MAX HUBER

THE RED CROSS

Principles and Problems

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President of the International Red Cross Committee

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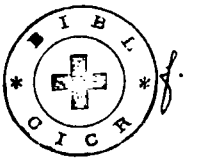

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INTRODUCTION

If, despite his twelve years' Presidency of the International Red Cross Committee, the name of Max Huber is still comparatively unfamiliar to the general public, it is because he is no friend of personal publicity. His desire to efface himself behind his work, to give his services to the movement he represents a character almost of anonymity, is in itself an expression of his view of the Red Cross mission in the world. It is one form of that disinterestedness upon which he insists so urgently on all occasions, excluding all thought of recompense, or even of personal recognition. In this, as in all other things, he is the first to practise what he preaches.

The articles and addresses here collected not only elucidate basic principles and problems of the most widespread humanitarian institution in the service of mankind; they also reveal, through the impress unconsciously stamped upon them by their author, a personality exemplifying the specific Red Cross virtues in an eminent degree, the servant par excellence of a cause that has always exacted much of its adherents, but never more than at this time. With the present World War now in its third year, the

Red Cross is already one of the last remaining bonds between the nations in conflict, and the head of the International Committee thus finds himself invested with a task of immense responsibility.

A member of an old Zürich family, Max Huber was born on the 28th December 1874. He completed his university studies at an early age, and as a young Doctor of Laws, set out on a voyage round the world. It lasted some years, and took him to Russia and the Far East, Australia and the North American Continent, sharpening his naturally acute insight into international questions which even then interested him particularly. His ease in acquiring knowledge, and his remarkable faculty for retaining a vast variety of impressions and sifting and studying them thoroughly afterwards, made his travels a valuable experience for his later life. But what determined his career and shaped its illustrious and laborious course from stage to stage, was the profound sense of justice which is perhaps his outstanding moral quality. With the unusual concordance of intellect and spirit that are his, no one was ever better fitted than Max Huber for the life-work of his choice.

That work began, as was right and proper, in his own country, before leading to long periods of residence abroad. Rising from the teaching of law to the dispensing of justice in international tribunals, it has culminated in a leading part in a work which at all times directly furthers amity among nations, but becomes, when they are severed by world crises, perhaps the last link between them — the Red Cross.

At the age of twenty-eight, Max Huber was

appointed Professor of Political Science and International Law in the University of Zürich. Far from absorbing him entirely, his academic labours were always combined with public services in many capacities; as member of the legislative assembly of his native canton, Colonel and Judge of the highest Swiss Military Court, as legal counsel to the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs, and as delegate on numerous diplomatic missions. In 1907 he represented Switzerland at the second Peace Conference at The Hague. This first international mission was followed by his nomination, four times renewed, as Swiss representative at the League of Nations and at the Disarmament Conference of 1932-1934.

But the actual beginning of his international career had been in 1922, when he was elected Judge of The Hague Permanent Court of International Justice, of which he was President from 1925 to 1927, and Vice-President during the three following years. Since 1923 he has been a member of the Permanent Court of Arbitration, and until 1940 was also a member of fifteen Permanent Commissions established under the terms of treaties of Conciliation between the States of different continents. Several of these commissions were presided by Professor Huber. Among his most notable individual contributions to international arbitration are the Report on Moroccan Questions, which he drew up at the request of Great Britain and Spain, and the arbitral award in the Palmas Case between the U.S.A. and the Netherlands. Among his published works on legal subjects, the one that has received the widest notice is his "*Soziologische Grundlagen des Völkerrechts*" (Sociological Founda-

tions of International Law), which broke new ground in this field.

As time went on all these activities, and others unconnected with laws and legislations, attracted ever wider notice, and brought inevitable honours. Universities conferred upon Professor Huber the degree of Doctor honoris causa — (he is thus Dr. Phil. of Geneva, LL.D. of Edinburgh, Dr. Jur. of Upsala, Dr. Theol. of Zürich)—and academies and learned societies elected him to honorary membership.

In 1928 the death of Gustav Ador deprived the International Red Cross Committee of a President whose exceptional merits had rendered him all but irreplaceable. That Max Huber was willing to assume the charge left vacant was an unhoped-for stroke of fortune, especially as it would mean sacrificing his activity at The Hague Court after the expiration of his nine years' term as Judge. Hitherto it had been possible to combine a variety of offices at home and abroad, but the exigences of the International Committee's presidency would no longer allow of long and frequent absences from Switzerland.

It was not only the expert in international affairs, the renowned jurist, who now placed his great knowledge and experience at the disposal of the Geneva institution; it was also the Swiss, very representative of a certain class of his countrymen, and especially of his fellow-townsmen in his cool judgment and clear-sightedness, his modesty and energy; the born head of a humanitarian work, severe towards himself, kindly and indulgent towards others, generous in recognition of those who serve the work in inconspicuous ways; and lastly the Christian, devoted

heart and soul to the good cause, and ready to give all to it, not counting the cost.

No sketch, however superficial, could omit to emphasize this last aspect of Max Huber's personality, for it is at once the mainspring of his thought and action, and the explanation of his great personal influence. His lifelong preoccupation with the problem of Christian principles and witness in public, especially political, life has enriched his country's literature by many noble pages in the form of essays and published discourses, some of which have been translated into other languages. These works are characterised by the high moral courage that refuses to take the easy way out, or to distribute comforting assurances which obscure the difficulties of these problems, than which none have a more immediate bearing upon the present hour.

The reader will not look for sequence in the detached exposés here collected, dealing with a number of different subjects, and covering the whole period of Professor Huber's presidency of the International Committee up to the outbreak of the present war. They have, however, a close inner connection in that they seek to capture and convey the Red Cross spirit in all its aspects. Their special quality lies in the way in which abstract idea and practical experience interpenetrate each other at every point.

Taken together, these utterances of the Committee's President may stand as a programme; they are also the first attempt yet made to initiate the general public into Red Cross principles and problems, and to make known the complexity and diversity of the

tasks which the International Red Cross Committee, at once universal and essentially, peculiarly Swiss, assumes or contemplates.

The Red Cross numbers twenty million adult, and as many junior, members in all the countries of the globe, yet its inner workings, and the deep significance of what it stands for, are too little understood. In presenting this book at a moment when war has once more brought the movement into the greatest prominence, the International Committee feel that they are responding to a longfelt wish to know more about its policy and purposes. In the spirit of Red Cross tradition, which is to serve in time of need, they therefore now make these writings and addresses of Max Huber accessible to all.

Martin Bodmer,
Member of the International Red Cross Committee.

HENRY DUNANT

1828 — 8 mai 1928 [1]

The Red Cross is the name and emblem of a great labour of love and mutual aid, in which all nations have been brought together. Originally intended, and still existing chiefly, to succour the sick and wounded in war, regardless of the side on which they fought, the Red Cross embodies the idea of brotherly help, systematic, truly neutral, remote from national, religious and social differences, voluntarily enlisted in the struggle against human suffering.

There is no scale by which to make comparative estimates of the power and effectiveness of spiritual or moral endeavours. But one may safely say that the Red Cross, both as an idea and as an organisation, is among the constructive forces in the world today, one of the unifying elements in our age of conflicts and divisions. We have good reason to keep this heritage intact, and to remember with gratitude those who created the Red Cross and made it what it is.

In the front rank of these stands Henry Dunant. With his personality and achievements the history

[1] Article published in the "Neue Zürcher Zeitung", May 8, 1928, on the occasion of the centenary of Dunant's birth.

of the Red Cross institution and the Geneva Convention are inseparably associated. But for Dunant's experience at Solferino, but for his sense of kinship with all men and his ardent spirit, but for the genius with which he instinctively grasped both the national and international implications of the Red Cross, the movement would never have come into being, or at any rate would hardly have been built upon so solid and productive a foundation. Like all things truly great, the idea of the Red Cross is simple to the point of obviousness. But long-prevailing egoism had so atrophied the sense of responsibility that nobody saw, when wars broke out, that to help the victims like brothers, whether friend or enemy, was a duty binding upon all. Dunant, however, realised this profoundly with his mind and heart, and proclaimed it with the inspired fervour of a prophet. That is his inextinguishable merit.

Dunant was a scion of that old Geneva whose descendants still bear the stamp of Calvin's Reformation. They see things gravely, and feel that religious and moral ideas must be expressed in personal life, and in ample and varied philanthropic works which they have a natural gift for conceiving on a large scale. These tendencies in Dunant derived their special character from the deep piety with which a Christian mother had endowed him, and which, through many changes of fortune, remained the mainspring of his thought and actions as long as he lived.

The turning-point in Dunant's life was his visit to the battlefield of Solferino on the 24th June 1859 and the days that followed. After the engagement, forty thousand wounded were left behind on a comparatively small space of ground; in the church of Castiglione he found five hundred French and Austrian

wounded soldiers packed together without any medical help to speak of, without care or comfort. Their misery was indescribable. The more closely Dunant considered it, the more the ghastly plight of the wounded overwhelmed his soul, more even than the horrors of the battlefield strewn with dead.

That shattering experience awakened in Dunant's mind the immediate urge to act. A civilian, a foreigner, no doctor, uninvited and unprepared, with only the most primitive means at his disposal, he flung himself into the organisation of a voluntary relief service formed of the local womenfolk and odd tourists who, like himself, chanced to find themselves in the battle zone. Nor was that all; he achieved the impossible by making all those people understand that their aid was due impartially to friend and foe. At his instance, Austrian doctors, prisoners of war, were exempted from treatment as prisoners and employed in the field hospitals. Bethinking himself of his excellent connections, he approached civilian and military persons of importance with stirring, vehement letters begging their support. But no one saw more clearly than he how all but useless such improvised aid must ever remain beside the wounded men's immeasurable misery.

In 1862 Dunant published " A Memory of Solferino ". The little book made history. It records, with an impressive lack of all dramatic emphasis, the events of the battle and the personal impressions of the author and his helpers. Going through many editions, and translated into many languages, gradually the book found its way to a wide public, arousing interest in the care of soldiers wounded in the field wherever it went.

But Dunant led the way with practical postulates as well: Firstly, that societies be formed in peace time to

organise the aid and train the personnel to be offered to the military medical services—these are the Red Cross Societies which today overspread the world. Secondly, that the societies be employed in time of peace wherever epidemics or natural disasters might call for relief. In recent years especially, work of this kind has won particular prestige for the Red Cross. And thirdly, that all these activities be given international recognition — this is the inviolability of the Red Cross organisations in war, first made effective by the Geneva Convention of 1864.

Where Dunant shone was in giving ideas, and winning influential people and public opinion for them. Where fortune served him was in immediately placing in his path like-minded friends — his own compatriots — who helped him to bring his visions to reality. Gustave Moynier, the President of the Geneva Public Welfare Society, at once espoused Dunant's cause, and under the presidency of General Dufour, the *Comité International de Secours aux Blessés*, composed of representative Genevese was founded, the predecessor of the International Committee in Geneva as it is today.

During the years 1863 and '64, Dunant was the indefatigable missionary of his idea, carrying it before courts and governments and the world at large. To such effect that as early as 1863 it was possible to hold a congress at which experts from sixteen States assembled, and laid down the principles of the Red Cross organisation, essentially as Dunant meant it to be. And in 1864, also in Geneva, a congress of diplomats met at the invitation of the Swiss Federal Council, the outcome of which was the so-called Geneva Convention of August 22nd, 1864 for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armies in the Field. This international treaty,

ratified sooner or later by all countries, establishes the principle of the neutralisation of military ambulances and hospitals, recognises and protects voluntary aid to the wounded, and proclaims the axiom of identical treatment for wounded and sick combatants on both sides. In honour of Switzerland the distinctive heraldic emblem adopted for the personnel and establishments placed under the Convention's ægis was the red cross in a white field, obtained by reversing the Federal colours. The treaty, considerably enlarged and improved at another congress held in Geneva in 1906, was extended at the Hague Peace Conference to the circumstances of war at sea. It was the first agreement ever entered into by all governments with a view to imposing humanitarian limitations upon war, and the first general international agreement ever to place a specifically wartime work of charity under the protection of international law. The Geneva Convention marks an epoch in the history of mankind and of international law.

Dunant did not stop at this success. All through the Franco-Prussian war he laboured for the observance of the Geneva Convention; during the Paris Commune he carried the idea of neutral help for the first time into the field of civil war as well. Untrammelled by the original intentions of the Red Cross, — here too outdistancing his contemporaries — he tried to obtain a regulation of procedure with regard to prisoners of war. He wanted to see the idea of international solidarity given practical expression in cases of natural disasters, and expanded finally into a world-league for social order. The theory of international arbitration, striking at the root of war's horrors by attacking war itself, had no more ardent champion than he.

But all these latter attempts were going too fast

and too far. They were moreover darkened by the gathering cloud of Dunant's financial collapse. A banker by profession, he had helped to float companies which failed, and ruined him. In 1867 he left Geneva, cutting himself off entirely from friends and collaborators. A few years later he had vanished completely, to lead a beggarly existence far from home. Long afterwards we find him living with kindly folk in remote Appenzell.

With the 'Nineties, his horizon began to brighten once again. The Red Cross movement, grown out of knowledge in the thirty years since its foundation, remembered its founder, Dunant, to whom his due of honour had not yet been paid. Material help was forthcoming; he was awarded the Nobel Prize. In 1910, he passed peacefully away in the hospital at Heiden.

Dunant's life was not without tragedy: for a season it was vouchsafed him to realise his genius to the full, to see his idea come to life and cover him with glory. All the keener must have been his sorrow in eclipse, during the long years of darkness after his forward-rushing, visionary spirit had caused him to lose his footing on the solid earth of commercial and political success. Magnificent in all his ways, when poverty and misunderstanding fell upon him he wrapped himself in silent dignity and became a wanderer, and with the same dignity received the second fame that came to him in his old age.

No country has more reason than Switzerland to hold Henry Dunant in grateful remembrance. Not only because she may be justly proud to count this benefactor of manking among her citizens, but also because both he and his collaborators brought the work of the Red Cross into close and permanent association with Switzerland and Geneva. Thanks

to a kind Providence, Switzerland has not yet had to experience in her own soldiers what the Geneva Convention and the Red Cross voluntary relief work mean. But like the other neutral nations, she has been called upon to give Samaritan service without stint. The war of 1914/18 confronted the Red Cross not only with an unprecedented increase in the range of its original tasks, but with new tasks altogether that carried it far beyond its early function of caring for the wounded and sick: information concerning prisoners of war, and dead and missing soldiers; repatriation of civilians evacuated from the war zones, and much besides. But also in its own specific field, the war brought new and wider duties, such as the exchange of mutilated soldiers, and the internment of prisoners of war requiring medical treatment in other climates.

Both in diplomatic negotiations and in the organisation of these new tasks, the Swiss Federal Government rendered notable services, as did the Geneva International Committee with Gustave Ador at its head, and the Swiss Red Cross under Colonel Bohny.

Had not well organised Red Cross institutions existed in our country and elsewaere, these high and arduous obligations, despite their urgency, could never have been fulfilled. But an essential factor in their accomplishment was also the moral authority and the power of persuasion which the Red Cross wields all the world over. In belligerent countries, eventual opposition to the expansion of international relief work dissolves at their touch, and neutrals realise without discussion that such work is a self-evident duty incumbent upon them.

For Switzerland the task was great, and if she was able to assume it, it was because of her neutrality in the war. But the fact that she proved equal to

it was, in turn, one of the reasons — and perhaps not the least — why that neutrality could be maintained during those four years. Peculiarly fitted for this rôle both by her geographical position and her place in the history of the Red Cross, Switzerland could later on request and obtain an exceptional status within the League of Nations.

The Red Cross, if it is to act usefully in wartime or on other occasions of emergency, must also be active in time of peace. It must keep itself alive in the nations' consciousness, and of this necessity the Red Cross organisations have been well aware. When, after 1918, the idea of outlawing war came to the fore, and the League of Nations was to ensure and enforce the maintenance of peace, the peacetime work of the Red Cross came in for added interest. Thus, at American instigation, the League of Red Cross Societies was inaugurated with a two-fold aim in view. On the one hand the improvement of public health, the combatting of disease and the spreading of instruction in hygiene; on the other the creation of a service for disaster relief. This great and admirable undertaking in no way prejudices the older, traditional function of the Red Cross, which is to furnish neutral aid in the external and internal wars of nations; indeed, this original mission is inherent in the more recent one.

To see in the pacification of the world by the rule of justice the supreme goal of all politics, and to work towards that goal with energy and confidence, does not mean that we should shut our eyes to the fact that the recourse to violence has not yet been made impossible, human instincts being what they are, demoniac and nature-bound still. This being so, we must still stand ready to help when need arises, so that, in the midst of wilful havoc, the red

cross in the white field may continue to bear aloft the symbol of fraternity.

Henry Dunant himself saw clearly that the task of the Red Cross would always be a dual one: succour for the victims of war, and repudiation of war itself. We can best honour his memory by acting in his spirit, and therewith a duty devolves upon the Swiss nation and its authorities worthy of their noblest efforts.

THE RED CROSS AND THE RECENT DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL LAW[1]

Like every other historical phenomenon, the Red Cross can only be correctly judged in its originality and significance as a legal and cultural institution by considering it together with kindred institutions and ideas, their nature and development. I shall here attempt to show the place belonging to the Red Cross in international law, as this has evolved in modern times. For the purpose of this rapid sketch —for it cannot be more—I shall take the term Red Cross to mean the Geneva Convention of 1864 with its complementary agreements, the work performed by the national societies which arose out of those treaties, and the international organisations of the movement.

Whilst the Red Cross is not exclusively a conception and achievement of international law, still the institution has its root in an international treaty and was created as a result of an essentially international circumstance; to wit, war. Furthermore, in connection with the governments' attempts to deal with this tragic circumstance of war by means of a system of accords in international law, the Red Cross marks a

[1] Article published in the " Revue internationale de la Croix-Rouge ", No. 121, 1929, and in " Blätter das Deutschen Roten Kreuzes ", January 1929.

notable stage in that evolution in which it has been one of the main elements.

At the base of international law, as it emerged out of the Middle Ages and continued to be all through the rise of modern sovereign States and down to very recent times, was the conception of co-existent Powers, absolutely independent of one another. Doubtless their recognition that a kind of law existed, implicit in the general admission of juridical principles and explicit in treaties, constituted a certain bond between them, but in the absence of any common organisation, each State looked solely to its own interests and desires, to obtain or defend which it claimed an unquestioned right to decide whether it should or should not resort to the extreme measure of war.

The Congress of Vienna in 1815, having to establish a new order in international relations after the disaster of the Napoleonic wars, introduced two innovations which influenced the future; international river law, recognising the existence and even the organisation of collective State interests, and the anti-slavery Declaration in which, however tentatively, the idea that international law was also bound to protect certain general moral interests of mankind, raised its head for the first time. Nevertheless the international law of the 19th century remained as before completely dominated by the theory that it existed to serve the interests of the State in its separateness, in other words to sanction and protect national egoism. The materialistic doctrines which were rife throughout that period singularly encouraged this view, and greatly helped to inflate the notion of the State and its powers.

All this must be borne in mind if the novelty and boldness of the Red Cross idea are to appear in their true light. Sent out into the world in 1863, by 1864 it had already taken form in an international treaty

to which, as time went on, all the countries of the habitable globe were to append their signatures.

Just as the advantages which great inventions bring us soon become so familiar that nobody pauses any more to think what huge strides in civilisation they represent, so our generation can no longer easily imagine what a stupendously new thing had appeared in the sphere of international law which the Geneva Convention of sixty-five years ago. We are always more prone to consider what has happened since a great event than what existed before it.

Three things especially were new: a first breach had been made in the law concerning methods of war. In that field, apart from the very moot point of the protection of neutral shipping in war at sea, the necessities of war always took precedence before the law. Secondly the object of the Geneva Convention was not, or at least not primarily, to safeguard the interests of States but, on the contrary, to impose a humanitarian duty upon them, namely to obtain their recognition for the care of wounded and sick combatants, including those belonging to the adversary's forces. Lastly, the so-called neutralisation of the medical establishments and personnel drew a protective circle round a kind of sanctuary within which the violence of unbridled warfare was curbed, and which the sign of the Red Cross made visible to all.

The fact that the Geneva Convention in no way questioned the fact of war and took its methods for granted, undoubtedly facilitated the rapid penetration of the Red Cross idea among governments and military departments. It speaks for the political insight of the men who in 1863 and 1864 strove to create the movement, that in bringing Dunant's idea into tangible existence they confined themselves to the one essential matter in hand. This restriction

of the Red Cross strictly to its own field, together with the extreme simplicity of its idea, proved of the utmost advantage in gaining such widespread acceptance for it among the nations. So absolute and uncompromising is the demand that a suffering human being shall be succoured for his own sake only, without respect of class, condition, creed or race, and above all without discrimination as to whether he be friend or enemy, that it lifts the Red Cross far above the plane of opportunism and facile concessions where so many international and other agreements belong. What the Red Cross dared to exact is more than neutrality, more than impartiality; it was the concrete act of self-sacrifice and charity towards all combatants, whichever the army in which they served. And in the external evolution of the Red Cross idea it has been of no small importance that the symbol of that high endeavour was the one which above all others is pregnant with meaning, and exhorts every foe to stay his hand.

Not only in its own humanitarian domain was the creation of the Red Cross an epoch-making event. It diverted international law into channels which can only lead at last to a sweeping away of the very base upon which the Red Cross was erected, that is to say, to the final elimination of war itself. The efforts to humanize war are a first stage on that path.

A conference of governments which took place in Brussels as early as 1874 was not immediately successful, but its proposals were resumed at the first Peace Conference at the Hague in 1899, and adopted in a treaty with almost universal validity, the Hague Convention Concerning the Laws and Customs of War on Land. Here it is a question of limiting the means of war, and of regulating the treatment of prisoners of war and civilians in occupied territory.

These instruments, drawn up by both Hague Conferences, are much wider in scope than the Geneva Convention, but they are all marked by a much greater pliancy and have never had either the authority nor the popular assent which the Geneva Red Cross Convention has enjoyed since the beginning.

Nevertheless the Hague Peace Conferences ushered in the second phase: to wit, the promotion of peace by means of a greatly amplified system of mediation and arbitration. The later Hague Conventions, like most of the separate accords arising out of them, left the question of the right to make war exactly where it was before, for they did nothing to speak of to constrain the contracting parties to take the peaceful way in settling their differences.

The third phase opens with an attempt in this direction. Shortly before the outbreak of the World War, the United States instigated certain agreements tending to prevent the governments from taking up arms; the signatory States pledged themselves not to declare war without first submitting their grievances to impartial investigation, pending the result of which they agreed to refrain from acts of war. In this direction another step—a giant one—was taken with the League of Nations Covenant of 1919, which places the governments before the alternative of submitting their quarrels either to arbitral or judicial settlement, or else of accepting the mediation of the League. Collective sanctions, a totally new departure in international law, guarantee the fulfilment of this obligation.

In this fourth phase we find the right to make war considerably curtailed, but it was followed by a still more drastic attempt, which represents the limit of this development thus far. The form adopted is a system of out and out arbitration or mediation,

the archetype being the Kellogg Pact of 1928 under which the governments agree to disclaim war as a political instrument.

Some will regard this evolution with optimism, others with doubt, but no one will deny that it represents a radical transformation of the theories concerning the place of war in international law as they obtained in 1864. Only those who have experienced these profound changes in some capacity or other as participants, viewing them always against their background of the history of international law, can see them in their true proportion.

Now what was the effect of this evolution upon the Red Cross? First of all, the vogue of humanising war, as it was called, caused the Geneva Convention to be extended to the circumstances of war at sea (Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907), and brought about the first revision of the Convention in 1906. The second and more momentous consequence of the new direction in which international law had begun to move, concerned the altered status of war. From an institution of heretofore uncontested legitimacy, the League of Nations and all the most recent accords reduced it to an abnormal form of national defence, to be tolerated only in the most exceptional cases, if not ruled out altogether. According to the measure in which this new international law can make itself obeyed, war must recede from the life of nations, and fade into the background of even their imaginative world. As for treaties such as the Geneva Convention which regulate the laws of war, the progress of this war-excluding tendency would naturally diminish their practical usefulness, without however requiring a revision of their terms.

But the Red Cross as an organisation of voluntary aid in war would not be in the same case. Wisely

realising that the effectiveness of their work in wartime would always depend upon an extensive relief activity in time of peace, the national societies began without delay to organise and build accordingly. This widespread and intensive labour has been justified in the event, for it has anchored the Red Cross in the consciousness of the nations which have come to know it in the long periods of peace as the embodiment of aid in epidemics and disasters. By these achievements the national societies have carried out an idea which Henry Dunant particularly cherished.

Consider this immense collective will to help, this vast accumulated wealth of human and material service garnered in the national Red Cross organisations spread over the whole earth. Is it thinkable that they should moulder away unused, because war, which was their cause and inspiration, shall have disappeared ? No indeed. The new conditions directly and indirectly created by the League of Nations can lead to no other conclusion than that the peacetime work of the Red Cross must go on, and wherever possible, increase. It is no accident that the selfsame treaty, the Covenant of 1919, whilst confining war within the narrowest limits, also provides that all the governments shall promote the national Red Cross organisations' peacetime work, and that in the same year an organisation for this purpose, the League of Red Cross Societies, came into being. It is also in entire conformity with this development that the International Relief Union founded by the Convention of 1927 entrusted its tasks to the Red Cross organisations.

Now does this new emphasis on peacetime work denote a withdrawal from, or even a repudiation of, wartime obligations, not to say a displacement of the foundations, both in law and in principle, upon which

the Red Cross has been steadily raising up its mighty edifice these many years ? Reason and gratitude would equally forbid any such abandonment, for from 1914 to 1918 and during the immediate post-war period, the Red Cross accomplished a gigantic work, the scope of which ranged far beyond the care of sick and wounded in belligerent and neutral countries. Neither the history nor the application of Article 25 of the League Covenant reveals any indication of a fundamental change of status; this clause refers a situation which has arisen in connection with the Geneva Convention.

But apart from juridical considerations, a repudiation of the historic principles of the Red Cross would be as devoid of purpose as it would be morally unjustified. Nothing could be more remote from our mind than to belittle the significance of the changes with the ideas touching war and peace have undergone in recent times, or to underrate the far-reaching importance of the international treaties concluded since the end of the late war. Those whose life-work is the study of these problems must, however, be the first to beware of illusions. Politics is the art of the possible, and its prerequisite is, or should be, the courage to look reality in the face without fear or prejudice. Well, the history of the past eighty years has shown that even in the best organised commonwealths or federative States, excessive political tension seeks it outlet in war. This should warn us that even a perfect organisation of peace may, under certain circumstances, be borne down by the dynamic forces in the life of nations.

But to illustrate our point there is no need to compare the international organisation of peace with modern federations of States. It is enough to look around us at the present moment and see how heavily

the problems of security and disarmament weigh upon international politics, and how far they are from being solved; how meanwhile the technique of war is progressing, and great armies and navies have not ceased to be. So long as the nations have not laid down their arms, the Geneva Convention has lost nothing of its substance, and Red Cross preparedness for the eventuality of war is not superfluous. Indeed from the standpoint of world peace, that particular anticipation of war should be the very last to be renounced. Even the countries which, as things look today, seem the least likely to become involved in wars, have every reason to hold themselves in readiness to give their help in case of need, for the advantages of neutrality must be counterbalanced by the duty to render fraternal assistance to others less privileged.

The Red Cross national Societies must at all costs remain faithful to their wartime mission, whether or no war may loom near or far on the horizon; the peculiar nature of their service obliges them to do so. The circumstances of war are such that, besides the army's own medical formations, no private organisation can be admitted to help in the zone of hostilities except under very definite conditions, and only those so admitted may bear the emblem of the Red Cross. The revised Geneva Convention of 1906 and the national legislation based upon it have laid particular stress upon this point. This special status and this privilege to render aid are inseparable from the contingency of war, for otherwise there is no need for them. The guarantee of inviolability with which the emblem of the Red Cross protects its wearers is only necessary where their work of charity is performed during a war or in the midst of battles. No medical or welfare service undertaken in peace-

time could require privileges of this kind, for all charitable activity has a natural place in the peaceful order of things, and common law ensures protection and respect for those engaged in it. Meanwhile nothing prevents the Red Cross Societies from exercising their peacetime work under the Red Cross sign; on the contrary, they are bound to do so, in order to keep the Red Cross ideal always alive in the eyes of the world.

If war relief on the one hand and the exceptional position accorded to the Red Cross and its symbol on the other stand in such close connection, it is not only because the movement was originally so constituted, and military considerations made it necessary. The reason lies much deeper, and is to be found in the nature of Red Cross war service.

War is a reversal of all normal values. Civilisation means the preservation of human life and the property that serves it; war aims to destroy both life and property. It also tears asunder the personal and cultural bonds between the adversaries. In war human suffering is not due to natural causes as in epidemics and catastrophes, but to men's violence against their fellow-men. When civilisation thus collapses, the non-violent work of the Red Cross stands forth in the sharpest antithesis to war. While governments, subordinating human rights wholly to their own designs, pursue their struggle for mutual annihilation, the suffering human being, whether friend or enemy, becomes the object of self-sacrificing service. Whether it be men's passions, hatreds or necessity that have battered down the ramparts which protect the peace between nations or within them, all is not yet lost so long as the Red Cross still lives. So long as it still carries on its arduous labour of love, a remnant of mutual comprehension survives,

and may be the point of departure for spiritual reconstruction when the war is over, for the Red Cross is a Cross too, the symbol of mankind's misery and salvation.

