THE RED CROSS OF GENEVA.

By Colonel H. HATHAWAY, Army Medical Service, and Major R. J. BLACKHAM.

Royal Army Medical Corps.

This article is written as the introductory chapter of a short handbook of Ambulance Transport projected by the authors.

It has been suggested that the individual chapters might be published in the Corps Journal, so that the writers might have the valuable comments and criticism of their brother officers on their work.

"La bannière de la Convention de Genève marchera dorénavant auprès des armées en campagne; c'est l'humanité même qui la porte; elle ne se la laissera pas enlever: In hoc signo vinces!"—Maxime du Camp de l'Académie Française.

The transport of the sick and wounded is a matter of supreme importance not only to the officers of the medical services of the Regular and Territorial Armies, but to the ever-widening circle of voluntary medical aid societies designed to aid the sufferers in modern warfare. We think, therefore, that we cannot adopt a better introduction to a handbook of this character than to give some account of the origin of the Red Cross which is the distinguishing badge of all ambulance transport in war. We are led to do so because it is obvious that the origin of this universal badge is not generally recognised, and that the greatest confusion exists in both the military and civilian mind as to its origin and meaning.

During the great campaign of 1859, when Napoleon III. undertook to free Italy "from the Alps to the Adriatic," a Swiss country gentleman named M. Henri Dunant, found himself involuntarily within the theatre of war and witnessed the terrible carnage at the great battle of Magenta, which left 10,000 Austrians and 4,000 French and Piedmontese dead and wounded on the field, and gave its name to a French dukedom and to a new dye! He also became a spectator of the frightful horrors of Solferino, which lasted fifteen hours and left as victims 38,000 dead and dying. His exceptional experience showed him that the regular medical services of even what were then considered to be the greatest armies of the world were totally inadequate to cope with the large number of wounded in modern warfare, and that everything was lacking for the poor wounded soldiers of France and Austria—doctors, instruments, surgical appliances, food, water, and even air; for the exhalations on those terrible battlefields were mephitic and loathsome in the extreme. This humane and enlightened gentleman came to the
H. Hathaway and R. J. Blackham

conclusion that two points were essential for the provision of prompt and adequate succour to the wounded in war, viz.:

(1) International recognition of the neutrality of all hospitals, and of the personnel and supplies of ambulances for the use of the sick and wounded of belligerents.

(2) The organisation of voluntary medical relief societies for the aid of the public medical services under the stress of war.

The first of these points was not original, as it had been advocated by an eminent Italian surgeon named Dr. Palaschiano in a paper entitled La Neutralità dei feriti in tempo di Guerra, read before the Academia Pontraneani in 1861, but the latter was entirely M. Dunant's own idea. His experience with the French and Austrian armies, as recorded in a pamphlet entitled "Un Souvenir de Solferino," aroused a considerable amount of interest. Dunant was received by the Emperor Napoleon III. and General MacMahon. The sympathy of the French Emperor was at once enlisted, and he himself suggested that the inhabitants of a country which gave help to the wounded should be accorded neutrality. The movement spread, and, thanks to the continued efforts of the Swiss enthusiast, an unofficial Conference of persons interested in the subject was held at Geneva in 1863, under the auspices of a charitable association of that city known as the "Société Genevoise d'Utilité Publique." This Conference resolved to encourage the formation of societies in every country for the purpose of offering aid to the military medical services in the field. So far what had been accomplished amounted to merely an organisation of public philanthropic effort, but a suggestion made by the Conference was destined to produce far-reaching results. The Swiss Government was induced to invite the Powers to a diplomatic Conference with a view to the "neutralisation" by permanent international agreement of persons and appliances devoted to the relief of the sick and wounded in belligerent armies. Accordingly, on August 8th, 1864, a Conference, attended by delegates from fourteen countries, was held at Geneva and a Convention drawn up which became the basis of accepted international law with reference to the sick and wounded.

The terms of the Convention provided that all military ambulances and hospitals, and all persons employed therein, are to be considered neutral, and, as such, respected by belligerents so long as any sick and wounded are under treatment, but should they be held by a military force their neutrality terminates. The term "field ambulance," which has now been adopted for the service unit
of the British Medical Service, is a vast improvement on the old
terms of "bearer company" and "field hospital," which had to be
specially construed to fall within the provisions of the Convention.
The term "hospital" is taken to cover all fixed or stationary
hospitals on the lines of communication or at the base. The post-
ings of such pickets or sentries as may be necessary for the pro-
tection of an ambulance or hospital does not interfere with its
neutrality, but in the event of its capture by the enemy all com-
batant attachés of the unit become prisoners of war. Persons
employed in the medical units are not prohibited from bearing
arms, or using them for their own protection, nor from receiving
the arms of the sick and wounded admitted for treatment (Article
8, Convention of 1906). The arms of all patients should, however,
be transferred to a combatant unit as soon as is reasonably possible
(Laws and Customs of War, Holland, p. 19).

