

OUR NEIGHBOR'S LEAGUE

Purpose of Paper

THE purpose of this paper is to present material relating to the League, more especially to its present standing and status, that may be of interest and help to a teacher of history.

The League of Nations, which came into being seven years ago, is now an established fact. In considering the status of the League, it should be remembered that the League was formed just after the close of the World War. The period was one of financial and economic disorder, feeling ran high, conditions were critical. Such was the situation when the League held its first Council meeting in March, 1920. This first meeting was of little moment compared to the significant Council meeting of September, 1926. Within this short time the members have organized the League in most branches of international life and have built up a great international system. "The League is closely woven into the constitutional and political life of the world, and there is no quarter of it which has not in some way been concerned."¹ The remarkable growth, the many accomplishments of the League prove that it is not a mere form, but that it is rather "the climax of all politics."² The fifty-six nations send their foremost men to the League meetings, realizing that the League requires first-rate men and first-rate men only. A Council seat has become one of the greatest prizes for a European diplomat to secure.

What the League of Nations Is

The League of Nations is an association of fifty-six sovereign or self-governing states formed "in order to promote international co-operation and to achieve international peace and security."³

¹The League of Nations—a survey—p. 8.

²Kent, Frank R.—League is Viewed as a Megaphone. *Baltimore Sun* (Oct. 23, 1926).

³Sixth Yearbook of League of Nations, p. 137.

Its Origin and Growth

"The League of Nations formally came into being by the official deposit of the ratifications of the treaty of Versailles at the French Foreign office, at Paris, on January 10, 1920, at 4:15 p. m. By that deposit the component parts of the British Empire, France, Italy, Japan, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Czechoslovakia, Guateemala, Panama, Peru, Poland, Siam, and Uruguay became the first members of the League of Nations, including the British self-governing dominions and India."⁴

Beginning with this small membership in January, 1920, the League has gradually grown until it now comprises fifty-six nations. League membership at present embraces the whole organized world with only several exceptions.

Probably a word of explanation is needed regarding "original" membership. "Original members are named in two groups in an annex to the Covenant. The first group acquired membership by ratifying the treaties of peace, in which the text of the Covenant appears. The second group, consisting of neutrals in the World War which were not parties to the treaties of peace, acceded to the Covenant as a separate document, without reservations."⁵ Several of these neutral states acceded to the Covenant in 1919, thus becoming members before the official deposit of the ratifications of the treaty of Versailles.

LEAGUE MEMBERSHIP DECEMBER 15, 1926

<i>State</i>	<i>Member from</i>
Abyssinia.....	Sept. 28, 1923
Albania.....	Dec. 17, 1920
Argentina ⁷	July 18, 1919
Australia.....	Jan. 10, 1920
Austria.....	Dec. 15, 1920
Belgium.....	Jan. 10, 1920
Bolivia.....	Jan. 10, 1920
Brazil ⁸	Jan. 10, 1920

⁴Yearbook of League of Nations, 1925, p. 379.

⁵Yearbook of League of Nations, p. 379.

⁶Membership lists taken from sixth yearbook of League of Nations, p. 142.

⁷Has given notice of withdrawal.

⁸Has given notice of withdrawal.

British Empire.....	Jan. 10, 1920
Bulgaria.....	Dec. 16, 1920
Canada.....	Jan. 10, 1920
Chile.....	Nov. 4, 1919
China.....	July 16, 1920
Colombia.....	Feb. 16, 1920
Costa Rica.....	Dec. 16, 1920
Cuba.....	March 8, 1920
Czechoslovakia.....	Jan. 10, 1920
Denmark.....	March 8, 1920
Dominican Republic.....	Sept. 29, 1924
Esthonia.....	Sept. 22, 1921
Finland.....	Dec. 16, 1920
France.....	Jan. 10, 1920
Germany.....	Sept. 8, 1926
Greece.....	March 30, 1920
Guatemala.....	Jan. 10, 1920
Haiti.....	June 30, 1920
Honduras.....	Nov. 3, 1920
Hungary.....	Sept. 18, 1922
India.....	Jan. 10, 1920
Irish Free State.....	Sept. 10, 1923
Italy.....	Jan. 10, 1920
Japan.....	Jan. 10, 1920
Latvia.....	Sept. 22, 1921
Liberia.....	June 30, 1920
Lithuania.....	Sept. 22, 1921
Luxemburg.....	Dec. 16, 1920
Netherlands.....	March 9, 1920
New Zealand.....	Jan. 10, 1924
Nicaragua.....	April, 1920
Norway.....	March 5, 1920
Panama.....	Jan. 10, 1920
Paraguay.....	Dec. 26, 1919
Persia.....	Nov. 21, 1919
Peru.....	Jan. 10, 1920
Poland.....	Jan. 10, 1920
Portugal.....	April 8, 1920
Rumania.....	April 7, 1920
Salvador.....	March 10, 1920
Serb-Croat-Slovene State.....	Feb. 10, 1920
Siam.....	Jan. 10, 1920
South Africa.....	Jan. 10, 1920
Spain ⁹	Jan. 10, 1920
Sweden.....	March 9, 1920
Switzerland.....	March 8, 1920
Uruguay.....	Jan. 10, 1920
Venezuela.....	March 3, 1920

