

PEACE AND INTELLECTUAL CO-OPERATION

THE idea of extending the purview of the League of Nations to 'international intellectual relations' was first launched at the Peace Conference, where it found but little favour. The first official recognition of a movement which **to some** extent originated in the desperate situation of intellectual circles in the early days after the war was obtained in 1921, when the Second Assembly of the League decided to constitute an International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation—a decision which was reinforced in 1924 by the foundation, by the French Government, of an International Institute with headquarters in the *Palais Royal*. The lists of men and women of international repute which the League succeeded in winning for this cause include some of the greatest names of science and art: Einstein, Bergson, Madame Curie, Paul-Valéry, Gilbert Murray, Galsworthy, Felix Weingartner and Bela Bartok, to mention only a few.

The central idea of intellectual co-operation is to promote, in all spheres that come within its range, co-ordination of effort and collaboration capable, not merely of saving time and facilitating information, distribution and progress, but also of encouraging the creation, gradually perhaps—but none the less surely—of an international outlook.

This programme falls naturally into two parts. The first, designed to facilitate study and research, may be described as the perfecting of an international machinery which consists largely in relations between ministries of education, ministries of fine arts, universities, students' associations, institutes of art and history, museums, libraries and record offices. These relations are encouraged and facilitated by special national committees working in direct contact with the central Organization for Intellectual Co-operation. **Much** of the work is aimed primarily at practical objects, **such** as the compiling of international bibliographical indices of specified subjects; exchanges of documents, catalogues and other material; interchanges of professors and students. The first part of the programme, and the second

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—the creation of a spirit of international understanding—are linked together by the work of the Organization in matters of education.

It has so often been repeated that the future of peace depends more than anything on education that it is not surprising to find an Organization of the League of Nations devoting a considerable part of its work to fostering direct contact between departments dealing with education, in order to induce them to compare methods and to handle jointly, and not separately, those questions of general interest which arise to-day for all civilized nations. Among the principal problems which form the subject of special study may be mentioned instruction on the aims and work of the League of Nations, the use of school-books written in a spirit of international understanding, the revision of those containing passages detrimental to such understanding, the use of broadcasting and films in connection with classroom teaching, exchange visits of school-children and the establishment of educational reference centres.

This leads us to the second part of the programme: the ultimate development and the culmination of intellectual co-operation in the service of peace. When, at the beginning of 1932, the Disarmament Conference met at Geneva, it appraised a question whose solution, for the greater part, lies within the province of the Organization for Intellectual Co-operation: moral disarmament as the essential condition and concomitant of military disarmament. To-day, after years of ceaseless grappling with the difficulties of a task beset with unheard-of and unforeseen complications, the only subject upon which the Conference appears to be nearing agreement is a convention prepared by its Moral Disarmament Committee in conjunction with the Organization for Intellectual Co-operation, which may be resumed as follows: Education, at every stage, including the training of teachers, should be so conceived as to promote good understanding and mutual respect between the peoples and to emphasize the importance of international co-operation. Provision should be made for the teaching of the principles of the pacific settlement of disputes

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and the renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy, and for the inclusion of these subjects in entrance examinations for the more important official careers. Government support should be given to the enquiry of the Intellectual Co-operation Organization into the services that the cinematograph, the theatre and broadcasting can render to the cause of peace and international understanding. The performance of plays, the showing of films and the broadcasting of programmes detrimental to friendly international relations should be discouraged or prevented.

In the preamble it is stated ' that moral disarmament is one of the essential aspects of the general work of disarmament ' ; ' that each stage towards the realization of the limitation of armaments implies a parallel effort in the domain of moral disarmament ' ; and ' that the League of Nations possesses in the Intellectual Co-operation Organization an instrument adapted to accomplish certain tasks connected with moral disarmament.'

The events of the past few years go some way to prove that the League is gradually losing its hold upon public opinion. Two great nations—Germany and Japan—have resigned their membership; and a third—Italy—is threatening to do so. A sure sign that in those countries the League no longer enjoys the support of the majority. The Convention on Moral Disarmament shows that it has realized that the younger generation, which holds the keys of the future, must first be taught to acquire a habit of peace.

The political organs of the League of Nations are driven by the ceaseless pressure of events to concentrate upon the present. Hence the provisional and frequently unsatisfactory character of typical League decisions. But the Organization for Intellectual Co-operation and its principal executive, the Institute in the old *Palais-Royal*, are working for the future—that future of civilization and culture upon which peace so largely depends. It is not too much to say that the success or failure of the movement may prove a decisive factor in the fulfilment of the promise held out by the Covenant of the elimination of war from human affairs.

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