The 18th Article of the New Convention provides that the
heraldic emblem of the red cross on a white ground shall be
retained as the distinctive emblem of the medical service of armies.
It must in every case be accompanied by the national flag of the
country to which the unit belongs (Article 21). An armelet or
brassard is also allowed for individuals neutralized, but the delivery
of this is left to the discretion of the military commander. The
arm badge must be stamped by the competent military authority,
and accompanied by a certificate of identity in the case of persons
who are attached to the military service of armies, but who have
no special uniform.

Before 1864 there had been no distinctive badge for designating
the medical organisation forming part of a field army, and the
device, the employment of which is enjoined by this article of the
Convention, is borrowed from the arms of the Swiss Confederation,
reversing the colours. It was not, as is generally supposed, origin-
ally designed for the 1864 Convention, but had already been
adopted by the "Sociétés de Secours" which came into existence
after the unofficial Conference held in Geneva in the previous year.

The Red Cross has, therefore, become the universal badge of the
medical service of every civilised army and navy, with the excep-
tion of those of Turkey and Persia, and has been used as such in
every war since 1864, with the exception of the Russo-Turkish war
of 1876, and the Græco-Turkish war of 1897. In these wars,
owing to the prejudice against the Cross which exists amongst
Mussulmans, Turkey was obliged to adopt a red crescent for her
own medical service; but, while doing so, she undertook to respect
the Red Cross in the service of the enemy.
At the Conference of 1906, although not actually embodied in the Convention, it would appear that the principle of allowing Turkey to employ the Red Crescent, and Persia the Red Lion and Sun on a white ground, in each case as a distinctive ambulance flag, was accepted by the delegates.

Until 1906 the position of the Red Cross Societies was somewhat anomalous, as they were not mentioned in the Geneva Convention of 1864, and its eight articles applied exclusively to the ambulances and hospitals of the belligerents, whether forming part of their regular military organisation or affiliated to it as the result of private effort. The ambulances and hospitals of Red Cross or Aid Societies, unless so affiliated and under the control of a belligerent commander, did not enjoy any of the benefits conferred by the Convention. This is, however, no longer the case, as Articles 10 and 16 of the new Convention of 1906 expressly recognise Red Cross Societies.

All voluntary aid in the field must of necessity be supplementary to the regular medical services of the army and navy, as the primary responsibility for providing for the casualties of war must rest on these two branches of the public service, and on them alone. A Red Cross Society can, however, perform great service to a belligerent and to humanity, by providing additional medical comforts and general help in ambulance matters which may reasonably be considered to be beyond the scope of official bodies.

It is, we think, generally accepted that in the matter of personnel it is well-nigh impossible to maintain the medical service of the army of any country, in time of peace, at the standard demanded by the stress of war. In the event of war, especially when some fundamental national sentiment is involved, or believed to be involved, it is found that the public come forward with the utmost generosity with offers of help, chiefly in the direction of rendering aid to the sick and wounded. It is the duty of the Red Cross organisations to act as agents to collect and retain the financial and practical assistance which national enthusiasm produces, till it can be utilised by the military or naval authorities. All such societies acknowledge as their supreme authority the International Red Cross Committee, which has its headquarters at Geneva, the birthplace of the Red Cross, and is vested by international agreement with the power to examine the credentials of all new organisations before admitting them as fully accredited members of the family of Red Cross Societies. This Committee arranges for international conferences and performs other important duties.
Red Cross Societies sprang into existence in every nation in Europe soon after the first Geneva Convention. France and Prussia were amongst the first in the field in 1864, Russia followed in 1867, while Great Britain was almost the last, as it did not form the first of its Aid Societies until 1870.

The present wealth and position of these European societies and the extent to which they have grown may be judged from the attached table. Our table was constructed prior to the publication of Lieutenant-Colonel Macpherson's excellent table in the *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution* in August, 1907.

