II. QUESTIONS OF A SOCIAL AND HUMANITARIAN CHARACTER

1. Health Questions

At a time when epidemic diseases and the situation with regard to the food supply are the chief subjects of preoccupation of health administrations in many countries, it is natural, indeed inevitable, that the Health Section should concentrate its work on those subjects.

Epidemic Diseases.

In the campaign against contagious diseases—whether they are described as pestilences as in the case of typhus, plague, smallpox and cholera, or whether they follow a less dramatic course as in the case of diphtheria, scarlet fever or cerebrospinal meningitis—there are two conditions which, in these troublous times more than ever before, require fulfilment. On the one hand, it is important to know the centres of infection, their nature, situation and extent, and the way in which they are developing, for the more rapidly a danger is recognised, the less difficult will it be to ward it off. On the other hand, means must be found for rendering the individual, and if possible the masses, proof against the action of any particular agent of infection. It is in this connection that the use of preventive sera finds its place. These sera, however, must be of such a titre that their activity is certain. It is the purpose of international biological standardisation to furnish the means for guaranteeing that titre.
The health administrations had therefore to be informed of the course taken by epidemics and they had to be supplied with standard preparations by means of which sera could be assayed. Notwithstanding drastic reductions in staff, the Health Section, thanks to the experience gained during the past twenty years, was in a position to meet both these requirements.

In regard to the first point, its Service of Epidemiological Intelligence and Public Health Statistics, which was set up immediately after the first world war for the purpose of facilitating measures taken against the epidemics to which that war had given rise in Eastern Europe, has been able to continue its work without interruption during the second world war.

The course of events has, indeed, affected that work and it has had to be adapted to the new conditions created by those events.

At the end of 1939, the first disturbances in postal communications due to the conflict made it necessary to develop and improve the system adopted for the transmission of epidemiological information by wireless. The powerful naval station at Kranji (Malaya) was added to the chain of ten stations which transmitted the weekly message of the Singapore Bureau, the Eastern Branch Office of the Service.

In May 1940, the territories of the French Empire and, subsequently, the invaded countries of Western Europe ceased transmitting sanitary information.

Certain parts of the British Empire ceased transmitting such information in November and, in December, the Regional Sanitary Information Bureau for the Near East at Alexandria (Egypt) suspended its activity.

The year 1941 brought, at first, an improvement in this situation. Nearly all the occupied countries began once more to transmit their epidemiological information. Further, ad hoc arrangements made possible a similar resumption in the case of the French possessions and the British possessions.

The invasion of Yugoslavia and of Greece, on the other hand, put an end to the transmissions from parts of those countries.
Later, the invasion of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics created a health problem of great magnitude, as it led to the exodus of millions of refugees from a zone where typhus is endemic and brought to that region millions of soldiers from Central Europe who were receptive to the disease.

Although no figures are available concerning the ravages caused by typhus in the zone of operations, and even outside that zone, amongst the troops, the frequency of secondary cases amongst civilians in certain European countries clearly shows the gravity with which the focus of this disease had to be regarded.

At the end of 1941, the occupation by Japan of French Indo-China, Siam and ports in China, followed by that of the Philippines and Malaya, progressively restricted the field of action of the Bureau at Singapore and it had to cease functioning in that city early in 1942. Thanks to the hospitality of the Australian Government, the Bureau has now been re-opened in Australia and will carry on within the limits imposed by war conditions.

Though this interruption in work which had proved its great usefulness over a period of seventeen years must be recorded with regret, it should be noted that the interruption is less dangerous for public health than would have been the case in normal times, in view of the de facto stoppage of maritime and air communications between the zone occupied by the Japanese and the rest of the world.

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The arrangements which had been made in 1940 in order to meet the difficulties occasioned by the slowing-up of ordinary communications between the Geneva centre and overseas countries worked satisfactorily in 1941. The telegraph was used for the regular transmission of information concerning the more important epidemics and the Weekly Epidemiological Record was despatched to extra-European countries by air-mail.

Air-mail transmission was employed for the regular exchange of information between the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau at Washington and the Geneva centre. In the opposite
direction, also, the air-mail service was used by the Federal Public Health Service and the Pan-American Sanitary Bureau for sending to Geneva information concerning respectively the United States and the whole of the Americas.

The agreement concluded in 1927 with the Paris Office international d’Hygiène publique, in virtue of which the communiqués of that Office are printed in the Health Section’s Weekly Epidemiological Record, continued to be carried out notwithstanding the difficulties arising from delays and irregularities in postal communications.

The Weekly Epidemiological Record has, in fact, appeared regularly and without any interruption at Geneva throughout the course of the war. At the beginning of 1942, it started its seventeenth year with its 827th number. During the year, 850 copies of each issue were printed.

It was found possible also to complete and distribute at the end of 1941 an Annual Epidemiological Report (E.I. 23), the preparation of which had been interrupted in June 1940. It should be pointed out that this volume, the sixteenth of its kind, consisting of 114 large pages, contains not only detailed and corrected epidemiological data relating to 1938, the last pre-war year, but also more recent vital statistics covering the first two years of the war.

The next volume of this series will have to cover not merely one year but the whole of the period of hostilities and it will, in addition to giving the usual statistical tables, have to bring together the various observations and partial studies made by the Health Section, while the war was still going on, in regard to the effects of the war on different aspects of public health, the incidence of cerebro-spinal meningitis and of typhus, infant mortality, general mortality, etc. These studies have in part been published in the Weekly Epidemiological Record.

Standardisation of Sera and of Vitamins.

Biological standardisation, too, had its origin in the first world war. It was then that the danger of using sera that had not been tested, or had been assayed according to different standards, became apparent. It happened, indeed, on several
occasions that a medical practitioner, relying on the indication of the number of units contained in an ampoule of foreign origin, injected a quantity of serum which he quite justifiably thought to be appropriate, but which was, in fact, inadequate, as its potency was expressed in terms of a unit much less active than that to which he was accustomed. Hence there were a number of cases of infection which might have been avoided. To-day, such errors need no longer be feared since, thanks to the work accomplished by the Commission on Biological Standardisation, all sera, whatever may be their origin, are assayed by reference to common measures.

Arrangements had, however, to be made by which the institutes of the different countries could continue to be supplied periodically with the standard preparations which would enable them to adjust the strength of the sera which they produced. The Danish State Serum Institute at Copenhagen has continued, as in the past, to act as the distributing centre for international serum standards. The laboratories with which it was unable to communicate have been supplied by the National Institute for Medical Research, Hampstead (United Kingdom).

Although there have been delays owing to disturbances in postal communications, no hindrances have ever been placed in the way of the despatch of these sera. This fact should, no doubt, be regarded as proof of the importance which Governments attach to biological standardisation and of the high value they place upon it.

International standardisation, however, does not relate only to sera. It applies also to vitamins, hormones and certain medicaments such as insulin, digitalis and the arsenobenzenes. The Hampstead Institute, in conjunction in some cases with the Health Section, has continued to carry out the distribution of the standards of these substances.

