

SERBS HERE GREET THEIR WAR MISSION

Renew Pledge of Loyalty to the Allies in Fight Against Despotism.

GRATEFUL TO AMERICANS

Resolutions Passed at Great Meeting in Astor Hotel and Sent to President Wilson.

The Austro-Hungarian invasion of Serbia was compared to Germany's seizure of Belgium at a mass meeting in the Hotel Astor yesterday, at which New York's Serbian population did honor to the Royal Serbian Mission. The guests were Dr. Milenko Vesnich, Serbian Minister to France; Professor Simo Lozanich, formerly Minister to England; Michael Rasich, and Colonel Michael Nonadovich, the members of the Commission, who are paying a visit to New York at the completion of their work in this country.

General Francis Vinton Greene presided. The Czechoslovak Singing Society sang "The Star-Spangled Banner" and other American and Slavonic national songs and the meeting bubbled with patriotism and expressions of fervent determination that Serbia should stand with the other nations battling against Germany and Austria-Hungary. Leading Slavonic societies presented resolutions of gratitude for America's aid to Serbia. They will be forwarded to President Wilson and copies will be taken home by the mission.

"I cannot pay too high a tribute to your people," said General Greene in opening the meeting. "They never gave up their wonderful fight for liberty and independence. Austria in the south tried to dominate Serbia, intending to follow the same plan that Germany did in its barbarous chase through Belgium. It was not until Germany with a tremendous army came to its assistance that you were compelled to retreat. The gallant fight you have made has made a tremendous impression in America.

"Our country intends to assist any nation that is enthralled in the bonds of a despotic power. We have enjoyed the benefits of independence and liberty for a long time and know what they mean. We are pledged by a determined public opinion in spite of delays and lack of preparedness. We are going to stay in this war and take a mighty part in it. Russia is now intoxicated with the first breath of liberty, and it will take some time to educate her subjects, only 10 per cent. of whom know how to read and write. Russia is destined to play a great part in the world's progress, and she will come back as the leader of the great Slavonic race."

Sees End of All Despots.

The Chairman introduced Dr. Vesnich, who said:

"We all have instilled in us the spirit of our great Kosciusko. Our fight for freedom has indeed been a long one,

and, though we have been rebuffed many times, we shall go on fighting, particularly when we know that that great and glorious country flying the beautiful Stars and Stripes is our ally in the greatest of all fights for democracy.

"We are certain that as morality must win over immorality, freedom over slavery, so must right in time come to conquer might. When this has come to pass we shall rejoice in the knowledge that the greatest of all despotic rulers has been driven to cover, never again to dictate to an enlightened people what they shall or what they shall not do. We are indeed grateful to your glorious country, your noble President, your high ideals. We glory too in the sterling American soldiers now at the front aiding our other allies in the great fight for liberty and justice."

General Rasitch, who commanded the rear guard in the Serbian retreat 1915, followed with a plea for a Greater Serbia, which roused the audience to the highest pitch of enthusiasm.

Gaza H. Mika of New Haven, talking for the Checho-Slovaks, said:

"When the crimes that have been committed under the cover of Teutonic Kultur are fully made known, the world will then know what sufferings our country has been through. Serbia has been crushed for the moment, but she will rise again, triumphant. The most barbarous acts of the bloodthirsty Turks have never approached in dastardly the acts perpetrated under a so-called rule of Kultur. The aims of Serbia are the same as those which led the Minute Men of 1776 to leave their homes and strike for liberty and independence. They wanted to be masters in their own homes, and that is just what Serbia wants now. We have no desire to dominate. Germany is only happy when called the chosen people, the only people fitted to rule and dominate others—what a mockery!"

Dr. F. Ignatius Drobinski spoke for the Poles. He brought greetings from Ignace Paderewski, who regretted that important affairs kept him in Washington.

"Why indict those who already have been convicted before the world?" Dr. Drobinski asked. "Prussian arrogance and barbarity today is the greatest blot on the world's history. Poland, we hope, will unite all her people in one great State with a unity of power, and thus acquire access to the Adriatic."

Sees Balkans as Last Battleground.

Dr. Hinko Hinkovich said it was obvious the war would end where it started, in the Balkans, and continued:

"Austria-Hungary must be wiped out, for her success would be a victory for the house of Hohenzollern and our people would again be subjected to extreme tortures."

With the members of the mission were A. B. Ruddock, representative of the American State Department, and Lieutenant Hamilton Fish Armstrong, U. S. A., military escort. The commission and its guests assembled for luncheon immediately after the meeting. They had planned to devote the afternoon to visiting the library of J. P. Morgan, but decided to postpone the trip until their return from West Point this morning. Among those who will accompany the party on this visit, which will be made in a special car, are Professor M. I. Pupin of Columbia University, Abram I. Elkus, John M. Riehle, H. L. Bridgman, and Charles B. Alexander, Chairman of the Mayor's Reception Committee.

The members of the mission and their escort were the guests at dinner last night of President Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia University at his residence, 60 Morningside Drive. Among the guests besides those named were Henry Morgenthau, Adolph Lewisohn, A. F. Cunliffe-Owen, Professor Pupin, C. A. Severance, John Bassett Moore, U. N. Bethell, George F. Baker, Jr., Professor John D. Prince, Charles B. Hilles, Charles N. Norton, and William B. Thompson. The guests toasted the King of Serbia and the President of the United States.