

It is to be noted that according to the last paragraph of this rule the Permanent Mandates Commission is allowed to deal at a public meeting with observations on the mandatory reports when once it has adopted them in "final terms," and that at the same meeting the representations of the mandatory Powers may be examined in connection therewith.

*Observations of Permanent Mandates Commission.*

The Commission investigated and discussed each report in the presence of the accredited representative of the Power submitting it, and afterwards settled the terms of the observations which appeared necessary on the consideration of each report. These observations were communicated to the duly accredited representatives of the Powers concerned, and annexed to the report. (See Document A. 39, 1922, VI.)

With reference to New Zealand's mandates, two points in particular were considered to call for the special attention of the Council.

(1.) *Imported Labour.*—The Mandates Commission observed :—

"The introduction of these foreign labourers, a step dictated by economic needs, is not wholly free from certain social difficulties which have engaged the attention of the Commission.

"On the one hand, the mere distance which separates the countries where these labourers are recruited from the place to which they are taken, and the consequent heavy expenses incurred in their transport, renders it necessary that labour contracts should be concluded for very long periods. It is, however, clear that, in spite of the guarantees incorporated in the mandate, the position of a Chinese coolie who is bound by a three-years contract and who has been conveyed to a foreign land thousands of miles from his kith and kin calls for the greatest care on the part of the administration of the mandatory Powers. Again, the presence of this exclusively male labour in the midst of a native population is bound to involve a certain element of danger to the social life of the latter.

"The Commission, which is fully alive both to the gravity of the economic conditions responsible for this state of affairs and to the social danger which arises from it, merely desires at present to call the Council's attention to the facts, and to express a desire that the mandatory Powers will be good enough, in their future reports, to supply all relevant information on this subject. The Commission is specially anxious to be kept constantly and fully informed of the extent of these migrations of labourers, or the measures taken by the mandatory Powers to supervise these movements, and of their results from a social point of view, and also of all observations to which the application of these measures might give rise."

Sir James Allen explained that in order to maintain the productivity of the plantations in Samoa, and for the execution of necessary public works and services, recourse was had to long-period indenture of Chinese labour, under a Convention entered into with the Chinese Government, the terms of which were submitted to the Commission. The Commission observed that the interests of the Chinese in Samoa were protected by a special officer and the presence of the Chinese Consul.

(2.) *Administration of the Island of Nauru.*—The observations of the Permanent Mandates Commission included the following :—

"It was brought out in the course of discussion that the British Empire had transferred the responsibility for the administration of the Island of Nauru to Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand, and that, as a result of a special agreement entered into by these three Governments, Australia for the time being has assumed the duty of governing this territory.

"The population of this island numbers only two thousand, but its mineral wealth is considerable. This wealth consists in rich deposits of phosphates, for the exploitation of which the Governments of Australia, Great Britain, and New Zealand have reserved to themselves exclusive rights. In accordance with the agreement concluded between these Governments, these rights are exercised by three Phosphate Commissioners, whose powers appear to be unlimited as regards everything relating to the undertaking which they manage. It is not clear what powers and means of control the Australian administration possesses with regard to this organization.

"This administration is, indeed, entrusted to an official appointed by the Australian Government alone, while the three Phosphate Commissioners hold their powers under the three Governments concerned and take their decisions by a majority vote.

"The Commission feels it its duty to call the attention of the Council to the anxiety which it feels as a result of this situation. It expresses the desire that future annual reports of the mandatory Power should contain information which will enlighten it further."

*General Observations.*

Under the heading of "General Observations" a document (A. 35, 1922, VI) contains substance of the first importance, which amply illustrates that the obscurities indicated above with regard to mandates is sometimes fundamental. From these observations it appears that there has been doubt and uncertainty as to who is the mandatory Power and under what arrangement the mandate exists. As the matter is important, this is perhaps a convenient place for the passage to be set out in detail :—

"The consideration of the report on the administration of the Island of Nauru raises an initial question which the Mandates Commission wishes to bring to the notice of the Council.

"It will be remembered that the mandate for Nauru, a small island in the Pacific, with only some two thousand inhabitants, was conferred upon His Britannic Majesty. The other British 'C' mandates were also conferred upon His Majesty, but in them it is expressly stated that in accepting