

THE SPIRIT OF ANZAC.

(P.A.J.)

Yet another Anzac Day has come and gone.

Rolling drums and stirring martial airs, solitary bugles, masses of flowers on many monuments, and row upon row of marching men - young and old - served to remind us that this Day, so sacred in the minds of Australians and New Zealanders alike, called for quiet and humble meditation in honour of those whose unrelenting gallantry alone enabled us to see the light of the Twenty-fifth day of April, 1917.

Whatever the weaknesses, we as a people may be bound to recognise - and if we are honest, we must agree that weaknesses do, in fact, exist - we may be justly proud of that one indestructible quality - courage. Courage, with all its attendant ~~consequences~~ ^{consequences}, loyalty, determination, tenacity, initiative and confidence in each other in the hour of crisis, was never more splendidly displayed than by those who remained on the sun-baked sands of Gallipoli. the arid stretches of Mesopotamia, Palestine and Sinai; the blood drenched mud of Mons and Flanders, in the wind swept dunes of Libya, the snow clad mountains and valleys of Greece; in Crete, Syria, Malaya, New Guinea, Borneo, and in a hundred other places too numerous to mention. In the air and on the land and under the sea these men - these comrades of ours, have symbolised the immortal spirit of Anzac.

We have remembered these men on this day, and rightly so, we agree. But can we go further than this? Can we not remember them every day, not from a sentimental angle, but, ~~to use a recent expression~~, from a reconstructional point of view. We have fought, they have died, others have suffered irreparable health for what we believed was a Cause. Freedom, of ~~the kind~~ ^{the kind} Decency of living conditions, equality of opportunity, and above all freedom from the scourge of War. If, in our daily lives, each and every one of us determine, by work and deed, to achieve these things, shall we not have done more justice to these men than we could ever do in one hundred Anzac Day Commemorations?

Shame on us if ever we should forget the significance of Anzac, but even greater shall be our shame if we fail to exert every effort, every possible means, to prevent a repetition of the two 20th Century tragedies which have brought this memorable day into existence.

BATTALION MARCH AND RE-UNION.

A little knot of men gathering in Wyndard Square at about 0830 hrs soon grew to a goodly bunch of about 250 - 300 by the time we formed up to march to the Cenotaph.

And wasn't it grand to see all the old faces again? Brains worked overtime to remember names one had not seen, in some cases for four and five years, since those far off days in ME or NW. Hands grew sore with hand-shaking, and tongues grew dry with tongue bashing. Pockets grew emptier as enthusiastic Committeemen extracted (with simply no compunction whatever) "dollars" for the luncheon, and "two-bobs" for the Dance (at Ashfield Town Hall on 10 May).

A grey haired gentleman appeared in our midst. Someone whispered "Say, isn't that "Col" Parsons?", and sure enough it was. Soon we formed up and got into our stride for the march to the Cenotaph where respects were paid to "Fallen Comrades". Col. Parsons, Ken Kesteven and Ross Ellerman officiated.

More of the "old ones" joined us at the gardens where we had quite a long wait till our turn came. In fact it quite reminded us of being in the Army again. Yes, they were all there, HQ, A, B, C, and D Coys - even to "Cock" Robin whose presence in the march was distinguished by the projection of the sign "2/4 Bn" in our midst. The big march went well, but someone reckoned that bottles of "hooch" were badly lacking among the spectators.

The luncheon was marred by only one thing - lack of room - and in that connection, the management points out that though everything possible was done to get a bigger hall we were unsuccessful. Sorry, but here's hoping for next year!

We were glad to have with us Brig. Dougherty who proposed the only two toasts, "Fallen Comrades" and the "2/4 Battalion". After these brief formalities, "it was on" with a vengeance, and it seems safe to say that a good time was had by all.

R E M E M B E R ! ! !

Next Meeting: Thursday, 27 June 46.

Membership: If you are not already a financial member please forward Cheque, Postal Note or Money Order for 10/6 to the Hon Secretary, P.W. ELLERMAN, 39 Bent, St., SYDNEY.