No new peace legislation should obscure this shining ideal for the bearers of the Red Cross, or cause them to forsake it, for the soul of the movement is its original idea, and from it their peacetime work derives its greatest force. Nothing should ever be torn away from its historic basis without imperative reasons. There is every moral and practical reason why, the Red Cross too, and all things, present and future, concerning it should be considered in the light of their relation to the past.

THE RED CROSS: A FACTOR IN INTERNATIONAL RAPPROCHEMENT

Address delivered at the Red Cross International Conference in Brussels 1930, in the presence of Prince Charles of Sweden, President of the Swedish Red Cross.

Your Royal Highness,
Mr. President,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On the agenda of the Conference, item No. XVII is announced as " The Red Cross as a factor in international rapprochement ". The Conference is therefore in duty bound to make some statement upon this point.

We have just listened to the important message addressed to us by His Royal Highness the President of the Swedish Red Cross, for which we express our deepest gratitude. The Norwegian Red Cross has once again informed us of its particular interest in the grave problem we are about to approach.

The scope and general terms of the question here raised, as well as the problem's obvious affinities with high politics, might justify a doubt as to whether it is quite appropriate for the Conference to deal with a

subject of this kind. It is hardly a matter that can be referred to a special committee, for nobody will expect concrete solutions. On the other hand it is perhaps both necessary and desirable for the Conference to bring to discussion certain great topics intimately touching the Red Cross, and define its attitude towards them for the enlightement of public opinion.

Not that we flatter ourselves that any resolution of ours could influence the cause of a better understanding between nations. Our aim is more modest: we shall try and get a clear view of ourselves, and that is all. When we have seen what we can do, we shall know what we must do, and shall be better able to rectify present, and avert future, misapprehen sions regarding the aims and activities of the Red Cross.

First of all it is as well to observe that the improvement of international relations, in so far as the problem is political, does not concern the Red Cross. The Conference will remain strictly within its province, which is that of moral values only. It is only indirectly, by augmenting and strengthening moral forces, both those inherent in itself, and those which it is especially fitted to develop and diffuse, that the Red Cross can aspire to see its action bear fruit in the realm of political achievement.

When considering the Red Cross in the light of a factor in international rapprochement, it is of the utmost importance to repulse a suspicion, I might even say a definite reproach, which is not seldom levelled at it: namely that, by pursuing our traditional service to wounded and sick soldiers in wartime, we countenance war as an inevitable, not to say normal, institution of social existence; that, by its humanitarian work, the Red Cross helps to hoodwink

the peoples as to the real horrors of war; and that, by rendering it ever so slightly less ghastly, we place an obstacle in the way of its suppression. In certain circles professing a total pacifism, it is held that the only way to overcome war is by refusing to react to it. All its evils then becoming apparent, it will become, as it were, absorbed in a universal passive resistance. In conformity with this line of thought, protests have even been raised against the preoccupation manifested by the Red Cross with regard to the new and formidable problem of chemical warfare.

War, for the creators of the Red Cross, was a sad but undeniably inevitable phenomenon of human life; they never dreamed that they might banish it, however ardently they no doubt longed to do so. And so they did the next best thing, which was to help its victims.

And yet, by carrying the banner of charity into the very midst of the battle, and having its right to be there confirmed by treaty, they actually struck the first blow ever aimed at war as an institution recognised by international law, for by their action the incompatibility of war with the idea of right was demonstrated once and for all. Since their day international law has made great strides towards a permanent establishment of peace, arriving even at the logical culmination of this progress, which was to thrust war outside the pale of the law altogether. Nevertheless, the nations continue to arm; new methods of combat, more general and more devastating than those of the past, are being studied and prepared. The sense of realities which the founders of the Red Cross never allowed their generous ideal to obliterate, is binding upon us also, and warns us not yet to disavow the movement's primordial aim. Those whose desire is to act, who feel called to help distress in the most

effective way, must not refuse to see things as they are, however afflicting they may be. It is a part of charity to look truth in the face.

For the moment then, the Red Cross has no reason to repudiate its original task, nor to feel hampered by it in the performance of its peacetime duties. If there is a seeming contradiction between the outlawry of war and the international regulation of some of war's practices, the Red Cross is not to blame for that. If, in the worst event, the organisations created to maintain the peace should prove unable to perform all that they have undertaken, the foothold for international collaboration which the Red Cross represents may turn out to be of invaluable aid in regaining temporarily lost ground. Among the regulations under international law which outclimb national rivalries and reach a higher moral level, the Red Cross principle is not only the oldest, it is also, thanks to its self-imposed limitations, perhaps one of the soundest and most enduring.

It is paradoxical, though, in the light of life's experiences not in the least astonishing, that at the very moment when the Red Cross is most sternly rebuked for being still concerned with matters relating to war, other critics begin to show anxiety at its increasing part in the struggle against forms of suffering entirely outside war's contingencies. Is it possible, in view of all these strictures, that the Red Cross does too much, or takes too broad a view ?

In the moral economy of the world, the fact of suffering is of supreme moment for individuals and collectivities alike. If, on the one hand, we must know how to bear suffering, accept it bravely for ourselves and even choose it where a lofty aim demands, the distress of others affords us possibilities of displaying the highest quality of all—that of charity. These pos-

sibilities are so great that we shall never exhaust them, however we may spend ourselves in bringing help to our fellow-men in need. It is thus not quite easy to understand how the legitimacy of any humanitarian movement for lessening the world's distress can be seriously questioned.

Most of our actions, our Red Cross action among them, are based on our moral, religious or philosophical beliefs. This is the reason why the Red Cross proclaims the principle of religious neutrality in the widest meaning of the term. It welcomes all, and rejects none—the desire to help is enough. This neutrality is not to be interpreted as indifference, nor as a dogma seeking to make a place for itself beside others. Red Cross neutrality in the matter of religion and *Weltanschauung* is purely and simply an expression of absolute respect for the personal opinions of all its members.

And the same is true of its political neutrality. The Red Cross does not set up an international against a national ideal. What it hopes to do is to bring the people of all nations to work together in a labour of love from which all shall benefit.

In the original domain of Red Cross work, namely service in the field, military necessities have invariably required all voluntary aid units to range themselves under the flag of the Red Cross. This does not mean, however, that the national Red Cross societies enjoy a monopoly of any kind; the unity of emblem is only a measure to secure international respect. As our societies enlarge their peacetime work, they find themselves more and more upon ground where a great number of other associations of every different type, and with the most varied affiliations, have long been making important contributions to human welfare. Here again, nothing is farther from our

thoughts than to strive for anything resembling monopoly. The immensity of the need, the multiplicity of forces already at work to fill it, would render such an ambition as vain as it is surely undesirable. In its civilian efforts, as in its work for armies in the field, the Red Cross seeks nothing but to serve. It is by its complete neutrality that it feels best able to help, nationally and internationally, towards the alleviation of the world's woes.

In virtue of its neutrality and the universal organisation it has created, the Red Cross could be chosen by the International Relief Union as the principal agent for putting its multitudinous plans into execution. For this same two-fold reason the Red Cross has been able to succour not only the victims of wars, but also those of wars' aftermaths. And therein lies its contribution to the cause of a better understanding between nations.

International amity, if it is to be the precious and lasting thing it ought to be, can never be attained at the expense of individuality, but only through co-ordination, based upon justice and equity. It has two main elements: first moral, for it rests upon human views; then political, since it takes concrete form in international law and organisation. The Red Cross neither can nor wishes to make its influence felt elsewhere than on the moral plane, and if it can be effective there, it will be so thanks solely to its uncompromising neutrality, and its detachment from politics in every shape or form.

In all matters pertaining to the Red Cross, the clearest distinction must therefore be drawn between its purely moral action, and its organisation. By gathering men and women, and in many countries young people also, together in a work of charity for all who suffer, the Red Cross develops in every-

one belonging to it a spirit which is the exact reverse of those selfish, pugnacious instincts which, carried into the political field, produce enmities, internal strife, and war. The Red Cross appeals to the sense of service given and received, another word for human solidarity. Nor should it ever be forgotten that the Red Cross rests, first and last, upon the highest conception of charity, namely charity towards the enemy. So long as we remain mindful of this, we shall have infinite resources of moral strength to draw upon.

But this great strength could not be put to use in the international field, were it not for existence of a truly universal pact upholding the Red Cross organisations in all countries, and a common name and emblem uniting them in universal recognition.

Nothing could be vaguer than the ideas which the name of the Red Cross evokes in the public mind, and even in our own circles it often connotes something strangely nebulous. But for the average person and for the Red Cross worker all the world over, the name and symbol stand for charity and devotion, for aloofness from political, racial and religious antagonisms of all degrees and kinds.

We believe that all this constitutes a considerable moral force. Certainly, we have no desire to delude ourselves, still less to boast. For that the Red Cross is a cause too high and too grave. But when we contemplate the condition of mankind today, ravaged and standing on the brink of chaos, with national and international life rent by passion and dissension on every hand, when we conjure up before our minds the immeasurable dangers latent in so much hatred, hostility and mistrust, then we may justly prize the Red Cross as one of the constructive and positive elements in the contemporary world, a factor of

understanding, tolerance and conciliation. However inadequate our powers, our duty is to turn them to the utmost account, keeping intact our moral patrimony and enlarging it where we may.

It is not for us to launch appeals to the nations. What must speak for the Red Cross is not its exhortations, but the witness of its unselfish, unremitting, faithful labour. If the Conference is to publish a resolution, then let it be addressed to the national societies, the international councils, and all our workers. To know what we are is to know what we can accomplish, and there we must not fail.

THE JUBILEE OF THE AMERICAN RED CROSS

Address delivered in Washington at the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of the American Red Cross, May 21, 1931, in the presence of Mr. Herbert Hoover, President of the United States.

Mr. President,
Mrs. Hoover,
Mr. Toastmaster,
Mr. President of the Central Red Cross Committee,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour and pleasure to me to represent the International Red Cross Committee on this auspicious occasion, and to convey its warmest congratulations to the American Red Cross upon half a century's magnificent achievements for the welfare of suffering mankind in this country and the world at large. With this splendid record of disinterested, steadily increasing, and most efficient relief work you have written a shining page in the annals of humanitarian endeavour.

I am grateful to the American Red Cross for its kindness in inviting me to be present on its Jubilee anniversary, for ever since 1928 when I succeeded the regretted President Ador whom I so inadequately replace, it has been my wish to pay a visit to the

American Red Cross. In the first place because the number of its adult and junior members and the magnitude of its performance give it an unique position among the National Red Cross Societies, but also because the part it has taken in the international work of the Red Cross in general has been outstanding.

The League of Red Cross Societies, uniting almost all the national societies in an association with a comprehensive programme of peace activities, was created in 1919 largely through the initiative of the American Red Cross, which, ever since, has taken a most active and helpful share in the development of that institution. I am particularly glad to greet, in the person of the Chairman of the American Red Cross, also the Chairman of the Board of Governors of our sister institution in the field of international Red Cross work.

In the beginning, it may have looked as though the co-existence of two independent agencies of international action would create certain difficulties, but if there ever were any, they have certainly been overcome. In a sincerely constructive spirit we have together succeeded in combining, under the Statutes of the International Red Cross, all the component parts of the movement throughout the world. Without curtailing necessary independence or intruding upon any specific domain, a wide field of not merely common, but joint, action was mapped out between us which, since the ratification of the statutes by the XIIIth Red Cross Conference at The Hague, has been constantly widening, both as a result of practical experience and also thanks to the atmosphere of cordial co-operation which has always marked the relations between the League and the International Committee.

Permit me to add that the international organisation of the Red Cross which is, I feel sure, heartily

endorsed by all the national societies, owes a great deal to you, Mr. Chairman. The draft Statutes which Colonel Draudt had negotiated with me on behalf of the League with so much breadth of view and comprehension, were given their final form in accordance with your highly expert advice, and it was due to your great personal influence that they were carried in the Board of Governors and the International Conference.

This day is an occasion of which the American Red Cross may be justly proud, and its pride and credit should be shared by the people throughout the United States among whom your society has recruited its millions of generous, devoted members and drawn its untiring energy and its large resources. And when we see how the initiative taken by the International Committee in 1863 not only led to a universal treaty, but to a worldwide movement of volunteer action which has taken root in the hearts of countless men and women, and out of which an association such as the American Red Cross could grow, we cannot but feel in our turn that our institution has done a good work in the world.

Certainly Geneva does not claim all the honour of having started what became the Red Cross movement. As scientific discoveries are sometimes, so to speak, in the air and appear simultaneously in different places, so in the sphere of political and moral ideas, the same thing happens now and then. Some seventy years ago the time had become ripe for organised and voluntary action on international lines for the relief of suffering. Florence Nightingale accomplished her wonderful work in the field hospitals during the Crimean War of 1855. In 1859 Henry Dunant, the spiritual father of the Red Cross, beheld the horrors of the battlefield of Solferino, and, with the peasants

and women of the place to help him, organised a voluntary first-aid for the wounded with the device: " *Siamo tutti fratelli.*" (We are all brothers.)

In 1862 he published his famous pamphlet, "A Memory of Solferino", which moved the public conscience wherever it was read. From 1861 to the end of the War of Secession, a brave woman, Clara Barton, the first President of the American Red Cross, hastened from one encampment, from one battlefield to another, helping the sick and wounded. In 1863 the International Committee was created by five citizens of Geneva, and succeeded in convening a Conference at which the main principles of the Red Cross were laid down. At the diplomatic Conference of 1864, the first Geneva Convention was signed. In 1863 President Lincoln had issued his historic " Instructions for the Government of Armies of the U. S. in The Field ", the forerunner of the work done by the Hague Peace Conferences for the mitigation of the horrors and hardships of war. Finally in 1866, Clara Barton threw herself into a work which was to become so important during the last Great War, and has remained no less so; namely, the search for missing soldiers.

These dates suffice to show, I think, that by the 'Sixties of last century the Red Cross had become due. From the outset Dunant clearly foresaw what the essential conditions of the future movement should be; firstly, the need for an international treaty to guarantee international humanitarian action in time of war; secondly, the need for extensive volunteer organisations in all countries to assist the army medical services in war. He also came to see very soon how useful it would be to extend Red Cross work beyond work with soldiers, bringing every kind of disaster relief within its range.

Happily Dunant was supported from the first by four fellow-citizens whose deep comprehension of his noble ideas was allied to the necessary qualities for putting them into practice. The Geneva Convention of 1864 was soon ratified by many Powers, and finally secured universal recognition. This success was due to the fact that the original Convention, and its revised texts to a still greater degree, limited their demands to essential issues able to stand the test of practical experience in time of war. The latest revision, effected in 1929, which we hope will soon obtain the ratification of all its forty-seven signatories, not only embodies the experiences gathered in the Great War, but is also of the highest importance to Red Cross activity in time of peace, as it completes the guarantees for the respect of the sacred emblem of the Red Cross in the white field.

The establishment of national committees or societies in all countries made rapid progress. No less than twenty-one countries had their voluntary aid organisations before 1869. The International Committee, so efficiently aided since 1919 by the League, spared no efforts to obtain the creation of a Society in each of the countries which are parties to the Geneva Convention.

Though the U.S.A. was represented at the Diplomatic Conference of 1864, it did not at first ratify the Convention, and indeed the American government was occupied at the time with much more urgent affairs. Thus for a time the U.S.A. remained outside a treaty which was obviously less pertinent to the interests of its people than to those of the European nations at a juncture when several international wars engaged their attention.

Clara Barton, worn out with work for the wounded and missing in the Civil War, went to Switzerland for

her health in 1869. She found an unexpected new opening for her charitable labours in the Europe of the Franco-Prussian war, and acted as agent of the International Committee on those continental battle-fields. Our Committee was anxious to interest the great American philanthropist in inducing her country to adhere to the Geneva Convention, and she at once agreed that his must be done. She had the vision to realise what America's adhesion to the Geneva Convention and the consequent establishment of a voluntary aid society, an American Red Cross, would mean both to the American people and to the Red Cross movement throughout the world.

Clara Barton returned home with a mandate of the International Committee, but her health did not permit her to begin her work until 1877, when she delivered to President Hayes a letter from M. Moynier, President of the International Red Cross Committee from 1863 to 1910. From the day of that interview, she never relaxed her efforts to convince the Government and the Senate of the necessity of ratifying the Geneva Convention. She published innumerable tracts and newspaper articles to create a current of public opinion in favour of the Red Cross idea. Her letters to the International Committee bear eloquent witness to the burning zeal and indomitable perseverance of this remarkable woman. It was certainly no light task for a woman to obtain singlehanded the ratification of a treaty concluded seventeen years previously, of no immediate interest to the American government at that moment, and a matter of all but complete indifference to the public. But she never lost hope; even when all her efforts seemed doomed to failure, she persevered in her faith that she would be victorious in the end. " Simply more work, still more hard toil ", she wrote. " I do not

lose a day to send my shout of hope to you across the sea." She had also the precious gift of humour. When at long last all obstacles had been overcome, the American Association of the Red Cross founded, the Convention ratified and the Association recognised by the government in accordance with the principles laid down by the International Committee, on August 11th, 1882, she wrote to M. Moynier with justifiable pride: "Monsieur le Président... In our American Red Cross camp I am thus far the oldest soldier and my brave manly associates have, I expect, small idea of the rough ground I have trodden, the obstructions I have met and quietly overcome in my five years of pioneer Red Cross march alone."

Here I should like to mention the name of another woman to whom the American Red Cross and the world movement owe a great debt of gratitude. From 1905 until the entry of the United States into the World War in 1917, the dominant personality in the American Red Cross was Miss Mabel Boardman. During all that time the American Red Cross depended for its development on Miss Boardman's wise, tireless, devoted leadership and it is largely owing to her that your Society has become what it is today. She obtained its new Charter from Congress in 1905, and it was she who was its guardian angel for years and years. Allow me to say how much we in Geneva, who have followed the rapid growth of the American Red Cross, have learnt to admire Miss Boardman's faithful and self-sacrificing services to the idea of the Red Cross, and how much we appreciated her advice and help in the constitution of the International Red Cross.

With your permission, I shall now touch upon the significance of the American Red Cross, its creation and remarkable development, in the light of the

general evolution of the movement in the international sphere.

Since the U.S.A. became a party to the Geneva Convention, the treaty has been twice revised and may be considered as one of the most carefully drafted of all international agreements. It was completed in two directions, first by the Hague Conventions of 1899, 1904 and 1907 which extended its principles to war at sea, and then by the Convention signed in 1929 relative to the treatment of prisoners of war. On all these occasions American participation and collaboration were invaluable. All these revised conventions keep closely to the original purpose, i.e. humanitarian action in time of war, and this limitation was certainly wise, for it secured universal acceptance of the treaty, which is of the utmost importance from all points of view.

The voluntary organisations of Red Cross Societies have never ceased to enlarge the field of their activities everywhere, having realised from the first that efficiency in wartime is dependent upon efficiency in peacetime. Hospital work, instruction of nurses, and various charitable works of a permanent nature assumed ever greater dimensions. Relief in all manner of calamities, and the promotion of public health are now among the main objects of the Red Cross Societies' work, and in this evolution the magnificent achievements of the American Red Cross have certainly been a most important, perhaps the decisive, factor.

But when a devastating war broke out, the Red Cross returned again, with greater efficiency than ever, to its original functions, and during the Great War of 1914-1918 the national societies, both of belligerent and neutral countries, were called upon to accomplish tasks of unimagined magnitude. One

result of this was that when the war was over and there was less to be done, the societies found themselves possessed of a much vaster organisation than before. The International Committee too, whose members during fifty years had done all the work without the assistance of a clerical staff, had seen the number of its collaborators—the large majority entirely unremunerated—soar to twelve hundred within a few weeks after the outbreak of the war.

The war and the first post-war years confronted the various Red Cross organisations with duties that far outranged the care of wounded and sick soldiers. Repatriation of prisoners, intervention in favour of the victims of revolutions and civil wars, relief to famine-stricken regions, were only a few of these activities. But the expansion of Red Cross action in general and of the American Red Cross in particular, had given fresh impetus to international humanitarian endeavours, many of which had but an indirect, or very loose, connection with the Red Cross. I shall mention only two: the great relief work which is connected with the honoured name of Your Excellency, Mr. President, and the other which Fridtjof Nansen undertook on behalf of the League of Nations for the hundreds of thousands of Russian and Armenian refugees whom political events had rendered homeless and deprived of nationality.

Expansion and new tasks were not all that the Great War signified for the Red Cross, however. Large sections of the human race had discovered a new attitude towards the problem of war. From being considered a deplorable but unavoidable fact in international relations, war, under the Kellogg Pact, has at last come to be disclaimed as a means of national policy. From the very beginning of their history as an independent Power, the United States

have played a conspicuous part in the great movement to promote the pacific, in particular the arbitral, settlement of international conflicts. This current has now become so powerful that it naturally affects the other great international current embodied in the humanitarian activities which are the offspring of the Red Cross. It was quite natural therefore that in 1919 the League of Nations Covenant should make provision for the various Red Cross activities, and that a new association should be founded to cope with them. This was the League of Red Cross Societies, created also in 1919, on the initiative of Henry P. Davison who had been the far-sighted President of the American Red Cross War Committee. And when, in 1927, the revised Geneva Convention was signed and the International Relief Union came into being, the national and international organisations of the Red Cross found themselves inevitably called upon to lend their voluntary cooperation to this new institution, in order that the carrying out of its tasks might be fully ensured.

But has the original purpose of the Red Cross, the care of war-victims, become obsolete ? Must it be considered nowadays as an anachronism ? To this, I am afraid that I must answer definitely: "No". We are living in a period of transition, of contradictory tendencies and problems. We all most earnestly hope that the organisation of peace may some day render war relief obsolete, but we cannot afford to neglect it yet, or let it fall into oblivion so long as armies and navies still exist, and so long as the nations are still preoccupied with questions of armaments and security. The International Red Cross Conferences have thoroughly understood this situation and have asked, among other things, for an investigation into the possibilities of protecting

civilian populations against the dangers of so-called aerial and chemical warfare.

The conditions of modern life have rendered both government and commerce more complex and difficult than they used to be, even a generation ago. The same is true for the Red Cross in its much narrower field. But the national societies and the international organisations have grown as the demand for their services increased, and will continue to evolve as circumstances require, for the Red Cross is a living organism, animated by a great power of goodwill. The Red Cross stands for relief to the wounded and sick in war; for more, relief to all sufferers; for more still, relief to all, through the indefatigable struggle against the causes of avoidable human distress—irrespective of political, religious or racial differences, relief to one's own folk and to one's fellow-men in foreign countries, if some disaster should call for international aid. But even this is not all, for since the day of its birth the Red Cross has always stood for another thing as well: relief to the friend and to the enemy in need, the enemy of today or yesterday. This surpasses solidarity, this demands self-abnegation.

At this point we touch the possibility for the Red Cross to work for social and international peace. The Red Cross is essentially non-political, it is humanitarian only. It cannot act directly on political issues, but it can and must develop that spirit which makes for peace, by instructing its members, by educating youth for disinterested service for others, and by bringing together all men in a relief work in common, beyond the dividing lines of classes, parties, races and nations.

Peace, if it is to be lasting, must not be anchored in treaties only, but in the hearts of men and women.

The vigour and resistance of the tree depends on how widely and deeply its roots go out and down into solid, fertile ground. The same applies to the Red Cross. It depends for its strength, and above all for its moral prestige, upon its national societies, their local branches, the thousands and millions of its members, both adult and junior. The international organisation of the Red Cross will do its best to co-ordinate the efforts of the national societies, to help them, to transmit ideas and resources to them, and take charge of joint action. But the real force must always come from the national societies. Though bound together by a common ideal, and marching under the same banner of the red cross in the white field, each must be the exponent of its own nation's best and most individual qualities, if all are to give their full measure.

What then can be more inspiring to the friends of the cause, and give them more confidence in the future, than to see national societies grow and prosper ? The achievements of the American Red Cross during its first fifty years have not only been a boon to those to whom relief was brought, but have also made a great moral contribution to the whole Red Cross. They are a goal of noble emulation for us all, and strengthen the confidence of all in what the Red Cross must and shall become in future.

May I therefore conclude by adding to our cordial congratulations a tribute of heartfelt gratitude to the American Red Cross, its Chairman, staff and chapters, for the great work accomplished, and to the American people and their illustrious Presidents who have support that work so generously.

EXTENSION AND LIMITATION OF RED CROSS ACTIVITIES [1]

In the beginning, the Red Cross had no other aim than to second the regular medical services of armies in time of war. But Henry Dunant had even then foreseen that wider horizons must open out before the movement, and indeed its scope of action was very soon enlarged. The first stage was the creation of peacetime work in favour of the sick, designed as training for the mission to be fulfilled in the tragic contingences envisaged by the Geneva Convention.

Preoccupation with the sick led naturally to efforts towards the prevention of disease, and interest in the problems of public health. But that was not all. Reaching out beyond its original work with wounded and sick soldiers, the Red Cross had long been active among the victims of natural calamities, and in a number of other humanitarian endeavours. It was, however, chiefly just after the World War that its action was extended and generalised. Article 25 of the League of Nations Covenant, the creation of the League of Red Cross societies in 1919, and the quite recent International Relief Union, are the tokens of

[1] After an exposé presented at the session of the Council of Governors of the League of Red Cross Societies in Paris, October 4, 1932.

this significant development. The direct and indirect consequences of war, the distress into which, in many countries, whole sections of the population had been plunged, impelled the national societies to widen, diversify and intensify their work which, pertaining in all its aspects to health, hygiene and help for the victims of catastrophes, is all contained in the notion of " social service " broadly understood.

Such endeavour, called forth by the extreme and fearful misery that the war left in its wake, has its roots in a heightened sense of social responsibility, the responsibility of each for all and all for each.

It is, at least in part, a phenomenon of the evolutionary process at work in fundamental conceptions of society. Whereas the social philosophies of the 18th and the liberalism of the 19th century, were mainly concerned with the individual, contemporary thought places the emphasis on social communities, the interdependence of groups, and the individual's dependence upon the group in which he is situated. This view of human relations has not simply resulted in a deeper sympathy with the ills of society; it has prompted the search for causes, and the root of individual suffering and distress is being sought in social conditions themselves.

The Red Cross cannot ignore this trend of thought; on the contrary, no factor likely to influence its orientation and usefulness must ever escape its vigilant consideration. But at the same time it should remember that associations, like persons, have most power when they concentrate their strength upon essentials only. If one can but rejoice that the Red Cross has not ceased to enlarge its social work —sure proof of its vitality—it is nevertheless necessary to measure off the field in which advances are to be made; certain limits must be traced, for fear of

straying out into indefinite space. To this end, let us be clear as to what we mean by social service.

This is not the place to go deeply into an extremely vast sociological problem. We shall confine ourselves to dealing with two of its aspects which, though different, are not mutually exclusive.

On the one hand, the term "social service" designates a method concerned with the individual, not as an isolated entity but as an integral part of the family and social group. The traditional activity of the Red Cross is no stranger to this conception, to recall only the Prisoners of War Information Service, or our work in the sphere of public health; in fact, when one surveys the area of Red Cross expansion beyond its original field, this is sufficiently apparent.

Social service may also—and this is the second aspect—stand for all activity which aims at helping the victims of economic crises and catastrophes; in this connection, pauperism and unemployment come first to mind. Problems of public health too, such as the struggle against alcoholism, insalubrious housing and so on, are also closely bound up with economic conditions. Social service would thus mean relief of the victims of what one might call economic, as against physical, disease.

But the notion goes farther still; it extends to efforts in favour of certain categories of persons especially in need of protection, without being necessarily victims either of physical or of economic disease, calamities or crises: orphans, abandoned or neglected children, emigrants, the blind, the aged, persons without nationality.

These remarks suggest an almost endless diversity in the connotation of social service; nor are they by any means a mere enumeration of theoretic possi-

bilities. On the contrary, they list very real activities and causes; we might have added many more. The work and rôle of the Red Cross have not, of course, evolved in the same way everywhere; nevertheless all the many phases of social work which we have just cited as falling well within the general acceptance of the term, have been, or are being, performed by a number more or less great of Red Cross national societies. Dr. Sand's report, with its exhaustive documentation, is highly instructive in this respect. Doubtless there are great divergences; certain of these activities are only very exceptional, but the tendency towards extension is unmistakable.

At the same time, an organisation, like an individual, must not lose sight of its natural limitations, its specific traits, that is to say, its moral and personal character. Whatever is not circumscribed by any outline at all is apt to become swallowed up in its surroundings.

It is not by enumeration that one can delimit the social activities of the Red Cross, for as constantly as conditions produce new needs, these must be constantly responded to. However, since delimitation there admittedly must be, there is a way in which it can be done: namely by recourse to two criteria—the fixed, historical criterion, and the movable criterion of selection among the new tasks emerging out of life's ever-changing circumstances.

The historical criterion is the function for which the Red Cross was originally founded, and in which it was confirmed by the three Geneva Conventions. It was in virtue of that function that the distinctive sign of the red cross in the white field was adopted in 1864; and from those international treaties the national societies receive their character as Red Cross Societies. Had that status not been granted them,

the use of the protective emblem would not have been extended by the Convention of 1929 to cover the societies' peacetime activities as well. If peace were ever to be consolidated among all nations, Red Cross work as such would fall automatically into disuetude, and to that ultimate end all our efforts should be bent. But in the meanwhile, we should not only be lacking in gratitude towards the past, but also in the wisdom and sense of present realities indispensable to every useful humanitarian endeavour, if we were to deny the tragic side of things as they still are, and if this led us to neglect or abandon the primary and fundamental Red Cross mission.

