

*To commemorate the 75th anniversary
of the death of Henry Dunant
on 30 October 1910*

**A BOOK BY HENRY DUNANT, WRITTEN IN
COLLABORATION WITH DR. CHÉRON ***

by André Durand

1. Henry Dunant and Dr. Chéron

Henry Dunant, speaking briefly in his memoirs of a visit to a Dr. Chéron in rue Taitbout, Paris, on 4 September 1870, added the following interesting detail: "We had just published a book, under his name, which we wrote together."¹

The book, which does indeed bear the name only of Dr. Chéron, is a 230-page 12mo volume entitled *Les victimes de la Guerre et les Progrès de la civilisation* (The Victims of War and the Progress of Civilization).² It deals with the foundation and history of the Red Cross, from the intervention of Henry Dunant at Solferino through the creation and early activities of the first relief societies and the role they played in the conflicts which followed the first Geneva Convention.

Dunant's relationship with Dr. Chéron was one of friendship and mutual trust.³ With the doctor, he had devised a system of individual ready-made dressings for wounded soldiers, consisting of

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¹ Henry Dunant, *Mémoires*, Henry Dunant Institute, Editions L'Age d'Homme, 1971, p. 248. Henry Dunant's book *Un Souvenir de Solferino* is available in English translation under the title *A Memory of Solferino*; the other works mentioned in this article have not been translated into English.

² Paris, E. Lachaud, Publisher, 1870.

³ Dr. Jules Chéron, born at Périgueux on 3 August 1837, died in Paris on 16 May 1900. Following his medical studies in Bordeaux, he received degrees as doctor of medicine and doctor of science in Paris in 1866. He was appointed to the staff of the Hospital St. Lazare and was a visiting professor of gynaecology at the Ecole Pratique de médecine. He was editor of the *Revue médico-chirurgicale des maladies des femmes* and author of many scientific publications.

a strip of cotton wrapped around a piece of waxed cloth, containing lint soaked in ferric chloride. "Dr. Chéron and I both had the idea of making an excellent anti-haemorrhagic of the lint, which nobody had thought of before," Dunant wrote.⁴ It appeared that the product was marketed under the name of a pharmacist, Sirech, who worked on it with Dr. Chéron and Dunant, but that Dunant never gained what he expected from the project.⁵ He had already become a frequent visitor to rue Taitbout in September 1870, for he wrote, "The business of ready-made dressings for the wounded is going very well. Dr. Chéron has been very good to me. I lunch and dine with him and his family every day and the beautiful appartement in rue Taitbout has become a veritable anti-haemorrhagic workshop. Madame Chéron has six women under her direction, to say nothing of her women friends and all the other people."⁶

Henry Dunant had nothing but praise for the young doctor. "Be sure to tell Anna," he wrote to his sister Marie, "not to worry about me. I should have liked to have had Dr. Chéron treat her with electricity. He has accomplished some remarkable cures, which all the medical journals have been talking about."⁷ During the smallpox epidemic in Paris in June 1870, Dunant was glad that he had been vaccinated by Dr. Chéron "with an excellent vaccine, which took perfectly".⁸

After the siege of Paris and the fall of the Commune, Henry Dunant had the idea of creating a new international organization, *l'Alliance universelle de l'Ordre et de la Civilisation*, to take the place of the *Société de Prévoyance* established during the war. The name of Dr. Chéron was prominent in the list of honorary presidents and vice-presidents of the Alliance⁹. At the opening of the first congress of the new organization, on 3 June 1872, Dr. Chéron, as rapporteur of the commission on the proposal for a diplomatic conference on prisoners of war, clearly expressed the view of Henry Dunant:

⁴ Henry Dunant to Marie Dunant, 31 July 1870, Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire de Genève (hereafter: BPU) Ms. fr. 2115 C, f. 32.

