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# Peace Through Industry

A BRIEF ACCOUNT  
OF THE INTERNA-  
TIONAL LABOUR  
ORGANISATION

BY  
OLIVER  
BELL

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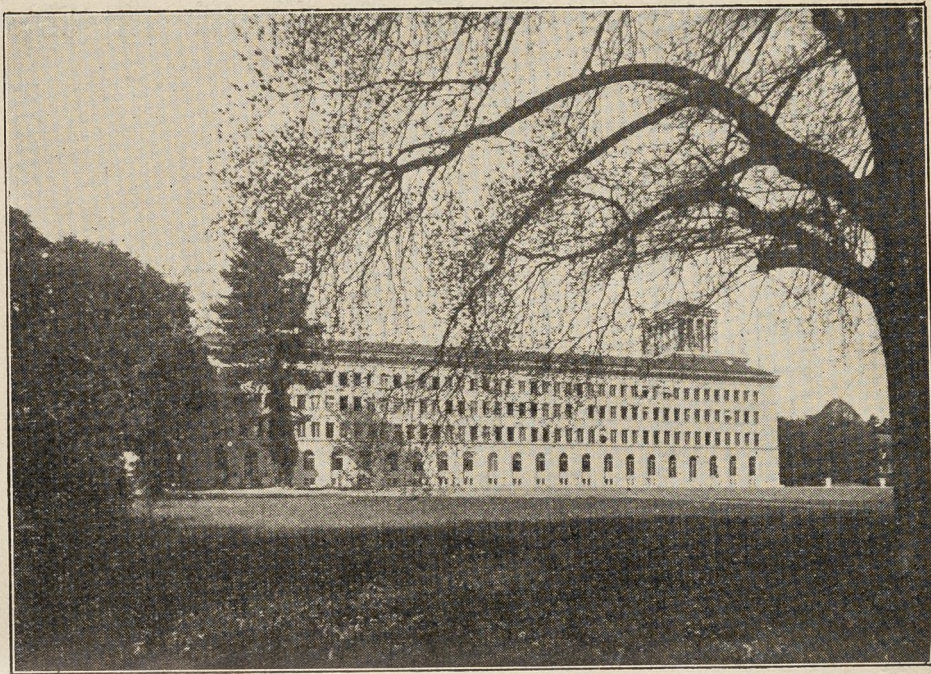
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LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNION  
15 GROSVENOR CRESCENT, S.W.1



THE NEW I.L.O. BUILDING  
*(View from Lake)*

## PEACE THROUGH INDUSTRY

THE League of Nations exists—

*'To Promote International Co-operation and to achieve International Peace and Security.'*

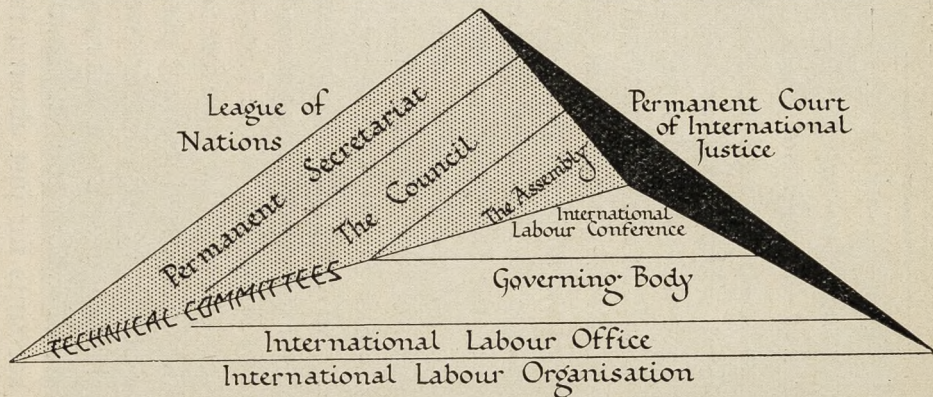
But there can be no lasting peace except it be based on social justice. There is therefore an important part of the League of Nations devoted to the industrial life of the world. It is the International Labour Organisation, of which the International Labour Office—the *Bureau International de Travail*—is the secretarial side as is the League Secretariat of the League proper.

The relation of the International Labour Organisation to the League and the World Court is best set out by a diagram. The three form a trinity which is at the same time a smooth working unity, and becoming more so as time goes on. All three are self-governing, but the Budget of each for the succeeding year is centralised in, and voted by, the Assembly of the League every September. The year's needs have to be forecast accurately, as once the Budget is passed it is not possible to get a further supply of money for another twelve months.

The cost of the League as a whole is roughly a million pounds a year, of which the International Labour Organisation accounts for just about a third.

# RELATIONS CHART

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ENGLISH CONDITIONS 100 YEARS AGO

If we delve into the reasons for the existence of such an Organisation we find a general belief that cheap goods produced under bad conditions in one country—low wages, long hours, child labour, etc.—undersell similar goods produced under better conditions in another. The best may thus gradually be dragged down to the level of the worst, unless legal measures are taken to reverse the process—*i.e.*, to level *up*, not *down*.

When factories were first started in Britain in the early eighteen hundreds, the industrial system sprang up suddenly and there were no regulations nor factory inspectors. Mechanical work made it possible for children to be employed at cheaper rates than their parents. For a long time children of five and six years of age were employed 12, 14 and even 16 hours a day in the hot atmosphere of badly ventilated mills. In the mines, too, women and naked boys and girls were employed hauling coal or opening the trap-doors for the tubs to pass. It was reported from Oldham that 'in small collieries towards the hills, some of the children are so young that they are brought to work in their night-gowns.' At Halifax the hours were 14–16 a day with a mile's walk home afterwards. In most parts of England the mills worked night and day. Tired children standing



SUNLIGHT MODEL FACTORY

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at their benches would sometimes tumble forward into the machinery to be maimed, perhaps, for life.

Good employers found that they could not improve their conditions for fear of losing trade to less scrupulous rivals. Laws were necessary to set up a standard of life. In 1833 the first travelling factory inspectors were appointed—four for the whole of England!—and since then conditions have progressively improved through the proper enforcement of regulations.

#### THE RISE OF INTERNATIONAL INDUSTRIAL ACTION

What was true then on a national is true to-day on an international scale. The recognition of this salient fact has been a slow process. It has taken a whole century to mature. One man only in Great Britain is known to have had the vision of the international regulation of industry. He went to the Peace Conference of the Holy Alliance after the Napoleonic wars in 1818 to urge his views, but nobody paid any heed to him.

His name was Robert Owen. He was a Welsh manufacturer. To-day his memory is revered, and the International Labour Office contains a bust of him by Sir William Goscombe John, R.A., which was presented by the Welsh National Council of the League of Nations Union.

