

BIG CROWD LISTENS TO VETERANS' VIEWS

Last Night's Meeting in Queen's
Park Passed off Without
Serious Trouble.

I. B. LUCAS PRESENT
Deputation Will Present Reso-
lutions to Mayor Church
To-day.

True to their promise, the civil or military police did not interfere with the citizens' meeting which was called in Queen's Park last night by a committee of four returned soldiers. The meeting began, as planned, at 7.30 o'clock sharp, with an assembly of about 1,000, and within an hour grew to a huge crowd of 5,000. From the beginning of the meeting to the end, for two hours, they listened quietly and respectfully to a half dozen speakers, and finally passed a string of eight resolutions.

I. B. Lucas, Attorney-General of Ontario, and E. R. Wood, the well-known Toronto financier, were for a long time attentive listeners to the speeches. A number of detectives and plainclothesmen mingled unnoticed with the crowd, and a number of military police in plain clothes were also present.

The crowd first assembled around the grand stand in Queen's Park, and were addressed by Mr. R. S. Cook, of 84 Muir avenue. At the outset he called for citizens, men and women, to take seats on the platform and constitute themselves a citizens' committee. The following responded and took places on the platform: G. H. Smith, 12 Davenport road; Henry E. Crockford, 14 St. Clair avenue east; John Galbraith, 91 Cronyn avenue; W. A. Ashton, 31 Dupont street; Ernest Roy Woodruff, 142 Gardeners street, Todmorden; Samuel Walker, 9 Mutual street; A. Henry Teagle, 158 Christie street; P. Briggs, 83 Mutual street Mrs. Mabel Hobson, 439 Richmond street west; Miss Mae Marton, 61 Mutual street; and Mrs. Helda Westman, 62 Augusta avenue.

The committee of returned soldiers, who were appointed from a number of veterans on Monday night to call the meeting, consisted of R. S. Cook, 84 Muir avenue; Ernest Coupland, 31 Wallace avenue; J. L. R. Bacon, 277 Huron street; and Hedley A. Burrell, 48 Ontario street.

Blames Government.

G. B. Smith, 12 Davenport road, made the speech of the evening. "We are met here this evening, ladies and gentlemen," he said, "for a purpose just as important as that which we met when the war broke out. We are met for the protection of the citizens and returned men of this city. The blame lies at the doors of the Provincial and Dominion Governments, as is pointed out in the of these resolutions which I am going to read to you. There is where the blame lies from the very first, for the Dominion and Provincial Governments have had times without number intimation of what is going on and yet not one single step has ever been made towards protecting the interests of the returned men." (Cheers.)

"There is not 40 per cent. of the electors of the Dominion of Canada," he went on, "that would to-day vote the way they did at the last election. If they had known what was coming they would never have voted for them then. I, of course, am only a crank. There is not one of them from Borden down worthy of confidence. What have they done for you? (Cries of "Nothing.") It is not a question of what they might do in a legislative manner, but it is what they might do in a legal fashion. They put through orders-in-Council in order that they might rob the citizens of their rights. There are orders-in-Council before you to-day that have no law. There is one that I think if we had a strong man could be successfully combatted, and that is prohibition. (Loud applause.) Orders-in-Council should be passed only in times of urgent necessity. Parliament was not meeting when these orders-in-Council were passed, but it had met, and they could have waited till they met again to give these matters proper discussion and consideration.

The Transportation Trouble.

"There have been cases brought before you and before the Government, and you thought surely there will be some action taken. When your men were brought across from England, taken and placed right down in the very lowest of the ship's bottom, when there were blankets and lots of room above. Lieut. Turney proved that matter right up to the hilt to the authorities. They appointed a commission behind closed doors. ("Shame, shame!") Have the men who did that dirty deed been punished? You don't know? You don't know anything. You never will know. (Cries of "Oh, yes, we will.")

"You hear people say wait till the boys come home. The cowards. Let the boys give their lives and limbs for you, and then you will take and wait till they come home to fight for their and your liberty. You want to wait till the boys come home to fight for everything for you, as if you can't fight for yourselves. It is a scandal and a disgrace what the people of Toronto have been subjected to. It is time there should be some awakening amongst you."

Mr. Smith then commenced reading the resolutions. When the clause concerning the taking away of aliens' licenses was read the crowd howled with delight, and Mr. Smith exclaimed: "If you had not given that response, I am afraid I would have jumped down your throats."

Again the crowd vigorously voiced its approval of the clause relating to the conscription of aliens. "In the

enemy countries," Mr. Smith said, "our men are taken and made to work for ten cents a day. What are you doing in Canada. You are feeding them, giving them the best of everything, robbing your own citizens in order that they might pile up wealth, in order that they may carry it off to their own country after the war. And, according to the press, some of these allens were even guilty of knocking the crutches from underneath returned soldiers. When you remonstrate with them they simply say, 'Oh, our Government will take care of us.' Have not they the right to think so. Our Government has treated them and given them the right to think they are the chosen people of the Canadian Government."

Tumultuous cheering greeted the declaration that all unmarried policemen of military age should be conscripted. "I'd like to be their sergeant-major," yelled a returned man. "They ought to make amends for what they have done first," declared another.

Must Assert Rights.

"Then you read," said Mr. Smith, "that your O. C. has forbidden any man in uniform to come to this platform to-night.. (Cries of, "Shame, shame!")

"It seems to me," Mr. Smith said, "that there are not as many people here to-night as there ought to be."

Veteran: "They'll be here."

Mr. Smith: "If there are any citizens of Toronto who care whether they have rights, they should be here to assert themselves."

There was no response to the resolution's demand for a public apology from the Mayor, so Mr. Smith remarked, "You don't care for a public apology, do you? Well, neither do I."

