

LATE REV. J. C. JOHNSTONE

Memorial Tablet Unveiled

Impressive Service in St. Andrew's Church

The unveiling of a marble tablet to the memory of the late Revd. J. C. Johnstone, M.A., who for 34 years was minister of St. Andrew's Church, Echuca, took place on Sunday morning. Every available seat was occupied and among the large congregation were many old friends of the reverend gentleman and his family. Most of these came hundreds of miles to be present for the occasion which in itself was a wonderful tribute of esteem to the Johnstone family. Mrs J. C. Johnstone was present and with her several members of the family, Mr and Mrs J. Johnstone from Prairies, Mr T. Johnstone from Melbourne, Mr and Mrs Graydon, Mrs Wragge, Mrs Wilson and Miss Lassie Johnstone also from Melbourne. Others notified were Mr and Mrs R. Murray Drummond, Mr and Mrs J. H. Taylor, Mrs J. H. Odde, Mrs L. Elliott, Misses Saberton, Mrs Stewart, Mrs E. H. Blackwood, Mr C. T. Earnshaw, Mrs R. G. Wilson, Mrs and Misses Garden, Mrs M. Park, Mr E. V. Drummond, Capt. and Mrs P. McIndoe, Miss Carnegie, the Misses Ferguson, and many others. Residents of Echuca present who were members of the Rev. Johnstone's congregation were the Hon. H. McKenzie, Mr J. Simmie, Mrs J. C. Smith, Mr R. F. Scott, Mr Foyater (Ballarat), Mrs A. D. McEadyen, Mr and Mrs Judge, Mr W. Campbell, Mr J. Jeffrey, Mrs Harico, and many others.

The Rev. T. Menzies Miller spoke from the scene described in Deuteronomy and the last chapter, where Moses having finished his life's work went alone up the steep sides of Mt. Nebo whence he saw in the distance the promised land of Canaan and also from that height could look back over a great distance of the long trail of the Israelites in their journey from Egypt. He would see the desert which had been spread each day with the miraculous manna, the rocks that gave forth water at a word, the heights of Sinai where the law had been given, and so on, each place speaking of the goodness of God, the great provider of all things needful for them. He then likened the end of a great man's work such as the Rev. Johnstone's being marked

the Rev. Johnstone's being marked all along the way by incidents of his life, telling of victory over the diffi-



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culties he encountered in the way, but rejoicing in the lasting memorials of such a labor of love. During his ministry over four hundred had professed their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and had joined in Holy Communion. In this alone his life had not been lived in vain. But there were other great and lasting monuments besides, such as the friendships made that had remained firm and strong through all the years and even now claimed the love and affection of so many. There were also the lives influenced for good and noble service still continuing in the community. By his wonderful life of precept and example his works were following him and would be ever widening to still further achievements. He had been one of the pioneers who had faith in this town and foresight to see its importance in days to come. With this inspiration he gave generously of his strength to make the town realise his ideal. In the year of his induction in 1871 he found things at a low ebb. A big depression was holding back the business of the little township, but with the backing of such strong supporters as Messrs MacIntosh, Jamieson, Noble, Scott, Graham, Glass, Rosel, Ferguson, Dorward, Drummond, Sinclair, Foyster, Hogarth, Jones, McKenzie, Steele, the Simmies and others he would allow no depression to thwart his purpose of building up a strong congregation with faith in God to win through and overcome all obstacles. He was a founder of the

stables. He was a founder of the Echuca District Hospital and was president for twenty years. He founded the Ladies' Benevolent Society. He also originated the Head of the River races among the big public schools of Victoria by issuing the first challenge from Scotch College to a boat race on the Yarra. In all his laborious years in Echuca he had been ably assisted and encouraged by a devoted and loving wife whose interest in the town was as keen as his own. The preacher then said that the idea of a memorial tablet had arisen during the 79th anniversary services. A small committee was formed and under the able organization of the hon. secretary (Miss G. Moreland) the idea materialised, the tablet was erected and would serve

as a silent witness through the years to his labour of love in the church and town of his heart's love and affection.

While the congregation stood, Mr J. Johnstone, accompanied by his mother, went forward and severed the string of an old Highland plaid which, falling, disclosed the beautiful tablet with its simple but endearing words of love for their minister. The service ended with a dedication prayer and hymn.

The inscription on the tablet reads:
To The Glory of God.

And in memory of Rev. J. C. Johnstone, M.A.

A faithful Minister of the Church for 34 years.

A life made beautiful by kindly deeds. A loving tribute by old members and friends.

After the evening service a reception was held on the manse lawns to enable the visitors to renew acquaintance with members of the Johnstone family. Mr T. Johnstone took the opportunity of thanking their old friends for the wonderful welcome extended to them and expressed the gratitude of his mother and her family for this recognition of his dear father's work in the parish, and the memorial which will last through the years in the new church, which was erected towards the close of his father's ministry, a silent witness in itself of his 34 years spent in this corner of His Master's Vineyard.

The singing of the Old Hundredth brought to a close a unique and

The singing of the Old Hundredth brought to a close a unique and historic day in the annals of St. Andrew's church.

