrative officials, with whom the Commissioners have maintained excellent relations, and from whom they have received all necessary assistance. Support has also been given by private organisations—the Red Cross Society, missions and other humanitarian institutions—and, with their full co-operation and that of the Chinese authorities, it has been possible to initiate far-reaching schemes for popular health education. These efforts have already given definite results.

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<tr>
<td>Cantacuzène Institute, Bucharest</td>
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<tr>
<td>School of Hygiene, Zagreb</td>
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<td>Turkish Ministry of Health</td>
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<td>Staatenserum Institut, Copenhagen</td>
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<td>Ministry of Health, Cairo</td>
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<td>American Red Cross</td>
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<td>Bacteriological Institute of Buenos Aires</td>
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<td>Central Committee for Assistance to the Civil Population of China, The Hague</td>
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<td>Government of Burma</td>
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<td>Government of Indo-China</td>
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¹ Cantacuzène Institute, Bucharest
From the point of view of the future, these results alone would justify the despatch of the Commission to China. But there are others more immediate and more tangible in their effects. The large quantities of material and stores supplied to the Commissioners have enabled them to cope with situations which would otherwise have been desperate and might have had the gravest consequences. Extensive schemes of vaccination against smallpox, typhus and cholera have been successfully undertaken; hundreds of thousands of persons have had injections; more than two tons of quinine were used to fight malaria in the southern and central districts.

Each of the units has set up hospitals, where infectious patients can be isolated, and opened laboratories (which are to be permanent), where vaccines and sera are being produced in ever larger quantities. In these institutions, Chinese employees find opportunities of improving their knowledge.

The various units had another important problem to solve—that of hygiene among refugees. Arriving, as they often do, in compact masses in districts which are increasingly overpopulated, where it has been impossible to organise suitable accommodation for them, these refugees, who are in a state of complete destitution, are especially exposed to disease because their physical resistance has been weakened. As they come from infected areas, they may be germ-carriers, and most of them are verminous. The Commissioners, accordingly, have had to open quarantine stations, arrange premises for observation, isolation, delousing, baths and douches, as well as instal sanitary conveniences, arrange for drinking-water supplies, and see that the camps are always kept clean.

Attention should be drawn to the invariably difficult and frequently dangerous circumstances in which the Commissioners and their staff have had to work, owing to the continual changes in the local situation and the bombing from the air which the places where they work have frequently undergone. Recently, these bombardments have become so frequent that work has been seriously hampered.

The information received from China shows that this large-scale enterprise has helped greatly to impress on the mass of the population the value of the material assistance given to China by the League of Nations during this time of misfortune.
New Plan of Action.¹

At the Chinese Government’s request, the Assembly placed in the 1939 budget a new credit of 1,500,000 francs, enabling the Epidemic Commission’s work to be continued for another year.

The plan of action which was drawn up was somewhat modified, as a result of negotiations with the Chinese Government, before being accepted by the latter. This involved some delay in its application, but meanwhile the experts sent by the League of Nations, who had agreed to remain at their posts, endeavoured, with a reduced staff, to maintain a degree of activity which, although necessarily limited, was sufficient to prevent the results of past efforts from being compromised.

Under the new plan, the units, which had previously operated with their own staff and material under the Commissioners’ direction, have disappeared. The League experts, whose numbers have been materially reduced, become exclusively advisers placed at the Chinese Government’s disposal. Their duties have been determined by the Epidemic Commission, which is to continue in existence. One of them, acting as the Secretary-General’s direct representative, also exercises administrative supervision and control over the funds placed at his disposal in China. The Chinese Government assumes full responsibility for the work, and, for this purpose, it has organised units composed of Chinese personnel, equipped for anti-epidemic work proper and for the necessary measures of hygienic improvement. These units are intended to reinforce the existing services and to support them, with the help of the advisers placed at the Government’s disposal by the League.

There is every reason to suppose that, even with a reduced staff, the anti-epidemic mission of the League of Nations will,

¹ According to the plan adopted, the anti-epidemic work this year is being carried on chiefly in Yunnan, Kweichow, Szechwan, Hunan, Shensi and Kansu.

In Yunnan, the campaign against malaria is particularly intense, owing to the wide prevalence of that disease. Drastic steps must also be taken to prevent the spread of malaria and other diseases, owing to the concentration of labour at various localities in the province which are already infected and especially along the new road to Burma. The danger is particularly great because big movements of population towards the west are to be expected, and the problems connected with the health of refugees which the Epidemic Commission had to solve last year have again to be dealt with this year.

In Shensi and Kansu, typhus and relapsing fever are the chief dangers. Attention also has to be paid to cattle-plague, which has caused severe losses among the cattle.

In Kweichow and western Hunan, a new epidemic of cholera is feared, and the necessary steps have been taken to meet the situation.

