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Minor Activities of the League

The general discussion in the Assembly of the League of Nations came to an end on Saturday; and the BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY and M. BLUM—the latter after a very short visit—have both left Geneva. The six Committees of the Assembly will carry through the technical business of the League, but the gathering of the chiefs of Government is now virtually over. Most of the leaders made public statements of their views. MR. EDEN did well to emphasize that if disarmament is to be real it must be moral as well as military; no scheme can of itself bring success so long as war is being glorified in certain countries. The deliberate cultivation of the war mentality is in fact the greatest single obstacle to European appeasement; but the corollary of its abatement should of course be that all countries must be ready to consider territorial changes under Article XIX of the Covenant, as some of the speakers in the Assembly pointed out. MR. MACKENZIE KING insisted that it was not the central purpose of the League to guarantee the territorial *status quo*; and he spoke in favour of concentrating for the present on its mediatorial functions. MR. BRUCE considered that "to operate the Covenant to the full" while the League was non-universal would be more likely to spread than to restrict the area of conflict.

Opposite views were expressed—notably by M. LITVINOFF—but on the whole the tendency was to urge that the League should "go slow"; and most observers will agree that in its present state of debility the League will be wise not to attempt too much. If however it can go ahead with those minor but important tasks about which PROFESSOR GILBERT MURRAY has written to *The Times*—such as the supervision of school textbooks—it may do more to prepare the way for a united Europe than by framing more ambitious schemes. A useful agreement was reached at Geneva the other day when eighteen countries signed the Convention to check the abuse of broadcasting and to render it, as it should be, a powerful instrument of international understanding rather than a provocation. The fundamental question of malnutrition is also being taken up internationally, and the Second Committee of the Assembly has just received LORD ASTOR'S report on the possibilities of Government action to improve the diet of their

populations.

The most important political item on the agenda of the Council was Danzig, and it is understood that the Polish Government is to be invited to negotiate with the Danzig Senate the terms under which the new High Commissioner will take office. MR. LESTER, whose position has in recent months been rendered extremely difficult by the National-Socialists of Danzig, has been appointed Deputy Secretary-General of the League. His removal from the Free City has naturally caused regret among the large proportion of the German population which is not National-Socialist, but it was decided that effect should not be given to MR. LESTER'S new appointment until the question of his successor at Danzig had been settled. The three States elected to the Council this year have been New Zealand, Sweden, and Bolivia. Belonging to the informal groups of the Dominions, Scandinavia, and South America, they took the places of Australia, Denmark, and Argentina, and would, conventionally, complete the Council until next September. But certain States remain outside the groups, and have the just grievance that their election is rendered almost impossible by this system. The Assembly has therefore now decided that two more Council seats should be created for a limited period and the number of non-permanent seats should thus be raised to eleven. Latvia seems likely to secure one of the new seats and China (a member of the Asiatic group) the other. Both countries will be welcome additions to the Council, but the representative of Norway was