

## NEIL STREET CHURCH DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATION.

The 60th anniversary of the Neil Street Methodist Church was celebrated yesterday, when the Rev. H. A. Overend, B.A., preached morning and evening. Special anthems were rendered by the choir under the leadership of Mr E. Enbling, the organist being Miss Connie Finlayson.

Mr Overend in the morning spoke on the first verse of the 85th Psalm—“Wilt Thou not revive us again, that Thy people may rejoice in Thee.” He said that no person who had an eye for the trend of affairs could fail to be alarmed by the decline in observance of the Sabbath, and by the ever-increasing spell of worldly amusements on that day. There was need of a revival of spiritual life. For 60 years the Neil Street Church had stood as a witness for God, those who were associated with it having sought through all that period to induce people to seek God. What could the church do to stem the flood of worldliness? It could do much, but it must be remembered that depression could not be lifted by morbid introspection. There should be an effort to get into more hopeful and cheerful surroundings, and into new faith and belief in God and His power to replenish the empty fountains of love and devotion. Complaining and criticism would never bring about a revival. Encouragement was necessary. There must be a policy of good cheer, one which would show more appreciation of what was being done. Was there due recognition of the self-denying services of Sunday-school teachers, or of other school teachers or of other workers? Criticism was cheap and easy, but it was another thing to go and do the job in a better way than the man who was doing it. If that was good policy in worldly affairs, it was good policy in the work of Christ. The church, if it was bound in a spirit of generous appreciation and love, could change the whole tone of a city. Religion was like measles in that it spread by infection. People had to catch the enthusiasm of it, then the cold hard world would be melted by the fervency of its heat. Christ's great programme of Christian qualities emphasised unselfishness and service for others. Christ said that if His programme of life was followed out the world would be saved, for character would always make itself felt. Men should be helped to realise what the Christian religion stood for. The kindly tactful word and the friendly interest were the things which would enable them to do that.

In the afternoon there was a large gathering present, when an external mural tablet in memoriam of the men from the church who fell in the war

was unveiled by Senator Brigadier-General Elliott.

Of the 122 men whose names are on the honor board the following 32 made the supreme sacrifice—H. J. Brown, C. C. Bell, L. C. Blick, A. Briant, G. Brookes, R. Coeka, C. W. Constable, H. G. Cornell, W. Dent, N. D'Angri, T. C. Finlayson, A. Gates, G. E. James, F. Llewellyn, L. Malin, R. Marshall, S. M'Adam, A. Peady, J. Peverill, H. Powell, W. Rashleigh, H. J. Semmens, A. Tomkins, H. L. Tretowan, M. R. Wasley, C. Waterhouse, S. Weir, A. Weir, A. Wilson, J. H. Wilson, F. C. Wright, C. White.

The Rev. W. T. Hiatt said that the fact that we were able to meet in freedom was largely due to Australia's valiant soldiers. Therefore had they met to honor the memory of those men who would never be forgotten, even although it might be impossible to pay all the debt that was due to them. Those men had made visible and had helped to preserve the unity of the Empire. The crimson thread of kinship had been revealed, and loyalty had been manifested, and now the Empire was welded whole, ready to meet the future unflinchingly. War was a great test, searching the fibre of a nation. It had disclosed the sterling qualities of Australia's sons, for whom the nerve-shattering terrors of war contained no fears. Their heroism would guild the page of Australia's history. Our soldiers had played the game, or as Paul had put it, they had fought a good fight. Heroic sacrifices had been made without hesitation or complaints, their movements being marked by the crimson stains of sacrifice. They met death with fortitude and figuratively we scattered flowers upon their grave.

Senator Elliott said that a great honor had been conferred upon him in asking him to unveil the tablet. This great country had grown in peace and safety for 100 years, under the folds of the Union Jack, until the great war broke out. Then it became evident that our united strength was required, and Australia's men, who were an unknown force, responded to the call. Germany's early opinion was that Australian troops would not stand half-an-hour before their attack. Time passed and captured maps which had belonged to the German army showed that the Australians were regarded as the equal of the picked German veterans. That reputation would deter any enemy from lightly waging war on Australia. The question had been asked, “Was the sacrifice worth while?” Christ's sacrifice had kindled a beacon light which shone through the ages. Already there was leaven working amongst the nations to have done with war, and to

there was leaven working amongst the nations to have done with war, and to take such steps as would ensure the realisation of Christianity—Peace on earth. If that was accomplished, who would deny that the sacrifice was worth while? To many a great sadness had come. Would the boys who had fallen think the sacrifice too great? Our land was undefiled by war, and their devotion had saved us from having the enemy amongst us. Surely that was something worth fighting and dying for. What a memory they had left! It was too soon yet to have a true perspective view of what Australian soldiers had done. Time would show that the deeds of Australia's soldiers in one campaign had paralleled those of any army in past history. They were moved by the noblest spirit. Senator Elliott then proceeded to give several instances of heroic sacrifice and bravery. It was the tradition of sacrifice which had been set in the landing at Gallipoli, and not one of boastfulness, which he hoped would be carried down through our history by the memorials which were being erected throughout the Commonwealth. It was not too much to hope that coming generations would draw inspiration from the memorials of men who thought not of self, but of their comrades and their country.

An adjournment was then made to the front of the church where Senator Elliott unveiled the tablet, which was inscribed, "To the Glory of God in honor of the men of this church who gave their lives in the Great War." Appropriate hymns were sung and Mr Hector Jones sounded "The Last Post."