

Since that day no war between nations within the treaty has taken place in which the Red Cross did not stand at its post, at the field, and the generous gifts of neutral nations have filled its hands.

The treaty has brought the war-making powers to know each other. Four times it has called the heads of thirty to forty nations to meet through appointed delegates, and confer upon national neutrality and relief in war. It has created and established one common sign for all military medical relief the world over, and made all under that sign safe and sacred. It has established one military Hospital flag for all nations. It has given to the people the recognised right to reach and succour their wounded at the field. It has rendered impossible any insufficiency of supplies, either medical or nutritive, at any point of wounded or prisoners which human sympathy and power can reach. It has given the best inventions known to science for the proper handling of mutilated persons, whether soldiers or civilians. The most approved portable Hospitals in the world are of the Red Cross. It has frowned upon all old-time modes of cruelty in destructive warfare; poisoned and explosive bullets are no longer popular. Antiseptic dressings and electric light at battlefields are established facts, and the ambulance and stretcher-bearers move in the rear ranks of every army. These isolated facts are only the mountain peaks which I point out to you. The great Alpine range of humanity and activity below cannot be shown in fifteen minutes.

So much for human warfare and the legitimate dispensation of the treaty.

Touching our "American Amendment," the wars of the elements have not left us quite at leisure.

Under our constitution are formed "Associate Societies," which aid directly in providing the relief which is dispensed. It being the rule to aid only in calamities so large or so severe as to require help from the general public, our societies are less seldom called to act. They are supposed to have reserved funds or material gathered and held for the purpose of supplying relief upon call from the National Association.

The public in general, to a large extent, is coming to the use of the Red Cross as a medium of conveyance and distribution for its contributions. The National Association, with its headquarters in this city, has a field-agent, who visits, in person, every scene where aid is rendered. Commencing with the "forest fires" of Michigan, in 1881, there has fallen to its hands a share of the relief-work in the overflow of the Mississippi river in 1882; of the Ohio in 1883; of the Louisiana cyclone the same year; the overflow of both the

Ohio and Mississippi in 1874; the representation of the United States Government at the International Conference of Geneva, Switzerland, in 1884; the exhibition of "woman's work" in the Red Cross, both foreign and American, at the Exposition at New Orleans in 1885; the drouth in Texas in 1886; the Charlestown earthquake in 1886; the representation of the United States Government again at the court of their Royal Highnesses the Grand Duke and Duchess of Baden, at Karlsruhe, Germany, in 1887; and the relief of the sufferers from the Mt. Vernon cyclone, from which the travel dust is still on our garments, and our trunks are yet unpacked.

In the overflow of the rivers in 1884 the Government appropriated one hundred and fifty thousand dollars for distribution through the War Department, and magnificently and faithfully was that distribution made—an honour to any nation.

The Red Cross, with no appropriation and no treasury, received from its societies and the public, and personally distributed in the space of four months, money and material at the moderately estimable value of one hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars—an honour to any people.

It will, I trust, be borne in mind, that this branch of relief work is not recognised by the treaty—that it is our own, the first publication of which, embodying the principles of the present constitution for the "relief of national calamities," was issued in pamphlet form, entitled "The Red Cross: What It Is," to the Congress of 1878, with the valued assistance of its efficient first Secretary, Mrs. H. McL. Shephard, of this city.

But, says one, what has this war movement, this Red Cross treaty, to do with real progress and the bringing about of that great universal peace towards which our eyes and hearts and hopes are turned, and for which we have so long organised, laboured, and prayed?

It has, my dear friends, the same in effect to do with these that suffrage would have to do with woman's position and advancement; the same that prohibition would have to do with temperance. Wars are largely the result of unbridled passions. That universal treaty, binding every war-making power to wholesome restraints, pledging it to humanity, and holding it responsible to the entire world, is the bit in the mouth, the curb on the neck of the war-horse, and while it holds out the measure of oats in the one hand, it carries the bridle in the other. It constitutes a peace society which cannot be sneered at in counsel, nor ignored in war. It is one of the thresholds to the temple of peace, but even ourselves may be farther from the entrance than we are wont to fondly dream. Wars are organised mobs, they tell us. We are not without that seed in our own fair land to-day.

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