Practical measures have been taken to provide the motor transport necessary for the efficient working of the organisation.
as last year, prove capable of carrying out the difficult task that has been entrusted to it.¹

II. Other Forms of Technical Collaboration

The wide scope of technical collaboration in the sphere of health has necessarily reduced the assistance given to China in the way of the normal technical collaboration afforded to that country by the League in the past few years. This collaboration has not, however, been entirely discontinued. Two engineers² continue to supply the Chinese authorities with any advice they may desire, particularly regarding road questions, the utilisation of new navigable waterways, irrigation, etc., with which they are particularly qualified to deal as a result of their professional training and Far Eastern experience.³

At the Chinese Government’s request, an expert⁴ who had already spent eighteen months in China immediately before the outbreak of hostilities has returned to continue the mission which had been entrusted to him, and which had to be interrupted owing to those events. This mission is to advise the competent authorities with a view to maintaining, as far as possible, the recent development of agricultural co-operative societies in China. The Chinese Government places great hopes in the improvement of the conditions of life of the rural population through these societies.

¹ As last year, the Peninsular and Oriental Steamship Co. agreed to convey to China free of charge the goods entrusted to it.

² M. Bourdrez and M. Maux.

³ At the time of printing of this chapter, the news was received of the tragic death of M. Bourdrez. For the text of the tribute paid to his memory by the President of the Council on May 27th, 1939, see the Minutes of the fifth meeting of the hundred-and-fifth session of the Council (Official Journal, May-June 1939).

⁴ Mr. W. K. H. Campbell.
The last Assembly had arranged that the European Conference on Rural Life should be held in July 1939. At the request of several Governments, it has been postponed to October 16th, 1939.

Good progress has been made in preparing the general technical documentary material of the Conference and in obtaining material on the different countries from the respective Governments. A number of these monographs have already been printed.

I. General Technical Documentary Material

The International Institute of Agriculture has supplied the following six studies:

Some Aspects of Agricultural Overpopulation in Europe;
The Land Tenure System as a Basis for the Organisation of Rural Life in Europe; Agrarian Reforms and their Economic and Social Consequences for Rural Life;
An Enquiry into the Capital invested in, and the Income obtained from, Agricultural Undertakings in Europe, based on the Accounts for the Period 1927/28 to 1934/35;
Land Reclamation in Europe;
Conditions and Improvement of Agricultural Production, Stock-raising and Rural Industries;
Principal Aspects of the Action taken by Public Authorities in connection with Agricultural Markets and Production.

The International Labour Office has prepared the following studies:

Co-operative Action in Rural Areas;
Organisation of Leisure in Rural Life;
Sickness Insurance and Rural Medical Assistance.

The Economic Organisation of the League of Nations has supplied the following studies:

Report on Systems of Agricultural Credit and Insurance, by M. Tardy;

See also page 88.
Survey of National Nutrition Policies; Urban and Rural Housing.

The International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation has prepared a memorandum entitled Intellectual Problems of Rural Life.

A memorandum on The Technical Education of Agriculturists has been drawn up by M. van der Vaeren, former Secretary-General of the Ministry of Agriculture, Brussels.

The Health Organisation has prepared studies on:

- Medico-Social Policy;
- Health in Rural Districts;
- Tuberculosis;
- Typhoid;
- Rural Planning.

As regards nutrition problems, the Health Organisation will place at the Conference’s disposal the results of the work accomplished up to date by its technical organs, supplemented, where possible, by the results of enquiries dealing with actual consumption, the state of nutrition, and health conditions in certain typical rural areas.

II. National Monographs

The national monographs of the various countries contain a number of photographs illustrating the descriptive portions of the text.
SOCIAL QUESTIONS

I. Introduction

Administration and Organisation.

The Advisory Committee on Social Questions held its third annual session from June 19th to July 1st, 1939.1 It examined the working and results of its collaboration with correspondent members, and, having come to the conclusion that that collaboration was not fully satisfactory, drew up a number of suggestions with a view to its improvement; for the success of the work of the Committee on Social Questions depends to a large extent upon the existence of satisfactory collaboration with the international organisations which constitute the group of correspondent members.

Review of Social Questions.

In 1937 and 1938, the Assembly pronounced in favour of the publication by the Secretariat of a review of social questions, which is intended to provide information, not only about the work of the League of Nations in the social sphere, but also about the experience of the various countries and the results achieved by them. In 1938, the Assembly voted the funds required, so that the review might appear in 1939. In consequence of the reorganisation of certain services in the Secretariat, it has not yet proved possible to begin issuing this publication.


The Information Centre has pursued its task of collecting and distributing current material relating to child welfare. It has proceeded with its series of publications, which are: the Legislative and Administrative Series, an annual summary2 of

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1 The Committee consists of representatives of at most twenty-five Governments; twenty-four seats are at present filled. The appointments of all the members expire in 1940: all are renewable. The mandates of the correspondent members, who now number twenty-eight, will also come to an end in 1940.
which deals with all the texts published during 1938; the annual report on Child Welfare which is drawn up on the basis of information supplied by Governments; and the Information Series itself, which consists of notes on questions likely to be of special interest to the Advisory Committee.

The Centre has replied to the requests for information which it has received both from Governments and from individuals and private organisations. Many of those requests deal with the laws governing the manifold aspects of child welfare in the various countries. The Centre has come to the conclusion that research into legislation, carried out in each particular case to meet a passing request, takes up an amount of time disproportionate to the value of the results obtained, these results not being always entirely satisfactory. To overcome this defect, the Centre is now building up a "Card Index of the Legal Aspects of Child Welfare"; this index will make it possible to trace without difficulty the text of any law relating to child welfare, and will therefore facilitate the comparative study of the laws of different countries.

II. PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The tendency to broader and more general treatment of the subjects studied by the Advisory Committee has been even more marked during the past year. The discussions in the Advisory Committee and the information obtained from Governments reflect the deep concern prevailing in many countries and the desire, not only to protect children and young people, but also generally to raise the standard of living of the family and the population as a whole, and to ensure a greater stability and security of the social framework.

Position of the Illegitimate Child.2

The position of the unmarried mother and her child has retained the Committee's attention for many years. Last year, several separate studies on the legal aspect of this subject were combined into one report,2 and the information was supplemented wherever necessary.

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1 Annual report on Child Welfare submitted to the third session of the Advisory Committee on Social Questions (June 19th, 1939) (document C.91.M.50.1939.IV).
2 Documents C.Q.S./B.43, 43(a), 43(b) and 45.
3 Document C.70.M.24.1939.IV.
This year, the Committee discussed the social position of the unmarried mother and her child on the basis of a preliminary report on the subject. The scope of the problem—that is to say, the geographical distribution of illegitimate births, the various circumstances affecting illegitimate births and the main consequences of illegitimacy—were discussed from many angles. The Committee approached the measures for the protection of the unmarried mother and her child from a very broad point of view. The relation of illegitimacy to the problem of mental deficiency, the influence of housing and social conditions, and the protection of the young worker were some of the main points specially considered. Before the end of the year the second volume of the study of illegitimacy, dealing with the social aspects of the question, will be published. In 1940, the Committee will therefore have before it the complete study, and will be in a position to discuss conclusions and recommendations.

Principles adopted in the Organisation and Administration of Welfare Work among the Young, including Social Assistance.1

This study was placed on the agenda of the Committee in 1938 with a view to the collection of information on the organisation of welfare work and social assistance for the young in the various countries. An outline of the study was sent to a selected number of Governments, with a request for information. This year, owing to the complexity of the problem, a new outline was prepared, taking into account the observations of Governments and the discussions in the Advisory Committee, which limited the enquiry to certain definite points. It was also decided to extend the study in question to all the countries represented in the Advisory Committee.

The Committee was particularly anxious to obtain information on certain questions of a general character, such as the part taken by public authorities in social work, the tendency of the smaller organisations to become merged in bigger organisations, the extension of social measures from destitute persons to a larger proportion of the population, and the methods adopted to estimate the progress made.

Training of Persons engaged in Social Work.2

This subject was placed on the agenda of the Advisory Committee last year. The object in view is to collect informa-

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1 Documents C.Q.S./B. 41 and 46.
2 Document C.Q.S.38.
tion and to place it at the disposal of Governments and private organisations which may be interested in the question. The idea of giving social workers some form of special training for their duties is comparatively new, and has not developed everywhere to the same extent. The study is therefore directed specially to countries which have well-developed systems of training of some years' standing; but it also includes countries which are seeking to organise schemes of training particularly suited to their immediate requirements. The information will be obtained from persons selected in various countries who are known to have expert knowledge on the subject, either by reason of their official position or as a result of personal experience.

The study is divided into two parts. Part I will be a description of the development and present organisation of such services as employ social workers. Part II will be concerned with particulars of the training available at universities and social service schools, and of the various circumstances relating to such training. In particular, information will be given as to the relations between theoretical and practical work and the ways in which practical training is organised.

Whilst it is contemplated that the enquiry should be primarily concerned with the training of social workers, Public Health nurses are included in so far as they are definitely engaged in social work. The special provisions made for the training of voluntary workers for certain branches of social work are also included in the enquiry. In countries where experiments are being made to give some form of special training to officials engaged in work of a social character in the public services, the Committee will endeavour to obtain full particulars on such experiments. The Committee will discuss the question in detail in 1940, when the information requested from various sources is available.

Family Desertion.¹

Since the year 1933, the Advisory Committee has been interested in this question, which has also been much discussed in the Fifth Committee of the Assembly. This year the Committee considered a preliminary study concerned with legal provisions relating to family desertion in various countries. The difficulty of solving this question on an international basis owing to the divergencies in the law of the different countries was fully

¹ Documents C.Q.S./B.44, 44(a), 44(b), 44(c), 44(d).
realised by the Committee. Among the many aspects which have been more fully investigated are the legal position of foreigners in the different countries, conflicts of law, the international effect of penal judgments, the recognition of the extraterritorial effect of accessory penalties, the international recognition of previous convictions, the question of extradition and, lastly, the universality of punishment.

In conclusion, the Committee was invited to submit its observations on the most salient points of the problem. It was proposed that these should be examined by a Sub-Committee, which would in turn make further proposals as to the lines on which the study on family desertion should be pursued.

**Mui Tsai.**

The suggestion has frequently been made in recent years that the Advisory Committee should deal with the question of Mui Tsai as a child welfare question, the Mui-Tsai system being a special form of the placing of girls in families in certain regions of Asia. The question has been included in the next agenda of the Advisory Committee, which will proceed to examine preliminary documentary material on the subject to be obtained from the Governments concerned.

