The League of Nations Commission met for the 13th time at the Hotel de Crillon. There were present:—

United States of America  President Wilson
                       Colonel House

British Empire  Lord Robert Cecil
                   Lt.Gen.Hon. J.C. Smuts

France  M. Leon Bourgeois
        M. Harmade

Italy  M. Orlando
       M. Senator Scialoja

Japan  Baron Makino
       Viscount Chinda

Belgium  M. Hymans

Brazil  M. Epitacio Pessoa

China  Dr. H.E. Wellington Koo,

Serbia  M. Vesnitch

Portugal  M. Jayme Batalha Reis

Greece  M. Venizelos

Roumania  M. Diamandy

Poland  M. Dmowski

President Wilson declared that, in accordance with the decision of the Commission at its eleventh meeting, he would name Signor Orlando, General Smuts, Baron Makino and Colonel House as a Committee to enquire into the question of the locality of the Seat of the League.

Article XVII.

On the motion of Lord Robert Cecil, the following British amendments were adopted:—

In the sixth line delete "above" and insert after "provisions" the words "of Article XII to XVI inclusive".
In the eighth line delete "League" and substitute "Executive Council".

**Article XVIII**

The British amendments:

"Present Article XIX to become Article XVIII" and in the second paragraph, line 4 after "responsibility" insert "and who are willing to accept it" — were adopted.

Certain other British drafting amendments were referred to the Drafting Committee.

**New Article XIX**

Lord Robert Cecil presented the following new draft with the object of joining the present Articles XVIII, XX and XXI in a single Article to read as follows:

"In accordance with the provisions of international conventions hereafter to be agreed upon for the purposes hereinafter stated, the States members of the League

(a) will endeavor to secure and maintain fair and humane conditions of labor for men, women and children both in their own countries and in all countries to which their commercial and industrial relations extend.

(b) engage to secure just treatment of the native inhabitants of the territories under their control.

(c) entrust the League with the general supervision over the execution of such agreements as shall have been jointly come to with regard to the traffic in women and children and the traffic in opium and other dangerous drugs.

(d) agree that the League shall be entrusted with the general supervision of the trade in arms and ammunition with the countries in which the control
of this traffic is necessary in the common interest.

(e) agree that provision shall be made to secure and maintain freedom of communications and of transit and equitable treatment for the commerce of all States members of the League, having in mind, among other things, special arrangements with regard to the necessities of the regions devastated during the war of 1914-1918".

Lord Robert Cecil said that the object of this new draft was to combine under a single Article all conventions of the same sort. If they were so grouped, the League of Nations might succeed in developing a consistent body of legislation on these subjects; whereas, if they were left under separate articles, legislation would in all probability develop along various inconsistent lines.

M. Vesnitch observed that these provisions imposed obligations which would perhaps lead to difficulties and to interference in the domestic legislation of the States members.

President Wilson replied that it was a question of influence and not of interference.

M. Leon Bourgeois remarked that the scheme of this article was quite in line with the ideas which had inspired the French amendment on the subject of labor organization.

M. Reis made a reservation on the words "general supervision" in paragraph 1. He hoped that less indefinite words might be substituted which would make it clearer that this supervision would be exercised in a way consistent with the sovereignty of the several States.

Lord Robert Cecil replied that this Article had reference only to such Conventions as should have been adopted by the States themselves.
The new Article 19 was adopted and the Drafting Committee was requested to examine the question whether the words "by means of an International Bureau" should be inserted after the word "endeavor".

Article XX
(Formerly Article XXII)

Lord Robert Cecil proposed the following amendments:

1. After the word "bureaux" insert "or Commissions for the regulation of matters of international interest".

2. Add a second paragraph as follows:

"In all matters of international interest which are regulated by general conventions but which are not placed under the control of special international bureaux or commissions, the secretariat of the League shall act as a central organization for the collection and distribution of information and for securing the effective observance of such conventions if the States thereto consent".

Messrs. Leon Bourgeois and Hymans considered that the power of the Secretariat should not be enlarged, but that it should remain a bureau of information and of distribution. They suggested striking out the words "and for securing" down to the end of the paragraph.

The amendment, as so modified, was accepted.

Lord Robert Cecil proposed a third new paragraph as follows:

"The expenses of all such bureaux and commissions, including those provided for by this Covenant, may, with the consent of the Executive Council, be treated as part of the expenses of the Permanent Secretariat of the League".

It was decided that the third paragraph should be adopted, subject to examination by the Drafting Committee to determine whether its provisions conflicted with present arrangements concerning the Postal Union and other like conventions.

