

A SOLDIERS' MEMORIAL.

UNVEILED BY THE PREMIER.

AUSTRALIAN PATRIOTISM.

The State Premier (Mr. Bent) on Saturday afternoon unveiled a memorial fountain which has been erected by public subscription in honor of men from the Moorabbin shire who saw active service during the Boer war in South Africa.

The memorial stands on the Nepean-road, Cheltenham. The base is of Malmsbury bluestone, with an obelisk of red granite, highly polished, and 10 feet in height. Below there is a drinking fountain, and at the top are two globular lamps with incandescent burners, the total height being about 14 feet. The names of the officers, non-coms. and troopers are cut on the face of the stone. Those on the "In Memoriam" tablet are as follow:—Troopers W. Christie, died at Rustenberg, 1900; F. Clay, killed in action at Elandshoek, 1901; J. Collins, killed in action at Williamsrust, 1901; F. Fisher, died. The names of the returned soldiers, headed by that of Major W. M'Knight, follow.

There was a large attendance of residents, including many of the returned volunteers. Cr. Penny presided, and formally welcomed the Premier.

Mr. Bent said it gave him great pleasure to be present that afternoon to perform the ceremony of unveiling the memorial. At the time of the last South African war it was recognised by Australians that England was in trouble, and our young men rose up in a patriotic manner and offered their services. Not only from that district, but from all other parts of Australia, they went to South Africa, and risked their lives on behalf of Queen and country. They were there to do honor to the four who had died, and to congratulate the 35 who had come back upon having done their duty. They all remembered the scenes which took place at the time of the war. As the troops marched along the road before them, people cheered and wished them "God speed." At that time all was enthusiasm, and promises were made to the departing soldiers which had not been kept. He was sorry that the pledges made by the previous Government had not been carried out; and he would make it his duty to see that they were redeemed to the fullest extent. (Cheers.) It was all very well for the Lieutenant-Governor (Sir John Madden) to speak of the glory of the men who had gone to the war, and to point to the great work they had done; but he (Mr. Bent) would repeat, in the presence of ex-Ministers, and in the presence of the people of Victoria, that if he remained in office—(A Voice: You will remain all right.)—nothing would be wanting on his part to see that justice was done to these men, and that the employment which was promised to them on their return from the war was given. (Cheers.) He noticed that a sermon was preached the other day by one of our clergymen, and the lesson it taught was that we ought not to go to war in the future. He was inclined to think that if we took up such a position as that we should soon have the Japanese marching down upon us. (Laughter.) We did not want to fight; but if we were forced to do so we were quite ready to protect our interests—(cheers)—and he believed that, in similar circumstances, Australians would again volunteer. The gathering that day showed that, although some of the lustre had worn off our achievements, our patriot-

ism still continued, and he believed that the memorial would be a splendid object lesson to the State school children of the Moorabbin shire, many of whom he saw around him. (Cheers.)

The Premier then removed the Union Jack which surrounded the memorial, and the people sang the National Anthem and cheered.

Major M'Knight said he hoped the men who had returned from South Africa would get fair play, and that the promises given to them would be fulfilled.

Colonel Otter and Colonel Kelly also spoke, and an adjournment was then made to the hall.