III. **Traffic in Women and Children**

*Summary of Annual Reports on Traffic in Women and Children and in Obscene Publications.*

The summary of the 1937/38 reports on traffic in women and children has been published as a separate document from that giving the reports on obscene publications. It was based for the first time on the new questionnaire drawn up in 1938. Approximately double the amount of information has been submitted this year in comparison with the years preceding the re-arrangement of the questionnaire: fifteen more countries have sent in annual reports as compared with last year, and twelve additional reports of colonies, protectorates, etc., were received. In particular, detailed replies were given to the question which had been added in order to obtain information on new administrative measures relating to venereal diseases.

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1 Document C.68.M.30.1939.IV, and Addenda I and II.
2 Document C.69.M.31.1939.IV, and Addenda I and II.
Ratification of Conventions.

The international Conventions for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children and in Obscene Publications, concluded in 1921 and 1923 respectively, are now almost universally applied. Further progress can therefore only be slow, as the countries which have not yet ratified have refrained from doing so for reasons which in most cases are still valid.

As to the 1933 Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women of Full Age, one further ratification (Brazil) has been received since the last Assembly. In all, twenty-five countries are parties to this Convention, which is still very far from attaining the universality of the Conventions of 1921 and 1923.

Prevention of Prostitution.

The discussion of a draft report on the prevention of prostitution was the most important part of the Advisory Committee's deliberations regarding traffic in women and children. The ideas underlying this report can be summarised as follows. The law and the police, if backed by public opinion, can hamper the exploiters of prostitutes, and can prevent them from recruiting women by force or fraud, or from artificially expanding the demand by advertisement and suggestion. Education, the moral protection of young workers of both sexes, and the development of health and social services can weaken some of the primary causes of both the demand and the supply.

The report was drawn up in collaboration with the International Labour Office together with a French and a Danish expert. It deals very fully with the problem of the mental state of the prostitutes and the reasons for treating this state on the basis of the results obtained from the use of psychiatric methods. The chief departure from the habitual methods is the emphasis laid in the report on the demand for prostitutes. Far from considering this demand as a static element, the report points to the possibilities of decreasing the demand by reducing artificial stimuli making men potential clients of prostitutes.

Attention is also drawn to certain recent discoveries in the medical field which are likely to lead to a great diminution, in the future, of one of the venereal diseases, but also, as has, moreover, already been observed in certain ports, to increased frequentation of prostitutes.
It was felt by the Advisory Committee that the moment had come for a thorough study of the social aspects of venereal disease to be made.

Rehabilitation of Prostitutes.

The enquiry into the rehabilitation of prostitutes, which has been carried out during the past five years, has been concluded. Two volumes, *Prostitutes, their Early Lives*¹ and *Social Services and Venereal Diseases*,² have already appeared. A third volume on methods of rehabilitation, including the general conclusions and recommendations which were arrived at by the Advisory Committee, will appear shortly.

The enquiries have led to four general conclusions—namely, that the difficulties of rehabilitation have not been exaggerated, that no one single method can be upheld as the best, that special rehabilitation services can only lead to successful results if they are based on wider social measures, and that the difficulties of rehabilitation will remain formidable as long as the demand for prostitutes enables women to earn more in prostitution than in other spheres of life. Apart from these general conclusions, the Committee adopted a number of specific recommendations on rehabilitation which can be summarised as follows:

Prostitutes can be rehabilitated most easily when they have not been long in the profession.

The success of attempts at rehabilitation depends on the personality and insight of the social worker who directs them, but also on knowledge. Control should be exercised by trained social workers only.

The attempts to combine social assistance with medical treatment for venereal disease have led to particularly promising results.

Methods of treatment should be elastic, and should not be decided upon until the individual case has been investigated. Rehabilitation services should include, apart from institutions which take prostitutes for long periods, social service bureaux to help them to find suitable employment, and hostels where girls and women can lodge.

Prostitutes should be examined by mental specialists in order that adequate treatment may be given to those who need it. The new start should be made in fresh surroundings. Institutions should not impose too rigid a discipline, nor a way

¹ Document C.218.M.120.1938.IV.
² Document C.6.M.5.1938.IV.
of living too opposed to ordinary life. Women should be trained for work for which they are suited, and should not be obliged to return to the occupations which they followed before they became prostitutes. In view of the high earnings of prostitutes, normal employment for them should offer a reasonable standard of living. After-care is desirable; but awkward enquiries may easily destroy the whole effort of rehabilitation.

Measures of rehabilitation can never themselves solve the problem. They need to be supplemented by preventive action.

Conference of Central Authorities in Eastern Countries.

The 1938 Assembly expressed regret at the unavoidable delay in bringing into effect the recommendation of the Bandoeng Conference that the League of Nations should establish an Eastern Bureau to assist the participating countries in their fight against the traffic in women and children in that part of the world. The Assembly invited the Advisory Committee to consider the proposal again in greater detail. The questions to be studied by the Committee were to include the place at which this bureau should be set up, the financial provisions necessary for its establishment and maintenance, questions of staff, etc.

