

RED CROSS WORK IN U. S.

The growth of the American Red Cross, since America declared war, and of the spirit which the Red cross represents and without which it would soon cease to exist, has been phenomenal. From an organization with 200,000 members in 1916, before America entered the war, it has grown until its membership is now over one-fifth of the population of the United States—22,000,000; and it aims to increase the membership until it includes the entire population, 100,000,000.

On May 1, 1917, there were 562 chapters; now there are 3,854 chapters, which are divided into some 30,000 branches and auxiliaries. Through these chapters over 8,000,000 women volunteer workers are engaged in canteen work, and the production of relief supplies. Over 221,000,000 articles have been made in the chapter work rooms, of an estimated aggregate value of \$44,000,000. Of these, dearly, 11,000,000 were hospital garments, 193,000,000 surgical dressings, and over 10,000,000 knitted articles such as sweaters, helmets, wristlets, and socks.

In 102 camps and cantonments, in over 700 canteens at railroad stations, and ports of embarkation, the Red Cross workers are helped to add to the comfort and health of soldiers; and among the families left behind, the Home Service, with its 10,000 committees, aid a work whose value for the well-being and morale of the "boys" cannot be over-estimated. Over 100,000 families were served by the Home Service every month.

At present the most important phase of Red Cross work was the care of the troops in France—in the hospitals, the rest billets, the convalescent homes—in transit to and from the firing line, and on the firing line itself. Here the Red Cross supplemented the work of the Medical Corps of the Army and the Navy. It was a vast emergency storehouse for the army, ready at a moment's notice to supply magazines or tobacco or splints or dressings or diet delicacies or any one of a hundred things. It had a representative in every army hospital, whose duty it was to supplement the casualty information given out by the War Department, in acting as a sort of connecting link between the sick and wounded, and their families at home, and in supplying them with comforts and extras not included in the regular hospital fare. It had its outposts and rolling canteens, which served the men in the front line, and when an offensive began the Red Cross front service men followed the boys over the top, loaded up with cigarettes and bandages and chocolate and drink, and served at need as stretcher bearers, surgeons' assistants, couriers or anything immediately necessary.

In June, 1917, there were 18 Red Cross workers in France; there were at the time of the armistice 5,000. All of these of course, were not working with the American troops. In canteens and rest houses and hospitals for the French Army, in feeding and housing and finding employment for the thousands and thousands of refugees and repatriates, in convalescent homes and tuberculosis hospitals, in child welfare work—Red Cross men and women did their utmost for the French people.

In Italy much the same sort of work was done, though not on so large a scale as in France. A Red Cross city was built for Venetian refugees almost under the shadow of the leaning tower of Pisa, where 15,000 of these homeless people were housed. More than 100 American Red Cross kitchens were in operation all over the country, and 14,000 tons of food were shipped from the United States each month. In addition the Red Cross maintained an ambulance service on the Italian front similar to that which was operated in France until the American Army took it over in July, 1917.

From huge warehouses near Berne in Switzerland weekly food parcels were sent to the American prisoners in German prison camps, and through Switzerland, too, the Red Cross sends inquiries behind the German lines in its efforts to locate soldiers listed as missing, and thus reassure their anxious families at home.

Red Cross Commissions were also sent to Serbia, Russia, Greece, Palestine and Rumania, and representatives appointed in Siberia, at Madeira and in Denmark. Here the same sort of work went on, varied greatly, of course, by the special conditions which in each country brought new and difficult problems for solution.

Millions have been spent by the Red Cross in all these countries, but figures—sums of money, can give no adequate idea of what the organization has accomplished. It is service that the Red Cross gives—disinterested human service.

CONCRETE ROADS IN UNITED STATES.

Michigan voters, on April 7, voted approximately 3 to 1 on its \$50,000,000 bond issue for permanent roads. This speedy and early action on a question which has been agitated but a comparatively few weeks insures that many contracts will be let and completed this year, and that the celebrated Wayne County system of concrete highways—very nearly 200 miles—will soon be but a part of a much more celebrated State system.

Michigan counties along the line of the Chicago-Detroit highway have been energetically placing their sections of this route under contract for early construction. The latest contract awarded on this highway is near Coldwater, in Branch County, requiring 5 miles of 16-foot concrete pavement. G. P. Scharl, of Coldwater, Mich., was the successful contractor, at a bid price of \$125,910.

A contract for 35,000 square yards of concrete pavement on State Route No. 84 in Crawford County, Pa., has been awarded to Baldwin & Welcomer, of Union City, Pa., at \$2.70 per square yard. Another state highway contract was awarded on Route 97 in Elk County, involving 56,734 square yards at \$2.75 per square yard. This contract was secured by the Miller Construction Co. of Punxsutawney, Pa. Both contracts call for pavement 18 feet wide, 6 inches thick at the edges, and 8 inches at the centre, reinforced.

Early in March a contract for 22,330 square yards of 6-inch concrete pavement was awarded at Tracy, Minn., Hamlin & Okes, of Minneapolis, who received this contract, have just been awarded an additional one covering 10,000 square yards at \$1.78 per square yard. City authorities at Tracy evidently think it desirable to take advantage of the competition that is natural between contractors early in the year and expect to have their street improvements completed before the heavy hauling season commences at harvest time.

The State Road Commission of Utah plans about 95 miles of paved highway construction this year. The first contracts have just been awarded for concrete road work in Davis County at prices ranging from \$2 to \$2.17 per square yard. The three contracts let call for about 100,000 square yards of pavement 18 feet wide, 6 inches thick at the sides and 8 inches at the centre, reinforced. These prices reflect a convenient supply of raw materials near the site of the contract. It is expected that other state highway work totalling over 168,000 square yards will be awarded in a few days.

District of Columbia: A contract has just been awarded for 40,537 square yards of street pavement, divided among 15 jobs. Concrete is to be 6 inches thick; price \$1.94 per square yard.

Georgia: A contract has just been awarded for 26,000 square yards of 18-foot concrete pavements on the Hapeville Road, near Atlanta. The pavement is to be 6 inches thick; price \$2.45 per square yard.

Virginia: A contract has been awarded for 2 miles of 6-inch concrete pavement on Willoughby Road, near Norfolk, at \$2.09 per square yard.

New York: A contract for 23,000 square yards of 7-inch concrete pavement on Main Street and Woodbine Avenue, Northport. Price \$2.47 per square yard.

BUILDING INSPECTORS.

Every city in the state of Maine of more than 2,000 inhabitants has a building inspector. This inspector is elected each year by the municipal officers. The inspector has jurisdiction only within such limits as are defined by the municipal officers, and these limits must include the thickly settled portion of the city. Towns of less than 2,000 inhabitants may establish the office of building inspector if the voters so decide at an annual town meeting. The election of building inspectors takes place in the month of April.

The prosecution of incendiaries in Boston is being continued with unabated vigor. One of the criminals was sentenced during February to the State prison for a term of four to five years. He was convicted of having hired another to burn the house owned by his brother-in-law. The man who actually fired the house confessed also during the trial that he had set thirteen other fires. He testified that in addition to receiving money for setting fire to the property he was also paid ten dollars on several occasions by public adjusters for advance information concerning the fire and place of fires to be set.