

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

RED CROSS SOCIETY.

At an enthusiastic meeting of ladies at Templeton hotel last night, Wednesday, May 26, a branch of the Red Cross society was formed in this city. The general public will undoubtedly be interested in some information regarding the object and methods of this philanthropic society.

Its origin may be traced to the battle of Solferino, June 27, 1859. A Swiss gentleman, Monsieur Henri Dunant, witnessed that engagement and was deeply impressed with the scenes of horror 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 considered by the Society of Public Utility in Switzerland, and by the aid of the Swiss federal council a conference of representatives of various nations was held in Geneva in 1863, which was followed by another in 1864, at which the so-called Geneva treaty was formulated. The idea slowly obtained a foothold among the different nations. Only sixteen at first signed the treaty, but gradually its powers were adopted by others, and at present there are at least forty nations in the compact. The United States entered into the agreement in 1882 by an act of Congress and a proclamation by President Arthur. A red cross on white ground is the emblem of the association.

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 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 committee of belligerent nations shall furnish relief to their respective armies in proportion to their respective resources and, if need be, they shall solicit assistance of committees of neutral nations, within the treaty.

With the concurrence of the military authorities they shall, upon request, place nurses upon the battlefields, 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 "Comite International." As early as 1865 it had been indirectly proposed that the committee 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 the 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 treaty countries and finally unanimous sanction was obtained. The change or addition to the original intention of the society is known as the American amendment. Sufferers from floods, cyclones and other

calamities have received aid as a consequence of this amendment.

The American Red Cross headquarters is located at Washington. This is the first time that the services of the American society have been required in aid of the country's defenders, and now its members hasten from all parts of the Republic to fulfill their mission of love.

Miss Barton, the president of the Red Cross society, is a Massachusetts woman about 60 years of age. She started as a school teacher, and in 1861 was engaged as a clerk in the patent office at Washington. The breaking out of the war gave her the great opportunity of her life, which she embraced by resigning her clerkship and devoting herself to hospital work among the wounded soldiers of both Union and Confederate armies. She was present at the battlefields of Cedar Mountain, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Falmouth, the siege of Charleston, and other scenes of carnage, where the prompt ministrations of herself and her band of trained nurses saved many lives. She also served in the Franco-Prussian war and did all in her power to alleviate the sufferings of the Armenians in the massacres of more recent date.

A WORD TO MISSIONARIES.

Elders who are traveling in the mission field frequently include in a letter intended for publication in the "News," a request to have their papers sent to a new address. A communication intended for publication goes to the editorial department, while one relating to a business matter goes to the business department; hence a request to change the address of a paper ought not to be included in a letter designed for publication, but should be written on a separate sheet. When this rule is not observed there is a liability that the request will not be complied with, as it may escape attention. In requesting to have a paper sent to a new address, the one to which it is being mailed should always be given. The foregoing suggestions apply to others besides missionaries.

NOT WORTH MUCH ATTENTION.

There have been sent to the "News" clippings from the "Free Will Baptist," published at Ayden, North Carolina, which embrace portions of an article written by one W. H. Frost, who undertakes to expose "Mormonism." Some of Mr. Frost's declarations are simply shocking to a person at all familiar with the subject he assumes to treat, so violently do they clash with the truth. Whether Mr. Frost has made these statements believing they were true, or knowing they were not, is a question for his own conscience to answer.

The persons who send the clippings to the "News" request that Mr. Frost be answered in these columns. It is not worth while to do so. The course events are rapidly taking is placing assailants of the truth of the stripe of Mr. Frost far in the background, and depriving them of consequence and influence. Correct information concerning the Mormon people, their doctrines, practices and traits of character, is spreading so fast that a strong tide of public opinion in their favor is setting in all over the United States, and it is only a question of a short time when their detractors and defamers will be overwhelmed.

Once in a while, though with increasing infrequency, the attention of the "News" is directed to an attack upon the Mormons or their religion, the source and character of which call for a reply in these columns, but such a screed as the one by Mr. Frost is not worth much attention. Should any Mormon missionaries laboring in his neighborhood have his statements called to their attention, it would be proper enough to refute them. But it is well to avoid conferring dignity upon such a writer by giving too much notice to his vile emanations.

INSPIRATION AND REVELATION.

The question of the inspiration of the Scriptures is causing some anxiety among some theologians, who realize that the belief in the common theories, if not in the fact itself, is gradually waning. Rev. W. C. A. Wallar recently took occasion to point out some reasons why he considers the common theory inadequate, and to predict that the future must bring forth some readjustment in this regard adequate to the needs of the churches.

Among the ancients, both heathen and Jews, it was sometimes believed that when inspired men were under the divine impulse, all voluntary action was suspended and that the speakers or writers were passive instruments under the direction of the Almighty. The early Christians had but little occasion for speculation on a question of this kind, but when in the middle ages the authority of the Roman pontiff became a matter of controversy and the Bible was appealed to against Rome, the doctrine of inspiration had to be defined. Different conclusions were arrived at. Some contended that God dictated the Bible word for word, while others held that only the fundamental truths were given by inspiration. Some maintained that there are different kinds of inspiration—one providing for the revelation of things not previously known, and one guarding the writers against errors in stating things already known.

Rev. Wallar believes that all the various theories are inadequate. He looks forward to an amendment which will reconcile the diverse opinions and cover the conflicting views. He thinks the eventual new theory will allow the broadest criticism and allow the readers of the Bible to judge for themselves whether the writings are to be accepted as historical or not; it will be a theory which satisfactorily reconciles the supposition that the sacred writings are imperfect human compositions with the fact that they are the word of God. How this is to be done is not even hinted at, but the author seems to be confident that it is within the range of possibilities.

Of more importance is the reverent gentleman's objections to the current theory of inspiration. They are classified as follows:

"It fails to satisfy many unquestionably devout scholars within the pale of the evangelical church.

"It practically limits God's communion with the race to the one channel of Bible interpretation, thus forcing us into the impossible task of arriving at revealed truth by way of the labyrinth of criticism and history, reducing theological inquiry to the lowest type of clerical drudgery, that of the scribe, the lawyer, and the text-monger.

"It requires infallible accuracy in every statement made in original autograph manuscripts now lost forever, an so needlessly wagers the success of Christianity on extremely remote picket lines which we are destitute of forces to defend.