GOVERNMENTS NOT LEAGUE MEMBERS
DECEMBER 15, 1926

Afghanistan	Russian Soviet Republic
Ecuador	Sultanate of Nejd
Egypt	Turkey
Mexico	United States

Organs of the League

"Action of the League under this Covenant shall be effected through the instrumentality of an Assembly and Council, with a permanent Secretariat."¹⁰

The Assembly consists of representatives from the Member states of the League, each

state having not more than three representatives, and only one vote.

"The Assembly may deal at its meetings with any matter within the sphere of action of the League or affecting the peace of the world."¹¹

Certain specific duties as admission of new Member States, election of non-permanent Council members, and approval of additional members represented on the Council, are Assembly duties.

The Council originally consisted of four permanent Members and four non-permanent Members. The Council has been enlarged so that it now consists of fourteen Members, five permanent and nine non-permanent.

The Council has the same general duties as has the Assembly. In addition it makes plans for armament reduction, acts as a council of meditation, makes recommendations, etc.

The Secretariat is the only permanent feature of the League. This Secretariat is established at Geneva. It may be likened to the civil service of a national government. The personnel of the Secretariat numbers about 465 persons of over thirty nationalities. The work of the Secretariat is extensive. It files all treaties, records, etc. In its organization it is divided into various departments, as the Economic and Financial, Health, Legal, Disarmament sections, etc.

The Covenant pledges all Members of the League to respect and preserve against external aggression the territorial and existing political independence of one another. The Members also agree to submit matters of dispute to arbitration and inquiry and not to resort to war until three months after the award. Any State violating this principle is subject to League action. A state may withdraw from the League by giving two years' notice, provided all inter-

⁹Has given notice of withdrawal.

¹⁰Covenant of League of Nations, Art. 2.

¹¹Covenant of League of Nations, Art. 3

national obligations have been filled at the time of its withdrawal.

The League Up Until 1926

The League has accomplished many things from January, 1920, to January, 1926. First of all it has successfully handled eight controversies in which war was threatened or actually begun. These controversies were (1) between Sweden and Finland over the Aaland Islands, (2) between Poland and Lithuania over the Vilna district, (3) between Albania and Yugo-Slavia over the Albanian boundaries, (4) between Rumania, Yugo-Slavia, and Bulgaria on one hand and Bulgaria on the other over Bulgarian refugees, (5) between Poland and Germany over Upper Silesia, (6) between Italy and Greece over the murder of Italian officers, followed by Italy's invasion of the Ionian Islands, (7) the border clash between Greece and Bulgaria over the invasion of Bulgarian territory, and (8) between Turkey on one side and England and Irak on the other over the Mosul question.

Through the agency of the League 427,386 war prisoners have been returned to their homes, these prisoners being of twenty-six different nationalities.

The League in 1923 created a Greek Refugee Settlement Commission whose purpose was to care for 1,500,000 Russian war refugees, and Greek and Armenian refugees, and to aid these refugees in finding new homes in Greece. The League enabled Greece to secure a \$60,000,000 loan to aid in the settlement of Asiatic refugees.

But not all of the League's work has been along war lines. It has been very active in safeguarding the health of the world. It is particularly interested in checking diseases in the Orient.

One of the outstanding features of the League is its effort to stamp out the opium traffic. It also wishes to stamp out the traffic in women and children and to get rid of all slavery.

One of the most important of the League's creations is the Permanent Court

of International Justice at the Hague. The League has also organized an agency to study and improve the conditions of labor and relations between the employer and the employee. A commission for the promotion of intellectual co-operation has been devised. The Commission of Jurists created in 1924-25 to consider what portions of international law are now susceptible of codification may be of much significance.

The League governs disputed territory, the Saar Valley and Danzig, protects backward peoples, befriends complaining minorities, has published more than a thousand treaties of international significance, and provides world-wide information concerning its activities, etc.