M. Leon Bourgeois proposed the following amendment to Article XIX:

"The High Contracting Parties agree, moreover, in declaring that in view of various financial injuries which the war has brought upon various states, special provisions should be made among them to the end that an equitable state of economic life may be recreated, especially as concerns
the matter of post-war budgets.

"The High Contracting Parties recognize the fact that an international body to deal with questions of production is necessary, and that its first task should be that of making a statistical inquiry into the needs of each nation.

"The States Members of the League of Nations shall give complete protection to all the rights and property legally acquired and possessed by foreigners".

M. Leon Bourgeois explained that it seemed necessary to introduce the idea of industry, since, if the only reference were to commerce, the article would be given too restricted an interpretation. Although, from an international point of view, industrial issues did not arise, except in so far as they were connected with commerce, it was right, nevertheless that it be included as a matter within the competence of the League of Nations.

Another part of the amendment had reference to the devastated regions and to arrangements which were to be made by the associated states with regard to post-war budgets.

The French Delegation was especially anxious, in proposing this amendment, to call attention to the problem which was presented rather than ask for a vote on any one of these provisions. For example, should a financial section of the League of Nations be created, this possibility should be taken into account in drawing up the Covenant.

The most important thing of all was to make it clear that the matter should be referred to this Commission. These remarks might well appear in the proces-verbal and could be referred to in case of need.

M. Hymans remarked that the most interesting feature of this provision, if it should be adopted, would be the question of how much the neutrals would be called upon to pay.

M. Leon Bougeois explained the last paragraph of his
amendment which dealt with the protection to be accorded to property legally acquired and possessed by foreigners. This part of the amendment had particular reference to mining concessions which might be granted by a country to foreigners. Such concessions rightly deserved the protection of the League of Nations, and if they should be violently attacked they ought to have the protection of all the States members. At all events, it was proper to raise the issue for discussion.

President Wilson recalled an American expression, "The flag follows the dollar", he feared that the last amendment proposed by the French Delegation might involve the League of Nations in serious difficulties if it should give its support to this principle. It would result that a state with a weak government might give concessions to certain foreign financiers, and the League of Nations might have to interfere in the administration of that state in order to secure a recognition of these individual rights.

In the United States certain parties claimed rights representing financial control of foreign customs, which constitute one of the most valuable sources of income of the States concerned. President Wilson hoped that the Covenant would not consecrate a principle to which he had been unalterably opposed throughout the whole course of his administration.

M. Leon Bourgeois said that he had no intention of involving the League in such serious consequences, but he thought, however, that provision should be made by which the League of Nations should guarantee protection of legitimate rights.

He would not insist upon his amendment, but asked that the preceding discussion should be put on record.

M. Hymans wished to propose an amendment which he had been unable to include among those circulated by the Belgian Delegation. This amendment was not concerned with industry, as was the French amendment, but with agriculture. It proposed
the creation of a permanent commission which should promote scientific agricultural production, and should adapt the products of each country to its climatic and geographic conditions. It should likewise promote exchange of raw material necessary for each kind of production. This commission should also examine and popularize scientific measures for securing the greatest possible output of the soil and for the improvement of cattle breeding. Moreover, it should study the question of international measures of protection against diseases of plants and animals.

M. Orlando remarked that the International Institute of Agriculture at Rome was engaged upon working out all the questions raised by the Belgian Delegation. Furthermore, an Article of the Covenant provided that all commissions or international bureaux could be brought under the League of Nations. The Italian Delegation suggested therefore that the Agricultural Institute at Rome might now be brought under the League.

M. Hymans did not insist upon the adoption of this Amendment.

ARTICLES XXI, XXII, XXIII.

These Articles (formerly Articles XXIII, XXIV and XXV) were adopted without amendment.

ARTICLE XXIV

Lord Robert Cecil stated that Article XXIV (formerly Article XXVI) provided that amendments to the Covenant should not take effect until after ratification by three-fourths of the states represented in the Body of Delegates.

The British Delegation proposed to substitute for the word "majority" the words "three-fourths". This amendment would remove the impression that the Covenant could only be changed with the greatest difficulty.
M. Venizelos referred to the amendments to this Article proposed by Chile, Norway, Holland and Switzerland. He said that all the states with special interests had the same anxiety: They agreed to be bound by the Covenant but only according to well defined conditions. If a simple majority could change the Covenant, many states might be bound without having given their assent thereto, and might find themselves burdened with serious obligations. The issue had been carefully examined at the first reading of the Covenant, and the text which was determined upon at that time paid regard to all the anxieties to which he referred.