## TREATY OF VERSAILLES

### PART XIII [LABOUR]

‘Whereas the League of Nations has for its object the establishment of universal peace, and such a peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice ;

‘And whereas conditions of labour exist involving such injustice, hardship and privation to large numbers of people as to produce unrest so great that the peace and harmony of the world are imperilled . . . .

‘Whereas also the failure of any nation to adopt humane conditions of labour is an obstacle in the way of other nations which desire to improve the conditions in their own countries ;’

‘THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES, moved by sentiments of justice and humanity as well as by the desire to secure the permanent peace of the world, agree to the following :

‘A permanent organisation is hereby established for the promotion of the objects set forth in the Preamble.’

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During the XIXth Century, Laws regulating industrial matters began to make their appearance in most countries. In 1890, Switzerland, after several attempts, managed to get a conference summoned at Berlin to consider the legal protection of Labour, at which fourteen countries were represented. This set the ball rolling, and during the next fifteen years several private international conferences were held. By 1905 the time was ripe for another official conference on the Protection of Labour. It met in Berne and drew up two Conventions, the one relating to the use of white phosphorus in matches and the other concerning the night work of women. Other meetings were held in 1908, 1910, 1912, and 1913, but the sum total of results achieved was small, because there was no regular machinery such as at present exists to carry out the decisions of these conferences.

Thereafter came the War, and Labour obtained new privileges and new standards. Labour was officially represented at the Peace Conference. A special Commission was set up on which the British representatives were the Rt. Hon. G. N. Barnes, Mr. H. B. Butler, now Deputy Director of the International Labour Office, and Sir Malcolm Delevingne, of the Home Office. During its 35 sessions the Labour Section of the





Mr. H. B. BUTLER

*General Secretary of First Conference at Washington, October, 1919. Now Deputy Director of International Labour Office*

always some outstanding people, nor is the International Labour Organisation any exception. First and foremost comes the Director of the Office, M. Albert Thomas. He corresponds to Sir Eric Drummond in his capacity of Secretary-General to the League proper, or to

Treaty of Versailles (Part XIII) was hammered out. By this the International Labour Organisation was set up, as was the League by Part I of the Treaty, which is the League of Nations Covenant.

The Treaty was signed on June 28, 1919, and in October the International Labour Organisation held its first Conference at Washington.

#### PERSONALITIES

In every successful organisation there are

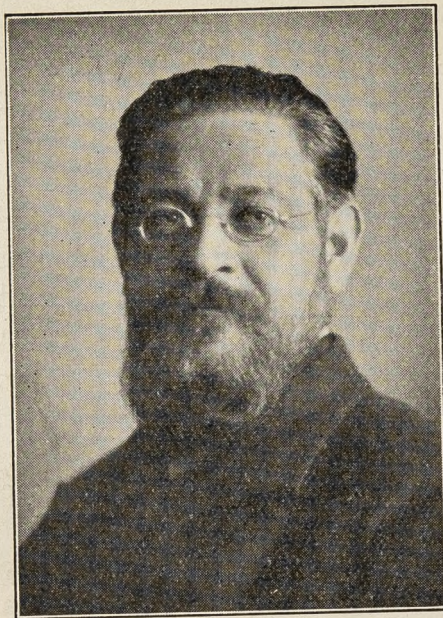
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M. Hammarskjold, the Registrar of the Permanent Court of International Justice at The Hague.

#### ALBERT THOMAS

M. Thomas is chief of the body of officials who form the Secretariat of the International Labour Office. Amongst the 360 men and women who compose the staff of the Office there are no fewer than 34 different nations represented. The striking presence and amazing eloquence of the Director have combined with his appearance—thick-set, bearded and bespectacled—to make him one of the best known figures in international circles.

His father was a baker in a small French town, whose wife in 1878 presented him with a son who turned out to be exceptionally brilliant. He won scholarship after scholarship, and went to Russia and Germany besides Paris. When he had finished his education he entered journalism. During this period he acquired political ambitions and eventually was returned to the French Parliament as a Deputy in 1910.

It was during the War that he first became known internationally as the first French Minister of Munitions. For a few months, in 1917, he was French Ambassador in Russia. When he returned he refused to



ALBERT THOMAS  
*Director of the International Labour  
Office*

Mr. H. B. Butler. He is a typical English Civil Servant—loyal, able, methodical. After a brilliant Oxford career, he entered the Civil Service, and from 1917 onwards he was in the Ministry of Labour, and was Assistant General Secretary to the Labour Commission at the Peace Conference. He was deputed to act as General

re-enter the Government, and devoted himself to defending the view that peace through a League of Nations would only be permanent if based on the principle of nationality. In 1919 M. Thomas was proposed and elected the First Director of the I.L.O., which post he took up in January, 1920.

The Deputy Director of the Office is an Englishman,

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Secretary of the First International Labour Conference at Washington in 1919. When the Office got thoroughly under way, and M. Albert Thomas was appointed Director, he became Deputy Director.

Apart from the official element, M. Arthur Fontaine is perhaps the most well-known figure. He is the French Government delegate to the Governing Body, and its Chairman.

#### THE GOVERNING BODY

The Governing Body is the part of the Organisation which corresponds to the League's Council. It is, in fact, the Executive. As a rule, it meets quarterly.

The composition of the Governing Body shows the great difference between the League proper, where only Governments are represented, and the I.L.O. The Governing Body consists of twenty-four members. Twelve of them represent Governments which, like the members of the Council of the League, are either permanent or non-permanent. Of the other twelve members, six represent the organised employers and six represent the organised workers. All of them have a separate vote. A glance at the diagram will explain the details.

It is of this Governing Body that M. Fontaine is chairman, a post he has held since the foundation of the