The League Since January, 1926

Brought into being just after the World War, the League was a league of victors. On February 8, 1926, the formal application of Germany for membership was contained in a letter from Germany's minister of foreign affairs, Stresemann. This was in keeping with the Locarno treaties of the preceding fall. The Locarno treaties, which meant so much for European security and peace, were to be effective whenever Germany should gain admission to the League and a Council seat should be bestowed upon her.

In March, 1926, a special session of the Assembly was called to consider Germany's application for membership. At this session the League suffered a loss of prestige because diplomacy and national policies took the place of co-operation and understanding. This session proved to be a free-for-all contest for Council seats.

Germany came to Geneva with the assurance of a permanent seat on the Council. But in the meantime, it was rumored abroad that "the French Foreign office, supported by the British, had intimated to Poland that she should have a permanent seat."¹² France

¹²Germany in the League—*Literary Digest* (September 18, 1926), p. 7.

supported Poland, her ally, to offset Germany. Brazil put forward her claim for a permanent seat. Spain also clamored for permanent representation on the Council. Each state tried to increase its prestige by acquiring Council seats. The old European idea of balance of power threatened to wreck the League.

Sweden, a neutral state, not wishing the Council to be enlarged, offered to resign, thus giving Germany her place on the Council. Germany said no to this proposal. France said Poland must accompany Germany. Spain said that Germany and Spain might come. Brazil said no to everything unless she was assured of a permanent seat.

Nothing could be done under such circumstances. The Assembly was not even consulted about the affair. The difficulty was essentially a Council matter. The Assembly had no relation whatsoever to the crisis. Having accomplished nothing, the Council was forced to adjourn. This crisis in the Council brought forth much criticism and apprehension concerning the stability of the League. The interests of the Great Powers were selfish ones, but the friendship of the neutral states for the League was based on earnest and real foundations.

It was evident that reconstruction would have to take place within the League. The evolution which all state constitutions undergo must attend the League constitution also, if it is to progress toward international order.

A committee representing fifteen nations was appointed to formulate plans for the reorganization of the Council. Public opinion was strongly opposed to the granting of permanent seats to other than Great Powers, as the creation of one seat would only require the creation of more. The Commission on the Reconstruction of the Council met in May. This Commission drew up rules regarding the number and election of non-permanent members. These rules were then brought up at the regular meeting of the Assembly in September.

According to these rules the Council was increased to fourteen members. The non-permanent membership was increased to nine, three being elected each year for a term of three years. A retiring member is ineligible for re-election unless declared eligible by a two-thirds majority of the Assembly. No more than one-third of the members may be re-elected until three years will have expired.

Upon the adoption of these rules, a system of rotation was put into use. The new Council now consists of five permanent members, Italy, Japan, France, England, and Germany, who was admitted September 8, and nine non-permanent members, Chile, Poland, and Rumania elected for three years; China, Colombia, and Holland elected for two years; and Belgium, Czechoslovakia, and Salvador elected for one year. The semi-permanent positions were intended for Spain, Brazil, and Poland. But Brazil had already declared her intention of withdrawal some time before, and Spain gave notice of withdrawal the day before the Assembly voted.

The question now arises as to whether or not the Council will be effective or not because of its size. Some of the advantages are: it is more democratic, the proportion of elected to Great Powers now being nine to five; it increases the authority of small states; it affords greater opportunity for expression of opinion; it affords more universal representation. Some disadvantages, of course, are obvious. The Council is large for close discussion and may not be summoned so readily. Then, too, the prestige of the Council may tend to overshadow the Assembly. But time alone will tell which organization of the Council is the better, the old or the new.

In so far as Spain was concerned two developments complicated the situation. The first was an agreement between Spain's dictator and Italy's dictator that each would support the international aims of the other. The second complication which arose Spain

tried to link up with the Council controversy. Spain wished for Tangier to be added to her Moroccan protectorate.

But the withdrawal of Brazil and Spain is overshadowed by the entrance of Germany into the League of Nations. Germany entered the League September 8, 1926, just exactly twelve years after the battle of the Marne. Germany's entrance makes the League no longer a league of victors. It is rather interesting to note that the Foreign Minister of Jugo-Slavia, "within the frontiers of whose country lies Serajevo, where was lit the spark that set the world aflame twelve years ago,"¹³ presided over the Assembly Session at which Germany was voted a Member of the League.

Germany's entrance means that the Locarno protocol which so much affects the stabilization and peace of Europe has gone into effect. By her entrance much of the prestige lost in March was regained although two countries were lost. A great step was taken toward universality, although Turkey, Russia, and the United States are needed to make this ideal realized.

