

Unveiling the Murchison State School Honor Board.

The official unveiling of the Murchison State School Honor Roll took place at the Mechanics' Institute on Tuesday evening last, and proved to be a most interesting ceremony. As has been previously explained in these columns, the work of preparing the board was undertaken by the pupils of the Murchison Sloyd School under the guidance of their instructor (Mr O. Bowen), and the finished article stands as a memento of the usefulness of the Sloyd Schools as a medium for instructing the boys in a skilful art, method and carefulness. The board is manufactured from Queensland cedar, beautifully polished, and in itself provides a striking illustration of the great value of our Australian timbers for works of art and general usefulness. The workmanship of the monument reflects the greatest credit on the boys and their teacher, to whom the best thanks of the public of Murchison are due for their ingenuity and enterprise, while a fine job has also been made of the inscription. The Honor Board carries the names of no less than 98 old pupils of the school who have volunteered for service, and we understand a few more names have still to be added. The board had been temporarily erected on a stand on the stage at the Mechanics' Institute, and the task of unveiling it had been allotted to Hon. Hugh M'Kenzie, Minister for Railways and Water Supply in the now defunct Peacock Government. Mr E. J. Gregory, chairman of the local School Committee, presided, and Mr M'Kenzie was accommodated with a seat on his right. The spacious hall was packed to its utmost holding capacity with an interested audience, and the proceedings were of a most enthusiastic nature.

After the singing of the National Anthem, the chairman briefly outlined the object of the gathering—to unveil their State School Roll of Honor. The ceremony was being held in conjunction with their Flower Day celebrations, and the money thus raised was to be devoted to the Repatriation Fund. The State School Scholars of Victoria had already raised something like a quarter of a million pounds for patriotic purposes, and £70 of that sum had been contributed by the scholars of the Murchison school. By that day's effort it was hoped that Murchison's contribution would be raised to £90. A scheme had recently been sug-

gested by the Department for the forming of groups to purchase war savings certificates, and he contended that a public meeting should be held at Murchison to further the matter. Before proceeding with the unveiling ceremony they had a short concert programme to be rendered. The programme was as follows:—

Song, "Mother Machree," Miss N. Cloney; violin solo, "Schubert's Sonatas," Miss Chrissie Metcalf; song, "The Landing at Gaba Tebe," Mr T. Brisbane; song, "God Bring you Home Again," Miss Woolcock.

The Chairman then introduced Mr M'Kenzie, and apologised for the absence of Mr John Gordon, who had been unable to make his election engagements fit in with their celebrations. Mr M'Kenzie was an old pupil of the Murchison State School, and it was most fitting that he should be the man allotted to unveil their Roll of Honor. Mr M'Kenzie had attended the function that evening at great inconvenience to himself, as his hands were full with election matters, and he considered they were under a great compliment to him. On the Honor Board was inscribed the names of 98 old pupils of the school who had volunteered and been accepted for service, and this was a record of which they could be justly proud. The board was the work of Mr Bowen and the sloyd boys, and it was a credit to them, and they were deserving of the best thanks of the community for their fine effort. (Applause.)

The Hon. Hugh M'Kenzie said that to him this was an interesting ceremony, and he would have been extremely sorry to have missed it. He felt grateful to Mr Woolcock for having made the arrangements fit in with his election work. As they were aware, he was an old pupil of the Murchison State School. At the age of six years he had commenced school at Murchison in 1860, and he had continued at the school until the end of June, 1865. At that time the school was conducted in an old weather-board building at the east end of Stephenson street, and later they moved to the old brick building in the vicinity of the railway line. They were now possessed of a new and thoroughly equipped brick building, so they could see things had changed considerably since his day. He hoped they would excuse him for being reminiscent, but the proceedings that evening brought it all back to his mind again. It gave him great pleasure to unveil their Honor Board. (Mr M'Kenzie here removed the

Board. (Mr M'Kenzie here removed the drapings from the board to the accompaniment of loud applause.) The names of 98 old pupils were inscribed on the Roll of Honor he had just unveiled, and he understood that ten or a dozen of those had made the supreme sacrifice of war. The men who made the greatest sacrifices

were the men who died for their country, for they died that we might live. (Applause.) Australia had sent over 300,000 men to the war. "Sent" was not the correct word to use, as these men had gone voluntarily. (Applause.) Of this number 30,000 men—or an average of 1 in ten—had made the supreme sacrifice. At present there was not a silver lining to the dark clouds of war that were hanging over them, but he was not pessimistic as to the ultimate result. They were there that evening to pay a tribute to the brave men who were fighting for them and had died for them, and their Honor Board would serve to perpetuate the memories of these glorious men. He trusted that no more of their men would be called upon to make that great sacrifice, but if such proved to be the case they should remember that these men died as heroes, for, to use words of Macauley—

"How can man die better
Than facing fearful odds;
For the ashes of his fathers
And the temples of his God."

(Applause).

The members of the Murchison troupe of Boy Scouts then sang that fine song, "For England," the words for which were composed by the late Private James Burns (nephew of Mrs H. S. Legge).

After an interval of ten minutes the musical part of the programme was continued as follows:—

Overture, Miss Woolcock; song, "Loch Lomond," and for an encore "Bonnie Prince Charlie," Mrs Woolcock; song, "The Sunshine of your Smile," Miss Smith; song, "When the Troops come Marching Home" (encored), Miss Keenan.

A comprehensive vote of thanks, moved by Mr E. O. Parsons and seconded by Mr W. G. Brisbane, to all who had assisted in making the function such a success, and the singing of the National Anthem, brought a very pleasant evening to a close.