

## THE REFERENDUM.

### RETURNED SOLDIERS.

#### STIRRING APPEALS.

A successful meeting, well attended despite the wet weather, was held under the auspices of the Returned Sailors' and Soldiers' Imperial League in the South Brisbane Technical College Hall last night. Major Walsh, who presided, remarked that the statement that the returned men were not in favour of conscription was quite untrue. (Applause.)

#### THE DEFINITE ISSUE.

Col. Espie De la, D.S.O., M.C., said that after an experience of 2½ years of active service he considered he would be lacking in the discharge of a serious duty if he did not tell them that the men overseas wanted all the reinforcements that it was possible for us to send. (Applause.) Side issues had been raised to cloud the very definite issue. We must support our men; the voluntary system had fallen short of requirements; and now we had the referendum proposals, than which there was nothing milder or more fair. Those on the other side could find no arguments; there were none. He told how gallantly our men abroad had played the game, and implored the people of Australia to fight harder and play the game a bit better than many of them had been doing. (Applause.)

#### TO SAVE OUR MEN.

Sergt. Buchanan stressed the point that by voting "Yes" they were not sending the son of another woman to his death, but that by voting "No" they were sending to their graves our noble army of 200,000 abroad. (Applause.)

#### IRON HEEL OF THE HUN.

Private A. J. de Topor Markowicz, late of the 3rd Battalion, A.I.F., and the Serbian 2nd Horse Regiment of the Line, delivered a vivid appeal for reinforcements. He is a Pole, who fought with the Serbs in the Balkan wars, and with the Anzacs in Gallipoli, and he gave first-hand evidence of the crushing administration of the mailed fist of the Hun in the governing of Poland and other countries. At the outset he emphasised the fact that Germany wanted British colonies, and wanted them badly. Her surplus population demanded an outlet, and she set out in her war quest for more land. This was not the first such war

set out in her war quest for more land. This was not the first such war that Germany had waged. He spoke of the attempts to crush Poland; to wipe out all the national characteristics of that land. Cruelties of many kinds, and of starvation, even in the present days, were practised on all, including children, almost babes. All experiences of German conquest and German rule told in letters of blood that it were better to die—to be exterminated—than to remain under the iron heel of Prussia. One-third of the population of Serbia had been done to death—not in the heat of battle. What Germany had done to them she would do to Australia if she reached our shores. We would not be spared. It was not Germany's policy to spare, but to exterminate and substitute with Germans. The atrocities and the practices of Germany were almost, and sometimes were quite, unmentionable. True democracy, he pointed out, meant that the action of the individual would be absolutely subject to the good of the nation. If the good of the community demanded the sacrifice of the individual it must be given, but the so-called democratic party of Australia today was really anarchistic. (Applause.) He spoke of the deeds and the sacrifice of Serbia's women, and asked Australia's women to do their share by helping their own men at the Front, and by helping those shirkers here to be men again. (Loud applause.)

#### MALIGNANT BARBARISM.

Colonel Lockhart Gibson averred that affection for, and gratitude to, the Motherland, pride, self-interest, and self-preservation, all impelled us to vote "Yes," and support civilisation against malignant barbarism. (Applause.)

#### BEST AND BRAVEST COMRADES.

Signaller Tom Skeyhill, the blind soldier lecturer, made an eloquent demand for help for our soldiers—"the best and bravest comrades a man ever had." (Applause.) Every man was wanted, he said, to hold the enemy back. He appealed to all to take no heed of "those canting political parasites who say that men are not wanted—these red-raggers, Sinn Feiners, and pro-Germans, who, in the guise of anti-conscriptionists, try to tell us that men are not wanted." He was a soldier, and he pledged his word that men were wanted. (Loud applause.)

The singing of the National Anthem and cheers for the men at the Front closed the meeting.

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