⁵ "Dr. Chéron, who is never very optimistic, assures me that my share in this affair, my share alone, should easily bring me a net profit of a hundred and twenty thousand francs a year." Henry Dunant to Marie Dunant, 31 July 1870, BPU Ms. fr. 2115 C, f. 32.

⁶ Dunant to Marie Dunant, 11 September 1870, BPU, Ms. fr. 2115 C, f. 36.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 7 April 1870, BPU Ms. fr. 2115 C, f. 27.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 24 June 1870, BPU Ms. fr. 2115 C, f. 30.

⁹ See *Bulletin non périodique de l'Alliance universelle de l'Ordre et de la Civilisation*, Paris, Aux Bureaux de l'Alliance, 1873.

“To treat prisoners of war with the greatest degree of humanity is now the desire of all civilized peoples, but it is essential that the procedures for doing so, just as much as the means, be clearly established. While leaving it to the members best qualified on the question to consider the various points which should serve as the basis for a convention between civilized states, the commission wished its rapporteur to propose resolutions designed to gain the agreement of governments to a meeting of accredited diplomats to discuss the articles of a diplomatic convention for the amelioration of the treatment of prisoners of war.”¹⁰

A letter from Henry Dunant to Marie Dunant reports that *Les Victimes de la guerre* came off the press on 29 July 1870,¹¹ just ten days after France’s declaration of war against the Kingdom of Prussia, on 19 July. Dunant set to work immediately to get the book into circulation and ensure that it was publicized. He went to the home of the writer Eugène Manuel, possibly to thank him for some verses Manuel had addressed to him,¹² and finding Manuel not at home he wrote him the following note:

“I left you a little book whose author, Dr. Chéron, offers it you with his respects. I speak for him in asking you to be kind enough, with reference to the book, to write about this humanitarian movement—so painfully timely today—in one of the major papers of Paris, since all of them are open to you, with your great talent and good heart... If you would like to write an article, I should be grateful if you would send it to Dr. Chéron at 43 rue Taitbout, who wrote the book, in order to popularize this work.”¹³

It is obvious that the book was written, and probably set in type, before the beginning of the Franco-Prussian War. At the last possible moment, apparently, the authors changed the end of the last chapter to adapt it to the new situation and added an introduction, with no title and no page number, which drew attention to the timeliness of the book:

¹⁰ *Congrès de l’Alliance universelle de l’Ordre et de la Civilisation*, Paris, Imprimerie typographique de A. Pougin, 13 quai Voltaire, 1872, p. 24.

¹¹ “Dr. Chéron’s book was published the day before yesterday, at a very appropriate moment.” Dunant to Marie Dunant, 31 July 1870, BPU Ms. fr. 2115 C, f. 31.

¹² “The verses I send you, my dear Monsieur Dunant, were splendidly interpreted last night at the Théâtre français by Coquelin and Mademoiselle Favart in the benefit performance for the wounded.” (Eugène Manuel, Paris, Sunday, 7 August 1870) cited in the appendix to the work by Rudolf Müller, *Entstehungsgeschichte des Roten Kreuzes und der Genfer Konvention*, Stuttgart 1897, p. 417.

¹³ Dunant to Eugène Manuel, 8 August 1870, Bibliothèque historique de la Ville de Paris. Fonds Eugène Manuel; facsimile, BPU.

“War has broken out between France and Prussia!

“At a moment when so many victims are falling in defence of their country, it is urgent to bring before everyone’s eyes a picture of the progressive evolution of the international movement under way for the benefit of the wounded on the battlefield.

“It is the purpose of this little book to show how such an institution could have relieved the distress at Solferino, and also to show the great services it rendered at Sadowa.

“We hope that its readers will give their support to this universal humanitarian movement in whose inception France played so great a part, a support which no man with a heart can fail to give, especially at such a fateful moment as this.”

