

## An Appreciation.

### The Late Elijah Budden.

Quiet a gloom was cast over the town of Merriwa on Sunday of last week, when it became known that Mr. Elijah Budden had passed over to the great majority. Some few months ago it became apparent that Mr. Budden was out of form; his appearance showed that something unusual had occurred, and eventually he was persuaded, much against his will, to seek medical advice. The result was that he journeyed to the metropolis, and placed himself under the care of the most eminent of its medical men. Returning home, he felt somewhat better, and his friends had hopes that a permanent cure had been effected; but, as time wore on, the dread malady was bent upon conquering that iron constitution, which previously had withstood the brunt of many epidemics. The Grim Reaper claimed him for his own, and the district is in sack-cloth and ashes. The sage, the matron, the swain, the maid, the boy and girl, and the little toddlers are mingling their tears in mourning the loss of their dear old friend.

The late Mr. Budden was born in Muswellbrook in 1851, and, at the time of his death, was 61 years of age. He was a son of the late Mr. Elijah Budden, of that town, and, like his father, he followed the occupation of a saddler. Budding into manhood, he joined the volunteers, and was a prominent member for many years. On the outbreak of the South African war his patriotism was fired to such an extent that he could scarcely be persuaded from accompanying the boys who offered their services in defence of the Empire. On leaving Muswellbrook, he started business at Jerry's Plains, where he took an active part in all matters pertaining to the prosperity of the town. He afterwards started business in Denman, where he was associated with every public function that embraced the district's interests. Leaving Denman, he finally settled down in Merriwa, where he started business as an auctioneer and stock and station agent, and, up to a few months ago, he wielded the hammer. Few men can be met to-day that can compare with him, either as a salesman of stock or household effects. The wonder was why a man of such brilliant talents should content himself in such a quiet country town; but Elijah could not disassociate himself from those noble institutions he helped to build up. A noble worker in the cause

noble institutions he helped to build up. A noble worker in the cause of charity for many years, a member of the hospital committee, one that on many occasions has cast oil on

the troubled waters, and, when a climax has been reached, dropped quietly out of harness, but who never neglected his duty as a canvasser for the institution. By his demise the School of Arts loses one of the best supporters. The committee can ill afford to spare men like Elijah Budden, always to the front, and always progressive. As a member of the Church of England he was one of nature's ideal men, one that practised what he preached. He took his place in the church, and his kindly advice and gentle manner to the little ones won their respect and esteem.

He was the leading spirit in all matters of sport, and few men could be found to compare with him in his masterful way of controlling not only the juveniles, but the trained athletes.

The late Mr. Budden leaves three brothers and three sisters, viz.:—Mr. Fred. Budden (Murrurundi), Mr. Frank Budden (Muswellbrook), Mr. William Budden (Chinchella, Queensland), Mrs. Ada Mather (Singleton), Mrs. J. R. Simpson (Hornsby), and Mrs. Thos. Gladstone (Queensland); also a wife, five sons, and two daughters, viz.:—Mrs. Budden, of Merriwa; Mr. Vic. Budden (Merriwa), Mr. Dan Budden (Merriwa), Mr. Roy Budden (Merriwa), Mr. Hunter Budden (Sydney), Mrs. Hayley (Sydney), and Miss Addie Budden (Merriwa).

Our departed friend was a splendid type of manhood, standing over six feet in height, well proportioned, and broad-shouldered. His open-hearted hospitality knew no bounds. His purse-strings were unloosened upon every call for help, and his ever-genial disposition and kindly nature endeared him to all with whom he came in contact. In his younger days he was an athlete of no mean order; as a runner he could lay claim to more wins than any amateur in the Upper Hunter. His last appearance on the turf was about nine years ago, when he stripped in the old buffers' race at the Church of England sports.

The funeral arrangements were carried out by Mr. Bond. The coffin was a beautiful oak casket, with suitable mountings. The cortege, as it moved from the church, was headed by the Oddfellows in full regalia (of which society he was an old member). People from all parts of the district were present to pay the last

ber). People from all parts of the district were present to pay the last token of respect to the departed. It was freely admitted to be the largest funeral ever seen in the district. The Rev. Mr. Wilson officiated at the graveside, and delivered a most impressive address while laying the remains quietly to rest in the Church of England cemetery.

All Merriwa and Muswellbrook mourns the loss of their dear friend.