The international conference which it was intended to convene for October 1939 for the purpose of bringing the assaying of preparations containing vitamins into line with the latest advances in scientific knowledge could not be held. It was intended that the conference should, in particular, standardise vitamin E before laboratories made a habit of
employing units of activity which, being based on different biological criteria, would be difficult to compare. In these circumstances, some of the experts who had been designated to take part in this conference took the initiative of proposing the adoption, for international use, of a standard preparation of vitamin E supplied by the firm of Hoffmann-La Roche, Basle. Following on comparative assays carried out in 1941 in thirteen different laboratories, this preparation has been recognised as being suitable for adoption as an international standard. It is now distributed to the laboratories concerned by the Hampstead Institute. Other vitamins also, in particular those constituting group $B_2$, require to be standardised. It is therefore clear that the programme of work which the Commission on Biological Standardisation laid down for itself is far from being exhausted.

The results of the latest research conducted under the auspices of the Commission were published in 1941 in the *Bulletin of the Health Organisation*; they relate to the standardisation of tetanus antitoxin, antivenenes (viper, cobra) and vitamins $B_1$, $D_2$, $D_3$ and $E$.

In regard to a further aspect of the question of the standardisation of therapeutic agents, mention should be made of the considerable work of a very complex character accomplished since 1938 by the Committee of Pharmacological Experts, which has undertaken the task of drawing up an international pharmacopoeia. The completion of this work would lead to the standardisation of medicinal preparations—some of which at present differ from one country to another in respect of the proportion of active principle they contain—and the results of treatment would thereby become universally comparable. This would, furthermore, be an advantage from the point of view of the chemical industry, which, by reason of the diversity of the requirements of national pharmacopoeiae, now finds it necessary to prepare, for one and the same product, a whole series of different qualities which serve identical therapeutical purposes.
The elements of an international pharmacopoeia have, in fact, already been brought together by the Committee in the form of eighty-five monographs, intended ultimately for insertion in national pharmacopoeiae, each monograph serving to define one medicament. Before reaching that stage, however, the method of presentation of these monographs needed to be unified and their text had to be subjected to a final revision. That was the work which was pursued during the past year.

* * *

Food Restrictions and Health.

In regard to nutrition, the Health Section endeavoured to ascertain to what extent the rationing imposed on European populations had already influenced the general level of health. This implied a somewhat detailed study of systems of rationing, with the object of determining the nutritive value of the rations officially accorded and any respects in which they might be deficient, whether quantitatively or qualitatively.

From the statistical standpoint, the earliest evidence of the harmful effect of under-nourishment is, as past experience has shown, an increase in infant mortality and in the number of deaths from tuberculosis, as the effects on the general death rate do not become obvious until after a longer period. From an examination of the most recent information available, it is clear that a marked increase in infant mortality occurred in 1941 in certain towns in Belgium, France and the Netherlands. The curve for deaths from tuberculosis has risen very steeply in the occupied countries and to a lesser degree in Germany and the United Kingdom. Although less definite, because they are less recent, the indications given by the general death rate suggest a decline in the average level of health. Analysis will still be necessary before it becomes possible to ascertain the importance to be attributed to the various factors that may have been in operation. Nevertheless, having regard to the striking similarity between present conditions and those which obtained towards the end of the war of 1914-1918, it may even now be asserted that
under-nourishment is responsible in a large measure for the increases in the death rate that have been recorded.

In order to form an opinion, account had necessarily to be taken, not only of statistical data, but also of clinical observations made in the countries where food restrictions are most severe. In this connection, too, the facts recorded are far from reassuring. Already, in addition to cases of loss of weight ranging from 5 to 20 kilogrammes, a recrudescence of pulmonary tuberculosis, with a marked tendency to develop unfavourably, is being noted. Cases of so-called starvation oedema and other conditions attributable wholly or partly to lack of vitamins are making their appearance. This raises the problem, of fundamental importance for the future of the race, of the available supplies, present and future, of what are called "protective" foodstuffs—i.e., those foodstuffs which are rich in vitamins and in certain other principles that are indispensable to the development and normal functioning of the body. The Health Section is at present engaged in the study of this question.

A summary of the information collected concerning the influence of food restrictions on health will shortly be published as an integral part of a monograph dealing with rationing considered in all its aspects.

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The Furnishing of Information concerning Health Questions.

An appreciable part of the work of the Health Section has been devoted to replying to requests for information. These requests covered the most varied subjects. Some of them were concerned with the health situation in certain countries or with the trend of a specific disease and could be quickly met thanks to the statistical archives of the Epidemiological Intelligence Service. Others related to some of the many health questions of a special character. To reply to these, reference had to be made to the documentary material (consisting of more than 5,000 studies) published during past years by the technical commissions of the Health Organisation, whilst, in some cases, it was necessary to resort to the resources,
of the League of Nations Library with its medical, health and legislative collections, which, by reason of their international character, are unique in Europe.

The following list of the subjects to which the information furnished during the past year related clearly shows the diversity of the requests made and the predominant preoccupations of health authorities at the present time. Thirty-three requests were concerned with epidemiology and health statistics. They related to the organisation of a national epidemiological service, demographic and health statistics, the nomenclature of diseases and causes of death, the influence of the war on the health situation, typhus, influenza, tuberculosis, cancer, poliomyelitis, malaria, cholera, trypanosomiasis and other tropical diseases.

Thirty-two other questions referred to other branches of public health: the medical and sanitary organisation of colonies and other countries, the training of health staffs, feeding and nutrition, protection of the health of youth, physical training, pre-marriage examinations and certificates, rural sanitation, dental care and international hygiene, alcoholism, narcotic drugs, benzolic intoxication, climatology.

The applicants for information were in seven cases international organisations, in twenty cases national authorities—Ministers, Ministries or their representatives—in seven cases regional health authorities, in seventeen cases university or private research institutes, in six cases public welfare organisations and in eight cases other institutions.

The requests came from seventeen countries: French West Africa, United States of America, Australia, United Kingdom, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, France, Germany, British India, Iran, Italy, Mexico, New Zealand, Poland and Switzerland.

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Future Possibilities.

After this short review of the quite recent past, it may perhaps not be over-rash to turn towards the future and endeavour to outline the way in which the Health Section might prove to be a useful auxiliary of health administrations
in their efforts to deal with the consequences of the war and the problems of the post-war period. Already measures, some of them entirely new, have been taken to safeguard public health and, in the case of certain countries, the Health Section has made a study of these. It is important that it should keep itself informed of the regulations enacted so that it may be able to acquaint the health authorities of any country with what is being done elsewhere. Such a case has already occurred and it was possible to furnish an adequate reply. By doing this, the Health Section would, moreover, not be breaking new ground; it would merely be adapting to present circumstances the means of exploration which it formerly utilised for the purpose of its study on the effects of the economic crisis on public health.

The field of nutrition seems to be that which offers the greatest opportunity for action by the Health Organisation, by reason of the experience it has acquired on that subject. The Report on the Physiological Bases of Nutrition \(^1\), which its technical Commission drew up in 1935, remains a landmark in the evolution of dietetics. It is true, however, that the standards therein laid down are optimum standards, and they will unfortunately have to be reduced in many countries. Nevertheless, the consensus of opinion to which they give expression retains its full value, for it defines the objective towards which efforts must be directed as soon as hostilities come to an end.

