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THE HUMANITARIAN ACTIVITIES OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

(Address given on April 12th, 1927, by Dame Rachel Crowdy, Chief of the Opium and Social Questions Section of the League of Nations.)

It is some years since the League established itself as a political entity in the world, but in those years it has not neglected the basis of its high adventure. The people who drew up the Covenant of the League showed great vision when they included social and humanitarian questions among its responsibilities. Those people who gave voice in Part XIII of the Treaty of Versailles to the sentiment that social unrest in any one country is a fruitful source of discord in all showed vision also. You may disarm the world, you may reduce your troops or abolish your battleships, but unless you introduce better economic conditions, better social conditions and better health conditions into the world, you will not be able to maintain peace even if you obtain it.

During the last six years the League has gone steadily ahead in its social work, so much so that much of the work of a temporary nature resulting from post-War conditions has been completed. You have all heard of this work, and I will not, therefore, tell you of the details, except that I should like to remind you of the fact that the four hundred thousand prisoners who were in Siberia in 1920 are now all back in their homes, and that the typhus in Poland, which was so extraordinarily bad in 1920, has assumed normal proportions. There is always a certain amount of typhus in Poland. Of the Russian refugees flung into Europe by the War and the Revolution, many are now settled in life with a part of their problems solved. As to the rescue of the Armenian women and children who were carried away in the fighting in the Near East, the work of the Commission concerned stops at the end of this year because, in the words of the Commissioner, Miss Jeppe, all those who can be saved will be rescued by then.

Then, again, the Health work of the League goes on very steadily. There is the Bureau at Singapore which tells the world of the condition as to epidemics in the Eastern ports; the five or six Health Committees which are sitting to study and make suggestions for the elimination of certain diseases—the Cancer
Commission, the Tuberculosis Commission, the Plague sub-
Committee, the Malaria Commission, the International Sleeping
Sickness Commission, and others.

Then, as a result of the Committees on Slavery, we have a
Convention—not a perfect Convention, but the best thing of
its kind which we could get at the time—for the abolition of
slavery, which will, we hope, at least put a stop to slavery in its
most acute form in the seventeen countries where it was still in
existence a year ago. Those are the problems with which it has
been possible for the League to deal.

I now wish to speak of two problems which are to my mind
among the most difficult with which the League deals—one the
suppression of the traffic in opium, and the other the suppression
of the traffic in women and children. I believe you had a very
detailed discussion one evening on the opium traffic, and I would,
therefore, only like to touch rather quickly on that traffic and to
tell you of progress as I see it. I mention this particularly,
because, when coming back from America six months ago, an
earnest American came up to me on the boat and said, "I am
extremely interested in the League and I am going to Geneva
now. I wonder if you would mind telling me this before I get
there: Is it true that the opium situation is infinitely worse
since the League first took it in hand?" Then I began to put
my own house in order, to go over the difficulties with which the
League had had to contend and to summarise progress.

In 1919, as far as opium was concerned, there was throughout
the world (with the exception, perhaps, of America) a thoroughly
unawakened public opinion; in other words, public opinion
really did not exist. Yet to-day one never takes up a newspaper
without seeing that some national opium committee has been set
up, that some big seizure has been made or that some country is
proposing to make a small or a large sacrifice, as the case may be,
for the limitation of her production or the control of her manu-
facture. That is progress. I am not speaking only of the space
given to the subject of opium suppression in the British Press, I
am speaking of the French Press and the American Press and of
the Press in the countries not particularly concerned with the
problem.

Then, again, in 1919 only a few countries had ratified the
Hague Convention of 1912. To-day we have, as full parties to
the Convention, fifty-six States, fifty of whom are Members of
the League. That again, surely, spells progress.
In 1919, there was throughout the world an enormous illicit traffic in opium (as there is now), but that illicit traffic was generally known only to the countries in which it took place—for example, where the seizure was made. There was no system whereby all countries were informed of all seizures. Now, as the result of a suggestion, made I am glad to say by the British representative three years ago, there is a system by which every seizure made by any country is reported to the Secretariat of the League, is circulated with all details to every State Member of the League and every party to the Hague Opium Convention. The name of the ship that carried the drug, the name of the forwarding agent, the name of the manufacturer, the name of the country of origin, and every detail we can have, including of course the name of any individual caught in connection with the seizure, is given. In the first year that that suggestion was made, from the fifty-four or fifty-five Members of the League only fifty seizures were reported. Everybody was afraid and practically nothing came to us. In the second year about two hundred seizures were reported, and in recent months many hundreds of seizures have been reported to the League and circulated in detail.

