

drivers prepared to drop everything to answer an emergency call. It organizes teams of hospital visitors taking cheer and giving helpful occupations to patients. It has set up a talking library for the blind, a picture library for long-term patients, microfilm books for the paralyzed to read without effort ; it assists in certain special therapy for mental patients ; it has 16 convalescent hospitals for ex-service personnel and the disabled.

This booklet also recalls the work of the Enquiry Bureau established in London during the First World War, to help trace wounded and missing men. It developed considerably from 1939 to 1945 and is still active even today. A great deal of work is undertaken by the Red Cross among migrants as they journey to the Commonwealth Migrant Centre. These immigrants are welcomed on arrival and mothers and children are given special care. Everything is done to smoothe the difficulties which are bound to occur on the first contact with a new country.

In addition, social services, ready to assume tasks of all sorts, send Home Helps to families in difficulty, distribute meals to the disabled and help the infirm and the aged. The junior Red Cross too is developing in a remarkable manner and has an important rôle to play in schools.

This cursory glance at the activities of the Australian Red Cross, gives an idea of its active growth over the last fifty years and of its steadfast enthusiasm and efficiency in the service of mankind.

Spain

Centenary of the Spanish Red Cross

The Spanish Red Cross is justifiably proud of being one of the oldest National Societies and it made a point of celebrating the Centenary of its foundation in a striking manner so that it would long be remembered.

On July 4, 1964, in the large auditorium of the Madrid Scientific Research Centre, the National Society welcomed representatives of the authorities, the diplomatic corps, the ICRC, the League, several National Red Cross Societies, and delegations from many parts of Spain. A guard of honour of Red Cross medical orderlies and nurses stood at the entrance of the large hall in which was held the opening ceremony of the Centenary celebration.

Mr. Antonio María de Oriol y Urquijo, President of the National Society, greeted the assembly and made the inaugural speech in which he said inter alia :¹

The 6th of July is the anniversary of the Royal Decree which authorized the foundation of the Red Cross Society in Spain. It was signed by Her Majesty Isabelle II at the request of the Order of the Hospital Knights of St. John.

From the outset, Spain associated with the movement which, started by Henry Dunant, took form and developed under the aegis of the Committee of Five. This Committee convened an international conference in Geneva from October 25-29 in 1863. Sixteen countries were represented ; Spain, by Mr. Joaquín Agullo, Count Ripalda, and Mr. Nicasio Landa, Chief Surgeon of the Army Medical Service.

We all know what was at the origin of the Red Cross. It was not the battle of Solferino ; it was its consequences which horrified the soul of a citizen of Geneva. Stricken with horror and pity he became the samaritan of Solferino. Thus, the institution began with the act of charity described in the parable : without stopping to enquire who the injured man by the wayside was, the good samaritan tended his wounds, gave him comfort and provided him with shelter. This is the true spirit of charity, the true spirit of the institution and it is this which has enabled the movement to grow. We must be ever-watchful that this spirit continues to be a living force for it is the basis of our institution's development.

This spirit of charity has given rise to actions of exceptional importance and which, historically, are of a twofold aspect. On the one hand the Geneva Conventions are a decisive advance in the evolution of international law. These rules have been progressively

¹ *Plate.*

accepted by all States. Revised and completed over the century, they have been extended more and more to provide for assistance to those who suffer and to an ever-greater number of categories of victims. Spain could not stand aside. She was present when this evolution of humanitarian law had to be nurtured and she contributed from the outset in a decisive manner. In practice too, she intervened in a similar fashion.

We cannot give full details here of all the Red Cross activities in the course of this century. The conflicts which have broken out since 1859 have been so numerous as to be almost continuous and millions of men, most of them without being aware of it, owe their lives to the charitable work performed by the International Committee. The moment is perhaps at hand when history should take into account this unobtrusive yet effective action.

The first appearance of the Spanish Red Cross on the international scene was in 1870 during the Franco-Prussian war. In that same year was founded the Central Section of the Ladies of Charity of the Spanish Red Cross, set up and presided over by the Duchess of Medinaceli.

In any outline of the history of the Spanish Red Cross we must mention that the Society went through its trial by fire on May 4, 1872, at the battle of Oroquieta where the Pamplona ambulance, Spain's first, rushed to the scene to bring relief and assistance to the victims.