The Committee unanimously came to the conclusion that the present situation in that part of the world in which the activities of the Bureau would be carried out was not favourable for proceeding with the examination of this question. In the circumstances, neither the despatch of an expert adviser to study on the spot the creation of such a bureau, nor the discussion of details for the establishment of the bureau, would be of any practical use. This position taken by the Committee was strengthened by the fact that the Chinese delegation, which, in the past, had been pressing for the creation of this Bureau, had stated that no normal operation of such a bureau could be expected at present. The Advisory Committee therefore decided to adjourn the discussion but to keep the subject on the agenda, with the intention of reopening the debate as soon as the situation in the Far East permitted.

IV. Assistance to Indigent Foreigners

The Committee of Experts set up in virtue of a decision of the Council dated May 20th, 1931 (sixty-third session), was entrusted with the study of two questions:

(1) Assistance to indigent foreigners;
(2) The execution of maintenance obligations abroad.
In previous years, the Committee held three sessions at which, after the consideration of practical measures for the purpose of improving the precarious situation of indigent foreigners, by international action, it came to the conclusion that, for the moment, a multilateral convention was unlikely to prove an effective international instrument. In 1938, the text of a model Convention, accompanied by a number of recommendations, was submitted to the Council as a possible basis for the conclusion of multilateral or bilateral agreements. During the past year, the Committee has not met. However, a more complete study of measures connected with assistance to indigent foreigners recommended by the Committee is in course of preparation.

The second question referred to the Committee of Experts was the fulfilment of maintenance obligations abroad. The Committee of Experts decided to postpone consideration of this problem until such time as the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law, which is preparing a draft international Convention with commentaries, has completed its work.¹

V. PENAL AND PENITENTIARY QUESTIONS

The Assembly instructed the Secretary-General to obtain information and opinions during the current year on the following questions with a view to a discussion by the Assembly in 1939:

Position of Aliens and Stateless Persons released from Prison.

The recommendations of the Seventh International Conference for the Unification of Penal Law held at Cairo in 1938 on the position of aliens and Stateless persons released from prison and the possible ways of improving the precarious situation of an alien or Stateless person who leaves prison were discussed by the Assembly in 1938. Feeling that a large number of legal and social questions were involved, the Assembly instructed the Secretary-General to convey to the Members of the League the information contained in the report ² on penal and penitentiary questions he had submitted to it, together with the Minutes of the First and Fifth Committees summarising the

¹ See also "Work of the Rome International Institute for the Unification of Private Law", page 152.
discussion which had taken place on the position of aliens and Stateless persons released from prison. The Secretary-General, by a Circular Letter addressed to the States Members of the League on December 7th, 1938, asked them to submit their observations on the proposals made by the seventh International Conference for the Unification of Penal Law and by the delegates in the First and Fifth Committees of the Assembly in 1938, so as to enable the Assembly to come to a decision in 1939 as to the action to be taken.¹

A number of Governments have responded to this enquiry. Their replies will be communicated to the delegations to the forthcoming Assembly in a separate document.

Treatment of Witnesses and Persons awaiting Trial.

At the request of the 1937 Assembly, the Secretary-General consulted certain technical organisations as to the feasibility of proposals for the purpose of protecting witnesses and persons awaiting trial against the use of violence or any other form of physical or mental constraint. The Assembly in 1938, however, considered that the study of this problem was not so far advanced that conclusions could be drawn at the present stage. It therefore instructed the Secretary-General to invite the technical organisations concerned with penal and penitentiary questions and interested in the subject to continue their enquiries, and to submit a joint memorandum summarising all the various suggestions on these questions to the Assembly in 1939.²

The Secretary-General invited the International Penal Law Association, the International Law Association, the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission, the International Bureau for the Unification of Penal Law and the Howard League for Penal Reform to send representatives to attend a meeting at Geneva in order to draw up the joint memorandum for which the Assembly had asked.

The representatives of three of the organisations consulted, the International Bureau for the Unification of Penal Law, the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission and the Howard League for Penal Reform, met in June and considered a memorandum³ prepared by the International Penal and Peni-

¹ Document A.70.1938.IV, pages 2 and 3.
² Document A.12.1939.IV.
tentiary Commission on the measures which might be proposed to protect witnesses and persons awaiting trial against the use of violence and other forms of physical or mental constraint, and the observations of the technical organisations collaborating with the Assembly on penal questions and interested in the matter. A joint memorandum summarising all the various suggestions made was drawn up at the meeting and will, as usual, be communicated to the delegations to the forthcoming Assembly in a separate document.
TRAFFIC IN OPIUM AND OTHER DANGEROUS DRUGS

A. WORK OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC IN OPIUM AND OTHER DANGEROUS DRUGS

The Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs held its twenty-fourth session at Geneva from May 15th to June 12th, 1939.


As last year, the Committee sat for a large part of its session as a Preparatory Committee for the examination of this question.

At its twenty-third session it had adopted, on the proposal of its Preparatory Committee, a body of essential principles which might serve as a basis for a future convention, and which it incorporated in its report to the Council on the preparatory work for the Conference.¹

This report was communicated to the Governments for their observations by a letter from the Secretary-General dated October 12th, 1938, and the Secretariat was instructed to prepare, on the basis of their replies, a draft of the principal articles which might appear in the future convention.

The Preparatory Committee thus had before it both the Governments’ replies and a draft prepared by the Secretariat. The Committee was then able to draw up a preliminary draft convention in which only a few points were reserved.