Of course, those of us who were at the Opium Conference two and a half years ago hoped for very great things. We hoped for 150 per cent. of progress and we got 50 per cent. Perhaps 50 is putting it rather high. We got 30 per cent., but surely even 30 per cent. is progress. Many of us had hoped that there would be a limitation of raw material to the amount required for medical and scientific purposes. Many of us had hoped that there would be a very much stricter control of factories, and many of us felt at the end of the Conference that we had failed, perhaps, to get all that we might have got. No immediate policy was adopted for the limitation of the production of raw material, yet since that Conference sat, two things have occurred which would have seemed absolutely impossible to us at the time. Firstly, India has recently undertaken to reduce her export of opium for smoking by ten per cent. every year until, ten years from now, that export will cease altogether. That means a very much larger sacrifice than most people realise. One only hopes that it may mean a diminution of import in the case of the countries that India used to supply, and that she will not have made her sacrifice for nothing.

Secondly, during the Council meeting in Geneva a few weeks ago, what seemed to me to be an amazing offer was made by the Persian Government. Recently a League of Nations Com-
mittee of Enquiry, consisting of three experts, went to Persia to advise the Persian Government as to possible substitution of crops. They came back and they made their Report. That Report was sent to the Persian Government for its observations, and, as a result, the Persian Government has presented certain proposals to the Council in writing. It proposes to submit to its Parliament a suggestion for a ten per cent. reduction of production, beginning three years from now and lasting for three years; Persia, at the end of those three years, will reconsider the position in the light of what other producing and manufacturing countries are doing. Then, again, the Government proposes to give priority of State loan to any person substituting some other crop for opium, and they propose to exempt from taxation for a certain period of years any person who will grow a crop in substitution for opium.

I should like to speak rather specially on the Report of the experts on the extent of the traffic in women and children, because the Press of every country has been full of it during the last three weeks, and the Report has, I am told, established a League record for sales. It was made available to the public only a few weeks ago, yet already five thousand copies have been issued and another edition is being prepared.

The history of the enquiry is this. For four years a Committee to advise the Council on how best to prevent the traffic in women and children sat in Geneva. Various suggestions were made. Then a practical American woman, Miss Grace Abbott, the head of the Child Labour Bureau in Washington, said—"We have discussed this for four years. Do we really know that the traffic exists at all? Why should not we send an expert enquiry to the countries where we think traffic exists, and put ourselves in a position to be able to tell the world once and for all whether this traffic exists only in the mind of the crusader or whether it is a reality?" As the result of her proposal the Council nominated a Commission; a certain sum of money was given by the Bureau of Social Hygiene in America; and the experts met to consider how best to tackle the problem, which was not an easy one. They could, of course, have gone to Governments only and obtained information from them. They could have gone to voluntary organisations only and benefited by their experience. But they wanted something more than that. That had been done in the past. They realised that the only possible thing was to go right down into the underworld, if they could get there, and to find out
the truth for themselves. They were lucky enough to get hold of eight or ten very courageous and very resourceful men and women, and for the last three years those people have been working as part of the underworld. Their conclusions are founded on fact. What the experts have said in their Report they have substantiated.

The first question of all—Does such a traffic exist?—they have answered emphatically by saying—"Yes, we find that there is a traffic in women from one country to another for the purpose of commercialised prostitution." They based their conclusions mainly on two reasons: (1) in many of the houses of ill fame, particularly in the houses in Central America and in South America, they found that seventy or eighty per cent. of the women inscribed there were foreign (I am sorry to say that they also found that some houses had as inmates frightened and bewildered children); (2) because the investigators, when they consulted various underworld people as to how the girls got there (remember always that they themselves were working as members of the underworld) always heard the same thing—"No girl will come by herself; she may be living a bad life in her own country, but she will not come on her own initiative. She does not know the language. Very often she has neither intelligence nor energy. She will not come unless somebody else provides the organisation." I quote one particular instance where a man made six journeys between Europe and South America in one year, taking girls with him every time. On the strength of these two facts, the experts state very definitely that they find such a traffic exists.