2. **Relation to *La Charité internationale sur les champs de bataille***

It is reasonable to suppose that the general concept of the book should be attributed to Henry Dunant and that he contributed considerably to writing it. We find in it a pattern characteristic of a number of books by Dunant published between 1864 and 1866 under the general heading *La Charité internationale sur les champs de bataille* (International Charity on the Battlefield), namely a brief history of actions to assist wounded soldiers, an account of the part played by Henry Dunant in the creation of the Red Cross, extensive quotations from *Un Souvenir de Solferino* (A Memory of Solferino) and a summary of the war over Schleswig, to which are added, in the book in question, a study of the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 and of the activities of the French society for relief of the wounded. The book refers to Henry Dunant in the third person, but it is well known that Dunant liked to refer to his activities in this detached manner, as he had previously done in *La Charité internationale*. We sometimes have the impression that Henry Dunant divided himself in two, enabling him in his role as chronicler to analyse the historic personality he had become, much as his compatriot Rousseau became the judge of the conduct of Jean-Jacques.

Dunant, using different titles, published seven editions of *La Charité Internationale sur les champs de bataille*. Each new edition was enlarged and updated and sometimes contained changes, in keeping with the author’s custom, arising from his dynamic and ever-active mind. He seemed to have planned issuing a further edition of the work, but this edition, which would have been the

eighth, apparently never appeared. It is possible that in encouraging the publication of *Victimes de la guerre* he sought to resume a previously abandoned project.¹⁴

3. Excerpts from *Un Souvenir de Solferino*

Like the successive editions of *La Charité internationale sur les champs de bataille*, the new book gave particular emphasis to the significance of *Un Souvenir de Solferino*. At the outset, it spoke of the founder of the Red Cross in these terms:

“We owe to the noble initiative of one man, who willingly devoted himself to examining the best means of relieving the suffering of the victims of war, the creation of the universal international institution for land armies and naval forces, a work of charity and humanity, if there ever was one, which Henry Dunant, its founder, brought to fruition by spreading throughout the whole of Europe an appeal, a Memory of Solferino, with its stirring pages, its poignant description of the misery, pain and suffering of which he was the witness.

“What a beautiful and noble protest against war!”

In the next 80 pages, the book reproduces more than half the text of *Un Souvenir de Solferino*, from the paragraph starting, “Oh, the agony and suffering during those days, the 25th, 26th and 27th of June...” up to the famous final proposals.

The text quoted above is from the sixth edition of *Un Souvenir de Solferino*.¹⁵ Close examination of the typography reveals identical minor errors in corresponding places in *Victimes de la guerre* and the editions of *Souvenir* which appeared between 1870 and 1873,¹⁶ indicating that the printer used the same type for the two works. Since the 1870 edition of *Souvenir* came out after 12 June 1870,¹⁷ and *Victimes de la guerre*, as we noted earlier, on 29 July,

¹⁴ “Will you be able to apply yourself to writing the history of the movement, from the moment you conceived it and brought it into being?” Count Sérurier to Henry Dunant, 1868. BPU, Ms. fr. 2109, f. 350.

¹⁵ On this subject, see introduction by Philippe M. Monnier and Roger Durand to the edition of *Un Souvenir de Solferino* reproduced from the original edition, Henry Dunant Institute–Slatkine Reprints, Geneva 1980, especially pp. xi and xii.

¹⁶ Some defective characters and in particular an exclamation point in italic type, occurring in a text set in roman characters (p. 48 of *Victimes de la guerre* and p. 96 of *Souvenir*).

¹⁷ The last page, apparently printed separately as a single-sheet insert, bears the text of an award to Henry Dunant of a medal by the *Société nationale d'encouragement au bien*, dated 12 June.

we may reasonably assume that Dunant was working simultaneously on both works.

4. A personalized history

Although the new work appeared in general to follow the line of previous editions of *La Charité internationale*, it differs from them on one essential point. There is no longer any mention of the Committee of Five nor of the International Committee for the Relief of the Wounded which sprang from it. The name and role of Gustave Moynier are not mentioned either. The founding of the Red Cross is described as follows:

“Immediately after the appearance of the *Souvenir de Solférino*, its author produced a series of publications to present his views, basing his proposals on the facts. He created a number of committees in various countries, including the Central Committee in France. He pleaded the cause of humanity in person before the crowned heads of Europe and won their adhesion to the cause.

