

already the Red Cross, when local sanitary arrangements were imperfect or in abeyance, has taken upon itself the burden of the emergency preventive measures as well as of measures of relief.

In so doing it has acted wisely. Preventive work is always more productive in results than relief work. It is also more economical. It is wiser as well as more humane to erect a parapet along the top of a dangerous cliff than to provide an ambulance at its base.

I do not, however, wish to give countenance to the notion that prevention and treatment of disease must be regarded in antithesis. The two are parts of a whole and not distinct and separate. This may be illustrated by two of the most serious diseases to which humanity is subject, tuberculosis and syphilis. Of these, tuberculosis is probably the chief producer of dependent widows and orphans; while syphilis, on the authority of Sir William Osler, must be regarded as third among the killing diseases. For the prevention of both of these diseases treatment forms an indispensable preventive measure. Every arrangement conducing to the comfort or recovery of the tuberculosis patient diminishes the risk of massive infection in his family; and the prompt treatment of syphilis by arseno-benzol preparations is the most effective means for securing his immediate disinfection as well as his progress toward cure. And even when the elementary personal infection is absent, it can be argued with justice that the prompt and efficient medical treatment and nursing of the sick not only diminishes the duration of individual disability, but prevents the impoverishment and enfeeblement of other members of the same family.

But for an increasing proportion of the total sickness of humanity, total prevention is now possible, and I need scarcely cite the almost complete disappearance of typhus in western nations in peace time, the rapid decline of enteric fever, and the improvement in regard to a large number of other diseases. The number of preventible diseases is being steadily increased, as investigation progresses, and as our knowledge of the already ascertained laws of health increases and becomes disseminated among the general population.

It was, therefore, a happy inspiration of Mr. Davison, the President of the American Red Cross, which led to his calling together the international conference of Red Cross Societies at Cannes, with a view to considering means by which the world-wide activities of Red Cross workers might be utilized for the prevention of illness as well as for the treatment of sick and wounded mankind. It is a vision of the future, which, I think, will have a great influence on the welfare of mankind, if, as I am confident will be the case, the conception fires the souls of the multitude of Red Cross workers and contributors in every civilized country, and leads them to determine against demobilization