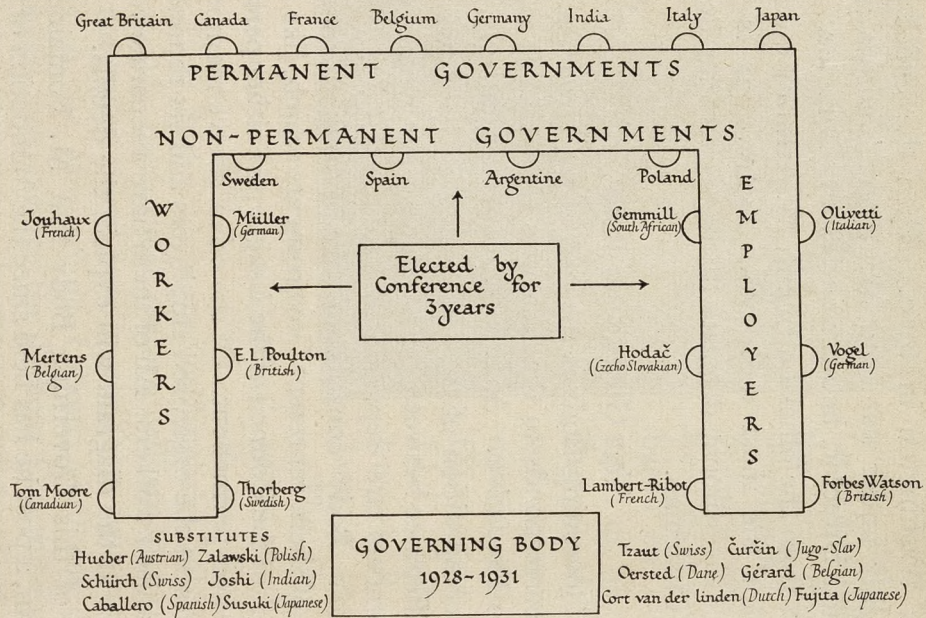


DIAGRAM OF THE GOVERNING BODY

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Organisation. His is a difficult task, for they are no easy team to get to pull together. At the May 1928 meeting, for instance, when the question of the Revision of the Washington Hours Convention was under discussion, a proposal was advanced by the British Government, and the Workers' group put forward an amendment. A battle royal raged. Neither side would budge an inch. Harmony was only restored as the result of an adjournment, during which time M. Fontaine's tact proved effective. At the afternoon session he proposed an alternative resolution to which everybody agreed.

#### THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE

The International Labour Conference is a full meeting of the Organisation, and generally comes together once a year in June. The same three groups, Governments, Employers and Workers, are present. Each of the 55 countries who belong to the Organisation can send four representatives, two Government, one Employer and one Worker, the last two, according to the Treaty, have to be selected from, 'the most representative organisations of employers and workpeople in their respective countries,' *i.e.*, in this country from the National Confederation of Employers' Organisations and the Trade Union Congress.



THE MEETING PLACE OF THE GOVERNING BODY

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At the League's Assembly, its rough counterpart, each delegation has but one vote, and all decisions, except in matters of procedure, have to be unanimous. At International Labour Conferences, on the other hand, a bare majority is enough to carry any resolution, though Conventions and Recommendations need two-thirds. This explains why it has been called the beginning of a World Parliament. It is interesting to note that the procedure is approximating in some respects to that of the House of Commons.

The personnel of the Conference naturally varies from year to year, but there are some hardy annuals, nevertheless, mostly among the Employers' and Workers' groups. Sr. Rossoni was, till 1929, the annual representative of the Italian Workers, and just as regularly exception was taken to his credentials by the members of the Workers' Group, who dislike Fascismo. Mr. E. L. Poulton, of the Boot and Shoe Operatives and the T.U.C., and Mr. Forbes Watson, of the National Confederation of Employers' Organisations, are invariably the British Workers' and Employers' representatives respectively both at the Governing Body and the Conference.

Each Conference elects its own President. The British Empire has had the honour of providing



AN INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE IN SESSION

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four out of these. Lord Burnham has been President three times, and Sir Atul Chatterjee, High Commissioner for India in London, once. In other years the President was provided by the U.S.A. [1919], Italy [1920], Japan [1923], Sweden [1924], Czecho-Slovakia [1925], Holland [1926], Argentine [1928], Germany [1929].

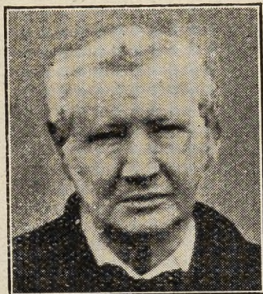
#### THE BUILDINGS

The first building which the International Labour Office occupied was an old school some distance from the centre of Geneva. It was charmingly situated and a pleasant enough building—for a school—but for the headquarters of a world organisation it proved to be increasingly inadequate. Very soon after its foundation the Organisation realised this and appointed a Committee of Investigation. In due course the wheels within wheels were set in motion, and it was decided to build an entirely new office.

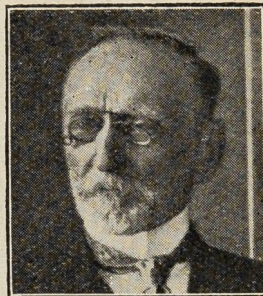
The foundation-stone was laid with great ceremony on October 21, 1923. The three parties to Industry, Governments, Employers and Workers, as usual were represented, and three stones were laid, one by each group. Under them was placed a casket containing a parchment, the inscription on which closes with these words: '*Si vis Pacem cole Justitiam.*' These may be



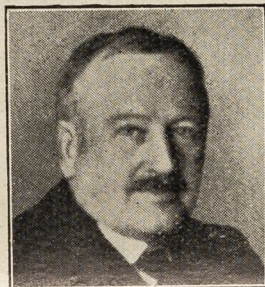
THE PRESIDENTS  
OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL  
LABOUR CONFERENCES  
1919-1924



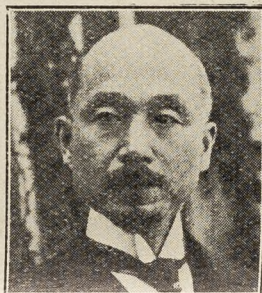
W. B. WILSON, 1919



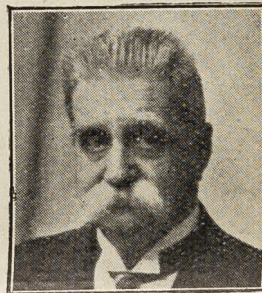
BARON DES PLANCHES, 1920



LORD BURNHAM, 1921,  
1922, 1926



H. E. M. ADATCI, 1923



DR. BRANTING, 1924

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freely translated by 'Sow Justice and thou shalt reap Peace.'

If its external appearance is not beautiful, it suffices for the conduct of the work, and that, after all, is the great thing. Inside, however, the decorations are remarkable. This is due to the gifts that have been received. In 1923 the Third Assembly of the League invited as many Governments as possible to mark their interest in the International Labour Organisation by giving some example of their national art to the new building.

#### GIFTS

This request did not pass unheeded. Some twenty Governments and many organisations responded. After mounting the steps to the main entrance there is a massive door made of Australian wood given by the Federal Government of Australia. Within the long and rather dark entrance hall the eye is struck by two bronze statues, the one of a miner and the other of an iron puddler. They are by the famous Belgian sculptor, Constantin Meunier, by whose country they were given. The doors of every room, save one, on the ground floor were presented by Canada. The exceptions are the doors of the Governing Body's room on the



STATUES FROM BELGIUM AND VASES FROM JAPAN  
PRESENTED TO THE I.L.O.

