

under strong obligations relative to the condition of the Christians in Turkey, because by various treaties they have assumed certain responsibilities. At the conclusion of the war between Russia and Turkey in 1877, it was stipulated that the Sublime Porte should "carry out without further delay the improvements and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and to guarantee their security against Circassians and Kurds."

The treaty containing this clause was objected to by England and a naval force was dispatched to the sea of Marmora to emphasize the objection. Great Britain further took the matter in her own hands and invited France, Germany, Austria, Italy and Turkey to a conference which was held at Berlin in 1878. At this conference the stipulations relating to the Armenians, as already quoted from the treaty of San Stefano, were adopted under the guaranty of the signatory powers. But while the European representatives were deliberating at Berlin, England entered into a separate treaty with the sultan, whereby the latter promised to introduce necessary reforms "for the protection of the Christian and other subjects of the Porte," to be agreed upon later by the two powers. England promised to defend Turkey by force of arms if Russia should attempt to take possession of Turkish territory, and virtually received Cyprus as payment for this promise.

By treaties, then, with Russia, with the powers represented at the Berlin congress and with England, the sultan is pledged to protect the Armenians and other Christian subjects in his dominions, and each and all of those countries are responsible for the carrying out of the promises. Yet, it is no secret that no reforms have been attempted by Turkey. The Christians remain in as wretched a condition as ever.

The question has been discussed whether the United States consistently can interfere in the affairs of the orient. The fact is our government has done so on previous occasions of a similar nature. International law recognizes the right of any country to offer its good offices "where the general interests of humanity are infringed by the excesses of a barbarous and despotic government." Acting on this principle Mr. Forsyth, secretary of the United States, in a letter to Mr. Kur-scheidt, dated August 26, 1840, at the time of the maltreatment of Jews at Damascus, instructed our chargé d'affaires at Constantinople to interpose his good offices on behalf of the oppressed and persecuted race of the Jews in the Ottoman dominions, "among whose kindred are found some of the most worthy and patriotic of our citizens." Other notable cases are also on record.

Citizens of New York are organizing a mass meeting to be held tonight, Dec. 18, in order to protest against the violation of treaties and presumably to express a desire that our government take some action in behalf of the Armenians. The cause is worthy of the efforts of enlightened citizens. Victory for liberty, wherever won, reflects its glory to the uttermost parts

of the world; it is the gain of mankind. And if the European powers, handicapped as they are by mutual feelings of jealousy, are slow in going to rescue the oppressed whose blood is shed on their own doorsteps; and if the good offices of our government, which cannot be suspected of selfish purposes in the matter, were needed to speed the day of the triumph of righteousness in an obscure corner of the world, there is no reason why such good offices should not be freely granted, and honor, in the best sense of the word, be added to the star-spangled emblem of political and religious liberty and equality.

### RED CROSS ASSOCIATION.

During the war now going on between Japan and China, reference has often been made to services rendered by the Red Cross association, and the former country has received much praise for the instructions given to the army, relating to the treatment of the enemy. Thus Count Oyama on the 22nd of September, issued an order to the troops stating that belligerent operations are properly confined to the military and naval forces actually engaged, and that there are no reasons for enmity between individuals because their countries are at war, and that consequently common principles of humanity dictate that succor and rescue should be extended even to the enemy's forces who are disabled by wounds or disease. These instructions were given in accordance with the principles adopted by the Red Cross association.

The present time has been deemed opportune by the officers of the American branch of the organization to call the attention of the nation to the work connected with Red Cross. Its origin can be traced to the battle of Solferino, June 27, 1859. Monsieur Henri Dunant, a Swiss gentleman, happened to witness that engagement and was deeply impressed by the scenes he saw. Wounded and dying were left on the field of carnage for days without medical attendance. This led him to consider the necessity of uniting civilized nations in a compact for the purpose of rendering warfare less barbarous. His suggestions were eagerly embraced by the Society of Public Utility in Switzerland, and by the aid of the Swiss Federal council a conference of nations was convened in Geneva in 1863, which was followed by another in 1864 at which the Geneva treaty was formulated. Only sixteen of the leading nations of the world signed this treaty, but its provisions were gradually adopted by one country after another until at present forty nations have entered into the agreement. The United States became a member of the compact in 1882 by act of Congress and proclamation of President Arthur. A red cross on white ground is the emblem of the members of the association.

The subjoined paragraphs give an idea of the methods adopted:

The resolutions of the Geneva conference provide that there shall be, in every treaty country, one committee, and only one, whose duty it shall be to co-operate in time of war by all the means in its power with the medical and sanitary

service of the army, and this committee shall place itself in communication with the government of its own country in order that its offers of assistance, in case of need, may be accepted. In the event of war, the committees of belligerent nations shall furnish relief to their respective armies in proportion to their respective resources and, if need be, they shall solicit the assistance of committees of neutral nations, within the treaty.

With the concurrence of the military authorities they shall, upon request, place nurses upon the battle-fields, but only under the direction of the military commanders.

The interchange of communications between the several national committees is made through the Swiss committee, which bears the title of the "Comité International." As early as 1865 it had been indirectly proposed that the committees might increase their usefulness by relief work in cases of calamities other than war, but the proposal met with no favor. It was not until the formation of the United States committee in 1881, that such a feature, owing to the earnest advocacy of such a progressive measure by Miss Clara Barton, took practical form and thereby broadened the scope of the humane work. The matter was laid before the international committee which ably seconded Miss Barton's efforts. By that committee it was submitted to the other treaty countries; and finally unanimous sanction was given. The change, or addition to the original intention, became known as the "American Amendment." What this amendment has meant to the sufferers by fire, flood, pestilence, cyclones and other great calamities in our own country, during the past dozen years, need not be repeated here. There is scarcely a section of the country that has not made its acknowledgment in tears of gratitude.

Upon adopting the treaty of the Geneva convention, each nation is required to at once instruct its army in the philanthropic and humane objects, and the provisions of the treaty.

The emperor of Japan is the president of the Japanese branch of the Red Cross. A very close relationship is said to exist between the American and Japanese organizations, and it is thought likely that, should exigencies require it, the American members would be among the first called upon to go to the aid of the Asiatic army of mercy.

The American Red Cross headquarters is located at Washington. The society has been prominent in rendering aid where great disasters have called for relief. Fortunately, its services in war have not been required since its formation, but if ever the emergency should arise, its members would hasten on their mission of love, and the humane principles of which the red cross is the simple emblem would do much to soften the horrors of war.

### CANAL BUILDING.

The People's canal in Bingham county, Idaho, is now so far completed as to bring within the irrigation area 10,000 acres of land out of the 100,000 acres which the ditch is expected to cover in the Snake river valley. Over ten miles of the work is done, and the remainder is being pushed as rapidly as the circumstances of the builders will permit. When the ditch is finished, the land under it will be increased in value not less than \$1,000-