

IN MEMORIAM.**MRS. EDWARD COSTELLO,
THANE'S CREEK.**

The Warwick Presbyterian minister, the Rev. W. Parton Shinton, conducted yesterday in the Presbyterian Church, Thane's Creek, a memorial service for Mrs. Edward Costello, wife of Major Edward Costello, who is on active service. The deceased lady recently died in Cairo. The service was attended by the bereaved families, and the church was crowded with sympathising friends from near and far.

During his discourse, Mr. Shinton said: I had been away on holiday, and did not think to come back to such news as this. Surely it could not be true, that Avon Costello was dead! But it was true, and I have never known the truth a sharper, sadder blow. In my work as a minister I am used to death, but never before to death of this tragic sort. Surely here was one whom death would not touch for many years yet. I know well that classic stream, Shakespeare's Avon, at Stratford, England, and I can say she was wisely named in her baptism after that river so gentle, pure, and lovely. These glades of the Downs have never known a woman more notable for unconscious goodness and a realisable shining-out of what I must call a beautiful soul. I say, remembering where I say it, she was like a flower, and alas, faded as quickly as flowers do. But what do I feel and know beside what they know and feel in those two darkened homes, the home of her parents at Karara, and the home of her too-brief wedded days over the creek here? I could almost wish that God had never given her father and mother (now twice bereaved of their children in one year) such a daughter, as they were to lose her so soon and like this. I pray His grace may keep such a grief from the rest of us. She lies in a grave thousands of miles away from us in a strange land that is only a name to us. What a sad world it is! I pray that their hearts, not healed yet from the loss their son, may not break altogether, and that they may see through this gloom the face of God. And the other home, the home of her husband's father and mother, where she came as a bride, fresh as a child and loving as if she had been their own. Can there be gladness there again for a long, long while?

ness there again for a long, long while? It was plain to see that Avon Costello kept up their hearts while their son was away fighting. Her young form and good heart about their home gave a new light to their days. They look upon the costly wedding gift of Edward's brother officers, and recall her quick eager voice saying so hopefully and trustfully that when the Major came home after the war they would use its contents on the table in the home he would make for her. And such a lovely home it was to be. Now, that home will never be made. Let me recall that tent array in distant Palestine. Darkness is here in two homes. But an eclipse is over that tent, the very base and centre of the shadow of death. Edward is a very girl, strong man I am told; he needs all his strength, and greater strength to bear this weight of woe. Oh, it is unutterable. He has the stature and spirit of a true and gallant gentleman (and I mean much by that); but I would not choose to be the German or Turk in the hours when, fierce that war has set sundering seas between him and the wife he so loved, he charged with his men across the sands of Egypt and Palestine. It was he for whom we feared, never for her. Let me say deliberately that after I came to Warwick, knew her, and heard the story, more than any other I used to dread a telegram from the base with sad news of him. But it is the utterly unexpected, the almost unbelievable, that has happened. I can find no words for such a grief as his. She would go to him right across the seas, for God had joined them together, and even war should not keep them asunder. In her journey we saw the courage of love. To me it has seemed the one romance of war in this neighborhood. It was a perilous journey in many ways for her; yet such a woman could go anywhere in safety. I was one of the friends who saw her leave Warwick in the train. They met in that far, old land, and I am sure their hearts had met in each other. But even there, I understand, they were separated again all too soon, for the soldiers there had to keep the field. Yet she did not fold her hands, for she was proud to be a soldier's wife. I am sure many an Australian soldier had blessed her for her ministrations in the hospital in Cairo, for she was eager for work with the Red Cross. She served her King and country. I am glad to hear that one of our own Warwick Presbyterian soldiers, Mr. W. J. Wilson, had a

soldiers, Mr. W. J. Wilson, had a glimpse of her as she crossed the court of a hospital in Cairo. She had the smile that comforts sufferers, and the quiet voice and manner that soothe a racked frame to sleep. Her name, I think, should be on a roll of honor in this church. I am sure the soldiers of Thane's Creek will desire it, that her memory be kept green and children ask for the beautiful story in years to come. Should she not have gone to Egypt? One higher than she set that journey in her destiny! When we thought it was a young wife's desire to see her husband that led her there, we said good and well; and shall we not say good and well now we see she made that journey in the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God? Yet it is a grief beyond utterance. How

much of her dear ones died with her! Her death seems like an arrow striking a dear white bird. But God is our Saviour, and His love is holy. Her husband is still in Palestine. Palestine! It is the land of the Redeemer Who arose and will call our dead arise. Bethlehem, Calvary, Olivet are there, and I suppose Edward Costello has seen those holy places, perhaps is now among them. So he is in the very locality of redemption, and hope, and consolation, and eternal life, and he is a religious man. Jesus Christ will be not only near, but also very real to Him there. Peace to all our disturbing doubts. The Lord hath called her. Avon Costello was a saved soul, and the Lord will lead her through the valley of the shadow. A month ago a child of four met me near the Manso in Grafton-street, and said with wide eyes. "Jesus Christ is dead." I told the child that Jesus Christ is living now and forever. So Avon Costello is not dead, but living, because when she was among us she had eternal life in her heart. May God help her nearest and dearest, one and all, and us also, to trust in Him that He has done this because of grace, mercy, peace, and loving kindness that is past all understanding.