THE PRESIDENTS  
OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL  
LABOUR CONFERENCES  
1925-1929



DR. BENES, 1925



MGR. NOLENS, 1926



SIR ATUL CHATTERJEE,  
1927



M. SAAVEDRA LAMAS,  
1928



REV. DR. BRAUNS,  
1929

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left. They, together with all the decorations, furniture and panelling of laurel wood, came from India.

These are only some of the gifts. Everywhere in the corridors and in the rooms are to be found other donations from Governments, organisations or individuals.

### THE LIBRARY

One of the most notable rooms in the building is the Library. It is unique, for it is the only place in the world where a complete survey of international literature on industry and labour can be obtained. It contains nearly 400,000 books, and is daily receiving more.

To students of every nationality it is useful, but to the staff it is indispensable. One of the most important things that the International Labour Office has to do, and one that is frequently forgotten, is to act as a world clearing house of information. Enquiries are received from every kind of source on every kind of subject. The Soviet Government, for instance, desired to know the conditions of work of telephonists in other countries: the British Home Secretary asked for information on shop opening hours elsewhere.

But this is only one side of the work which makes necessary the use of the Library. The usual result of a meeting of an International Labour Conference is a

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THE LIBRARY

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Draft Convention or a Recommendation or both. The former is in the nature of a treaty on industrial conditions. A Government has to put a Convention before its Parliament or other legislative authority within eighteen months of its adoption in Geneva. After the National Parliament approves signature of the treaty, it undertakes to enforce the conditions which it lays down by its own national laws.

A Recommendation, however, is different. It does what its name implies. It recommends. If ever a country is making a law on that particular subject, and has accepted the Recommendation, it is in honour bound to bear in mind the principle contained in the Recommendation and to give effect to it.

#### MAKING A CONVENTION

The method of making a Convention is a complicated business, but at every stage the Library comes into play. It is the Governing Body that decides what subjects shall be discussed at an International Labour Conference. When a subject has been fixed upon, the Office sets to work gathering information. Reports are published. The Conference meets, debates and settles the general line of approach. During the ensuing year a questionnaire is sent to all members of

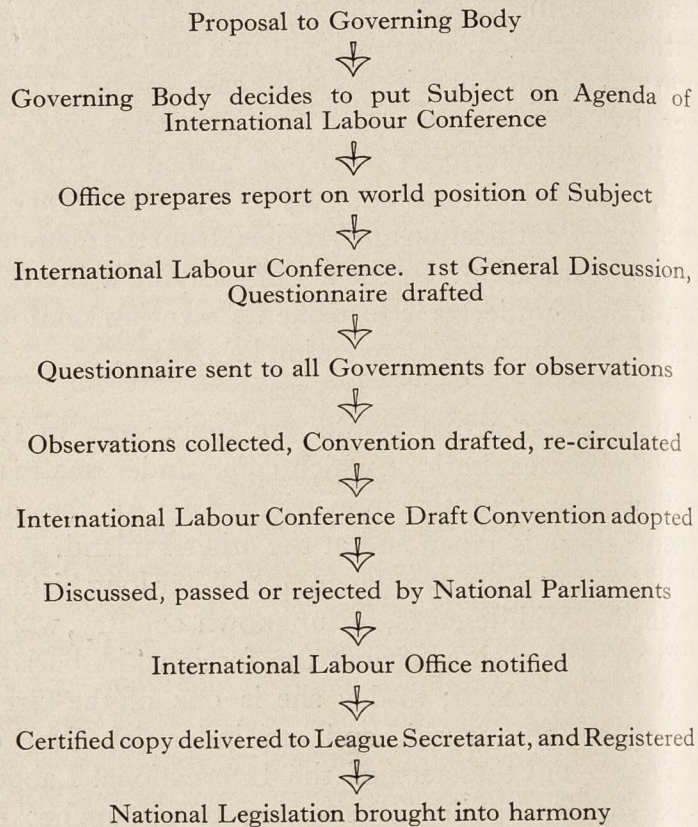
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the Organisation. On the basis of their answers a draft Convention is drawn up by the Office. When the Conference meets again the following May, the Convention is debated, amended, put in a final form, voted upon and adopted or rejected as the case may be. Thereafter by slow degrees—for few countries work as rapidly as did Germany when she ratified on June 23, 1928, two Conventions adopted by the Conference in June, 1927—ratifications are received from the members of the Organisation. By the act of ratifying a Convention, a State undertakes to make its own law conform to the rules which the Convention lays down.

#### STATES AFFECTED

The greatest actual results are to be seen in two classes of States, both of which come under one main heading—the recently industrialised. At the one extreme there is Japan and at the other Finland.

Till seventy years ago, Japan, for all her long history, was in the Middle Ages, an unknown country, whose doors were fast shut against the foreign 'barbarian.' Then she awakened; to-day she is one of the Great Powers of the world and an industrial rival of the West. Till the start of the International Labour Office she was guilty of allowing to go unchecked practices as bad as those which existed in Great Britain

## THE PROGRESS OF A CONVENTION



in the 1830's. To-day she is bringing her industrial standard up to the minimum demanded by the International Labour Organisation through its Conventions. She has set up Unemployment Insurance and Workmen's Accident Compensation Machinery; she has largely abolished night work for women and young persons; child labour is becoming a thing of the past; she has ratified several Conventions for making the lot of the seaman more tolerable.

At the other end of the scale are Europe's many new or newly liberated States, such as Finland, Poland or Czecho-Slovakia. After the war they had to start quite fresh in an already complex world. There was no constitution, no body of national law. Without guidance, without some standard upon which to base their legislation, they might have come to grief. There would have been a period of experiment, a time of trial and error during which much unnecessary hardship would have been inflicted upon their peoples. To such countries, the work of the International Labour Organisation has been a godsend. Ratification of Conventions, since there was no existing law to be altered, has been easy, as is shown by the numbers received.

### HOURS AND WAGES

The first and still the most important piece of work



GERMAN STAINED GLASS WINDOWS  
IN THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE



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that the Organisation has achieved is the drafting of the famous Washington Hours Convention. It was the first draft Convention made, and it seeks to regulate the hours of work in industrial concerns to eight a day or forty-eight a week.

Its history in this country has been chequered. We never ratified it because of the uncertainty in the minds of some people as to the interpretation of some of its terms. Different countries held different views. In order to get agreement between the chief industrial powers of Western Europe, a Conference of the Ministers of Labour of these countries was called in 1925. But we still held back, even though France, Italy and Spain had ratified conditionally upon our doing the same. We were almost looked upon as traitors. So matters stood till 1929 when Mr. Humbert Wolfe, the British Government delegate at the Twelfth Session of the Conference, announced amidst applause that Great Britain would proceed to ratify it as soon as possible. This was satisfactory news not only to the members of the Organisation, but also to the League of Nations Union who had never ceased to press for ratification.

