

**A NEW EDITION OF THE
“ INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS HANDBOOK ”**

The International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies have just issued an eleventh edition of the International Red Cross Handbook, in English. This volume contains 607 pages, including the Foreword—which we think it worth while to reproduce below—describing the contents.

A French edition of the Handbook left the press recently, and a Spanish edition is due to appear next spring.

Since 1889, when it was first published, the Handbook of the International Red Cross was meant to be both a compilation of the principles and rules that have directed the activities of the Red Cross since its foundation and a practical guide for all those interested in the life of the Red Cross.

It therefore contains the Conventions that govern the mission of the Red Cross in time of conflict, the Statutes and Rules of Procedure connected with the organization and working of the Red Cross institutions—the International Committee of the Red Cross, the League of Red Cross Societies and the National Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies—and finally the main Resolutions adopted by the statutory bodies of the Red Cross.

Originally published by the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Handbook took the form of a twenty-two page pamphlet containing the substance of the resolutions of the first International Conference of the Red Cross.

Increasing considerably in size with each successive issue, the Handbook was re-edited in 1898, 1920, 1925, 1930, 1938, 1942, 1951 and 1953. From 1930, it became the Handbook of the International Red Cross, a joint publication of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies. Its plan remained unchanged in later editions. Part I contained the Geneva Conventions and several other international Conventions with a bearing on Red Cross work; Part II was devoted to the Statutes

and Rules of Procedure of the international agencies of the Red Cross; Part III assembled the main Resolutions of the International Conference of the Red Cross and of the Board of Governors of the League, as well as a few resolutions of the Council of Delegates.

Various texts of general interest were successively added to the Handbook. The ninth edition, in 1951, saw important changes in this publication. It was then supplemented by the four Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949. The resolutions of the Diplomatic Conference of Geneva (21 April—12 August 1949) and a resolution concerning the Red Cross adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations also found a place in the new Handbook, as well as several new regulations. This development is carried on in the present edition which introduces, in particular in Part II the text of the Agreement between the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies, the Regulations for the use of the emblem and the Statutes of the Henry Dunant Institute.

On the other hand, the present edition differs in many ways from the preceding ones. For the first time, the Handbook does not give the text of the Conventions prior to those of 1949, with the exception of the "mother" Convention of 1864. There is, however, an extract from the Hague Convention of 18 October 1907 concerning bombardment by naval forces in time of war (Convention No. IX of 1907) and the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (The Hague, 1954) which did not appear previously. This is also the first time that the Handbook does not contain all the Resolutions adopted since the foundation of the Red Cross movement by the International Conferences of the Red Cross (Part III). The need to reduce the size of the work, a great part of which is now taken up by the four Geneva Conventions of 1949, the ever growing importance of the administrative section (Part II), the continuously increasing number of resolutions due to the extended fields of activity of the Red Cross, have imposed these restrictions. So the earlier resolutions, or those of a temporary nature, or again texts less suited to present needs, have not been retained in the present edition. In the case of these texts, those interested may refer to the 1953 edition which is still of value.

IN THE RED CROSS WORLD

The annexes to preceding editions, lists of mandates, lists of publications, which added to the bulk of the work, have been omitted. The present " Annexes " give only brief particulars, such as the list of International Conferences of the Red Cross and sessions of the General Council and the Board of Governors of the League, as well as the list of Presidents of the International Committee of the Red Cross and Chairmen of the Board of Governors of the League of Red Cross Societies since the foundation of these two Institutions.