Then the experts wanted to find out whether any co-operation existed among the people in this business—whether there was what one might call a ring with a super-trafficker sitting at the head making profits out of a big organisation. The answer is that they found nothing of the kind, but they did find what they describe, grimly, as a "universal camaraderie." Every person knew every other person in the same trade, and each would always do a good turn for a neighbour. If a man was taking some girls out for himself he would bring another for somebody else, who would do the same thing for him next time. That they found again and again. They found the same people working together, the same men and the same women, but they found no definite "ring."

Then they asked themselves what really encouraged the traffic, because, after all, if you are going to trade in such a supply
there must be a definite demand. One answer to that question was that the demand for foreign women was created mostly because—and it is a natural and psychological reason—people would not ask of women of their own country the kind of thing that they would ask of foreign women. A girl out of her own country has no freedom and no friends, or is unlikely to have friends and is very unlikely to have freedom. She does not know to whom to go for help. Many girls have never heard of consuls. Therefore the foreign woman is wanted instead of the woman of the country.

There were definite demands also. The writer of the article in The Nation about a fortnight ago said it seemed to him that the nature of the demand as spoken of in the Report pronounced almost a death sentence on civilisation. Wherever troops were sent or wherever ships put into port, there, the traffickers said openly, they rushed a large number of foreign women because they knew that there would be a sure demand. Further, in those countries where there are very many more men than women the trafficker felt that he would always have a ready market to hand.

The experts were faced with one particularly difficult problem; they realised before they had been at work for many months that the system which, above all others, created and contributed to a permanent market was the system of the licensed house which exists still in so many countries. Of the eight experts, the countries of only two, I think, had abolished that system. A great deal therefore depended upon the strength of the reports sent to the experts by the investigators. Unless facts were given which proved a case up to the hilt against registration and the system of licensed houses, certain of the experts would not have found it possible to sign the Report. That the facts did speak for themselves is shown by the fact that we had a unanimous Report, in which the system of licensed houses is referred to as "fraught with danger from the point of view of the international traffic."

I do not want to give the impression for one moment that all these girls in the traffic were women who would have led wise or sensible lives in their own countries. They would not. Quite frankly, I suppose sixty or seventy per cent. of the women in the international traffic were people who in their own countries were prostitutes, but again and again they said the same thing—had they known the conditions to which they were going and the life to which they were going they would never have gone. This
is also proved very largely by what the souteneurs themselves said. I remember two conversations, both connected with girls who were prostitutes in their own country. The first was a case where the trafficker said to an investigator of ours—"We had to send her home at the end of three years. She starved rather than listen to reason." The other case seems to me more pathetic still: "She fought the life at first, but she listened to reason rather than starve, and now she is happy."

Though I say sixty or seventy per cent. of them might have lived the same kind of life in their own countries, we came across several other types. First of all, there was the rather silly young girl who had never led a life of commercialised prostitution in her own country, but could easily be attracted by offers of things that meant much to her—jewellery, a certain amount of money, theatres and that sort of thing. They were easy victims. Again (and these were specially pathetic cases) there were the small variety artistes. These, I think, of all people, have been the most "put upon" class, for in certain cases the regulations of countries not only do not protect them in any way, but seem actually to operate in such a manner as to favour an international traffic. I am thinking at the moment of the laws of one country, which seem to me to be almost past belief. Under this law any girl who goes out as a small variety artiste to small cafés and dancing places (although according to her original intention she may be going only for dancing or singing), on arriving in the country is obliged to register as a prostitute, whether she is one or not.

Then, take the type of contract that is given to some of the girls. We came across a contract between the head of a dancing establishment and a girl of seventeen which was almost unbelievable. The girl was to be paid four shillings a day, she was to supply her own meals, which she had to eat and pay for at the establishment, she was to dress herself, she was to provide a new entertainment every week, she was to pay a thousand francs, which is about £40, if she broke her contract, and the management could dismiss her at any moment for any one of a dozen reasons. The experts felt that while that type of contract is allowed, we are always liable to run the risk of forcing girls into the international traffic.

