

Mr. Vandekerckhove's translation has slightly condensed the original text and has divided the book into short chapters, which strikes me as a good thing.

The present-day importance of the Red Cross is undeniable, and is rendered all the more vivid by the prophetic vision with which Dunant concluded his book:

'If the new and frightful weapons of destruction which are now at the disposal of the nations seem destined to abridge the duration of future wars, it appears likely on the other hand that future battles will only become more and more murderous. Moreover, in this age when surprise plays so important a part, is it not possible that wars may arise, from one quarter or another, in the most sudden and unexpected fashion?'

As President of the ICRC, I express my whole-hearted wishes for the success of Mr. Vandekerckhove's adaptation of 'A Memory of Solferino'. I hope that reading it will attract many volunteers to the Belgian Red Cross in Flanders and to the Red Cross in the Netherlands, for lasting and disinterested service. Today, as much as ever, the world needs living and active National Red Cross Societies.

JEAN PICTET : "HUMANITARIAN LAW AND THE PROTECTION
OF WAR VICTIMS"¹

In its issue of September 1973, *International Review* introduced this work, which had just been published in French. The English edition has now appeared, and this is a good occasion to recall the great significance of the book. It consists of the text of a course given at the University of Strasbourg under the auspices of the International Institute of Human Rights. It was published by the Henry Dunant Institute as part of a series which later included a text by Mr. F. Kalshoven, "The Law of Warfare", and one by J. Zourek, *L'interdiction de l'emploi de la force en droit international*.

Mr. Jean Pictet, vice-president of the ICRC and an associate professor at the University of Geneva, is especially qualified to deal with the funda-

¹ A. W. Sijthoff, Leiden — Henry Dunant Institute, Geneva, 1975.

mental problems of international humanitarian law, which are grouped in this book under four chapters: What is international humanitarian law?—The principles of humanitarian law—The general provisions of the Geneva conventions—Rules of application.

As we commented with regard to the French edition, this work is addressed not only to legal experts but also to those who are concerned with problems of social philosophy and the sociology of institutions. It is particularly valuable as a source of references for teaching, inasmuch as international humanitarian law has now assumed its proper place in the universities and research institutes of many countries. It provides convincing proof that humanitarian ideals require ever-increasing efficacy in protecting war victims, as this protection is more and more called into question by technical progress.

J. G. L.