

COXEY'S ARMY

By H. MICHELL.

A recent announcement in the Toronto press that an excitable individual was calling for recruits to accompany him on a march to Ottawa in order to present a protest to the Dominion Government against the discontinuance of relief to veterans, recalls the story of the famous "General" Coxe and his army, who marched on Washington.

Twenty-eight years ago, almost to the very day, saw this wonderful crusade. The early nineties were times of severe depression, unemployment and falling prices, and saw the rise and fall of Free Silverism, Populism, Bimetallism and all the other economic heresies that vexed the world a generation ago. Among the other movements of that disturbed time was that of the "Commonwealers," a disorganized and diffused sort of communism, that suddenly became rampant and as suddenly died away.

Jacob S. Coxe was a horse-dealer in Ohio, and so, the story is, had a horse to sell which he valued at \$1,000. But when the animal was put up for auction it fetched, to Coxe's chagrin and wrath, only \$145. Coxe felt aggrieved, even more, he felt that somehow, in a way he did not quite understand, he had been cheated. What was wanted was some remedy for falling prices, and obviously the simplest was an issue by government of a great amount of paper money. He determined to lead a crusade, to demand that half a billion of paper money should be issued in putting the unemployed to work in building roads. He also tackled onto this another demand for the total suppression of "using," by which term he designated the charging of interest on borrowed money.

On March 24, 1894, Coxe raised the banner of "The Army of the Commonwealth of Christ" at Massillon, Ohio, and the march on Washington commenced, with a hundred men in the army, and 43 press reporters to chronicle the crusade for the benefit of an interested and amused world. Coxe led the vanguard, while another larger force under one Kelly marched behind. As the march progressed recruits came in, and in a short time their numbers were swelled to quite respectable proportions. They were a motley crew, a few honest men who really believed in the crusade; a number of visionaries and religious fanatics who thought that in some undefined way the march was to usher in the Millennium; and a rabble of hoboos and hangers-on, who joined in the hope of plunder or pickings on the way.

For a short time things went fairly well. The marchers were received not unkindly on the way, perhaps out of real pity for their tattered and forlorn condition, perhaps out of fear of depredations, and on the whole it must be said they behaved remarkably well. But nature was

against them and the spring rains damped their ardor. Desertions were numerous and it was a bedraggled remnant of about 300 men that Coxe led into Washington six weeks later. And here the adventure ended, for marching his men to the capital, Coxe began to harangue them for the last effort that would carry them triumphant to their goal. But the general made a fatal mistake, he stepped on the sacred grass on the lawn in front of the capital and was promptly arrested by the vigilant custodians and cast into prison for this awful offence. With Coxe in prison the crusade was over; the army melted away and the world laughed at the farce.

And now we are promised another Coxe's army, to march this time on Ottawa. There is always such incidents a pathetic side, a touch of tragedy in the farce. Men, often quite honest men, become troubled and are bewildered and think that if something very striking and bold is done their troubles will be cured. But these are much in the minority, and round them gather all sorts and conditions, who are neither honest, nor particularly troubled about anything except the problem of getting a living easily. These are the mischief makers, and because the visionaries attract such to their cause, society has always, although oftentimes reluctantly, been compelled to suppress and even deal harshly with the visionaries which, on reflection, will be seen to be a pity but quite inevitable.

How strangely does history repeat itself. Every time that the world comes upon an era of depression and falling prices it is confronted with all the old heresies come to life again. Coxe was only another Wat Tyler who led a rabble to London and got knocked on the head for his pains.

If times are bad and prices are falling all will be set right by putting the printing press to work and making lots of new money.

In conclusion may we earnestly commend to our Canadian Coxe one piece of advice? Whatever he does when he arrives at Ottawa let him beware of stepping on the lawn in front of the Parliament Buildings when one of the vigilant Ottawa police is watching. If he does, his cause is lost. The motto for all Coxe's is "Keep off the grass."

General McDonald's army of unemployed veterans is now on the march to Ottawa and last Sunday had got as far as Newcastle.