“Emperor Napoleon III and the Empress Eugenie, the royal family of Prussia, King John of Saxony, the King and Queen of Wurttemberg, King Maximilian of Bavaria, the Grand Duke and Grand Duchess of Baden, the Archduke Reigier of Austria, the Grand Duke Constantine and Madame the Grand Duchess Helene of Russia and the ruling houses of Sweden, Italy, Portugal, Belgium, Hesse-Darmstadt, Weimar, Mecklenburg, Oldenburg and Spain distinguished themselves by the readiness with which they encouraged the initiative of Monsieur Dunant by granting their special protection to the institution he created with such great determination.

“Monsieur Dunant gained approval in 1863 from the International Statistical Congress in Berlin for his work. A number of social welfare associations, in Switzerland, France, Germany and Belgium, also supported his ideas, in particular the highly esteemed Geneva Public Welfare Society, whose members wished to assist in putting them into effect.

“An international conference, to which a good many sovereigns, governments and various societies sent delegates, was held in Geneva from 26 to 29 October 1863.¹⁸ The conference was presided

¹⁸ At this point, a footnote listed the countries which were either represented at the conference or had announced their support.

over by the distinguished General Dufour, Commander in Chief of the army of the Swiss Confederation, the first man who had encouraged the project.

“The conference, recognizing that assistance is always insufficient in wartime, no matter how great the zeal and devotion of the members of the medical corps, adopted resolutions based on those proposed by the Geneva Public Welfare Society.”

Concerning preparations for the Diplomatic Conference of 1864, the book had this to say:

“The Emperor instructed Monsieur Drouyn de Lhuys, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to confer with the founder of the international movement for the benefit of the victims of war, which was done in March and April 1864, with a view to organizing a diplomatic conference to draft a treaty whose provisions would be binding on civilized governments and would enshrine the neutrality of the wounded and of those who come to their assistance—and in so doing modify international law for the benefit of humanity.

“Monsieur Drouyn de Lhuys recommended the proposal for a diplomatic convention to the various European governments. At the same time, General Dufour and the Geneva Public Welfare Society approached the Swiss Federal Council in Bern, asking the Swiss Government to send a diplomatic note to civilized governments, inviting them to meet for the purpose of concluding the proposed treaty.”

What was it that made Henry Dunant present such a modified version of his earlier publications?

To understand this, we have to remember that Henry Dunant at this time was in a state of great material and psychological distress. In August 1867, he had been forced to resign from his functions in the International Committee. He might doubtless have hoped, in view of the essential role he had played in the creation of the Red Cross, his extensive connections and the value of his cooperation, that he would continue to participate in the advancement of the movement, that he might continue to be its senior adviser. This is indeed what did happen in France, where his influence and standing remained undiminished; he was one of the Vice Presidents of the National Society there and was listened to by government ministers and other political figures. He had reasons to fear, however, that the Geneva Committee was seeking to reduce to an absolute minimum the historic role he had played in its foundation, and above all to cut him off for good from its future development. Conversely, Dunant was convinced of two things: that his human-

itarian mission was by no means finished and that his rounds in September and October 1863, to enlist support in the European courts, in Paris, Berlin, Dresden, Vienna, Munich, Darmstadt, Stuttgart and Karlsruhe, and rally monarchs and other heads of state to the proposals of the International Committee, had been decisive for the success of the first Geneva Conference and consequently the success of the Red Cross.¹⁹

Threatened with being stripped of his past and his future as well, Dunant tried to defend himself. He decided to do so by presenting, through the co-operation of another author, an image in which his own role in the creation of the movement, as he conceived it, would be highlighted, and in which his former colleagues in the Committee would be passed over in silence, except for General Dufour, to whom he owed a debt of gratitude.