For the rest it can be said that all humanitarian activity, that is, all voluntary and unpaid service for the relief of suffering humanity, can be integrated in the work of the Red Cross, as circumstances may require. Any attempt to fix hard and fast limits would be both pointless and harmful. On the other hand, let us remember that the farther one leaves the specifically appointed task behind, the more one ventures on to almost boundless territory, and the more one risks encroaching upon areas already occupied by other organisations. When contemplating new activities, every society should therefore take into full account not only the ways and means at its disposal, but also the principles, independent of material considerations, which must at all times govern its choice.

In this connection the history of the Red Cross can best show us the way. What Dunant saw on the battelfield of Solferino was an appalling distress due to the dearth—or at least the total inadequacy—of care for the wounded soldiers, though their need was desperate. The relief service he organised on the spur of the moment taught him many things of

practical value for the future, and it was with a wide, clear vision that he launched the idea which soon took form as the Red Cross.

The Red Cross came into existence to fill a gap, but it had no ambition to occupy the place exclusively. It desired no more than to complement and aid the regular military medical services, which Florence Nightingale had also found so hopelessly unequal to the need. The Red Cross does not claim to be the only voluntary organisation protected under the Geneva Convention in time of war. With the countless possibilities of social service facing it today, if the Red Cross seeks counsel in its original idea, it will always be ready to act where suffering inadequately cared for calls for its aid. But it will avoid all overlapping; and every kind of competition, beyond emulating others' better efforts, will be far from its thoughts. There is so much misery in the world that it would be unpardonable to scatter or mismanage the means available for its alleviation, and no less unpardonable to employ them, not as real necessity dictates, but to justify preconceived ideas or satisfy a desire for prestige.

Since the Red Cross enters where other organisations are not already at work, its chief mission consists in taking the initiative in new and unforeseen situations. Sudden calamity, such as floods and earthquakes and the like, are thus its natural concern. Intermittent, irregular and unpredictable, these phenomena which cause such widespread distress, cannot be regularly provided for. It would be difficult for each country to maintain a special organisation in view of such events, or to create one for each occasion. But available to all, and equipped for all emergencies, permanent, and held in general esteem, the Red Cross is an organisation ready to enter into action at any

moment, and able to mobilise a legion of willing helpers.

Thus in new or newly constituted countries, the Red Cross national societies have much wider and more varied scope than in countries where government, municipalities and private organisations all take their share in old-established tasks of social service. And finally, the Red Cross is peculiarly fitted to deal with cases in which, on account of its political and religious neutrality, it has a freer hand than other official or private organs. It alone, very often, is able to reach groups outside the radius of relief societies with a closely circumscribed field of action, or those which do not care to receive assistance from sources with this or that political or religious bias.

If the foregoing observations are correct, it follows that the social activities of the Red Cross necessarily differ from one country to another, and that in one and the same country they change with the times. The intervention of the Red Cross may be required at the moment when a new and urgent need arises; it may cease if a special and efficient organisation can be created to carry on the work begun. The same holds if the Red Cross has lent its services to public administrations or private organisations in emergencies, when extraordinary and supplementary aid was wanted to tide over a time of crisis. All these conclusions drawn from the principles expounded above, seem fully confirmed by Dr. Sand's report with its impressive picture of Red Cross social work.

The need for delimitation applies to the action of the Red Cross in times of war between nations, and in other abnormal circumstances such as civil war. There too the movement has gone beyond the boundaries of its functions as defined in the Geneva Conven-

tion and the first statutes of the national societies. It has embraced prisoners of war other than sick and wounded, civilian populations menaced by the methods of modern warfare, such as chemical war and aerial bombardment, to mention but two examples among many.

Political neutrality—taken here in its international sense as well—by giving the Red Cross a moral right, imposes upon it also the concomitant duty to intervene wherever intense human suffering exists, and must be helped. But here too the Red Cross takes such initiative only if it sees a gap unfilled; it withdraws as soon as the steps it has taken have had practical effect—when, for instance, the governments concerned, or the League of Nations, have taken up a cause first served by the Red Cross, and proceed to deal with it effectively.

The Red Cross is often linked in the public mind with the idea of the good Samaritan. And indeed the parable, with its unfathomable depths of meaning, seems to propound the very principles which inspire the work of the Red Cross. The Samaritan brings aid to a man in dire straits, abandoned and ignored by others just as well qualified to befriend the sufferer as he. His help is absolutely unselfish; he does not concern himself about the social and religious barriers separating Jews and Samaritans. Nor, having assumed the charge, does he relinquish it until he can confide the victim to another's care, but even then he does not merely pass on his way and lose all further interest in the man he has helped.

The Red Cross has a great and noble function to fulfill: to keep continual watch for human distress wherever it may appear, in new forms or forms which have never yet been heeded; to bear aid where others do not; to second others' efforts if they are

really useful, but only long enough to ensure that usefulness, after which the others remain, but the Red Cross withdraws.

Only an organisation at once entirely disinterested, and rich in generous human aid and in material means, could assume so arduous a mission. It represents the idea of service in the purest sense of the word.

THE RED CROSS IDEA AT THE PRESENT TIME[1]

In the year 1863 a committee of Genevese, having conceived the plan of carrying out the idea with which Henry Dunant had been inspired on the battlefield of Solferino, called a conference. Out of that meeting emerged the Red Cross, with its corollaries, the Geneva Convention and the Voluntary Aid Societies. As early as the following year an international congress took place, which resulted in the first Geneva Convention. The new movement was given the name and emblem of the Red Cross, and permanently established in international law. And no sooner was the Convention duly signed than Red Cross societies began forming in all the countries of the contracting governments.

During the seventy years which have gone by since then, the national Red Cross societies, together with representatives of the signatory Powers, have held their ordinary international congresses at intervals of

[1] Message addressed to the XVth Red Cross International Conference in Tokio, 1934.

usually five years. The fifteenth of these takes place in October 1934 in Tokio.

The choice fell to Japan not only as the home of one of the largest and most active national societies, but also because that distant meeting-place gives visible proof that the Red Cross now embraces the whole world. Almost all the previous Conferences had been held in Europe which, in the early years of our century, still counted by far the largest number of national societies. In 1912 it met for the first time in America, at Washington, and now it has had particular pleasure in accepting the invitation extended by the largest society on the Asiatic continent.

These International Conferences, at which the national Red Cross Societies present reports of their activities, and at which questions of general interest are discussed, afford more than the opportunity of following the development of the movement; they are also an occasion for considering where it stands with regard to contemporary thought. All life is ebb and flow; every human being and every human community and institution are in continuous discussion with their environment, either in self-assertion or in adaptation. The former often means tension and conflict, the second often inner change; but the more universal the character of a movement or organisation, the greater is the need for such discussion and the more frequently occasions for it will arise. Indeed these periodical reckonings are inevitable in proportion to the movement's enduring qualities.

The Red Cross, with its sixty autonomous, loosely federated national societies, is one of the few movements which can be called truly universal. But far from being a cosmopolitan thing, detached from all national moorings, it has been anchored, from its

inception, in national societies as its essential elements. Therein lies its international character, one of the chief features of which is the existence of many national groups working independently side by side. The strength and vitality of these national societies are the well-spring from which the Red Cross, in each separate country and as a composite entity in the world, draw its potentialities of usefulness and its moral credit. But the peculiar structure of the movement also lays its organisations open to the repercussions of all the constant changes that national life is heir to.

Another consequence of this international and universal character is that when ideas regarding international relations and universal human obligations begin to alter their course, whether in single countries or over much wider areas, the Red Cross cannot remain unaffected by them. They necessarily influence the standing of the movement as a whole, and that of the separate societies as parts of an international and universal organisation existing in the countries concerned.

With its seventy years, the Red Cross is a comparatively new, but also a comparatively old, institution. The Geneva Convention inaugurated a new era in the history of modern international law, and the same can be said of the movement carried forward by the national societies. Since the Red Cross has existed in the world, the idea of international law and the international co-operation of national organisations has undergone an evolution out of all proportion to that of previous epochs, and in the course of which it has been well buffeted by all the political and intellectual tides that have advanced and receded within that period.

The Red Cross must be considered from three

distinct angles: First the national societies, which, taken together, represent almost the entire moral, personal and material assets of the movement. Then there are the international organs whose function is to maintain the movement's tradition and its unity, to facilitate the national societies' dealings with one another, and to further the formation of national societies and enhance their effectiveness.

But if its national and international groups are wholly contained in the Red Cross, the Red Cross is not wholly contained in them. It must be viewed in its totality as the sum of all its parts and aspects, an idea made concrete in committees and societies, but existing by itself, apart from these. It must be seen as upholding, in the midst of the nations, a living principle which, though the practical forms it assumes are chiefly national, yet in its utter simplicity is comprehensible and acceptable to all peoples; as a bridge of understanding from one people to another, which they will allow to stand and consent to use when, in the recurring tragic crises between nations, almost every other bridge of human intercourse has broken down.

It is of the very essence of the Red Cross that it remain aloof from all politics, national and, more especially, international. But as a movement planted in the centre of practical life, it cannot ignore political events or the changing trend of political ideas. Indirectly, if not always directly, these modify the standing and composition of the national societies, and affect the prestige and popularity of the humanitarian ideas and the principle of international co-operation they represent. Political changes are largely the result of changing philosophies, and these again are influenced by political and social innovations. But even where philosophical influence does not reach

the political sphere, it is bound to make itself profoundly felt in the general attitude and response to a movement such as the Red Cross, based upon an ethical idea.

In the national field, we are experiencing an ever-increasing extension of governmental power over individuals and private groups, which tend to go down before the greater group of the nation as a whole, the collectivity. If the contrast between the present day and the period just prior to the World War is striking, it is still more so in comparison with the age in which the Red Cross was founded and passed through its early stages of development. Certainly the countries in which the Red Cross societies existed were at all times very different from each other, different as to their form of government and their politically and socially dominant classes, and these divergences have often been noticeably reflected in the social composition of the Red Cross national societies and their degree of influence. But widely as these elements might differ, the then existing liberal trend of thought made for a certain homogeneity notwithstanding, and it was more possible to give them a unified character than it is today. The less the state encroaches upon the individual sphere, the more a private national organisation can follow the line of a universal movement.

Whilst it is perfectly correct to say that the Red Cross was conceived as a popular movement embracing all sections of the nation, and that this principle has been held to wherever possible, another principle has always been at least of equal moment: namely, that the national societies should be in close contact, indeed in formal connection, with their respective governments. This association with the state authority is an indispensable prerequisite, for without

it the tasks devolving upon the societies under the Geneva Convention cannot be fulfilled. Also, this bond with their governments has contributed not a little to the prestige the societies enjoy, and it has greatly benefitted their peace-time activities as well.

Today however, not every government is disposed to co-ordinate individual liberties in a law applicable to all; there is a desire to put the national community in the foreground, and keep it there by means of an intensive synchronisation of social and political thought. The play of parties rivalling for place on a basis of equal rights is no longer everywhere admitted, and even a neutral attitude towards the government may be looked at askance.

It is not for us to pass judgment upon the relations between government and governed, or between the individual and the state, still less to make prognostications. We confine ourselves to the statement that great changes in political life have taken place since the early days of the Red Cross, and that these have affected the existence of certain national societies in an unprecedented manner. And indeed in a period of ferment like the one in which we are living, what changes may not occur! It may be safely assumed that differences greater than any that have existed before must be expected to appear in the structure and governmental relations of the national societies for a long time to come.

These circumstances, over which neither its national nor its international organisations have any control, will not, however, touch the unity of the Red Cross at its essential core so long as the Red Cross idea, unself-seeking help for the suffering in every situation, still rules the activities of the national groups. What matters is to reach an ever wider public in all countries, and gain their interest and

collaboration. Either in law or in fact, the social and political structure of a state is inevitably decisive for its national society, and always has been, though to a lesser extent than now. For the Red Cross the important thing is for every country to possess a robust national society, one in which the vital forces of the nation, each according to its kind, devote themselves with energy to Red Cross work. The unity and universality of the Red Cross would both be ill served by an attempt to cling to a pattern which it was right and possible to follow in a given political and social situation, but which altered circumstances have rendered inapplicable. What this implies may be illustrated in the manner in which the International Committee, invested by tradition and in the Statutes of 1928 with the regular constitution of the national societies, executes its mandate in this respect.

The Red Cross should not be a kind of foreign body within a nation and state; it cannot stand in contradiction to the national sentiment, or to the government upon which it depends for official recognition and the power to perform its prime function —medical relief in time of war. The unity and universality of the Red Cross must not be sought in any outward uniformity of its component parts, but in the existence of strong societies having their roots in the national life, each one, whatever its individual character, embodying the Red Cross idea common to all.

This brings us to the second aspect of our problem: the relation of the Red Cross to international developments. There is no question about it: since the foundation of the movement, international relations, international law and international institutions of every kind have vastly evolved.

Not only was the Geneva Convention the first universal treaty for the purpose of forcing home a

humanitarian idea in warfare; it also paved the way for the development of modern international law. In the wars of seven decades it has stood every test. The Red Cross, as an institution of voluntary aid, likewise broke new ground in the field of international co-operation, and for a long time it was one of very few similar movements uniting organisations of a like kind belonging to several countries. For many years the Red Cross, like the Geneva Convention itself, stood apart, as a thing unique, the symbol of non-political international endeavour.

So faltering was the pace at which international institutions developed until quite recent years, so limited were the competencies and so scanty the resources they obtained from governments and private groups, that the Red Cross was able to fulfill its arduous international duties with only a very loose organisation, Conference and International Committee, and at very small expense.

Enormous tasks grew out of the war of 1914/18 for the national societies and the International Committee in Geneva, and the means to cope with them flowed in to an extent not to be imagined. And this state of things lasted in some cases long after the war was over. With the creation of the League for the furthering of the peace-time aims of the Red Cross, this part of its work received a powerful new impetus, and the international organisation found itself considerably enlarged thereby.

When the war came to an end, all things international took a simultaneous leap forward, and assumed proportions that would have been looked upon as quite unthinkable before. Apart from institutions like the League of Nations, the International Labour Office and the Permanent Court of International Justice—to mention only these—based

on the peace treaties or on resolutions of the League of Nations, all kinds of private or semi-official international organisations appeared in great and rapidly increasing numbers: philanthropic, scientific, or religious, some newly founded, others reanimated and enlarged. Today the Red Cross is only one of many movements which pursue aims common to the generality of nations, and bind national organisations together.

The impetuous growth of international ideas brought about a curious situation for the Red Cross. Its activity, which had so immensely increased while hostilities lasted, gradually but immediately diminished when the post-war period set in, and the means which had flowed in to meet its emergencies receded also. Not only this, but in the eyes of many people, the Red Cross movement itself and all its accomplished service had suddenly become open to question. In certain circles it was held that merely to place a humanitarian bridle upon war was only evading the problem; in the light of the new endeavours to limit war by international agreement and even to ban it altogether, they declared both the Red Cross and the Geneva Convention to be based upon a false principle.

We need not here concern ourselves with refuting the deluded opinions which stigmatised the specific function of the Red Cross as useless and self-contradictory. These criticisms have no practical cogency in the face of the vast post-war development of the peace-time work of the Red Cross, and the extension in that direction of its national and international organisations. In the international field, the League of Red Cross Societies is the most notable expression of this important new orientation.

One of the results of the powerful growth of inter-

nationalism after the World War, was that the Red Cross ceased to occupy its former position as a kind of isolated headland in international life. Another was the noticeable degree to which it was affected by those intellectual currents which strongly favour or disfavour international effort. Whereas in the international field the pre-war period had been one of extraordinary timidity, if not extreme scepticism, the bold enterprises of the post-war years unleashed widespread hopes in things which cannot be achieved —or at least only very imperfectly—except with time. The upshot was much inevitable, and largely unfounded, disappointment. If for many the international, and the universal, humane and supranational in general, are the very essence of ethical rightness and a broad spiritual vision, there are others to whom these ideas denote a menace to the national interests, an aberration, or even a cloak for political manœuvres. Among the nations divided against each other and themselves, national and international issues have become the object of passionate controversy in which emotions rather than reason hold sway.

The Red Cross neither speculates upon a rise in internationalism, nor, when this drops in public favour, does it let itself be moved thereby. In these seventy years it has grown slowly to maturity; as it is not the product of any particular political situation, it has no need to adapt itself to the fluctuations of politics.

The Red Cross rests chiefly upon its national societies; the essential task of each of these is service to its own people. The supra-national activity of the Red Cross has its corner-stone in the Geneva Convention, which all governments have accepted, and which has justified its existence in the most varied circumstances of international life. And furthermore

its base is in the International Relief Union which every country, without jeoparding its individual interests, is free to join or not, as it chooses.

If and when the national organs of the Red Cross extend their action over and above the provisions of the treaties and beyond their own frontiers, they do so always in the spirit, or for the protection, of the purely humanitarian principles in which the treaties are grounded. Their participation is a service, offered but not imposed, and always exercised in collaboration with the national Red Cross of the foreign country concerned, so far as one exists and is able to perform Red Cross work. All this applies most particularly to the international organs.

The international organisation of the Red Cross has always refrained from every attempt to stereotype, or dictate to, the national societies with their different forms and requirements. Itself gradually evolved out of existing conditions, it adapts itself to the special circumstances of the Red Cross, whatever these may be. Observers who prefer their formulas cut and dried, and reduced to a comfortable simplicity, may find some difficulty in understanding and admitting the co-existence of National Societies, Committee and League as components of the edifice of the International Red Cross. And yet it is precisely this triple structure, informed by the immanent reason of its historic being, that gives the movement its staying-power in the face of evolutionary crises on the way to an international world order.

The Conference stands for the voluntary national organisations' co-operation with the governments; the League, for the federal union of autonomous societies; the International Red Cross Committee in Geneva, for the movement's neutrality and independence, guaranteed by the special status accorded to the

country where this resident body has its seat. In times of conflict this independence remains unchanged, and the neutrality unaffected; and by its composition the International Committee offers the advantages of a national institution.

One danger which besets almost all international organisations is the disproportion between organisation and aims, and again between organisation and actual possibilities. Beside the obvious advantages which the narrower, more self-contained national body can always display over the broader, looser, more heterogeneous international one, the latter can easily appear to be given over to mere empty and impotent rhetoric. But international work can only be rightly judged, whether by those engaged in it or by simple onlookers, if the observer remains constantly alive to all the special sociological and psychological premises which underly relations that go beyond a single government and a single nation; and if he never falls into the error of supposing that the international is either a synthesis of the individual and national, or—a still greater mistake—that it is one or the other of these on a larger scale.

As an international organisation, the Red Cross can only gain in prestige by continuing to appear no more effectual than it really is. What tells is not what it says and proclaims, but what it is and does. It will therefore be sparing in making resolutions and publishing them abroad, for behind each one it must set the whole of its force. Words without actions are not only meaningless, they would also tend to undermine confidence in declarations of the Red Cross in cases where its action might otherwise have been most useful.

Let us now look at our problem in its third and last aspect: the place of the Red Cross in the ideological

currents of the day. How the Red Cross reacts to the national evolution of various countries and their attitude towards international co-operation, is an affair of social dynamics. In these matters the contending forces eventually reach an equilibrium which time will ever and again displace: closer or less close union between the state and the sections of the people that determine its form and character, greater or lesser readiness for international effort. But the same does not hold for the plane of philosophical and religious influences. These have no effect at all upon the movement's organisation and field of activity, but a very great effect indeed upon the basic understanding of the Red Cross idea.

Adaptation and conciliation are both possible and normal on the shifting ground of politics; in the spiritual and ethical realm, they are out of the question. What must therefore be sought and found is one point at which people of divergent views may meet without compromising their most intimate and treasured beliefs. If our movement means to fulfill the task it has assumed, then it must speak a language which, without being the spiritual mother-tongue of each individual in the multitude, shall yet be comprehensible to all who work under the sign of the Red Cross.

Like Florence Nightingale, Henry Dunant was a person whose sense of responsibility towards his suffering fellow-men sprang from a deep religious conviction, and for whom to believe was to act. But it was neither Dunant's desire nor that of his collaborators, nor that of the countries participating in the Geneva Convention that the work and emblem of the Red Cross should bear a religious stamp, or be in any way attached to a given set of philosophical ideas. On the contrary, the movement was not only to serve, but also to gather to itself, all sorts and conditions of men.

Explicitly or implicitly this principle is contained in the statutes of the national societies, and in those of the International Committee and the League it is distinctly expressed.

Its " neutrality " — one could think of a happier designation, but it is the usual one — in matters of religious or philosophic creed, does not seem ever to have led to difficulties in the past; in fact it alone can explain how, for so long a time, the Red Cross idea never gave rise to anything like ethical questionings. And yet every human action has its antecedents in a philosophy. Without let or hindrance the Red Cross has spread over all lands, lands confessing the great world religions in their various churches, one only or several side by side, lands in which every imaginable difference of relationship exists between the ruling power and public worship, from closest unity to complete indifference, or even definite repudiation. And the picture becomes more kaleidoscopie still when we call to mind the individuals assembled in the Red Cross movement. This neutral attitude has even permitted exceptions to be made in regard to the emblem itself. (Red Crescent, Red Lion and Sun. Art. 19 of the Geneva Convention of 1929.)

The principle of neutrality as the Red Cross understood it, fitted in very well with the liberalism of recent generations with their far-going tolerance, amounting sometimes to a certain indifferentism. The humanitarian idea which had its main source in 18th century philosophy, found concrete expression during the 19th century in a general flourishing of philanthropic movements, some newly created and others, already extant, aroused to fresh activity. It was a common ground upon which people of different worldly and other-worldly views could come together.

But it may also be a starting-point for frictions and

misunderstandings which the Red Cross cannot ignore. Humanity in the philosophic sense is generally understood as the ethics of humanism, a system having as its central point the morally autonomous human being. And that is precisely where opposition can occur, between the revealed religions on the one hand, which defend their spiritual claims more militantly as the secularisation of modern life increases, and with the strictly national or collective school of thought on the other, which puts the collectivity, and not the individual person foremost in the hierarchy of social phenomena.

This last view, if carried through to its logical conclusion, could well deny the Red Cross all validity. But we think that it will nowhere be pushed quite to that extreme, certainly not to the point of contesting responsibility for one's suffering neighbour, even if he be the enemy.

There is, however, one real danger overhanging the Red Cross idea, and it lies in the view that human action, in the last analysis, shall be ruled, not by moral duties binding upon every individual and owed by each to all, but by the dynamics of the nation in its totalitarian aspect, in which the individual's duties are all absorbed by, and concentrated in, his sole community.

The opposition between an anthropocentric humanism and religion, the Christian religion in particular, does not in itself touch the Red Cross at any essential point, so long as the Red Cross does not identify itself with that humanism. And this it cannot do without departing from the philosophic neutrality it proclaims.

The Red Cross idea is the act of unself-seeking aid for all who suffer, for all who are in need of help and receive none elsewhere. Wherever distress exists,

the Red Cross is ready to step into the breach to the extent of its capacity and its personal and material means. The Red Cross is action, simple and disinterested, disinterested both as to the helper's person and as to the institution itself. Hence its desire to work together with all who are moved by the spirit of service, without enquiring what special theory of human obligation has prompted their offer to collaborate.

The Red Cross knows that whoever labours, not for his own well-being but his fellow-man's, draws the power and the urge to do so from his conscience and an inmost sense of human responsibility. The Red Cross is not called upon to trespass upon these last and most sacred preserves of the spirit; it is therefore bound to remain neutral in matters touching personal beliefs. That is not the neutrality of indifference, but of deep and true respect.

Contemplating the whole range of Red Cross work, we see that it falls into three zones: the humanitarian, the directive and the technical. But all exist for the sake of the humanitarian work alone. Necessary for holding the responsible organisations and the movement together, as well as for keeping a look-out for new tasks, the directive work — direction of the national societies, the Conferences, the international institutions — receives perhaps more than its due share of public notice, on account of the reflected glory cast upon it by the movement as a whole. Indispensable to the movement's prestige is the technical labour of whose who, in local organisations and central administrations, carry a great burden, the many men and women working quietly and faithfully at modest posts. But superior to all is the humanitarian work, which goes out to find the distress that calls to it. The Red Cross was not fashioned out of a beautiful but abstract ethical idea,

not was it first thought out and debated at a congress; it came to life upon the battlefield of Solferino, born of an urgent and actual necessity, and the people who created it did so, in the most literal sense, with their own hearts and hands. From such help rendered then and since, the Red Cross lives, has lived and will live on and on.

The courage and self-sacrifice for which it stands do not wait upon wars or epidemics or catastrophes. In the care of the sick, in countless other humble and unnoticed Red Cross tasks, thousands of men and women workers spend themselves daily without thought of recognition or return. From all this direct humanitarian service, strength, confidence and respect flow into the Red Cross through all its parts.

Not that this labour of relief and general usefulness are the sole prerogative of the Red Cross. It shares in these humane services with many, very many other movements and individuals. The more there were the better it would be, for even all these efforts together are insufficient for the need, and all that they can hope to achieve is far behind the immensity of the world's distress.

But where selfless help and service are, where administrative or technical work contribute their part without thought of advantage or reward, and in an unwavering spirit of fraternity, there and there only is the Red Cross.

This service to suffering mankind is the flame that illuminates the entire movement, warms it and leads it onward. May this flame not be a flickering rushlight to be anxiously watched over lest it go out; may it be the strong flare of an advancing torch, which shows the way through darkness, and which the stormwind of distress and difficulty only fans to a brighter blaze.

RED CROSS AND NEUTRALITY[1]

The notion of neutrality is one which appertains essentially to the field of international public law; the word " neutrality " describes the position of a State which is not taking part in a war, in relation to the States which are waging the war. Although the notion of neutrality has gradually changed, it still implies that the neutral party refrains from, and is unaffected by, acts of war strictly so-called. In the moral sphere, on the other hand, neutrality means the observance of an impartial attitude towards situations or trends of thought which are different or contradictory.

Neither in the first nor in the second of these acceptations of the term does the neutral take sides. The idea of impartiality is, therefore, closely connected with that of neutrality.

From the outset, the principle of neutrality has been an essential part of the idea of the Red Cross. The first Geneva Convention of August 22nd, 1864, laid down the neutrality of military ambulances and hospitals and of the personnel employed by them (Arts. 1, 2, 5, 6, 7). By this the Convention meant to indicate that the institutions and personnel intended to render assistance to the wounded and sick, and

[1] Article published in the " Revue internationale de la Croix-Rouge ", 1936.

also the wounded and sick themselves, should be regarded as inviolable by the belligerents. It also enacted that these institutions and personnel should not take part in any act of war. The revised Geneva Conventions of 1906 (Arts. 9 et 16) and 1929 (Arts. 6, 9, 10, 14, 16 & 18) no longer use the expression " neutrality " which is, indeed, not very accurate from the juridical point of view, but the inviolability conferred by the Conventions is to be interpreted in the sense given by the 1864 instrument to the word " neutrality ".

The Geneva Convention further professes the principle of neutrality and impartiality in its essential stipulation that the wounded and sick are to be cared for regardless of their nationality. The Red Cross considers no one as an enemy.

Furthermore, from the very outset, the idea of neutrality made its way into the Red Cross by yet another channel. One objective of the movement started by the first Geneva Conference in 1863, was to set up in every country Committees which would organize voluntary assistance. For this purpose an appeal was made to all sections of the population; the idea was to bring together in each national Society all persons of goodwill, whatever their sex, creed or political faith. As a result of this particular kind of neutrality, national Red Cross Societies have been able to take action, in the national sphere, in cases where other organizations of a more or less political or denominational character would perhaps have encountered insuperable obstacles. This neutral and non-political character, moreover, enables the national Societies to take impartial and disinterested action when—in time of war or in the event of a calamity—they have to render assistance outside their own country.

These principles which are those inspiring national Societies and the League of Red Cross Societies, which is their corporate organization [1], are also essential to the International Red Cross Committee [2].

In the case of the International Committee, as its work is carried on outside any national territory of its own, and is primarily concerned with the situations arising as a result of war, its first obligation is to observe the most complete neutrality in international relations. The Committee, which was founded in 1863 by citizens of Geneva and whose Statutes enact that its members are to be recruited by co-optation from among Swiss nationals, has from the foundation of the Red Cross been known as the " International Committee ", even though its membership was exclusively Swiss. The term " international ", therefore, applies not to its membership but to its activities, because, in contrast to national Societies, it operates in the international sphere. This may, at first sight, seem to be a paradoxical state of affairs but it is, in the first place, the consequence of a historical fact: the lead in Red Cross work given by a Geneva Committee which suceeeded in giving effect to the noble inspiration of J. Henry Dunant. It can, moreover, be explained by considerations of a practical nature: the age-long neutrality of Switzerland [3] affords a special guarantee to the International Red Cross Committee. It can, after all, be presumed that, as the Committee consists of Swiss nationals and has its headquarters in Switzerland, it will be able in war time to carry

[1] Statutes of the League, Art. II.

[2] Statutes of the International Red Cross Committee, Art. 4, *b*), *d*), *e*). Statutes of the International Red Cross, Art. IX.

[3] In 1815, the Powers declared their agreement that it was in the general interest to grant the Swiss Confederation the privilege of perpetual neutrality (Cf. " Die schweizerische Neutralität und der Völkerbund " in *L'origine et l'œuvre de la Société des Nations*, Copenhagen, 1924).

on its operations better than it would be able to do if its headquarters were in another country. It would, of course, be conceivable that, although having its headquarters in a permanently neutral State, an international Red Cross body with the powers which are at present attributed to the International Committee should consist of representatives of the various national Societies. However, there might be apprehension of its activity being seriously hampered or exposed to suspicion of some bias, in the event of States, having nationals as members of the International Red Cross Committee, being involved in a dispute. Finally, a Red Cross organization, responsible for work connected with warfare, must be in a position to take prompt decisions and to function without interruption. Its representative composition would, therefore, mean heavy sacrifices for the national Societies if the promptness and effectiveness of its action were to be really ensured.