Many of the soldiers are suffering from sore feet, and fully a third of them have taken advantage of the kindness of motorists to reduce their road work. Cars traveling light have given a large number of the incapacitated ones a lift.

The men report that the public are manifesting a generous spirit towards them, and so far they have been able to eat regularly.

SARCONA FATAL TO YOUNG MEDICAL STUDENT

There passed away to his great reward no Tuesday, May 23rd, John Duncan McLean, aged twenty-five, third year student at the Western Medical school. He died at his home in Caradoc Township following an illness of about three months with Sarcoma. He was the only son of the late John and Martha McLean and for some time resided in Enniskillen Township. Later he made his home in Caradoc Township with his uncles Charles and Archibald McLean. He was a member of Beaver Masonic lodge No. 83, and of White Lily lodge, Knights of Pythias. Deceased leaves to mourn his loss his only sister, Annie.

The funeral was held Friday afternoon from the family residence, ninth concession of Caradoc. The service at the home was conducted by the Rev. John Moore of Strathroy and Rev. Robertson, Kilmartin, formerly of North Caradoc Presbyterian church, which Mr. McLean attended. The large attendance and the many beautiful floral tributes testified to the esteem in which the young man was held. He was loved by all who knew him and he bore his illness with great patience, and his early taking away has cast a gloom over the whole community.

Allan McCabe and A. Lamont, medical students, and J. Crawford, A. McNeill, A. Simon and N. McGugan, Masonic brethren were pallbearers while Dr. J. W. Crane, L. A. McGregor, Fred Hurst, Victor Travnor, T. Welford, W. Herd, M. Fletcher, Sanborn and H. Trotter, medical students, carried the floral tributes. The service at the grave was conducted by the Masonic Order. Worshipful Master R. Trueman being in charge. Interment in Strathroy cemetery.

SARNIA PRESBYTERIAL W.M.S.

The eighth annual meeting of the Women's Missionary Society of Sarnia Presbyterial was held May 10th and 11th at Parkhill and was well attended.

The President, Mrs. Forster of Burns Church, presided, after the opening devotional exercises she reviewed the work of the year in a general way, featuring the organization of a new Auxiliary at Corunna and the sending of two new missionaries for service. Miss MacDonald of Burns church to Honan, China, and Miss Maitland of St. Paul's, Sarnia, to Northern Ontario.

The Treasurer reported \$6149 from auxiliaries and \$1139 from Mission Bands, a total of \$7288, a gain over 1920. The Secretaries all gave encouraging reports. The Mission Band Banner was presented to Camlachie, accompanied by some pretty exercises by the Parkhill Mission Band.

Mrs. Paige and Mrs. Rae, members of the General Board, each gave an attractive talk on their particular department. The evening session was presided over by the Rev. Mr. Shepherd of Parkhill. An address followed by Rev. Gillies Radie of Honan, China, formerly of Sarnia, which was very edifying, he pleaded for more workers.

The choir rendered some pleasing selections.

The following officers were elected President—Mrs. (Rev.) Geo. Atken, Springbank.

1st vice pres.—Mrs. (Rev.) J. C. Forster, Burns church.

2nd vice pres.—Mrs. Robert Strirrett, Sarnia.

3rd vice pres.—Mrs. Irvine, Sarnia.

4th vice pres.—Mrs. Dawson, Parkhill.

5th vice pres.—Mrs. (Rev.) Shannon, Corunna.

Rec. Sec.—Miss L. Ross, Warwick.

Cor. Sec.—Mrs. (Rev.) Shepherd, Parkhill.

Treasurer—Miss N. Geddes, Strathroy.

Supply Sec.—Mrs. A. Wheeler, Sarnia.

Strangers' Sec.—Mrs. Geo. Fields, Strathroy.

Home Helpers—Mrs. (Rev.) J. Monds, Petrolia.

Press Sec.—Mrs. Hugh Simpson, Petrolia.

Library Sec.—Mrs. McCrae, Sarnia.

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street, the right-of-way of pedestrians should be recognized.

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Everyone reads the "Guide-Advocate Want Column" on page 4.

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