

Newington College War Memorials.

(By Rev. Jas. Colwell.)

"To keep their memory green." There are many memories to be kept green, for of the 613 Newingtonians who saw service in the great war, 104 fell mortally wounded—a record not to be surpassed, if equalled, by any other school in Australia. For this cause a large number of Old Boys, with their relatives, were drawn to the beautiful and spacious grounds of Newington College on the afternoon of Thursday, May 11th. Lord Forster, the Governor-General, who had consented to unveil the memorials, arrived punctually at 3 o'clock, attended by Lord Digby. Lady Forster would have been there also but for another function which demanded her presence. His Excellency was received by the Headmaster (Dr. Prescott), who introduced the President of the Conference (Rev. Eldred Dyer) and the President of the Old Boys' Union (Mr. Reginald Cowlishaw). The Governor received the salute, inspected the guard, shook hands with several gentlemen who accompanied the Headmaster, and proceeded to the platform erected at the entrance to the Main Hall. In welcoming His Excellency, the Headmaster gave particulars of the boys, who, having played the game at Newington, afterwards played the game in the school of life and on the battlefields of France and Flanders, Gallipoli, and Mesopotamia. That these volunteers represented the flower of the school life is apparent from the following figures:—

On the academic side, 13 out of 17 Schofield scholars enlisted; 21 out of 27 Wigram Allen prize-winners; 15 out of 18 winners of the Old Boys' prize; and 72 out of 118 prefects. The sporting side was also splendidly represented, 13 out of the 1912 first XV. having enlisted; 10 out of the 1914 XI.; and 9 out of the 1912 rifle team.

Addressing his remarks to the boys on his right, and the visitors on the lawn, the Governor said:

"I am always pleased to be associated with any movement to commemorate services rendered to King and country during the great war. As an old Public School boy, I take an intense interest in the Public School life of my new home. It does not matter what field of war you look to, you will find Australia's sons upholding the great traditions and honour of the British race. As an old Public School man, I congratulate you on the splendid war record of your school. But that is what we expect, and no more than we expect; for if there is anything in the nature and training of life at the Great Public Schools, it teaches us always, and all the time, to play the game and play for the side. We old Public School boys do not pretend we are better born than our neighbours; we do not pretend to be better people, but we have the right

tend we are better born than our neighbours; we do not pretend to be better people, but we have the right to say and to acknowledge that in our Public School life we had advantages which were denied the great mass of our fellow-countrymen. This enables us to set the highest example we can. I was lucky enough to go to one of the old English schools with centuries of tradition behind it. You belong to a school which, compared with the old British schools, is young, although, judged by the history of Australia, it is almost ancient. The traditions you have are not as old as those of the English schools, but they are equally honourable. Honour all the school's traditions. With your splendid traditions of war service, scholarship, and sportsmanship, you have a record of which you may well be proud. It depends on the boys at school whether the traditions of the school are maintained; it does not depend on the masters. The way in which to preserve the traditions of the school is to be yourselves. You have not to make a great parade or a great fuss—only be yourselves at your best. We all have two selves—the one we show to our mothers and the one we don't talk about. If you are yourselves at your best the traditions of your school will be safe in your keeping. Your Headmaster has announced that I will unveil the honour roll first, then the machine-gun, and lastly, the memorial to the dead. It is a very fitting sequence, for the token of victory stands between the two emblems of service and sacrifice. There could be no victory without sacrifice. And it is because the service and the sacrifice were splendid that the victory was so complete."

At the conclusion of the speech, when the hall doors were thrown open a small choir of small boys sang Kipling's Recessional. As the last notes died down the Governor entered the Main Hall to unveil the honour roll. The sixteen panels of this honour roll, divided by the names of the Australian battlefields, contain the names of those who saw service, the panel consecrated to the dead being thus inscribed: "These nobly fighting, nobly fell." This chaste and beautiful honour roll was designed and set up by Mr. A. W. Anderson. This duty over, the Governor passed down to the flagstaff, where, deprived of its power to make further human wreckage, the German machine-gun captured by the 19th Battalion at Estrees now stands. This instrument of death was soon uncovered. One wonders, but wonders in vain, whether any boy from Newington was sent "west" by a shot from this infernal machine. And now followed the most touching ceremony in what will always be a memorable day in the history of Newington. The Headmaster led the

way to a small gateway in a clump of timber near the drive, the entrance being guarded by the Union Jack, and the school flag, hanging in loyal union side by side. Here the architect, Mr. Hardy Wilson, has set up the memorial inscribed with these simple words: "To our beloved dead." The memorial is in the form of a semi-circular wall of white sandstone. Standing out, but in the centre of this memorial is a sun-dial. This, too, bears a simple sentence: "Time dimms not their sacrifice." Nothing more fitting than this memorial could be designed. The secluded spot, hidden from the public gaze, and surrounded by trees, creates an ideal atmosphere. Here one may sit in silence while he communes with his dead. Here he may dream, and, as he dreams, he may once again hear the tramp of feet as the boys walk to the neighbouring church—the tramp which suggests other things—the march to the transport or to the battlefield, the tramp which tells that their souls still go marching on. Before the Governor cut the cord which held the flag, Major Buchanan read the long list of fallen, closing with these words: "They saw the light of life and followed it to the end." He read with difficulty, for he had loved these lads. The Governor heard in pathetic silence, for the war had demanded his only son. The relatives listened with tense feeling, waiting for the name of him who had followed the light, and would return no more to the darkness of earth. Then the President of the Conference made our thoughts vocal in prayer, the guard reversed arms, the wailing notes of the Last Post fell on the ear, and the Governor and his attendant passed in silence to the sacred spot where, with uncovered heads, they yielded themselves to the influence of those mighty hopes that make us men. Then slowly the gathering dispersed, for the tribute had been paid. Newington has done many fine things in its day, but it never did a finer thing than when it honoured its dead. It was a worthy aim, worthily carried out, and done in memory of those who had proved themselves worthy.