

THE DREVERMANN MEMORIAL

The ceremony of unveiling the granite drinking fountain created by the people of this district to keep green the memory of one of its oldest and most valued residents, the late Councillor F. W. Drevermann, was performed on Saturday afternoon, in circumstances that may be better imagined than described. The thermometer had reached 109deg. in the shade, clouds of dust, borne down by a scorching "brickfielder," traversed the town continually, and enveloping all was the smoke from miles of bush fires to the westward of the town. Still, a large number of citizens assembled to witness the ceremony, testifying, by their presence under such conditions, to the respect that their late townsman was held in by those he had left behind him.

Councillor D. Williams briefly explained the circumstances leading up to the ceremony that they were all there to witness.

The Hon. A. McLean, M.H.R., then stepped on to the pedestal of the fountain. He was, he said, going to curtail his remarks, as the day was suitable neither for speaking or listening. He had to congratulate the people of Bairnsdale upon the generosity, public spirit and the strong sense of gratitude that they had displayed by the erection of such a handsome, substantial and useful tribute to the memory of their old townsman, Councillor Drevermann. Without claiming any extraordinary merits for that gentleman he could truthfully say that he had proved a fair-minded and worthy citizen. (Hear, hear.) As a public man he had shown himself just and useful. The speaker's own knowledge of Mr Drevermann extended over two score years—ever since he came to Bairnsdale, in fact. He had always been prominently associated with every movement inaugurated for the benefit of the district, including the opening of the lake waterway, the establishment of the hospital, school of mines and many other public works. As a member of the Board of Health, Mr Drevermann had rendered the community very valuable services—not only to his own district, but the whole state. (Hear, hear.) And he had received little or nothing in return for these services. He would like to remind those present that this was the first occasion on which the people of Gippsland had erected anything in remembrance of a departed public friend. He quite agreed with the selection made by the committee in respect of the form which it was proposed the memorial should take. A fountain such as that before them would doubtless do the most public good. He would earnestly impress upon those who used the fountain that it stood there as a reward of personal merit. They all knew that Mr Drevermann had not been born a British subject, but those who knew him knew that he was just as true and loyal a subject as if any British territory had been the place of his birth. (Applause.) Mr Drevermann's labors

to-day had been the place of his birth. (Applause.) Mr Drevermann's labors in the public interest had been unselfish throughout, and the speaker felt impelled to say that if he had devoted these talents that he had so freely expended for the benefit of his fellow citizens to the furtherance of his own private business, he would have died a wealthy man. (Hear, hear.) He would ask all who drank at that fountain to take Mr Drevermann's life as an example of what a citizen should be. He had very much pleasure in declaring the fountain available for the use of the public. (Applause.)

The covering of the fountain having been removed, amidst applause, Mr McLean filled one of the drinking cups with water, and drank it, wishing the assemblage a "very happy new year."

Mr H. P. Keogh, M.L.A., said it would be his first duty to thank those who first conceived the idea of establishing such a permanent and useful memorial. It did not matter how much public men were praised. It took an effort to put the public appreciation into practical form. Famous painters left their own memorials behind them in the shape of beautiful pictures, sculptors' memories were preserved in lasting stone carved out by their own hands. Authors' names still lived in the great works which they gave to the world. With the public man, whatsoever his services and his deserts, the case was different. When he came to the end of his days there was an eddy, a little whirl, perhaps, for a moment, and then the rushing tide of public life obliterated all trace of his disappearance and he was known nor remembered no more. He congratulated the people of Bairnsdale in having made an exception to this rule in the case of their old and trusty friend. And he congratulated them, further, upon the taste they had displayed in the selection of a memorial. That fountain before them was symbolical of the man whose name it bore. It was plain, good and useful. So had he been. (Applause.) The granite of which it was composed carried a high polish. He need scarcely remind them that, in addition to his other sterling qualities, Mr Drevermann was as polished and thorough a

gentleman as one would meet. (Loud applause.) The speaker had been told that there was no greater principle than truth, but he thought that the next best thing was to keep a wise tongue. That, as they knew, Mr Drevermann had done until the last. He died as he had lived, passing away happy in the knowledge that he was prepared to meet his God. (Subdued applause.)

Mr H. Robinson said that as treasurer of the fund for erecting the fountain he had listened with a great amount of satisfaction to the address just delivered. His relations with Mr Drevermann had always been of a decidedly cordial nature. He wished to move a hearty vote of thanks to Mr McLean for performing the unveiling ceremony, and would take that opportunity of reminding the people of Bairnsdale that there was still some

tonity of reminding the people of Bairnsdale that there was still some £1 required to square up the accounts.

The motion was carried unanimously.

Mr McLean, in returning thanks, said there was one incident in Mr Drevermann's life that he had omitted to mention. They had been friends, — he had already said, for two score years. They had had a difference once, for a few weeks, when they were both contesting the Gippsland North seat in the Legislative Assembly. But he must say that though Mr Drevermann did everything he could to win that election, fairly and squarely, he never said or did anything that could be taken exception to or that was not worthy of an honest man and a gentleman. (Hear, hear.)

Mr Keogh also returned thanks. He quite agreed with Mr McLean that, had Mr Drevermann bestowed upon his own business the pains he had devoted to that of the citizens he would have been a wealthy man.

This concluded the ceremony, but the Bairnsdale Brass Band played a number of selections during the afternoon.