

## ST. GEORGE'S HONOUR ROLL.

### The Service of Unveiling.

#### An Impressive Ceremony.

The service of unveiling the Honour Roll of the names of 110 members of St. George's Presbyterian Church, East St. Kilda, who took part in the Great War, 21 of whom made the supreme sacrifice, was observed last Sunday morning. The service was a memorable one. It was conducted by Professor A. Skene, who read the Scripture lessons, and the pastor, the Rev. T. Glass, who preached the sermon. His Excellency, the Lieut.-Governor, Sir William Irvine, was present with Lady Irvine, and aide de camp. Sitting behind them were some of the members of the St. Kilda Council, amongst whom we noticed Mrs. Hewison, Kentry, Clarke and the Town Clerk (Mr. Chamberlin). The church was crowded. Amongst the regular adherents were many visitors. Flags decorated the inside of the building, there being a large number of union jacks draped beneath the beautifully stained glass windows, through which a mellow storied light fell that seemed to give just the golden colour tone in keeping with the service, suggestive of a glorious resurrection for our heroic dead. The honour board was placed in the centre of the chancel draped in full view of the congregation by a curtain made by the embracing folds of the British flag. A large vase containing Christmas lilies suggested purity in their chaste virginal whiteness that was contrasted and enhanced by the red background of the flags. Punctually at eleven o'clock the vice-regal party entered the church. As they did so the organ pealed forth "God Save the King," and the choir took up the anthem, leading the congregation. The occasion, and the reverent way the National hymn was sung, seemed to give the words a special significance. The order of service was set out on cards, with the words of the hymns that were to be sung, so that those present could join in the fullest sense in this sacred ceremony of unveiling the honour roll. Such devo-

tions are eminently sacred. They are full of solemnity. They bear a message and a lesson of spiritual significance. This timely recognition of what the ceremony symbolised; how much it meant to convey of what had gone before it, in Gallipoli, in Palestine, in France—aye, in all the far-flung theatres of war, this knowledge did indeed pervade that large, well-

flung theatres of war, this knowledge did indeed pervade that large, well-filled church of worshippers at St. George's. It was impossible to look around at the devout and bowed heads; to observe the garments here and there of the black that betokened lost lads and mourning, without feeling a catch in the throat, the heart full of sympathy, and a realisation also of how before the throne of the Living God what poor weak vessels we are! How frail is life's tenure! How inscrutable are the ways of God, and how wicked and cruel the war has been, robbing mothers of their sons, bereaving wives of their husbands, and leaving children fatherless! Such memorable services remind us, "lest we forget," in the Vanity Fair of this world, that though the war has ceased it has, in many homes, left a most sad aftermath that will last with grieved parents and lonely widows until the full season, when they are, too, gathered unto their fathers. Such thoughts were ours as we looked from the pew in which we sat upon the window of the first Christian martyr, St. Stephen, and from there our eyes went to the veiled honour board. We felt there was something akin between the fine lads whose names were written on that board, and the martyr, whose name was on the window, for they both died for their faith, for God's kingdom against Paganism. Some of us are apt to overlook the fact that the heroism that was displayed by our boys in khaki is the recrudescence of the heroism of old, around which time has cast a tradition something akin to divinity. Some of us hardly realise that the lad who fought the good fight, and laid down his life in doing so, the lad we knew so well, had the divine spark of Christian greatness in that ordinary everyday personality of his, and that when he was tested in the fires of war the spirit was found to his everlasting honour.

One of the Scripture readings was taken from St. Matthew xxvi. 6, telling of the woman with the precious ointment pouring it on the head of Jesus, and how Jesus said that in the whole world her act would be told as a "memorial of her."

The text of the sermon by Mr. Glass was taken from Zechariah, vi. 14. "The crown shall be for a memorial in the temple of the Lord." Mr. Glass said it was a story of two memorial crowns, which crowns were to be put upon the head of Joshua, the High Priest, and hence the double ceremony, first of all the union of the past, and then, secondly, that of the Feast in the Temple of the Lord. Mr. Glass saw in the crown its emerging in the history of nations, and in the story of the lives of men who were leaders

the history of nations, and in the story of the lives of men who were leaders and pioneers. The very fact that human nature was too prone to forget was the necessity for memorials. He quoted examples from Scripture, from old history, back as far as Alexander, founding Alexandria, from comparatively modern times, of Alfred the Great, and London, of flags, tattered and torn, hanging in some of the great Cathedrals of the old land, recalling the battles and marches of great men. Everywhere, in every land under the sun, are memorials, speaking in their own language. "Lest we forget." We had reached to-day the stage when we too, should erect our memorials that generations may read what was done for them, and who did it, at a cost too great to be accounted. He knew there was no danger that we who had passed through the last five years will ever forget them. The issues that hung in the balance for many days

marked years of agony that we cannot forget if we try. But we must write history as well as make it, and the names that are placed on the memorial erected in these days of peace, and if we only knew it, all of them together would make an Iliad alongside which those of ancient war were mere side shows and holiday parades. These memorials, like the crowns of Joshua the High Priest, are well placed in the House of God. We must recognise that the war that has ended was a war of ideal, a fight between might and right. As President Wilson said, "We have fought for what we believe to be the rights of mankind." If we had lost the war we should have lost our most priceless possessions. The victory stands for the supremacy of God. These things were all in the recent struggle for the mastery of the nations, and hence it is that as victory has been won we deem it an honour if, in our house of prayer and worship, there is some permanent record that the great mother nation called for help, and our men laid down their tools, and pens, and went forth to battle from their homes. The spirit of adventure no doubt quickened their pulses and warmed the blood of many, but the sense of sacrifice, too, was also in the hearts of many. They went



THE LATE REV. ANDREW GILLISON, M.A.

forth to do the work of true men, and their sisters, too, who shall be for ever honoured.