The above are the chief reasons, apart from historical tradition, for the existence of an exclusively Swiss committee forming one of the central organizations of the International Red Cross. The International Red Cross Committee has, of course, no monopoly in promoting humanitarian relations between belligerents; national Societies of neutral countries played a very important part during the World War, similar to that played by the International Committee. This Committee, however, as an independent institution which acts on its own responsibility alone, must not take the risk of automatically, by its own acts, involving the national Societies in responsibility. This might occur if it were composed of nationals of different nationalities and in that way represented, indirectly at any rate, various national Societies.

To understand fully the importance of the neutrality of the Red Cross in general and of the International Committee in particular, it should never be forgotten that the essential task of the Red Cross is to render humanitarian assistance. Its aim is to abolish or alleviate human suffering [1]. The Red Cross work originally done on the battlefield, as envisaged by the Geneva Convention,—even though it is now supplemented or even perhaps outdistanced by numerous peace-time activities—still remains the essential and primordial duty of the Red Cross. All this humanitarian work must be done for the benefit of everyone without distinction and under all circumstances, that is to say, even in the gravest eventuality —that of war—when men are so tragically tempted to choose one side or the other. If the Red Cross is to be able to offer its help to everyone and to do its work in centres which are utterly different from, or even hostile to, one another, it must inspire everywhere a feeling of complete moral security and maintain everywhere relations of mutual confidence. It will only enjoy that confidence if it works in a spirit of absolute impartiality and if it remains determined never to serve, even indirectly, the interests of one side to the prejudice of those of the other.

While this exclusively humanitarian work is primarily the function of the national Societies, which form the real army of the Red Cross, the principles laid down above are equally incumbent upon the international Red Cross organizations—the International Red Cross Committee, the League of Red Cross Societies and even the International Red Cross Conferences. The whole of the international superstructure

[1] Cf. " Extension et délimitation du rôle de la Croix-Rouge ", *Revue internationale de la Croix-Rouge*, décembre 1932.

of the Red Cross is really designed merely to help the national Societies, to co-ordinate their efforts or to intervene when the action of a central body, representing a definite tradition, holds out more chances of success than would attend the action of a national Society. The international Red Cross organizations, inspired by the same ideal as the national Societies, must, therefore, if they are to preserve intact their character of neutrality and impartiality, adopt a reserved attitude which in some cases may perhaps seem, at first sight, surprising. And this is particularly true in the case of the International Committee owing to its special function, which is that of a neutral intermediary in time of war or even of civil war or internal commotion.

Though its primary and immediate task is to alleviate human suffering, the Red Cross is deeply interested in having its work guaranteed by international treaties. The first efforts of the promoters were directed essentially to the convening of the Diplomatic Conference of 1864 which resulted in the Geneva Convention. Since then the Red Cross has taken the keenest interest in all efforts aimed at making war less inhuman, at restricting it and ultimately outlawing it. It would be no exaggeration to say that the Geneva Convention—the earliest of the Conventions designed to make war less brutal—led the way in the great forward movement of international law which culminated in the organization of peace in the form of the League of Nations and the pacts which supplementit [1] [2].

[1] Cf. " La Croix-Rouge et l'évolution récente du droit international ", *Revue internationale de la Croix-Rouge*, janvier 1929, p. 8-20.

[2] The peace-time activities of the Red Cross have been explicitly recognized in Article 25 of the Covenant of the League of Nations and the International Relief Union (Convention of July 12th, 1927) marks an important advance in this direction.

International Conventions, clearly, are only of value in so far as they are observed. The International Red Cross Committee is, therefore, bound, *inter alia*, to receive all complaints made regarding alleged breaches of the Conventions; among the latter the Geneva Convention calls for its special, but by no means exclusive, attention. The International Committee receives these complaints chiefly from the national Societies but it gives consideration also to any protest relating to humanitarian interests which seems to be justified. It has, moreover, the right of initiative and can itself take in hand certain cases about which no complaint has been made but which, in its opinion, justify its spontaneous intervention.

At the same time, even when dealing with breaches of the Conventions or with any act that is a violation of humanitarian principles, the International Red Cross Committee has no intention whatsoever of sitting in judgment. It is not a court of justice and, besides, it has not itself the means of ascertaining the facts, which alone would enable it to give a verdict. As a general rule, therefore, it merely transmits the protest emanating from other quarters, or from itself, to the national Society of the country which is accused of the breach or of the act of inhumanity. Usually, this correspondence is published by the International Red Cross Committee, even when it does not receive the reply asked for. It is impossible, however, to lay down a rigid uniform rule as to the method of procedure or as to the publicity to be given to the action thus taken. In contrast to freely organized groups of private individuals, and to organizations which have entire liberty to vent, in resounding demonstrations, their emotion or indignation in respect to acts which they condemn, the Red

Cross, and in particular the International Red Cross Committee, have to exercise great caution and self-command. This is not due to indifference or to lack of courage, but is a result of the responsibilities devolving on an organization which must always be in a position to afford all parties the guarantee of as unbiassed a judgment as possible and of action free from every suspicion of partiality, political or other.

Thanks to its neutrality and its impartiality the Red Cross has sometimes been invited to investigate matters of fact. Thus, delegates of national Societies or of the International Red Cross Committee have, for instance, been invited to visit prisoners' camps. The confidence which is thus placed in the Red Cross makes it essential for the latter to exercise extreme discretion. Moreover, the facts thus ascertained by it, through the sources of information directly or indirectly due to this confidence, must only be used for humanitarian purposes, never for the political ends, however legitimate they may be, of one party against another. Furthermore, whenever the Red Cross, or the International Red Cross Committee in particular, are asked to investigate facts in dispute, they will be careful to see that the procedure adopted affords all the necessary guarantees of objectivity and impartiality not only in point of fact but also in outward appearance.

As has been said above, the Red Cross cannot claim to exert any kind of judicial authority. It has a different part to play: it is a humanitarian institution.

In the present state of international law the neutrality of the Red Cross raises a problem of a special and delicate nature. When the Geneva Convention was concluded in 1864, international law

drew no distinction between licit and illicit wars. It was, of course, always open to anyone to pass judgment from the moral standpoint on resort to war, but the law of nations accepted war, without attaching any qualification to it, as an inherent part of a nation's sovereignty. In the case of the Red Cross the question did not arise at that time as to whether its attitude towards war might depend on circumstances. Since that time, however, the League of Nations has put the right to make war on an entirely different plane; the Briand-Kellogg Pact has banned it as an instrument of national policy; the Covenant of the League of Nations has made an initial attempt to organise collective reaction against illicit warfare and has thus profoundly modified the regime of neutrality. It has thus become possible to wonder whether the Red Cross would maintain its neutrality, its " impartial " attitude, towards belligerents who took up arms in violation of a covenant limiting or excluding the right to wage war.

Nevertheless, the purely humanitarian objective of the Red Cross must take priority over every other consideration. It is true that the efforts made to suppress warfare have also a humanitarian end in view, and one of the noblest. Moreover, the International Red Cross Conferences have, since the World War, often manifested their desire to help in promoting a spirit of peace and understanding among the nations. At the present time, however, war can only be prevented and repressed by political means. Therefore in relation to this repression—as in relation to any act of domestic or foreign policy—the Red Cross must adopt the attitude of reserve which is forced upon it by its obligation to remain neutral. The real activity of the Red Cross—to help the victims, all the victims, of war—must not be subordinated to the question

of the legality of the war. The motto: *res sacra miser*, holds good in all circumstances. Thus the Red Cross continues to be expected to act in the event of civil war or internal commotion, even while the right to take up arms is being most bitterly contested.

The idea that the Red Cross can continue to function in any international war has been admitted by the League of Nations in the Assembly resolution of October 4th, 1921, which contemplates that, notwithstanding the application of the economic weapon, humanitarian relations shall be continued.

Just as the idea of neutrality and the work of the Red Cross are far from being incompatible—it has already been explained that they are, in fact, intimately connected—so there is no incompatibility between the work of the Red Cross and the solidarity which binds the States taking a collective part in repressive action in virtue of Article 16 of the Covenant of the League of Nations [1]. Doubtless, if, as the result of such collective action, the state of war comes to embrace several Powers, the number of neutral Societies which could offer their services to the belligerents will correspondingly decrease. But the system instituted by the Geneva Convention still remains in force between all the belligerents, and the Societies of countries which, for one reason or another, are not involved in the war, will be able to carry on their work for the benefit of all the belligerents without distinction. Even then, it is extremely important that the International Red Cross Committee, which operates in the international field

[1] Cf. Fourteenth International Red Cross Conference, Brussels, 1930, Resolution XXIV.

only, should be able to go on discharging the duties assigned to it by the Statutes of the International Red Cross.

Though, in comparison with the distress which every war creates, the help given by the Red Cross may seem insignificant, this help should, nevertheless, not be regarded solely from the material standpoint of the service which it renders to sick and wounded soldiers and civilian populations. The work of the Red Cross is important from yet another aspect; it testifies to the fact that human solidarity remains even when the orderly life of nations is shattered and when, perhaps, the rules designed to limit the horrors of war are questioned. It is of primary importance then that this last bridge connecting the warring nations, the bridge formed by the Red Cross, should not collapse, should not be materially subjected to violence, and that its buttresses—neutrality and impartiality—should never give way under the pressure of passion.

Neutrality—the essential feature of the Red Cross —imposes responsibilities, burdens and also sacrifices. For the men who devote themselves to such a cause are necessarily exposed to criticism, to the reproach of indifference or partiality, from one or both of the parties to the dispute or even from a third party on the outside. The principles underlying the Red Cross are simple in themselves, but their application, in situations which can seldom be foreseen, which are almost always delicate and often tragic, is difficult. It may be that those who are called upon to act sometimes make mistakes. But they try to accept the criticisms expressed and suggestions offered, in the spirit of impartiality and understanding which must inspire all Red Cross work. For the Red Cross will never grow weary of trying its best to carry out

its humanitarian task, under its distinctive emblem, which implies so much responsibility but also so much hope and promise.

THE INTERNATIONAL WORK OF THE RED CROSS, AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Address delivered at the Red Cross International Conference in London, June 1938, in the presence of H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester, President of the British Red Cross.

Your Royal Highness,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As at previous Conferences, the International Red Cross Committee submits a general report on its activity, and a number of special ones relative to certain problems of interest to the movement. With your permission I shall leave aside a commentary upon these reports, and put before you instead some general considerations touching the work of the Red Cross, and in particular of the International Committee.

In my message to the Tokyo Conference, which I was unfortunately prevented from attending, I attempted to cover somewhat the same ground. Recalling the upheavals that have taken place in the social structure and the constitutions of numerous countries since the foundation of our institution in 1863, I tried to show how such happenings might affect the activity of the Red Cross in general, the relations

between the individual nations and the community of states, and finally the trend of religious and philosophic thought.

The events of the past four years have made these questions neither less urgent nor less timely. On the contrary, in a world ravaged by contending politics and ideologies, a universal movement like the Red Cross which tends towards a common moral end, has situations of incomparable gravity to face.

It has never been more indispensable than now that in every country the utmost possible moral persuasion be brought to bear upon the public in order to induce people to contribute with their pence and persons to the work of their own national Red Cross. But it is no less essential to keep clearly in view the common patrimony, over and above all national opinions and sentiments, divergent as these must naturally be at all times, but infinitely more so now. By this I mean that the national societies must never fail to discern the bonds and obligations binding upon all who, in the tragic contingency of war, are marshalled in a common purpose under the ensign of the Red Cross. The red cross in the white field is not only an emblem that protects life and property against some of war's worst ravages; it is also the symbol of a great idea encompassing all lands and peoples. Upon this point there is much that could be said, having regard to prevailing conditions in the contemporary world. But that is not my theme today.

The problem to which I invite you to lend your attention is a more concrete, and perhaps a duller one; it is none the less a permanent obsession of every national society, as well as of all the international organisations of the Red Cross. Of late years it has acquired especial acuteness for the International Committee and for the Red Cross community.

It has become harrassing for us all, and for some, alarming. I refer to the proportion, or rather, I am forced to say, the utter disproportion, between what the world justly expects of the Red Cross and what the Red Cross response ought to be—that is one half of the question—and between what we might justly expect, and what the world's response ought to be—that is the other half. This deplorable discrepancy comes out most plainly in cases when the Red Cross is required to act, not in its national, but in its international capacity. Let us look into this situation together.

The Red Cross has come to strength and greatness through its idea and the symbol of that idea, familiar in all but the most unvisited regions of the globe, a name that millions pronounce, evoking what it stands for: an effort in the cause of human welfare, drawing no distinctions, seeking no advantage or reward; succour for the wounded, the sick, the persecuted. In our age of rupture and dissension, the Red Cross is among the few calls to union and reconciliation resounding in the world above the clamour of national, religious, social and racial strife. All people know these things about the Red Cross, and that is all they do know. Their more than hazy ideas about the rest cause them often to expect the Red Cross to render services wholly outside its province, or—more often still—wholly beyond its material possibilities. But the chief of all these current misconceptions is to fancy that the Red Cross can accomplish even what is reasonably demanded of it without the workers and the funds upon which everything depends.

For a long period, especially during the post-war years, the national societies concentrated chiefly upon peacetime activities, and the effort they put forth

was indeed remarkable. The creation of the League of Red Cross societies not only gave a great and welcome impetus to this part of the work, but also put it on an international basis.

It is not my intention to discuss the financial aspect of this peacetime activity. The conditions in which it is carried out differ from those of the so-called " war " activities. The peace-time enterprises require no less massive financing, but they do afford the advantage—except in the case of natural disasters—of not being largely dominated by the element of emergency. They can therefore be studied and provided for in advance, and organised according to the means available. This is not the case with war-time work. These twin branches of Red Cross activity and the two international institutions that serve them, need equally vigorous support. Their requirements are not the same, yet for either to thrive, both must. Each can attain its full living capacity and moral power only on condition that the other proves at all times equal to its tasks.

I shall first, if you will allow me, take the situation of the International Red Cross Committee. It is beset with difficulties, due to the fact that the appeals made to it are as varied and unforeseen as the circumstances out of which they arise, whilst the means at the Committee's disposal, financial chiefly, but in personnel too, are by no means correspondingly elastic. May I remind you that the International Committee is founded upon the principle of voluntary, unremunerated service ? For this reason alone its membership is bound to be limited, and is further restricted by the unconditional rule of neutral citizenship. To render our organisation so adaptable that it can instantly double, triple or multiply its work tenfold or more in a hand's turn as the need occurs,

is therefore no easy matter. Nevertheless within recent years, and during the World War as well, the International Committee managed to find the number of collaborators each emergency called for, and enrol them in its service so far as its means allowed, but no farther. Even in normal times, however, it cannot reduce its permanent secretariat below a certain level. Not only would this be to the detriment of all current work, but there would then be every danger of its being enfeebled to a point which would virtually preclude all possibility of responding to sudden calls in an effective manner.

It must not be forgotten that the Committee's budget comprises two kinds of revenues, ordinary and extraordinary. The ordinary revenue consists in the national societies' annual contributions, and the income from a certain number of title-deeds owned by the Committee. Four-fifths of these compose an inalienable endowment fund, the first and chief part of which was donated by the Swiss Confederation. Although this fund has not been added to in the measure hoped for, I am happy to take this opportunity of expressing our cordial gratitude to the national societies that have helped to increase it.

As to the contributions of the national societies, these have declined notably since 1928, a phenomenon the more disturbing in that, since 1938, the value of Swiss currency has diminished as compared with many others. Whilst discussing this subject, we feel obliged to mention that for the past seventeen years ten national societies have contributed nothing at all financially towards the expenses the International Committee incurs in the fulfilment of its mandates; that 50% of the contributions received have come from five national societies, 40% from fifteen, and the remaining 10% from all of thirty. The contributions

are moreover not always on a scale proportionate to the importance of the states to which the societies belong, and still less to the services expected of the International Committee.

The ordinary revenues, derived from the two sources I have mentioned, barely suffice to cover the running expenses of the Committee. Now our institution is conducted on lines of the most stringent economy, apart from which a considerable portion of the work is given by its own members themselves without any remuneration whatever. If paid secretaries had to be engaged for the same work, our budget would have to be increased by at least twenty-five percent.

Nor is it to be supposed that we can go on indefinitely recruiting voluntary collaborators prepared to give their services more or less continuously. As you know, all International Committee members have to be domiciled in or near Geneva. But in Switzerland, as elsewhere, one meets fewer and fewer persons who are not obliged to earn their own and their family's livelihood, and can afford to devote the greater part of their time to purely honorary labours. This means that the International Committee, if it desires to maintain even its present degree of usefulness, will sooner or later have no other alternative than to reinforce its salaried secretariat. And even then it would still remain, as international organisations go, an institution working at a minimum of cost.

As I have said, the ordinary revenues just barely cover the ordinary expenses. This not only makes current work very difficult to cope with; it also dangerously handicaps every emergency action the Committee is called upon to take, and sometimes makes it wellnigh impracticable. Thus the mission to the Chaco cost the Committee about 20,000 Swiss francs, the mission to Ethiopia about Sw. frs. 45,000, and

the sending of a temporary delegate to China, about Sw. frs. 20,000. All these expenses had to be met by inroads upon a capital consisting of what was left over from donations made to the Committee during the World War. This sum, which had already shrunk to a mere Sw. frs. 300,000 several years ago, has melted away with such rapidity in recent years that we are wondering how we are to face our tasks henceforth. It would be culpable imprudence on our part to go on depleting this reserve until there was nothing left, for it is all that we possess to fall back upon when the call comes for new and immediate action, as always wholly without warning, and with an urgency that brooks no hesitation.

The national societies would certainly not consider it normal for the International Committee to have to apply to them at every turn before embarking upon any enterprise at all. Such a procedure would moreover result in fatal delays. Normally, the International Committee first steps into the breach, and then maps out a more ample plan of action which it submits to the national societies. They then decide either to carry a relief action abroad themselves; or to alleviate the distress of the national society of the country concerned, so that it may deal with the situation on its own territory; or else to second the International Committee in an action that will be begun at its instigation or under its direction. But in each case the national societies come in later on; the pioneer work, the initiatives, are one of the International Committee's most essential functions.

It is obvious that the Committee cannot undertake or develop any action on a large scale unless the national societies and other groups, and the governments as well if necessary, provide the means. This was strikingly evidenced during the Great War, and

more recently in the case of Spain. But the national societies generally stipulate that their donations, solicited or spontaneously offered in favour of new and special tasks, be employed exclusively for those tasks, and shall not go towards helping the Committee to recuperate the outlay the emergency entailed. Thus, under the present system, these actions, even when generously supported by the national societies, are very far from aiding the Committee financially. Quite the reverse, they place an extra load upon its budget, since every action of more or less considerable scope automatically sends the general expenses soaring.

Such a situation must soon become untenable. The only remedy is to devise some method by which the International Committee shall be enabled not only to meet all its ordinary expenses, but also to lay up reserves against its emergency work, and never let them get too low. If this result cannot be obtained, the International Committee will soon be no longer able to function at the outbreak of wars or internal political disturbances, which is when it is invariably called upon to come forward either with the rapid preparation, or the instant execution, of an international emergency action. In duty to itself, the Committee felt compelled to make known this present state of things to the XVIth Conference.

Outside its service as the auxiliary of army medical corps, almost the whole work of the Red Cross rests upon the shoulders of the national societies. It is only they that have large numbers of voluntary and professional collaborators ready to hand, and only they have large stocks of material to draw upon for relief actions at short notice. They alone possess sufficient funds, either because a crowd of members make regular contributions, or because the nation can

be counted on to respond to Red Cross appeals. Many a society could be quoted as an example, but we shall not go into a comparative study of the national societies, their resources and achievements. We should only like to note that, as against the international, a certain equilibrium prevails within the national Red Cross bodies in these respects. The national society functions on national territory, and the country's general social structure, its attitude towards works of public utility, largely determine its character. The more a nation relies upon its Red Cross to fulfil its missions as they come, the less it will allow it to go short of means both for its current work and for exceptional cases. When these arise the public is ready and willing to express the united national sentiment by making exceptional sacrifices for its Red Cross.

None of these favourable conditions facilitate Red Cross international work. By its very nature, this cannot be the affair of any particular national society, but only of the Red Cross collectivity. The radius of action is not one, or a group of countries, but the world. It is called for when, and because, the national organisation of a given country defaults, or proves unequal to its task. This is especially true of cases in which the International Committee is asked to take the initiative before all others, namely in time of war or grave political and social disorders. At the same time, these are the Red Cross activities which arouse the most widespread public interest, for they remind the world ever again of the recurring human tragedy, and stand in intimate connection with events which engage the passionate sympathy of all.

At such times the Red Cross and the International Committee in particular, as an organ of the International Red Cross, find themselves besieged with

demands on every side, from the press, and from humanitarian and philanthropic organisations everywhere. But at such times also, the popularity of the Red Cross, and the fact that it is more or less vaguely familiar to the entire world, adds greatly to our burdens, chiefly because as a general rule, everybody is far more ready to ply the International Red Cross with suggestions and advice than to provide it with the wherewithal to carry out the actions recommended.

Even if only one of the belligerents has recourse to International Red Cross aid, our tasks are, almost without exception, very costly. War, upsetting all values in the moral domain, upsets all economic conditions as well. The nations throw everything wholesale into the scales when it is a question of surviving or going under. At that rate it can therefore hardly be expected that the efforts of private charity will weigh very heavily in the balance. However lavish they may be, they will be infinitesimal compared with what is needed to relieve the most immediate distress caused by the war. To the critical view all this will be as clear as daylight. For a neutral society to send one, not to mention several ambulances into the field, especially to distant countries, is to make a far greater effort than almost any peacetime work demands. And yet how slight such help appears in proportion to all that should be done. Whether it is a matter of sending medical material, foodstuffs or clothing to prison camps, or of providing a civilian population with similar requirements, the sums run up instantaneously to hundreds of thousands, to millions of Swiss francs, before even the most pressing needs are met.

Sometimes an international relief action can lean upon a military medical service or on a powerful

national society, and then many major difficulties are smoothed away, and the aid sent from the outside, whether much or little, can be used without delay or obstacle. But if the conditions presumed in Article 11 of the Geneva Convention are not present, the International Committee must first pave the way with all manner of negotiations by no means easy to bring to the desired end. And in such cases as these, the outside help, when it does arrive, is apt to be totally inadequate.

I must here emphasise the point that the international action of the Red Cross is quite unbound by the terms of the Geneva Convention. In fact, it is precisely when circumstances occur that the treaty does not provide for that the International Committee is asked to intervene, and it is the only source from which the hoped-for aid could come: action in favour of prisoners of war, the exchange of prisoners of war, relief for political prisoners and unfortunates of every kind, transmission of news between members of dispersed families, representations relative to violations of international treaties, to mention but these. For all initiatives of this kind, the International Committee must establish contacts with the belligerent governments on a basis of unquestioned confidence. It must possess an organisation of its own to which all may have access, and send delegates wherever the trouble may be. The cost of such undertakings cannot but be considerable, even though the severest economy be observed. Nor should it be overlooked that these indispensable humanitarian actions, falling outside the provisions of the Geneva Convention, are often frowned upon by the belligerents when they perceive in them no direct advantage to themselves; they may even find them equivocal, if not unfriendly. The best guarantee against

being forced, for such reasons, to abandon its efforts is for the Red Cross to be in a position to do practical and parallel relief work on an extensive scale and well within the framework of the treaty.

What assets does the Red Cross possess ?

It is the sober fact that the International Committee —to mention it alone among the Red Cross international organisations—has scarcely enough to live on, and that it has nearly exhausted its emergency reserve, both for more limited actions and for the preparation of work on a great scale. I lay stress upon the word "preparation". As for undertaking and supporting such activities out of its own resources, this could not be thought of.

As the Red Cross is essentially a movement of voluntary collaboration based upon goodwill and nothing else, it is only right that it should lead the way with its own preparations for any work it decides to do. This gives it a justification the more for asking others to lend unstinting and untiring aid. In considering the Red Cross international organisations' ways and means problems, it is therefore the national societies that we have first in mind, for these, taken together, are the veritable substance of the Red Cross.

For Red Cross international enterprises, two paths are open: Either the national societies act in their own name, or in collaboration with the sister societies; or they put funds and material at the disposal of the International Red Cross Committee as steward and agent for them all. The choice between these two methods, or a combination of them, is a question of kind; the essential thing is that the service expected of the Red Cross be forthcoming as and when it is called upon.

Let me illustrate this by a few recent examples:

During the Chaco conflict the International Committee sent out no appeal to the national societies as a whole, but through the intermediary of the Chilean Red Cross, it asked the societies of South America to grant their support to the Red Cross organisations of the two states at war. If we remember rightly, three of the societies thus approached answered the appeal; the general report of the International Red Cross Committee contains detailed information on this subject.

In the Italo-Ethiopian conflict, the spontaneous aid of certain national societies and the International Committee's appeal to the neutral Red Cross societies rendered possible a very notable relief work. Never yet had so many neutral societies been seen to send entire ambulances to the theatre of war, and that in circumstances which exposed the personnel to grave difficulties and dangers due to topographical, climatical and other conditions. Five European societies and the Egyptian Red Crescent participated in this direct action, which imposed great pecuniary sacrifices upon all concerned. And several of these same societies did still more, and gave financial support to the International Committee's work in the same field.

Twenty-two other societies answered the Committee's appeal either with subsidies, or by helping the Ethiopian Red Cross with large despatches of medical material. The gifts to the International Committee rose to a total of approximately Sw. frs. 16,000, of which 40% was the gift of a single national society. It is difficult to estimate the donations of medical material, but we may put at about Sw. frs. 200,000 the assistance in money and kind rendered by these twenty-two societies. As for the contribution of the six national societies which sent ambulances to the front, this must certainly be

reckoned at over two millions. Thirty-two national societies out of sixty did not take part —at least to our knowledge—in the relief action in Ethiopia. Public collections were held only in the countries which equipped the ambulances.

Of all the international actions accomplished by the Red Cross since the World War, the first place must be given to the relief of victims of the Spanish civil war, on account of the diversity and duration of that work, but especially with regard to the number of national societies participating. The International Committee sent out a series of circulars and letters of appeal to the national societies, asking their support for that action. Out of sixty, only thirty-six contributed gifts of money and material. Most of these fell away after the first year of the war. Of the other thirty-four, the majority left our appeals altogether unanswered, a few sent negative replies. The contributions of the thirty-six donating societies made up 30% of our total funds for the work in Spain, and four of them furnished 80% of the total financial contribution made by the national societies. Our information indicates that the societies did not make any great direct contributions in kind, but it must be placed on record that one of them did accomplish a most notable relief action on its own territory, adjacent to Spain.

These few figures go to show that when all is said and done, the national societies' financial support, generous though it may be, does not afford more than a very slender basis for Red Cross international action, even when the cause in question arouses fairly general and active sympathy.

The action in China is even more instructive. Here only two national societies have undertaken an important relief action of their own, outside the work done

by the International Committee. They have collected —partly, it must be owned, in association with other organisations—donations more than twice exceeding the sums contributed for help in Spain. Twelve only of the other societies have so far responded affirmately to the appeals of the International Committee. The Chinese Red Cross, all by itself, has furnished 80% of the funds placed at the International Committee's disposal, and which permitted it to keep a delegate in China for about six months. Thus a work of which nobody contests the great necessity, and which ought to be supplied with ample funds, awakens all in all only a rather feeble echo.

And here is something no less significant: The contributions for aid to Ethiopia and Spain describe a curve rising sharply at the beginning of each of these conflicts, to drop as sharply after a short while. One sole society supported our action in Spain throughout, and if so few have let themselves be moved in favour of our work in China, this is doubtless due to the fact that that appeal followed too closely on the heels of those for Spain, which drained the national societies' resources.

In those three latest international actions of the Red Cross, that is to say within the past two and a half years, the national societies have given or collected no less than some five million Swiss francs. This is a large sum, and we quote it with immense gratitude. But if we are to look facts in the face, we must not deceive ourselves into pretending that for practical purposes, the funds supplying the International Red Cross are anything like sufficient. On the contrary, they are so insufficient as to compel it to restrict its relief work to a degree entirely inadequate to even the most pressing needs. Secondly, there is no counting upon continuous aid, and thirdly

only some of the national societies are in a position, or have the desire, to support international action on the part of the Committee, or to undertake such action themselves.

This being the case, there is nothing for it, as everyone, I think, will concede, but for the International Red Cross Committee to look elsewhere for support in its international activities. It is moreover perfectly right and just that work like that of the Red Cross be subsidised from other quarters, by which one obviously means—except in very exceptional cases—the general public, and the signatory Powers of the Geneva Convention.

As for the general public, it is old-established Red Cross tradition—and this is the first and most natural step to take—for the national societies to approach their own people in their own name; the International Committee can hardly do so itself. An institution which is not national would most likely have small chance of success if it were to launch an appeal to the population of this or that country for aid in an international relief action. It is extremely rare for private persons to make spontaneous donations to the International Committee for its international projects, but these gifts, when they do come, move us deeply by the spirit of sacrifice which inspires them. It is true that private collections for the financing of our actions in Spain and China brought in very considerable sums indeed. Thus somewhat over a third of all the funds sent to the International Committee for its work in Spain came from collections spontaneously organised in a few of the South-American Republics in favour of the Red Cross action of the International Committee. In the same way, the groups known as " Committees of the International Red Cross " at Hankow and Shanghai, also obtained

remarkable results and were able to lighten the burden of the Chinese Red Cross by so much.