The experts prepared their Report in the coldest possible manner, quite intentionally shorn, as the article in The Nation says, of all picturesque indignation. They felt that the facts were so strong in themselves that the less sentiment and the less
emotion put into the Report the stronger would be its effect, and I think that they were right in that. Public opinion has really been awakened. Not only has this been shown in the Press recently, but I know it in Geneva from letters that we are now getting. We are getting progress everywhere. The question of educating the young in such matters is becoming more and more important in the different countries. Since the War, studies have been made which were never made before. Recreation, which plays an important part in the life of young men and young women and of the adolescent, is taking a more and more important place in the world; the nations—and we can judge in Geneva—are beginning to examine their laws with something like an international as well as a national conscience, and the voluntary organisations engaged in suppressing the traffic are at last being given the support they have merited but not always received in the past. I have three or four examples in my mind of progress made in different countries during the last three years. In 1924 one of our investigators went to Cuba. I have never forgotten his terrible report of conditions there. Six months ago he went to Cuba again. He went to the trafficker who had originally given him his introduction and said—"Will you give me another introduction to some of your people in Cuba." (I may say here, en passant, that sometimes our investigators travelled disguised as souteneurs with introductions given to them by souteneurs.) The man said—"I will if you want it, but I do not recommend that you should go there. In the last two years they have stiffened up their laws. They have expelled or are expelling their undesirable. The police are down on everyone whom they suspect; in fact, a man cannot make an honest living!"

Japan furnishes an interesting example. She has, perhaps, made more progress in social matters in the last three years than any other member of the League, and has put into effect several reforms of interest. Two days before I left Geneva a Japanese official came to my office and told me that he was just going to the Legal Department to withdraw the reservation made in 1921 to the White Slave Traffic Convention with regard to the age limit. Under that Convention the age limit is twenty-one; the Japanese said that they would sign the Convention but they could not possibly accept any age limit over fourteen or fifteen. On the same day another Japanese official brought to me a draft law for the complete abolition of all registration and all State regulation in Japan by the year 1933, which is to be submitted to the Japanese Parliament this spring. Meanwhile it is proposed to
register no more houses. That law is a very amazing thing when one thinks of the tradition behind Japan's system of regulation. There was a clause at the end of the law, to the effect that the owners of the houses which were still in existence in 1933 would be compensated on compulsory retirement. That seems to me very just, because you surely cannot tolerate something in your country for years and then suddenly turn upon people, who are carrying out what you have allowed, and treat them as criminals.

One other example of progress is that Japan has just raised her marriage age to sixteen, and Turkey has raised her marriage age to fifteen for boys and girls. That is not at all a bad example to certain European countries, who retain the marriage age of twelve, comforting themselves with the reflection that marriages at such an age very seldom take place, quite forgetting the effect their example may have on smaller or less civilised countries.

What are the remedies for the present state of affairs? First and foremost the experts, and I am sure that they were right, place an enlightened public opinion. If public opinion realised that in certain countries in Europe the child of ten is only protected by law from assault if it can be proved that she was previously chaste, if it realised that women are rushed like medical stores to the scene of a disaster when fleets come into port, if it realised that right in the heart of Europe civilised States are allowing the registration of frightened and bewildered children in licensed brothels, that girls are really starving to death rather than "listen to reason," and that contracts such as the contract I have mentioned are being given to girls, I cannot believe for one second that it would tolerate what is happening.

The experts put forward, as a most important remedy, the education of the young in a better understanding of their moral responsibilities. They felt that if only the young could be made to realise their responsibility they would think twice in regard to some of the follies that are committed. Last of all there should be greater co-operation between Governments than there is at present. Agencies for foreign employment should be more strictly supervised. The age of marriage should be raised in the countries where it is low, and the age of consent should be made sufficiently high to give proper protection to the young. Above all, the Report concludes, it behoves those Governments, which place reliance on the old system of preventing the spread of venereal disease by licensing prostitution, to examine the question
thoroughly in the light of the latest medical knowledge and to consider the possibility of abandoning a system which is fraught with such dangers from the point of view of the international traffic.

