

its sentiments over the romance of Fate which brought back its Vicar and his lost wife and restored them to happiness. It did this eventually in its own warm, large-fisted, whole-hearted manner, though it never pretended to know exactly all that happened.

"Life is a queer thing," observed one of its wise men sagaciously. "Life is an astonishing queer thing."

"Yes," agreed another; "and if you ask me, our Vicar and his good lady have gone and tasted the queerest side of it. Reckon they had a mighty bitter taste in their mouths for a while, though everything be all right and proper now."

"Oh!" rejoined the first sapiently; "it don't do people no harm to find out that there's bitter as well as sweet in this world, and that most of us are expected to taste 'em both, just to get a proper understanding of things."

"P'raps so," assented the other. "But 'spite of all they do be telling tales, they do for sure."

"And they'll go on telling 'em," was the response. "Sure as tongues was made for talking they'll go on telling 'em. But bless ye, tales don't break no bones, though they're sometimes hard enough on the feelings, and sore feelings are just about as bad as sore bones, and that's a fact."

Lumley Beacon was content to leave it at that. If there were any sceptics, and there always are sceptics, they were fully and finally convinced that all must be well again when Lady Stapleton, the renowned and fashionable Lady Stapleton, called at the Vicarage, stayed nearly two hours, and was seen by at least a score of trustworthy witnesses taking a most affectionate leave of Mrs. Herrick. All must be well since Fashion thus signifies its approval.

THE END.