loquacious Pigafetta break silence concerning the personality whom he obviously loved so well.

Remembering that bloodstained beach, he cannot restrain himself, but breaks off his narrative to address himself directly to his patron, the famous Grand Master of Rhodes, Villiers de l'Isle-Adam: —

He died: but I hope your illustrious Highness will not allow his memory to be lost, so much the more since I see revived in you the virtue of so great a captain, since one of his principal virtues was constancy in the most adverse fortune. In the midst of the sea he was able to endure hunger better than we. Most versed in nautical charts, he knew better than any other the art of navigation, of which it is a certain proof that he knew by his genius and his intrepidity without anyone having given him the example how to attempt the circuit of the globe which he had almost completed.

Many men have had a worse epitaph: few men have deserved a better.

THE THIRD LEAGUE ASSEMBLY

BY ROBERT DELL

From the *New Statesman, October* 7
(LIBERAL LABOR WEEKLY)

THE third session of the Assembly of the League of Nations has been even more tedious than its predecessors. Its monotony was relieved only by the sittings of the Disarmament Committee, where M. Henri de Jouvenel gave several oratorical performances, sometimes, but not always, in the best French manner. The passages between him and Lord Robert Cecil were amusing studies in comparative psychology. It struck me from the first that Lord Robert Cecil thought M. de Jouvenel to be much more in agreement with him than he really was, — oratory is a deceptive art, — but the illusion, if illusion there was, can hardly have survived M. de Jouvenel's speech in the Assembly.

During the war I was sitting one afternoon in a tribune of the Chamber of Deputies listening to a speech by M. Briand, who was Prime Minister at the time. It was a wonderful speech from the artistic point of view, with just the right amount of pathos, just the due proportion of patriotic fervor, a quaver in the voice at just the appropriate moments, and now and again a furtive tear. When the speech was over, a very eminent man who was sitting next to me turned to me and said: 'If I did n't know him, I should almost believe him to be sincere.'

I hope I am not unjust, but I could not help feeling rather like that whenever I listened to M. de Jouvenel. I admit that I am prejudiced against oratory. The passion for it seems to me about as healthy as the drug habit, and its effects have been more pernicious than those of opium or cocaine.

It is only just to say that there has been very little oratory in the strict sense of that term during the session of the Assembly. The fact that the great majority of delegates cannot use their native language makes oratorical display impossible for most of them. English-speaking delegates, by the way, are under a great disadvantage from the fact that English is little understood in the Assembly. Excellent as are the interpreters of the League, — in some cases their interpretations were a good deal better than the original speeches, — a translation can never convey quite the same impression as the original. That is particularly true of English speakers, who are, as a rule, more subtle than most and deal in suggestions and half-phrases. In a speech of that kind so much depends on the tone of the speaker which no interpreter can reproduce.

Lord Balfour's speeches, for example, lose terribly in translation; but perhaps no speech lost as much as that of Mr. Fisher in the disarmament debate in the Assembly. Its quiet irony almost entirely disappeared, and I am convinced that few of the delegates have understood to this day that what Mr. Fisher intended to convey was that England will have nothing to do with the sort of pact of mutual guarantee desired by M. de Jouvenel, and that no pact of guarantee can be efficacious until 'the divisions existing during the war' are forgotten and the European nations are no longer divided into categories.

The need for an auxiliary international language is a crying one, and until it has been supplied neither the League of Nations nor any other international organization can do its work well. The alternatives are Esperanto or the choice of some existing language to be taught as a second language in every country, for I fear that it is hopeless to think of Latin. I am intensely prejudiced against Esperanto; but if, as seems too probable, the nations of the world will never agree to choose the language of one of them, Esperanto it must be, and the sooner the better. It has the advantage of being very easy both to speak and to understand, — I heard a speech in Esperanto the other day and understood quite half of it, — and my Oriental friends tell me that they find it much more easy to learn than any existing European language.