President Wilson said that, in order to meet such anxieties, the American Delegation had considered the question of states withdrawing from the League. He therefore proposed the following amendment:

"After the expiration of ten years from the ratification of the Treaty of Peace, of which this Covenant forms a part, any state member of the League, may, after giving one year's notice of its intention, withdraw from the League, provided all its international obligations and all its obligations under this Covenant shall have been fulfilled at the time of its withdrawal."

The object of this amendment was to provide a period of ten years in order that the experiment of a League might be tried. If the experiment succeeded, no state would desire to withdraw. If it failed, it would make very little difference whether a state were allowed the right of withdrawing after one year's notice, provided that it had fulfilled all its international obligations.

M. Larnaude said that public opinion was looking for something much more than an experiment. If it were said in the Covenant of the League, that the League would only last for ten years and that any state might withdraw after that time, an impression would be given that the structure was very frail.

The League had a great international work ahead, it answered urgent demands, and public opinion would not
understand how it could be considered as a temporary experiment. The impression should not be given to the world that we were engaged upon nothing more than a timid trial.

President Wilson answered that he had no intention of limiting the life of the League, but that the idea of a permanent tie was quite incompatible with the principle of the sovereignty of states.

Lord Robert Cecil was impressed by M. Larnaude's remarks to the effect that a term of ten years might startle public opinion. He thought it better to establish a term of twenty years during which the Covenant must be observed, in order to cover the period of reparation and recovery and several years after it. In case the Commission should decide, in accordance with the proposal of M. Larnaude, not to fix a term for the League but to create it from the outset as a permanent institution he proposed that notice of two years should be substituted in place of one year for such states as desired to withdraw.

M. Orlando said that a term of ten years, which would be the same for all the states members of the League, might at the end of this period give rise to a general and simultaneous withdrawal of a great many powers. This unfortunate event would be avoided if the period of trial were abandoned and if each nation were allowed to withdraw upon two years' notice.

President Wilson said that he was ready to give up the term of trial which he had suggested and to accept in its place a two years notice.

M. Larnaude believed that if the League of Nations should in fact live up to its theory, it could not prove to be a tyrannical institution so far as anybody was concerned.
It could only bring security and prosperity to the States members. This being so, what was the point in providing for the right of withdrawal? The possibility of giving notice of one or two years might cause great disturbance within the League, if such notice were given by one of the Great Powers. The very life of the League would be threatened. It is our intention, according to President Wilson’s excellent words, to substitute the reign of law in place of the reign of anarchy which has hitherto prevailed in international relations. If this object is to be attained, the world must believe that something definite and permanent has been established.

President Wilson said that he did not entertain the slightest fear that any State would take advantage of the proposed Clause. Any state which did so would become an outlaw. The sovereignty of their own country was the fetish of many public men. If they entered into a permanent arrangement they would feel that they were surrendering this sovereignty. America valued her sovereignty more highly than most nations. Americans would have to be assured that they were not giving up the sovereignty of their State. He thought that the Clause would have no practical effects, while its omission might have very serious results. It was necessary to avoid such consequences by making concessions to existing prejudices. The time would come when men would be just as eager partisans of the sovereignty of mankind as they were now of their own national sovereignty. He himself would be in a very awkward position if the amendment was not passed, since in the earlier sessions of the Commission he alone had been anti-secessionist, and had reluctantly acquiesced in the opinion of the Commission that the right to withdraw should exist. No state would have a moral right to withdraw. States would have a legal right, that was all that he proposed to admit. He was afraid that the Senate would not agree to come in if the right to withdraw did not somewhere
exist. He had frequently stated this understanding in America.

M. Leon Bourgeois stated that the remarks of President Wilson and of M. Larnaude had led to an agreement of opinion, in that the idea of fixing an experimental period for the League had been given up. The draft of this Article might take a negative form and might read as follows:

"No State Member of the League of Nations shall have the right of withdrawal unless it has discharged its international obligations, and except after two years notice."

Such a draft would establish the principle of the permanence of the League, and at the same time would preserve to each state the right of withdrawal under certain necessary conditions.

M. Larnaude feared that if a "term of experiment should be fixed, every state would be anxious during that period. On the other hand, if it was said that the League of Nations from this time forward represented new system of law in place of the old, every State would join it without regret and for an indefinite period. Nations should be required to bind themselves in this way in order to put an end to war.

Should not sacrifices be made for such an object, even to the extent of renouncing the right to withdraw from an agreement with such an important purpose. One should not talk here in the same way in which one discussed treaties between individual states, or the formation of a partnership. The question was one of establishing anew system of law in place of the old for the purposes of putting an end to war. If this high purpose seemed idealistic, it was, nevertheless, quite in accord with the views of President Wilson.