5. The Austro-Prussian War of 1866

In *Les Victimes de la Guerre*, a prominent place is given to the Austro-Prussian War of 1866, which of course could not be dealt with in the seventh edition of *La Charité Internationale* since that came out in the year of the war. The second chapter of *Victimes de la Guerre*, entitled *International charity brings a powerful remedy to the evils of war at Sadowa*, has 85 pages, devoted mainly to a historical explanation of the conflict, descriptions of its battles and reports on the losses, together with accounts of the benevolent actions of the reigning families and the activities of relief societies and volunteer nurses in the theatre of operations. The prominent place given by Henry Dunant to these subjects can be explained by the fact that it was from the courts of Prussia and the sovereigns of other German states, the kingdom of Wurttemberg, the kingdom of Saxony, the grand duchy of Hesse-Darmstadt and the grand duchy of Baden that he had received the earliest encouragement for his work, and also by the fact that the war of 1866 offered the first possibility of putting the principles of the Red Cross into practice. "This first attempt," Dunant wrote, "surpassed everything expected of it everything one might hope for."

¹⁹ "He succeeded in interesting the most highly placed persons in Europe in his plan and influential members of their families, statesmen and persons of competence in the most varied fields, and persuaded them to participate in the Geneva Conference by sending delegates." C. Lueder: *La convention de Genève au point de vue historique, critique et dogmatique* (*The Geneva Convention from the historical, critical and dogmatic points of view*). Translated into French by the ICRC, 1876.

In order to write this scrupulously documented work, Henry Dunant used a number of the historical studies which were available to him at the time, whose authors he mentions: Dr. Loeffler, Léonce de Cazenove (*La guerre et l'humanité au XIX^e siècle*),²⁰ Vilbort (*Sadowa et la campagne des Sept jours*), de Rougemont (*Revue des Deux-Mondes*). There can be no doubt that Dunant himself worked on this important historical study, devoted to a subject that was so close to his heart.

The copy of *Victimes de la guerre* which the present writer has before him seems to have belonged to Henry Dunant. It has a number of notes and marginal indications in his handwriting, written with the red and blue pencils he liked to use, such as "inserted" and "to be inserted", indicating extracts used or to be used, and some names of persons, *Murset* and *Kohler*, in which we recognize references to Lieut.-Col. Murset, M.D., of Bern and Dr. Hans Kohler of Munich, to whom, as we shall see, Dunant sent excerpts or quotations from *Victimes de la guerre*.

6. Reprint of the text in *Das Rote Kreuz* (Bern, 1896)

Twenty-six years later, at Heiden, Henry Dunant contributed the bulk of the chapter on the Austro-Prussian War to the Swiss Red Cross magazine, *Das Rote Kreuz*, whose editor was Lieut. Col. Murset. It was published in ten parts, from 12 August 1896 to 15 July 1897, under the title *Die Genfer Konvention: Praktische Ausführung* (The Geneva Convention: Practical Implementation).²¹

The text we are considering here has been kept in the Henry Dunant archives.²² It is a 53-page manuscript, written in a beautiful hand, bearing the title: *Die Genfer Convention/(Vereine vom Roten Kreuz)/Réalisation pratique* (The Geneva Convention (Red Cross Societies): Practical Implementation). Much of it is taken from Chapter II of *Victimes de la guerre*. Little was changed but the arrangement, mainly to provide more unity by bringing

²⁰ "This is a work," Dunant wrote, "which must be regarded as the golden book and guide for the international movement on behalf of the armed forces on land and at sea" p. 145.

²¹ Lieut. Col. Alfred Murset, M.D., one of the most loyal supporters of Henry Dunant, was editor of the review *Das Rote Kreuz* from its inception on 1 January 1894 until 15 March 1898. *Das Rote Kreuz* had previously published, in its issues of 1 September, 15 September and 1 October 1895, an article on Henry Dunant and the Geneva Convention and later, from 15 October 1895 to 1 May 1896, a 12-part series entitled *Die Genfer Konvention (Vereine vom Roten Kreuz)*, which was also based on texts by Henry Dunant.

