

NOTES.

ON A SECRET MEETING OF THE COUNCIL, HELD AT 4 p.m. ON JULY 4th,
1923.

All the representatives of the Members of the Council and
the Secretary-General were present.

SLAVERY

M. BRANTING read a report which he proposed to submit to the
Council.

The report contained a suggestion that the Abyssinian
Government should be invited to attend the Assembly in order to
give information on the subject of slavery.

M. Branting said that he would be glad to have the
views of the various Governments on this proposal.

The PRESIDENT said that he was not authorised by his
Government to accept the proposal that Abyssinia should be
invited to attend the Assembly. The Italian Government would
be unable to agree to such a suggestion, though it was prepared
to support any measure for the suppression of slavery.

M. HANOTAUX said that, in view of Italian interests in
that part of the world, the Council seemed to have no choice
but to respect the declaration of the President and to modify
the report accordingly.

M. BRANTING formally proposed to delete from the report
the passage referring to the invitation to Abyssinia.

Lord Robert CECIL, expressing his gratitude to the French
Government for the remarkable report ^{which it} had presented to the
Council on the question of slavery, asked the President
whether any means could be found to obtain the assistance of
the Abyssinian Government in the work which had been under-
taken. Would it be possible for the Secretariat to communicate

with the Abyssinian Government?

The PRESIDENT said that such a procedure was practicable, but he would prefer that it should not be explicitly recommended in the report.

M. BRANTING suggested that the report might contain a general conclusion to the effect that the Council would continue to keep itself informed on the subject and would endeavour to use its influence in all possible ways for the suppression of slavery.

The SECRETARY GENERAL said that he could not communicate with the Abyssinian Government unless he had the express authority of the Council.

He enquired what kind of report the Council proposed to present to the Assembly. Was it suggested that only the reports of the Governments should be communicated to the Assembly.

He pointed out that in the report of the French Government which, under this arrangement, would be presented to the Assembly, the proposal to invite Abyssinia was included.

The PRESIDENT pointed out that the proposal was not included in the report. It was merely a suggestion contained in the covering letter. The report would be sent to the Assembly without the covering letter.

Lord Robert CECIL suggested that the report should conclude with a statement that the work of investigation was not complete and that it was for the Assembly to decide on the action to be taken. The Secretariat might be requested to continue its efforts to secure information on the subject and authorised to extend its enquiries to the Governments of countries not Members of the League.

The proposal of Lord Robert Cecil was adopted.