Rachel E. Crowdy.

Record of Discussion following the above address:

Colonel J. C. Somerville, speaking as one who had had ten years experience in Japan, referred to the cages in Tokio in which highly dressed, painted girls sat for passers-by to talk to, the girls being exposed like meat in a butcher's shop. He was delighted to hear what Dame Rachel had said about the abolition of such things. He would like to know what action the Japanese Government was taking with regard to geisha houses. He considered these a danger as, though "geisha" simply meant "professional entertainer," and accurately described the girls, they were indentured to the keeper of the house, and it was only a question of paying him a big enough price.

Dame Rachel Crowdy replied that in the draft law to which she had referred there was no mention of geisha houses. It was of interest that Japan was the only country in the East that had actually asked that the expert enquirers should be sent to advise her as to how best to alter the system prevailing there.

Mr. C. G. Hancock asked whether, in the event of maisons tolérées being abolished, there would be any sort of supervision of women suffering from venereal disease. When he was in Cologne with the Army of Occupation after the war, he happened to discuss the question with some of the Catholic officials, and what they said was—"These maisons tolérées are better as they are, because we can supervise the women." That was the opinion of Catholic officials, who looked at the matter entirely from the moral point of view. The point was one which he hoped the officials of the League would deal with in their final Report.

Dame Rachel Crowdy replied that the Committee of Experts had made no recommendation with regard to the matter, but the Advisory Committee was considering the question of the future of the expelled prostitutes.

Miss L. F. Nettlefold asked whether it was true, as she had been told on very good authority, that in Germany there was a traffic in children who were deliberately crippled and then used for commercialised begging purposes.

Dame Rachel Crowdy said that the investigators had found nothing of the kind. There was nothing about it in any of the reports which she had seen.
Dame Millicent Fawcett asked if England was not one of the countries which was still very much at fault in that she legalised the marriage of girls at twelve years of age. On her first visit to Palestine a few years ago, she stayed in a house in which there was a young girl of sixteen years of age, a servant, who had already had four dead children. Lately she had been to Palestine again and, in another house, she had seen a mere child who had been condemned to a long term of imprisonment for murdering her husband. Was not this country responsible to a large extent for encouraging that state of things so long as it kept the marriage age at twelve?

Dame Rachel Crowdy felt it impossible, as the servant of an international body, to criticise any one country. It was true that the marriage age in England was amongst the lowest.

Dame Edith Lyttelton referred to the importance of dealing with the trafficker, who was making the profit. That matter was, of course, intimately bound up with the question of the punishment accorded by the different Governments. She was particularly interested in the sentences which were passed for assaults on children and the use of children. They were shamefully low. She had come across the case of a woman who some years ago had used her own child of seven to satisfy the morbid cravings of her clients. The child had been sent to the Lock Hospital. The woman was only given a sentence of three months. In the future the fight would have to be waged more strongly against the third party and the vicious than against the victims.

Dame Rachel Crowdy said that the Report and the material from which the Report was made showed that there was very inefficient punishment of the third party in most countries. The experts laid stress on that, and the Advisory Committee would also lay great stress on it.

Miss Muriel Currey asked three questions. The first one was in reference to the opium problem. The Italian representative on the Opium Commission made a very strong plea for the holding of a fresh conference. She wondered whether Dame Rachel could say whether such a conference was likely to be held. In the second place, could Dame Rachel say whether Sir Malcolm Delevigne’s suggestion about the enquiry to be made into the sources of drugs in which there was an illicit traffic was likely to receive support? Thirdly, was Dame Rachel hopeful that the second half of the Report on the traffic in women and children was likely to be published when it had been considered by the Governments, and was the matter one which would be pressed by the delegates in the forthcoming Assembly?

Dame Rachel Crowdy said that there might be an extraordinary meeting of the Opium Committee to consider further aspects of the opium problem, but it would be a mild affair compared with what the Italian representative had suggested. She thought that almost cer-
tainly an enquiry into the sources of illicit drug traffic would be made sooner or later, and she suspected sooner. As to the publication of the second half of the Report on the traffic in women and children, she considered that the fact that the part published was called the first part implied the publication of the second when the Governments concerned had made their comments.