"So many people say these returned men think they are going to run the whole country," Mr. Smith continued.

Veteran: "So we are."

I say these returned men perhaps think they have done something for you and for the country. They think so. I don't know whether you think so. I think so."

Referring to the resolution concerning allens and firearms. Mr. Smith said: "These foreigners are much cuter than you are. They have a little bit more cunning than you possess. They can place their firearms where they are not easily found—in their boots."

Concluding he called for the singing of "God Save Our Splendid Men."

"What about the men in jail?" someone asked.

"God save the policemen when we get through with them," shouted a youthful voice.

Wanted Mayor Church.

"I may say," said Mr. Smith, "that the men who were in jail have been handed over to the military authorities. We have the word of Colonel Bickford for that." Another speaker told the crowd that the court-martial which would try the men were all to be returned soldiers. The press would also be on hand, and that meant a "wash-out" for the "boys."

When he concluded a voice asked: "Where's Church?"

Mr. Smith asked: "If anyone in the crowd who has the number of a policeman who used a baton on a returned soldier will give the number in here those policemen will be punished. This announcement brought a squad of veterans who were sitting on the grass to their feet. In a few seconds they were on the back of the platform handing in numbers.

"Get 535," shouted one man.

"And 563," cried another. While two men took the police numbers at the back of the grandstand Mr. Smith called upon the crowd to sing "God Save Our Splendid Men," to which they responded, standing, and with bared heads. When they finished he said: "Now you can have "God Save the King" if you want it. I'm sure you're all British here, and you want to sing it." A veteran began to ask about the men who had been arrested on Saturday night, when the crowd broke into "God Save the King."

Addressing the crowd R. S. Cook said: "This is not a meeting of war veterans. They are not with us, though I am a veteran. We demand that the Government take these allens and make them fight. If they don't we'll go and make them fight."

Trouble Looms Up.

The speaker then referred to the arrest of T. G. Matheson. "I was there when he spoke at the corner of Shuter street, and I say every word he spoke was true. I'll be there to speak for him when he comes up.

"We men don't believe in smashing restaurants. The city must act. But we must give the city some time. If anything happens it won't be our fault. We will not have that name of hoodlums."

Cries of "No, no."

"It's up to the press to put a good word in for us. They know we are in the right. The Government must act."

At this point someone in the crowd shouted: "There are three plain-clothesmen here." Messrs. Strohm and Kroster, of the detective department, had arrived on the scene and were sitting on the land behind the front of the platform.

"Throw them out," demanded

clear voice, and the first real excitement of the evening arose. One wing of the crowd began moving in the direction of the two detectives. One of the leaders on the platform appealed to the crowd to stand still, and prevented an outbreak.

"They're citizens, and should be allowed to be here," shouted someone from the platform. "Gentlemen, stand where you are!" The appeal was effective. The flutter of excitement quickly died down.

Corp. Varley's Address.

Corp. Varley, candidate in the North Toronto elections, declared he was the first man to expose the conditions that were existing on the transports returning from England, and was largely instrumental in the securing of a commission appointed by the Government, to inquire into the situation. "What has been done with the report of that commission," demanded Corp. Varley. "What has the Government done to remedy the situation?"

Referring to the alien problem, the speaker stated it was a matter of sincerity in dealing with the situation, and unless the members of the Government took quick and decisive action, trouble was bound to accrue. "There is no Federal Government today?" he said. "They are all away taking their holidays, while the country is going through the most momentous period in its history. No man at home can realize the conditions under which the soldiers are fighting on the fields of France and Flanders, or how deeply they feel over the alien question. It is a case of the returned man having to compete against the alien in physical fitness. This must not be. The returned man must be given the preference in every instance."

John Galbraith, candidate for East York, received an ovation, and immediately plunged into the alien situation, relating particularly to the indignation caused by their treatment in Canada. "Do you think these men that have been through the most horrible battles of the war, would have committed those acts on Friday night, unless they saw a reason for it?" he asked. "Over there in your Parliament buildings is where a great deal of the trouble lies. Those big fat slob in Government positions should be put out and their places filled by returned men. There are lots of them right here in the city capable of filling the positions just as well and better.

"Is it fair that these returned heroes some of them minus legs or arms, or otherwise, mutilated for life, should be placed in the position of being forced to beg for work while these aliens are taking the best and living on the fat of the land?" he asked. "Such papers as the Mail and Empire and the Globe, that throw out such slurs against the returned men as to call them 'hoodlums' should be brought to time." (Prolonged cheers).

In closing, Mr. Galbraith declared the men would have no difficulty in securing support to their resolutions, when people know that they are to benefit the cause of the returned soldier.

Chairman Smith here stated that he had received a communication from Mayor Church to the effect that he would receive a deputation, representing the men, composed of 5 women, 5 citizens and 5 returned soldiers, this morning.

"I would submit a resolution that all the men who appear in court today, including Mr. Matheson, be released without fine or punishment, and I would present this resolution in the court" said Mr. Smith. This statement was received with a great outburst of applause, and outstretched hands testified to the carrying of the proposal.

He also declared that he would propose that the Globe and the Mail and Empire print a public apology for the word "Hoodlums" alleged to have been in articles, and failing this that both papers be sued for slander. This was the signal for another outburst of cheering.

W. J. Rouse said he had been a resident of Toronto 61 years and had never seen a rottener condition of affairs at the City Hall than at present existed. The aliens he said, were given all the licenses and went around jingling money in their pockets, while you and I paid the war tax.

J. Hardy said the returned men should be given those easy jobs behind the cash register. "Our one-armed and one-legged men," he said, "can take the two-bits for the milk and pie just as well as the greasy foreigner." (Loud cheers).