On October 11, 1863, the Red Cross was called upon to disembark the dead and wounded following the naval combat which took place off Cartagena. Thereafter, that same year, the hospital ship of the Red Cross of Cartagena—the "Buenaventura"—flying the Red Cross flag accompanied the fleet. It was the first hospital ship in the world.

On May 28, 1874, the Spanish Red Cross opened its first field dressing station at Miranda del Ebro to tend the wounded of both sides during the Carlist war. During the cholera epidemic in 1885, its task was enormous. It gave assistance to victims and later intervened once again to alleviate the suffering following the earthquake in Andalusia. These two terrible disasters occurred in the same year and wrought frightful havoc throughout the country.

It was in 1914 that the Red Cross concerned itself with the

training of nurses. In 1915, it inaugurated the first official training course at the Princess Hospital. Subsequently, under the impetus of the enthusiasm sparked off by Queen Vitoria-Eugenia, the first Red Cross nurses training school was established in 1918.

The Spanish Red Cross professional nurses course was officially constituted by royal decree on October 26, 1922. During the African campaigns, Red Cross nurses worked closely with the Army Medical Services. We should today pay tribute to the memory of these brave nurses who displayed such high ideal and absolute faith in their mission, following the example of Florence Nightingale. I wish particularly to recall the memory of the Duquesa de la Vitoria who is the inspiration for all the nurses in our institution ; those nurses to whom I express our sincere admiration and gratitude for the work they have carried out in co-operation with the Sisters of Charity. There is no publicity for this work, but it is nonetheless admired and known by everybody . . .

. . . These are some of the outstanding events of the past century but I do not think we should pause too long to consider the past. We must, however, recognize the merit of those who enabled the work to develop throughout that time. But even more must we give the impetus necessary for the work's future success.

We must take into account the social conditions and circumstances of life today, because it might prove essential for the Red Cross to give up certain functions which it has so far carried out and which are part of the established social services, in order to devote itself to setting up other services to meet needs for which no provision has hitherto been made.

Indeed, health today is a matter of complete physical, mental and social well-being; it is no longer the mere absence of illness. One of the fundamental rights of every human being is the enjoyment of the best possible health and it is in this respect in particular that education in matters of hygiene is a basic necessity because it helps everyone to achieve health through his own efforts and through his personal outlook on life.

The programme this involves is enormous but feasible. Attention must at the same time be given to the social evolution now going on in order that we do not burden ourselves with the continuation of work which is now being taken over by others. We must co-

operate effectively with the medical authorities in every country, planning on an ever-wider scale, not only to meet emergencies but also to contribute to all schemes of preventive measures and rehabilitation. It is thus that we shall bring about improvement in health, which, as we have said, is essential.

The plans of the Spanish Red Cross today may be summarized as follows :

Hygiene instruction for the maintenance or recovery of health through the personal efforts of those concerned.

First aid, including dissemination of basic training thanks to which emergency measures may be taken when necessary, efficiently and without delay. This enables us to train active and devoted volunteers to tend the wounded in time of war and the injured in time of peace not only in the event of natural disasters but also in the daily accidents of modern life. These volunteers are seconded to army medical corps units and their practical work takes the form of co-operation with the armed forces. At this point I wish to convey to these army medical corps units how greatly we appreciate the magnificent spirit with which they carry out their task, for the Red Cross is honoured to be able to count them in its ranks.

Professional and voluntary nurses are given an intensive moral and practical training. They are prepared for the great important social tasks which will be theirs, for instance in the field of pediatrics, rehabilitation, etc. We have three schools which are constantly connected with the medical faculties, to which we here express our appreciation for their co-operation.

Training of our medical teams is undertaken in 43 hospitals and there too we must adapt ourselves to changes arising from the development of social security, which has become increasingly necessary in view of the demands of modern medicine with its constant technical improvements and its ever-more costly means of diagnosis and therapy. There are always injured people who, for one reason or another, are in distress and to whom we must bring assistance which they are unable to afford or obtain from insurance schemes.

