

L'ENRACINEMENT SPIRITUEL DE LA CROIX-ROUGE ¹

by

Maurice LADOR

This is a booklet which all who are interested in the problems and origins of the Red Cross will read with profit. The author, a clergyman of the Free Evangelist Church of Geneva, recalls the close connection between Henry Dunant and the movement known as "Réveil", which was so active in Geneva towards the middle of the last century. As Gustave Ador mentioned, although the Evangelist Society was not the originator of the Red Cross idea, it may in any case be said "that it did prepare the ground". The Evangelist Society was itself the Genevese expression of the "Réveil" movement.

Moreover, following the battle of Solferino, this Society set up a "Committee for the wounded" whose task it was to bring relief to the victims of the fighting in Lombardy. Two persons on this Committee were later to become members of the founding committee of the Red Cross: Dunant and Appia. As Mr. Pierre Boissier points out in his preface, this publication provides a useful adjunct to the history of the Red Cross. The Centenary of the Red Cross movement was an opportune moment for a competent qualified author to shed light on the influence and favourable action of the members and the friends of the Evangelist Society in the birth of the Red Cross.

It is not without interest to note that the ICRC has always been conscious of what it owed to the Evangelist Society. Gustave Moynier wrote to its President in 1868 that "the Committee for the wounded... really represents the seed from which the whole work sprang". In its first issue (January 1919), the *Revue internationale* published an article on the appeal launched by this Society in 1859 on behalf of the Solferino wounded.

J.-G. L.

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