Mr. Wyndham A. Bewes thought that it was right in such a meeting to take stock and look forward, but he was able to look back for some years, and his feeling was that he did not want to forget those who had led in the hard fight. Going back to 1885, when the Criminal Law Amendment Act was passed, he would like to say that Mr. Stead was a brave man. It was from that time that organised efforts to suppress the international traffic in women and children took their rise. Almost immediately upon the passing of the Act the National Vigilance Association was formed in this country. It was fortunate from the first in having as its Secretary and its wise adviser, almost its factotum, William Alexander Coote, who a few years ago passed to his honoured rest, followed, he was sorry to say, a fortnight ago by Miss Annie Baker, his invaluable helper and afterwards successor, who at the Geneva Conferences on the subject had had a very great deal to do in guiding the operations of the Bureau over which Dame Rachel presided. Mr. Coote, in addition, was Secretary of the International Bureau for the suppression of the White Slave Traffic, which in close co-operation with the National Vigilance Association did the international work in connection with which two International Conventions were passed in Paris, one in 1904 and one in 1910. Those Conventions were expressly directed to the suppression of the international traffic in women and children.

Coming to the opium traffic, he should never forget his friend J. G. Alexander, who for many years acted as Secretary and virtual director of the operations of the Anti-Opium Society in England. That Society gained its greatest triumph when the Anti-Opium Convention was signed by a number of nations on January 23, 1912. In a sense that Convention was not so successful as was expected. The Anti-Opium Society thought that their work was done; and perhaps because they were tired, perhaps because they were too sanguine, the Society was dissolved. The work was not done. One was happy to know that the League of Nations was likely by its organisation to carry to greater perfection the agitation in connection with the opium traffic and the traffic in women and children, which had, in each instance, been originated in England and carried on mainly from England.

Dame Rachel Crowdy was sure that all those who had worked on the subject would realise the extraordinary pioneer work that had been done. She had had personal experience of the work of Miss Annie

1 Since supplemented by the Convention of September 30, 1921, framed under the auspices of the League of Nations.
Baker during the last seven years. Miss Baker had had a great influence not only in past days but during the last few years in her work with the League. Again and again she had gone to Miss Baker for advice, and again and again she had received wise advice from her. In her death the League lost a great supporter, and she personally had lost a most wise adviser and friend.

Mr. H. Wilson Harris said that Dame Rachel Crowdy had laid before the meeting a vast amount of interesting and important information. The humanitarian activities of the League occupied a special and important part in its life, and they had a certain very definite effect in securing for the League a support which might otherwise not be forthcoming. There were people in this country and, he supposed, in all countries, to whom the ordinary political work of the League made no very great appeal. They were interested, no doubt, in hearing that a dispute which might or, on the other hand, might not, have led to a war had been settled; but when it could be shown that the League was actually affecting the lives of men and women it made a great appeal to a certain type of person. That was true not only in this country and in other countries, but it was true geographically of parts of the world which were not as definitely affected by the League's main work as was the continent of Europe.

Dame Rachel had spoken about the activities of the Health Organisation of the League, and she had touched on the work of the Epidemics Bureau at Singapore. That Bureau was enabling the League to carry knowledge of itself, so to speak, into the continent of Asia, where knowledge of the League was not very great at the present time. At the last Assembly the native prince who came from India spoke with particular appreciation of the value of that special work to India in signalling information as to epidemics in Far Eastern ports that might be carried westwards to India and other countries.

The conference which was to be held in a month or two in South America on the subject of infant mortality was expected to impress the existence and the activity of the League upon the people in that continent very much more than would the political activities of the League in the Balkans and other parts of Europe. The humanitarian work of the League might have a much larger part to play in the life of the League than some perhaps had altogether appreciated.

No one could fail to have been struck by the almost poignant, but he thought, quite unconscious cynicism of the sentence with which Dame Rachel introduced her address. She said that she was going to speak of the traffic in opium and the traffic in women and children. Opium, women; supply, demand,—exactly the same in both cases and to be treated in the same way by international co-operation. Her address had led the audience into paths which were not altogether familiar to them as members of the Institute, but paths which, he thought, it had been very profitable for them to tread.