According to the preamble, the object of the convention is to suppress the abuse of dangerous drugs and to supplement the provisions of the International Conventions of 1912, 1925 and 1931.

¹ Document C.221.M.123.1938.XI.
**Principles of the Draft Convention.**

The production of raw opium is to be limited to recognised world requirements of opium for:

- Medical and scientific purposes;
- The manufacture of prepared opium until the use of opium for smoking has been finally suppressed, and subject to certain provisions regarding limitation before final suppression which are to be incorporated in the future convention;
- Other non-medical forms of internal consumption at present authorised in certain countries.

Recognised world requirements as regards raw opium are to be determined in accordance with a system of estimates (annual and supplementary) supplied by the Governments. Estimates are to be examined by an international controlling authority.

The controlling authority will be required to fix for each producing country, on the basis of the estimates, the annual quantities to be produced and exported.

The controlling authority's allocation to producing-exporting countries of the quantities to be exported will be based either on a quota system or on a free order system, whichever may be chosen.

Producing countries will undertake:

- Not to sow with opium-poppy an area greater than would be required to produce the quantity of raw opium allocated to them for production, and
- Not to export more than the quantity allotted to them for export.

On their side, the Governments of countries importing raw opium will undertake to buy in the course of a year the quantities estimated for that year (binding estimates), and not to import in the course of any given year raw opium in excess of their estimates for that year. This assurance of a market for their production will compensate producing-exporting countries for the sacrifices imposed on them by the convention as regards the limitation of their production and export.

World production and international trade will thus be limited to the total world requirements determined on the basis of
estimates. The system is to be completed by the formation of stocks for the purpose of ensuring the proper working of the convention.

The *regulating stocks* are designed to enable producing countries to meet variations in opium production due to the fact that, independently of the intentions of producers, such production, being of an agricultural character, is often subject to considerable fluctuations. These stocks will make it possible to meet export requirements in all circumstances and thus to ensure the operation of the convention. The controlling authority will see to it that the stocks are kept within the required limits.

*Government opium stocks* consist of raw opium kept under State control for the use of the military, naval and air forces and for the defence of the country. The maintenance of such stocks is optional, and they will not be subject to any external control.

The *emergency stocks*, which may be maintained both in producing and consuming countries, are intended to meet exceptional requirements, either on the part of the Governments for purposes other than consumption by the armed forces of the country, or on the part of manufacturers or wholesalers. Their maintenance is optional, and their level will be determined by the Governments in consultation with the controlling authority.

Lastly, a system of national and international control would ensure the strict application of the convention.

*Points reserved in the Draft Convention.*

One of the principal points which the Committee was unable to settle, and for which it has drawn up alternative articles, is whether exports should be allocated according to a quota system or a free order system.

Under the quota system a fraction, fixed in advance, of the total world requirements of opium for any given year would be allotted annually to each producing country. This fraction would represent for each country concerned its share in the total export trade of all producing countries (export quota). The consuming countries would indicate the country whence they proposed to obtain the opium required, and the controlling authority would as far as possible take that indication into account when allotting quotas to the producing countries.

The effect of a universally adopted quota system would be to give to all producing countries some assurance of stability as regards both production and exports.
Under the free order system, Governments, in submitting their estimates of raw opium requirements, would also specify the country or countries whose opium they desired to purchase. They would have the certainty of obtaining from such country or countries the whole quantity required. Under this system, producing countries might find it necessary to compete for orders.

Although the Committee was obliged to submit alternative texts on the matter, the divergence of views seems to have narrowed. The representatives of the producing countries members of the Committee (Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey, Iran, Yugoslavia) held a joint meeting at which they expressed themselves in favour of the quota system, with the exception of the representative of Iran, who reserved his Government's opinion.

Another question on which alternative texts were submitted was that of prepared opium.

In general, it was agreed that the result of the future convention should be the abolition of the use of prepared opium and a corresponding decrease in the production of raw opium. It was considered necessary that the draft convention should contain provisions for the reduction, over a number of years, of the quantity of raw opium required for the manufacture of prepared opium. Nevertheless, different methods were proposed for achieving this common end.

On the one hand, the representatives of certain States urged that, if this total abolition is to be achieved, the convention must contain an undertaking to make an annual reduction according to a fixed percentage of the sale of prepared opium or raw opium intended for consumption in the form of prepared opium, this annual reduction leading to the total cessation of the use of prepared opium by a given date. At the same time, the cultivation of opium intended for conversion into prepared opium, or imports of raw opium intended for the same purpose, should be reduced until they completely disappeared. Stocks of raw opium intended for the manufacture of prepared opium should also be gradually reduced so as to cease to exist by the specified date.

Other members of the Committee pointed out that the practice of selling prepared opium in conformity with the strict rules applied by the State monopolies constituted the best means of restricting the use of prepared opium as far as was possible in present circumstances. Total prohibition would not put an end
to the consumption of opium for smoking, because smokers would obtain supplies from the illicit traffic. For that reason an alternative draft article was suggested under which, five years after the date of entry into force of the new convention, the Council of the League of Nations would appoint a commission to decide whether the convention had produced results such that illicit traffic in opium no longer constituted a serious obstacle to the effective suppression of the use of prepared opium. If the commission's decision were in the affirmative, the countries concerned would undertake to bring to an end, within ten years following the date of that decision, the importation of opium for manufacture into prepared opium or for sale for consumption in the form of prepared opium.

