

HONORING THE FALLEN.

IMPRESSIVE CEREMONY AT BOOLEROO CENTRE.

On Sunday last all roads appeared to lead to Booleroo Centre, where, at 3 p.m. the Memorial in memory of the men of the A.I.F. who gave their lives, was unveiled. Long ago the conflict ceased, and the torn and battered banners adorn many a dim chancel throughout the Empire, but the vast crowd who stood in the sultry heat and joined in the impressive ceremony, was a pledge that the mind of the true men and women of Australia is as steady in peace as they proved to be in war. These grim, silent pillars throughout Australia must pass out to the passer-by as a thrilling message—and act even as a trumpet call to men and women of the Australian race for generations. These columns stand in memory to sons Australia could ill afford to lose—men who competed with their neighbour for the post of honour—which was death!—and they met the last summons with gallant laughter—secure in their unflinching defiance of the enemy, and unshakeable in their resolution to meet their fate—if meet it they must—with the inherent valour of their forefathers, who blazed trails across our mighty continent. It is wholly fitting that the man of this breed should be honoured in his own country—in his own town—among the hearts of those who knew him, and it must be said that it is with no uncertain voice that the Australian joins in a ceremony such as that of Sunday. Booleroo Centre may have seen many a brilliant spectacle, but looking over the sea of faces one felt that there was never in the town's history a ceremony in which the heart of the community was more heartily in accord. May the echo of commemoration find ready and willing acceptance throughout Australia and keep green in the garden of our hearts the memory of those who wrought in the glory that is imperishable.

Shortly after 3 p.m. the combined choirs took their seats on the specially constructed dais. The honour of unveiling the memorial was in the able hands of Colonel E. J. Parkes, D.S.O., M.A., and he was supported on the platform by the Hon. G. F. Jenkins (Minister of Agriculture), Messrs. S. W. Dickson and T. Hawke, M.S.P., and several of the clergy and prominent townsmen.

The proceedings opened with the singing of the National Anthem, the organ being in very capable hands, giving a good lead to both choir and

giving a good lead to both choir and crowd.

The President of the Memorial Committee (Mr. S. F. Arthur), in his opening remarks, said that he desired to confine himself to the work of the committee in connection with the Memorial they had assembled to unveil. The movement was far from being a new one, because the committee had been moving for some considerable time. The first meeting was held on May 4, 1920—nearly three years ago—and it was decided to erect Memorial rooms on the front of the Institute, but a good deal of dissatisfaction was expressed—there was a multitude of ideas, and the matter lapsed into the vale of controversy for thirteen months, when the second meeting was called on June 23, 1921. The gathering was a large one, and it was agreed to rescind the former motion, and a resolution was carried that "We erect a Memorial of the type we have to-day." Something for itself alone, and not attached to places of amusement, and we feel that we did the proper thing. (Hear, hear.) Since that meeting everything has worked smoothly, some people there are who reckon we've been slow! We may have been, but we were after the best for the men who gave their all! It respects the living, as well as the dead, and it is pleasing to know that it is erected free of debt (when all the promises are collected). Our thoughts are on this occasion especially with the dead, whose bodies are scattered wherever the tempest of war has raged. Well may we ask ourselves the question: "Are we worthy of their sacrifice?" Browning said in those famous lines: "God's in His heaven—right shall rule!" Time will prove whether we are worthy.

"Lead, Kindly Light" followed, and the Rev. Howland offered up a dedicatory prayer.

Colonel Parkes, who was introduced by the Chairman, expressed Col. C. P. Butler's regret at being unable to be with them and accede to their request by performing the ceremony of

unveiling their beautiful Memorial that afternoon. It was pleasing to note the big gathering, because it showed that there are still people in Australia who remember that there has been a war. The community had turned out to honour the men who had gone west, and he trusted that they would also have a care for those the Digger left behind. Grasping the cord, and in an impressive tone, the Colonel continued: "To the glory of God and in memory of those who gave their lives for King and Country I unveil this Memorial." The flags fell away, and though hundreds stood looking upward for some minutes

fell away, and though hundreds stood looking upward for over a minute, a reverential silence was very marked. "God of our fathers," sung by choir and crowd, must have found its echo in every corner of the town.

The Hon. G. F. Jenkins expressed his pleasure at being given the privilege of joining in the ceremony, to assist in doing honour to the gallant men who had made the supreme sacrifice in the cause of Empire. It was pleasing to note that in all parts of the Empire memorials were being erected, and it went to prove that those who had to stay at home had not forgotten, nor will those who come after. The form of the memorial mattered little—it is the spirit of the people that counts. May this act to-day create in us a wish to do something that will make the world a little better than we found it.

Mr. S. W. Dickson thanked the committee for their kind invitation to be present at the day's celebration, which marked the consummation of their wishes—the erecting and unveiling of the Memorial to the glorious dead. He was pleased to hear the opening words of the Colonel's dedication: "To the glory of God." It was fitting. Their gallant dead would live for ever. In the scorching heat of Palestine or in the blinding sleet and snow of France, they suffered, while we had the benefits. "Lest we forget"—how quickly we do forget—and it is good at times that we are able to. But our fallen men we can never forget.

Mr. T. Hawke thanked the committee for the opportunity given him in joining in the ceremony, and he desired to congratulate them on the beauty of the design and on the spirit which had brought about its consummation. On the sides of the Memorial he could see many names of fallen lads who were well known to him. Men who had responded nobly to the Imperial call of duty. In the years to come if our duty be sacrifice—or if it be death—may we be as ready and willing as the men we have this day honoured.

Rev. C. E. Taylor expressed pleasure at being present, for he had been associated with the Memorial movement from its inception, and he was pleased to at last see it in its perfect form. On the Memorial were four bronze plates representing four arms of the service in which the men of the district served—the Infantry, Artillery, Light Horse, and Army Medical Corps. These plates made it a complete Memorial, and it did justice to the various arms of Australia's Army. The dedication of memorials was of great value to the community, for it stimulated the spirit of remembrance and gratitude. Armistice Day had been celebrated a few days pre-

brance and gratitude. Armistice Day had been celebrated a few days previously—may these days of remembrance grow stronger as the years go on. There were heavy hearts that day—hearts of those who remain—but there is a return for every sacrifice made, and it is for us to be grateful that our fallen men gave their all willingly and cheerfully. The blessings and privileges we enjoy through their heroism we are unable to estimate.

The Rev. Father Kain felt that previous speakers had left him nothing to do but to confirm their remarks. He considered it an honour to be asked to assist in paying a tribute to their soldiers—both dead and living, in memory of whom the Memorial was raised. The fame of our soldiers has gone to the ends of the world, and if they were not known before—they are now. Honored by enemy and ally as a fair and square soldier. There was a tinge of sadness in the proceedings, and their thoughts must turn to the heroism of the women of Australia, both during the war and since. He trusted that the struggle of 1914-1919 would not be in vain, and that in years to come the Memorial would stimulate remembrance of the sacrifices of our boys.

Mr. R. J. Roac (Laura), on behalf of the visitors, congratulated the residents of Booleroo Centre on the excellence of their Memorial.

Mr. B. A. Clarke also said a few words on behalf of the Diggers.