

National Convention in Manila from August 25 to 27, 1961. The plenary session, which was presided over by the Society's Chairman, opened with a ceremony attended by numerous personalities, among whom General Alfred M. Gruenther, President of the American National Red Cross, who spoke on " The Red Cross and our time ". At the third plenary meeting, a magistrate gave a speech on the four Geneva Conventions. During the closing ceremony, rewards were distributed and the ICRC delegate in Manila, Mr. Mittner, had the pleasure of presenting the Florence Nightingale Medal to a Philippine nurse, Miss Julita V. Sotejo.

U.S.S.R.

Among the many interesting articles published in the *Soviet Red Cross* (1961, No. 1), the bulletin of the Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, one is of particular interest since it describes a new initiative taken by this National Society.

Under the title " The Nurses' Bureau in action ", we learn of an activity which social conditions have placed in the forefront of our present-day problems : home nursing. In the Soviet Union, as in many other countries, a sick person, living alone and dependent on himself, presents the humanitarian institutions with a problem which numerous efforts have been made to solve during the last few years ; various National Societies have indeed solved it successfully, as the *International Review* has already mentioned. It is interesting to see how the Alliance is now performing this task, following on a decision of its Executive Committee.

This decision planned the setting up of a " Red Cross Nurses' Bureau " for the purpose of providing personnel trained in home nursing. After attending nursing courses, these young women are attached to the Policlinic of this Society where they carry out periods of volunteer work in a surgical ward or in the dispensary. The article stresses the fact that these candidates are given a warm

welcome by the professional staff of the hospital, which is of great help to the beginners; they receive every encouragement as they successfully complete the numerous stages which will later enable them to become excellent nurses.

The author gives a simple and direct picture of the practical aspect of the duty to be performed. We see the young nurse visiting a sick person living alone, " she inquires after his health, gives him his medicine, remakes the bed and naturally carries out all the doctor's instructions . . ." Here, as in the hospital, there is close co-operation between doctor and nurse.

However, if necessary, the nurse also performs other duties for the patient ; forgetting her scientific training, she is also willing to take over household duties, prepare meals, clean the room and perform other tasks not strictly included in a medical nurse's functions, but which bear witness to her humanity and certainly encourage the patient. That is why these nurses are always greeted with affection and gratitude.

The nurse keeps a " medical diary ", which is regularly checked by the doctor and in which she enters the number of days she has worked and the amount of time she has devoted to each patient. In this connection, those in charge of the Nurses' Bureau intend to organize " meetings in which the young nurses will give methodical accounts of the characteristic features of their work ".

The article, signed by the head doctor of a policlinic in Sverdlovsk, points out the humanitarian character of this work : " To come to the aid of sick people in a very special way, by persuading them that man is not alone at the most arduous moments of his life." An idea that is very much in keeping, in a practical and efficient way, with the Red Cross ideal.