

The references to health and transit questions, disarmament, opium traffic, protection of minorities, &c., do not appear to call for any special comment.

*Earthquake in Japan.*—Immediately following the Chairman's opening address Sir Joseph Cook moved a resolution tendering the sympathy of the Assembly to the Japanese nation in the catastrophe which had just overtaken it. In doing so he specially stressed the regard which was felt in Australia for her neighbour in the Pacific.

*Election of President.*—The Assembly then proceeded to the election of a President. As explained in previous reports, the method adopted is that of a secret ballot; and Monsieur Cosme de la Torriente, principal delegate for Cuba, having obtained an absolute majority at the first ballot, was declared elected.

The only other business transacted on the opening day was the setting-up of a committee to report on the credentials of delegates and the acceptance of the Agenda as circulated (Document A. 8 (1)), with the addition of an item recommended by the Council with regard to the protection of women and children in the Near East.

It was decided, as in previous years, that six committees should be set up to deal with the various items of the Agenda.

*Allocation of Items on Agenda to Committees.*—The Assembly decided that the six committees to be set up should be as follows: (1) Constitutional and legal questions; (2) questions regarding technical organizations of the League; (3) reduction of armaments; (4) finance; (5) humanitarian questions; (6) political questions.

*Representation of New Zealand.*—New Zealand having only one delegate, it was, of course, impossible for me to attend the meetings of all six committees, as at least three committees sat simultaneously each day. I, however, entered my name as a member of each committee, in order to enable me to attend any meetings when a subject was being discussed in which New Zealand was particularly interested. I nominated Mr. C. B. Burdekin as a deputy on Committees Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 5, in order that I might be able to follow the work of the committees as far as possible, even if unable to attend personally.

*Election of Officers of Assembly.*—The committees having elected their Chairmen, the Assembly proceeded to elect its six Vice-Presidents, who, together with the President and the Chairmen of the six committees, form, under the Rules of Procedure, the General Committee of the Assembly, which on this occasion was composed as follows:—

Committee No. 1: Chairman, M. Motta (Switzerland).

Committee No. 2: Chairman, The Maharaja Jam Sahib of Nawanager (India).

Committee No. 3: Chairman, M. Skirmunt (Poland).

Committee No. 4: Chairman, M. Momtchilo Nintchitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes).

Committee No. 5: Chairman, M. de Mello-Franco (Brazil).

Committee No. 6: Chairman, M. Hymans (Belgium).

Vice-Presidents of the Assembly: Lord Robert Cecil (Britain), Viscount Ishii (Japan), M. Hanotiaux (France), Count de Gimeno (Spain), Dr. Fortoul (Venezuela), M. Pusta (Esthonia).

On the 4th and 5th September the various committees met for the first time, but did no further business than to elect Vice-Chairmen and rapporteurs on the various subjects, and to decide on the order in which the various items allotted to each committee should be dealt with. I may state that the rapporteur elected at these meetings introduces the subject to the committee, and normally, though not necessarily, at a later date, drafts the report for consideration by the committee, and speaks for the committee when its report is dealt with by the Assembly.

*Effect of Italian-Greek Crisis.*—The ordinary routine business having been disposed of, the normal course would have been for the Assembly to commence the discussion on the report on the work of the Council during the past year (Documents A. 10 and A. 10 (a)). Owing to the very delicate situation arising out of the Italian bombardment and occupation of Corfu, however, the Council were particularly desirous that their endeavours to bring about some solution of the problem should not be prejudiced by any premature discussion of the question in the Assembly. The feeling among a great majority of the delegates, particularly of those representing the smaller countries, was very adverse to Italy, and at the request of the Council the General Committee of the Assembly therefore decided that the Assembly should not meet again until Monday, the 10th September, and, even then, only to give effect to the recommendation from No. 6 Committee that the Irish Free State should be admitted to the League, and to elect a Judge of the Permanent Court of International Justice. With the Italo-Greek dispute I will deal later in this report.

*Election of Judge.*—The vacancy was caused by the death of a Brazilian, who was one of the original Judges elected by the Second Assembly, and another Brazilian—M. Pessoa—was elected in his stead. Although the regulations governing the voting are very elaborate (*vide* Document A. 59), as a matter of fact, in almost all cases, the result of elections in the Assembly is a foregone conclusion, owing to private arrangements which precede the election, not only of Judges of the Permanent Court, but of any officers of the Assembly, &c. In this case only one ballot was necessary, as M. Pessoa received thirty-four of the forty-six votes cast. Some time after the election I was rather astonished to learn that the late Judge had never actually sat, although he had been drawing the salary (15,000 florins per annum) appertaining to his office for quite a considerable time.

*Irish Free State.*—The admission of the Irish Free State was agreed to unanimously. The only feature of note was that Mr. Cosgrave, the President of the Irish Free State, who visited Geneva specially in order to be present on the occasion, prefaced his speech of thanks by a greeting pronounced in Erse.