

WAR MEMORIAL

To the Editor.

Sir.—My frequent absences from Goulburn on diocesan and other duty have prevented my taking any active part in the movement for the erection of the city war memorial. But the stage now reached is so critical that I feel impelled to enter an earnest plea for the free and unfettered consideration of the design of the memorial before the citizens of Goulburn are finally committed to a design which I am strongly inclined to think will be regretted when it is too late. I feel sure that the committee has been swayed by the generous motive of consideration for the preference of a generous donor. Now there are two questions to be asked. The first is, by whom is this memorial to be erected? The answer is, by the citizens of Goulburn. The generous donor of the site would surely be the first to say that the citizens as a community must decide upon the kind of memorial to be erected in their name, and that they are entitled and indeed bound to consider the different designs on their merits alone. Great principles, not personal preferences, should be the deciding factors. If the citizens feel that a cross is a better memorial of the sacrifice of their soldier brothers than a lighthouse, let them say so kindly but firmly. Whether the final decision is made by a representative committee or by a public referendum, that decision should be made conscientiously in the light of big principles and great ideals.

The second question is, to whom is this memorial to be erected? That means, in other words, what is it to commemorate? We cannot ask the men who fell what they would prefer. But we may be certain that the men who learned to salute a wayside cross on the way into the lines and to find comfort, deep and real, however vague and unthinking, in the sight of Christ in Flanders, would have no such objection to a memorial cross as is sometimes urged on memorial committees. Men of all creeds and men of no creed felt the appeal and the uplift of the Cross. And if we cannot ask them to guide us, we can and must ask ourselves, what is this memorial to commemorate? It is to commemorate the Christian sacrifice, consciously or unconsciously Christian, made on behalf of Christian ideals of civilisation and humanity. Why should not our memorial be in some shape or form an honest and fearless avowal of our convictions? Here we have been met by a generous plea on behalf of those who do not share those Christian convictions. A distinguished soldier, whose own Christianity is beyond doubt or reproach, pleads that we should not erect as a memorial an emblem which might give offence to Jews or Moslems or others who do not believe the Christian faith. I cannot help recalling the story of some Indian troops, Moslem by faith, who placed wooden crosses over the graves of their fallen. They told their astonished British officer, "The cross is the sign of sacrifice in your religion. It is the same sacrifice for us all in this war. Our brothers shall lie under the same sign as yours." I would recall the fact that the cross of sacrifice is the accepted memorial over men of all creeds on many of the great cemeteries on the western front. But I would also ask whether we are always to have "the affirmations of the overwhelming majority sacrificed to the negations of a small minority." As a matter of fact, these men to whom this memorial is to be erected were almost to a man Christians of one sort or another. I have a black visiting book in the pocket of my tunic containing the names of some nine hundred Anglican soldiers in camp in July, 1916. In making the list I worked through the attestation papers of 2000 soldiers. There were four Jews—the rest were Christians. Not one wrote himself down an agnostic or unbeliever. All claimed membership of some part of the Christian Church.

I have pleaded for the embodiment in this memorial of the faith of a Christian nation. Let me plead two more considerations—(1) In days to come, when our children's children ask, "What mean ye by these stones?" what kind of memorial will lend itself best to the telling of the tale of sacrifice? An arch, a lighthouse, or a cross?

(2) If any personal considerations are to have weight, what about the last eloquent plea in St. Saviour's Cathedral from the lips of one of the soldiers' best friends, Archdeacon Bartlett? It woke an echo in the hearts of many who did not belong to his Church. They read it in the newspaper, and felt and said, "The memorial will just have to be a cross." "He, being dead, yet speaketh." Let us remember that plea for a Christian memorial, not for the sake of the speaker, but for the sake of the great truth which he pleaded to have embodied in the memorial of this city to its brave and faithful dead.

Yours sincerely,
LEWIS GOULBURN.

Bishopthorpe, Goulburn.

TECT, and Buckham (shire engineer), and all three gentlemen agree with me that it is not only practicable, but inexpensive, to do same.

Mr. Fitzgerald has volunteered to do survey free of charge, and I will bring the matter up again at the next general meeting of the R.S. and S.I.L. of Australia, when I have no doubt I can get a working bee of "Diggers" to excavate the design, so the only expense would be to provide the white stone.

Mr. Lee Hunt suggested that the word "Anzac" be also placed on the hill under the badge in manner outlined, and it has been said that this word has a limited application to those of us who were actually on Gallipoli, but I would like to say all Australian soldiers were referred to as Anzacs.

As a public meeting has been called for to-morrow night (Wednesday) to deal with the selection of memorial, and at which meeting I have no doubt a resolution will be carried that a poll of subscribers will decide design, I trust these suggestions will not be lost sight of, and if a vote is to be taken I submit at the same time the question of incorporating the suggestions with the memorial selected can also be decided.

A question has been raised that to carry out this additional work a portion of the money subscribed for the erection of memorial will have to be used, but I feel quite certain if the scheme is adopted that the extra subscriptions derived will more than pay for it, as the cost, I am assured, will not be high.

With the A.I.F. badge and word "Anzac" on hill, all visitors to our fair city will not require to ask what the memorial on the hill is, but will, I hope, say—"That is a fine war memorial, and something for Goulburn to be proud of."

In conclusion, I would ask readers to view the enlarged photograph in Mr. C. S. Boyd's window, showing effect of suggestion as described.

Yours, etc.,

W. T. BRENNOCK.

General McNicoll's Design

General McNicoll's design, a sketch of which, prepared by Mr. P. M. Carew-Smyth, A.R.C.A., was recently published by us, is that of an Ionic column with an adaptation of an angle capital, the volutes being so arranged that the memorial has a satisfactory appearance from all points of view. The base is flanked and strengthened by seats separated by scrolls, which repeat the Ionic voluted form. The draughtsman who prepared Mr. Carew-Smyth's sketch for newspaper reproduction straightened the lines of the column, thus removing the entasis (or slight convex curve), which should be shown. It is intended that the whole should be about 35 feet high. The proportions have been determined with the aid of photographs of Rocky Hill, and details as to its length, altitude and distance from the city. A bronze dedicatory tablet in the face of one of the bases is suggested. It is estimated that the cost will not exceed £3000.

OBITUARY.

MR. MURRAY L. ALLEN.

One of Goulburn's oldest residents, Mr. Murray Leith Allen, died at his residence, Clifford-street, at ten o'clock last night, after an illness which had lasted for eleven years. He had been gradually sinking for months, and death came as a happy release. He was eighty years of age.

The late Mr. Allen was born at Norfolk, England, and came to Australia when a young man. He was highly educated and a brilliant scholar, being able to converse in half-a-dozen modern languages, while he was also a student of Greek and Latin. Soon after his arrival in Australia he became a teacher in the Education Department, and was twenty years in the service. He was stationed at Muswellbrook, Baw Baw, and Collector, retiring when at the last-named school and joining the late Mr. Clement Wragge, whose assistant he became while that astronomer was conducting the Kosciusko observatory. Later Mr. Allen coached students for the Sydney University until he became too ill to continue the work to which he was so much attached. He was justly proud of the letters of appreciation written to him by Mr. Wragge and the State Meteorological Department, his knowledge of astronomy being wide. He leaves three sons, Messrs. Max, Gladesville; Harry, Sydney; and Bert, Kenmore; and one daughter, Mrs. Williams, of Concord.

The funeral will take place to-morrow to the Church of England portion of the general cemetery.