The question was an international question. In so far as it was

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being dealt with by the League of Nations it was, he supposed, a political one; but it was in its essence a moral one. He thought there was ground for some satisfaction in the fact that the League of Nations should be taking up moral questions of the kind. It was satisfactory to know that the section of the Report devoted to Great Britain placed her in a more satisfactory light than certain other countries in the continent of Europe.

He supposed that the real question was, what was going to be the result of the arresting disclosure made in Part I of the Report on the white slave traffic? It was desirable that the original intention in the enquiry should be carried out and that those engaged in the work should not be content with the knowledge of the conditions in Europe and in Central and South America. After all, there were other parts of the world where the evils existed and where this country, in particular, was concerned with their existence. He would be glad if Dame Rachel would say whether there was reasonable hope of the enquiry being extended to the continent of Asia. There were obvious difficulties as long as China remained in its present state but, at any rate, there was Japan and there was India. Japan had already invited the League to prosecute its enquiries in that country. It could hardly be supposed that where Japan came forward India would hang back. Africa, he imagined, so far as the central part of it was concerned, was hardly a fruitful field for enquiry at the present time.

Mrs. Swanwick said that once or twice in the address the phrase "frightened and bewildered children" had been used. It had struck her as being applicable not only to children but to a certain number of so-called adults who were affected by the traffic. The question of the education of the young in matters of sex had been raised. She wished that she could see a development of education amongst the old and middle-aged in the matter, so that they would no longer drive down to degradation those who had offended against their code. Judge Ben Lindsay of Denver in a recent book had shown how, when the young were made to think themselves degraded, they were degraded. Then they became material for this traffic. The publicity that the League could give was its strongest point. In her opinion publicity was more important in many ways than sanctions. In promoting morality, publicity and the scientific understanding of life were vastly more effective than punishment. She added that there was one famous pioneer in the work who should not be forgotten—Josephine Butler.

Dame Katherine Furse wished to associate herself with everything which Mr. Wilson Harris had said with regard to the humanitarian work of the League and its appeal to people in all countries. Speaking a great deal, as she did, to girls and to young women in the Guide Movement, she realised how extraordinarily difficult it was to interest them in the political side of the League, but the moment one began to talk about the humanitarian work of the League one had a
response which was quite amazing, and she thought that the more that could be dwelt upon the better it would be.

She would like to refer to the question of the education of children in regard to the white slave traffic and all such matters. She was not thinking only of biological education, which perhaps was used merely as a screen for other forms of education, and she was not thinking of telling children of tender age or young girls, or even young boys, many of the things which their parents would probably wish them not to hear; but she was thinking of bringing them up all through their lives to understand and appreciate the perfectly simple gifts which had been given to them, how to use them for the betterment of the race, and how to save them and economise in them for the safety of other people. She thought that if the League could do something to find out what countries were thinking about those questions, what they were proposing to do, and the best means of approach, it would fill a very real gap in education in nearly all countries. She had been surprised to find that the Latin countries very strongly supported biological education. She hoped that the League would try to find out what was being done to give the young a real understanding of how their actions affected others. There should be education in social ethics with a certain amount of biological education behind it.

Lady Astor stated that the moment women police were sent out to Cologne the figures of venereal disease fell enormously. Women police were being dispensed with in England to an alarming extent—it had happened in forty boroughs. The moment that the women police began to see too much, Watch Committees found reasons for getting rid of them.

Would it not be a practical step to press for the raising of the marriage age in England, not only for the sake of England but for the sake of setting an example to other countries? She thought that the League of Nations would be helped in its work if the marriage age in this country were raised and the number of women police were increased.

Mr. R. H. Herford drew attention to the influence of climate. Temperature had a good deal to do with the prevalence of the evil in different parts of the world. It was more difficult to eradicate it in hot climates than in cold.

The Chairman, the Duchess of Atholl, M.P., thought that no one could read the published part of the Report without being very deeply stirred by it. It unfolded a hideous tale. She gathered from a question recently asked in the House of Commons that there was some idea that still further horrors were contained in the unpublished part of the Report. It was only right that people should know that practically the whole tone and tenor of Part II was to be found in Part I.

