

BOOKS AND REVIEWS

REINHOLD WEPF: "YEMEN"¹

The writer of this book, Dr. Reinhold Wepf, was an ICRC delegate in the Yemen and is at present in Vietnam on another Red Cross mission. His book is of constant interest from beginning to end and is admirably illustrated.

The writer describes the history, geography and ethnology of this country where the Queen of Sheba reigned and he explains the circumstances which in 1963 induced the ICRC to undertake its relief mission which still continues today. It was in this war-ravaged country of vast desert that the Red Cross raised its standard above its field hospital at Uqhd, where Dr. Wepf worked for five months as head physician.

It is not so much this humanitarian action which Dr. Wepf describes, but the life of the people. On the other hand, the foreword written by the President of the ICRC relates the circumstances in which the author took part in the "Uqhd operation" which was "one of the great Red Cross adventures". This was an adventure in which the ICRC was able to rely on the help of the Swiss Red Cross which made available well trained and willing personnel. "Throughout this captivating book", Mr. Gonard continues, "a vivid picture of his fascinating experience is conveyed, for Dr. Wepf is not only a skilled surgeon dedicated to his calling; he is also a shrewd observer. His sympathy for the Yemenis, his understanding of this strange people who have remained on the fringe of the modern world, enhance his descriptive narrative. These same qualities, which will not fail to impress readers, contribute to the effectiveness of his medical work".

J.-G. L.

¹ Kümmerly & Frey, Geographischer Verlag, Berne, 1966, 108 pp.