

### A VILLAGE THANKSGIVING.

To recall the deliverance from the Great Plague which devastated the old-world village of Eyam (Derbyshire), in 1665-1666, and to offer thanksgiving for the self-sacrifice of the villagers, who remained in their homes to localize the plague, a special commemoration service was held on Sunday last in the picturesquely situated Cucklet Dell, about a quarter of a mile from the village. The following details are reported in the *Times* :—

"In this solitary spot the rector of Eyam of that day, the Rev. W. Mompesson, conducted services during the prevalence of the plague, instead of in the parish church. The Cucklet 'church,' as it is called, is a large, hollowed-out rock overlooking the hillside. It is now several years since the first commemoration service was held in the dell, and yesterday, as usual, thousands from near and far attended the service.

"The plague was taken to Eyam, in September, 1665, in a box of clothes sent from London to the village tailor, George Vicars, who lived in a cottage near the parish church. The house is still called 'Plague Cottage.' Nearly two centuries after the visitation stones bearing the names of the villagers who died of the plague were found near many of the houses. According to the parish registers, 250 out of a population of 330 lost their lives. The rector and the Rev. Thomas Stanley took the lead in helping and comforting the villagers in their distress.

"Headed by the village brass band, the usual procession was formed yesterday near the parish church, and on the way to the dell suitable hymns were sung. In the course of the simple service, tribute was paid to the self-sacrificing example set by the 'brave men of Eyam' of two-and-a-half centuries ago."

### OUTSIDE THE GATES.

We take a quite special satisfaction (says *The Woman's Leader*) in making the following announcement. On September 14th will appear in this paper the first of a series of articles entitled "What I Remember," written by Mrs. Henry Fawcett, J.P., LL.D. During her long life, Mrs. Fawcett has been brought into contact with most of that which is best in the academic and political life of her time, and her recollections, which will extend back to her childhood's memories of the sea and its heroic lifeboat rescues and the outstanding personalities who influenced her, will have an interest for everybody, but most of all our readers, not only to those who for many years have regarded Mrs. Fawcett as their leader, but to the younger generation who has entered into the fruit of her labours.

The world is the poorer by the death of Mrs. Hertha Ayrton, a great scientist, not the least of whose services to humanity was the invention and presentation to the War Office of the "Ayrton Flapper," widely used during the War for the dispersal of poison gas in trenches and dug-outs.

### BOOK OF THE WEEK.

#### DAMASCUS GATE.\*

This very remarkable book cannot fail to delight intelligent readers. It is far above the average, and more than sustains the reputation which Mr. Raymond achieved in "Tell England."

Those who are aware of the author's association with Toc H. will understand the goal at which the book finally ends.

But it is the analysis of character that enthralls quite apart from the story itself.

Lella and Oscar, Henry Guard, Herr Mocken, Aunt Agatha, are all drawn with the accuracy of a pen which thoroughly understands human nature.

It is a pity that, there being so many good things in the book, it is only possible to indicate them briefly and quite impossible to do them justice.

Oscar Pool Shattery and Lella Shattery Pool were first cousins, not ordinary first cousins in any sense.

Oscar even at the age of eleven months was not of a retiring nature. Not at all. Ask Ruby Shattery, his mamma; ask Annie Ottley, the nurse parlour-maid; ask any unfortunate guest who comes to call on Ruby Shattery if Oscar is a retiring child?

Well, the child is father of the man. At seven years old he was the same, only more so, aided and abetted by his faithful ally, Lella, who ever remained his admirer and "mate."

Truly marvellous were their "parts," as Annie Ottley called their disturbing ways. "Them little comics. Did you ever see the like of them?"

At nineteen Lella and Oscar were still "mates." Love in the accepted term did not seem to enter into their vision. Lella fell in love with each successive curate of the church she attended, and finally married Henry Guard. It was at this time that she had visions of self-abnegation.

Lella liked discussing Lella. The Reverend Henry Guard was also partial to the subject. Her biggest difficulty was Thomas à Kempis.

"Have we *really* got to do all he says?" she asked.

Henry's own position was that he would sincerely try to go a good way with Thomas, and then leave the merciless old man to venture into his spiritual wilderness alone.

So he preached a gospel to Lella, which he himself was afraid to adventure, and Lella, being a shrewd girl, soon discovered that the handsome curate had feet of clay. But she continued to love him all the same.

Oscar, of course, was the first person she wished to tell of her engagement, but he forestalled her with news of his own.

"Hello, Lella," he said; "I was just coming to rout you out. You're the only person who'll understand. If I don't tell you I'll bust."

"Well, what is it?"

\* By Ernest Raymond.

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