

Unveiling Roll of Honor.

On Wednesday night, 1st inst., a National Service for the unveiling of a Roll of Honor was held in the Mirboo North Presbyterian Church. The building was filled to the doors, and many were unable to obtain a seat. The collection which was taken up during the service to assist in defraying expenses amounted to £4 10s. The Honor Board, which contains the names of 58 Presbyterian men of the district, is largely composed of fiddleback, the wood having been presented by Messrs M. Dyke and Sons. It is a magnificent piece of timber. The Board has been splendidly got up, and is without a doubt a fitting memento of the brave lads who have left here to assist in the fight which has now been raging for over three years.

The service commenced with the singing of the National Anthem, which was followed by the hymn, "God Bless our Native Land." Prayer and Scripture reading by Rev. A. Wall came next, then the hymn, "Lord, for all Mankind we Pray." The Rev. H. E. Hunt, of Elmore, followed with an address.

The Rev. Mr Hunt thanked all most heartily for their invitation to be present. He counted it as a very high honor. The meaning of the gathering was easily found in the words written on the tablet, "Roll of Honor." It was one way, and he trusted it would ever prove to be an inspiring way, of honoring the boys whose names were written thereon. God too had His roll of honor, and when the redeemed shall enter His presence and His home, coming from the East and West, from the North and South, they would enter because their names were written in the Lord's Book of Life. Some of those present must have a deep joy, a joy that had been sanctified by sorrow, because some of the names on their roll were also written on God's roll. But did they not all feel that in doing that precious duty they were honoring themselves? They did not set out with that intention, but he was sure they were a proud people that night, and their hearts were expanding with a wonderful tenderness, because the

their hearts were expanding with a wonderful tenderness, because the good God had permitted them to do that thing. Had they never envied the King when they read that he had received so many officers and men, and pinned on their tunics the decoration of honor. All their lives they would remember that honor, and yet whom of those present would not be the proud-

est in the land if the Governor-General or the Prime Minister visited one of them to pin the V.C. on him. He was sure the King must feel that, and he was equally sure they had the same feeling themselves, that they were deeply honored in paying their tribute to the lads of their own country, of their own homes, and of their own hearts. Now let him say another thing. Their roll of honor was not an ephemeral something; it was not going to last only as long as their lives, it was not going to be there just as long as the church stood, when they were all gone, when that church had been replaced by a larger and a better, then little children not yet born shall be fathers and grandfathers, that tablet, it was their hope, would be still in evidence to tell its story. And what a story it would be. They knew only fragments of it at present, but as those children of the future came to church and saw the Roll of Honor, the day would come when they would ask their parents what it meant. The Rev. Mr Hunt at this stage explained the manner in which the war was started, and how Germany had for fifty years prepared for it. He also explained how the neutrality of Belgium was guaranteed. Great Britain went into the war because more than any other nation she was the custodian of civilization. Not for conquest, not for aggrandisement, but with the very highest motives did she enter this terrible conflict, and the fact that the United States of America, after long hesitation, threw in her lot with the Allies, was the strongest proof of her conversion to the standpoint of Great Britain. And when the dominions of her far-flung Empire saw the mother country getting ready and heard her say "This is a big business. this is

mother country getting ready and near to her say "This is a big business, this is going to be a long business," the cry went out, "Can't we come into this business?" And the message went out over the ocean "Australia will be there." And Australia has been there, some for 1000 days, and Australia is still there. Germany will never forget it, and they did not want Germany to forget it. So they gathered there that night in memory of the brave lads whose names are on the Roll of Honor. They had reason to be proud, because the congregation of the Mirboo North charge had produced a fine number of soldiers. Some went perhaps because they had gallant hearts, who loved a big adventure, but many could find no appeal in that. They all went because they heard the call of blood, because they heard the call of duty. It was hard to go, but it was harder to stay behind. In a book entitled "Greenmantle," by Buchan, this sentence appears, "You have chosen the roughest road, but it leads to the hill tops." There was one saddening feature of the gathering, and it laid in the knowledge that some of their dear lads would not come back. The rough road was done with and they had reached the hill tops. To Ministers of religion this war had brought the very painful experience of breaking sad news and writing letters of sympathy to bereaved parents, but he would sooner face the shell fire of the Germans than face mothers and fathers who know not the Lord. Some of the lads had been communicants of the church, and took of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper before they went. Was that not a comfort, a wonderful comfort, to them? Mothers, fathers, brothers, and sisters, they are not dead. They are alive and safe, safe in the arms of Jesus. Thanks be unto God because if you have lost them for a while, you have not lost them for ever. Might he further say to those present with all tenderness but with all sincerity, that he did not know of any finer end of life than to die in this struggle. There was nothing mean and selfish and sordid in it so far as their soldiers were concerned. It had been the biggest game they had ever played; the most righteous cause they ever expoused. They lived for it, fought for it, died for it. Could there

fought for it, died for it. Could there be anything better?

The "Battle Hymn" (by Rev. Prof. Rentoul) was then sung by the choir, which was followed by the hymn, "O King of Kings, O Lord of Hosts," by the congregation.

The next item was the unveiling of the Roll of Honor, which was performed by Rev. Arthur Wall, who stated that the cost of the board had been subscribed by the members of the church.

The Rev. Donald Dow, of Mansfield, thanked the members of the Church for their kind invitation to him to be present, and during his remarks said that they must not let the matter end with an honor board, but it was for them to bring back to the men, by their refining influences, any of the good qualities they may have lost during the time they were away on active service.

The Rev. Wall here thanked the Revs. Dow and Hunt for coming such long distances to be present.

The Hymn, "Remember Lord, Australia's Sons To-night," was then sung.

The service was brought to a close with the singing of the Anthem. "God Bless Our Splendid Men."