Unless, however, wages as well as hours are regulated, the work of the Organisation will not be successful. If, for instance, an Indian works for an eight-hour day at



A GROUP OF THE STAFF OF THE I.L.O.  
TWENTY-SIX NATIONALITIES ARE REPRESENTED

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3d. an hour, there is still an element of unfair competition, tending to lower the standard of life, against another country that works an eight-hour day but pays 1s. an hour. The Organisation must be highly commended for its courage in tackling this problem as well. By drawing up a Convention in 1927 for setting up machinery for fixing the minimum wage, it has taken a first and important step. France, Germany and Great Britain have already made a move in the matter and others will certainly shortly follow the lead of these three important countries.

There is a great deal of need for such action, as is shown when the actual working conditions in Far Eastern countries is considered. They are frankly terrible.

There is no need to go into the vexed question of who is to blame—the moral is that such conditions as these affect ourselves.

#### PERSIAN CARPETS

The story of the Persian carpet industry is well known. In the province of Kerman, from the time that they were five years old, children had to work at the looms. Their hours were from sunrise to sunset. The conditions were deplorable. The narrow benches, upon which they sat cross-legged, gave them permanent deformities, which in the case of the girls led



CHILDREN DEFORMED BY WORK IN PERSIAN  
CARPET FACTORIES

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to childbirth being usually attended by fatal results. As a result of the friendly representations of the International Labour Office, the Persian Government took steps. The results were immediate. No boys under eight, nor girls under ten are allowed to work at the looms. They now have an eight-hour day with proper rest intervals, regular holidays and comfortable seats in light and airy workshops of modern design. The only fear is lest there be a backsliding since the change was effected by a Governor's order and not by a special law.

#### WORKERS AFFECTED

Behind every Convention is some reason. In each case some group of persons can lead a happier or healthier life. Some grievance is done away with. Better feelings are created, which lessen the likelihood of strife and bring about a generally higher standard of life and prosperity.

To go more into detail. The Conventions that have been passed fall roughly into eight main classes, according to the type of worker affected. These are Workers in Industry, Workers in Commerce, Workers in Agriculture, Workers at Sea, Women Workers, Child Workers, Workers in specialised industries such as bakers or painters, and lastly Emigrants or Workers on the move.

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I.L.O. POSTAGE STAMPS

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One Convention may affect several of these classes. For instance, the two relating to Workmen's Compensation for disease or accidents, and the Convention made in 1928 for the creation of machinery to fix the minimum wage touch most classes of worker.

The latter is in reality a move against 'sweating.' Each State which ratifies undertakes to create machinery whereby minimum rates can be fixed for workers employed in trades or parts of trades (especially the home working trades) in which no arrangements exist at present for the effective regulation of wages by collective agreement or otherwise, and where wages are exceptionally low. Those who have read Hood's *Song of a Shirt* will realise what sweating means in practice.

Agricultural workers have presented certain difficulties. In the first place, the agricultural worker is rarely organised as highly as, shall we say, the engineer. In fact, in some countries he used not to be allowed to have a Trade Union. This was remedied in 1921 by a Convention which gave agricultural workers the right to have Unions of their own. Six years later the International Labour Conference drafted yet another Convention giving the farm hand the right to join in a State scheme of sickness insurance.

A great deal of attention has been given to the



FIELD WORKERS IN POLAND



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welfare of seamen. In 1920 two Conventions were made dealing respectively with Employment Exchanges and Unemployment Indemnity in case of Wreck. In 1926 three more Conventions dealt one with Articles of Agreement, and two with Repatriation both for men, masters and apprentices. A special Maritime Session of the Conference was held in the Autumn of 1929 at which the principal subjects discussed—for the first time—were Hours of Work at Sea, Seamen's Welfare in Ports, Sickness Insurance and the question of Certificates for Officers of the Watch. No definite Conventions on these subjects will be made till the next Session in 1931.

Women workers have closely concerned the I.L.O. since the First Conference in 1919, when two Conventions were made regarding the 'Employment of Women before and after Childbirth' and 'Night Work in Industry.' The principles underlying these are obvious. For a woman to work right up to the time of bearing her child is bad for her own health and for the race. Furthermore, it is believed that she is not so fitted to work continuously through the night as a man.

For children the International Labour Organisation did a great deal in the first three years of its life. The

subjects dealt with included night work and the age of admission to industry, to the stokehold of ships and to agricultural work. At the ' Maritime Session ' in 1921, another Convention said that young people under 18 employed in ships must be medically examined for fitness. The sea is a rough life, and a boy whose health is not up to standard may easily become a physical wreck unless he is strong enough to withstand a certain amount of hardship.

Finally, emigrants. The whole subject of emigration and immigration is still too thorny to be dealt with as a whole, but there are two minor aspects which can be, and have been, regulated. One is the system of the inspection of emigrants. In 1926 a Convention was drawn up for the simplification of the inspection of emigrants on board ship. Another which applies to immigrants provides for the Equality of Treatment between national and foreign workers in the matter of accident compensation. This appears to be a most popular Convention with Governments. In four years no fewer than twenty-two ratifications have been received and two more are pending. This is the highest number of ratifications to any International Labour Convention, except that on Unemployment, which has twenty-three, and they took ten years to be received.

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THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE NEW ORGANISATION  
WERE SET FORTH IN THE FOLLOWING TERMS :—

## ARTICLE 127

*First.*—The guiding principle above enunciated that labour should not be regarded merely as a commodity or article of commerce.

*Second.*—The right of association for all lawful purposes by the employed as well as by the employers.

*Third.*—The payment to the employed of a wage adequate to maintain a reasonable standard of life as this is understood in their time and country.

*Fourth.*—The adoption of an eight hours day or a forty-eight hours week as the standard to be aimed at where it has not already been attained.

*Fifth.*—The adoption of a weekly rest of at least twenty-four hours, which should include Sunday wherever practicable.

*Sixth.*—The abolition of child labour and the imposition of such limitations on the labour of young persons as shall permit the continuation of their education and assure their proper physical development.

*Seventh.*—The principle that men and women should receive equal remuneration for work of equal value.

*Eighth.*—The standard set by law in each country with respect to the conditions of labour should have due regard to the equitable economic treatment of all workers lawfully resident therein.

*Ninth.*—Each State should make provision for a system of inspection in which women should take part, in order to ensure the enforcement of the laws and regulations for the protection of the employed.