"The National Society for Aid to the Sick and Wounded in War" was the name of the first Red Cross Association to be established in England. Of its foundation, Lord Rothschild, the chairman of the society, thus spoke at a meeting on July 17th, 1905: "When the Franco-German war broke out in 1870, that gallant soldier, the late Lord Wantage—who had planted the colours of his regiment on the heights of the Alma, for which he received the Victoria Cross, who had served with distinction all through the campaign in the Crimea, who knew from experience the misery and sufferings of wounded and sick soldiers in a campaign, and who was aware of how little was done in those days to alleviate the hardship of men fighting for the honour and glory of their Sovereign and country—took advantage of the rules of the new Geneva Convention to start the society over which he long presided, namely the National Society for Aid to the Sick and Wounded in War. His Majesty the King was the patron of that society, and His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught was one of the trustees."

The great work accomplished by this society has been worthy of its distinguished founder, and of the country in which it originated. From the time of its foundation in 1870 till 1905, it expended nearly £500,000 in assisting the sick and wounded in war. In the Franco-German war it provided over £250,000 in supplying transport, food, clothing, medical stores, and grants in aid of local funds. It employed in that campaign nearly 200 agents, surgeons, nurses, &c., and established more than a dozen central depots in France and Germany for the distribution of stores. It accomplished similar good services in the Turco-Servian and Russo-Turkish wars, as well as in other European campaigns. It furnished aid in the Zulu campaign of 1879, and in the Boer war of 1881. In the Egyptian campaign of 1884-1885 the society expended £33,920 in the employment of surgeons and nurses, in
the provision of steamers, launches and dahabeahs, and in the forwarding of medical and surgical supplies to the front. The amount expended by the society in the South African war, 1899-1902, was about £162,096. Twenty-one commissioners and agents were employed, the hospital ship "Princess of Wales" was chartered, and the hospital train "Princess Christian" purchased. The work in this war was carried out in connection with, and under the direction of, the Central Red Cross Committee.

The "Central British Red Cross Council" came into being in 1898. In that year, at the request of the Secretary of State for War, representatives of the National Society for Aid to the Sick and Wounded in War, of the St. John Ambulance Association, and the Army Nursing Service Reserve were invited to take part in an informal Conference with a view of considering the advantages that would be derived in time of war by bringing societies in touch with the Army Medical Service in time of peace.

On January 19th, 1899, the Secretary of State for War notified his official recognition of the Central British Red Cross Committee. On November 27th, 1902, the Foreign Office notified all foreign chancelleries that the Central British Red Cross Committee was the only body authorised to deal with Red Cross matters throughout the Empire. In May, 1904, the name of the Committee was altered to the "Central British Red Cross Council." The personnel of the Council was finally composed of three representatives of the National Aid Society; of two, respectively, of the St. John Ambulance Association, the Army Nursing Service Reserve, and the St. Andrew's Ambulance Association; of three representatives of the War Office, and one of the Admiralty. The admirable work carried out by the Central British Red Cross Council in the late South African war is fully detailed in the report of the Central British Red Cross Committee.

In 1905 was inaugurated the British Red Cross Society, under the presidency of Queen Alexandra. It is the outcome of the fusion of the "Central British Red Cross Council" and the "National Society for Aid to the Sick and Wounded in War," as Their Majesties the King and Queen considered it desirable that the Red Cross movement in the Empire should be represented by one society, which should co-ordinate all associations concerned with the succour of the sick and wounded in war.

In addition to this new Red Cross Society, which is, of course, in its infancy, there are two other bodies engaged in active ambulance work in Great Britain. These are (1) the St. John
**TABLE.**

**RED CROSS OF GENEVA, SHOWING PARTICULARS AVAILABLE OF RED CROSS SOCIETIES OF THE SIX GREAT POWERS.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Membership (a)</th>
<th>Total funds (b)</th>
<th>Annual revenue (c)</th>
<th>Medical profession (d)</th>
<th>Schools for training nurses (e)</th>
<th>Trained nurses available (f)</th>
<th>Field medical units (g)</th>
<th>Hospital ships (h)</th>
<th>Hospital trains (i)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Great Britain:</strong></td>
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<td>(1) British Red Cross Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>(2) St. John Ambulance Association</td>
<td>70,000</td>
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<td>£11,000</td>
<td>2,000 surgeons</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>8 to 10 permanent bearer companies</td>
<td>Naval and military home hospital reserve being formed</td>
<td>17,000 all ranks</td>
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<tr>
<td>(3) St. Andrew's Ambulance Association</td>
<td>—</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nearly £5,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>(4) Army Nursing Reserve</td>
<td>Only arranges for supply of nurses.</td>
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<td>621 lady nurses</td>
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<td><strong>France:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>(1) Société de Secours aux Blessés Militaires; (2) L'Union des Femmes de France; (3) L'Association des Dames Françaises</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>£468,547</td>
<td>£14,000</td>
<td>806 surgeons</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Material for equipping hospital trains exists.*
Germany:

(1) German Red Cross Territorial Societies.

