



Bravery

HERE is one of the rarest stories of collective bravery I have encountered. It concerns the little village of Eyam in Derbyshire. When the great Plague of London was raging, a box of clothes was sent from London to a tailor in the village they were damp. The servant who dried them became ill, and speedily died, as did others in the same house. The dread plague had arrived. There was a stampede from the village, a great rush to reach the wind-swept moors and put pestilence behind. But the rector, William Mompesson, did an extraordinary thing. He saw that this action would spread the plague throughout the north of England. So he called together the 350 souls of the village and put the case to them: that they, in the interests of others, remain within a circle drawn a mile round the village; that food be brought to depots on that line from the surrounding villages, and no one go outside. Gripped by his plea, they stayed: for twelve months not a soul left the village, and the dreaded plague

Wind Magic

By Betty Kerr

Have you ever gone a-walking
On a windy afternoon,
When cloudlets race across a sap-
phire sky,
And the tall trees are a-talking
As they sway beneath the moon
That is hanging, half-forgotten, up
on high.
Have you heard, half glad, half
tragic,
All the voices of the air
That the wind has fashioned into
rhythmic tune?
If you have you've felt the magic
And enchantment that is there
In a sunny windy Autumn afternoon.

was not scattered round the country-side, but stayed within Eyam. Three hundred and fifty souls there were at the start of that ordeal. There remained 83 when the Dark Death suddenly left. Two hundred and sixty-three died and were buried there. Mompesson's wife was amongst them. I agree with Morton when he says that if any village ever earned a V.C. it was Eyam, for its cool, deliberate bravery.—*Olive*.

CONTRIBUTIONS of original matter of general interest to women and the home, if possible, but not essentially, associated with radio, electrical equipment or home-craft in the widest field, are invited for this page. Space rates. All matter must be brief and in ink, on one side only. Name or nom de plume. Contributors must claim payment for matter published by forwarding at the end of each month clipping, together with date of publication, to our Accountant. Address contributions, "The Editor," Box 1032, Wellington.

That "Something"

THE bluntest and most pungent comment on my sex that I have seen in literature is that of Somerset Maugham. In his "On a Chinese Screen" he tells a story of a Consul encountering an Englishwoman who, as the landlady's daughter, had married a Chinese student in London and returned with him to the land of his fathers. There she found that he already had the customary native wife, and, moreover, that she was to live with her husband's mother and obey her in all things. The household was not a happy one, and the illiterate, blowsy Englishwoman speedily deteriorated. Appealing to the Consul, she was advised that under English law she was not legally married to her Chinese husband, and the advice was given that she should return to England. This she consistently refused to do. At the end of two years she burst one morning into the Consul's domicile, dishevelled and unkempt, bearing an evil-smelling mess of pottage, with the story that effort was being made to poison her—quite an understandable procedure on the part of the two native women, with whom she would be quite out of harmony. Once more the Consul pleaded with her to leave. "What on earth makes you stay with the man?" he cried. She hesitated for a moment, but finally, with a curious look in her eyes, replied: "There's something in the way his hair grows on his forehead that I cannot help liking." This was the end. In a cold fury the Consul walked off, and though a man not often using bad language, could not restrain himself from the summing up: "Women are simply bloody!"—*Antoinette*.

An Evil of "Capitalism"

LISTENING recently to an eloquent tirade on the evils of "capitalism" by my wash-lady (by the way, is it a demerit of the electric washer that this voluble specimen, with her charming conversation, will be no longer required?) I could not help thinking

of the way in which Samuel Johnson summed up those incipient Socialists of his day. This is what he says: "Sir, your levellers wish to level down as far as themselves; but they cannot bear levelling up to themselves." It has always struck me that there is a lot of meat in that epigram.—*Daphne*.

"Five and Ten"

ONE of the new books I have read lately is "Five and Ten," by Fanny Hirst. It is a tale of an ultra-fashionable, "self-made" American family—father, mother, son and daughter living together and yet utterly apart. Although rolling in wealth, which the father has acquired by his chain of "five and ten-dollar" stores, each member is miserable in his or her own separate life. The mother is ambitious and rises as their wealth increases, and is contemptuous of the father because he is too little to rise with her. The son commits suicide because he finds life too hard, and the mother and daughter both have rather discreditable love affairs just to pass the time, it would seem. It keeps one in a turmoil from start to finish, and everyone seems in a continual whirl of excitement or emotion. One is used to American slang nowadays, but it is rather startling to have the heroine tell a would-be lover to "go plump to hell!" In the end, the father, the sanest of them all, deliberately leaves his daughter to struggle with "poverty" on several hundred pounds a year! Altogether the book makes one feel that if this is fashionable American life, it is good to be a New Zealander, amid sane, calm surroundings, with just enough to make ends meet.

Curiously enough, the next book I happened to read was a very old-fashioned one by Jane Austen, "Northanger Abbey." This was a soul-satisfying feast; the satire, the delicate humour, the whole style of the book gives pleasure, quite apart from the story. The heroine, no doubt, would be considered too meek and mild nowadays, but the chief charm of the book lies in the telling.—*S.D.*

Quaint Epitaphs

I have a friend who has a hobby of collecting quaint epitaphs. Glancing through her collection recently I came across these two quaint specimens, each redolent of the craft of the deceased. Can anyone quote others as apt? The first was to the memory of a Yorkshire cook:

*Underneath this crust
Lies the mouldering dust
Of Eleanor Batchelor Shoven,
Well versed in the arts
Of pies, custards, and tarts,
And the lucrative trade of the oven.
When she lived long enough
She made her last puff,
A puff by her husband much praised,
And now she doth lie
And make a dirt pie,
In hopes that her crust may be raised.*

The next one, somewhat more sweet and reserved, commemorating Benjamin Franklin, runs as follows:—

"The body of Benjamin Franklin, Printer (like the cover of an

The Little Old Table

By Thomas Hardy

Creak, little wood thing, creak
When I touch you with elbow
or knee;
That is the way you speak
Of one who gave you to me!
You, little table she brought—
Brought me with her own hand,
As she looked at me with a
thought
That I did not understand.
—Whoever owns it anon,
And hears it, will never know
What a history hangs upon
That creak from long ago.

old book, its contents torn out and strip of its lettering and gilding) lies here, food for worms; but the work shall not be lost, for it will (as he believed) appear once more in a new and more elegant edition, revised and corrected by the Author."—*Olive*.