

or even a pair of scales for weighing an organ, without a beaker, without a test tube and without any of the modern instruments of precision necessary for original investigation or advanced teaching. A small grant has been sanctioned for the purchase of a few of the more essential things. The sum is inadequate even for modest requirements. We have suffered in all our Australian Universities in the past on account of the parsimony on the Senates or Councils. In the matter of current journals, it has been necessary for the professors to purchase their own sets. As a consequence no departmental libraries have been gathered within the medical schools. The need for such special libraries is obvious. Similarly it may be said that it is unreasonable to engage the services of an eminent teacher and a recognized research scholar and to ask him to teach in a cramped department containing a few museum specimens and no real equipment.

In the Department of Pathology the equipment and the accommodation are less inadequate, owing to the fact that this department was founded when Professor J. B. Cleland was appointed to the chair. His difficulties are therefore different from those of his colleagues who have taken over departments established in 1884. Professor Brailsford Robertson has already added some valuable apparatus to the equipment of his department and has exercised much ingenuity in adapting the material in his possession to the space available and to the needs of his classes. There is still much apparatus missing that he should possess. In the histology room, he has introduced a clever scheme for enabling a relatively large number of students to find space and light for microscopical work. This has been achieved by placing in each window a large, wedge-shaped table, so that the students can be placed close together without interfering with the light passing to the microscopes.

Now is the time to remedy these serious defects.

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE RED CROSS.

In the December issue of the *Bulletin of the League of the Red Cross Societies* the Director-General publishes an historical sketch of the development of the League and of the *Comité International de la Croix-Rouge*. The tenth international conference of the Red Cross will be held in Geneva at the end of this

month and at this conference the question will be discussed as to how far the peace-time activities of the *Comité International* will overlap or interfere with those of the League. The story of these two organizations is one of intense interest to the medical profession.

Many years ago Henri Dunant, a citizen of Geneva, was brought face to face with the ghastly results of war. He witnessed the sufferings of the wounded of the French and Austrian armies after the battle of Solferino in 1859. There were then no elaborate measures in existence for the care and alleviation of the sufferings of the wounded. Revolting against this state of affairs, he conceived an organization whose functions should be limited to the care of the wounded. He realized that unless the individuals engaged in this work of mercy were themselves protected by a recognition of their neutrality, the remedy would fail to a large extent. At first no one heeded his appeals. He then published a book entitled "*Un Souvenir de Solferino*," setting forth his demand for the immediate establishment of voluntary corps with official recognition. The book appeared in 1862. The result was the appointment of a committee of five influential men—General Dufour (Commander-in-Chief of the Swiss Army), Gustav Moynier (President of the *Société d'Utilité Publique*), Dr. L. Appia, Dr. T. Manoir and H. Dunant. This committee, we are informed, was self-appointed and unofficial. Nevertheless, it dared to issue invitations to the governments of all the countries of Europe to send delegates to a conference to discuss the proposals. The invitations were accepted and a conference was held on October 25, 1863. Progress was made, but it required time and further elaboration before full success could be attained. Emperor Napoleon III. took up the cause and induced the Federal Government of Switzerland to convene an international conference in 1864. At this official conference the famous Convention of Geneva was adopted. Mr. David Henderson calls the Convention "the charter of the Red Cross, the covenant of mercy in war." The five members of the unofficial committee were appointed the *Comité International de la Croix-Rouge*.

This committee undertook the general direction of all matters connected with the amelioration of the conditions of warfare. All questions concerning the interpretation of the Convention have been referred to it, while in time of war the committee has acted as mediator between the national Red Cross societies. The committee has been guided by three principles. The first is that help should be extended to those suffering from the casualties of war; the second is that every effort should be made to encourage the observance of mercy and humanity in war; the third is that the *Comité* shall maintain absolute impartiality in dealing with the nations. That the *Comité* has remained impartial has never been doubted. Its members are and have been exclusively citizens of Geneva. Geneva remains to-day "the most neutral of all the Cantons of neutral Switzerland."

The League of the Red Cross Societies was created at the end of the world war. The American Red Cross consulted with the Red Cross Societies of Great