Until then, lower standards will inevitably have to be accepted. In the first place, everything must be done so as to allocate available supplies of foodstuffs in such a way that the intake of energy furnished by the official rations may be sufficient to enable the individual to live without feeding unduly on his own substance. That is the object of food rationing. The various forms it assumes have already been the subject of a study by the Health Section and this study must be kept up to date, for it may be possible to deduce from it certain guiding principles which will have to be applied in the post-war period.

\(^1\) Document A.12(a).1936.II.B.
In the second place, care must be taken to ensure that the so-called "protective" foodstuffs are allotted by right of priority to those population groups which are most threatened, whose needs are most urgent and which are the most precious—children, adolescents, pregnant and nursing women. In Europe to-day, foodstuffs which possess a high protective value are rare. Some of them, such as cod-liver oil, for instance, are unobtainable in many countries. When the time comes, as is anticipated, for large quantities of foodstuffs to flow into countries where want is rampant, an important place must be given to protective foodstuffs, some of which can, at the present time, be prepared synthetically or even in a concentrated form. Two problems will then arise: that of the choice of these foodstuffs and that of their distribution in accordance with the frequency and gravity of deficiency symptoms observed amongst the suffering populations. The Health Section, which still has the advantage of access to many and widespread sources of information which are lacking to others, must contribute its share to the solution of these humanitarian problems.

In Asia, the land of rice-eaters, this cereal must be made to yield all it can give—that is to say, steps must be taken to ensure that the grain is not deprived, by excessive polishing or inadequate methods of cooking, of certain of its nutritive and protective qualities. These questions were raised in 1937 at Bandoeng (Java), during the Conference of Far-Eastern Countries on Rural Hygiene. They formed the subject of several studies which appeared in 1941 in the Bulletin of the Health Organisation and their consideration will probably have to be resumed under the pressure of circumstances.

In Latin America, the impulse given to research work on nutrition as a result of the Conference of representatives of National Nutrition Committees in 1939 continues to make itself felt. Reports of the enquiries which have been conducted into the nutritional situation in various countries have brought to light deficiencies which require to be made good. A further meeting of representatives of National Committees would provide an opportunity for a collective study of measures that might be adopted for improving these inadequate dietaries.
As regards contagious diseases, there is no need to be a prophet to foresee that there will be a marked increase in their incidence in the post-war period. Perhaps, if pestilential diseases assume the same proportions as after the first world war, it may be advisable to revive the Epidemics Commission which, in 1921/22, succeeded in uniting and associating national efforts and created a chain of quarantine stations in Eastern Europe, thereby preventing smallpox, cholera and typhus from spreading westward. That would be a field of application for the recommendations of the Typhus Conference of 1937 and it would doubtless also provide an opportunity for conducting a vast comparative test of the different methods of anti-typhus vaccination which are now recommended, with a view to determining their respective value.

A considerable increase in the incidence of malaria must be expected, in Southern Europe and also in Africa and the Far East, owing to the movements of troops and of refugees and the consequent mingling of receptive individuals with those who are infected, and owing also to the way in which the war has interrupted antilarval work. In the campaign that will have to be waged against hyperendemic malaria, the Malaria Commission, which has earned for itself worldwide authority, must, once more, play its part as adviser to national health administrations. The question of quinine supplies cannot fail to arise and that, too, is a subject which the Commission has explored in all its aspects.

A serious increase in the incidence of tuberculosis as a result of the industrial effort called for by the war and of the food shortage can already be observed; this increase is bound to continue as long as the war lasts. It would be desirable for the Tuberculosis Commission to undertake a revision of the guiding principles enunciated in 1932 for the organisation of the campaign against tuberculosis, with due regard to new methods of treatment and, more particularly, of detection. These remarks apply equally, mutatis mutandis, to venereal diseases.

The Housing Commission might be required to undertake an immense task in the work of reconstruction. It should
see to it that the principles it has laid down—sanitary, technical and economic—are observed, whether the question be one of rebuilding what has been destroyed by war or of carrying out a new distribution of housing, industrial and agricultural zones.

In the East, the hostilities will inevitably be found to have produced unsanitary conditions that will be all the more serious because of the pestilential diseases of which that region is the breeding-ground. The Eastern Bureau of the Health Organisation should consequently not merely resume its work of supervision in the matter of epidemics, but should also intensify the work of international co-ordination in the medico-social sphere, the bases for which were laid down by the Conference on Rural Hygiene in 1937.

In short, side by side with the increase in the burden of the tasks which will confront health authorities in countries that have been affected directly or indirectly by the war, there should, as soon as the international situation permits, be a corresponding increase of activity on the part of the Health Organisation in all those fields in which its technical advice and its assistance as an instrument of co-ordination might prove to be useful.

2. CONTROL OF THE DRUG TRAFFIC

The activity of the League of Nations in regard to the control of the drug traffic has been maintained in its essential parts thanks to the fact that, on the whole, Governments have continued to fulfil their obligations under the Conventions, and the organs which form the international drug administration have accordingly been able to carry on their work.

At its twenty-fifth session (May 1940), the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs, having considered the possible repercussions of the international situation on the object of its work, pointed out, in a resolution submitted to the Council ¹, that the war of 1914-

1918 had led to a very marked recrudescence of drug addiction and an immense extension of the illicit traffic due to the lack of national and international legislative measures and of adequate systems of supervision and suppression and that it was essential that Governments and international organs should take all possible steps to prevent an extension of drug addiction and a reversion to the conditions which existed during and after the last war.

The Committee's resolution was communicated to Governments. It is gratifying to note that, in spite of other pressing preoccupations, a large majority of Governments have readily responded and continued to furnish the information which is essential for the functioning of the international control.

No efforts are being spared to preserve the system of control of dangerous drugs, built up so laboriously in the last twenty-two years under the auspices of the League of Nations. It is in the common interest that drug addiction and illicit traffic should be combated and reduced to the lowest possible scale. This is particularly important during the present world-wide conflict. Wars create conditions favourable to the development of drug addiction, both through the suffering caused by war and through the fact that drugs are necessarily more extensively used and sometimes unavoidably come into the hands of persons who are not familiar with their dangers and do not realise the need for careful use and supervision.

The war itself has created a new situation and new problems. On the whole, the international illicit traffic has diminished because of the cessation or stricter control of international communications. Addicts and traffickers seek other sources of supply. Existing supplies for legitimate use must be carefully protected. There are great difficulties in obtaining both raw materials and the drugs which are required for legitimate needs. New sources of supply have to be sought and the trends of the international trade have, as a consequence, undergone very material changes. This means, in fact, that the drug trade no longer follows its normal well-regulated channels. In these circumstances also, the immediate situation requires continued vigilance and control, and
experience proves that this control is only possible on the basis of conventions and international co-operation.

Although it is not possible to make progress during the war, it is possible to plan for further progress. The settlement following the war will offer opportunity for improvement in the control of dangerous drugs, but only if the necessary preparatory work has been done.

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The following is a short review of the activities of the League in the drug field during the past year. The existing international supervision is based on information supplied by Governments in regard to conditions in their territories. The exchange of information stipulated in the Convention has continued. Governments continue to transmit to the League annual reports on the traffic in opium and other dangerous drugs, reports on cases of seizures in the illicit traffic and texts of laws and regulations. All these documents are communicated by the Secretariat of the League to Governments and to the Opium Advisory Committee. The session of the Committee which was planned for May 1941 was postponed until further notice, partly on account of the international situation and partly because the changes which the drug trade had undergone were not at the time sufficiently developed or sufficiently known. It may be possible to convene a session of the Committee in the not-too-distant future.