But with Germany in the League complications arise. Italy is known to be Anti-Teutonic. On February 26 Mussolini made an appeal for the union of all Latin races against the German. He probably fears that Germany will unite with Austria, and then interfere in South Tyrol.

Germany desires to regain one of her colonies or either gain the bestowal of a mandate over some colony. Germany's industrial and commercial interests are insisting upon colonies. If Germany does get a colony, it means her rapid development commercially. Here British interests would conflict. It is for the League to decide this problem, but the question is how. Then, too, the union of German and French coal and iron interests has League significance.

¹³Twelve years after, *League of Nations News* (September, 1926), p. 3.

Germany, by having a permanent seat bestowed upon her on the Council, has now taken her place among the Great Powers. This is certain to create new situations and difficulties in the League conferences.

Abyssinia is creating much discussion in the diplomatic circles of Europe. On July 28 Abyssinia sent a note to Geneva, saying that her independence was being encroached upon, and made an appeal for the preservation of her independence. The note protested against the concession sought by Great Britain for a dam in Northern Abyssinia. Italy also wished to construct a railroad across Eastern Abyssinia to connect two of her colonies. Abyssinia protested against the Italo-Saxo pact, saying that it had put Abyssinia under undue pressure to relinquish its independence. Italian newspapers claim that France urged Abyssinia to make this protest in order to prevent Italian colonial expansion. Italy questions Abyssinian membership in the League. As the social fabric of the country is still based on slavery Italy asks, "Is this compatible with League membership? Should not Abyssinia be placed under a mandatory power until League qualifications are fulfilled?"¹⁴

Italy also complicates the League situation. It is known that Italy maintains a cool attitude toward the League. Several Fascist papers seemed to delight over the turmoil in March. One of them, *Twere*, says, "Italy has long since abandoned all Utopian ideas of peace. Peace can result only from a balance of warring forces." The Spanish-Italian treaty has created much excitement. The terms of this treaty have not been disclosed. But knowing that the two dictators are to support each other in their aims, France and England are especially alarmed. It is feared that Spain and Italy—their dictators, rather—mean to control the Mediterranean and thereby prove men-

¹⁴MacCallum, Elizabeth.—Imperialism Within the League. *News Bulletin* (August 13, 1926), p. 1.

acing to France and British African interests.

The most recent Italian pact is that recently signed by Italy with Albania. The Jugo-Slav cabinet maintains that this treaty marks the beginning of a protectorate by Italy over her Adriatic neighbors. The pact is looked upon as a triumph for Italian diplomacy. It excites suspicion not only in Jugo-Slavia but also in France and other countries as it isolates Jugo-Slavia and allows Italy to have complete control in the Adriatic. League of Nations circles are carefully watching developments, and the slightest move endangering peace will be promptly made a League affair. If action should have to be taken by the Council, it would be a delicate test of its authority.

The powers on the Council have been notified of Turkey's readiness to join the League. Mustapha Kemal Pasha has requested Turkey's admission to membership. This request carries with it no reference to a council seat. Pasha says that with Turkey the Moslem world would be represented.

The League's rejection of the Senate reservations to the United States' adherence to the World Court was the only action taken by the League which directly affected this country.

The League is trying to further disarmament but seems to be having very little success. A General Army Parley is planned for 1928. It seems that the various countries cannot agree upon what constitutes disarmament. Political conditions have so great an influence on armament that the majority of the states cannot agree upon a basis for disarmament.

The League also wishes to hold an International Economic Conference. "But," says *The Survey*, "if the United States should oppose any consideration of inter-allied debts and if the Allies were to object to a consideration of Germany's reparation

obligations, little progress could be made."¹⁵ The work of the Disarmament and Economic Conferences, even though disappointing at first, may "do more to remove the underlying causes of international conflicts" than is realized at present.¹⁶

One of the outstanding accomplishments of the League is the financial reconstruction of Austria and Hungary. Austria was in a state of collapse. The League, acting as a board of guardians, has enabled Austria to recover. Of course her future stability largely depends upon wise supervision, but she now stands upon fairly sound economic conditions. Hungary was also in a state of helplessness. Under League supervision Hungary has recovered so that she can now stand on her feet and may become a strong state, although business conditions are still depressed. Both Austria and Hungary must thank the League for life.

One of the greatest achievements of the year was the settlement of refugees in Bulgaria. This scheme was similar to the one worked out in Greece. As a result of this settlement 120,000 refugees found homes in Bulgaria. This will also tend toward making Bulgaria's position more secure, as these wandering refugees were the cause of much friction between Bulgaria and her neighbors.

The Health, Intellectual, and Welfare work has been steadily progressing.

What of the League's Future?

