

Unveiling Heyfield Honor Board.

AN IMPRESSIVE CEREMONY.

The ceremony of unveiling the local Honor Board, which was carried out in the Mechanics' Hall on Sunday afternoon last, will live long in the memory of the people of Heyfield and district as one of the most impressive functions ever held in the town. The hall was packed with a large audience, and all were bent on doing honor to those who had sacrificed the comforts and security of home and their personal interests, and had shown their willingness to risk their lives in fighting for the dearest and greatest thing in the world—honor, liberty, and freedom.

Mr J. H. Pearson, President of the Soldiers' Welfare League, occupied the chair, and seated on the platform were—Hon. Geo. Davis, M.L.C., Mr G. H. Wise, M.H.R., Mr J. W. M'Lachlan, M.L.A., and several members of the Welfare League.

The proceedings opened with prayers, read by Rev E. W. Bradley, for the King, the Empire, the Army and Navy, and for Victory. The Chairman read an apology from the Rev. Father M'Mahon, who wished the function every success, and regretted his inability to be present owing to his absence at Walhalla. In a few introductory remarks, the Chairman welcomed the members of Parliament, and mentioned that in compiling the list of names for the Board they had omitted one name—a lady—Nurse Ida Mills. This would be rectified later on. He then introduced Mr Wise, M.P.

Mr Wise thanked the people of Heyfield for conferring on him the honor of unveiling the Honor Board erected in memory of the men from this district who had gone out to fight for them in this great war. No

fight for them in this great war. No tribute they could pay to those brave

boys was too great. A few years ago they thought there would never be any more war; that reason had mastered the minds of men. But they now understood what war between great nations meant, a fact they utterly failed to realise at the outset. No one, perhaps, was so slow as the British people, and one of the greatest mistakes was the giving up of Helgoland. Germany had prepared for war for years, and it was his firm conviction that had the British statesmen listened to Lord Roberts the present struggle would never have taken place. Again, if they had had 200,000 men in Belgium at the outset, there would have been no war. Diplomatic correspondence showed that Germany believed Britain would not come in, and they knew what Britain coming in would mean. They could never repay those brave Belgian people, who had put up one of the grandest and bravest fights on record. Britain, except for her navy, was caught unprepared, but that fight of the Belgian people had given her time to get some of her troops across to France, and at the critical moment they turned that great battle of Mons into Germany's first defeat. The winning of the war now depended on the British nation, assisted by America. France was bled white, and was a ruined nation. Last year her troops were beaten to a standstill at Verdun, and she made an urgent appeal to Britain. The British people, thanks to the wonderful genius of Kitchener in raising an army of two million men, were able to respond to the cry for help, and the great and glorious victory of the Somme resulted. This Brit-

and the great and glorious victory of the Somme resulted. This British movement had a great effect on the French, showing that Germany could be beaten, and she was now doing wonderful work. But what the people of Australia had to be proud of was the grand part taken in the war by their own troops. He was shown a letter only last Thursday night in the House telling how

Australians are being used as storm troops. In one instance the writer said that after two unsuccessful attempts had been made at one of the enemy's strong points, the General gave the command, "Put the Australians at it." And their boys took the position. It was pleasing to know that they are keeping up the great reputation established at Gallipoli. Some of those they were honoring that day had paid the supreme sacrifice—they had died as men—and he hoped they would welcome back many of the others whose names were on the Board. There were two ruling principles in the world—Right and Brute Force, and if brute force came out on top they could not say what would happen to the weaker nations. They had to fight till this war was won. Personally he could stand absolute defeat rather than a drawn war or indecisive peace. If they had an ineffective peace all their sacrifices will have been in vain. If Germany won, it meant that Right goes down, and they would live in a state of dreadful anxiety. Everyone, of course, would like to see peace, but in the words of one of the boys at the front, this affair must be finished for good and all. In reference to the ten whose names are prefaced by a star, and who would never return, it was some consolation to the parents and relatives to know that the boys had gone to their death through the triumph of the spirit and not

the triumph of the spirit and not through the decay of the body. They died as few men get the chance to die—fighting for God and country. They gave their bodies for the Commonwealth. That is the consolation their loved ones have. In addition to Honor Boards in all the centres, he would like to see photos of the men taken in khaki and placed in the buildings. Future gener-

ations might like to see the kind of men who had fought and died for them. They should preserve their photographs and let the men of tomorrow see what the men of to-day were like. Mr Wise then unveiled the Board, and disclosed the names of 79 volunteers as given above.

Hon. G. M. Davis, M.L.C., said that he was glad to be present to assist in the ceremony of unveiling the Heyfield Honor Board, and of paying a tribute to the grand boys who had accepted the call of duty, many of whom he had known personally. Those who had gone to the front deserved for all time the greatest honor they could pay them. Such an Honor Board would bring back memories of those who had gone abroad to fight for the rights and privileges which they had enjoyed for so many generations. It was up to all to assist the Mother Country who was bearing the brunt of this great war in a valiant effort to crush the plutocrats and autocrats of Germany. They did not want to live under the iron heel of militarism, but under a free flag. Germany had really no occasion for war. She and all other peoples were received with open arms by the British. The Kaiser's desires were a mad ambition, but they were bound to beat the Hun in the long run, as they had Right on their side. He hoped such an Honor Board as had been erected in Heyfield would be erected in every district in the Commonwealth in memory of the brave boys. As regards the physically fit, who stayed at home when they reached old age

the physically fit, who stayed at home, when they reached old age they would perhaps realize that they had failed to do their duty, and if they had any sentiment or patriotism it would be to them a life long regret.

Mr. J. W. McLachlan, M. L. A., said he was pleased to see such a large gathering present to do honor to the boys who had gone away to take the great risk of war. Like ourselves, those who had gone away

were peaceful men, but they had sacrificed good positions and the comforts and pleasures of their home and everyday life to fight for the honor of their country. All honor to them. The deeds of those boys were wonderful, and they had done nobly whatever task they had been set, and he had no fear but that they would hold their line till the last, and cover themselves with glory. If they didn't fight they could not defend their grand principles of democracy and liberty. There were a fair number of pacifists in Australia, but they should not listen to them. They must throw aside their peace preferences, and fight for their rights. The boys they were honoring that afternoon had done great and noble work, as all the Australians had done, and Australia was justly proud of them. It was from the heroic stock from which the Australians sprung that the boys got their pluck—from their forefathers who had come out to unknown lands a hundred years ago. But Australians hardly yet realized that they were at war. It was only necessary to take a trip to one of their cities to be convinced of this fact. One of the pleasing features of the great struggle was the advent of America in the field. She had come in to protect the smaller and weaker nations. She entered into

weaker nations. She entered into the struggle knowing the trials she would have to undergo. We in Australia were not getting the truth about the war. He did not mean to say the press "cooked" the reports sent them, but they were only allowed to publish what the censor permitted. A Swiss of his acquaintance told him that the Italian papers put the facts in a much truer aspect, and he could tell them those facts were not so bright as they in Australia thought. In concluding Mr. McLachlan paid a warm tribute to the lads of Heyfield and district who had responded to the call, and he offered words of condolence to the parents of those who made the supreme sacrifice for their country.

Mr. Sergeant, Methodist Chaplain at Broadmeadows, also spoke, and confined his remarks principally to experiences of camp life. He referred in terms of high praise to the fine spirit shown by the men in their daily work.

During the service the hymns Onward, Christen Soldiers, O, God, our help in Ages Past, and Lead Kindly Light were sung, to accompaniments played by the Heyfield orchestra. The singing of the National Anthem concluded the proceedings.