Supervisory Body.

The Supervisory Body created by the 1931 Convention examines Government estimates of drug requirements, and its annual Statement containing these estimates is the basis on which the whole machinery of international control of the manufacture of and the trade in dangerous drugs now rests. The effectiveness of the Estimates System depends on its universality. That is why the Convention of 1931 placed upon the Supervisory Body the duty of establishing estimates itself for those countries and territories which fail
to furnish them. The continued functioning of the Supervisory Body is therefore essential if the national and international control of drugs is to be maintained. The following short survey of the Supervisory Body's work in regard to the estimates for 1941 and 1942 shows that it has, in fact, been possible to ensure the application of the system of estimates.

For the maintenance of the national and international control, easy communication with Governments is essential. To facilitate communication with non-European Governments, a branch office of the Supervisory Body was opened in Washington, D.C., in February 1941. Experience has proved that the existence of this branch office has facilitated the work of the Body. It is of interest to note, in regard to the estimates for 1942, that this is the first time since the coming into force of the 1931 Convention that estimates have been furnished by all sovereign countries in the Western Hemisphere.

I. Application of the Estimates System in 1941.

1. Owing to delays in communications, at the time when the Supervisory Body's Statement of the Estimated World Requirements of Dangerous Drugs in 1941 was sent to the printers (December 1940), annual estimates for 1941 had been received in respect of only ninety-six countries and territories. Before the close of the year 1941, however, further estimates were transmitted in respect of fifty-eight countries and territories, and the total number of estimates furnished for 1941 by Governments themselves rose to 154, or 88% of all the countries and territories—177 in number—covered by estimates shown in the Statement. For the remaining twenty-three countries and territories, the estimates framed by the Supervisory Body were in force during the year.

2. In addition to the annual estimates mentioned above, which came in late, thirty-five supplementary estimates were received and dealt with by the Supervisory Body in the course of 1941.

3. Five Supplements to the Statement for 1941, containing the late annual estimates and the supplementary estimates mentioned in 1 and 2 above, were issued and communicated
to Governments by the Secretariat of the League of Nations between June 25th and December 31st, 1941.

4. These Supplements to the Statement for 1941 modified as follows the original world totals for the five principal drugs published in the Statement for that year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drugs</th>
<th>As shown in the Statement for 1941</th>
<th>As modified by supplementary estimates</th>
<th>Increase</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kg.</td>
<td>Kg.</td>
<td>Kg.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morphine</td>
<td>43,910</td>
<td>53,414</td>
<td>9,504</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diacetylmorphine</td>
<td>814</td>
<td>1,053</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocaine</td>
<td>4,641</td>
<td>6,294</td>
<td>1,653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codeine</td>
<td>30,028</td>
<td>36,333</td>
<td>6,305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dionine</td>
<td>2,891</td>
<td>3,630</td>
<td>739</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Taking into account 177 estimates included in the Statement for 1941, fifty-eight late annual estimates and thirty-five supplementary estimates, the Supervisory Body dealt in all with 270 estimates for 1941.

II. The Statement of the "Estimated World Requirements of Dangerous Drugs in 1942".

1. Notwithstanding their growing preoccupation with the international situation as it developed in 1941, and in spite of the ever-extending war, the Governments have continued their efforts to collaborate closely with the Supervisory Body and to maintain the international control system as set up under the Conventions. Estimates in respect of forty-seven countries and thirty-four territories were received in time to be included in the Supervisory Body's Statement for 1942. A further thirty-six estimates (for seven countries and twenty-nine territories) were furnished after the Statement was sent to print. Thus, up to February 21st, 1942, Governments themselves submitted estimates in respect of 117 countries and territories, which represent 66% of all the countries and territories of the world.

2. The following table shows how countries, grouped by

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continents, fulfilled their obligation to furnish estimates in respect of 1942:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continents</th>
<th>Estimates</th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Furnished by Governments</td>
<td>Established by the Supervisory Body</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Countries</td>
<td>Territories</td>
<td>Countries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>America (North, Central and South)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>177</td>
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</table>

3. The Statement for 1942 was communicated to Governments by the Secretariat of the League of Nations in December 1941.

**Permanent Central Opium Board.**

The Permanent Central Opium Board watches the international trade in narcotic drugs, on the basis of statistical information supplied by Governments. The work of the Board is summarised in its annual report to the Council of the League of Nations, issued in Geneva in December 1941, as follows:

"When war broke out in the West, the Board issued a request to all Governments to send as usual estimates and statistics in accordance with their obligations under the Convention. The response was remarkable and has now been sustained through two years of war. The situation to-day is as follows. There has been one accession (Paraguay) to both Conventions; and no denunciation of either. The legal and administrative basis for the work—the Conventions, the Board itself, its small international staff—subsists; and the opening of a branch office of the Board at Washington has done something to overcome difficulty and delay in obtaining information from many Governments. The essential measures of control continue uninterruptedly, although they are impaired by gaps, by the imperfection of data, and by the delay and dislocation..."
caused everywhere by war. The support of Governments has been widespread. For the year 1940, the Board received 163 estimates and fifty-five supplementary estimates which were passed to the Supervisory Body, and statistics of one kind or another, required by the Conventions, from fifty-seven metropolitan Governments or administrations, and in respect of eighty-nine colonies, territories, etc.

"This encouraging result is, of course, largely due to the efforts of national controls, which prepare the estimates and statistics sent to the Board and have continued to function and to collaborate. The Board expresses its warm appreciation of these efforts and, at the same time, the hope that they will be redoubled."

For the year 1941, the Board received 154 estimates and thirty-five supplementary estimates, and these were passed to the Supervisory Body. It has, so far, received for that year quarterly export and import statistics from forty-eight metropolitan Governments, and in respect of forty-one territories. More quarterly statistics for that year, delayed by slow and hazardous communications, are still to be expected. As regards the annual returns for 1941, which, according to the Conventions, are not due until several months after the end of the year, numerous Governments have already sent them.

3. Social Questions

Without touching on the great social problems which fall within the province of the International Labour Organisation, the League of Nations has, during the past twenty years—whilst maintaining, throughout, the necessary contacts with the International Labour Office—devoted part of its activities to a certain number of important "social questions" coming within its own competence. These questions concern chiefly the legal and moral protection of women and children and related problems. In this field, certain studies or enquiries, the programme for which had been drawn up by the Social Questions Committee, could not be pursued during the war, but an effort has been made to carry on, as far as possible, the work of collecting documentary material, with a view to its ultimate utilisation.
Publication of Annual Reports.

In regard to the traffic in women and children, ten countries transmitted to the Secretariat their annual reports for 1939/40, together with some forty reports concerning colonies, possessions, protectorates and other territories. As usual, the Secretariat prepared and published a summary of these reports (document C.35.M.32.1941.IV and Addendum).

It also published a summary of the annual reports which some half-dozen countries transmitted concerning the traffic in obscene publications. This summary comprises, in addition, an analysis of about forty reports relating to territories such as colonies, protectorates, etc. (document C.73.M.70.1941.IV).

The former of these publications records the accession of Turkey to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women of Full Age; the second mentions the registration of the accession of Morocco to the Convention for the Suppression of the Circulation of and Traffic in Obscene Publications.

