The death of the Rev. W. R. Fletcher represents a distinct loss to the community. Few men expressed so much labour as he did into their lives; and fewer still, even among prominent men, have made so deep an impression upon the minds of their associates as he has left to testify to his mental ability and his practical power.

Mr. Fletcher possessed gifts of curiously opposite kinds in rare association. If he had not devoted himself so assiduously to the active duties of a minister of religion he might have become a noted scholar, or an eminent theologian, or have earned special distinction in the walks of literature. By dint of uncommon energy he managed, without neglecting any of the legitimate demands of an important pastorate, to maintain and constantly to supplement an amount of scholastic knowledge which would have been unattainable by many men with abundant leisure. It is no exaggeration to say that Mr. Fletcher was scholarly amongst scholars, an archeologist with a few, if any, equals in the Southern Hemisphere, and a scientific student who needed only the opportunity to enable him to become a master.

In his voluminous contributions to current literature he displayed much of the versatility of the born journalist, and all his writings indicated a special quality of analysis and of close and critical observation. Indeed, his balance of rhetoric and perceptive faculties, and a certain judicial cast of mind which he possessed, would have enabled him to secure no little prominence if he had chosen the profession of the law instead of applying himself to pious exposition; but he would have been better as judge than as pleader. As it was he was a devoted minister of religion with a mathematical head—a man of the church, but a man of the world also in the dual positions in which the dual positions may be fitted in by the same person.

It was, of course, as the religious teacher that Mr. Fletcher exerted his chief influence and left his mark upon his generation. In this sphere of usefulness he was a worthy son, a successor of the founder of the Church with whose labours in South Australia have been largely identified—this

Rev. Thomas Quainton Stow. Popular preacher in the ordinary meaning of the term he was not. He was no pulpit gymnast, no rhetorician, no actor. He sought to persuade the reason rather than the ear or to please the fancy. His sermons and his lectures were not oratorical, in the same sense that a geometrical diagram, however well-executed, is a work of art which appeals to the more sensuous faculties. Mr. Fletcher could never be mistaken for the type of pastor immortalised by Goldsmith in his 'Deserted Village,' and he did not recall to mind Copper's beautiful ideal of simple ministration; but he might have sat as the model from whom the author of 'The Task' derived another impressive conception of his—

He that negotiates between God and man, As Joa's ambassador, the grand concern Of judgment and of mercy, should towards Of righteousness in his speech. 'Tis painful To count a grace when you should have been meek; To treat a just when piti would inspire Prudential exhibition; and to address The sinister fancy with facetious tales When near was God's commission to the heart.

Mr. Fletcher was always decorous, even to dignity, and his earnestness was as consistent and as unquenchable as his vigour. He was a man of broad mind and catholic sympathies, and no duty came amiss to him that had in view the amelioration of the condition—physical, mental, moral—of his fellow men. His religion was distinctly of the intellect as well as of the heart. He attempted not to produce a spiritual hysteria by playing upon the nerves and the emotions. While agreeing with Carlyle that, 'When belief waxes uncertain practice becomes unswerving,' his constant aim was to build up character and to make it stable; to teach that religion is not a sentiment to be associated with the Sunday pool of light and the ordinances of the Church, but that it is a practical guide alike in the homelier worries of the house and in the most momentous concerns of the wider world beyond the domestic sphere. Religion, according to Mr. Fletcher, was essentially the source and fountain of manliness and womanliness. Instead of insisting upon rigid adherence to the literal scripture he taught that morality was higher than conformity to convention. Yet it must be morality according to authoritative chart; or rather it must be the superstructure to a base resting on the cardinal truths of the Gospel. There were, indeed, signs that as preacher and as man Mr. Fletcher was strongly imbued with the philosophy of Socrates, perhaps the best non-Christian Christian whose fame lives in the world's history.

Of the deceased minister's services to the State in many capacities it is unnecessary for us to speak here. The more unnumbered, made in the various positions which he occupied supplies sufficient testimony to the completeness of his conception of the manifold duties of citizenship, and of his earnest endeavour to turn to the best account for the good of others the talents with which he was endowed. His industrious useful labours in connection with the University of Adelaide, the theological studies of ministerial students, and various other branches of educational work will be held in grateful remembrance. His services as the friend and the mentor of young men will be long commemorated in the most substantial manner possible. Prominent and useful colonists now engaged in many public capacities—men whose ambition he inspired, whose aims he directed into...