

imperfections of committees and councils entrusted with the public purse and the public weal.

There is, and I think always will be, ample scope for supplementation of official work by voluntary workers, for the experimentation in new and promising work which it is so difficult to initiate in official circles, and for the undertaking of necessary work by devoted volunteers when public opinion and officialdom refuse to undertake it.

This disposes of the argument that Red Cross activities in the prevention of disease merely prevent the development of official work. The true object of all voluntary workers is to stimulate official public health work, and when in any sphere the latter is fully developed to welcome the disappearance or reduction of voluntary non-official work, or seek the new means of social help which are always awaiting for devoted workers to initiate.

The conference agreed that the new work of the Red Cross would naturally divide itself into two parts: an International Bureau, and National Organizations. The duties of these and their relation to each other will be more clearly seen in the light of experience. The International Bureau in the scheme proposed for the consideration of the conference—which received general approval—would act as a great centre for collecting information on various public health subjects, and for digesting it and subsequently distributing it by means of special publications, or periodical journals, or on application from those requiring specialized information. It would also act as a means of educating the general public on urgent problems affecting its welfare; and it would be utilized as a centre, organizing in less favored communities, missions which would undertake local investigations and remedial work. These surveys and activities would be intended rather as demonstration centres than as permanent organizations, the intention being to withdraw them as soon as the necessary work could be carried on by local Red Cross or other organizations.

It was suggested that the central bureau should comprise a number of branches dealing with epidemic diseases, tuberculosis, venereal diseases, child welfare, nursing and other subjects, collating and analyzing information and distributing it through the medium of the National Red Cross of each country.

Such a central bureau, it will, I think, be agreed, will be of the greatest value to all social and public health workers, while not clashing with any existent agency.

The proposed organization of Red Cross agencies for preventive work has already received an imprimatur in the draft league of peace; and it would be appropriate that its headquarters should be near if not side by side with the future home of that league. If it receives the full