

the war, of the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles concerning those responsible for war. Again in 1919 the *Revue* published a moving article by him, entitled “*Protection de l'enfance et Croix-Rouge*”.

Before the war, moreover, he had occasion to submit a well-documented report on the misuse of the signs and the name of the Red Cross. He had presided over a commission to consider measures to be taken in this field and, at the Rome conference in 1892, he had reported on the results.

He also concerned himself—and in this he was a pioneer—with the improvement of conditions for prisoners and with legislative measures which might have relieved their often miserable plight.

He drew up a veritable “Code for the treatment of prisoners” and he knew the gratification of achieving considerable success in this field.

But he went even further: in 1914, he persistently sacrificed himself, without ostentation, by assuming a voluntary position at the *Prisoners of War Agency* in the ill-lit and badly ventilated basement of the Musée Rath, to take in charge, day after day, the department which perhaps required the greatest prudence and tact, that which was concerned with the recording of deaths and communicating with bereaved families.

It was Alfred Gautier who was charged to represent the ICRC (of which he became one of the Vice-Presidents in 1917) at Paris in 1919 for the ceremony of the founding of the League of Red Cross Societies. He then had the opportunity to describe in public in glowing terms, the mission and role of the International Red Cross.

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**The Rights of the Disabled**, according to the Rt. Hon. Noel Baker, *World Health, WHO, Geneva, Oct-Nov. 1968.*

... Thanks to the progress of science, man, on average, lives longer than he used to do. This is also true of children born with physical or mental handicaps. It means that a greater number of them will survive and form part of adult society, thus setting a new problem.

The Declaration of Human Rights, in its article 25, justly recalls that "Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection". It is obvious this applies to handicapped children even more than to others.

Until fairly recently the fate of handicapped children was harsh if not cruel. They have, however, the same right as others to lead a normal life. We must stop treating them as outcasts. They must be integrated into our society and assured of a fair chance of a satisfying life. A great collective effort is necessary which itself requires a vast information campaign.

We must all be convinced that mentally retarded or physically handicapped children have the right to a happy, normal life. It is urgent and imperative that we all realize it.

Indeed, at a strictly medical level great progress has been achieved on the preventive side as much as on the curative. The part, for example, played by certain infectious diseases among pregnant women has now been accurately assessed. It is known that German measles (rubella) in the first three months of pregnancy may affect the baby who then has one chance out of two of coming to life with a handicap. So every precaution needs to be taken to protect the pregnant woman from German measles. Furthermore, the role of malnutrition and its ill-effects on the normal development of the brain is now also better understood. Certain social factors can also hamper mental development and the possibility of alleviating, through mass social measures, damages resulting from early exposure to unfavourable conditions seems to be nowadays at hand.

Medicine has also made important strides on the curative side. Screening has become more efficient if nothing else because of the great improvement in public health services. Specialists also know far better how to stimulate visual, auditory, kinaesthetic and tactile responses and to promote appropriate body action.

. . . But important as the family is, it cannot replace society itself and today, in a time of far-reaching changes, the public must be called upon to accept the handicapped as equal members of society. People who might wish to make a career or give voluntary services to the handicapped should be stimulated to do so. Industry should be urged to give them the possibility of doing useful work. Finally, a climate of public opinion should be created that will regard the use of public resources for the handicapped as a well justified social investment.

The handicapped child is a normal child facing life with a disability. He has the *right* to a normal life. It is up to the entire community to give him the best chance it can.