Further, the Secretariat received, in 1940 and 1941, reports from ten countries concerning the progress achieved in the matter of child welfare from the legislative and administrative standpoints. The summary of these reports, which was prepared by the Secretariat, was recently published (document C.15.M.15.1942.IV).

A further volume, which was issued last year, summarises the texts published during 1940 by the Child Welfare Information Centre, in its Legislative and Administrative Series (document C.89.M.86.1941.IV).

Special attention must be drawn to the fact that it is important that countries should transmit regularly to the Secretariat their reports on these various questions, the consideration of which, after the war, will be facilitated if it is possible to collect at the present time a wide range of information concerning recent developments.

Maintenance of the Child Welfare Information Centre.

The work of the Information Centre which was created at the Secretariat was not interrupted after the lamented death
of Mlle. Andrée Colin, who had for years devoted all her energies to the establishment and development of this Centre. It continues to collect and communicate information concerning provisions of a legislative and administrative character adopted in various countries with a view to promoting child welfare.

In this connection, it should also be noted that, as far as possible, the Secretariat endeavours to furnish information requested by Governments and private organisations.

**Questions in Suspense and Post-war Situation.**

The consideration of questions concerning the legal and moral protection of women and children must necessarily be taken up again after the war. The latter will certainly prove to have rendered more acute those problems which, before 1939, were the subject of concern to the Social Questions Committee and all the organisations that collaborated with it.

It is obvious, for instance, that the problem of prostitution, in its many aspects (preventive action, traffic in women, regulation, rehabilitation of prostitutes, measures against venereal diseases, etc.) will have become more serious as a result of the destitution to which an enormous number of women and children will have been reduced.

The splitting-up of families, not only through the increase in prostitution but also from many other causes, such as the disappearance of parents and the removal of children from one region to another, with or without their parents, will also have increased in alarming proportions the number of children and young persons in moral danger.

It may be anticipated that, in order to meet this situation, many countries will wish to take active measures and will, in particular, develop their social administrations or social services, or establish new ones. It is probable that these countries will not merely desire to obtain information concerning the organisation of social administrations and services in other countries, but will also attach importance to the advantages that would follow from an international enquiry into the different aspects of the problem.

Most of the questions which have just been mentioned have
already, in one form or another, figured in the past in the programme of work which the competent organs of the League of Nations have undertaken with the collaboration of Governments and of various experts. Some parts of this work had, in 1939, reached a very advanced stage. The final report concerning "preventive action against prostitution", for instance, was ready for printing; it could be published as soon as the necessary funds become available.

The Social Questions Committee had, further, expressed the wish that, in conjunction with the Health Committee, a thorough study should be made of the social and medical aspects of venereal disease.

It may also be recalled that a draft convention for the "suppression of the exploitation of the prostitution of others" had been drawn up but, owing to the situation in certain countries with regard to this problem, the convening of a conference for the adoption of this convention seemed premature. This question is, however, of such importance that it will, it would seem, have to be examined afresh.

The same is true of the "social position of the unmarried mother and her child". Good progress was being made with the work on this question on the eve of the war and the publication of a report was contemplated. The first part of this report, devoted to the "legal position", had been completed, whilst the second part, consisting of a study of the "social aspects", followed by conclusions and recommendations, had reached a fairly advanced stage. On the other hand, only preliminary work had been undertaken on other questions—e.g., those relating to the "principles adopted in the organisation and administration of welfare work among the young" and the "training of persons engaged in social work".

It should, however, be pointed out that, after the war, these problems may arise in conditions which are so changed that the measures taken and the recommendations adopted even in a recent past may no longer meet the exigencies of the situation. Should that prove to be the case, they will have to be re-examined with a view to making any necessary modifications in the earlier conclusions and, possibly, giving them a wider scope.
New Problems.

Finally, it is by no means impossible that, when work in common on the international plane can be resumed, it may be found that the events and ideas which, from the spiritual no less than from the material standpoint, are at present causing an upheaval in the world have created situations and given rise to problems of no less urgent a character than those to which reference has been made above. I am thinking, for instance, of problems connected with the training of young persons, the social, moral, cultural, health and other aspects of which might with advantage be the subject of study. The time has not yet come for defining more precisely the work that might be undertaken; but, having regard to the manner in which and the extent to which present circumstances are affecting the existence of the family, of children and of young people, it must be anticipated that urgent questions will have to be faced and that their examination by international organs, and the results of such examination, may be of great importance for the future of the human community.

4. INTELLECTUAL CO-OPERATION AND INTERNATIONAL BUREAUX

The activity of the various organs of Intellectual Co-operation has also, to a large extent, been interrupted by events. The Executive Committee of the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation has not met since December 1939 and the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation in Paris ceased functioning in June 1940.

It has, however, been possible for intellectual co-operation to continue in America, and the National Committees of that continent held their Second Conference at Havana in November 1941. The programme covered the following points:

1. Examination and statement of the basic principles upon which the existence of intellectual co-operation depends;
2. Improvement of copyright regulations;
3. Removal of obstacles to cultural and intellectual exchange, including high duties on books, Customs formalities, cost of travel, excessive postage rates;
(4) Consideration of means for developing inter-American cultural relations through exchange of professors, students, experts, motion pictures, radio broadcasts, music, art, theatre, and publications of all kinds;

(5) Consideration of the means that should be adopted for facilitating and co-ordinating relations between the American Committees on Intellectual Co-operation;

(6) Consideration of the measures taken or which may be taken in fulfilment of resolutions and recommendations on intellectual co-operation approved by the International Conferences of American States, the First Conference of American National Committees on Intellectual Co-operation, and the Pan-American Union.

In the intellectual sphere, as in the economic sphere, the war is extending its ravages. It is destroying men and their work. At the end of the conflict, the world will have less artists, less scientists, less technical experts. Not only have many of those whose work was still unfinished disappeared prematurely but also, in many cases, total warfare, with its methods and its consequences, has led to the death or dispersal of their pupils. Furthermore, in some countries, the most precious artistic treasures—like the organisations built up by the efforts and the thrift of many generations, the public buildings, museums, artistic and scientific collections, libraries, laboratories, schools and universities—have been ravaged or destroyed. This will make it more difficult for the artist, the scientist and the student to resume their work.

The Intellectual Co-operation Organisation created under the auspices of the League of Nations might be expected to facilitate such a resumption. The National Committees, as has just been seen, are still functioning in America and are continuing their collaboration there, and it may be possible to reconstitute them also in the countries of other continents. Contacts between these Committees may be re-established; some collections of books, publications and scientific instruments which have been destroyed may, in a certain measure, be reconstituted by exchanges or gifts; relations between universities and museums and also between men—scientists, artists, students—may be resumed through those organs which facilitated international co-operation during the period between the two world wars.
If the difficulties encountered in re-establishing intellectual relations after 1918 are recalled, it will be seen that, in the work of reconstruction which must follow the present war, the world cannot afford to neglect the teaching of twenty years of experience or the fruits of the efforts of men of goodwill who, in ever-increasing numbers and in all parts of the world, gave the League of Nations their collaboration in the organisation of intellectual co-operation.

As regards *International Bureaux*, the Secretariat continues to receive and collect information concerning their activities which, in many cases, it has proved possible to continue during the war.

5. INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES

International assistance to refugees is being continued on the lines laid down in the Assembly resolution of September 1938. In his report for 1941, the League of Nations High Commissioner points out that, whilst his task has been rendered increasingly difficult by the extension of hostilities, it has also become more and more clearly indispensable. The tragic situation of thousands of refugees assembled in certain regions, interned in camps, or scattered in emigration ports, has been improved as far as possible, thanks, in particular, to the invaluable co-operation of the private organisations, though these have been forced, in many cases, to reduce their activities.

Possibilities for emigration are also growing less day by day. A certain number of refugees, chiefly Jews from Germany, have found shelter in America. On the other hand, as is generally known, apart from Palestine, the only country for which it had been possible before the war to consider a definite plan for colonisation and emigration was the Dominican Republic. In his report for 1941, the League of Nations High Commissioner writes:

"The Dominican Republic Settlement Association has devoted much thought and care to the settlement and has done a good deal of preliminary work in regard to the breaking-up of land, the erection of farm
and other buildings, the introduction of new crops, and the physical health of the settlers. The ultimate success of the settlement will probably depend on the ability of the Association to find the necessary capital to cover the heavy expenditure during the early years until new crops are produced on a commercial basis."

The legal protection of refugees, one of the High Commissioner's chief tasks, meets with as many difficulties as their emigration. Nevertheless, the framework of an international organisation subsists. After the Evian Conference, convened on the initiative of President Roosevelt in July 1938, an Inter-governmental Committee was set up, and of this Sir Herbert Emerson, League of Nations High Commissioner, is honorary director. Better collaboration with the American countries has thus been rendered possible. If States so desire, they will be able to adapt the existing organisation to the needs of the post-war situation.

It is perhaps not premature to attempt even now to gather some idea of what that situation will be, and of the magnitude of the problems by which Governments will be faced.

As a result of the war, and of the removals, voluntary or enforced, of populations to which it has given rise, the number of foreigners within the territory of most States will have considerably increased at the time when peace is restored. Amongst these foreigners, many will wish to return at once to their own countries and, in a large number of cases, it may be possible for them to be repatriated without undue delay. I am thinking, in particular, of prisoners of war, civilian prisoners, foreign workers who have been recruited or deported to work in industry or agriculture, and of those who have emigrated in order to escape from war-zones. Most of these will, no doubt, be able to return to their own countries by their own means, or as the result of arrangements made by the Governments concerned. The experience of the last war showed, however, that, in many cases, these arrangements are not sufficient. In some regions, prisoners of war and civilians of various nationalities may, several months after the end of hostilities, still be found in camps or be wandering about in search of means for repatriation. More than a year after the armistice of November 1918, half-a-million prisoners
were still waiting, in Europe and Asia, to be taken back to their countries. It was at that moment that Nansen was entrusted by the Council of the League of Nations with the work of repatriating them. He had, says the report adopted by the third Assembly, “to improvise” everything; he succeeded in finding vessels at the time when the transport crisis was at its height and, though the funds at his disposal were inadequate, he managed to evoke so much good-will and to organise co-operation on such a scale that he was not held up by the lack of money. A month after his appointment, transports were beginning to move; but it took him nearly two years to complete his task. It is to be hoped that the lessons to be learned from this experience will not be lost. It will perhaps not be easy to find another Nansen, but, by preparatory work, it may be possible to save the man or men to whom a similar mission is entrusted from having “to improvise” everything.

Apart from prisoners and persons who will wish to be repatriated and who can be repatriated, there will, as after the last war, be those who are compelled by the political or social situation of their country to remain in an exile that may for some of them be voluntary, but will for many others be enforced, if they have been driven out by political, religious or racial persecution and even, in some cases, deprived of their nationality. It may be anticipated that the number of such refugees will not decrease during the next few years, for, although in some countries changes of régime may favour the return of certain categories of emigrants, those very changes may also lead to the exodus of other nationals of the same countries. The experience of the past twenty years proves that the refugee problem is so grave for States and so distressing for the human conscience that it will not in future be possible to solve it by merely reverting to the methods that were traditional before 1914. It will no longer be possible to rely solely on the charitable organisations for the provision of relief for the victims of wars or revolutions; nor will those wide openings that were for so long offered by certain emigration countries be available for the absorption of the masses of men seeking a land of refuge.
The work accomplished by the League of Nations or under its auspices should enable the refugee problem to be solved after the second world war in a better way than was possible after the first. It will be recalled that it was only in 1921 that a proposal by the International Red Cross Committee concerning assistance for Russian refugees was laid before the Council of the League of Nations. There were then some two million persons on the territory of countries in which it was often impossible for them to find employment and which they could not leave as they had no recognised legal status. Nansen accepted the new mission that was offered to him—notably, that of co-ordinating the action of Governments and private organisations in favour of these refugees, whose numbers were soon increased by the addition of 300,000 Armenians. It is well known that, over a period of years and with the co-operation of the International Labour Organisation, efforts were made with the object of finding places for these refugees either in the countries in which they happened to be or in other countries where they could be received more easily. The problem of the legal status of refugees also, it will be remembered, was gradually solved as a result of the recommendations adopted, from 1922 onwards, by various inter-governmental conferences, and through the International Convention of 1933. The experience acquired in regard to international protection in favour of the Russian and Armenian refugees was utilised when, in 1933 and subsequent years, the measures enforced in Germany against Jews or persons of Jewish descent led to a further exodus of populations.

There is, finally, still one more experience which may perhaps prove to be of value during the coming years. It is sometimes suggested that, in order to lessen causes of friction between certain European countries, it might be desirable to contemplate exchanges of populations when peace is restored. Through this procedure, which has, in fact, been resorted to recently, some of those minority problems which have embittered the relations between certain States during past years might, it is said, be rendered less troublesome or even be completely solved.

Such exchanges, however, if it is decided to undertake them,
must be carried out so as to leave as little bitterness as possible between the countries concerned—that is to say, they must, in the first place, cause the minimum of suffering and regret in the case of the populations transferred. The part played by the League of Nations in 1923 and the following years resulted, as is well known, in mitigating the consequences of the exchange, agreed upon between Greece and Turkey, of nearly two millions of their nationals. The grave problems to which the arrival of a million and a-half refugees from Asia Minor gave rise in Greece, impoverished by years of war, were solved largely through the assistance of all kinds furnished by the League of Nations or under its auspices—the organisation of emergency relief in the form of foodstuffs and medical supplies, the vaccination campaign, the drawing-up of a programme for the settlement of the refugees and the launching of an international loan for the execution of that programme. The success of this work certainly contributed towards facilitating the good relations which were subsequently established between Greece and Turkey.

Though the magnitude and, in some cases, the nature of post-war problems cannot as yet be accurately foreseen, it may nevertheless be useful to pass in review even now those problems which arose after 1918, to study the methods adopted for their solution and also to follow closely those developments which are at present taking place in regard to the various aspects of the refugee question.

6. SETTLEMENT OF THE ASSYRIANS OF IRAQ

Work in connection with the settlement in Syria of the Assyrians of Iraq had been pursued over a period of years and, notwithstanding the course taken by events, it was possible to complete this work in December 1941, on the expiration of the transition period during which, as arranged, certain supervision continued to be exercised by the Trustee Board.