The Assembly has referred the question to the Committee on Intellectual Coöperation, so that it 'may give its opinion on the various aspects of the problem of an international language.' Next year that Committee will have an opportunity of laying some practical proposal before the Assembly. It is to be hoped that it will take it. The Covenant of the League does not give the Assembly much to do; but here is a question in regard to which it might really do something. It will be a long time before all the nations in the League agree on this matter. The view of France, for instance, about an international language is 'French or nothing.' But if a considerable number of countries could agree on a secondary language to be universally taught, the others would eventually be obliged to fall into line.

Besides Esperanto the Assembly has dealt with the opium trade, the traffic in women and children, obscene publications, and other matters subsidiary to the main purposes of the League of Nations. Since it is not allowed to deal with those main purposes, at least directly, it is natural that it should seek some outlet for its activity; but its activity in these directions needs watching. The mentality that regards police regulations as a panacea for all moral ills is represented in the Assembly; and Governments are only too ready to make new police regulations which, especially when they are international, may be used for other than their original purposes.

For example, the question of obscene publications, about which the Assembly has asked the French Government to call an international conference to draw up the text of a new convention, is not quite simple. The term 'obscene publications' has to be defined, and, as M. Bellegarde, the delegate of Haiti, pointed out not without a certain malice, it is being defined in the United States of America in a way that has startling consequences.

The Assembly has repudiated any intention of interfering with the liberty of genuine artists and men of letters; but here again definition is involved, and the question is a delicate one to be left to the judgment of a policeman or a magistrate. The taste for publications that are obscene and nothing else is, after all, restricted to a very few people, who will probably succeed in gratifying it somehow, regulations or no regulations. I wonder whether it very much matters.

Even proposed international regulations against what is called the traffic in women and children — about the existence of which, at any rate on any considerable scale, some of the most competent authorities in these matters are skeptical — are fraught with dangers. We learned that at the conference last year, when the Canadian representative proposed that no woman of any age should be allowed to embark on any vessel, unless accompanied by her father, mother, or husband, without the permission of the authorities of the country to which she proposed to go. The proposal was not adopted by the conference, but it is sufficiently disquieting that any Government should have made it.

The worst of police regulations in such matters is that, whereas they cause great annoyance to the innocent public, those against whom they are aimed usually succeed in evading them. I am told by those who should know that, in spite of the stringent passport regulations during the war, the wrong people generally got through. I cannot agree with Mrs. Coombe Tennant that the League of Nations should become a 'league of mothers,' or even of grandmothers, apart from the obvious physical obstacles to such a transformation.

The Maharajah Jam Sahib of Nawanagar, otherwise 'Ranji,' showed the Assembly that there was another side even to the opium question. Opium, he said, was to Indians what wine, beer, tea, and coffee were to Europeans, — how wily of him to mention tea and coffee, — and, whereas Europeans needed stimulants, Asiatics needed sedatives. He suggested, most politely, that perhaps after all Indians knew what suited them better than other people. The suggestion is worth consideration.

I suppose that, like Lacordaire and unlike most Liberals, I am an 'impenitent Liberal.' At any rate, I always wonder why in such matters as these so few people think of trying the simple solution of liberty. On the whole, it really works better than any other, and is open to fewer objections. So far as I can gather, there is no control of the 'drink traffic' in Geneva of any sort. At any rate, anybody seems to be able to sell drinks of every kind, and the number of places where they can be bought for consumption on or off the premises would shock a temperance advocate. Yet there is much less drunkenness than in England.

Post hoc is not *propter hoc*, of course; but, if Geneva followed the example of England and made the sale of alcoholic drinks the monopoly of a few individuals, I think it more likely that drunkenness would increase than that it would diminish. At present nobody in Geneva thinks it wicked to drink wine or beer or even spirits, with the result that there is no added attraction.