This centenary should arouse in us the desire to do our utmost and also the determination to carry out plans within the framework we have just outlined. Accomplishment of such plans should

enable us, the leaders and members of the Spanish Red Cross, to practise with increased efficiency and in a positive manner that charity which inspired our movement from the outset and which will always be the sure foundation for greater understanding among men. In this way, we shall help one another to work for a better world.

Mr. Henrik Beer then conveyed the greetings and congratulations of the League of Red Cross Societies, of which he is Secretary-General, and those of the National Red Cross Societies, several of which responded to the invitation of the Spanish Red Cross by sending delegates to Madrid, where they took part in the various events. Mr. Beer recalled that the National Society in Spain had proved itself capable of adapting its activities to the necessities of the times and he concluded by saying :

For example, its network of first aid posts and its blood transfusion services prove its desire to continue the pioneer work and to be always ready to serve for the benefit not only of the Spanish population but also of other countries when disaster strikes them.

The League is crossing the threshold of the second century of Red Cross existence, and is drawing up a technical assistance programme in order to contribute to the development and establishment on solid bases, of new National Societies in every country having recently acquired independence but not yet possessing a humanitarian institution such as ours. It is our desire that each link in the chain of 102 National Societies be strong. A large part of our development programme is intended to intensify Red Cross activity in Latin America. We are sure that we shall be able to count on the co-operation of the Spanish Red Cross to assist us in helping these sister Societies to which it is so closely attached by the time-honoured bonds of language, tradition, and culture.

For these reasons my most sincere wish at this moment of celebration, is that the Red Cross may always continue its work with the same dynamism as it has displayed throughout its history. Future generations can then be proud of the men who led the movement when it reached its hundredth year, just as these men themselves may feel proud today of the achievements of their predecessors.

Mr. Léopold Boissier, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, then spoke as follows :

The International Committee of the Red Cross, the founding body of our world-wide movement, is happy and proud to convey its hearty congratulations to the Spanish Red Cross on the occasion of its hundredth anniversary.

Your Society and all the Spanish people are entitled to celebrate this centenary with joy and to survey with satisfaction the work accomplished in that spirit personified by Henry Dunant which develops unceasingly to attain results ever wider and ever more remarkable.

In 1863 Spain took part in the preliminary conference in Geneva. It was represented by Count Ripalda, who became the first President of the Central Committee of the Spanish Red Cross, and by Dr. Nicasio Landa, Chief Physician of the Military Medical Services and, throughout his life, devoted to our institution.

The importance of the years 1863 and 1864 cannot be over-emphasized, especially the latter, which saw the birth of the first Geneva Convention.

This Convention was the beginning of a decisive development in the evolution of international law and, in a wider context, of relations between governments.

Although from that time on States were still able to resort to war, they were no longer free to act with unbridled violence in any manner which suited them and to treat their enemies as they wished. Strict rules obliged them to respect the wounded, the sick, and the medical services of the armed forces in the field. And it was at that time that there appeared on the battle-field the sign of the red cross on a white ground, the inviolate emblem of law and humanity combined, to protect the enemy who formerly would have been defenceless.

The impetus having been given, governments in the course of the century were to sign the four Geneva Conventions which constitute humanitarian law, one of the most noble achievements of our civilization.

Spain and its Red Cross were loyal followers of this ideal. Already in 1870 the National Society sent relief supplies to the

victims of the Franco-Prussian War and two years later it again intervened in the Carlist War, taking care of prisoners and the sick in both camps. During the battle of Oroquieta, Dr. Landa and seven other doctors worked with courage, devotion and efficiency worthy of the highest praise.

There is not sufficient time for me to dwell here on all the huge field of activities carried out by the Spanish Red Cross to bring relief to the innumerable victims of the two world wars. I shall merely mention the work in favour of prisoners of war by a commission set up in August 1914 and which was replaced by your Society. I would also recall the repatriation of the seriously wounded and sick and civilian internees; German, American and British.

I mention these two examples from many others because they gave rise to very close co-operation between the Spanish Red Cross and the International Committee of the Red Cross. Indeed, as a neutral intermediary between belligerents, it is the International Committee which is the authority for the implementation of the Geneva Conventions. In order to perform this task, it needs the support not only of governments, but also of National Societies.