But when we try to look ahead and see what should and could be done by the Red Cross in the international field, we realise that it would be an excess of optimism to rely upon resources so uncertain. In one case there was the special factor of the bond existing between the Spanish populations of the Old and New Worlds; in the other the situation of the foreign residents in China with their powerful financial connections in Europe and the United States played an essential part in the success of the collections referred to.

What stands out clearly in this analysis is that the International Committee must envisage the possibility of making direct appeals to the public at large, or at least to that of certain countries. Indeed, as has already been said, no sooner does the suffering caused by war or revolution begin to stir the public mind than the International Committee is at once deluged with requests and suggestions of every description, and from every section of society. The world's press makes itself the mouthpiece of all these demands, which turn unhesitatingly into strictures and even attacks if the action advocated is not launched and executed with all efficiency and despatch. Now, when actions which come within the province of the Red Cross are in question, public opinion cannot leave us cold. If, for one reason or another, the national societies fail to mobilise the means to carry out the international undertaking the situation demands, the International Committee has no choice but to turn to the circles pressing it to intervene, and ask them to produce the necessary funds.

Let us also bear in mind that the more prompt and useful international Red Cross action can show itself

to be, the more this will redound to the credit of the national societies. International work, by the interest it arouses and the notice it receives in the press, far surpassing that given to any the normal peacetime activities, can be a valuable lever for lifting public opinion out of mere routine approval to active sympathy for national work. And conversely, if the expectations of the public are disappointed, the Red Cross institution as a whole will find its prestige infallibly reduced.

I should like here to touch upon one of the more peculiar aspects of our problem. In many cases Red Cross appeals would find people more ready to respond, if we could accept gifts destined exclusively for one or the other belligerent. This would be perfectly compatible with our basic principles of impartiality and neutrality, if it were always possible to keep the balance even between donations for one side and the other. The International Red Cross undeniably needs to secure the maximum means to work with, but all this notwithstanding, it must never fall into the temptation of relaxing its attitude of the most undeviating neutrality. If this absolute impartiality must be safeguarded at all costs, it is not only because without it there could be no question of our working with all the adversaries at the same time, which is the essence of our usefulness. It is because the idea and ideal of the Red Cross reveal that in the face of human suffering there is no such thing as friend or enemy. This is the Red Cross message to mankind that sets our movement apart among the many other philanthropic works, and therein resides its unique power to make people support Red Cross effort with gifts of work and money.

There remains the final alternative of putting our case before the governments participating in the

Geneva Convention. If the governments desire the services of the national or international Red Cross, it is no more than natural that they should defray the cost. During the World War they gave the national Red Cross societies and the International Committee every facility and support, but since then, except for the rarest exceptions, no Red Cross international action has received help from any national authority. Last year when funds for relief work in Spain went down and down whilst the needs were going up and up, the International Committee—on the April 27th, 1937, to be exact—addressed an appeal for an emergency subsidy to all the signatory Powers of the Geneva Convention. The Committee considered it its duty to leave no stone unturned to avert the imminent cessation of that work, for our withdrawal would have dealt a serious blow both to a great humanitarian cause, and to the prestige of the International Red Cross. Out of sixty-four governments, thirty-one have replied to date, and thirteen only promised their assistance. Thanks to their open-handed help, we did not have to abandon our work in Spain. By putting these new funds and those which continued to be furnished by one of the national societies to the most appropriate uses, we were enabled, not to carry on adequately, but at least to proceed to a rational and gradual reduction, instead of coming to an abrupt stop. The states from which we received donations where so heterogeneous a group that the International Committee could accept their gifts without any political scruple, and the experience proved how fully justified the appeal had been. The total contribution of the thirteen states in question was about equivalent to the amount subscribed by the national societies.

If we have hitherto so rarely approached the

governments for aid in our international enterprises, it is because it is always preferable to exhaust the possibilities offered by our own circles first before going outside them. The support of the national societies and the public contributions made at their instigation are one of the most convincing proofs of how the members of the Red Cross family stand shoulder to shoulder, and help one another in time of need. But in the national, as in the international, field demands upon the Red Cross are continually more numerous and insistent, so that eventually government aid will have to be sought, especially in cases where the individual societies are debarred from direct participation. Only the International Red Cross Committee can then carry through a many-sided relief action for the benefit of all the victims involved in a given conflict.

There could hardly be a more ungrateful, not to say painful, task than to complain of insufficient support at the very moment when one has so much thanks to express for the most generous aid and comprehension from many quarters. But there are things that must be said, and the need to make our situation clear to the National Societies will be obvious to everyone. Our actual and potential resources under the prevailing system are thoroughly inadequate to the tasks the International Red Cross has declared its readiness to assume, and to what not only the public on the outside, but even our own national societies expect the Red Cross to accomplish.

We are only too well aware how severely the national societies also have felt the effects of the economic crisis. We know that needs and revenues stand increasingly in inverse ratio to each other. Moreover for many societies, obstacles all but insurmountable stand in the way of all exportation of

money. But on the other hand, how should one not be struck by so many national societies' utter apathy towards collective efforts to rescue sister-societies in great distress ? This unresponsiveness may have many causes: lack of means to develop even the necessary activity within the non-participating society's own country; or else it may be that the idea of solidarity among the national groups, for all it has been proclaimed at so many Conferences and is so admirably represented by the League of Red Cross Societies, has not been grasped everywhere, or is not yet very deeply implanted. We are even prepared to learn that certain national societies stand aloof out of desagreement either with every intervention on the part of the International Committee in the cases referred to, or with its methods of procedure. If these objections exist by any chance, we are ready to listen to every criticism and suggestion. But it is well to remember that no society is obliged to have recourse to our intermediary; we hold ourselves at the service of all the national societies in cases where they feel unable to act on their own initiative, or in their own name, but they may avail themselves of our good offices or not, as they think fit.

I think that I have now said enough to give a clear picture of the financial situation to which the Red Cross and the International Committee in particular, have to adjust their activities in time of war. The facts I have presented seem to me to speak for themselves.

This is neither the place nor the moment to formulate new schemes; the Conference will appoint subcommittees to deal with that problem. I should only like to repeat once again that if the Red Cross intends to justify the hopes with which the nations and the victims of war and other conflicts look towards it for

help in the hour of need, its efforts must become morewidespread, more energetic, and less sporadic than in the past. The national societies should not have to bear the whole burden; the governments should do their share, and so should be public whenever it adds its voice to others urging the Red Cross to take this or that initiative. As for the International Committee, its regular and permanent work must be put upon an adequate and stable financial basis, and sufficient funds must be ready to its hand, firstly for those sudden emergencies with which it is its special function to cope without delay, secondly for preparing operations on a large scale to be carried out or supported by the national societies and governments, and lastly for all those activities in which the national societies are precluded from participating directly.

Two points remain for me to mention in conclusion and I commend them to your most earnest attention, for their importance is second to none: the necessity of developing every national society to its maximum efficiency, and the necessity, each time the Red Cross decides to extend its range of action, of opening up corresponding sources of material aid.

To muddle through in certain given cases and circumstances, momentarily correcting the discrepancy we have noted between the services the world expects of the Red Cross and the available funds, is quite obviously not enough. The trouble must be attacked at the root. The Red Cross will only develop satisfactorily when it succeeds in organising the whole potential effort everywhere, and when every nation has learnt to see in it the living expression of human partnership. This applies just as much to peacetime work—to which the League of Red Cross Societies devotes all its efforts—as to our activities in time of war. The thing to be done therefore, is to bring the

national societies to their full efficiency, which is only possible by establishing an even balance between the tasks assumed and the means of fulfilling them. Only a strong national society, with deep roots in the popular consciousness of its own country, can carry a direct action abroad, or give the International Committee support commensurate with the demands of a collective undertaking of wide scope. There is not another institution that has the same chances of success as a well-established Red Cross national society in eliciting public sympathy for an action in favour of a foreign country.

A strong society will be less prone to look for outside aid in time of war or disaster. And if it does ask for and accept such aid, it will be in a position to use it to much better purpose than if it were poorly organised and precariously established. A national society with a defective organisation and but a feeble hold on life will always need aid from the sister-societies, and this will never be enough. Also much effort, time and money will have to be squandered in creating the conditions necessary for efficient performance. Now although the International Red Cross is powerless to repair the defects of any national society's organisation, it often the finds itself blamed for that society's shortcomings.

I have spoken of the urgent need to open up fresh sources of material aid whenever an extension of activity is planned. This becomes more and more indispensable as, throughout the Red Cross world, The tendency to bring civilian war-victims within the radius of the Geneva Convention's protective measures gains ground. Some would even like to see the civilian population become the chief beneficiary of Red Cross relief work in wartime, in contrast to

the original statutes of the Red Cross and the Geneva Convention which define our institution as an auxiliary of the army medical services. This amplifying of the programme, and consequent appearance of the Red Cross in a new rôle, is a logical consequence of modern warfare. But the new task is overwhelming; no proper attempt has yet been made to determine where it shall begin or end, and from whichever angle one looks at it, the difficulties are legion. And one of the most probable drawbacks is that the work with civilians will not everywhere have the advantage of being done within the framework of a powerfully constituted organisation such as a regular military medical service.

Whether the national societies are equal to such ventures must be left to themselves to decide. Meanwhile we cannot but wonder to what extent the spirit of mutual aid among them will manifest itself in an infinitely widened field. Will not the dearth of means prove an even more serious stumbling-block there than elsewhere ?

Nothing is farther from my desire than to discourage any extension of Red Cross activity in which the spirit of the movement finds expression, even if it means far overstepping original or traditional lines of demarcation. But let us always bear in mind that the Red Cross, national and international, does not live by vast and numerous projects but by work well and truly done. Everybody knows what admirable things the national societies have achieved, and how great have been the successes of the League of Red Cross Societies within its special sphere. But all that work demanded the incessant sacrifice of time, strength, health and even lives; of money also, and always and again, of money.

There must be no plunging into any undertaking

before the cost of it has been thoroughly surveyed. We cannot pass resolutions or adopt programmes in all sincerity, unless we see clearly and accept what they commit us to, financially and otherwise.

The only way in which we can really give fresh impetus to the Red Cross is by taking due thought of realities, and being willing to make personal sacrifices. Nothing could be more pernicious than to delude ourselves and the world with us as to what we are prepared to do, and the sacrifices we are ready to make in order to realise the projects we announce.

This is why I felt in duty bound to draw the Conference's attention to the important problem of finances. Serious for every national society, it is a particularly grave and anxious one for the International Red Cross, especially in view of the terrible distress that war and catastrophes engender suddenly and without warning.

And now, after all this insistence upon the great inadequacy of means which impedes the work of the Red Cross, we may insist with equal justice upon the greatness and ever-growing significance of that work and what it stands for.

War and civil war are more dreadful catastrophes today than in the past, not only because of the formidable destructive power of modern weapons, but also and chiefly because the civilian population, women, children and old people, are much more exposed than formerly to the devastating effects of these new engines. There ensue sufferings a thousand times more cruel, and an unleashing of hatreds a thousand times more bitter and intense. When humanity passes into these eclipses, the Red Cross stands forth before all other movements, and perhaps alone, as a perpetual reminder of the true mission of mankind, made visible in deeds of human charity, moral and material.

It is the duty of the universal Red Cross never to lose its power to safeguard a work which over and over again imposes the remembrance of charity and human dignity upon a world forgetful of them, and which keeps clear in the hearts and minds of men, amidst all conflicts and above all hatreds, one point at least where there can still be contact and mutual understanding.

The national societies, the governments, and every member of the public for himself should measure their obligation to contribute to the maintenance of the Red Cross according to the grandeur, and the unique and vital import of its purposes.

GENEVA CONVENTION AND RED CROSS[1]

The 22nd of August this year was the seventy-fifth return of the day which saw the conclusion of the Geneva Convention, that is, the international treaty for the amelioration of the condition of the wounded and sick in armies in the field. This memorable occasion was celebrated throughout the Red Cross world, a double anniversary for some of the oldest national societies which had their own seventy-fifth Foundation Day at the same time.

Switzerland especially had reason to hold this date in high remembrance, for not only was the Geneva Convention concluded on Swiss soil, and placed under the auspices of the Federal Council, but it was thanks chiefly to two great Swiss, Henry Dunant and General Dufour, that it ever came into existence at all.

The significance of the Geneva Convention cannot be rightly gauged apart from its connection with the Red Cross. By Red Cross we understand the movement for the organisation of voluntary aid, the origin of which was the Geneva Committee of Five. Created in 1863 under Dunant's inspiration, this movement is today embodied in sixty-two national societies, the International Committee in Geneva (which is the Committee of Five in its present form), and the League of Red Cross Societies. The Geneva Convention is the above-mentioned international treaty of

[1] Address delivered at the assembly of the Swiss Red Cross, the Swiss "Samariterbund", and the Swiss Military Medical Service Union in Zürich, July 2, 1939.

the 22nd August 1864, twice enlarged and amended, once in 1906 and again in 1929.

Each in itself entirely different from the other, the treaty and the Red Cross belong inseparably together in history and practice. The movement launched by private persons led up to the Geneva Convention, and its scope then widening rapidly to embrace all nations, the treaty also acquired a vivid and universal popularity in the world ordinarily ignorant of, or indifferent to, State treaties. This it owed to the Red Cross, but the Red Cross in turn owed the Geneva Convention its name and the protection and support grated it in international law, and by legislation in every country where the national societies arose.

We feel that the present great gathering of the Swiss Red Cross, the Military Medical Union and the Samaritan League, together with the occasion of the jubilee year, affords us a propitious opportunity to consider the connection between the Red Cross and the Geneva Convention, a survey which will help us to realize some of the most important fundamental questions touching our movement.

Let us look first at the Geneva Convention of 1864. This is not the place to analyse the treaty in its juridical aspect, nor can we here describe its later developments resulting from the revision of 1906 and 1929. Important as were these subsequent phases, the essentials were already contained in the original treaty:

First: all establishments and hospitals for the reception and treatment of wounded and sick soldiers, and the personnel attached to them, are immune from capture and from acts of destruction otherwise admissible under the rules of warfare. The Convention designates this special legal status of the military medical services by the somewhat inexact term: " neutrality ".

Second: This special protection also covers such voluntary aid as may be performed by the civilian population in favour of the wounded.

Third: sick and wounded soldiers are received and treated without regard to the side upon which they have fought.

Fourth: a heraldic emblem, the red cross in a white field, is created for the distinguishing sign of hospitals, ambulances, transports of wounded, and the personnel protected under the terms of the agreement.

The Geneva Convention was, and is still, an instrument of manifold significance. In giving the army medical services a privileged legal status, it rendered them both more efficient and more respected than before. It was a milestone in the history of the treatment of sick troops on active service. If international law has since made notable strides in the direction of putting humanitarian checks upon the conduct of war, this is directly and incontestably due to the Geneva Convention. The Declaration of St. Petersburg in 1869, prohibiting the use of certain types of projectile was a first step on the way; the Hague Conferences of 1899 and 1907 were stages of particular importance in this development, the final stage to be reached so far being the Geneva Convention of 1929 relative to the treatment of prisoners of war. But the Convention of sixty-five years earlier had broken the first ground.

Thus the beneficent effects of that pioneer accord were felt in many ways, but nowhere perhaps as decisively and fruitfully as in the Red Cross.

To take the outward and visible first. The red cross in a white field—the Swiss colours reversed—was proposed by General Dufour, leader of the Swiss delegation and President of the diplomatic conference of 1864, as the emblem of the medical establishments

and their personnel. The symbol gave the name, and both were extended to the voluntary aid societies. Would a world movement like the Red Cross have been possible but for the beauty and simplicity of these two outward attributes with their profound and impressive implications, clear and intelligible to all ?

But more valuable to the movement even than the title and symbol with which the Convention endowed it, were the contents of the treaty itself, the two basic ideas of which cannot be too greatly insisted upon. First, the principle of voluntary, private assistance incorporated into the military medical services. The Convention of 1864, inspired by Dunant's immediate experience at Solferino, gives a large place to the enlistment of improvised aid to be given by the population of the war zone, but the Geneva Committee, a year earlier, had stressed the necessity of creating an organisation in peace-time to ensure that that aid should be as complete and efficient as possible when the time came that the army would have need of it.

The idea of voluntary aid was Dunant's and his friends, new in that it had not existed in that form and application before them. But what was absolutely unprecedented and unheard-of was that an instrument of international law should protect such free private charity wherever it was exercised within the radius of war.

The second principle, which has shaped the course of events even more decisively, is the Convention's declaration that wherever sick and wounded soldiers are in question, no distinction shall be drawn between friend and foe. All progress in military medical practice, all health precautions for the troops and efforts to keep these functioning well in spite of, and in the midst of, war, directly serve the interests of every

army, and each belligerent can only gain by developing these measures to the full. But strangely and inhumanly enough, until the time of the Geneva Convention nobody had ever given any thought to these important matters. Military medical statistics in the World War show how enormously the standard of care for wounded and sick affects the general condition of the troops, and go to prove that considerations of simple expediency would suffice to create a military medical organisation of great excellence.

But the principle that an immense work of aid, calling for untold courage and devotion, for the benefit of enemy soldiers on an equal footing with those of one's own forces, embodies an idea of moral, not material, interest. That idea was the real cornerstone, not only of the Geneva Convention, but also of the Red Cross as a universal movement. It is the source, the justification and the safeguard of the neutrality by which the Red Cross stands and falls:

Relief for sick and wounded lies outside the sphere of conflict, in principle and purpose it is as close to one side as the other, and that is why all Red Cross work, whether in peace or war, must always bear the stamp of a complete absence of individual bias; the help offered must be detached from all allegiance to groups or parties, whatever they may be. To Dunant the idea of equal treatment for friend or enemy was something to be taken for granted. And so thought the women of Castiglione, whose cry, " Siamo tutti fratelli! " resounds through Dunant's " Memory of Solferino ", and awoke such an echo in the world which he brought to share his own boundless compassion for the victims of war.

Sceptics may disparage the noble idea of aiding one's enemy like one's own; they will say that, being based on reciprocity, it suits the book of all

belligerents, and indeed there is no gainsaying the fact itself. This service *is* of use and profit to all. But the other fact remains, that this fundamental principle of the Geneva Convention and the Red Cross sprang from no cold computation of selfish interests, but from the pure humanitarian urge of consciences grown vitally aware that above the hatreds and dissensions of the world, each man remains his brother's keeper. Neither the treaty of 1864 nor the Red Cross then entering upon its career, would have stood firm and grown these five and seventy years, holding their large place in the world's esteem, had they been built upon mere considerations of utility and not upon the highest instinct with which the human spirit has been endowed.

We may ask why the Geneva Convention should have taken so long to come about. Here, as in all historical events, irrational factors play their part, The moment waits upon the predestined individual. the executive genius. Social and spiritual conditions, the origin and nature of which we can analyse and to a certain extent understand, must also be propitious. The idea of which Dunant and the Geneva Public Utility Society's Committee of Five became the advocates, had been long in the air.

Less than ten years before the Convention, Florence Nightingale's heroic work in the Crimean War had made known the terrible deficiencies of the military field hospitals. At the same time the Italian Palasciano, the Frenchman Arnault and others had lifted up their voices in protests similar to hers. Democratic and pre-socialistic ideas, beginning to gain a foothold in Europe, helped to put a higher price upon human life, whilst the progress of medical science opened up new vistas for the treatment of wounded and sick. It

was a period of an increasing exodus from the churches, and many people were eager to rally to the service of a truly Christian ideal free from denominational ties.

But all these circumstances together and others besides, could do no more than create a favourable climate for the idea to thrive in once it was no longer latent but had become a reality, the men it was waiting for having at last emerged. It needed more than Dunant alone. His winged, prescient vision and irresistible missionary power, both through the written word and the magnetism of his personality, lent the idea its effulgence and set it in impetuous motion. But to seize that meteoric flame and make it yield a lasting, creative heat, it needed such men as those who were Dunant's collaborators from the first; the great and truly humane soldier, General Dufour, with his mature wisdom; Moynier, the jurist and philanthropist with his vast experience of men and things; the eminent medical authorities, Appia and Maunoir. Ardour and prudence, inspiration and experience, a vision that embraced the world and a clear-sightedness that saw what limits must be set, and where to set them, all these qualities were united in that unique company of pioneers.

The history of international treaties has no parallel for the rapidity with which the idea of Dunant and his friends became incarnated in the Geneva Convention. In 1862 " A Memory of Solferino " appears, in 1863 the Geneva Public Welfare Society creates the Committee of Five with Dufour at his head. In October of the same year sixteen governments are represented at a private conference at which the fundamental principles of the Geneva Convention and the Red Cross are clearly formulated as they stand today. And less than a year later comes the

diplomatic conference at which, on the 22nd August 1864, the Geneva Convention is signed, an innovation in the domain of international law, not only by reason of its contents, but also in that it is open to all the States not represented at the conference to adhere to it at any time. This alone suffices to make it an epoch-making event.

As we have said, the time was ripe. But this would not have availed unless Dunant had come at the right moment, carrying his idea to all the courts of Europe, and defending it with a fervour and brilliancy before which the dangerous obstacles of military and bureaucratic opposition were swept away. Nor, we repeat, would Dunant alone have achieved anything lasting, had not Dufour and Moynier, with unerring insight, realised the need of moderation and formulated their proposals accordingly.

Chance favoured the Geneva Convention both in its first beginnings and in its later history. In the year of its inauguration it was ratified by Belgium, Denmark, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, Spain and Switzerland. By 1867 all the then Great Powers had followed suit, with the exception of the United States which did not adhere until fifteen years later. Since then all the world's governments have become signatories either of the original Convention or the revised Conventions of 1906 or 1929. The first international agreement ever to invite the free adhesion of all nations has in fact become universal, and so far no country, having once joined, has ever withdrawn from it.

The experience of several wars brought about the two revisions of the Geneva Convention, carefully widening its military, technical and juridical scope. But its fundamental character has never been altered.

The principle of keeping within the bounds of what is feasible in war, but to surround all obtainable privileges with every possible safeguard, has remained dominant. On the other hand, little is left of the voluntary aid in its original form. A certain recognition is still given to improvised relief work by the population of the war zone, but it is now the Voluntary Aid Societies of both the belligerent and neutral countries, to which far-reaching security is expressly granted, particularly as regards their close co-operation with the medical services of the armies at war. These changes were an inevitable consequence of modern war conditions.

The Hague Conventions of 1899, 1904 and 1907 extended the principles of the Geneva Convention to war at sea. On the basis of experiences in recent wars and in accordance with the final resolutions adopted in 1929, and those of the Red Cross Conferences of Brussels and London, the International Red Cross Committee, together with the experts appointed by the national societies, have worked out propositions for a still further revision of the existing treaties, as well as the outline of an agreement concerning the adaptation of the principles of the Geneva Convention to aerial warfare. These projects have been transmitted to the Swiss Federal Council for further treatment.

Thus the Geneva Convention, in its seventy-five years' existence, has constantly moved and grown with the world's events, embracing in its radius of action all the changing circumstances of war, and all the regions of the habitable globe.

It is perhaps not superfluous to point out, however, that the Geneva Convention, closely as it is welded to the Red Cross in origin and spirit, has not in any way essentially determined the organisation or activ-

ity of the national societies, nor does it so much as mention the international organisations of the Red Cross. Indeed the Red Cross has set its various goals far and away beyond the limits of the tasks set forth in the Geneva Convention; it is a world institution constructed upon its own traditions and its own statutes. Nevertheless the tasks defined by the Convention as devolving upon the Red Cross, are not merely part of its general assignments; they are essential to its very being. Those tasks alone require enactments of international law to give them indispensable protection.

The Red Cross has its deepest root in the heroic service rendered in wartime to wounded and sick soldiers, friend or enemy. This service, than which none is loftier and none demands a more total exclusion of self, is what gives the movement its right to bear the name of the Red Cross.

Having now told what the Geneva Convention is and what it means to the Red Cross, let us now reverse the question and ask what the Red Cross means to the Geneva Convention.

The object of the Red Cross was to be an auxiliary to the regular medical services with armies in the field. The crying inadequacy of these establishments up to the middle of the 19th century called the movement into life. The revised Conventions provided for the co-operation of the Voluntary Aid Societies belonging to neutral as well as belligerent countries, and these have participated since in almost all recent war relief actions, sending not only many doctors, nurses and ambulance-men, and quantities of medical material, but often entire ambulances complete with personnel.

It is obviously hard to assess the importance in wartime of voluntary collaboration in general and

that of the Red Cross in particular, for much depends upon the development of the various military medical corps on the one hand, and of the national Red Cross societies on the other, and much upon the extent to which military operations affect one side and the other. In these respects the wars in Ethiopia and the Far East have been rich in instructive experiences.

However efficient and well organised a military medical service may be, if the war is long and especially if it involves the national territory, the Red Cross will be able to render the army invaluable aid, both directly and by relieving it of certain tasks of special difficulty, for the specific rôle of voluntary work is to step in when the need arises for extraordinary efforts. For this reason the Red Cross will never lose its value for the army medical services in wartime.

The material help afforded in transport and treatment of wounded and sick is doubtless of great importance to the army, but what makes the work of the Red Cross irreplaceable is the moral support it gives the army with which it co-operates. Supposing the protection of medical personnel and establishments, which is a means of protection for war-victims themselves, as granted by the Geneva Convention, had been a mere matter of military expediency and the enlightened policy of governments. Is it likely that those measures, however beneficent their effects, would ever have taken a fast hold upon the emotional consciousness of fighting troops ? Surely not. And yet for every soldier in the field, the Red Cross spells something of comfort and security. This is because the Red Cross societies' twenty million members, spread over the whole world, have made the movement familiar and popular in the best and highest meaning of the terms. Even if the man in the street only half knows what the Red Cross actually is, he identifies

it in his mind—and that is all that really counts—with the idea of ever-ready help, untainted by self-interest and offered to all who suffer. Often those in the thick of war are more alive to chivalry and human values than are the publicists behind the front; the soldier does not theorise and cavil, to him the name and emblem of the Red Cross stand for a work of brotherly aid inspired and performed in a spirit which should command the respect of all, and the inviolability of which has been rightly made secure. This moral prestige is at least assure a safeguard against breaches of the Geneva Convention in wartime as are the penalties which military law designs for such offences, nor is it the least significant factor that army high commands take into consideration whenever the question of Red Cross inviolability comes up for debate.

Thus during the past seventy-five years, the paths of the Geneva Convention and the Red Cross have always run parallel. Hard upon the first ratification came the first national committees, sometimes the adhesion of a government gave the lead to the foundation of a national society, elsewhere countries wishing to create a national Red Cross induced their governments to sign the treaty. Today there are sixty-three ratifications and sixty-two recognised national societies. It is not enough for a national Red Cross to exist, however. It must be a living force, ceaselessly advocating its cause by means of works which win respect for the principles of the Geneva Convention.

But on the other hand the Red Cross is not, nor has it ever been, an institution existing by virtue, or in the shadow of the Convention, simply as an auxiliary of military medical services. On the contrary, it has always existed very much in its own right, and it was clear from the outset that its wartime efficiency

would depend upon an intense activity in peacetime too. Hence the training of men and women for the ambulance corps, and the organisation of Red Cross hospitals.

From the first, Dunant had envisaged another activity which has always lain outside the range of tasks assigned to the Red Cross under the terms of the Convention, namely relief work in calamities of nature. This is only one aspect of the definitely peacetime activities which expanded so powerfully after the World War, and for which the League of Red Cross Societies has laboured with such conspicuous success. In many national societies this work predominates, its objects varying widely from country to another, for historical and social factors always exercise a great influence in this respect. Red Cross societies not only work in the field of public health and life-saving in their widest application, they also undertake the most varied tasks of social welfare. The nature of the work is of secondary importance to the great condition, laid down in 1859 on the very battlefield of Solferino, that Red Cross help should be pioneer help for hitherto undiscovered ills, or Samaritan help, offered when others have passed by unheeding.

We must here recall yet another Red Cross task which also, strictly speaking, lies outside the sphere of the Geneva Convention, but has its roots in that neutrality which is the basic principle of the treaty. What we mean by neutrality in this connection is the attitude which permits a State or institution to be in contact simultaneously with all the parties to a war, and thus able to bring its humanitarian influence to bear in the interests of soldiers and their families on every side without distinction.

Any institution is free to aid one or all belligerents

with gifts of medical material, foodstuffs and such-like, and also with personal assistance, so long as the helpers do not come into touch with the adversary. It is only a question of practical possibilities, financial means and individuals' willingness to give personal service. But to protect the interests of war-victims who belong to one party but find themselves within the other's sphere of domination, something more is required. For this it is necessary to have the confidence of both sides, and even then the intermediary, given the state of mind prevailing in wartime among belligerents and their sympathisers, has a difficult and thorny task.

The iron reserve which a neutral institution like the Red Cross, and especially the International Committee, is compelled to maintain at such times is not seldom interpreted as cowardice, or even as partiality towards one side or the other. But the slightest relaxation of that reserve, either to defend itself against misjudgment or for any other reason, would mean the end of its ability to serve the victims of all the parties in the war. That and no other is the Red Cross task—to help sufferers, not to sit in moral or judicial judgment upon nations and their policies. One international treaty, the Geneva Convention, is its immediate affair and that it defends with tenacity and energy, jealously watchful that its provisions be respected by all concerned.

The Geneva Convention dealt with the treatment of wounded and sick soldiers in armies in the field. They are not the only victims of war for whom the Red Cross feels responsible. There are the captives of every different category; the severely injured and incurable, those who need treatment in more favourable climates, the evacuated populations in enemy territory, the numberless families whose scattered

members can only have news of each other through a service operating on both sides. This manifold distress heaps herculean labours upon the Red Cross of neutral countries, especially upon the International Committee to which tradition and the statutes of the International Red Cross assign the task of intervening in war, civil war or internal disorder, when none but a neutral intermediary could serve.