The League is about to begin a new year in its history. What is that future history to be? Time alone will tell. That the League has really accomplished much cannot be denied. This year which saw the loss of prestige in March also saw Germany become a member, the Council reorganized on a more democratic basis, and plans laid for two great conferences.

But the League's greatest work has not

¹⁵International Sidights. *The Survey* (November 1, 1926), p. 148.

¹⁶*The Seventh Assembly*, p. 3.

been political, but social, scientific, and humanitarian. Herein lies its great weakness and danger. The states which compose it have not been willing to yield ultimate authority to the League. Will conflicting national policies and interests finally destroy the League?

Geneva affords a place where all nations may come together. The close contact there leads to better understanding. With understanding will come friendship and co-operation. To Geneva come not only Assembly and Council Members, but thousands of visitors and reporters of all nationalities.

Another hopeful thing is that the voice of the smallest nation may be heard. Even though the Great Power may control, the small power may be heard and world opinion is quickly focused upon the situation.

With men of unselfish statesmanship, prudence, and resourcefulness in the League, no one need tremble for its future.

The *Koelnische Zeitung* asks, "Is the League a permanent institution? The ideal purpose of the League to insure peace and justice in international relations is rendered almost unattainable by various political reasons. One must not forget that the Members of the League are independent sovereign states, and that national egotism lives in the very essence of every state. There are people who think that the noble spirit of the League of Nations is strong enough to strive with national egotism. Yet, it would be safe to say that this noble spirit, however active, would go up in smoke if it were brought into collision with the selfish national interests of individual nations. There is, therefore, nothing improbable in the supposition that some day the whole League may break up into separate groups of States held together by common interests, as Pan-Europe, the British Empire, Pan-Asia, and Pan-America."¹⁷

The *Irish Statesman* says, "Though one

may be dubious about the League, we still think it should be upheld, because it is the simulacrum of that world League which must come, and just as a tyrannical state is better than anarchy and no state at all, so the existing League, with all its defects, is better than no League. It accustoms statesmen to consider national problems world problems, and just as a tyrannical state may be reformed, so the League may, if upheld, be gradually molded into a true instrument for international justice and peace."¹⁸

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¹⁷What Germany Means to the League. *Literary Digest* (September 25, 1926), p. 16.

¹⁸An Irish View of the League. *Literary Digest* (October 9, 1926), p. 23.

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THEY JUST WON'T TALK!

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

THE characters are: Joe Ellis, a business man of about 35; Mabel, his wife, both of them plump, good-natured, homey people; Mrs. Corey, a neighbor, a woman somewhat past middle age; Miss Spangler, a school teacher; Bobbie, the little son of Joe and Mabel; and George, Mabel's brother, just home from the war.

The time is late fall, a few weeks after the Armistice.

At the opening of the play, the stage is empty. The telephone rings and Mabel hurries in from a door at the left. She wears an apron, and appears to have been called away from some kitchen task. She takes down the receiver:

MABEL: Yes? . . . Oh, yes, Miss Spangler. . . No, he hasn't come yet, but we're expecting him in time for dinner. . . . What's that? . . . You'd like to see him? Of course you would. He always thought so much of you. You were his favorite teacher. . . No, we haven't seen him yet ourselves. He only landed a week ago, you know, and he's been at mother's, resting quietly. But we couldn't wait any longer, so he is coming over today to have dinner with us. . . No, driving, with one of his pals. . . Yes, we can scarcely wait. He'll have so much to tell us. . . Yes, I know that; so many of the boys seem to be that way. . . They don't seem to want to talk about it. But George won't be like that. You know what a talker he always was. I guess you know that all right, in your classes in history especially. Why, when he was just a little chap, he knew all the story of the battle of Gettysburg, all the flank movements and everything; it was just wonderful. . . Yes, we are proud of him, and I guess you as his teacher had a hand in it too. George always said you were a wonderful history teacher. . . Yes, do run in. . . I know he'll want to see you too. . . Good bye.

(As she is hanging up the receiver Bobbie rushes in. He is wearing a soldier hat and carrying a wooden gun.)

BOBBIE: Oh, mamma, mamma. See what Uncle Bill made for me. (Holds out gun.)

MABEL: Why, Bobbie, isn't that lovely.

BOBBIE (putting gun to shoulder): Bang! Bang! Bang! That's the way it goes, mamma. That's the way to shoot the heinies down.

MABEL (indulgently): Heinies! Where did you pick that up?

BOBBIE: In school. We played a game . . . (a tap at the door, left, and Mrs. Cory looks in.)

MRS. CORY: May I come in? Has the hero arrived?