The history of this settlement provides an example of the difficulties that have been encountered in every effort for the
permanent establishment of refugees. It shows too that, in this case, means were found for overcoming those difficulties through a persevering international effort backed by the collaboration of the country which agreed to receive the refugees into its territory.

These Assyrians, nearly all of them Christians, formed part of the Assyrian population which had taken refuge in Iraq during the upheavals the first world war occasioned in the Near East. They began to make efforts to leave Iraq in 1933, when the United Kingdom relinquished its mandate over that country. Their first attempt at emigration gave rise to incidents on the frontier between Iraq and Syria. Finally, the French authorities allowed the Assyrian refugees to enter the territory of Syria, but they admitted them only temporarily and quartered them in encampments in the valley of the Khabur, whilst the Council of the League of Nations was endeavouring to find a State or a colony where they could settle in a permanent manner. These efforts having failed, the French Government agreed, in 1935, to create a permanent settlement for the Assyrian refugees in the plain of the Ghab, with the financial participation of the States of the Levant under French mandate, the United Kingdom and Iraq. The Assembly of the League of Nations then voted a special contribution for the purpose of assisting in carrying out this plan, a thing which it had never done previously for any specific work of settlement. In 1936, the plan was abandoned, as the French Government had pointed out that it was preparing to emancipate the States of the Levant from the mandate and that, in consequence, there were difficulties of a political nature which stood in the way of the settlement of the refugees in the plain of the Ghab. In 1937, finally, it was decided to convert the temporary settlement in the valley of the Khabur into a permanent colony, with the financial participation of the United Kingdom, Iraq and the League of Nations. The execution of the plan was placed in the hands of the Trustee Board, an autonomous organisation which had been given legal status and was co-operating with the French mandatory authorities at Beirut. The functions of this Board ceased finally in January 1942, the set-
tlement plan having, at that date, been completely carried out.

This gives some idea of the difficulties that had to be overcome in order to bring about the settlement of a few thousand refugees belonging, it is true, to a population group which had practically no connection and no affinity with any other people. In their favour there was, however, the fact that the United Kingdom felt a certain responsibility towards a minority of which it had assumed the charge when it was exercising its mandate in Iraq. The latter country also desired to help to find a permanent settlement elsewhere for those members of this minority who wished to leave its territory. France, the mandatory Power in Syria—notwithstanding the difficulties that were entailed for her by an immigration she did not desire—and the other Members of the League of Nations, prompted, as was France, by feelings of humanity, associated their efforts with those of the United Kingdom and of Iraq in order to find a satisfactory solution.

At the present time, whilst some 20,000 Assyrians have remained in the north of Iraq, where they form a Christian minority, the 9,000 or so who emigrated to Syria have acquired Syrian nationality.

Before that nationality was granted to them, they were settled on a permanent basis, thanks to the financial aid provided for in the settlement plan. They have, in fact, been given land, agricultural equipment, and live-stock in so far as what they had brought with them from Iraq was insufficient. They have been divided amongst thirty-three villages, forming an administrative unit, nearly every one of which has its own church (twenty-seven Nestorian churches and four Catholic churches). The settlement has, in addition, been provided with sixteen schools and also, from the outset, a hospital, as a result of which it has been possible to improve the health situation and, in particular, to combat malaria. The progress of the colony is evidenced by the fact that the area sown with crops amounted to nearly 5,000 hectares in 1940/41. As to the extent of pasturage available for the settlement, it is practically unlimited.
The total amount of the expenditure incurred for the settlement of these refugees will be communicated to the Members of the League as soon as the Secretariat receives the final report of the Trustee Board.
III. QUESTIONS OF A LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CHARACTER

1. REGISTRATION OF TREATIES AND LEGAL WORK

I. Registration and Publication of Treaties.

During 1941, fifty-four new treaties were sent to the Secretariat by Governments for the purpose of registration. These treaties are mentioned in the *Monthly List of Treaties registered*, which has been regularly published.

The Secretariat has also recorded further particulars concerning conventions already registered.

As regards the publication of the actual texts of the treaties registered, with the English or French translation of treaties the original of which is not in one of those languages, one volume of the *Treaty Series*, Volume CXCIX (containing Treaties Nos. 4660 to 4685) appeared during the course of 1941.

It is anticipated that the publication of the *Treaty Series*, which was retarded in 1941 by administrative and financial difficulties, will be pursued more rapidly in 1942. A further volume of the series, Volume CC, has already appeared—in May 1942.

*Communication of Ratifications and Accessions.* — Governments have continued to communicate to the Secretariat ratifications and accessions in respect of treaties concluded under the auspices of the League of Nations, including Labour Conventions. These ratifications and accessions have, in each case, been notified to all Governments.
II. Legal Studies.

During 1942, the Rome International Institute for the Unification of Private Law completed its general study on the *Legal Status of Women in Private Law*. This study was to have been submitted to the Committee of Experts appointed for the purpose of conducting a comprehensive enquiry into the legal status of women. As a result of circumstances, however, no meeting of this Committee at an early date can be foreseen. The Secretary-General of the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law has informed the Secretariat of the League of Nations that he intends himself to publish, on his own responsibility, the study prepared by the Institute.

III. Dispute between the League of Nations and Former Officials of the Saar Territory.

The Council of the League of Nations decided, on December 14th, 1939, to request the Permanent Court of International Justice for an opinion on the question whether the League of Nations had any legal obligations towards former officials of the Saar Territory who complain that they have not received the pensions to which they claim to be entitled.

Between October 31st, 1940, and September 18th, 1941, the complainants and the Secretariat of the League of Nations exchanged the memoranda referred to in the Council resolution. This matter, which raises general questions relating to possible obligations of the League of Nations, has thus reached a stage at which it is ready for examination by the Court.

2. Protection of Minorities

After the first world war, the authors of the peace treaties were guided by what they considered to be an established tradition, in accordance with European public law. In con-
nection with the territorial changes in Central and Eastern Europe, they introduced in a number of countries a new form of international protection of minorities. The Assembly, further, extended this protection to other countries in Eastern Europe at the time of their admission to membership of the League of Nations or following upon that admission.

This protection has been interrupted by the war. This is not the place to attempt once more to assess the value of what the League of Nations has done in this field. The protection of minorities may have had a preventive value. It prevented discriminatory measures against persons belonging to minority groups and also, during the years immediately following its introduction, it prevented conflicts for which the more or less equitable treatment of a minority might have furnished a cause or a pretext. This protection was, however, in some cases, regarded as an onerous burden by the States which had agreed to it and they brought against it the objection that it constituted an exceptional régime. Further, some defenders of the rights of minorities have criticised the procedure and the decisions of the Council and have blamed them as being, in general, ineffective.

During the crisis which preceded the opening of the present hostilities in Europe, certain minority questions were withdrawn from the system of protection instituted after the first world war. They then once more became the subject of negotiations, agreements between Powers, diplomatic representations and, finally, conflicts—which is exactly what the system was devised by its authors to prevent.