When we look back over the period of the World War and the most recent past, and realise what the Red Cross societies of neutral countries and the International Committee have been able to achieve apart from assistance rendered to wounded and sick soldiers, during the Spanish Civil War for example, we feel justified in saying that the wide irradiation of the principles of the Geneva Convention beyond its actual sphere is of scarcely less importance to the humanitarian activity of the Red Cross than its specific task under the treaty.

The diplomatic conference which met to revise the Convention in 1929 concluded at the same time a Convention relative to the treatment of Prisoners of War, which represents a thorough regulation of this problem in a sincerely humane spirit. For the other categories of war victims general treaties can be neither so complete nor so universal. But the fact that, notably towards the end of the World War and again very recently, it was possible to lessen the hardships of war victims other than prisoners, either by means of agreements between belligerents or between belligerents and neutrals, or else by concessions obtained from one or the other singly, all this goes to prove how mightily the spirit of the Convention has evolved, and how far it has outgrown its original boundaries. The institutions which range themselves under the sign of the Red Cross have no higher or

more responsible duty than to keep that spirit alive in its integrity.

Of late years a still wider prospect has opened out before the Red Cross, showing once more how creative is the principle of neutrality which inspires the movement. Here again the International Committee is chiefly concerned in carrying out a task beset with untold difficulties. Whenever violent political changes or grave internal dissensions, no matter in what corner of the world, cast certain individuals or groups within the nation into particular distress or expose them to inhuman treatment, a loud outcry arises for intervention by the Red Cross. Often enough the alarm is based upon rumours difficult or impossible to verify, and often also it is raised by persons whose interest in the Red Cross has never moved them to do the least thing towards furthering any of its national, let alone international, endeavours.

Humanitarian efforts of this kind, so general as to render it as difficult to define as to limit them, are particularly onerous and even ungrateful, for they reveal all the disproportion between the hopes set upon us and our possibilities of fulfilling them. If even in civil wars where the situation created by the two parties' refusal to recognise each other as legitimate belligerents multiplies the obstacles that Red Cross action has to surmount, how much greater and more numerous are these where intervention of any kind may have all the appearance of an attempt to interfere in a country's intimate domestic affairs. The extreme prudence which the Red Cross is obliged to impose upon itself in such cases is not seldom misinterpreted, and yet its only hope of alleviating distress or averting hardships for those it is called upon to help is by exercising the utmost tact, and working as unostentatiously as possible. Repeated interventions

or protests which are more likely than not to be utterly ineffectual, could only result in a gradual frittering away of Red Cross authority in the world, and confidence in its neutrality and objectivity would go. This is a risk to be avoided at all costs, for it is essential that the movement guard its whole resources, moral, personal and material, intact for the performance of its tasks within the vastly enlarged but not unlimited framework of the Geneva Conventions. For the Red Cross, as elsewhere, the maxim holds good, to take the wide view and set one's goals high, but also to recognise one's limitations and do one's best within them.

Having now passed these seventy-five bygone years in retrospect and seen how the Geneva Convention and the Red Cross acted and reacted upon each other's development, it may not be inappropriate to glance cursorily at a subject much discussed at present, and which seems to foreshadow a future task for the Red Cross.

The nature of modern warfare and observations made during the most recent hostilities in various countries have aroused widespread concern as to the fate of civilians in wartime, and the possibilities of protecting them. Current opinion falls into two opposing camps, one of which holds that a humanitarian mitigation of war methods is no longer practicable, the other demanding " the extension of the Geneva Convention to civilian populations ", which does not convey any very clear idea, but their general position is as follows:

Obviously the civilian population is more endangered today than at a time when military operations were limited essentially to the areas in which the opposing armies met in combat. Today the air arm has brought the entire State territory into the radius

of enemy attack, and the ever-tightening connection between war and economics thrusts into the zone of interest objectives whose destruction greatly increases the threat to civilian lives, even where this is not intended, as many fear, as an end in itself. The generally admitted view that the danger to non-combatants is henceforth extreme, leads logically to the conclusion that they are justified in defending themselves, and in inflicting as much harm upon the enemy as may be expedient and possible. This being so, why not then denounce, for instance, the Hague Convention on Land War, with its prohibitive clauses relative to a people's war?

We cannot here consider this hypothesis in detail, or go into the reasons why such a denunciation could contribute little towards national defence today; so little, that nobody would care to take the responsibility of buying negligible advantages at the price of the moral and material havoc which inevitably ensues when the populace takes a direct share in the fighting. Suffice it to state our firm conviction that once the rules of war concerning the relations between populations and aggressors were abandoned on principle, there could hardly be any further question of applying the principles of the Geneva Convention, for the simple reason that they would have become inapplicable.

The Geneva Convention assumes that civilian lives and property are given due protection; in securing the interests of sick and wounded soldiers, it claims protection of the same kind for combatants and other members of the army on active service, who are in principle exposed to acts of war.

Now, as regards the extension of the Convention's principles to embrace the civilian population, the matter seems to be variously understood. Clearly

an establishment protected under the treaty may succour sick and wounded civilians, especially war victims, without compromising that protection. As for Red Cross formations whose activity is so localised that except in the event of air raids they do not come into contact with the opposing forces at all, the regulations of the Convention have only practical importance inasmuch as the institutions which the Red Cross marks as protected, exist for the reception of wounded and sick exclusively, and are subject to military supervision and discipline as a guarantee that they serve that purpose and no other.

What those who demand that civilians be protected by the treaty actually mean however, is something quite different; they envisage the creation of zones in which certain categories of non-combatants—children, women and the aged, for instance—especially entitled to be sheltered from enemy action, shall be in safety. It would need to be satisfactorily established that such zones contain no military objectives, and could in no way be used for military purposes, the necessary supervision being carried out by some neutral authority acceptable to both sides. The creation of these areas, sometimes referred to as "*lieux de Genève*" (Geneva places), has been advocated within late years in many quarters, and Italian legislation has already made provision for it.

It was natural to associate this scheme with the Red Cross, as it was able to contribute both the neutral surveillance and the external distinctive sign, and possibly personal service and material aid as well.

For ten years past, the International Committee, with the support and counsel of the national societies, has been considering the problem of protection for civilians. It has done successful pioneer work in the

field of Air Raid Precautions, and has worked out propositions which aim at obtaining international legislation limiting aerial bombardments, or even prohibiting them altogether. If its concern with the question of safety zones has become active only recently, the reason is that another very similar problem, more circumscribed and therefore easier to solve, had first to be dealt with and settled, namely the creation of safety zones for those categories of wounded and sick whom the Convention was already pledged to protect. In several leading countries this plan was first received with extreme reserve, not to say hostility, particularly in military circles. It was not until last autumn that a special committee of experts came to terms over a far-reaching plan, and a treaty could at last be drafted. We have hopes that the governments will find it on the whole acceptable.

After this the larger and knottier problem of safety zones for civilians could be attacked with better prospects of success. Two points must here give us pause:

First of all, the creation of safety zones must not cause the civilian population outside them to forfeit the protection which is their due under international law and treaties. The zones should serve no other end than to make that protection practically more sure, for the whole scheme falls to the ground even in principle, if it implies capitulation to the thesis of so-called totalitarian war.

It must next be remembered that every addition to the objects designated by the red cross in the white field as entitled to protection, constitutes an added risk that the emblem may be abused; and every real or alleged breach of Red Cross principles increases the danger that the Geneva Convention itself

may gradually cease to be scrupulously observed. The Convention placed the Red Cross in closest connection with the military medical services, and every loosening of the bond paves the way for infractions. The wider and more numerous the safety zones for which the Red Cross would have to give its guarantee, the more difficult it must become to make such guarantees reliable.

Deeply as we may wish that the demands of humanity might be respected to the full, even in the midst of modern war, we must still let ourselves be guided by the principle adopted by the creators of the Geneva Convention long ago: to discern what is feasible in war and, while attempting nothing more, to defend that much with unyielding tenacity.

It is not enough to contemplate the vast range of activity now covered by the Geneva Convention and the Red Cross, nor even to watch vigilantly for new tasks as they arise. Neither can suffice without an organisation maintained steadily at the level of all these great enterprises, present and to come.

The strength of the entire movement lies in the national societies and their allied organisations. These, the International Committee and the League of Red Cross Societies, can only do their part adequately if the movement is represented in every country by a sound and respected national society, and if the national societies are able to express their sense of partnership by giving powerful material support to international actions.

The eleven earliest national societies—Württemberg, Oldenburg, Belgium, Prussia, Denmark, France, Italy, Mecklenburg, Spain, Hamburg, Hessen—were founded in the year of the Convention by small committees, hardly more than the germ of the societies we know today. These have now multiplied

to the number of sixty-two, with a membership of twenty millions, not counting the further twenty million members of the Junior Red Cross which is a flourishing section of the movement in a number of countries. Should we rest content with the development to which these certainly impressive figures bear witness ? I think that that would be a great mistake, even if the societies were equally developed everywhere, which they are not. Indeed the reverse is true, their progress is anything but uniform.

Wherever it exists, the Red Cross must be equal to its obligations in three respects:

It must consist of men and women willing to contribute their own person to the cause, and serve the sick and wounded, either in war or disaster relief, in the capacity of doctors, nurses and ambulance men. Doubtless direction and administration are necessary and demand much personal devotion, but the heart of the Red Cross beats where those who have heard the call for help are out courting danger and privations in the direct work of rescue. The stronger these active Red Cross contingents, the better they are equipped and trained, the more clearly their nation will understand what the Red Cross is. But they must have moral and financial support to sustain them, and this must come from contributing members far more numerous than they. No national society has yet achieved an adult membership amounting to ten percent of the population, though some hope to reach this proportion in the not too remote future. On the other hand there are certain local Red Cross groups in the United States which no less than a quarter of the population of the State have joined. This is an example that we in Switzerland must try to emulate, and even surpass, for Red Cross work is a task to which our policy of perpetual

and universal neutrality lends, in a very special sense and measure, the character of a national duty.

All does not depend of course upon numbers and percentages, which are inevitably largely determined by the social and economic structure of the country concerned, but they are important as symptoms of the vitality of the Red Cross idea in the nation's consciousness. When unusually great tasks crop up demanding extraordinary means, only a Red Cross organisation of more than ordinary magnitude and prestige is able to reach and stir the whole nations by its appeals, and mobilise the prosperous of the land to support a great gesture of voluntary aid. In regard to this aspect of the three-fold efficiency we have mentioned, the American and Swedish Red Cross, to name only these, have many very notable achievements to their credit.

Organisation and mass suffrage, personal readiness to serve and material resources, all these the Red Cross needs if it aspires to be equal to its great and numerous obligations. But vital above all other things is the Red Cross spirit. Without it the Red Cross would be merely an organisation for its own sake like so many others. But where the true ideal animates even a small Red Cross society, it can impress the people with it, and win through step by step to its due status within the nation, and this attained, to the material substance it requires.

The spirit of the Red Cross is the offering of self, the willingness to do one's helping in one's own person. The ambulance corps, going defenceless into danger to succour not only compatriots and friends but enemies as well, expresses this spirit in its perfection. And second only to this supreme affirmation of human brotherhood is the work of those who serve the cause in epidemics and natural calamities,

and wherever alse the personal deed of charity is decisive.

All Red Cross work must bear the hall-mark of this spirit. It must be strong in the representatives dealing with belligerent governments or with the contending factions in civil wars and other forms of internal strife. Not only must these delegates possess the diplomat's tact and skill, and often the soldier's bravery and steadfastness, but they must also be capable of a disregard of self, an equanimity in the face of suspicion and ill-will such as hardly anyone but missionaries are expected to display.

It is not given to all, nor are all required, to perform such immediate Red Cross services as these. Less is demanded of other Red Cross workers, but two things equally of all, precisely those which the creators of the Geneva Convention deemed fundamental: that their service be voluntary, and that it be faithful to the principle of absolute neutrality.

Voluntary service means that the work is the outward token of an inward acceptance of the idea of service without personal advantage, a labour offered freely for no wage. True, a great organisation like the Red Cross, besides it honorary directors and their assistant staffs, cannot do without other workers too, for whom their work is at the same time vocation and livelihood. These collaborators, content with very modest emoluments, are very conscious of the difference in kind between Red Cross work and any other. No one can foresee how greatly national circumstances may cause Red Cross organisations to enlarge their scope, but it will always remain of primordial importance that unremunerated, voluntary collaborators form their main element, that they shun bureaucracy, and that the greater part of their financial support come from contributions which

express the readiness of members and the people as a whole to make sacrifices when their national society makes an appeal.

Neutral service means preparedness, so far as means and principles permit, and without respect of person, to help those who are in need of help and willing to accept it. Red Cross aid is not a declaration of sympathy for a party, a State, or an idea; it sees only the human being and his distress. In every conflict in which it is called upon to act, the more equally it is able to assist both sides in its humanitarian capacity, the more clearly its true nature and purpose come to light, and the less difficulty it encounters in the execution of its tasks.

We cannot uphold the Red Cross spirit unless we are vividly mindful of it at all times, and seek to give it expression continually in deeds. The Red Cross is perhaps more necessary today than it has ever been, and the fact that the times are all against it is only a confirmation of this certitude. Innate egoism and acquired love of ease are naturally no friends of self-denying service, but they are not the only adversaries. The modern State, in its struggle for existence, lays claim not only to the men, but also to the women and even the youth of the nation, and the further it pushes this invasion of private life, the less room is left for any voluntary action on the citizens' part. In the face of this contemporary phenomenon there is surely ample reason to ask, as the Red Cross does, that its active work be recognised as of equal value to the State-organised services for the progressive co-ordination of the total forces of the nation. Like the new political systems, the prevailing trend of thought repudiates rather than encourages the principles of voluntariness and neutrality. The widespread movement towards centralisation and the extension

of State authority to all aspects of life without exception, can have but little use for unregimented, individual effort, being all directed towards demonstrative mass achievements; in such programmes the moral forces which voluntary work so strikingly develops and releases can have but little place.

As for the idea of neutrality, it is currently considered not only as more and more impracticable, but even hardly intelligible at a time when political parties and social classes everywhere, like the nations themselves, either stand drawn up against one another in fiercest opposition of interests or ideas, or else take the reverse course and seek their force in an unbroken uniformity and compactness of political and every other kind of opinion imposed upon the people.

But their very supposed irrelevance to the hour throws into relief the Red Cross principles' profound relevance to the eternal lines of human history. It is because the values enshrined in them must never go lost, that the Red Cross must guard and defend them with all the greater vigilance at periods when there seems no place, and almost no comprehension, for them anywhere.

But however clearly we may discern the nature, value and necessity of the Red Cross, we must arm ourselves against two objections likely to sap our confidence and courage to go forward against all odds.

It is not so very long ago since the Red Cross, by reason of its wartime work and preparation especially, came in for much adverse criticism. Worse, it was openly accused of being a beneficiary of war and its accompanying horrors. This last assertion has of course perished of its own puerility and foolishness and is heard no more, but another objection of the same kind has survived, graver and more tenable; namely, that to prevent war is more important than to take

care of its victims, to create just conditions in the world more useful than to try and undo the harm done by human violence and injustice.

Nobody would dream of denying that the highest goal of all human striving is the establishment of a just political and social order. But the work of the Red Cross does not stand in the way of any such endeavour; on the contrary, those who have been inspired by the spirit of the Red Cross have passed through a superior apprenticeship fitting them peculiarly to carry out the most constructive tasks in the national and international community.

On the way to the high and distant end of making a righteous world, the influence of single individuals, with few exceptions, can only be very slight and indirect. Often such efforts defeat rather than serve their ends, because their authors omit to take human nature into account and thus run counter to it, and to the fundamental conditions which lie at the base of human societies. These are errors into which the Red Cross has always been careful not to fall. Holding fast to realities, it recognises as terrible, but also as certain, that at its present stage of development the human race is still in constant and immediate danger of those spasmodic waves of destruction which burst upon it, not only out of surrounding Nature, but, more dire still, out of the savagery and miseries of human nature itself.

The Red Cross, taking the recurrence of catastrophe for granted, looks beyond it to the victims, since victims there are and will be for a long time yet. It suggests a concrete and immediate task which everyone can help to fulfil, doing something worth while here and now, directly with personal labour or indirectly with material and moral support. Those who are the first to lend a helping hand to relieve

present ills are not the last to work consciously and realistically towards a future from which such things will have disappeared.

Whilst not dealing lightly with the above objection, we need not take it more tragically than it deserves. It is less dismaying than another doubt which might more reasonably lame our efforts if we did not take a stand against it. This doubt attacks us when we look at our achievements. Even if we confine ourselves to the comparatively modest task of helping the victims of war and other disasters, is there not an immense disproportion between the distress which faces us, and our means of alleviating it ? In countries with a powerful Red Cross and well established State and private welfare institutions, it can be said that relief is equal to the need. But where these are lacking, or when a long drawn-out war or any civil war confronts the Red Cross with extraordinary or unprecedented situations, we often experience a melancholy sense of falling far short of our obligations. The discrepancy is greatest between the hopes the public pins to the Red Cross and the impossibility of fulfilling all of them in cases where the aid must come in great measure and over a very long period from Red Cross societies abroad. In this respect the situation is frankly discouraging, and can only be mended by giving a powerful new spur to the national societies in every country, as expounded at the last Red Cross Conference in London.

But we should be able to admit deficiencies without losing heart; on the contrary, it is a reason to redouble our efforts. We may also take comfort in the reflection that a labour of love has a worth that cannot be expressed in terms of visible successes, influence and usefulness. It has invisible virtues. Every Red Cross worker, whatever his religion or philosophy of life,

will find the true value and meaning of his Red Cross work if he looks for it in that same sanctuary of meditation within which he seeks and finds the meaning of existence. The Christian will hear the answer in the words of Christ: "I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me... Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

With the Geneva Convention and the Red Cross, the pioneers of 1863 and 1864 laid the twofold foundation of a great edifice which has been built up to vast dimensions through the years, and stands today, on its base and in its solid superstructure, as firm as ever. Far from having outlived their purpose, our age of cleavage and threatened destruction on every side has brought these institutions to the summit of their usefulness. Not only because numberless victims of future wars will need the help they give, but because they are themselves a safety zone within which those who, on the outside, no longer speak or understand each other's language, may and will still meet in human kindliness and comprehension. This is the Red Cross mission for peace, not less great for being indirect.

All these considerations show us the magnitude of our obligation and responsibility as custodians of the Geneva Convention and the Red Cross, which by our efforts must be kept undiminished in their outward and inward integrity, and in their power to serve and to endure.

THE RED CROSS AND THE PREVENTION OF WAR[1]

The seventy-fifth anniversary of the signing of the Geneva Convention has been the occasion of many Red Cross demonstrations. The history and mission of the Red Cross have been expounded to the public in articles, lectures and talks over the wireless.

The International Red Cross Committee has been singled out for many marks of sympathy, not a few in the tangible form of gifts, some considerable, others modest and just as precious in their anonymity.

But the voice of homage is not the only one heard; some minds are perplexed to understand why the Red Cross, instead of keeping so narrowly to its relief work for the victims of wars, does not rather put its prestige and organisation to the wider use of preventing the wars themselves. This is a question the Red Cross has often been asked, particularly in the period just following the last great war. Now once again, the jubilee of the Geneva Convention coinciding with a state of grave political crisis in the world, several heads of Red Cross organisations have been

[1] Article published in the " Revue internationale de la Croix-Rouge ", April, 1940.

most urgently exhorted to take the necessary steps to cause their great institution to intervene with the Powers or the public of all nations, in order that peace may be maintained.

This confident belief that the Red Cross could, if it would, consolidate the foundations of peace and remove the threat of war, is doubtless a flattering testimony to the movement and its supposed range of influence, but it rests upon a misconception as to the aims and functions of the Red Cross, the conditions to which its universal action is subject, and as to what is and is not in its power to do.

Before considering how the Red Cross might exert its direct influence in the direction of a peace campaign, it must first be seen through what channels the " Red Cross "—a notion the general public would be hard put to it to define—could inaugurate such an action.

If the Red Cross is to a certain extent a power in the world, this is because of its sixty-two national societies with their twenty million adult members. Now, this great legion of adherents, though doubtless representing a powerful moral force, is far from forming a block of unanimous opinion, either with regard to the peace question in general, or to possible wars between this or that nation.

Then again, the Red Cross societies' standing with their public varies widely from one country to another, and besides this the members of each national society may be, and are, of many different shades of opinion in the matter of international politics. The only unanimity asked or required of the Red Cross as a whole and every national society in particular is on the two points which form the movement's basic principles; namely succour for all

victims of war without distinction, and the struggle against human suffering in all its forms.

Neither in the Convention of 1863, nor in the statutes of the International Red Cross Committee, nor in those of the League of Red Cross Societies founded in 1919, nor again in the statutes of the International Red Cross laid down in 1928, nor finally in those of the national societies, is any provision made for a Red Cross initiative in favour of peace. This absence must have a reason, and it cannot be because the millions of men and women united under the sign of the Red Cross are not all, or nearly all, whatever their divergences of opinion as to practical measures, the most fervent friends of that peace for which they never cease to hope.

The reason is that the Red Cross has its own mission to fulfil, conducive to peace but not specifically or directly concerned with its political establishment.

And now let us see how the national societies could proceed, supposing they desired to act ? It may be thought that one or several societies could approach those of the countries on the verge of war with a direct appeal. But this, as we shall see, is an initiative so fraught with possibilities of dissension within the society taking the initiative, and friction with the sister-societies appealed to, that it is highly doubtful whether the central committee of any national group would consider itself authorised to indulge in such an experiment.

The national societies possess organisations in common, the chief of which is the International Red Cross Conference which meets every four years, and is, according to Article I of the Statutes of 1928, the highest representative of the International Red Cross. Only the Conference is com-

petent to propose a major extension of the national societies' activities. As a matter of fact, on several occasions the International Conferences have passed resolutions concerning peace and international amity. We shall come to these later on. As for an action in view of warding off a particular threat of war, the International Conference could hardly be convened on purpose to discuss this issue; and if, during one of its regular sessions, some international conflict should happen to break out, the Conference would certainly be ill advised to interfere.

Another point to be remembered is that all the contracting governments in the Geneva Convention, that is, practically all the countries in the world, are represented at the Conference, and nothing is more probable than that a great many government delegates would be strongly opposed to the idea of the Conference's debating a political problem of the day.

Failing the national societies, which are thus seen to be, whether separately or united in conference, neither entitled nor qualified to initiate a peace action in times of crisis, the question arises whether this rôle does not rather devolve upon the international organisations.

The League of Red Cross Societies is a federation of all the national societies holding its general sessions, the Council of Governors, every two years. Its position is in every way comparable to that of the International Conference. The programme of the League, far-reaching though it is, does not cover even the whole range of Red Cross work. It could therefore hardly be expected to spread over into a domain not only beyond its statutes, but outside the tasks allotted to it within the framework of the International Red Cross. The League's executive body, made up of representatives of eleven national societies,

would obviously be more handicapped still. Indeed one cannot see how any Red Cross executive organisation could make political decisions its business, or take action to avert an imminent war, or interrupt one already started. Established for quite different purposes, none of them even offers the assurance of neutrality in such matters, or of equal representation for all the contending parties.

Among other things, the League of Red Cross Societies does however aim at a goal of incontestable importance for the question of peace; namely in its Junior Red Cross work. This has nothing whatever to do with international politics, and still less with intervention in conflicts; it is an attempt to inculcate in young people a spirit of comprehension and fraternity towards other nations than their own. But this is of course not the kind of peace action meant by those who press the Red Cross to pacify the world.

There remains the International Red Cross Committee. Of all Red Cross organisations, the International Committee is the one which, in virtue of its composition, seems at a first glance to fulfil certain conditions favourable to an action for peace. Independent of all governments, and equally independent of the national societies, choosing its members by cooptation among Swiss citizens exclusively, the International Red Cross Committee is free to make gestures and proclamations without involving anybody's responsibility but its own. It is thus far less hampered than any other of the representative councils made up of delegates belonging to, or chosen by, the national societies.

But on the other hand, this independence carries with it corresponding obligations, for the International Committee, by tradition and the mandates of the International Conferences, is also a moral

representative of the whole Red Cross. Its members all belong to a little country which for centuries has consistently pursued a policy of strict neutrality; at its deliberations the discordant voices of rival nationalities are never heard. In contrast to conferences, councils and committees where people hailing from a variety of countries meet and then disperse, the International Committee is at all times ready to take up the duties required of it, because its members are recruited almost entirely in Geneva. The statutes of the International Red Cross, as well as those of the Committee itself, define its mission as that of a specifically neutral intermediary in time of war. Not as a prophylactic agent against political conflicts to come, but as a humanitarian agent in wars, civil wars and social disturbances, whenever and wherever they may occur. Nothing in the statutes or tradition of the International Red Cross Committee gives it a shred of authority to launch a campaign of peace politics in its own name.

Before leaving the subject of the Red Cross organisations, one last observation must be made, namely that the members of all these bodies are chosen for their ability in the field of humanitarian work, not for their acquaintance with international affairs.

At the same time, it might be contended that if the Red Cross seriously wished to take up the cause of peace, either permanently or with a special case in view, its statutory incapacity and the impediments inherent in its present organisation, would not be insurmountable obstacles.

To reply to this argument we must see whether, even with an organisation better adapted to that new mission, the Red Cross would really be in a position to do anything practical and effective in the matter of peace.

Here doubts arise. The problem is not solved by examining what appreciable results might be obtained in the sphere of regular politics, or in a particular crisis; there is also the dilemma whether or no the new mission might not jeopardise the accomplishment of present and essential Red Cross tasks.

A general action on behalf of peace can be envisaged in many different ways. But to act concretely, one must be able to point out and solve the difficulties existing between various States with regard to their economic and other relations, and the demarcation of their spheres of domination or influence. All this presupposes an organisation equipped to ensure the peaceable settlement of grievances, and so forth. But the moment one sets out along this path, one moves inevitably on to the plane where political ideologies and national allegiances and resentments run riot, and where national interests are in perpetual collision. For the discussions concerning the establishment of a just and lasting peace to be immediately enveloped in an atmosphere of dispassionate fairness and mutual comprehension, would it be enough to provide them with a Red Cross background ? To put the question is to answer it.

If, considering the evident and grave objections to concrete projects, one confined oneself to generalities and issued a proclamation of abstract principles, there would be a great risk of remaining perfectly ambiguous, for everyone interprets terms like peace, justice, right, in his own way, and, perhaps subconsciously, in the light of what he holds to be the acquired positions or legitimate aspirations of his own country. One may also wonder how much the Red Cross would gain in authority by adding one or several more to the appeals, excellent though their intention indubitably is, by which countless other

institutions, associations, committees and individuals strive to capture the public ear.

It seems appropriate to recall at this point what the International Conferences have done in this connection since the end of the World War.

In 1921 the Xth Conference voted a resolution, No. V, to effect that

> " The International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies shall address an appeal to all nations, exhorting them to combat the spirit of war, which dominates the world."

The XIth Conference which took place in 1923 passed a resolution expressing its desire

> " to see the Red Cross emphasise at all times its character as a symbol of peace, esteeming that this conception in no way diverges from the idea of the founders of the institution, but is, on the contrary, in complete harmony with its spirit and tradition."

The International Red Cross assembly at which questions concerning peace were given special prominence, was the Conference of 1930 at Brussels. At the instance of the International Red Cross Committee, and after hearing a paper by the writer of the present article, it adopted a resolution on " The Red Cross as a factor in a better understanding between nations ", from which we give the following extracts:

> " The XIVth International Red Cross Conference,
>
> . . . Considering that the national societies, inspired by this principle, develop and organise,

in the national field and on a basis of neutrality, the goodwill of the public in view of a great work for the alleviation of human suffering;

Considering that the national societies overspread all countries and that, by co-operating with the International Red Cross in their common purposes under a distinctive sign consecrated by a universal treaty, they constitute a moral force unlimited by national boundaries and an element of mutual help and better understanding among the nations;

Esteems it advisable that the Red Cross make every effort to seek out all the points at which it may offer the support of its prestige and moral power to the world movement towards mutual comprehension and conciliation, essential pledges for the maintenance of peace, and use all the means at its disposal to combat war in order to avert those sufferings, the alleviation of which has been the foremost object of Red Cross activity."

In formulating this resolution the XIVth Conference showed more reserve than those which had preceded it. Nevertheless it clearly brought out the indirect influence exercised by the Red Cross in favour of peace, and thereby considered the peace problem in its practical aspect. That is to say, it made an attempt to obtain a greater objectivity in the information disseminated by the world's press, and in the nations' judgments of one another and of international questions. In the name of the Swedish Red Cross, H.R.H. Prince Charles of Sweden had addressed an important message to the Conference. Following this Conference, the International Committee had assembled the representatives of diverse

national societies at a Round Table meeting, to study the question of how the Red Cross organisations might bring their influence to bear upon the press in the direction of mutual comprehension among nations. Unfortunately the reactions of the national societies revealed neither the unanimity of sentiment nor the sympathy towards this project which could have been expected. And yet there is scarcely a more important factor in the consolidation of peace than the objectivity of the information services which form public opinion.

This fact was fully recognised by the XVth Conference at Tokyo in 1934, as is shown by its Resolution No. XXII, as follows:

> " The Fifteenth International Red Cross Conference,
>
> Considering the paramount importance of the press for a better understanding between the nations and the maintenance of good relations between them,
>
> Recognises the usefulness of the initiative taken by the Swedish Red Cross at times when the peaceful relations between the nations are threatened.
>
> And expresses the hope that it will be possible to find a practical solution to the problems resulting from that initiative."

