

APPENDIX

CLOSING SPEECH

*Delivered by the President of the Sixth Assembly (Mr. Dandurand)
On September 26, 1925*

LADIES, GENTLEMEN AND DEAR COLLEAGUES:

Our work is finished. Before vacating the chair, to which I was elected by your votes, I should like first to discharge a duty and, secondly, to attempt to indicate the lessons which this Assembly has taught us.

On behalf of all the delegations I express our thanks to the Swiss Republic and to the canton and city of Geneva. Switzerland has become the home of noble schemes of international pacification. It is in the peace-inspiring atmosphere of this country that have been born the conceptions of universal reconciliation. Animated by the spirit of hospitality, of reason and of discipline, the Swiss democracy offers to us an example of the brotherly union of peoples differing in race, language and religion.

Secondly, our thanks are due to the Secretary-General, Sir Eric Drummond, who, with his wide and rich experience, has controlled the complicated machinery of the League's organizations. I would ask him to convey to all his collaborators, whatever their position, our great appreciation of the value of their daily help.

The many reports submitted to us by the six committees are proof of the breadth of view and the ripe wisdom of those who have helped in preparing them.

We are particularly glad to pay our tribute to the active sympathy extended to us by the press. The Assembly regards the press as an all-important factor in world peace. It has proclaimed in a resolution the necessity of the co-operation of the press in order to prepare for that moral disarmament which must precede material disarmament. In its capacity as a coadjutor of the League of Nations in the work of peace and the creation of a "new conscience" for humanity, the press will be able to spread far and wide such words as will calm passion and mould public opinion.

Several speakers have already observed that this Assembly was not intended to have the appearance or the character of a college of rhetoric. It is not our duty to distribute laurel wreaths or to strew palms before the victors in the lists of oratory. The object of our meeting here is to consider problems which affect the future of the great civilizations and to seek the patient zeal to reconcile the sometimes discordant elements in practical and acceptable solutions.

It has been unjustly asserted that our meetings lacked élat. I am inclined to make a virtue of what was formulated as a criticism: is it not indeed proof of the serious nature of our work? Whether in matters social, financial, economic or political, decisions have been taken, the consequences of which may be far-reaching. In all spheres in which we are competent to act important results have been obtained. Of these I will only say one word.

Through the help given to refugees and the extension of protective measures for women and children, the League has sought to safeguard the rights of the weak and to alleviate the misfortunes of the suffering.

Special mention should be made of the protocol drafted by the Sixth Committee to remove the last traces of slavery. This is an undertaking of real humanitarian value and we hope that it will be welcomed by the Governments concerned.