

## South Africa

The *International Review* has often stressed to its readers the importance which the ICRC attaches to the widespread dissemination of the Geneva Conventions, particularly amongst young people, since it will fall to them in the future to put into practice the ideals which these Conventions propound. It is interesting, therefore, to note an article published last year in *The Junior Magazine* of the South African Red Cross and entitled "The Geneva Conventions".

The author has dealt with this serious subject in a language both simple and direct, well within the grasp of his young readers. He first of all traces a general picture of the needs of humanity, both from the material and the moral point of view, and he then outlines the rules and regulations intended to satisfy these needs in an equitable manner. He recalls that in the past, when international law did not exist, there were no rules governing the conduct of nations one with another and he gives examples to show the unfortunate position of combatants, soldiers or sailors, whom the hazards of war delivered into the hands of the enemy, either wounded or as prisoners. : "How they were treated would depend entirely upon the humour of their captors and quite horrible things could happen. Nobody sent messages to their families to say where they were. It was a very terrible thing to be a prisoner of war."

Thus, the author of this article leads the young reader towards his meeting with Henry Dunant, whose fortuitous presence at Solferino is briefly but vividly described, as are the practical consequences which he drew from the dramatic lesson which the terrible battle was for him.

Finally, after recalling the importance of Dunant's book, *A Memory of Solferino*, and stressing Dunant's idea of creating international rules for the protection of the wounded on the battlefield, the author gives a short historical account of the Geneva Conventions. He shows what guarantees they now represent for the victims of war and the rôle which representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross can be called upon to play.