## ACTUAL RESULTS

There are several Conventions that have received twenty ratifications and over. Those relating to 'Night Work of Children in Industry,' and 'Minimum Age for Admission to Employment at Sea,' have received 21; 'The Minimum Age for Admission as Trimmers and Stokers' and 'The Compulsory Medical Examination of Young Persons at Sea' have obtained 20 each.

The country which has sent in most ratifications is Luxemburg. In 1928, as a gesture to show her support of the Organisation, this little, but highly industrialised, country ratified every Convention that had then been passed whether they applied to her or not.

After Luxemburg comes Belgium with 19 to her credit. The numbers for the Great Powers [December, 1929] are: France, 15; Britain, 15; Italy, 14; Germany, 13; India, 11; Japan, 9; Canada, 4. Though China and several of the South American countries have ratified none, most countries will soon reach double figures.

Each month the number of ratifications increases. In 1928 no fewer than 85 were received, as compared with 33 for the preceding year and 29 for 1926. By December, 1929, the figure stood at 377. Though the possible total is 1,485 if every State had ratified every Convention, 377 is not so bad as might be imagined

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THE LEAGUE'S OFFICE  
*The Palais des Nations at Geneva*

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In some cases a Convention is inapplicable; in others great changes have to be made in national laws to bring them into line, and that takes time; in others again the national standard is far higher than the international, and, Parliaments being busy places, time has not been found to pass a purely formal piece of legislation even if it were desirable.

#### CONTACTS BETWEEN LEAGUE AND I.L.O.

It must not be thought that the International Labour Organisation and the League have no contacts beyond the budgetary control exercised by the League Assembly. Each year the co-operation between the two grows. Whenever, as often happens, the work of the League comes into contact with labour conditions there is need for co-operation with the International Labour Organisation.

*Economics.* Chief among these subjects of joint work comes Economics. It is impossible to separate economic from industrial questions.

In 1928 the League's Economic Consultative Committee, whose business is to follow up the work of the Economic Conference, started an enquiry into the condition of the coal industry throughout the world. Its purpose was to see whether international action could assist the revival of this industry. The enquiry

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represents the producer's point of view. A similar enquiry on wages and hours in the coal mining industry, representing the workers' point of view, has been brought to a successful conclusion and a report issued by the International Labour Organisation. Few better instances could be found of the way in which the Economic work of the League dovetails into the work of the Labour Office. Further joint work is in hand as a result of resolutions passed by the Tenth Assembly in September, 1929.

*Health.* Health is a matter which affects the individual both as a worker and as a citizen. Consequently there is a great deal of joint work between the League Health Section and the Office's Industrial Hygiene Service. This section of the Office was directly responsible for the White Lead Convention which prohibits the use of Lead Paints for interior work save under very strict rules. A visit to any industrial museum such as the Home Office Museum in Horseferry Road, Westminster, London, will show the diseases to which workers are subject not only from Lead, but also from Phosphorus, Anthrax and other occupational diseases.

An Encyclopædia of Industrial Hygiene is in process of publication. This is another example of the numerous research efforts of the Office.

*Women and Children.* Again, in Child Welfare work and the Protection of Women there is much upon which the League Secretariat and the Office can work together. The conditions of employment of women in foreign countries and more particularly the question of the contracts accepted by performers in music halls and cabarets are of importance for the suppression of the white slave traffic. So also is the question of emigration upon which a special Convention has been framed for the Inspection of Emigrants on board ship. Juvenile Employment and social matters such as the proper censorship of films also come within its purview.

With the League's sections on Transit and Communications, Mandates, Calendar Reform and Slavery, the Office is also concerned. The latter is especially important; for the League Slavery Convention has a clause on the prevention of compulsory or forced labour in backward coloured areas from developing into conditions similar to slavery.

#### FORCED LABOUR

One of the fundamental problems which faces the modern day world is the clash of colour. So important does it seem that an item on the agenda of the 1929 International Labour Conference was ' Forced



THE FIRST GENEVA HOME OF THE I.L.O.

Labour.' A questionnaire was adopted upon which a Convention will be based in 1930. The whole question of the development of Africa is bound up with this. The humanitarian movement for the protection of native peoples against the dangers of an unrestrained industrialisation is continually gaining strength under the pressure of hard facts. Both the administrations and the employing companies and the industrial concerns are realising that get-rich-quick methods in colonial development do not pay. Prudent and solid preparation is necessary if, instead of killing the goose that lays the golden eggs, a continued output is to be attained. It is no use taking natives out of their natural surroundings and putting them to work in districts where they become diseased and die like flies. Temporarily it may mean that the supply of products necessary for the comforts of civilisation may increase, but afterwards there comes a decrease of production, since the few natives left are loth to leave their homes. Moreover, there grows up a spirit of resentment between the white employer and the coloured worker which, if not taken in time, is almost sure to lead to armed conflict.

*Armaments.* The last sphere of co-operation with the League is the limitation and reduction of armaments. There have been three stages.



NATIVES LOADING LOGS

The I.L.O. is studying the whole question of Native Labour with a view to doing away with the abuses which are so common

In 1921, through the Governing Body, three representatives of the Workers were appointed to a League Commission which had been appointed to advise the Council on the reduction of Armaments and the private manufacture of arms and munitions. In 1924 the Commission was reorganised, but the Workers Group still sat with them. In 1926 the League's work started to become more intense and a Preparatory Committee for a general Disarmament Conference was created. To a sub-committee of this, which advised the main committee on the economic aspect of disarmament, the Employers and Workers Groups were invited to send representatives. This was done.

It is obvious that the reduction of armaments and unemployment are very closely related. It is only right and natural that the International Labour Organisation, specially concerned as it is with the workers and industry, should have a say. Another advantage is gained in that the discussions are not swamped by purely political and technical considerations, which would certainly happen if the other point of view was not constantly put forward.

#### CONTACTS WITH THE WORLD COURT

The novelty of the International Labour Organisation soon brought it into contact with the Permanent



THE PEACE PALACE AT THE HAGUE



Court of International Justice at The Hague, set up by the League in 1922. In fact, the first business of that body was to give three ' advisory opinions ' on matters affecting the Organisation.

*Workers' Representatives.* The first of these related to the nomination of delegates to the Conference. In 1921 exception was taken to the Dutch Workers' representative. He had been nominated by the Government in consultation with three different (Christian) Unions, whose combined numbers were greater but whose individual numbers were less than those of the Netherlands Confederation of Trades Unions. The latter body complained, and in order to settle the point once and for all the matter was eventually in 1922 sent up to the Court for an opinion. The Court upheld the Dutch Government, on the ground that in a country where there are several organisations of employers or workers, all of these may be taken into consideration and not merely the one which has the largest membership, even though that one, in the words of the Versailles Treaty, may be the most ' representative.'

