

Vienna will receive the XXth International Conference of the Red Cross

On October 2, 1965, delegates of States signatory to the Geneva Conventions and of the National Societies will be meeting for the work of the XXth International Conference of the Red Cross in the Hofburg, the old Imperial Palace.

A mediaeval fortress, flanked by massive towers, the Palace underwent considerable transformation during the Renaissance. In 1526 a library was added to the existing building as well as rooms to house scientific and art collections. In 1723, the old library was rebuilt. Of imposing dimensions it was dominated by a central projecting wing. The interior was decorated in an ornamental style and on the shelves can be found most valuable works such as Prince Eugene's famous book collection.

Another wing, the "Michaelertrakt" was built in 1893. It forms by itself a majestic whole with elegant curves and is surmounted by cupolas. Between 1881 and 1913, the last block of buildings was added by the architect Sauper. The statue of Prince Eugene is in front of the concave façade. The sessions of the XXth International Conference of the Red Cross will take place in this wing. The opening ceremony will be in the Festival Hall in the presence of the President of the Austrian Republic. The Ceremonial Hall and the apartments, skilfully transformed to conform to modern requirements, will be the place of meeting of the various commissions. They have been provided with the most up-to-date installations and numerous rooms will be placed at the disposal of the technical services and the press. Reception rooms will be on the ground floor.

We would recall that 150 years ago the Congress of Vienna was held in the Imperial Palace and in 1897 the capital welcomed an International Conference of the Red Cross, the sixth, which will now be described.¹

¹ We herewith reproduce translated passages of an article which appeared in the review *Das Rote Kreuz*, Vol. I - 1965, edited by the Austrian Red Cross.

IN THE RED CROSS WORLD

During the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1867, the National Red Cross Societies met for the first time, in accordance with the Resolution which had been adopted in Geneva in 1864. The Second International Conference was held in Berlin in September 1869 in which representatives of States signatory to the Geneva Convention took part. Already at that time Vienna was proposed as the place for the next Conference. However, various circumstances prevented the realisation of this project. The IIIrd Conference took place in Geneva, the IVth in Karlsruhe and the Vth in Rome in 1892.

In January 1896, the International Committee of the Red Cross sent a letter to the Austrian Red Cross Society, proposing to convene the Conference for the following year in Vienna, a proposal which was favourably received.

At the beginning of June, invitations were sent out both from Geneva and Vienna to the Central Committees of the National Societies. Out of respect for the many women's welfare associations then existing in Austria, women were also invited for the first time to the Conference.

The VIth International Conference of the Red Cross opened on September 19, 1897 at midday in the Great Festival Hall of the University. The Emperor was represented by Archduke Ludwig Viktor, patron and representative of the Red Cross and by Count Badeni.

The International Committee of the Red Cross had delegated its Vice-President, Gustave Ador, who was accompanied by four delegates. Nineteen European States were represented by 61 delegates. Of the five non-European States, Argentina, the Congo and Siam were each represented by one delegate, Japan sent three and the United States of America five. The President of the American Red Cross, Clara Barton, headed her delegation.

The Orders of Chivalry sent six delegates. Austria was represented by no less than 98 delegates, 78 of whom belonged to welfare societies of the various countries of the Empire.

On that same Sunday, there was a gala performance at the Opera of the "Bartered Bride" and of the "Viennese Waltz" ballet. The following day the Conference began its work.

The meetings were interspersed with a number of events and receptions. On Wednesday afternoon after the plenary session,

the delegates had dinner at the Prater park at which the Mayor of Vienna spoke. "After a session lasting several hours", according to the minutes of the Conference, "the guests of honour all proceeded to "Venice in Vienna" where the giant wheel, in particular, aroused the keenest interest."

On Thursday morning a visit was made to the first Viennese Society of public kitchens, followed by a reception in the afternoon at the Town Hall of Vienna.

The guests visited the city's art collections. They then went to the Great Festival Hall for a collation at which Clara Barton made an entrance on the Mayor's arm. In the evening, the Archduke Ludwig Viktor received the participants at the Hofburg in the Secret Council Chamber and in the Marble Hall. A buffet-supper had been prepared in the Hall of Knights.

On September 24, the Conference met for its closing session. Amongst others, a resolution was adopted by which the National Red Cross Societies were to intervene with their respective governments, for the latter to conclude a Convention relative to naval warfare. Other resolutions dealt with the storage of medical equipment, with activities in time of peace and the aid which National Societies should give each other. Similarly, it was recommended that misuse of the protective emblem, which the Red Cross represents, should be avoided, the States having promulgated the necessary ordinances to that end.

GERMANY

This is our first opportunity to mention a special and original side of the German Red Cross in the Federal Republic of Germany, that is to say, the annual meeting called "Justitiartagung" which, since 1957, has been attended by the legal advisers to the National Society's "Länder" sections. These counsellors and voluntary workers, judges, lawyers, and legal consultants thus meet once a year alternately in the North and South of Germany to discuss problems of mutual interest at meetings lasting from three to four days