

THE LATE CAPTAIN SALMON.

MEMORIAL UNVEILED BY THE
PRIME MINISTER.

(BY OUR SPECIAL REPORTER.)

TALBOT, Friday.

The Federal Prime Minister did a graceful action when he came to Talbot to-day to unveil a monument to the late Captain Salmon. Of the many brave men who have died in South Africa, there is no one from these shores who has won more universal commendation, who has been more sincerely mourned. The visit to-day was the outcome of a promise made some weeks ago. Hearing from Mr. Salmon, M.L.A., that the erection of a monument to his brother was in progress, Mr. Barton declared that he would be glad to unveil it. Captain Salmon went to South Africa with the First Victorian Contingent. He had only three months of active service when he died, but he did a great deal to build up the reputation that Australian officers have since been able to maintain. In Talbot, his native place, his memory is as green as if he had died yesterday. The monument unveiled by Mr. Barton is the tribute of a large number of personal friends. It is a polished granite column with a square base, suitably inscribed, and tells the passer by that it has been erected in memory of Captain R. W. Salmon, of the First Victorian Contingent, who died at Naauwpoort, South Africa, while on active service on 6th March, 1900.

Mr. Barton, accompanied by Mr. Drake, reached here shortly before 1 o'clock, having come on from Ballarat by special train. A detachment of Mounted Rifles was in attendance, and drew up around the base of the monument, which thus became the centre of a hollow square. A platform had been erected, on which the two Ministers, with Colonel Price, Mr. Salmon, M.L.A., and some others took their stand. At a given signal the Prime Minister drew aside the drapery which had screened the column from view. The folds fell apart, and simultaneously the bugle notes of the Last Post rang out with mournful distinctiveness. So reminiscent was it of their loss to the spectators, most of whom were personal friends of the late officer, that a perceptible quiver, something between a sigh and a sob, ran right through the assemblage, and the brothers of the dead soldier gave way to uncontrollable emotion. A few speeches followed, pitched in a key of genuine appreciation and sincere regret.

Mr. Barton, who was introduced to the gathering by the mayor (Mr. M. Wilson), and Mr. H. Davis, chairman of the memorial committee, advanced to the platform and said a few words, couched in a strain of deep feeling. He spoke of Captain Salmon as one who had died in the performance of his duty, and who had gained nothing but praise from those who had observed his actions, whether they served under him or over him. He read an extract from the London "Times" of 12th February, 1900, in which it was stated that Captain Salmon, of the Victorian Mounted Rifles, in his first action, showed exceptional skill in the handling of his men, and won much commendation. Mr. Barton reminded the audience that men who made the supreme sacrifice for the Empire did not die in vain, because they added lustre to something, of

lice for the Empire did not die in vain, because they added lustre to something, of which all were proud to be a part. He quoted the words of Sheil, when that orator, in reply to the taunt that his Irish countrymen were aliens, said that they and the English lay together on the field of Waterloo. "The green grass of spring," he said, "breaks from their commingled dust; the dew falls from heaven upon their union in the grave." That, said the Prime Minister, was how the men of British blood were lying together in South Africa, and how they had cemented the unity of the Empire.

Mr. Drake and Colonel Price spoke briefly and eulogistically, and the proceedings came to an end.