*Agriculture.* The next cases had to do with agriculture. The French Government thought that the I.L.O. was not competent to deal with agricultural labour. On this the Court gave two opinions. In the

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THE COURT IN SESSION

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first, it said that the Organisation was competent to cover international regulations of persons employed in agriculture, and in the second, that it is competent to deal with agricultural production only in so far as conditions of labour are concerned. These two opinions have materially helped the Organisation to chart its course, and thus contributed to the easier co-operation of the nations engaged in considering and adopting uniform labour legislation. More recently, the League World Economic Conference has said that Agriculture, Industry and Commerce are inseparable. What affects one affects all three.

*Bakers.* Some years later, in 1926, the Court was again asked for an opinion whether the Organisation can regulate, incidentally, the work of an employer. The point arose out of the Nightwork in Bakeries Convention. By this, night work with certain exceptions is prohibited to all persons, proprietors as well as employees, engaged in making bread, pastry or other flour confectionery. Certain sections of the Conference thought that the owner could do as he pleased, but the Court's opinion was that the Organisation can draw up and propose labour laws which, in order to protect certain classes of workers, also regulate the same work when performed by the employer himself.

#### OTHER SIDES OF THE WORK

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By the Peace Treaty as has already been said, one of the principal tasks of the Office is to collect and distribute industrial information of all kinds.

On this account cordial relations exist between the Office and somewhat unexpected quarters. In the Annual Report the Director devotes a considerable section to the various relations which the Office maintains and the sympathy and support which it obtains from religious bodies, League of Nations Societies, Ex-Service Men's Organisations, and others.

To distribute the information which it has amassed, the Office publishes regular journals such as 'Industrial and Labour Information' and the 'International Labour Review.' For longer and more technical subjects it makes use of special reports. That they fill a need is shown by the fact that the sales have gone up regularly from year to year.

With all new ideas and new movements the Office is actively in touch. Such diverse matters as holidays with pay, accident prevention, factory inspection, migration, profit sharing, collective agreements, unemployment and vocational guidance are watched. The laws which each country makes are studied and when the time is ripe international action is taken.

1919	1919	1919
Africa, Union of South	Italy	Venezuela
Argentina	Japan	1920
Australia	Liberia	Albania
Belgium	Netherlands	Austria
Bolivia	New Zealand	Bulgaria
Brazil	Nicaragua	Finland
British Empire	Norway	Luxemburg
Canada	Panama	1921
Chile	Paraguay	Esthonia
China	Persia	Latvia
Colombia	Peru	Lithuania
Cuba	Poland	1922
Czecho- Slovakia	Portugal	Hungary
Denmark	Rumania	1923
France	Salvador	Irish Free State
Germany	Serb-Croat- Slovene State	Abyssinia
Greece	Siam	1924
Guatemala	Spain	San Domingo
Haiti	Sweden	
Honduras	Switzerland	
India	Uruguay	

THE FIFTY-FIVE MEMBER-STATES  
Costa-Rica, admitted in 1922, retired in 1927.

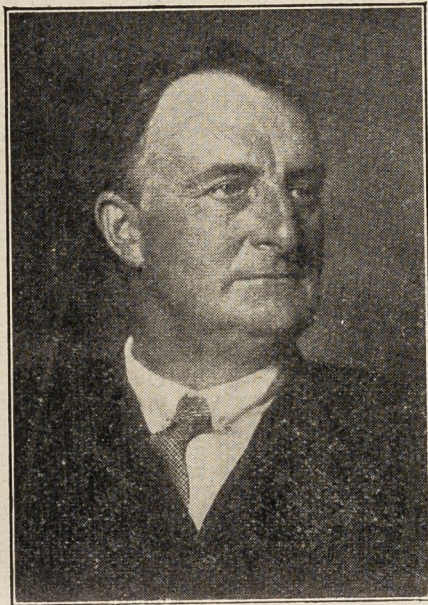
*Safety First.* In the matter of accident prevention, or 'safety first,' the Office watched the movement develop; it collected information; it saw the time was opportune for international action, and in 1928 the question was discussed by the 11th session of the International Labour Conference with a view to recommendations and Conventions being made in 1929. In that year a 'Dockers' Convention was framed laying down strict rules for the prevention of accidents in loading and unloading ships. Three recommendations were also adopted.

#### YOUR PART

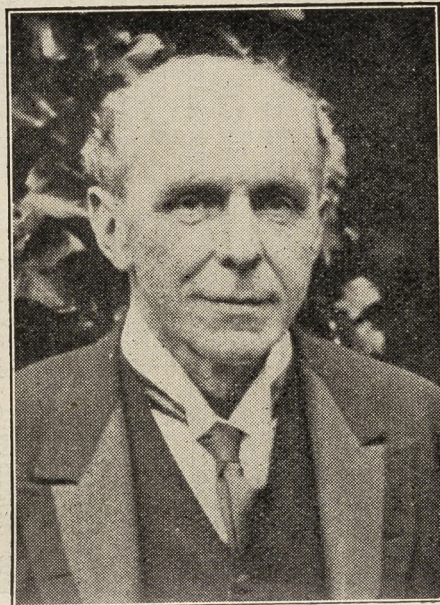
All the manifold activities of the International Labour Office and Organisation are inspired by that magic phrase in the opening words of Part XIII of the Treaty of Versailles—'Universal peace can be established only if it is based on social justice.' It is a lofty ideal, which will entail a hard struggle to attain. 'If we do not end war, war will end us,' once said Lord Bryce. The future success of the League and its kindred organisations depends on the organised will of mankind. The overwhelming drive towards peace will not take place unless that public opinion is educated.

There is no world machinery of a party character to educate public opinion as do political parties within a

THE JOINT PRESIDENTS OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNION



VISCOUNT GREY OF FALLODON, K.G.  
*He says*  
LEARN OR PERISH



VISCOUNT CECIL OF CHELWOOD, K.C.  
*He says*  
EDUCATE AND ORGANISE

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State. Nor can purely party machinery be used for this purpose. As Mr. Baldwin said to a deputation from the L.N.U.: ' I consider that it would be a disaster if there were a political party within the League of Nations, for the whole thing would go down into the arena of Party Politics.'

Hence the need for non-party societies to educate and also to organise public opinion on questions relating to world affairs and, in particular, the League of Nations. In England that Society is the League of Nations Union, which more than four-fifths of a million men and women have already joined. That is not enough; and it does not represent one-half of those who are profoundly desirous of peace.