Nothing practical seems to have been done as a result of this resolution. The Tokio Conference also passed another resolution—the XXIVth—which is a kind of résumé of all previous efforts made in this connection, and reflects the ideas we spoke of at the beginning of this paper. This resolution runs as follows:

" The Conference,

Having regard to the resolutions of earlier International Red Cross Conferences, and especially to Resolutions VII of the Eleventh (Geneva) and XXV of the Fourteenth (Brussels) Conferences, declaring that the Red Cross, without losing sight of its usual wartime and peacetime activities, must exert every effort, within the sphere of its attributions, to prevent war,

And considering that the progress made in the technique of warfare creates ever-increasing difficulties for the traditional activities of the Red Cross,

Expresses the hope that all national Red Cross Societies, while continuing, as during the past, to spare no effort in order to safeguard the lives of millions of men, to protect other millions from suffering and privations, as well as to prevent catastrophes which threaten to destroy the intellectual and material wealth accumulated through the centuries, will amplify their action against war and in favour of a better understanding between nations by every means at their disposal."

Lastly, the Conference held in London in 1938 made no pronouncement on the subjects in question, unless one counts the XXIInd Resolution, proposing the Junior Red Cross as candidate for the Nobel Peace Prize. Earlier Conferences, dealing with Red Cross work with youth had already, and very rightly, emphasised the importance of educating young people to judge other nations more fairly and in a friendlier spirit.

It suffices to review these resolutions voted by the International Conferences over a period of eighteen

years, and compare them with the present aspect of the world, to realise, before ever beginning to criticise their tenor, that they are quite valueless by themselves. Published, they are instantly swallowed up in the ocean of the daily press; as for the minutes of the Conferences, they are read by very few. So we see that the only way in which the Conference can bring its influence to bear is by urging the national societies and—this is the crucial point—the mass of individual Red Cross members to move in the desired direction. If the International Red Cross Conferences deserve censure, it is for casting the weight of their moral authority into the scales without always asking to what extent a public proclamation of high principles is balanced by visible effects in the Red Cross world itself.

Even when, as in the message of the Swedish Red Cross, vast but by no means boundless problems are approached in a practical way, the national societies respond but feebly. We cannot but fear that a proposal to add organised work for peace to the main tasks of the Red Cross would be far from receiving the welcome that many people imagine. Be this as it may, no peace campaign the Red Cross might inaugurate could be in the least effectual, unless it were possible to mobilise through the national societies a very large number of individual members to support it. Isolated initiatives by this or that central body are foredoomed to failure. The national societies must be prepared to cooperate in a general and persevering effort, and let us repeat that that effort may be bought at the price of introducing elements of discord into the Red Cross world.

The Red Cross has never interposed itself between political adversaries contemplating war, nor has it ever sought to make belligerents stop fighting, and

no wonder. For a conflict in which the opponents could be brought to terms by the mere intervention of some neutral personage or institution, would not be a very dangerous one, unless in some exceedingly rare and exceptional case.

It may not be generally known that besides the League of Nations with its system of peaceable adjustments, there exist, or did exist, treaties by which a great many States undertook to submit their quarrels to conciliation or arbitration. And it is only right to mention that the partners in those agreements were chiefly the very countries which have been engaged in all the most recent wars. Under the terms of the treaties in question, permanent conciliation commissions, their members chosen partly by each signatory government, and partly by common accord, were duly appointed and could be called upon by even only one of the contracting Powers. They never have been called upon in any matter of moment.

Experience teaches that governments almost always simply disregard the existing organisations for international conciliation and judicial settlement of differences, highly developed though these have now become. There is an explanation of this fact, but this is not the place in which to expound it. Suffice it to say that if the Red Cross were to come forward in the capacity of conciliator, the results would be essentially the same. It is conceivable that in certain circumstances an offer of mediation by a very powerful State or group of States might have some chance of being accepted under pressure of political considerations important for both contending parties. But all that the Red Cross has to offer, even at best, is its total lack of all political influence, and its equally total impartiality.

The unsolicited offer of mediation is moreover

always an exceedingly delicate business. It can very easily happen that one of the opponents will take it for a move in favour of the other, or else as a defeatist ruse. To choose the propitious moment and be ready with suggestions sufficiently telling to be taken seriously, the mediator must have an absolutely thorough knowledge of all the details, and an exceptional insight into the situation as a whole. The State chancelleries have these prerequisites perhaps; the Red Cross organisations have not, and cannot have. Nor should they give the impression that they possess any such special political capacity, for their own work would suffer as a result.

We feel that these few considerations, incomplete though they are, nevertheless show how hard it is for an organisation like the Red Cross to intervene to any purpose in international differences without going in frankly for politics. Nor have we so much as touched upon the problems themselves, bristling with difficulties due to the real or pretended tangles and antagonisms of national claims involved. And when we have added the psychological problem presented by the masses and the chiefs concerned, we have still mentioned only a few of the factors to be taken into account.

But for the Red Cross the main thing is to be clear as to the dangers it would incur by meddling in international affairs; set against even the best results a direct action could achieve, they will be seen perhaps to outweigh them.

To speak in the name of the institution whose recognised moral prestige and impartiality might entitle them to initiate a peace campaign, the Red Cross organisations must at least be the authorised spokesmen of the millions of men and women gathered together in fidelity to the Red Cross ideal. Without

this common consent, whatever declaration might be made would be a mere expression of personal opinions. These opinions might be of great value as coming from accredited leaders of the movement, but they would not represent the Red Cross world, and this alone would give offence to many members. Central committees could only speak for the Red Cross members as a whole after the national societies had fully discussed peace questions, and that not only by way of general resolutions adopted at an international Conference or Council of Governors, but in the national assemblies and committees, where the rank and file of the movement had made their attitude known more or less directly.

There is of course a possibility that the harmony which has hitherto always prevailed within the national societies, thanks to the remoteness of their activities from politics of every kind, might become ruffled in peace discussions in which the individual members' national sympathies could not fail to influence their attitude to some extent. This might, however, be of slight importance, and the chances are that a majority would vote in favour of a peace campaign, unless it meant departing altogether too far from basic principles.

But the greatest danger lifts its head, not when the general approval is being sought, but when it has been obtained. The idea of peace is dear to the heart of every nation, but hardly any two are agreed as to the best way to establish its dominion. There would be no homogeneity in the peace programmes drawn up by the various national societies, each of which would reflect the political sentiments and theories of its country of origin. Whilst some societies might, as we said, refuse to admit the inclusion of a peace mission among the specific aims of the Red Cross,

others might even reject the proposition as pandering to some political ideology.

All these reasons taken together justify some misgiving lest the new element, raised to the power of a regular and perhaps intense activity, turn out to be a cause of schism in the Red Cross community. There are two sides to every human question, and those who wish the Red Cross to take up the cudgels for peace must be prepared to face all the consequences.

International organisations are always fragile, having no power over their national members, whether groups or individuals, who can always withdraw at will either openly in due form, or else by persistent non-cooperation. The introduction of an activity which, however much its advocates might wish it to be non-political, is so inevitably because of its close connection with the issues of international politics, clearly affords prospects of disruption. The tendency of nations to form themselves into blocks representing ideologies, sympathies or community of interests, might very well infect the Red Cross national societies, some of which would rally round the international institutions of the Red Cross, whilst others, though remaining faithful to the Geneva Convention and keeping their national societies intact, would retire behind their own national boundaries, and stay there. The universal edifice of which the Geneva Convention of 1863 laid the foundations and which has taken seventy-five slow years to become the solid structure it is today, would then be exposed to the effects of disintegration and abandon which have undermined more than one official or private international institution.

National societies have been known to disappear as a result of political events, being replaced by new

ones afterwards, but so far not one has ever declined to maintain continuous relations with the others and with the International Red Cross Committee, a collaboration willingly accepted by all from the beginning. In the same way, when the League of Red Cross Societies became a universal institution, all its members without exception remained firmly attached to it. Before inaugurating any action likely to threaten this universality and this stability, it would be well to think long and carefully over all the pros and cons.

The difficulties we have just described as disabling the national societies would be substantially the same for their representative bodies, if they were to take an active stand, in their official capacity, with regard to the peace question. If the International Conference has no power to impose its will upon the national societies, the other organisations of the International Red Cross are still less able to do so. But the mere fact that an important question had aroused a sharp divergence of views would be most regrettable, for the Red Cross, even in its own and undisputed sphere, is dependent upon a high degree of unity throughout its parts.

We may be reproached with having painted too dark a picture, showing all the drawbacks and none of the advantages. But it is our inescapable duty, whenever a new activity is urged upon the Red Cross, to see where it would lead us to if we took it up.

Much is expected of the Red Cross. Why ? Because it spans the globe with its societies in all countries, as different in latitude as in politics, and then because it is known to be impartial, aloof from all political contentions and all ideologies. Now why does the Red Cross exist everywhere and for everyone ? Why could it go on growing for three quarters of a century,

attaining and maintaining that universal character ? Chiefly because, if it has always known when to go forward, it has also always known when to halt. It is in the world for a set purpose, and has kept to it; it has never intruded into places already occupied, but has always been a pioneer, seeking and doing tasks ignored before.

But over and beyond all these things stands the paradox of the Red Cross. Paradox because its original activity, relief work with wounded and sick soldiers in the field, rests upon two contradictory ideas strangely combined—war, the utter denial of human brotherhood; and charity, which knows no foe; unflinching realism in the face of all that life may hold of good or evil, and a sublime ideal of fraternity towards all men.

To this first and foremost task, solemnly entrusted to it by the Geneva Convention, the Red Cross has been able to add all its later charitable initiatives without in any way altering its status as it was at the outset. This meant eschewing politics in every form, and offering its services where no others could hope to be accepted. Neither has it ever sought reward of any kind, but has simply asked to help where help was needed.

And there is one thing more: Whatever the Red Cross does, it does itself; it goes itself to the rescue; it does not advise others what to do, or draw up social and political plans dependent upon others for their execution. The Red Cross labours for all, and with its own strength; it is all service, selflessness and devotion. Propaganda is not its mission, but the fulfilment of a modest, though not insignificant, task. That task is certainly limited, but is none the less great, for it is one in which all kinds and conditions of men can join, and have joined, and which no one

can oppose without denying the principles upon which all human relations rest.

Its self-imposed limitations, both in its earliest work and in all that has grown out of that initial inspiration, are the underlying reason why the Red Cross still survives in the fulness of strength, united, universal, neutral.

There are circumstances in which the noble impulse to look ever further ahead, to see ever broader, to build ever higher, is a temptation to be sternly shunned. It is that if the impulse imperils the accomplishment of an allotted and accepted task, and that danger will lie in wait for the Red Cross if ever it attempts to forsake its first and most real mission. Created to do a work of charity in the disastrous contingency of war, it can perform its duty only so long as its universality and impartiality are still without a flaw.

To focus all one's efforts upon one's sole appointed goal is an act of self-abnegation, and the Red Cross is great and strong because it has not shirked the necessary sacrifice. Its reward is that many cataclysms have not yet brought it down, but on the contrary, it still stands high amidst the tumult, the last bond between the severed nations, and the first, as yet unbroken link in the chain that will be mended by and by.

THE RED CROSS AS A NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL REALITY

Address to the German Press representatives on the occasion of their visit to Geneva, October 22, 1940.

Gentlemen,

It gives me great joy to greet the representatives of the German press here today. The many things that you have heard and seen this morning and this afternoon will have acquainted you with the Red Cross past and present. Now, if you will allow me, I should like to give you a general idea of our work in the International Committee, and hope that I shall not repeat too much of what you have already learnt.

The genesis of the Red Cross is a person and a deed. Not an idea that had to wait for the means and the people to carry it out, but a man who saw a task before him, and set his hand to it without an instant's hesitation.

Gœthe's splendid lines:

" So didst thou flourish ever on and on,
True to the law that call'd thee into being;
. . . . . .
And neither time nor any power shall crumble
The changeless form that, living, changeth ever,"

apply as well to individuals as to states and institutions. For the Red Cross at any rate, the spirit of personal service, the pioneer spirit with its constant readiness for new ventures, have been the determining elements in all the successive phases of its history.

Almost pure chance had taken Dunant to Solferino. Then suddenly he was on the battlefield, with the misery of ten thousand wounded all around him. In a flash he saw that here was something to be done that he had never dreamt of, and he went instantly to work. He had no wherewithal to speak of, and nobody to help him but the civilian population of the region, ready, like himself, to do what they could.

On his return home, he was not idle. His little book, " A Memory of Solferino " struck a chord that the whole world responded to. In his native Geneva he at once found friends to join him in forming a committee whose deliberations foreshadowed the Geneva Convention and a Red Cross movement borne on the shoulders of all the earth's peoples. That group of Genevese citizens still exists in the form of the International Committee in whose name I address you today.

Thus an unpremeditated deed brought forth a work that has never ceased to point the way into the future. The vital elements I have mentioned were all united in the members of that first association, precursor of the Red Cross. They were men profoundly imbued with a sense of responsibility, capable of making

decisions and standing by them. Dunant, the forward-storming visionary and apostle, could not have found a more perfect complement than in those collaborators of the earliest days: There was General Dufour, the great soldier, as wise as he was chivalrous, the commander who brought Switzerland's civil war to so swift an end that no European conflagration had time to catch alight at it, and conducted it so humanely that even the defeated cantons vied with one another to honour him above all his peers. In Moynier the committee found the builder and organiser, the framer of plans, the jurist; Appia and Maunoir brought to it the experience and ethical probity of the medical profession.

It is almost inconceivable that the brief space of little over two years could have sufficed to lay the foundations of a worldwide movement of still unimpaired vitality. Yet more incredible is it when one considers that this meant bringing a number of leading governments to the point of debating, concluding and putting into effect a treaty which stands out as one of the landmarks in international law.

Certainly the time was ripe. For a very long time past, since the latter 18th century especially, military leaders, doctors and philanthropists of various kinds had let the fate of the wounded and sick among the fighting forces in the field disturb their minds. But nothing coherent, nothing universal had been attempted.

To Dunant and his friends, with their admixture of wisdom and daring, breadth of vision and sound common sense (for they were careful not to lose themselves in inessentials and impossibilities) it was given to bring the scattered seed to a fruit of infinite future harvests. Their work had become a necessity of the times, because its object had at last begun to importune the public conscience.

The two-fold principle which the Geneva Convention embodies, namely protection for those who succour the wounded and sick, and help for friend and foe without distinction, could hardly have gained such widespread suffrage, or have taken such firm hold of the nation's minds, if it had been no more than an arrangement between governments or military staffs. Before the treaty of the 22nd August 1864, the Geneva Conference of the previous year had already urged the creation in every country of a national relief committee for injured soldiers in the field, to reinforce the regular military medical services with voluntary aid contingents. The Red Cross as a movement organised on national soil but reaching out across all frontiers, preceded the international treaty, and stands as the basic and original idea. The Convention comes in afterwards, to ensure special protection for the army medical corps thus reinforced in its work during hostilities.

The Red Cross is thus a world movement, but it is not a product of internationalism. From the first it was built up upon the terra firma of national effort. The national Red Cross in wartime does all its work either incorporated into its own army, or else in closest association with it. In other countries concerned, Red Cross action may or may not be taken, but of this each national society is independent. Each has its work to do on its own soil, and can give its best and highest there. And there too it fulfills its supra-national mission in the selfless help given by every Red Cross worker to the wounded, sick, defenceless enemy.

The national organisations of the Red Cross, which exist today in every country in the world, are not by

any means equally well developed everywhere. Though the spirit of disinterested, voluntary service which animates them all, welds them into an inner unity, each bears the stamp of its state and nation. Thus the Red Cross, whilst universal, is nowhere something foreign or un-national. And the Red Cross, as a universal institution, draws its strength, as its international organisations draw their prestige, from the fact that in every land the movement is a national affair, and each group can therefore appeal to its own nation for funds and workers, using both as it sees fit.

The German nation, both in the period of its divers independent states, and later on as the Reich, was one of the prime supporters of the Geneva Convention from its inception onward. Second only to Napoleon III, German princes such as King Wilhelm of Prussia, Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm, later Emperor Friedrich, King John of Saxony, were not only Dunant's most interested and understanding listeners, but they brought their personal influence to bear upon the negotiations to such effect that the Convention was concluded, as I remarked, in a minimum of time. And when, in 1906 and again in 1929, it came up for revision, it was the then German governments that took a leading part in establishing the provisions of the final treaty. The German national societies were among the very first to be founded. If the German Red Cross as a whole has always occupied so noticeable a place within the movement, this is explained by Germany's place in the world, her outstanding interest in social institutions, her superior gift for organisation, and the advanced standard of German medical science. At the second international Conference of the Red Cross held in 1869 in Berlin, the sister-societies were shown a strikingly well organised medical service ready for any summons, and several

of the resolutions passed on that early occasion have retained all their importance down to this day. It was at that assembly, for example, that the International Committee was asked to create a Central Information Bureau for Prisoners of War. No later than the following year, it found itself called upon to put that new creation to its first practical test.

The relations between the International Committee and the German Red Cross have always been excellent and marked by mutual confidence. The German Red Cross rendered invaluable aid in working out the International Red Cross statutes, and making them effective; it was indispensable in the work of the many committees of experts which the International Committee has appointed during the past twelve years to improve existing accords and outline new ones. Since H.R.H. the Duke of Coburg has been at the head of the German Red Cross, and Dr. Grawitz has presided over its administration, the International Committee has often had the honour and pleasure of their visits, which always brought fresh proof of these leading Red Cross representatives' great sympathy for our efforts, and their generous readiness to further them in every way. The Committee is in frequent personal contact with the head of the Foreign Service of the German Red Cross, Generalhauptführer Hartmann, with whom all our dealings have been in the highest degree friendly and gratifying.

Although the Red Cross is built up on the solid basis of national organisations and national work, it nevertheless cannot do without a corporate body to ensure the liaison between its various parts, and to assume tasks that, by their nature, exclude action by any national group. These cases, and they are many,

demand the offices of a non-partisan, neutral member, acting as intermediary between the national societies, or between governments, as the need arises. It is of the essence of the Red Cross that it reaches its full anp singular effectiveness at the moment when the nations, in their struggle for existence, arrive at the extreme of opposition, when governments have ceased to communicate with one another, and those under their dominion are more or less cut off from all direct contact with relatives and friends in enemy countries. If the Geneva Convention constitutes an improvement in international relations because of the protection accorded to the adversary's military medical services, and the acceptance of the principle of equal care for all the wounded, friend or enemy, the Red Cross, as a movement of voluntary aid, went further still, even at the beginning, and looked upon the unbroken maintenance of relations between the national societies as an aim of prime importance.

The very successful first Conference of 1863 was followed in 1867 by a second one in Paris, and a third in Berlin in 1869. Since then the international Red Cross Conference, meeting at intervals of from four to five years, has almost always taken place at the invitation, and at the seat, of one of the national societies. Thus was created, not a kind of world parliament of the Red Cross, but a worldwide Red Cross co-operation on the basis of the national societies.

Beyond these, the only other permanent organ for a long time was the " Committee of Five ", out of which the movement of 1863 had grown. At the desire of the national societies, it set out to fulfill its self-appointed mission as guardian of Red Cross interests as a whole, and trustee of the principles laid down in the Geneva Convention. Here also there was no

idea of establishing a vast new department; it was begun on the scale that circumstances required and allowed.

The Committee, round which the great *Agence des Prisonniers de Guerre* grew up to what it has become today with its over 1800 voluntary, and 700 salaried workers, was housed, for a long while, in a small room of a private house, with one single honorary secretary in charge. From time to time, on exceptional occasions, it enlisted reinforcements, for the most part voluntary, for the duration of the crisis, and then went back again to its modest exiguity. Its great expansion came with the war of 1914/18, and in the years just after. Establishing its Prisoners of War Information Bureau in the Musée Rath, it sent out over a hundred and eighty delegates into the prison camps, and to negotiate and supervise the transport home of prisoners. With the International Committee, the national associations, which in 1919 had joined together in the League of Red Cross National Societies, also increased in number and their sphere of activity was vastly widened. The statutes adopted at the Red Cross Conference at The Hague in 1928 brought the multiplicity of national and international Red Cross groups and institutions together into an organic whole. As to the function and composition of the International Committee, nothing was altered, not out of any reluctance for change, but simply because it still met the needs it had to deal with, having never ceased to evolve naturally with surrounding circumstances.

It is a curious thing that a committee like this, entirely self-contained, exclusively composed of nationals of one sole country, not only should have had an inter- and supra-national mission allotted to it, but should even designate itself as " international ".

The title and the function are both in direct response to the desire expressed by the national societies at the international Red Cross Conferences, and have nothing to do with the, in a sense, fortuitous circumstance that the flame of Dunant's initiative went out over the world from Geneva, and that the Geneva Convention was signed in that city.

The reason lies deeper, and has three sources:

If the pre-eminent Red Cross principle of voluntary, unremunerated service is to be valid for the International Committee also, not only in the way of periodical deliberations and resolutions but in the permanent organisation and execution of its own relief work, then its members must obviously be recruited from among people living near enough to its seat for their services to be frequently, or if necessary, even daily available. This general rule was modified for the first time in 1923, when a few members were appointed from other parts of the Confederation, in order to give the Committee an all-Swiss character. The knowledge that all the members of the Committee give their work without reward of any kind, is a powerful encouragement to potential collaborators on the outside to do the same. Today in Geneva and throughout Switzerland, more than 3500 persons are working for the International Red Cross Committee. This enables our organisation to accomplish, with the modest means at its disposal, tasks that the world's events may cause to become tremendous at a moment's notice.

The restriction of the members' nationality to one country in preference to a consortium representing a few or many national societies, is in the nature of a guarantee. A body of unmixed nationality is proof against those political frictions to which an internationally representative one is inevitably subject.

For much the same reason the Committee has also never sought its members among persons definitely associated with the more important political and social currents of the day. So long as nobody feels bound to set himself up as the champion of national or class or any other kind of interests, because nobody else is doing so, it can be vouched for, humanly speaking, that the Committee's attitude will be genuinely impartial, that it will work with undivided allegiance and in the true Red Cross spirit, for the causes entrusted to it.

One cannot expect every Red Cross worker to keep aloof from politics; it may occur that in the expression of his feelings and opinions on these matters, he sometimes forgets discretion. But what the Red Cross does exact without exception and unconditionally of all its workers on active Red Cross service —the member of the ambulance corps giving first aid to the wounded enemy in the field, no less than the delegate negotiating with belligerent powers for the welfare of war-victims—is that each and every one of them shall have no other thought in mind than the fact of human suffering, and the possibilities of alleviating it. Their greatest fear must be lest any political motive whatsoever intrude into their work, causing them to relax their efforts on behalf of those belonging to the side with whose cause, for reasons that may be honourable in themselves, but which for the Red Cross absolutely do not exist, they may feel little sympathy, or none. On the contrary, it is the Red Cross worker's duty in such a case, rather to overdo care and devotion than to fall short in either.

I count it as one of the happiest experiences of my life that during the time I have been in closest touch with the work of the International Committee, twelve years that have seen many a war and civil war

descend upon mankind, our members, whatever their political or social position, have been unwaveringly loyal to the principle of impartiality in their Red Cross work.

We must have the courage to stand by this absolute refusal to take sides even when by so doing we may appear to show favour. It is important, exceedingly important, for us that our impartiality and disinterestedness should never be doubted; but more essential than the reputation and the prestige is the fact. We must *be* impartial and disinterested. By this the Red Cross stands and falls.

The final element that goes to make the International Committee's position a singular one, is the fact that the institution has its seat in neutral Switzerland, and that its members are all citizens of this neutral country. If only for purely external reasons, a Red Cross serving a number of warring groups, and acting as go-between among them, could hardly do its work on other than neutral soil. However non-partisan and unselfseeking individual members of the belligerent states may be, generally speaking only neutrals can fulfil tasks for which the indispensable prerequisite is the confidence of both sides.

Not only is Switzerland the cradle of the Red Cross and Geneva Conventions, but it is also a country which, except for one brief interruption at the time of the French Revolution, has consistently pursued a policy of neutrality for more than four successive centuries, a neutrality formally confirmed by all the Great Powers on many different occasions.

This is the reason why the International Committee has its seat in our land. Neither when Dunant launched his idea, nor when the Conferences of 1863 and 1864 inaugurated the Red Cross and Geneva Convention, was it a privilege of Switzerland's own

seeking; it came about quite naturally as a result of historical and political circumstances.

The Red Cross, with seven and seventy years of history now behind it, has obviously felt many a repercussion of the great social and political changes which have taken place within its lifetime. Immovably true to itself, it has stood fast against them all. But it has also never ceased to grow with its obligations and in the national and international domain it has met each changing order in an open-minded and constructive spirit.

Until the Great War of 1914/18 the Red Cross, as it had built itself up upon the corner-stone of the Geneva Convention, was an institution whose worth and ethical justification had never been contested. It was recognised as one of the most valuable creations of international law. Throughout the world, from the beginning of the war until the end, in all the belligerent and many of the neutral countries, it underwent an enormous development, and did great things for the alleviation of distress, not only with the wounded and sick members of the armed forces, but also with civilian victims of the war. Our Committee too found itself faced with tasks compared with which its former work had been almost child's play.

The end of the war, however, brought with it a curious revulsion of opinion. War, as such, was to be forever debarred by means of an international organisation. The war against war was no longer to take the form of a struggle between adversaries having equal rights; instead of this there was henceforth to be a system of collective defence against all breaches

of the peace of nations. Thus both the hitherto obtaining laws of war, into which the Geneva Convention had been incorporated, and the institution of neutrality which plays so preponderant a part in the Red Cross, found themselves for the first time challenged as principles.

Interest in a movement which had won a right of way for mercy in the midst of the savage turmoil of war, not only went by the board as all minds were bent upon the suppression of war, but many champions of collective security even went to the lengths of declaring it morally unsound. This aversion from all things military (the swing of the pendulum after the superhuman tension of the war), and the belief that a completely new and better world order had been born, caused much misunderstanding as to the necessity and moral value of the Red Cross, resting as it did upon the fundamental principles of the Geneva Convention. At the same time its work during the long war had given it such prestige in the world that it was thought essential not to let it disappear. An equally considerable destiny was planned for it outside war and military institutions, in the field of charity in general, in the fight against sickness, and wherever human distress called for aid. This is the only connection in which the national Red Cross Societies' work is mentioned in the League of Nations Covenant.

And from still another quarter crisis threatened the Red Cross idea: the new world organisation of the Red Cross, created with a view to almost exclusively peacetime tasks, at first showed signs of following in the wake of all the tendencies inspired by the military outcome of the war, and the peace treaties of 1919/20.

Through all the successive phases of those abnormal

times which lasted well into the post-war period, the International Committee which, under Gustave Ador's leadership, and thanks to the unshakeable principles we have so often reiterated, had developed an activity of great range and variety, steered an undeviating course. It held to the view that its traditional mission had not yet proved itself superfluous, and therefore still remained its true raison d'être, though this in no way hindered its welcoming the extension of Red Cross activity to the new peacetime fields, nor made it any the less ready to collaborate with the new federation of national societies. But neither did it hinder—on the contrary, it imperiously imposed—the Committee's rejection of all compromise in the matter of Red Cross universality. It stubbornly upheld the cultivation of contacts with *all* Red Cross societies on an absolutely equal footing, irrespective of the political constellation of the countries they existed in. This firmness of attitude was certainly not without importance for the whole future of the Red Cross. The International Committee's view made rapid headway among the national societies, and the movement was thus spared the fate of other international institutions which later political re-shufflings caused to totter and, in several cases, to collapse.

The acts of war which have unhappily devastated different regions of the globe these twenty years and more, have amply demonstrated that if concern for an equitable and firmly consolidated peace is fully justified, the concern for the succouring of victims of wars, sad as it may be to admit the fact, is no less so. The results of the diplomatic conference which met in 1929 in Geneva to amend the Geneva Convention in the light of experiences gained in the last great war, and at which the accord in favour of the prisoners of war was concluded, proved that the traditional,

specific Red Cross work was once more reinstated in undiminished significance in the view of all governments. The international Red Cross Conferences have always encouraged the International Committee's initiatives, among which have been actions in connection with Air Raid Precautions, the revision and extension of the Geneva Convention and its subsidiary agreements, the protection of the civilian population, especially women and children, against the effects of modern warfare, and the judicial status of civilians on enemy territory. It is of particular note that from 1934 onward, the Chancellor of the Reich in his discourses has repeatedly laid stress upon the importance of the Geneva Convention and the Red Cross idea, as a useful and constructive element in international relations.

If today it is vouchsafed to the International Committee to maintain contact with all the belligerent Powers, to use its humanitarian influence with each one in favour of war-victims belonging to enemy countries—these démarches being made either on its own initiative or at the request of one or more of the present adversaries—we may confidently ascribe this to the fact that the Committee, true to the task assigned to it three quarters of a century ago, has always held the fate of the immediate sufferers through war to be, before all other things, the object of its mission, and has always endeavoured to win and keep the confidence of governments and of the national societies, without which its work would be well-nigh brought to a standstill. To this end it has upheld its neutral attitude against all criticism and against all odds, free from political entanglements, independent of every political contingency, impartial and loyal towards all.

Thus the essential character of the International Committee of the Red Cross is, as we have seen, determined on the one hand by its first and foremost duty: to be an impartial, neutral link between the belligerents, and between the national societies cut off from each other by the war; and on the other by the fact of its anchorage in the soil of Switzerland, the land of perpetual neutrality.

But I think that something still remains to be said, to give a clear picture of the highly special nature of this institution, its manner of working, and the problems that confront it at every step.