- Male members: 94,780
- Lady members: 293,222
- £462,350
- Civilian doctors: 53
- Volunteer ambulance patrol streets and practice on Sundays
- In 85 parish nursing stations, 69 hospitals—15 devoted to training of Red Cross sisters; 3 hospitals in German East Africa; 8 sisters in China; 57 Red Cross sisters in German colonies; 25 in East Africa; and 24 in S.W. Africa.

(2) National Society of German Women.

- 312,091
- Nearly a million dollars
- Expenditure equals receipts
- Hospitals to accommodate 11,931: 85 can provide commissariat, &c., of reserve Government hospitals, but 83 only with assistance; 815 sanitary transport columns; 877 rest stations; 518 branches have arranged with families to take in sick and wounded. The total provision is for about 40,000 sick and wounded.

(3) Knights of St. John and Teutonic Knights.

- Statistics not available; but these ancient Orders of Knighthood take a practical interest in ambulance work in Germany and Austria.
RED CROSS OF GENEVA, SHOWING PARTICULARS AVAILABLE OF RED CROSS SOCIETIES OF THE SIX GREAT POWERS.—Continued.

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<th>Hospital trains</th>
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</table>
| Austria—
Hochr  | 100,000    | £494,915    | —              | 723 surgeons, 25 pharmacists | Hospitals for this purpose are established | 900                    |                |                |                |
| Italy:        | 5,800      | Cash, £182,960; material, £104,000; Total, £286,960 | £12,820, expended: Cash, £7,200; material, £4,000; Total, £11,200 | 520 directing staff, 2,000 working staff for hospital; 44 railway station infirmaries | Information not available | Exact figures not available | 65 dressing stations, 8 hospitals of 100 beds, 8 hospitals of 50 beds, 64 mountain ambulance corps, material for 3 hospitals of 50 beds, 64 war hospitals without beds—value £60,000 | Two—one with 25 beds; one river hospital |                |
| La Croce Rossa
Italiana     | About a million | £1,200,000 before war | About £100,000 | Several hundred doctors are attached | 42 hospitals, 83 dispensaries, 10 asylums for widows and orphans of wounded soldiers | Several thousands |                      |                |                |
| Russia        |            |             |                |                   |                             |                        | 15—one in Sicily. |                | 15 in the war with Japan. |
Ambulance Association and Brigade; and (2) the St. Andrew's Ambulance Association. Both are essentially Red Cross Societies, and have rendered important and memorable service to both belligerents in the South African war. The first-named body is of special interest. It is officially styled the Ambulance Department of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, and came into existence in 1877.

The Order of St. John has its headquarters at St. John's Gate, a portion of the ancient Priory of St. John in the city of London, and in some thirty years has developed its ambulance department in a very remarkable manner. From persons who have obtained proficiency certificates of the ambulance department has been organised a further development of the Order called the St. John Ambulance Brigade, which forms a distinct branch under a special Chief Commissioner. The Brigade is formed of divisions consisting of at least sixteen individuals, with an honorary surgeon.

From these divisions is being formed an organisation called the "Military Home Hospitals Reserve of the British Army," which will be recruited, as far as officers and rank and file are concerned, from the St. John Ambulance Brigade. It is designed to take over the whole of the military hospitals in the United Kingdom in the event of a great war, and thus set free the whole personnel of the corps for service at the front.

Such, briefly, is the present position of the Red Cross organisation in this country. We hope that we have succeeded in showing, in this necessarily limited review of a great subject, that the badge worn by the men of our corps is an honourable and military distinction of a truly international character, which symbolises the greatest humanitarian movement the world has ever known.

And in conclusion, we venture to predict that whilst other great schemes of international reform have often a mere temporary vogue, the Red Cross of Geneva, and the great work of which it is the emblem, will never pass away while Human Charity remains to us, or sympathy with Human Suffering endures.