By supporting the Union you are changing vague aspirations into practical methods. Methods, too, that are very practical from a purely selfish point of view. The added support which such a course gives to the International Labour Organisation means better labour conditions elsewhere. Unfair competition is eliminated. Things are therefore made easier for this country. Our standards of life and general prosperity can rise. Industrial and economic peace are assured, and they are the complements of international peace.

By becoming a member of the Union you are

shouldering your share of responsibility towards posterity for the proper universal organisation of world peace. You are helping to create that world opinion without which no sustained pacific effort can succeed. Will you take a hand in the triumph of Reason over Folly, of Order over Chaos?

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*Nothing is more essential than a strong and enduring League of Nations.*

*Millions of British men and women stand ready to help if only they be shown the way.*

*I commend the cause to all the citizens of my Empire.*

H.M. THE KING

## MEMBERSHIP

### OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNION

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Membership is open to all those who are in general agreement with the objects of the League of Nations Union. It is non-party and non-sectarian.

To join the Union, send your subscription with a written statement that you are in general agreement with its objects, and desire to become a member, either to the secretary of your local branch, or to the Secretary of the League of Nations Union, 15, Grosvenor Crescent, London, S.W.1.

Ordinary Members' subscriptions supply only a small part of the funds needed to carry on the work of the League of Nations.

#### YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION:

Foundation Members, £1. Registered Members 5s.

Ordinary Members 1s. minimum.

*Foundation Members are entitled to receive HEADWAY, the journal of the Union, monthly by post, and as much as they desire of the pamphlets and similar literature issued by the Union. Registered Members are entitled to receive HEADWAY monthly by post, and occasional important notices. Ordinary Members subscribing not less than 3s. 6d. a year are also entitled to receive HEADWAY by post.*

Those who are able and willing to help the Funds of the Union are urged, if possible, to become Foundation Members or, failing that, Registered Members.

## APPENDIX A

### CONVENTIONS

- 1st Conference (Washington, 1919)
1. Hours.
  2. Unemployment.
  3. Childbirth.
  4. Night work, women.
  5. Minimum age (industry).
  6. Night work, young persons.
  7. White phosphorus.
- 2nd Conference (Genoa, 1920)
8. Minimum age (sea).
  9. Unemployment indemnity.
  10. Employment for seamen.
- 3rd Conference (Geneva, 1921)
11. Minimum age (agriculture).
  12. Rights of association (agriculture).
  13. Workmen's compensation (agriculture).
  14. White lead.
  15. Weekly rest (industry).
  16. Minimum age (trimmers and stokers).
  17. Medical examination, young persons (sea).
- 7th Conference (Geneva, 1925)
18. Workmen's compensation (accidents).
  19. Workmen's compensation (diseases).
  20. Equality of treatment (accidents).
  21. Night work in bakeries.
- 8th Conference (Geneva 1926)
22. Inspection of emigrants on board ship.
- 9th Conference (Geneva, 1926)
23. Seamen's articles of agreement.
  24. Repatriation of seamen.
- 10th Conference (Geneva, 1927)
25. Sickness insurance (industry, etc.).
  26. Sickness insurance (agriculture).
- 11th Conference (Geneva, 1928)
27. Minimum wage-fixing machinery.
- 12th Conference (Geneva, 1929)
28. Weight of packages transported by vessels.
  29. Prevention of accidents (dockers).

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1919 (1st Conference) : Unemployment.  
 Reciprocity of treatment.  
 Prevention of anthrax.  
 Protection of women and children against lead poisoning.  
 Government health services.
- 1920 (2nd) : Hours of work (fishing industry).  
 Hours of work (inland navigation).  
 National seamen's codes.  
 Unemployment insurance (seamen).
- 1921 (3rd) : Prevention of unemployment (agriculture).  
 Maternity (agriculture).  
 Night work of women (agriculture).  
 Night work of children and young persons (agriculture).  
 Technical agricultural education  
 Living-in conditions (agriculture).  
 Social insurance (agriculture).  
 Weekly rest (commerce).
- 1922 (4th) : Migration statistics.
- 1923 (5th) : Factory inspection.
- 1924 (6th) : Utilisation of spare time.
- 1925 (7th) : Minimum scale of workmen's compensation.  
 Jurisdiction in disputes on workmen's compensation.  
 Workmen's compensation for occupational diseases.  
 Equality of treatment (workmen's compensation).
- 1926 (8th) : Protection of emigrant women and girls on board ship.
- 1926 (9th) : Repatriation of ships' masters and apprentices.  
 Inspection of conditions of work of seamen.
- 1927 (10th) : General principles of sickness insurance.
- 1928 (11th) : Minimum wage-fixing machinery.
- 1929 (12th) : Prevention of industrial accidents.  
 Protection of machinery.  
 Consultation with industrial organisations on regulations under Convention 29.  
 Reciprocity (inspection certificates).



## APPENDIX B

### INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE PERIODICALS

INDUSTRIAL AND LABOUR INFORMATION. [Weekly.]			
Annual Subscription	.. ..	£1	10s.
INTERNATIONAL LABOUR REVIEW. [Monthly.]			
Annual Subscription	.. ..	£1	4s.

### SELECTED UNION PAMPHLETS

			s.	d.
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No. 153.	FOUR YEARS' WORK OF THE I.L.O. .. ..	o	3	
No. 172.	THE LABOUR COVENANT EXPLAINED .. ..	o	1	
No. 187.	SEVENTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE I.L.O. .. ..	o	1	
No. 208.	I.L.O. RECORD IN 1926 .. ..	o	3	
No. 216.	FACTORY CONDITIONS IN CHINA .. ..	o	2	
No. 224.	WORLD LABOUR PROBLEMS .. ..	o	3	
No. 229.	WASHINGTON HOURS CONVENTION .. ..	o	6	
No. 235.	INDIA AND THE I.L.O. .. ..	o	6	
No. 259.	WORLD LABOUR PROBLEMS, 1928 .. ..	o	4	
No. 277.	WORLD LABOUR PROBLEMS, 1929 .. ..	o	4	

### A FEW BOOKS

INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL PROGRESS, G. A. Johnston, 1924. (Allen & Unwin) .. ..		10	6
HISTORY OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE, Rt. Hon. G. N. Barnes, 1926 (Williams & Norgate) .. ..		3	6
LABOUR AS AN INTERNATIONAL PROBLEM. (A series of Essays comprising a Short History of the International Labour Organisation and a Review of General Industrial Pro- blems.) By G. N. Barnes, Arthur Fontaine, Emile Vandervelde, Albert Thomas, H. B. Butler and others. Edited by E. John Solarno. (Macmillan) .. ..		8	6

*The Librarian at Headquarters, 15 Grosvenor Crescent, S.W.1, will gladly lend these, and make further suggestions.*

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