

## THE SIGN OF THE RED CROSS NO LONGER SACRED.

News has been very disturbing during the past month from Abyssinia. Apparently the Red Cross until recently recognised as the neutral sign of human sympathy in War, is no longer, and from the various ambulances sent from Sweden, Norway and Great Britain, authentic reports that they are "targets for bombs" are arousing dismay. *Central News* reports from Addis Ababa:—

"News is anxiously awaited from the British Red Cross unit at Kworam.

"The reason is that the Ethiopian Red Cross Ambulance No. 2 has telegraphed for aid for 30 of its members who were badly burned by Italian gas bombs. Both these Red Cross units are at Kworam."

From Stockholm it is reported that:—

"Dr. Hylander, head of the Swedish Red Cross unit, in report to the headquarters here, declares that it is now impossible to tend the sick and wounded in Southern Abyssinia, under the protection of Red Cross emblems, because the Abyssinians refuse to stay in the places marked with these signs. They are firmly convinced that these spots are specially exposed to Italian bombs.

"When the Norwegian ambulance wanted to spread a big Red Cross flag very near to an American missionary station," says Dr. Hylander, "the missionaries refused to allow it, declaring that the Italians would then have a target for a bombardment."

The British ambulance unit at Alamata, near Kworam, was bombed on March 4th by an Italian aeroplane. The damage was serious and three patients were killed and several wounded. There were no casualties among the personnel.

The unit was bombed for a second time on the following day. The attack, according to a telegraphed report from Dr. André Melly, seems to have been as deliberate as was the first bombing.

Dr. Melly, in his report, states that all patients had previously been removed from the camp as a result of the first bombing, and fortunately there were no casualties. The encampment itself, however, was badly damaged and the 40 ft. square Red Cross flag, which had been repaired after the previous bombing and was spread on the ground, was struck squarely in the centre by a bomb.

Only hurried flight from the tents and ambulances saved the British doctors and their assistants.

Some of the Kenya orderlies have asked to leave the British ambulance owing to the bombardment. It is reported that, after this second bombing, Dr. Melly, the commander of the ambulance, has removed his unit under the shelter of trees and has discarded the Red Cross emblems, which were prominently displayed during the second bombing.

Four of the patients of the British Red Cross unit who were wounded in the Italian air bombardment are reported in Addis Ababa to have died of wounds.

Sir Eric Drummond, the British Ambassador in Rome, has been instructed to protest to the Italian Government against the bombing of the British Red Cross Ambulance Unit No. 1, and to ask for an inquiry into the circumstances. The unit's itinerary—from Dessie to Waldia and thence to Kworam—was notified to the Italian authorities by the British Embassy after the bombing of the Swedish Red Cross unit in January.

## PROFESSIONAL REVIEW.

### A MANUAL OF TUBERCULOSIS FOR NURSES.

When we realise how widespread is tuberculosis in its various manifestations, and the importance of good nursing, the need of a Manual written specially for nurses' instruction is evident. From time to time we are consulted by nurses as to a book which will meet their needs, and we have much pleasure in drawing attention to the "Manual of Tuberculosis for Nurses," by Dr. E. Ashworth Underwood, M.A., B.Sc., D.P.H. (U. Glas.), etc. It is published by E. & S. Livingstone, 16-17, Teviot Place, Edinburgh, price 6s.

Professor J. R. Currie, M.A., M.D., Professor of Public Health in the University of Glasgow, in the Introduction which he contributed to the book in 1931, writes: "The disease assumes so many forms and demands such varied types of treatment that its nursing has come to be a special field, full competence in which can only be attained by specialised training and study. The peculiar need of the tuberculosis nurse for knowledge not up to a medical standard and yet complete for her more limited purposes has not yet been satisfactorily met by any writer in this country. Dr. Underwood's book appears to me to fill this gap well."

The book is excellently printed, the type clear, the illustrations numerous, adding greatly to the value of the text as descriptive of the matter dealt with, which is well and lucidly arranged.

Thus the first chapter deals with the seed, the soil, and the sowing. Inasmuch as tuberculosis is a preventable disease it is appalling to realise that in Britain one death in every 10 is due to this cause, a fact which should stimulate every nurse to acquaint herself with the best means of dealing with it, and to do all in her power to help to combat it.

"Tuberculous matter which has been cast out of the body—for example, the sputum, or the discharge from a tuberculous wound—contains the seed which will grow and produce the disease in another body. Each seed is a tubercle bacillus." The resisting power of the bacillus against harmful agents is emphasised. "It can resist drying almost indefinitely, lying dormant, and when circumstances are again favourable it may spring to life and carry on its deadly activities. . . . There is one agent, however, which is very deadly to the tubercle bacillus. This agent is sunlight. Darkness is the friend of the bacilli, and exposure to strong sunlight rapidly kills them."

"There are three main types of tubercle bacilli—the human, the bovine and the avian. The nurse is not concerned with the avian type, but it is essential that she should have some knowledge of the other two types." These are then explained.

Concerning the soil the author asks, "If tuberculosis is such a common disease, and if tubercle bacilli are scattered about everywhere in such large numbers, how is it that every member of the community does not develop the disease? The Parable of the Sower gives the answer."

Of the methods of infection the tubercle bacillus may be taken into the body by three routes (apart from rare cases of congenital tuberculosis). By inoculation, by inhalation, and by ingestion. It has been estimated that about 75 per cent. of all young children are infected with tuberculosis.

The book should be read from cover to cover, not least the very important chapter on the tuberculosis dispensary, "one of the most vital of all the weapons which have been evolved in our campaign against tuberculosis."

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)