²² BPU, Ms. fr. 2093 A, p. 34.

together material dealing with Prussia, the kingdom of Saxony and the grand duchy of Hesse-Darmstadt which had been dealt with separately in *Les Victimes de la guerre*. In addition, the text was somewhat modified to adapt it to *Das Rote Kreuz*. An introduction recalls the role of Switzerland in founding the institution, mentioning this time the part played by “the current president of the International Committee”. On the whole, it appears that the text of *Victimes de la guerre* was the basis of the article in *Das Rote Kreuz*. In its first version, the Heiden manuscript sometimes follows the text of the book, but Dunant later made small changes, to correct a date or make a stylistic alteration. In the copy annotated by Henry Dunant, we find on page 147 a marginal note separating two paragraphs: “17//p. 18”. This note recalls the fact that the manuscript was sent off in two instalments, the first ending at the place indicated by the note, three quarters of the way down page 17, followed by the words “Continuation follows shortly”, while the text begins again at the top of page 18, under the heading No. 2. It was therefore this copy which was used in preparing the manuscript.

7. Quotations in the review *Der Samariter* (Munich, 1896)

Also in 1896, the Munich periodical *Der Samariter*, edited by Dr. Hans Kohler, published an offprint of a series of articles it had run, an 80-page booklet on the history of the Red Cross under the title, *Historische Fragmente und Essays über die Entstehung der Genfer Konvention und des Roten Kreuzes. (Nach alten und neuen authentischen Quellen)* (*Historical Fragments and Essays on the Origin of the Geneva Convention and the Red Cross. Based on old and new authentic sources*).²³

The booklet was unsigned, but it came from the hand of Henry Dunant, as shown by the fact that we find the French text of the four final chapters (IX, X, XI and XII) among Dunant’s manuscripts.²⁴ A publication outline prepared by Henry Dunant for future works includes the titles and detailed subtitles of the first seven chapters. A marginal note referring to the titles of chapters V, VI and VII, reads, “Sent to Dr. Kohler”.

As the title of the booklet indicates, it consists of fragments and essays about approaches made by Henry Dunant to further the

²³ *Separat-Abdruck aus “Der Samariter”, Zeitschrift für das gesamte Samariter- und Rettungswesen, München 1896. Druck und Verlag von Seitz & Schauer. There is a 93-page de luxe edition of this booklet. ICRC Library, 1247.*

²⁴ BPU, Ms. fr. 2093 A, pages 116, 129, 100 and 107.

creation of the Red Cross, descriptions of the favorable welcome given him by the sovereigns of the German states and the Vienna court, recollections of the Statistical Congress in Berlin, the assistance given by Dr. and Mrs. Basting and the Count of Eulenburg and the activities of Florence Nightingale. Some of the texts are taken from Henry Dunant's memoirs; others seem to be original, at least in form. Two chapters are found in part in the work of Rudolf Muller, but in a different translation. One of the chapters whose manuscript has been preserved (Chap. X) bears the title *Samaritans and guerrillas in wars of the future; Digression on the visit of an English Colonel to Paris under siege*, and refers explicitly to the material in *Der Samariter*:

"All this is a considerable digression from our main subject, dealt with in our *Fragmente und Essays*, but it is an important digression, for we are not trying to write a chronological history. We are, however, citing authentic events. We have taken the occasion of the English Colonel's report to raise an important humanitarian question in *Der Samariter*. We believe this matter might well be stirred up, grappled with and developed by other publications, so that consideration will have to be given to it by the responsible authorities in various countries."²⁵

What interests us at this point however is Chapter VIII, *Weitere glückliche Folgen des Dinners bei Seiner Exzellenz dem Grafen von Eulenburg (Further fortunate results of the dinner at His Excellency's the Count of Eulenburg)*, designed to show the active sympathy manifested by the rulers of the German States for the founder of the institution. To this end, Dunant quoted numerous passages from *Victimes de la guerre*, referring to the author as follows:

"Another French author, the learned Dr. Chéron, wrote a book called *Les victimes de la guerre et les Progrès de la civilisation* at the outset of the Franco-German War in 1870, in which he said:²⁶

'Württemberg was in the forefront of the crusade for charity. Her Majesty Queen Olga was not only the first to patronize the institution but she continued, during the war, the most assiduous activity. She familiarized people with the humanitarian movement through meetings and lectures not only in Stuttgart but in cities and

²⁵ Text from the original manuscript, BPU, Ms. fr. 2093 A, p. 129. Part of it was reproduced in *Un Souvenir de Solférino, suivi de l'Avenir sanglant*. Texts selected and edited by D.C. Mercanton, Henry Dunant Institute, Editions L'Age d'Homme, 1969.

²⁶ This introductory phrase has been translated from German, in the absence of the original text. The quotations which follow it are from the French text.

towns throughout the kingdom, so that every class of society is aware of the purpose and value of the association.’ ”

The Munich publication cites a number of other passages from *Victimes de la guerre*, concerning the creation of the International Women’s Committee in the grand duchy of Baden, the devotion of the volunteer nurses from the grand duchy of Hesse-Darmstadt and the benevolent assistance given by the royal family of Saxony.

“The example of devotion began with the royal family. Both the dowager Queen Marie and the Princess Amelia were tireless in their efforts; the ladies of Dresden worked with the help of the Sisters of Charity, and Madame Simon was an outstanding model of active, intelligent and persevering charity... We hope that the ladies of all countries, in comparable circumstances, will follow the noble example offered by the ladies of Saxony and Germany...!”

Finally, before citing Dr. Chéron again, Henry Dunant sought to reconcile his gratitude to the German sovereigns with that he owed to Napoleon III:

“We have quoted the opinions of eminent French writers such as Cazenove and Chéron in order to demonstrate that before the war of 1870 there was no animosity against Germany in cultured French circles. We could cite others as well who have nothing but feelings of good will and esteem for our country. If we choose to believe a well-informed author (whom we regard as competent in this field), animosity against Germany had its principal source in evil-minded people in the entourage of the Emperor Napoleon and the Empress Eugénie, following the death of the Duke of Morny and the disgrace of the Duke of Persigny. ²⁷

“Let us cite a few more words by Dr. Chéron, one of the most highly regarded doctors in the French capital:

‘It is Germany that gained the glory of proving the possibility of accomplishing the international project. It is to Germany that the honour belongs of giving practical and beneficial application to the diplomatic treaty of humanity. Queen Augusta was the first to encourage the work in its early stages and to support the efforts of the Prussian Central Committee. She, the first and foremost Sister of Charity in her kingdom, stretched out her protective hand from afar during that war (1866) over all those struck down while fighting for their country.’ ”

²⁷ The words “our country” in this quotation refer to Germany. Although this paragraph was not written by Dunant alone, we may at least suppose that he supplied information for it.

8. Straightening out the facts

Study of this little book has enabled us to follow, through a few examples, the determined manner in which Henry Dunant, in the face of forgetfulness and misunderstanding of his work and of himself as a person, set out to re-establish the facts, for his contemporaries and for the historical record. By encouraging the publication of books, pamphlets and articles by his supporters, supplying them with the texts and documentation they needed, by his own writing, by the selection of old texts for republication or translation, he created a structure of mutually supporting testimony, which drew added strength from their diversity. Naturally, amidst the confusion of the events of 1870—the Franco-German War, the fall of the Second Empire, the Paris Commune—*Victimes de la guerre* may not have found the readership its authors expected. At the least, however, Henry Dunant was able to use it to make better known the history of the Red Cross, as he himself had lived it, and to gain recognition for the part he played in that history by his thoughts, his writing and his deeds.

André Durand
