

RENMARK WEST UNION CHURCH

FOUNDATION STONES LAID.

Thursday of last week (November 6) will be historical as the date of the laying of the foundation stones at Renmark of the first Union Church in Australia. (This is perhaps hardly correct. A Union Church—Baptist and Congregational—was built in Angaston 70 or more years ago. The arrangement however did not last.—Ed.) The site of this building is a piece of high land, donated by Mr. H. Showell, on the south side of the Renmark West school. Thursday was a scorching hot day and a burning sun shone down on the large gathering.

Mr. Darrington presided at the function and expressed the pleasure of the committee at seeing so many present. Renmark West, he stated, had been first in at least two things. In building a Union Church they had led the way in Australia and he believed the foundation stone in memory of the fallen was the first to be laid in the Renmark district. When he arrived in the settlement about 20 months ago he was surprised to find that there was no church or Sunday school in that portion of the district, but two months later the Rev. A. E. Francis (Congregational) and Mr. E. W. Sanders (Methodist) started to hold church services in the public school and, with Mr. Jennings as secretary, a Sunday school was formed. Then someone awoke and the question of the erection of a union church was discussed. The result was the ceremony that afternoon. While the financial aspect of the undertaking was not so important as the great benefit the church would be to settlers, and the Sunday school to their children, it nevertheless had to be taken into consideration and they looked to the people to help them finish the building to the glory of God.

Mr. E. W. Sanders, in introducing Dr. C. Krakowsky and asking her to lay one foundation stone, remarked that the movement only started a little over twelve months ago and to-day they saw the result of concerted effort together with the generous gift of the land by Mr. H. Showell, to whom they were deeply grateful. Dr. Christina Krakowsky had proved herself eminently suited to perform ceremonies such as they were asking her to perform that afternoon. The stone was the found-

such as they were asking her to perform that afternoon. The stone was the foundation of what would be a landmark in years to come and what would probably be known to the children as the little church on the hill.

Dr. C. Krakowsky was then handed a silver trowel and declared the stone well and truly laid. She wished the magnificent enterprise on which the committee had embarked every success.

The Rev. A. D. McCutcheon (Berr), who was introduced by Mr. E. W. Sanders, was next presented with a silver trowel and asked to lay another foundation stone in memory of the fallen soldiers of Renmark. Mr. McCutcheon in accepting the trowel said he appreciated the honor that had been paid him for the reasons that the stone was a memorial to the fallen soldiers, and because he felt the future of the church was assured when he saw so many young people there. Mr. Bean had said the future of Australia was assured and he would add that the future of greater Australia was in the hands of the children of to-day. When he was at the front he learned two lessons, one of which was that the men were not antagonistic to religion, and the other that sectional controversies had no place. On one occasion at Gallipoli there was a burial party and 20 men had to be interred in one big grave. Standing on the edge of the grave were three chaplains—Roman Catholic, Church of England and one representing a non-conformist church. That church at Renmark West was a Union church, and he personally welcomed the union. It had been said when the men went away that they didn't know what they were fighting for. Perhaps not, in detail, but they knew they were fighting for the right, and that right would prevail. His thoughts that afternoon were of the little wooden crosses on the other side which would tell the traveller in foreign countries that an Australian had made the supreme sacrifice in a righteous cause. The school girls under Mr. H. Williams (teacher) sang the Song of Australia and votes of thanks were carried to Dr. C. Krakowsky and the Rev. A. D. McCutcheon at the instance of Messrs. Eley and Jennings. The latter stated that they had nearly £80 in hand, but about three times that amount was required. They looked to the people to help them to complete payment. An invitation was made to those present to place an offering

made to those present to place an offering on the foundation stones and £15/1/8 was collected in that manner. The work of erecting the church is being done very largely by means of voluntary labour. Mr. Darrington has donated the front door and the two back doors are the gift of Mr. Sanders. / A window has been

promised by the Renmark Congregational Church.

A bazaar was opened in the school after the foundation stone laying, Mrs. E. W. Sanders declaring it open. A brisk business was done at the stalls and a substantial sum raised in aid of the building fund.

"The Great Day" at Renmark West was brought to a close with an open air concert. Mr. Wilkinson of Berri brought a party up from that settlement and assisted by local artists a splendid programme was presented. Three recitals by Miss Guy were much enjoyed and the lady had to respond to an encore on each occasion. Songs were given by Miss Thomas (2), Messrs. Wilkinson, Murdoch and Judd (2 each), duets by Messrs. Wilkinson and Judd (2), Miss Shand played the accompaniments and with Miss Gregory, played the overture. Mr. Newstead with his concertina delighted the audience with three selections. A supper, well served by the ladies, concluded a busy day. A very hearty vote of thanks was passed to all who had assisted in making the functions so successful. On Thursday night £55 was in hand as a result of the efforts during the day.