"Many of those who went away from us have come back again," said Mr. Glass, "and we bid them welcome, with all our hearts; but, alas! some will never come back, and their names include the gallant Chaplain-Major, the Rev. Andrew Gillison, who preceded me in this pulpit. To the memory of those who gave their lives in battle we offer our deep reverence to-day. For them the task is done, the struggle is over, and their mission has been fulfilled. In coming years we shall remember them, but how shall we live worthy of those who sleep beneath white crosses in a far-off land?" Mr. Glass then exhorted his listeners to show in their daily lives the great white virtue of sacrifice, and to profit by the lessons that our heroic dead had shown to us.

When Mr. Glass had finished his earnest, feeling sermon, that was most appropriate in substance, method and manner, the Lieut.-Governor removed the flag screening the honour roll, the congregation standing in impressive silence while the clear notes of a bugle rang through the church, sounding that mournful, persuasive lament,

rang through the church, sounding that mournful, persuasive lament, "The Last Post." As its last notes died away in soft wailing calls, the feelings of numbers in the congregation were greatly moved.

In the course of the Lieut.-Governor's address which followed, he said that names which are inscribed upon this honour roll are familiar to all of you who are here to-day. When all have been prepared to make the last sacrifice it is invidious to mention any names amongst them, but I feel that in this place there is one name which I cannot pass over in silence. When the news came to Australia that the Rev. Andrew Gillison had met his death while endeavouring to save a wounded soldier, there was a wave of sorrow passed over the whole community. You who knew him, and when reports from Gallipoli came here his name was known throughout Australia. He was among the bravest of the brave. Those who have come home, who have been into contact with him, say so. We all know the intense devotion with which all the soldiers on Gallipoli loved him, almost worshipped him. Some of those who went have come back to us; some can never come back to us. But there is no great sorrow in such a death as that of our heroic dead. If on such a life as they have lived, for those who must still sorrow for them, we feel most profuse sympathy. As for them, they have lived their lives. Most of them have done their duty, and we know our duty. When he looked around and saw the mad rush for pleasure which seems to accentuate the majority of this community, when he saw the riot of extravagance which covers the acts of many people in this crisis and our history, he attempted to see if there were some sign of the virile testimony of that spirit that the nation which took a part in the war should have, but in such directions he looked in vain. He reminded the congregation that we had our duty to do towards the returned men. That duty was not fulfilled by doing nothing towards getting the men back to work. The proud independent spirit which had made these men what they are did not make it easy for them to accept charity.

Continuing, Sir William said, "It is nothing new to you, but I venture to repeat what I have said before. The war, while it strengthens the character of the strong, weakens the character of the weak. As all our men, I am glad and proud to say, have the spirit which we love. Those who have gone or are going back to resume, such as it may be, their life as before, are setting their feet to go back to the tasks they had

their life as before, are setting their teeth to go back to the tasks they had and to fight a new place for themselves. They are willing to go straightforward to the line of duty without seeking help from any man whatsoever. These are the men to whom this country looks to for future guidance and control. There must be many, too, and we know there are many who have come back to us, filled with that restlessness constant with them during the past years, they are unwilling to settle down into the ordinary avocation of life, many of them having these conventional habits to some extent. Those are the people to help, and let me say to you to-day, and I believe this work can be done by the women of the community being from day to day sympathetic with such lads."

In conclusion, Sir William said he regarded it as a great privilege to

have been invited that day to unveil the honour roll that stood before them.

The memorial is 13 ft. 6 in. high by 7 ft. wide, and is portion of the original design for a screen extending the full front of the building.

The design is Gothic, with bold pilasters, surmounted by towers with brackets and finials. At the top of the Memorial is carved in bold relief the emblem of the Burning Bush, surrounded by the St. George's Cross, laurel wreath and ribbon. The whole of the work is carried out in Victorian selected blackwood, and the carving is in high relief, the finish French-polished.

In all 116 names appear on the Roll of Honour, amongst whom the following made the great sacrifice:—R. W. Andrew Gillison, M.A.; Aram J. T. H.; Fleming, N. R.; Fraser, J. L.; Gillison, T. A.; Healey, L. C.; Holdsworth, H. R.; Jack, B.; Jebb, W. St. J.; Lowe, H. M.; Mackie, A. G.; Mackie, J. S.; Melvin, J.; Orr, J. L.; Owen, J. A.; Peebles, F. C.; Roberts, F. T.; Thomson, R.; Wales, L.; Wilson, H. H.

During the service, accompanied by the organ, Miss Myrtle Thorne sang "Abide With Me," in a most sympathetic manner, her rich voice touching a chord in all hearts.

Altogether a most memorable service, and one which will remain a sad and glorious page in the history of St. George's, the fine that shelters the colours of the 14th Battalion. These flags have served during the war, when the congregation met in the House of Peace, to remind them that the battalion was on the field of war. Now that is over, the harvest of death is reaped; the triumph over death has

Now that is over, the harvest of death is reaped; the triumph over death has come, and the names of the valiant sons of St. George's have their memorial in the hearts of men as well as on the Church Honour Roll, which stands in the church, symbolical, as Mr. Glass reminded us, Joshua's crown was symbolical of great hearts and great deeds, lest human nature, being weak, should forget.