

If an old woman, left partially crippled after an accident, felt one morning she could not face the stairs, even with a helper on each arm, Mrs. William Ellis was there, sitting beside her at the top of the stairs and making the journey down with her, stair by stair, on their respective behinds.

When old people, on their own or in pairs, wander through into the ten acres of grounds and stray from the ornamental garden with its shrubs cut like port decanters, its Italian stone well-head filled with geraniums, and its folly, past the palm trees and the giant tulip tree and the late-flowering magnolia, into the woods beyond and seemed to have vanished, it was Mrs. Williams Ellis who sounded the alarm and headed the search to discover and bring them back home. "We can never be sure whether they have fallen into one of the streams, or just taken the bus to Criccieth," she said.

But this is all part of the "no rules" rule of Wern. "Everyone is an individual," said its overseer, "we are all quite different, with our likes and dislikes and our individuality doesn't end because we are getting old."

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## Mexico

*From Mexico where he is at present, Mr. J. J. G. de Rueda, delegate of the Mexican Red Cross in Europe has, it will be recalled, already contributed to the International Review. He has sent us some notes which we now summarize for our readers. These give interesting facts about the tasks being undertaken by an important National Society in Latin America.*

In Mexico the National Red Cross assumes in several places the responsibility of hospital establishments in which nurses which it has trained are working. After three years' study in Red Cross schools the nurses then obtain a university diploma. We would mention in passing that the shortage of nurses, which is so keenly

felt elsewhere, does not exist in this country and that recruitment is fully assured. We would add that free treatment is given to thousands of sick in hospitals and dispensaries.

This does not only apply to the capital, since in the provinces as well the hospital services function under Red Cross responsibility and are of high standard. Mr. de Rueda had the opportunity when he was in Puebla, a town of more than 350,000 inhabitants, of visiting the hospital, which is extremely up-to-date and gives attentive care to the sick.

However, hospital problems are dealt with differently according to regions: they are not, for example, the same in Guadalajara or Puebla, respectively the second and third largest towns in the country, as in Mexico City. The remarkably rapid growth of towns raises problems which in this respect cannot be resolved in a uniform manner.

The Red Cross sponsors courses in mountain rescue and life-saving at sea. First-aid schools give training to ambulance personnel and stretcher-bearers who, in time of war, could be mobilized as medical personnel in the armed forces. The Red Cross also deals, at least in certain towns, with the organization of the ambulance services which, because of the gradual increase in the population, are of ever-increasing importance.

There are two sections in the Red Cross which to a certain extent form a pair. This is the Veterans' Section which exists nowhere else and comprises elderly members wishing through association to maintain the enthusiasm of the early days and, by their means and advice, help the children and adolescents of the Junior Red Cross. This latter is most active in Mexico and is one in whose development the Ministry of Education takes sympathetic interest. It possesses first-aid teams whose instructors receive awards for merit and efficiency at annual reviews at which demonstrations in first-aid take place. These young people are then inspected by the directing staff of the Red Cross and government representatives. They are then awarded their colours<sup>1</sup>.

The principles of the Red Cross are explained to them as well as the ideas behind the Geneva Conventions, and illustrated pamphlets,

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<sup>1</sup> *Plate.*

distributed in the schools, initiate them into the history of the ICRC, in the development of their own National Society as well as the organization of the International Red Cross.

After more than half a century's existence, the Mexican Red Cross performs multiple activities, details of which were mentioned at a recently held assembly in Mexico City by Mr. Cesar Santos Galindo, President of the Society's Board of Governors. Thus the medical services cover numerous fields such as radiography, anaesthetics, a blood bank, clinical analyses. The numbers in these services of all categories reached a total, in 1963, of 159,256, namely 15,000 more than in the previous year. The ambulance services intervened on no less than 1,260,163 occasions during that period, that is to say 1,167 emergency cases each day on an average throughout the country. The Women's Committee works unceasingly and collects considerable funds for relief actions. It also organizes aid with clothing and food for the sick.

The Red Cross exists in order to show initiative and assume entirely new tasks. Then, once the moment has come, after having selflessly initiated new movements, it can stand aside and leave others to continue the work. The Mexican Red Cross is now playing an effective rôle in its own country and in various ways it is setting a fine example.

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## Sweden

*The Swedish Red Cross has informed us of some of its recent activities which we now have pleasure in giving below.*

*On the occasion of the Centenary.*—About three and a half million Swedish Crowns were collected as a result of Swedish Red Cross activities for different helping aims during the International Centenary in the autumn of 1963. A series of campaigns followed one after the other. The national inauguration of the yearly Red Cross week took place in the South of Sweden.