Whatever may be the political configuration of Europe after the war, minority problems, unless they are solved with wisdom, will constitute a danger to established order. Oppression does not quench but keeps alive national feeling. Moreover, even if the system of exchanges of populations were ruthlessly extended in its application, it could neither be expected to facilitate rapprochement between nations in all

1 This work was quite recently the subject, inter alia, of an article commenting on the second point of the Pope's Christmas Message of 1941 and entitled "The Protection of Minorities" (Osservatore Romano, January 11th, 1942).
cases nor to eliminate all minority problems; some groups will remain minorities of race, religion or language, whatever be the country in which they are incorporated. It may be thought, on the other hand, that, within the framework of a more or less comprehensive confederation of States, minority questions, like other political or economic questions, might become less acute as a result of the lowering of frontier barriers and the development of the spirit of collaboration.

Co-operation between nations after the war will be either facilitated or impeded by the treatment accorded to minorities in specific cases.

3. Mandates

The Secretariat has continued to keep up to date all available documentary material from official and unofficial sources concerning the territories under mandate—e.g., official gazettes, statistics, trade reports, etc. A number of documents, including the annual reports on the administration of certain territories, have been received from the mandatory Powers and communicated to the Mandates Commission.

While it is obviously too early to foresee the repercussions of the present conflict both upon the social, economic and political conditions of the native populations and the future of the mandates system, it may be said without exaggeration that the system based on Article 22 of the Covenant proved to be of moral and practical value. The consideration of the social, material and moral welfare of the natives as the primary object of colonial administration; the custodianship of peoples "not yet able to stand by themselves" with a view to teaching them gradually to assume greater responsibilities for their own affairs and thus leading them, in many cases, towards eventual self-government; these are fundamental principles which can hardly fail to be taken into account in any future study of colonial problems. Also, the collective supervision by an international body of the faithful observance of such principles has offered serious advantages, though the opinion has been expressed in some quarters that the supervision
might perhaps be made still more effective and more independent of national control.

The application of the principle of economic equality to the mandated territories, subject to the paramount claims of native economic welfare, constitutes also a noteworthy experiment, which may be of value for the solution of the much-discussed problem of giving all nations equal access to markets and raw materials.

4. Slavery

The Secretariat has continued to receive communications from Governmental sources concerning this question. These communications are being added to the documentary material already submitted to the Advisory Committee of Experts on Slavery. No resumption of the work of this Committee is expected as long as the present situation continues.

The last report of the Committee, submitted in April 1938, gave an encouraging picture of the progress made during recent years in the gradual abolition of the institutions and customs mentioned in Article 1 ¹ of the Slavery Convention of 1926. When the time comes for the Advisory Committee to resume its work and to complete the task undertaken by the League in this field, the Committee may be called upon in the first place to examine what repercussions the present conflict has had on the social system of the populations concerned and to study the means of eradicating the last remnants of slavery and of the customs and social conditions related to slavery.

¹ For the purpose of the Convention, the following definitions are agreed upon:

"1. Slavery is the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised.

"2. The slave trade includes all acts involved in the capture, acquisition or disposal of a person with intent to reduce him to slavery; all acts involved in the acquisition of a slave with a view to selling or exchanging him; all acts of disposal by sale or exchange of a slave acquired with a view to being sold or exchanged; and, in general, every act of trade or transport in slaves."
5. THE LEAGUE BUDGET

Financial resources constitute one of the main elements in the maintenance of the life of the various international organisations and are a chief factor in determining the scope of their activities. The Supervisory Commission, in spite of the difficulties of the times, has kept itself fully informed, has maintained complete control and has, in addition, discharged the much weightier responsibilities which the Assembly decided it should undertake in the event of a crisis such as has occurred. It has met regularly and, while supervising the heavy task of reducing the League budget by almost two-thirds, it has at the same time provided for the continued existence of each of the institutions. It will be realised that the problems which it had to face, and which the various administrations had to face, were even more difficult than those of normal times.

It may be recalled that the budgetary retrenchments initiated in 1938 had not only to be continued in the following years, but had to be applied, especially in the years 1940 and 1941, to an extent which profoundly affected the functioning and structure of the various League organisations. The League budget (which makes provision for the International Labour Organisation, the Permanent Court of International Justice, the Secretariat and special organisations) had necessarily to be adapted to the situation, which deteriorated rapidly. Expenditure, even though voted, had to be curtailed to enable the organisations to live as far as possible within their income, and this, owing to the difficulties in which the various States found themselves, continued to diminish.

Whereas the budget for 1939 still amounted to 32,234,012 Swiss francs, it was reduced in 1940 to 21,451,408 in 1941 to 10,659,711 and in 1942 to 9,647,462.
As compared with 1939, this represents a reduction of

33.45% in 1940,
66.93% in 1941, and
70.07% in 1942.

Receipts, which in 1939 amounted to 82.14% of the budget, fell in 1941 to 65.96% of the budget.

As regards expenditure, the downward movement was not as rapid as that of income. Heavy legal obligations, in the first place towards the staff, prevented its full adaptation to income. Moreover, such an adaptation would have meant curtailing to a great extent activities which it is in the interest of States to maintain, even though on a reduced scale. The Supervisory Commission stated, in this connection, in its report on the budget for 1941:

"The Commission feels that, after these large reductions in successive years, the budget of the League has now been reduced virtually to the minimum consistent with the effective functioning of the League even on a reduced scale of activities and it considers that any further material reduction in expenditure would endanger the maintenance of the institution."

The number of States participating in the allocation of expenses, and consequently the total number of units allocated to the States, have continued to decline since 1939, as is shown in the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of States</th>
<th>Total number of units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>917.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>817.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>522.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>472.94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was nevertheless possible to reduce the value of a unit (thereby lessening the burden falling on each individual State) from

31,479.70 Swiss francs in 1939 to
26,241.75 ,, ,, ,, 1940, and to
20,398.95 ,, ,, ,, 1941 and 1942.
The distribution of contributions among the various organisations of the League has also been modified since 1940, as appears from the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1940</th>
<th>1941</th>
<th>1942</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Secretariat</td>
<td>50.21</td>
<td>34.99</td>
<td>35.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. International Labour Organisation</td>
<td>29.61</td>
<td>30.52</td>
<td>32.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Permanent Court of International Justice</td>
<td>11.11</td>
<td>4.69</td>
<td>5.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Special Organisations, pensions, etc.</td>
<td>9.07</td>
<td>29.80</td>
<td>26.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

100.00 100.00 100.00

The auditing of the accounts of the institutions has been regularly carried out by the Auditor appointed by the Assembly, and his reports have been presented to the Supervisory Commission.

6. THE LEAGUE BUILDINGS

The necessity for reducing expenditure all round has created for the Administration of the Secretariat new and complex problems as regards the upkeep of the League buildings. It was obvious that the programme of upkeep would have to be limited to repairs indispensable for the prevention of damage or necessary for the conservation of the property.

The League buildings (Ariana) cover an area of 17,635 square metres. Their cubic content is 440,000 cubic metres. The park surrounding the buildings is a little over 231,000 square metres.

The total cost of the buildings (without installations and equipment) has been 31,373,000 Swiss francs, while the technical installations, Library books, furniture, etc., bring the total to 38,156,000 Swiss francs. To this figure must be added the value of paintings, frescoes, works of art, carpets, furniture, etc., all gifts from Governments, which have been insured for the sum of 717,000 Swiss francs.

The preservation of all this valuable property has entailed unremitting care and the solution of many wartime problems.