This Assembly has done one good thing, or rather abstained from doing a bad one. It has adjourned *sine die* the amendments proposed — and very nearly carried — last year to Article 18, requiring the registration and publication of all treaties and international engagements. The amendments would have destroyed the effect of the Article. Any new Government coming into power in a country belonging to the League now knows that it is not merely its right, but its duty, to repudiate any secret treaty or engagement that its predecessors may have made. The first Government that acts on that knowledge will do a service to Europe.

The Assembly is also to be congratulated on not having elected Serbia — or the 'Serb-Croat-Slovene Kingdom' — on the Council, and on having elected Sweden and reëlected China. The Scandinavian countries are all good Europeans, and China is the most pacific country in the world. Moreover, Asia is entitled to two representatives on the Council, especially since the other Asiatic countries, rightly or wrongly, do not consider Japan to be a representative Asiatic Power.

Although the ballot for the election of nonpermanent members of the Council is secret, the fifteen voters for Serbia are mostly known. They included, I think, — besides, of course, the three countries of the Little Entente and Poland, — France, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, half-a-dozen States of Central or South America, and possibly Japan. The European majority on the other side was therefore very large — there were forty-six voters — and included England, Italy, Austria, Hungary, Holland, Bulgaria, Albania, the Scandinavian countries, Finland, and the Baltic States. The result is indirectly due to Poland, for Polish opposition led M. Bénès to withdraw the candidature of Czechoslovakia, which would almost certainly have been successful.

The practical results of the Assembly, like that of its predecessors, are of course meagre, indeed almost nonexistent; but that will always be the case until the constitution of the League is altered. The Covenant vests nearly all power in the Council. Many people have told me that there was a better spirit in the Assembly than last year or the year before. Perhaps more delegates than before had begun to be alive to the fact that the state of Europe is really serious, and that something ought to be done; but, with few exceptions, the delegates to the League of Nations are not overcourageous. And Italy, which at the two previous Assemblies showed a genuine international temper, seems to have gone back and returned to 'sacred egoism.' This is no doubt, partly at least, the result of the Near Eastern policy of the British Government.

Mr. Lloyd George, by the way, did well not to come to Geneva. What little prestige his previous blunders and failures had left him in Europe has now vanished, and his appearance in the character of the Angel of Peace would not have gone down. So far as I could gather, his Near Eastern policy had hardly a single sympathizer, except perhaps to a certain extent in the ranks of the Little Entente and among the Greeks, although the latter have no reason to thank him for having first enticed them to destruction and then thrown them over, just as he threw over the Poles after having forbidden them to make peace and forced them to go on fighting against their will.

Distrust of Mr. Lloyd George was tolerably widespread at Genoa; at Geneva it has become almost universal. He threatened to isolate France; he has isolated England, but not permanently, for happily it is generally recognized on the Continent that Mr. George and his Cabinet no longer represent the country.

Optimist views about the temper of the Assembly are principally based on the acceptance of Lord Robert Cecil's scheme for the reduction of armaments. One is loath to belittle that scheme. Lord Robert Cecil's courage, sincerity, and indefatigable energy need no praise from me. They deserve success, but it does not, unfortunately, follow that they will obtain it. The almost despairing note in the peroration of his speech in the disarmament debate showed that he himself knows that. But Lord Robert Cecil, perhaps on account of his sincerity, is no match for the wiles of a Jouvenel, and he accepted for the sake of a purely external agreement suggestions that diminished the value of his scheme.

For instance, the recommendation that military expenditure should be reduced to the level of 1913, allowing for the difference in values, was an ingenious move on the part of M. de Jouvenel. French military expenditure was higher in 1913 than it had ever been before, and the effect of the recommendation is that France will not have to reduce her expenditure at all. Moreover, reduction of military expenditure, though excellent in itself for financial reasons, is not the same thing as reduction of armaments. In 1913, the huge French conscript army of five or six million men cost £50,000,000, and the tiny British army cost £35,000,000.

