

CHRONICLE OF THE RED CROSS.

NO REPRISALS ON PRISONERS.

(From the "Journal de Genève.")

A recent number of the *Bulletin Internationale* of the Red Cross contains a quantity of interesting news on the activities of the International Committee and national societies during the last quarter. At the beginning of the number is the beautiful appeal which the International Committee—on the initiative of the vice-president, Professor Edward Naville—wrote for the belligerents and neutral countries, to contend against the reprisals on prisoners. The International Committee have never ceased since the beginning of the War to urge the principle of good example. They appeal to the belligerents to meet reprisals by showing justice and humanity, which will leave a remembrance of gratitude, and which will help so greatly to do away with hate—that bitter obstacle to peace.

The *Bulletin* does not say what reception the appeal met with. By reading the different papers of the belligerent countries one could come to the conclusion that each, on the one hand, has declared itself to be in sympathy with the principles of the Committee; but, on the other hand, they have not failed to add that they feel themselves exempt from reproach, and it was the enemy's fault for starting.

The chapter of protestations covers, once again, many pages of the *Bulletin*. The most important documents published in the last number are connected with the protestations of the Austrian Red Cross against the attack on the hospital ship *Elektra* by a French submarine; and also that of the Russian Red Cross against the sinking of the hospital ship *Portugal* by a Turkish submarine. It also gives, under the title of "Russia," the analysis of two papers from the Russian Red Cross, accusing the German and Austro-Hungarian armies of a number of violations of the Convention of Geneva.

The agencies for prisoners of war at Geneva have continued their activities. Up to June 30th, 1916, the number of enquiries answered since the beginning of the War had reached 470,399. The French, English and Belgian prisoners numbered about two millions. The German about one million, without counting 300,000 civilians. These figures, which grow every day, give an idea of the immense undertaking which is so quietly worked in the halls of the Musée Rath, thanks to the splendid work of the helpers.

The International Committee continue to send delegates to visit the camps of the prisoners. They have just published the report of the two doctors—M. Blanchod and M. Speiser—on the camps and workshops of the French prisoners in Germany; and also that of Dr. von Schulthess and Dr. Thormeyer on their visit to the camps of Russian prisoners in Germany. New missions

are being prepared to visit the English and French prisoners in Turkey and the Turkish prisoners in Russia.

Civilians continue to occupy the special attention of a committee directed by Dr. Ferriere, and the International Committee never cease to intervene for the repatriation of these civilians, in order to conform with Article 12 of the Convention of Geneva.

The correspondence with the French provinces occupied by German troops is now centralised, in the way that what concerns France is in the hands of the Enquiry Office, under the direction of the Ministry of Interior in Paris (27, Avenue de l'Opéra). It is a very active medium of communication with the Red Cross in Frankfurt.

This office is trying to extend a regular correspondence to those parts of Belgium which are still shut off. This humane work is one of the most interesting of the day. The *Bulletin* contains many particulars of the work undertaken by the Red Cross to help the victims of the war. The societies of the United States and Japan hold, as we have often said, the place of honour in a work of joint responsibility.

Moreover, let us mention a series of reports of the Austrian, English and Russian Red Cross on their work during the war, articles on special work such as the help given to refugee children in Germany, the health camps for tubercular soldiers in France, &c.

The American Red Cross is now in correspondence with the English Government to obtain their sanction to send to the principal centres medical and surgical necessities for the wounded. She relies on Article 16 of the Convention of Geneva. The *Bulletin* considers that the reasons given by the American Red Cross should receive every consideration by the nations interested.

The *Bulletin* also contains very useful information on the working of the Red Cross in Serbia since the occupation of the Austrians and on the second meeting of the German, Austro-Hungarian and Russian Red Cross at Stockholm.

Needless to say, Switzerland is represented in many ways in that review of the work of the Red Cross, in particular in the chapters about the wounded, the interned, &c. Let us mention, also the hospitality offered by our country to the wounded and sick of the fighting nations. One knows that this work, under the President, Mme. Arthur Hoffmann, and the Hon. President, M. Ader, is in full activity, and has given splendid results, thanks to the Hotel-keepers' Association, who took the initiative and who also bear the brunt of the expense.

Much regret is felt at Middlesex Hospital at the very sudden death of Mr. Melhado, the Secretary-superintendent. His business ability has been of exceptional value to the hospital, which has extended its usefulness in every direction in recent years.

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