Lastly, a compromise was suggested providing also for the constitution of an international commission, but with a different mandate. A date for the total abolition of the use of prepared opium would still be fixed, and the countries concerned would agree not to exceed the period stated unless an international commission appointed by the Council of the League of Nations after a specified number of years unanimously decided to extend the period in question.

The Committee postponed to its next session the examination of the question of regulation of raw opium prices, but it reached agreement on a certain number of principles which should be embodied in the convention. These principles are as follows:

The convention should contain provisions relating to the regulation of prices.

The prices should not be fixed in the actual convention, but the procedure for this regulation and for revision should be laid down, together with the principles to be applied when prices are fixed and revised.

These various points will be considered more fully at the next session in the light of the documents and observations submitted. The Secretariat has been asked to continue to study the question of prices in collaboration with experts from the producing countries.

Lastly, the Committee discussed the scope of the measures of limitation and control to be applied to the poppy-plant as a raw material for the extraction of opium alkaloids. The representatives of Turkey and Yugoslavia were in favour of the total prohibition of the extraction of opium alkaloids from the poppy-plant, for reasons of principle. The producing
countries consider that when they are asked to limit an important agricultural production for humanitarian purposes, they cannot consent that the place left vacant through their sacrifices should be filled by others thanks to the application of new processes.

The representatives of Poland and Hungary pointed out, on the other hand, that the Preparatory Committee had already opposed this prohibition, and that the small quantities of drugs hitherto extracted from poppy-straw could not have any far-reaching effect on the production of raw opium. They also stressed the fact that a country could not be forbidden to use, for internal purposes, raw materials produced on its own soil for the manufacture of products of vital importance which, in the event of an international crisis, it might not be able to obtain from abroad.

Acting on the suggestion of the representatives of Turkey and Poland, the Committee decided that, in order to reconcile the different points of view, it was better, for the time being, not to insert any article in the draft convention, but to leave the matter to be settled by the Advisory Committee at its next session, or by the Conference itself.

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The Committee decided to ask the Council to transmit its report to the Governments, together with the annexed draft articles, with the request that they should send in their observations by March 1st, 1940, at latest. The Committee also recommended that the draft articles should be submitted in April 1940 to a committee of jurists, in order to be put into the proper legal form, taking into account the observations made by Governments. The draft articles thus drawn up will be submitted to the Advisory Committee at its next session (May 1940), with a view to further examination and the preparation of a complete preliminary draft convention to be laid before Governments before the Conference is convened.

II. EXAMINATION OF ANNUAL REPORTS FOR 1937

General Reports.

The Advisory Committee examined the annual reports for 1937, and was glad to note the progress made in the matter of laws and administrative measures applicable to narcotic drugs in the various countries.

1 The following sections are dealt with in document C.202.M.131.1939.XI.
The Committee noted an increase in the manufacture of opium alkaloids from poppy-straw. In the opinion of several members, the position brought about by such an increase, at a time when the Committee is concerned with the limitation of the production of raw opium calls for serious consideration.

The Committee’s attention was drawn to new draft regulations in Mexico for the treatment of addicts. According to this draft, addicts may in the future acquire in the licit trade, by means of an authorisation issued either by individual medical practitioners or by official dispensaries, the quantity of drugs prescribed for them by doctors under the supervision of the authorities responsible for controlling addiction. Several members of the Advisory Committee emphasised the drawbacks of the measures contemplated in Mexico. The United States representative asked the Mexican Government to postpone until next year any decision on this draft law, so as to enable the Committee to go into the whole question again at its next session. The Committee expressed the hope that the Mexican Government would give favourable consideration to this request.

The Committee learnt with much satisfaction of the results of the mission of the Director of the Opium Section to a large number of Latin-American countries. It welcomed the lively interest taken by those countries in the technical and humanitarian activities of the League of Nations. All these countries are in favour of the closest technical collaboration with the organs of the League, but they wish to be more fully informed as to the nature of the problems with which those organs are occupied, and as to the results which countries may expect from their activities. The competent authorities laid stress on the need for facilitating their task by the supply of the essential documents in Spanish, and by giving fuller publicity to the technical activities of the League. They also urged the value of sending technical League missions more frequently to that part of the world. The Committee expressed its confidence that there would be increased collaboration with the countries of Latin America, which would be reflected both in a greater interest in the ratification of conventions and the communication of annual reports and in the furnishing of information essential to the Committee’s work.

Reports concerning Prepared Opium.

Despite certain improvements, the situation revealed by the reports concerning prepared opium in those Far-Eastern
territories in which the use of opium for smoking is still temporarily authorised continues to be a matter of concern to several members of the Committee. Its investigations led it to believe that the difficult problem of the price of raw opium was worth further examination in the light of the observations submitted as early as 1930 by the Commission of Enquiry into the Control of Opium-Smoking in the Far East. That body had stated in its report that the policy of high prices had rendered smuggling most profitable, and that Governments should take steps to reduce prices to a level sufficiently low to make it cease to be so; prices might be restored to their former levels later when smuggling ceased to be such a serious problem.