As to publication, she understood that Part II had been sent to the various Governments in order that they might verify the figures con-
tained in it. It dealt in detail and specifically with each country, whereas in Part I a veil was sometimes drawn over the country alluded to. It was only natural that the Government should be asked to give their consent to the publication of information concerning their countries and should be given the opportunity of verifying figures.

She endorsed what Dame Rachel had said about the skill with which the investigation had been conducted. The courage of these men and women investigators, and their knowledge of foreign conditions and languages, had enabled them to penetrate into the heart of the underworld and gain the confidence of the members of it in many different countries. There was a great debt of gratitude due to the American Bureau of Social Hygiene, whose generosity had made the investigation possible.

The results of the investigation made one realise the debt that was owing to the pioneer workers, and it was most appropriate that the Report had seen the light in the year in which the centenary of the birth of Josephine Butler was to be celebrated.

It was very satisfactory to find that, as a result of the fact that there were no licensed houses in this country and as a result also of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885, in all the accounts given of the passage of the unfortunate girls and women from one country to another there was very little mention of British women. There was reason to believe that British women and girls hardly ever formed part of the traffic.

Emphasis, however, was laid in the Report on the dangers attending girls who took theatrical touring engagements abroad. In 1913 an Act was passed in this country which required any girl under sixteen who was going abroad to a theatrical engagement to obtain a special licence from a magistrate in this country. One was glad to know that in Paris there was an admirably conducted hostel founded and maintained by British residents there. Recently an Act had been passed which aimed at dealing with the bogus theatrical manager who left girls stranded in this country without money. That was very often the prelude to a life of prostitution. There was reason for thankfulness that steps had been taken for the protection of British girls and women from the dangers which might be involved if they were drawn into touring companies going abroad.

Dame Millicent Fawcett seemed to think that the marriage age was an important factor in the question. She (the speaker) did not know that importance was attached in the Report to the age of marriage, but the contraction of bogus marriages was mentioned as a very fertile source of the traffic. She understood the concern which had been expressed with regard to the marriage age for girls in this country being no higher than twelve. The question had been under consideration for some time and was still being considered. The reason alleged for the retention of an age so young was that it was regarded as a means of restoring to a respectable life a young girl of, say, thirteen or fourteen, who had been assaulted by a man. It was thought by some to be in the
interest of girls to keep the marriage age low for that reason. Whether it was really in their interest was a question with regard to which there might be difference of view. Mercifully, the number of marriages below the age of sixteen was very small in this country.

Mr. Hancock had asked a question about an alternative policy to the system of licensed houses. The fears which he had expressed had, she believed, been genuinely entertained by many in this country who valued public health when licensed houses were first abolished here. They had felt that the change was not in the interest of public health, however much it might be in the interest of morality. The figures, however, which had been published in recent years showed a marked diminution in the disease since the abolition. Solicitation laws no doubt had contributed to this result, and she believed that the system of free treatment had proved very beneficial. She thought that what had been found to be the case in this country would be found elsewhere.

As to what could be done to help, for many years she had felt that there had been a grave lack in the guidance given to young people in regard to one of the most vital matters of life, a subject which was more difficult and which more profoundly influenced life than anything else.

There should be put before young people ideals with regard to marriage and relationships generally with the other sex. It was amazing, in view of all the time and thought devoted to the education of boys and girls and the trouble that was taken to explain to them the temptations of drink and the virtues of thrift, that there should be left out, in nine cases out of ten, any guidance upon such an all-important matter. She was happy to think that the Advisory Committee of the League was discussing the subject, and no doubt any recommendation from them would bring grist to the mill of those in this country who were interested in the question, though it was a matter which each country had to decide for itself. There was a hopeful note in the Report in the assurance which the investigators evidently felt that education and wholesome recreation might help young people from taking the first false step into terrible danger.

No one could read the Report without a sense of horror at what unhappy girls and women had to endure or without a profound sense of sadness and of shame that countries known as Christian should in any way harbour people who could live on their earnings. It must not be forgotten, however, that the greatest demand for those unhappy girls came from countries which one was not accustomed to regard as in the van of civilisation.

The Report had a special message for anyone who had any responsibility in connection with the education of young people in this country.