A conscript army is always far cheaper than one raised by voluntary recruitment, and a navy is always more expensive than an army. The test of sincerity in the matter of reducing armaments is willingness to abolish conscription. When the Allies disarmed Germany, the first condition they made was that Germany should not have conscription. There is no other way of disarming, and if the other nations are really prepared to disarm they will impose on themselves the conditions that the Allies imposed on Germany. Reduction of expenditure is no valid criterion.

With regard to the proposed treaty of mutual guarantee, I am inclined to share the doubts of the Scandinavians. If all countries reduced their armaments in the same proportion, their relative positions would be unaltered, and the necessity of such a pact is not evident. In any case it is only too evident that, as Mr. Fisher hinted, M. de Jouvenel's idea of the pact is not at all the same as that of Lord Robert Cecil. What M. de Jouvenel wants, in fact, is simply an alliance against Germany and Russia, with a mere vague undertaking to reduce armaments as its condition.

I should like to think that the temper of official France has changed, but M. de Jouvenel's speech in the disarmament debate makes any such illusion impossible. If, as has been said, M. de Jouvenel was speaking only for French consumption, that may make possible a more optimistic view about his own spirit, but it has the opposite consequence in regard to that of his fellow countrymen. It was a bad speech in every way, bad in form and in substance — the speech at once of a chauvinist and a *cabotin*.

Perhaps even more significant was M. de Jouvenel's almost insulting rejoinder on the Disarmaments Committee to M. Motta's suggestion that Germany ought to be in the League. Not one member of the Committee — not even Lord Robert Cecil — ventured to stand up for M. Motta.

It is idle, in these circumstances, to tell the German Government, as Lord Robert Cecil has lately told it, that it ought to apply for admission to the League. If it be true — and I believe it is — that the large majority of the members of the League would welcome an application from Germany, it was their business to say so publicly in the Assembly.

Turkey, after having torn up the Treaty of Sèvres and made war in defiance of it, gets a formal invitation from the Allies to join the League, and France, who has signed that invitation, says that Germany cannot be admitted because she has not yet fulfilled her Treaty obligations. I do not object in the least to the invitation to Turkey, but Germany may reasonably await a similar invitation. For two years she has been kept out of the League because the other nations weakly submitted to the threats of the French Government. It is now evident that without Germany the League is and must be paralyzed, but it will not do to try to put the blame, as Lord Robert Cecil has tried to put it, on the German Government.

A NATURALIST IN MANCHURIA

BY ARTHUR DE CARLE SOWERBY, F.R.G.S., F.Z.S.

[*The author is a well-known naturalist who was born in China, his parents being British missionaries there. He was educated in England, and has done field work in Canada as well as in China, where he has been associated with many exploring and collecting expeditions under the auspices of the United States National Museum and the British Museum. He is the author of two books:* Fur and Feather in North China, *and* A Sportsman's Miscellany. *A third volume,* A Naturalist in Manchuria, *will be published shortly.*]

From the *North China Herald, September 2*
(Shanghai British Weekly)

It does not appear to be generally known that Manchuria is not merely a land of fertile plains and hills, but contains wide stretches of magnificent forests. Indeed, to me the very name Manchuria is associated with forests, though I have frequently heard people say that they did not know there were any such things in the country. This appears to be due to the fact that so many authors of books about the land of the Manchus have confined their travels and remarks to the narrow strip that is traversed by the easternmost section of the Trans-Siberian Railway. Even if they have traveled down the Sungari River, or up the Amur, they do not seem to have realized that back of the flat lands that form the river-beds almost the whole of the country is, or was till quite recently, covered with dense growths of pine, birch, or oak.

Though the name Manchuria is restricted to-day to the three provinces, Fengtien, Kirin, and Heilungkiang, I prefer to use it in its older and wider sense, when it included Amur and Primorskaya, which formed part of the country conquered by the founder of the Manchu dynasty and was subsequently annexed by the Russians. Amur and Primorskaya have been fairly well explored by naturalists working for the Imperial Academy of Science at Petrograd, but the rest of the