

# NEWS OF NATIONAL SOCIETIES

Formerly: International Bulletin of Red Cross Societies, founded in 1869

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## Australia

This year the Australian Red Cross is celebrating the jubilee of its foundation. It is a great date for this National Society which, in half a century, has come to assume such an important part in the life of the nation. The International Committee was pleased to associate itself with the event and on August 12, 1964, it sent the following telegram signed by its President, Mr. Léopold Boissier, to Melbourne :

*At this time when Australian Redcross celebrating fiftieth anniversary its foundation International Committee Redcross associates itself your society and forms every good wish for success of your humanitarian activities stop I also express our gratitude for your constant efficient support International Committees work stop.*

On this occasion, the Australian Red Cross published *Australian Red Cross Jubilee, 1914-1964*, an illustrated booklet giving an account of the main events in its history. The memory is recalled of those who, in August 1914, nine days after the outbreak of war in Europe, gathered in Melbourne to form a branch of the British Red Cross. The enterprising spirit of their successors was the impulsion which led to ever more numerous and useful services, not only in Australia itself but also on several continents in the form of welfare and medical teams, relief supplies of food and clothing in time of natural disaster, and in many other forms. Medical supplies are sent to various parts of Asia and relief and teaching missions have been set up in a number of places.

In Australia the blood transfusion service, started in 1929, has developed to such an extent that since 1954 it is one of the most important services in that country. Ever mindful of social requirements, the National Society provides ambulances with voluntary

drivers prepared to drop everything to answer an emergency call. It organizes teams of hospital visitors taking cheer and giving helpful occupations to patients. It has set up a talking library for the blind, a picture library for long-term patients, microfilm books for the paralyzed to read without effort ; it assists in certain special therapy for mental patients ; it has 16 convalescent hospitals for ex-service personnel and the disabled.

This booklet also recalls the work of the Enquiry Bureau established in London during the First World War, to help trace wounded and missing men. It developed considerably from 1939 to 1945 and is still active even today. A great deal of work is undertaken by the Red Cross among migrants as they journey to the Commonwealth Migrant Centre. These immigrants are welcomed on arrival and mothers and children are given special care. Everything is done to smoothe the difficulties which are bound to occur on the first contact with a new country.

In addition, social services, ready to assume tasks of all sorts, send Home Helps to families in difficulty, distribute meals to the disabled and help the infirm and the aged. The junior Red Cross too is developing in a remarkable manner and has an important rôle to play in schools.

This cursory glance at the activities of the Australian Red Cross, gives an idea of its active growth over the last fifty years and of its steadfast enthusiasm and efficiency in the service of mankind.

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## Spain

### Centenary of the Spanish Red Cross

*The Spanish Red Cross is justifiably proud of being one of the oldest National Societies and it made a point of celebrating the Centenary of its foundation in a striking manner so that it would long be remembered.*