M. Vesnitchk felt that the League of Nations should be as flexible as possible. He thought it better to preserve the possibility of withdrawal than to run the risk of a Great Power breaking the Covenant. Furthermore, the fact that a great
democratic republic like the United States was concerned over this issue, seemed to him to be a sufficient justification for President Wilson's proposal that the door should be left open to such states as wanted to withdraw.

The League must be a body into which States will be anxious to come, nor should they be bound forever unless they so desired on account of the advantages which they found there. It should not, however, be a matter of permanent engagement, and it would be better to say so quite frankly.

Mr. Reis said that the Commission had already been widely accused of having laid violent hands upon national independence. Everything possible should be done to remove that impression, but great sacrifices had already been made to the sovereignty of States in that the principle of obligatory arbitration, which he considered essential had not been established.

M. Venizelos thought that the period of experiment might be lengthened to twenty years, and that at all events, the negative form proposed by M. Bourgeois was much better.

M. Orlando remarked that liberty was necessary in every question which involved human relations. The important thing, however, was not being free so much as thinking oneself free. If the various States realized that they could withdraw from the League after notice, in all probability they never would take advantage of the privilege. On the other hand, if they gained the impression that they were chained down, their uneasiness might well lead to a serious rupture. There could be no doubt, as M. Lemaude said, that a new regime of law was in process of formation; but in order to establish it something more than a treaty or a declaration of intention was needed. New customs must be created, new ways of thinking, and, within the edifice which was now being erected, a force which would uphold it.

A term of ten or twenty years seemed, from the point of
psychology, undesirable. It would be much better to lay down no definite period, but simply admit the right of withdrawal.

M. Larnaudé thought that nations leaving the League should be compelled to render an explanation.

President Wilson wished to assure M. Larnaudé that he shared with him all his hopes and his ambitions. The United States, however, could not support an institution from which they were not permitted to withdraw. Once a member, he hoped that the United States would always remain a member. Fundamentally, all the members of the Commission had the same chief object in view; and an accord among them might be reached by abandoning the experimental period, and simply admitting the right of withdrawal.

President Wilson then proposed the following revised amendment which was adopted:

"Any State member of the League, may, after giving two years' notice of its intention, withdraw from the League, provided all its international obligations and all its obligations under this Covenant shall have been fulfilled at the time of its withdrawal."

Lord Robert Cecil asked whether his amendment to Article XXIV was agreed to.

This amendment was adopted.

Lord Robert Cecil moved a new Article that:

"All bodies formed under or in connection with the League, including the Secretariat, may comprise women as well as men."

The amendment was adopted.

M. Hymans then moved a new Article, as follows:

"The States members of the League will ensure, so far as possible, the development of intellectual moral, scientific and artistic relations among their peoples, and will promote by all possible means the creation of an international manner of thinking.

For this purpose an International Commission of Intellectual Relations shall be established."

Lord Robert Cecil said that though he sympathized with the ideas expressed in this proposal he thought that it would be
difficult to reach an agreement on the exact competence of the suggested Commission. He recommended that the question be reserved for submission to the Body of Delegates.

The amendment was thereupon withdrawn.

President Wilson said that the work of Revision was now to be undertaken by a Drafting Committee, consisting of Lord Robert Cecil, Mr. Larnaudie, Mr. Venizelos and Colonel House.

It was understood that the next meeting of the Commission should be held as soon as the Drafting Committee was ready with its report.

The Commission likewise agreed that the Chairman should nominate a Committee to consider questions such as the nomination of the first Secretary-General, Housing, etc.

M. Leon Bourgeois reminded the Commission of two amendments which had been proposed by the French Delegation, one with regard to a verification of armaments, the other with regard to the creation of a body which should study and prepare military measures.

President Wilson said that he fully appreciated the motives which prompted the French Delegation to move their amendments; they had been fully discussed, however, on two occasions, and he was afraid that further discussion would not lead to their adoption.

M. Leon Bourgeois answered that, in these circumstances he would have to call for a vote.

M. Orlando suggested that record be kept of the French reservations on Articles VIII and IX. In this way the French Government might preserve its freedom of action up to the very end. On the other hand, if the amendments should be put to a vote, their rejection might prejudice the French contentions, by creating the belief that the Commission was opposed to the principles that were behind them. He remarked once more that
the idea of the French amendment was implicit in the text as it had already been agreed to.

Lord Robert Cecil asked M. Bourgeois not to insist upon a vote, but to reserve his remarks for the next meeting.

M. Venizelos felt that this was a matter which would have to be settled by the Great Powers, or at least by conversations between the Chairman and M. Clemenceau, since the Commission could only present to the Conference decisions which had been accepted unanimously.

M. Vesnitch supported M. Venizelos' point of view, inasmuch as a question of governmental policy was at stake.

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 p.m.