The Committee was interested to hear a statement by the representative of Portugal with reference to Macao. The Portuguese representative recalled the fact that, when information indicating the gravity of the situation in that territory under Portuguese sovereignty had been brought to the notice of the Advisory Committee in 1938, the Head of the Portuguese Government had immediately instructed Professor Caeiro da Matta to make a statement on his behalf at the meeting of the Permanent Central Opium Board in August 1938; that statement was later supplemented at the session of the Board held in April 1939. While making the most express reservations as to several of the points on which the Board had based its impressions, and also as to their legal validity, the Head of the Portuguese Government had declared himself in agreement with the Board that, in spite of the Portuguese Government’s efforts, the situation in Macao, as elsewhere in the Far East, was not yet satisfactory and might excite apprehension. The Portuguese Government had accordingly ordered the most searching enquiry into the facts brought to its notice, with the firm intention, if necessary, of punishing anyone found guilty. The enquiry would shortly be completed, and the Permanent Board and the Advisory Committee would at once be informed of the findings of the report.

III. **Application of the International Opium Conventions**

_Ratifications and Accessions._

The total number of sovereign States parties to the Hague Convention (1912) is now fifty-nine. Since the Committee’s last session the Government of Haiti has acceded to the Geneva
Convention of 1925. Fifty-four sovereign States are now parties to this instrument. Sixty-three sovereign States are parties to the Limitation Convention of 1931.

The Committee was gratified at the prospect of the application in the near future of the 1936 Convention for the Suppression of the Illicit Traffic in Dangerous Drugs. Nine Governments have deposited their instruments of ratification with the Secretariat of the League of Nations: Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, India and Roumania.

The Turkish representative on the Advisory Committee announced that the Turkish National Assembly had ratified the Convention, and that he hoped that the instruments of ratification would be deposited shortly.

The deposit of those instruments would fulfil the conditions for the entry into force of the Convention.

Results of the Application of the Opium Conventions as shown by the 1937 Statistics of World Manufacture, Exports and Consumption.

The examination of the statistics for 1937 relating to the five principal drugs (morphine, diacetylmorphine, cocaine, codeine and dionine) shows that there has been a very marked increase in the world manufacture of these drugs. As regards world consumption, there has been a considerable decrease for morphine and an increase for all the other drugs. World stocks show a very large increase for morphine and codeine; stocks of dionine also rose, though to a lesser extent. Stocks of diacetylmorphine and cocaine have remained almost unchanged. The total volume of exports shows a marked decrease for morphine, cocaine and diacetylmorphine, but a considerable increase for codeine and dionine.

The manufacture of morphine for all purposes (consumption of morphine as such and conversion into other drugs) continued to increase fairly rapidly. Taking as a basis the last year of the period 1931-1935, during which manufacture and legitimate world requirements amounted on an average to 29 tons, we find morphine manufacture in 1937 (43.3 tons) had increased by 12.4 tons, or more than 40% as compared with 1935 (30.8 tons). There was a similar increase in the manufacture of codeine, of which 28.8 tons were manufactured in 1937, as against 19.9 in 1935—i.e., an increase of 45%. This shows that about three-quarters of the increase in the amount of morphine
manufactured as compared with previous years was converted into codeine.

Another noteworthy feature is the increase in world stocks of morphine and codeine. Whereas in 1936 stocks in the hands of retailers decreased, during 1937 an increase in the stocks held by manufacturers and wholesalers took place. World stocks of morphine increased from 7.7 tons in 1936 to 10.2 tons in 1937, and of codeine from 8.1 tons in 1936 to 10.6 tons in 1937.

Exports of morphine, diacetylmorphine and cocaine declined. If the total volume of exports of the three drugs in question is considered, it will be found that whereas exports in 1926 amounted to approximately 23.1 tons, in 1937 they amounted to only about 2.3 tons, or 10% of the total exports in 1926.

To sum up, the Committee found that the position during the year 1937 in regard to the manufacture and use of the five principal drugs was the same as in the six previous years, that the amounts lawfully manufactured corresponded to the legitimate world requirements and that the upward trend of manufacture recorded in 1936 and 1937 was mainly due to the need felt by nearly all countries to keep larger reserves in order as far as possible to guard against the difficulties which might arise in the event of normal supplies being restricted or cut off.

IV. ILLEGAL TRAFFIC AND CLANDESTINE MANUFACTURE

The report of the Sub-Committee on Seizures reviews the situation as regards the illicit traffic in 1938 and the first three months of 1939. The survey of the illicit traffic, approved by the Advisory Committee, covers the majority of countries and territories in which the illicit traffic is a major problem. The Sub-Committee expresses the regret, however, that it could not make a complete survey of the situation in relation to the whole world in the absence of information concerning the situation in 1938 in respect of certain countries in which the illicit traffic is a problem, particularly China, India, Iran, Japan and Macao. In spite of the difficult situation, however, China has furnished statistics of seizures in 1938.

A number of Governments report a reduction in the illicit traffic (or at any rate in the number of prosecutions for illicit trafficking)—for instance, those of the Netherlands and Turkey—but it cannot be said that this reduction is general.

In the United States of America, the trend of prices in the illicit wholesale traffic and other circumstances indicated that