The tragic events between 1936 and 1939 strengthened the ties uniting the International Committee to your Society and the Spanish people. Thanks to the confidence which was placed in it and to the great understanding with which its delegates met, the International Committee was able to extend its action in a number of fields, some of which were hitherto outside its scope, such as visits to prison camps, interceding in favour of persons condemned to death, exchange of prisoners and hostages, protection and evacuation of children, women and old people, communication of family news and so on.

My point in mentioning these tragic events is just to mark the beginning of great strides in the development of the Red Cross as a result of so many new experiences. It was clearly seen that under the most difficult circumstances, the Red Cross was able to accomplish and even develop its work of charity.

Thus it was that from the end of the last war the International Committee was able, with the indispensable aid of the National Societies, to prepare the revision and extension of humanitarian law. In 1949 four Geneva Conventions, which were ratified by Spain

in 1952, opened up wide horizons full of promise for the Red Cross.

The Fourth of these Conventions is something completely new. It extends the benefits of humanitarian law to civilian populations which hitherto were unprotected. It is appropriate to mention article 3 in particular. This is common to all four Conventions and it enables the International Committee to offer its services in the event of civil war.

It was under the terms of this article of capital importance that the Committee intervened in internal conflicts in many countries over the last twenty years ; in several Latin American republics, in Hungary, Algeria, the Congo and in Asia, the scenes of so many outbreaks of violent conflicts.

Today the delegates of the International Committee are at work in Laos, in Cyprus and in the deserts of the Yemen.

The Red Cross was founded a hundred years ago to assist the army medical services. Since that time it has realized that there is another daily and immediate duty to be discharged among the populations stricken by natural disasters or suffering from misery and want, from hunger and sickness.

The Spanish Red Cross accepted this duty nobly and generously. At the present time its activity is carried on in a variety of ways, thanks to the impetus given by your National Congress of 1959.

You know better than I your numerous hospitals and dispensaries, your nursing schools, your ambulances, the development of your first-aid services, your blood transfusion services, your assistance to disabled children.

That is why your movement has won the hearts of the Spanish people who have feelings of great gratitude towards you.

A new century is opening for the Red Cross, which faces the future with renewed strength, conscious of the solid bonds of unity displayed last year in Geneva during the Centenary Congress. This unity will enable our institution, comprising the International Committee, the League and 102 National Societies, the better to accomplish its mission in any country and internationally. By working for suffering humanity, the Red Cross also serves the cause of peace.

Spain has given to the world a civilization which has never ceased to produce its fine fruits. Its Red Cross is worthy of such a

homeland and I greet it with respect whilst wishing it a future full of promise.

General Camilo Alonso Vega, Minister of the Interior, speaking on behalf of the Government, expressed the good wishes of the Spanish authorities and people on this anniversary, and he declared their pride that the Spanish Red Cross had been one of the promoters of the great universal charitable movement. The Minister was delighted at the growth of the Society and at the important rôle it has played in the life of the nation for a century. He recalled also the rôle of neutral intermediary assumed by the ICRC during the civil war.

On Tuesday July 7, the heads of the foreign delegations were received at the Palacio del Pardo by His Excellency Generalissimo Franco.¹ Mr. Antonio María de Oriol y Urquijo, President of the Spanish Red Cross, attended this interview at which Mr. Léopold Boissier spoke in the name of all the delegations. He voiced the goodwill for the Spanish people of the Red Cross movement which delights in the magnificent anniversary celebrated today by the Spanish Red Cross to which he expressed his sincere wishes.

The Municipality of Madrid played its part in the commemoration and invited the dignitaries present to a dinner in the Parque del Retiro. This was followed by a performance of Spanish ballet.

The Spanish Red Cross owns several hospitals and dispensaries throughout the country and had planned a visit to one such hospital in Madrid, the Queen Victoria Hospital. Under the guidance of Dr. J. J. Aracama, of the Inspector General, the chief surgeon of the hospital, and the members of the Spanish Red Cross Supreme Committee, the visitors from abroad and the delegates from the provincial sections of the Spanish Red Cross were able to appreciate the perfect operation of this institution, equipped with the most up-to-date medical and surgical apparatus.

The success of these anniversary days will long be remembered. Conscious of everything that the Spanish Red Cross has contributed to our movement, the International Committee was delighted to take part in the ceremonies which took place in Madrid in July 1964.

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