

LA SOCIÉTÉ GENEVOISE D'UTILITÉ PUBLIQUE BIRTHPLACE OF THE RED CROSS ¹

For the one-hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of its foundation, the *Société genevoise d'utilité publique* has issued an attractive publication, in which the Society's history is related by Bernard Lescaze, with numerous reproductions of interesting documents.

In the pages of this lively little history, readers will learn of the Society's many useful undertakings and also of the ethical and philanthropical questions and the economic and social problems in which its members took particular interest. While the construction of low-rent dwellings, the welfare of prisoners, educational reforms, the campaign against intemperance, the founding of the *Société de natation et de sauvetage* were all enterprises designed to make the City and Republic of Geneva a better place to live in, other undertakings led the *Société genevoise d'utilité publique* into the sphere of international relations, when it set up a Commission to bring aid to war-wounded soldiers which very soon became the International Committee of the Red Cross.

It is this chapter which the readers of our Review will probably read with the greatest interest. Moreover, it is likely that many of our Genevise readers will recognize some of their forefathers among the people named in this history and will discover how a large number of institutions, which are still active today in their native city, saw the light of day.

¹ *La Société genevoise d'utilité publique en son temps, 1828-1978. Contribution à l'histoire économique et sociale de Genève*, by Bernard Lescaze. Geneva 1978, 96 pp. *Société genevoise d'utilité publique*, case postale 349, 1211 - Geneva - 2.