The Committee is not a public body, nor is it an institution of international law. It is a mere association of at most twenty-five private citizens of Swiss nationality. It is not a richly endowed foundation; it has no assurance of financial support from any quarter whatsoever. It has neither the political nor the economic strength of a great Power to lean upon, but only that of the little country of its seat and origin.

And yet it has a no mean function in the world. The national societies, the governments, public opinion, look to it for things that are asked of no other private organisation in all the wide realm of international relations.

But it is perhaps its very unassumingness, poverty and lack of all the attributes of power that make the fulfilment of its mission possible. And so far as humanly, materially and morally possible, it leaves no appeal unheard, although it has nothing, literally nothing to work with except the sole voluntary labours of its members and collaborators on the inside, and its sympathisers on the outside, and the gradually acquired official confidence in its absolute impartia-

lity. These are its only permanent assets together with such funds as may be contributed by gifts from public funds or private charity in its own and foreign countries

Closely as the Committee is bound up with the creation of the Geneva Convention, it is neither expressly nor tacitly referred to in that instrument. For more than sixty years before, and during the whole duration of the last great war, it exercised its full activity without being recognised in any diplomatic document as having any definite mission. The Geneva agreement of 1929 concerning prisoners of war is the first international treaty to mention the Committee as such. But neither it nor any other document binding upon the governments reserves to the institution any specific rights; it merely declares that nothing in the treaty shall be interpreted as limiting the humanitarian activity of the International Committee.

This deliberate vagueness as to its rights is perhaps the secret of our institution's strength. For it is the soul of all Red Cross work that wherever, whenever, and in whatever guise a great distress appears, there and then we must step in. The Committee could only lose by being confined within the rigid clauses of a treaty which cannot possibly foresee all emergencies and designate them in advance.

Certainly the Committee's work is greatly facilitated by being able to appeal to recognised principles of international law, and to treaties which the belligerents are still disposed to abide by. But even such chartered rights do not suffice the Red Cross, if more and better conditions can be achieved for the war-victims, its traditional protégés. From the first hour, the Red Cross has always worked with the future in view, and will continue to do so with the same

energy while it exists. Thus, immediately upon the outbreak of the present war, it approached the Powers, not once but repeatedly, to put into temporary effect certain accords elaborated by the Red Cross during recent years, and submitted to the various governments, but not yet incorporated into international law.

The activity of the Committee being unimpeded by the fixed provisions of governmental agreements, it can be freely brought into play in cases where the appeal to treaties has become null and void, the contending parties having ceased to recognise each other as governmentally competent. This situation is especially typical of the state of civil war.

But elsewhere too we often find ourselves encountering circumstances as remote as possible both from the political situations provided in the international treaties, and from the normal conditions under which the Red Cross organisation envisages its work. The International Committee tries to be equal to all these anomalies as they arise, and deals with them in accordance with its two great guiding principles: to keep all politics at arm's length, serving no political interests whatsoever, either directly or indirectly; and to maintain, in all circumstances and at all times, its readiness to help, to hold out the hand of collaboration to any unselfseeking effort for the welfare of those whom war has harmed, or threatens to harm.

The International Committee's rejection of all commerce with things political in any shape or form must even be adhered to in cases where, for the very reason of its known impartiality, its intervention is sollicited. Our task, the sacred and particular task of the Red Cross, was laid upon us by suffering mankind. Considerations perfectly justifiable, or even

noble, in themselves must never be permitted to divert us from fulfilling that great trust. But neither may we stoop to dubious means to serve it. In time of war, our whole work must stand squarely upon the bedrock of unequivocal loyalty and fairness towards all the fighting parties. This is why the Committee does all its work out in the open. Needless to say, this does not mean that silence, discretion and tact are not frequently essential, but there is not a letter, not a telegram that leaves our offices which, if they were to be made public, we could not answer for without a qualm to all the contending parties in the war, and to the world at large. For we seek neither the interests of any country, nation or group as such, nor even those of our own institution, but solely the welfare of human sufferers in need. On no other assumption could we expect to receive the degree of confidence indispensable to our usefulness, and no other could give us the moral right to ask for it.

Our greatest difficulty and heaviest moral burden is to realise—as, alas, we must—the immeasurable disparity between what not only uncounted individuals, suffering, disappointed, worn with suspense, but even governments and the national societies of our own Red Cross, expect of us—between these great expectations and what we actually undertake, not to mention finally achieve.

It is hard to imagine the number and bewildering variety of requests and supplications with which people approach the " International Red Cross ". Most of them have only the most shadowy notion of what it is, but from the most exalted to the unhappiest outcast, they come to us in the same anguish. Unreasonable or almost ludicrous as many of these demands may be, they spring from the same profound distress, the same heartbreaking dread and misery.

The letters these innumerable correspondents send us are, with rare exceptions, cries of the despairing for whom the Red Cross represents their last earthly hope.

Ardently we wish that the realm of the Red Cross were wide enough to find room for the fulfilment of every wish, but this is beyond its scope and ours. To outgrasp reality, to attempt too much, to wander off into the utopian or the unattainable, could only endanger, and at last destroy, our capacity to do with efficiency what was essential, urgent and feasible. The Geneva Convention and the Red Cross owe their greatness to the fact that from the very first, their artisans remembered that not only politics, but all practical humanitarian work as well, if rightly understood, is the art of the possible.

But after all necessary limitations have been duly taken into account, we sadly measure the enormous disproportion left between what should, and in point of fact, could be done, and what, as things are, can be done. The discrepancy between necessity and ways and means. And even when the material problem has been solved, and funds and workers are at last assembled in sufficient quantities, what new difficulties have we not to contend with as a result of sudden obstacles due to military operations, governmental orders, transit prohibition for persons, goods or money, and innumerable other such hindrances. We must, however, let nothing discourage or dismay us. Would the Red Cross have ever come to life if Dunant, with his so pitifully meagre resources, and the women of Solferino, inexperienced and without the faintest preparation, had paused to set their difficulties against the need of the wounded ten thousands, and turned away with a regretful but hopeless " Impossible ! " ?

The International Red Cross and its now so numerous collaborators, find joy and courage in the thought that, though the relief obtained or rendered, the news transmitted, be but a small, perhaps minute, fraction of the relief and news so bitterly needed and so eagerly longed for; even though we reach only some millions, whilst other millions remain, for this reason or that, beyond our reach, yet for the imprisoned and interned, for the anxiously waiting family at home, a parcel, an amelioration of treatment in captivity, a word of news, are things that bring back strength and hope and happiness into human lives. That is what justifies the work, yes, even when the only service we can render is to end a long and torturing uncertainty.

A statistical analysis cannot give the measure of the Red Cross, its psychological effects upon the individual must be included in the estimate.

Like the national Red Cross societies and the League that unites them, the International Committee pursues its work in cheerful devotion to the idea under whose symbol we all labour together. We Swiss regard this service in a special sense as a duty incumbent upon us. For centuries we have defended and maintained the neutrality without which we should forfeit both our independence and our national identity, marked with the imprint of a unique history. Not that neutrality means a dull and passive standing aside from common experience; on the contrary, only an active neutrality can be good and fruitful.

The International Red Cross Committee, Swiss and international, must incarnate the principle of all right neutrality—in its readiness to help where help is needed, with equity towards all and favour towards none, impartial because, and not in spite, of the human sympathy and understanding which inspire

all its work, practically effective in virtue of its neutrality, and of that only. To this, our freely accepted mission, we try to give the best that is in us at our alloted post. We know that we are sustained in our endeavour by all our fellow-countrymen and our authorities. If only our work, already so restricted by our own so limited possibilities, might not find so many other barriers in its way, placed there by others, and beyond our power to remove!

The International Committee is fully aware that its contribution to the alleviation of war's great distress can only be a very slight one in comparison to what the national societies, especially those in the belligerent countries, have to produce. A neutral intermediary's function is admittedly of first necessity; nevertheless, except in the person of our delegates, we stand, so to speak, outside the fighting zone. We do not do our work among the victims of the war, though whatever we do is for them.

Today, as on the first day when one whole man on a battlefield of mutilated conceived it as a vision and brought it forth as a reality at a single stroke, the Red Cross draws its life from the personal labour of the men and women who go out into the thick of the war, into the midst of the bombardments, into the hospitals; and who, in flood and fire, earthquake and epidemic, carry succour to the suffering and menaced. Before those workers' simple and unconscious heroism, we, on the outer lines, can only bow our heads in thanks. In such readiness, such faithfulness to the ideal of the movement, such unreserved gift of self, lie the deep strength and true nobility of the Red Cross. And therein, above all, lies the evidence of its national and international reality.

ON THE WORK OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS COMMITTEE

Improvisation and Preparedness.

Dunant's experience on the field of Solferino was the point of departure for the Red Cross movement. His intervention and his aid to the wounded with only the people of the place to help him, were improvisation; improvisation in their sheer inadequacy—for to do much with so little was utterly impossible, but also in their greatness, the personal effort performed with such simplicity, the courage which could not be daunted, even by the hopeless magnitude of such a task.

The aim and object of the Red Cross is always to bring relief in cases of exceptional necessity; first of all in wars, then in catastrophes of other kinds. It derives its law from the fatality which underlies all great misfortune. From the beginning, it was Dunant's and his first collaborators' idea to give their improvisation a solid basis in careful preparation, so far as this was possible, and this led to his immediately pleading for the creation of national organisations of voluntary aid in every country. It was out of such groups that the Red Cross emerged as a relief work encompassing the world.

The national Red Cross societies prepare themselves for their great tasks, which can be anticipated but never foreseen, by training men and women as nurses, equipping medical units, ambulances, hospitals and so forth. The greater the extent to which a national society has made its own people a part of itself through philanthropical and social action, training helpers, collecting funds, the more nationally self-supporting it becomes in every way, the better it will rise to the unpredictable demands which times of crisis make upon it.

As for the International Red Cross Committee in Geneva, the cell out of which the entire movement grew, its task can be compared to no other, being as singular as it is difficult. Existing chiefly as a connecting link, it is a neutral intermediary through which the national societies, cut off by war, may keep in touch with one another; and at the same time, thanks to the trust placed in it by all the belligerents, it labours for the welfare of war-victims on both sides, so far as this falls within the humanitarian sphere, and establishes contact between them.

Whilst the Red Cross society of any given country is a national foundation, and has therefore certain natural limitations and can count upon a fairly normal balance between its tasks and the means of fulfilling them, it is inherent in the universal mission of the International Committee that, according to the dimensions a war may assume, it may find itself at any moment confronted with tasks out of all proportion to even the utmost it can ever be called upon to do in peace time. If this was the case in the great war of 1914/18, and in the early post-war years, the present conflagration, which involves not a world but a planet, makes demands upon the Geneva Committee which far exceed all its previous experience.

And yet its work cannot be other than an improvisation on a grand scale. If those at its head do not shrink from so daring an enterprise, it is because of their profound conviction that its services are necessary and irreplaceable, and also because not only the Red Cross Societies but also many governments look to the International Committee to carry on against all odds. The exhaustive preparation against wartime which is every Red Cross Society's duty in time of peace is, in the nature of things, impossible for the International Committee, but this does not mean that it let the years between the last world war and the present one go by in idleness. On the contrary, its members, assisted by a small staff of paid collaborators, were unceasingly at work.

The Geneva Convention of 1929 concerning the treatment of prisoners of war, a treaty which has proved of the highest importance in this war, was elaborated by the Committee chiefly on the basis of experiences gathered in 1914/18. From 1928 onward it was a pioneer in the field of air raid precautions, until this work was taken up by the national societies, which in turn relinquished it in all countries to the governments thereof. The International Committee's draft treaty for the regulation of the status of civilians of enemy nationality in the territory of a country at war, was approved by the International Red Cross Conference held in Tokio in 1934, and has served the Committee well during this war, in which the interests of countless of interned civilians require protection. A number of other treaties, drafted in Geneva, were on the point of being dealt with at a diplomatic conference to be convened by the Swiss government, when the war broke out.

The Committee's activities during the interim of peace were by no means confined to the preparation

of agreements for future belligerents. As early as 1930 it had caused records to be made of all the experiences met with in the course of building up the Prisoners of War Agency. Happily there was no need to rely on these archives, as the two members of the Committee who had been mainly responsible for that work in 1914/18 were able to take it up again with all their outstanding ability of twenty-five years before, not slavishly repeating the past, but utilising what had been learnt then and applying it creatively to new and different circumstances.

Long before the political crisis of the year 1938 had reached its climax, the texts of letters and telegrams sent out in the first days of September 1939 to the heads of governments and the Red Cross Societies of the belligerent countries offering the Committee's services and urging the application of treaties pending though not yet in force, had been carefully drawn up, and at the critical moment were ready for use. A long time in advance, lists of possible collaborators had been made, quarters provisionally reserved for the housing of the various departments, and many other farsighted measures taken, among which the negotiations with the Swiss Government for a considerable advance fund to meet the first emergencies was not the least important. Likewise, in many anticipatory deliberations with the Swiss authorities and the Swiss Red Cross, all possibilities of aid within the Confederation, consonant with the policy of active neutrality, had been throughly discussed, so far as the eventualities of the future could be foreseen and provided for.

All this preparation would have been next to useless however, but for the hundreds and soon thousands of men and women who flocked to offer the Committee their collaboration, for the most part wholly unremunerated. And when, in the summer of

1940, the Agency's correspondence became an avalanche, close upon two thousand more Swiss citizens in more than twenty different districts enrolled for unpaid service in the local branches.

It would not have been possible to establish delegations at such short notice and such small expense in so many countries, especially overseas, had not Swiss citizens living abroad immediately placed their goodwill and their qualifications at our disposal, many without any return. Without such moral enthusiasm, finding its outlet in such wholehearted readiness to serve, an improvisation on so vast a scale would not only be pure recklessness rather than daring, but would lack all ethical justification.

On the financial plane as well, the work of the International Committee is a compound of improvisation and risk. Its expenses, before the war, thanks to the work of its members, none of whom receive remuneration of any kind, never exceeded the Frs. 15,000 monthly contributed by the Red Cross Societies. From the end of 1939 onward they gradually increased, and as the war spread, bringing a proportionate increase of work for the Committee, the monthly expenses rose to over Frs. 300,000, at the end of 1941, and are still increasing, in spite of the unpaid work that lifts an enormous burden from the budget. Until now, two thirds of this great financial load, amounting to some six million francs since the outbreak of the war, has been borne by the Swiss people through public collections, the sale of badges, donations from private persons or institutions and commercial firms. One third came from the belligerent governments and Red Cross Societies abroad.

But now the Committee's expenses are increasing to such a pitch that it finds itself more and more

dependent upon the support of governments, including the Swiss Confederation. Though it does not for a moment imagine that its financial boldness will be unfortunate in the event, still such complete dependence upon voluntary contributions is not only a constant exhortation to thrift; it is also a source of extreme anxiety to the responsible members. It is impossible for them to say, "Thus far, and no farther": the Committee's expenses are determined by the work, the work is determined by the duty to care for the victims of the war, the duty by the distress, and the distress by the war. Circumstances over which the Committee can exercise no influence whatever, reveal to it where its duty lies, and where work is to be done money must be spent.

Readiness and Limitations.

The International Committee, as the specifically neutral member of the Red Cross, comes pre-eminently into action as the connecting link between belligerents. The only function the Geneva Convention of 1929 concerning Prisoners of War expressly attributes to it, is the establishment of a central agency for the exchange of information. In September 1939, the Committee at once took this work in hand, as it had done in previous wars. Ir grew into the huge centre at the Palais du Conseil General, with over twenty branches in various cantons, hundreds of employees, thousands of volunteers, tens of thousands of incoming and outgoing mail and parcels daily, and millions of names in the card-index.

But the same international treaty of 1929 stipulates that the Committee's humanitarian initiatives shall not be impeded. It sends out delegates to visit the camps, seeing to the welfare of the prisoners, and as

in the last war this branch of its work, parallel with that of the so-called " protecting Powers ", is welcomed and appreciated. One activity of the Committee which was only of minor importance in former wars, the transmission of parcels from the prisoners' friends, has come to the fore today. Through the Committee's intermediary, various organisations and private persons, but chiefly the national Red Cross Societies, have already sent parcels to the value of far more than Swiss Frs. 100,000,000 containing foodstuffs, clothing, books and so forth to prisoners all over the world. A great transport organisation had to be created for this purpose: Red Cross freighters ply between Lisbon and the Mediterranean, over 6000 goods-wagons have rolled out of Geneva carrying over 12,000,000 parcels. The shipping problem assumes ever greater importance, and is more difficult of solution as time goes on.

The creative initiatives of the Red Cross do not stop at wounded, sick and imprisoned soldiers, but extend also to the thousands of civilians interned in enemy country, as well as to those who wait in hopes of being repatriated. The International Committee, ever seeking to improve its services to the national relief organisations, had already widened its activities to include the civilian populations of war-stricken countries, especially the women and children. To this end the Joint Commission of the International Red Cross was founded by the Committee and the League of Red Cross Societies. To the immense tasks undertaken by this organisation will be added others not less vast as soon as the war is over, such, for example, as the prevention and combating of epidemics, and others too varied and too many to be enumerated here.

To rely upon an essentially improvised organisation

for the accomplishment of such extraordinarily many-sided and widespread works, seems so fraught with danger that few would care to take the responsibility for it. But there is no choice, for no other way is possible. People often express disappointment and judge the Red Cross with some disparagement because they find that not every enquiry can be answered, or because now and then news comes through more rapidly from other sources, or else because not all parcels can be forwarded to all destinations at all times. It is not to be avoided, in an organisation of such dimensions as the Red Cross, and so largely dependent upon helpers who are neither trained experts nor, in all cases, permanently available, that errors and delays sometimes occur. Where special, privileged channels are open to certain groups, or can be used for an isolated case here and there, it is obvious that enquirers will be satisfied more promptly. But the International Committee and its Agency view their mission above all as a service, not for some only, but for all without privilege or distinction. They rejoice to know that tens and hundreds of thousands are helped by other means than theirs; but the millions who have no access to special favours and whom nobody takes care of otherwise, must also be served, and served first. The services demanded of the Committee are countless; they range from the transmission of prisoners' names by the tens of thousands from government to government, to the search for a single missing individual; from suplying a prisoner's request for some remedy indispensable to him but unobtainable in the enemy country, to rescuing whole sections of populations, such as the children in countries suffering from famine.

Also the public looks to the Red Cross for much that lies entirely outside its province, on account of

the very general impression that the Red Cross can help where no other instance can or will do anything, and that for it the obstacles created by the war simply do not exist. Whilst this idea doubtless does the movement great honour, it is based upon a not undangerous misconception. Whoever has seen Red Cross work from the inside, knows how long and arduous is its road. A work may be defined and recognised in an international treaty; new possibilities of usefulness to war-victims may have been created for it through the Committee's negotiations with governments, but nothing of all this prevent innumerable technical and external obstacles from towering up before it. The information and mail services alone present a problem that cannot be solved once and for all, but changes incessantly with the fluctuating circumstances of the war. As to the sending of goods, of no matter which description, a host of other difficulties must be overcome: monies placed at the Committee's disposal must be got free, a lifting of embargoes obtained—if possible; whilst the scarcity of rolling-stock and the various blockade regulations raise obstacles which are anything but easy to overcome. Where the situation calls for overseas transport in vessels flying the Red Cross flag, intricate negotiations must be opened with the belligerent sea Powers, and the ships and ladings are subjected to permanent control. In all this, it must be remembered that the Committee is neither like a government, with an extensive system of diplomatic and consular agents and a great staff of officials, nor yet like a commercial enterprise run for profit and equipped with a highly paid personnel trained up to the hilt. The Committee's entire work has to be done with an improvised organisation of voluntary helpers and employees whose quite paltry salaries have to be found out of funds voluntarily contributed.

Under such circumstances it is clear that the Committee must be constantly on its guard against any dissipation of its working strength and resources. The tasks devolving upon it by treaty, statutes and tradition must always come first, and new ones, however much to be recommended, can only be embarked upon as available means allow. Also, none must be kept up once its necessity has ceased or diminished in proportion to other, and more pressing, calls. No human organisation is capable of infinite extension, and the penalty of overstepping the limit is that efficiency grows less and less, and at last fails altogether.

One of the hardest trials the Red Cross has to face is when it finds itself obliged to refuse to intervene everywhere and at all times. But it has no alternative: either its commitments must be kept within bounds, or else it must do things by halves and superficially. Even at best, the International Committee is always painfully aware of the discrepancy between the need, which is unlimited, and the possibilities, all too limited, of alleviating it. We reflect with sorrow how much suffering, disease and death result from the hindrances and delays inseparable from the innumerable difficulties which beset Red Cross work on every side. But on the other hand, the Red Cross worker knows that even the little is infinitely more than nothing, that every particle of news obtained, every trifle of help rendered is a ray of light in the darkness, and that figures alone do not tell the essential tale, but the spirit upon which the work is borne.

Humanity and Politics.

The Red Cross, its national Societies and supranational and international organs, came into existence

as a work of human sympathy, an expression of fraternal love towards all men. The humanitarian idea has undergone many a change within the past three quarters of a century, and has had faced more than one sharp criticism. But neither the one nor the other has ever caused the Red Cross to waver in its purposes which are the same in war and peace; its concern remains unchangeably the individual human being in distress, ill or a prisoner, or hungry, or freezing, or alone and cut off from family and friends.

The humanity the Red Cross stands for is of the simplest kind, like the Good Samaritan's, who, seeing a man lying by the roadside, wounded and helpless, does not stop to ask questions as to persons and circumstances, but goes at once, and takes care of his neighbour in need. It is not a romantic humanity embracing all mankind, but a readiness to do the immediate and direct works of mercy in one's own person and without parade. For the ability to help assumes the duty to do so. And in this Red Cross attitude there enters also the element of chivalry, implicit in the relation of the strong towards the weak and helpless, and which commands respect for the life and dignity of the vanquished when the battle has decided.

Not political or social reform, but help alone is the business of the Red Cross, help for the victims of all catastrophe. It does not enquire into the justice or injustice of a war, nor is war between nations more properly its concern than war within a country divided against itself. When conquest, occupation or political change affect normal relations established by the international law upon which its war-time work is generally based, the Red Cross works on undismayed, though under far graver difficulties. This is especially true of the international and supra-national activity

of the International Committee. It is of great importance for the Red Cross to possess an unassailable legal basis in treaties recognised all round. But the absence of such juridical regulations never deters the Committee from its endeavour to make Red Cross principles observed notwithstanding; and indeed it has seldom failed to obtain sufficient practical recognition of those principles to enable the work to be carried on with complete integrity on the humanitarian side, and with guarantees of principle enough to provide the necessary working basis.

The exclusively humanitarian aims of Red Cross work rule out all thought of benefit, not only material but also political, either openly admitted or wearing the disguise of charity. The entrance of the Red Cross on the scene cannot ever be interpreted as a declaration of partisan sympathy, since its help goes out to all in equal measure, restricted only by its resources. Although the first duty of each national society is towards the members of its own army and country, its activity is none the less subject to the fundamental principle laid down from the beginning in the Geneva Convention of 1864; namely, that every wounded and sick soldier, whether he belong to a national society's own, or an allied, or even the enemy army, has exactly the same right to protection and care as every other. This is the lofty idea at the heart of the Geneva Convention.

It stands to reason that the very existence of the International Red Cross Committee depends upon its absolute remoteness from politics in every form. Its readiness to help on all sides must be beyond the shadow of doubt. This neutrality is far from being a mere attitude of strict correctness towards all parties; it is a very vital readiness to serve. But the desire can only be translated into action if all parties have

unquestioning faith in the institution, its heads, its agents and all its works, and complete confidence can only be the reward of comprehension. It is not enough to realise the needs of each belligerent; it is essential to understand how he feels and the way his mind works, essential also to maintain the reserve becoming in those not engaged in war towards those who are, for the effort, the sacrifice and the suffering are almost all on one side. The Committee must, as we see, have no commerce with politics, but this in itself calls for deep insight into the political situation. Tact and prudence are no less necessary in the Committee's work than in diplomacy, but must not be carried to the point of timidity and over-caution where Red Cross issues are at stake. There must be transparent loyalty of attitude, combined with methods of irreproachable probity.

What helps the International Committee to maintain its unpolitical character and keep the confidence bestowed upon it, is the fact of its essential helplessness. Its weakness is its strength. For every part of its activity it is utterly dependent upon the trust placed in it by those who need its services. This and the usefulness of those services are its power, nothing else. As a mere private association of Swiss citizens, it has not even any public status, let alone a recognised status under international law. As an organisation within a small country pursuing no active foreign or ideological policy, it cannot fall under the suspicion of indirectly serving political ends. It has no financial resources to speak of, but lives on voluntary and spontaneous gifts from its own nation and countries abroad. Nor can the Committee, in exercising its activities, appeal to any conventional rights, for none exist. It can do nothing at all except with the consent of the States concerned, hence, normally, of the belli-

gerents on both sides. Even the Prisoners of War Agency is subject to these same conditions.

As the Committee's work is wholly a one-way service, and not an arrangement of give and take, its only means of insisting, whenever it encounters opposition, is to remain perfectly quiescent and passive. Unlike a government or an individual with a stake in the outcome, it cannot fight any issue on a basis of mutual interest, for it has no interests of its own; it exists to serve others. Though non-co-operation, tacit or expressed, on the part of this or that government, may hinder the Committee, it does not allow itself to be discouraged thereby, nor is it ever to be moved to compromise concerning the principle that the Red Cross is a universal institution, with all that that implies. Lastly, the question of prestige does not exist for the International Committee.

It is thus seen to be something unique, and even paradoxical in a world where everything is subordinated to the struggle for power. But just because it has nothing either of a government, or of the law and its rigidities, or of the weightiness of power, or of diplomacy tied up to the general interests of a nation, or of official representation and the easily wounded susceptibilities that go with it—because of all these negative advantages the International Committee can act as a link between governments, and between the Red Cross Societies of countries at war. Its very singularity enables it to establish many kinds of practical collaboration on all matters which transcend the conflict and concern the individual victims, suffering in mind and body.

Silence and Speech.

Humanitarian service should be a natural gesture of devotion to one's fellowmen, a matter of course, self-conscious only to the extent of taking a clear view of the task to be done and remaining true to it. If self-consciousness becomes self-praise, all the blessing goes out of the work, which is no longer the same. This holds good for an institution trying to render the services of human fellowship, and also for the nation, the country to which the institution belongs, and which help to maintain it. The ability to serve is a privilege that carries obligations with it. Looked at in any other way, the organism of humanitarian effort perishes; it turns into philanthropic pastime, bureaucratic almsgiving, or an end in itself.

It is an altogether peculiar task that has fallen to the International Committee's lot, especially as regards the Prisoners of War Agency. The national societies, with their different welfare services, come into direct touch with the sufferers in need of help. Especially through the hard and often dangerous work of their nurses in hospitals at the front and behind the lines, they are, so to say, the front-line troops of the Red Cross, and all their work vibrates to the living personal contact with the sufferer, his misery and his hope. The International Committee, on the other hand, is more like a Headquarters Staff, or a War Ministry, far from the battle zone and yet exclusively concerned with it. And just as the same soldier-like spirit must permeate an army throughout, so also must the Red Cross be inspired in all its parts by the unanimous purpose and desire to render humanitarian service to all in need.

The Prisoners' Agency is an organisation built up with all the refinements of modern science and

method. Much of its work, such as the search for the missing—what anguish in countless families these words evoke !—could never be accomplished but for the Hollerith machines, veritable miracles of the inventor's genius, so munificently lent to the Committee by an American friend, Mr. Thomas G. Watson. Every item of information that leaves the Agency to re-establish contact between relatives otherwise hopelessly separated by the war, has passed through many hands in processes which appear impersonal and monotonous, and yet demand unremitting attention and the most conscientious precision. And it must be remembered that the workers in the Agency have often not even the satisfaction of sending the results of their exacting toil directly to the families they have been able to help. In many cases, the governments or national Red Cross Societies require that all news shall be sent for distribution to themselves or other official departments. Yet such readiness to serve anonymously is an authentic expression of the Red Cross spirit.

The same is true of the intellectual and comforts relief services. Their work is technically similar, and equally responsible; it resembles that of a great transport firm, or an importing and exporting house, except that the driving force is not considerations of profit and loss, but solely the will to be as effective an intermediary as possible between those who stand waiting with gifts, and those to whom the gifts mean so much. So the International Committee's Relief Service cannot even play the grateful rôle of the giver.

No person and no institution, however idealistic and selfless their devotion to the chosen task, can live in this world of realities withdrawn in mute idealism. Thus the Red Cross must sometimes speak of itself, and even the International Committee

must, on occasion, do the same. Nations and governments expect something of it, and it responds by its work. But this work is more vast, more difficult and more complex than meets the eye. This is why its activities must be brought to public attention from time to time, not for the sake of blowing its own horn, but simply to give a report of itself. If this means some self-criticism, it is also an urgent invitation to those on the outside to support the work by sympathetic understanding, donations, and perhaps by enrolling as active collaborators.

All that we have just said with regard to the Red Cross in general and the International Committee in particular, may be applied to Switzerland as well. The work of the Committee is only a fraction of what can be, will be, and is being done from our country for the victims of the war; ours is only one of the manifestations of active neutrality.

To help wherever possible and to the extreme limit of our nation's possibilities, is not a mission but the most self-evident duty. If we are able to do anything at all, it is because we have been spared so far from being drawn into this greatest of all wars, the horrors of which pass all imagination. It may be that the world has a question to ask us; we have one to ask ourselves at any rate, and there is only one right answer to it: " Deeds, not words ". If, and when, we stop, it must be because we cannot do otherwise. Short of that, we must and shall go on until all opportunity is gone, and when we shall have held on until that end, we shall simply have done our duty, and no more.

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