

present significance to the movement for the unification of the laws of cheques. The present divergence of legislation has been referred to as creating a condition comparable to a Tower of Babel. This is due perhaps to the comparatively brief period during which cheques have been in general use. If the progress towards complete unification promised by the proposed conventions may appear to some to be very modest, it nevertheless represents a definite advance which should lead to encouragement in view of the magnitude of the task and the number of national legislative prepossessions to be overcome.

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Interest in the Academy of International Law founded in 1923 continues to increase. At the ninth session held in July and August of the present year, more than 400 auditors were inscribed, in spite of the general financial depression which it was believed would lead to a falling off of the attendance. This number has been exceeded only twice during the history of the Academy. Naturally the Netherlands, as formerly, led with the largest number of students (more than 160). Germany, the United States, Poland, France, Italy and Belgium followed in the order mentioned. Altogether 34 countries were represented among the students in attendance. Of the professions represented, that of the law furnished the largest number. Next came functionaries of the diplomatic and consular service, judges and university professors.

Several governments have adopted the practice of encouraging by different means young men of their countries to take advantage of the facilities which the Academy offers in the way of instruction. During the present year the German Government sent to the Academy several councillors of legation and other functionaries. The Governments of Prussia, Baden and Wurttemberg adopted a similar policy. So did the Governments of Poland, Turkey, Lithuania, and Czechoslovakia. The Government of Italy offered two fellowships to Italian students, and since 1924 the Dutch Government has appropriated annually 2000 florins for five fellowships to be awarded by the Curatorium to students of non-Dutch nationality. In addition, the Curatorium itself offers annually five fellowships with a stipend of 400 florins each. Several universities and other institutions have likewise provided for a certain number of fellowships for their students.

At the recent session of the Academy, courses were given by 25 professors representing ten different countries, the subjects dealt with covering a wide range, including public and private international law, criminal law, administrative law, economics, finance, international organization, international jurisprudence, etc. The recently adopted practice of requiring professors to prepare in advance for distribution among the students a summary or synopsis of their lectures with a brief bibliography, has proved

helpful to students who wish to study while in residence at the Hague the questions with which the lectures deal. The complaint regarding the delays which have heretofore elapsed in the publication of the lectures, it is believed will now be removed by a change of publishers for which provision has recently been made.

A new policy has also been adopted in regard to the language in which the lectures are to be given. As is well known, this language has heretofore been exclusively French. Earlier in the year a petition signed by most of the English and American professors who have given lectures at the Academy since its opening in 1923, was presented to the Curatorium requesting that French and English be made the official languages of the Academy. They pointed out that these languages are now on a footing of equality as the languages of the League of Nations and the Permanent Court of International Justice, that the present rule disqualifies a number of English and American professors of high professional standing from lecturing at the Academy, that many students, especially from the countries of Northern Europe and the Orient, understand English better than they do French when poorly spoken by English or American professors, and that the introduction of English along with French as the language of the Academy would probably lead to an increase in the number of students attending the Academy. When the petition came before the Curatorium for consideration a similar claim was advanced on behalf of the German and Italian languages. The Curatorium, apparently feeling that their claim was equally well founded but that if the use of four languages were authorized it would result that certain courses would be attended by only a small group of students, declined to approve the Anglo-American proposal in the form in which it was made. Nevertheless, the Curatorium decided that, while French should continue to be maintained as the principal and official language of the Academy, any professor who is unable to give his lectures in that language may, with the authorization of the Curatorium, use his own language, whether it be English, German or Italian. While this decision constitutes a departure in principle from the old rule, it does not, of course, fully meet the demand of the petitioners that the English language be placed on a footing of equality with French. But the way is now open for exceptions to be made in particular cases, and it is to be hoped that they will be made in order that the use of English at least may be tried out. In our opinion the experiment is well worth making; if it is not successful, it can be abandoned; if it leads to an increase in the usefulness of the Academy, as the petitioners claim it will, it can be continued and extended as experience justifies.

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