

"What the mischief is he up to now?" exclaimed the vicar. "I can't pull him up, my dear; his muscles are far stronger than mine."

They were indeed; the bull-necked little beast had the power of ten ponies in his chest and loins, when he chose to put it forth; and a much stronger man than the vicar would scarcely have succeeded in holding him in, when his mind was bent so obstinately on running away as it was at this moment. He rattled along at a great pace; never had he been known to go so fast; stone hedges and granite quoits would doubtless have appeared to fly behind, had it been possible to see them.

"It is useless," said the vicar, laying down the reins in calm despair. "I have no power over him. After all, animals are often much wiser than men; he may know better than we where he is going."

Mrs. Venables cowered closely to her husband's arm. "I am afraid he will run up against something," she said, in a timid whisper.

"I don't think he will," rejoined the vicar; "he is a sensible beast on the whole."

It was not long before Charles came to a dead stop, so suddenly as to shake his master and mistress violently in their seats.

"Where are we now?" inquired the vicar, petulantly. "Get on, you brute!" And he flicked Charles sharply with his whip. But Charles refused to stir; he stood like a solid rock, and neither threats nor entreaties had the smallest effect on him. The whip was equally ineffective; and the vicar turned towards his wife with a mournful shrug of the shoulders.

"He knows he is in some dangerous place, Theophilus," said the old lady. "Oh, I am so terrified! I daresay he is standing on the brink of an old mine-shaft. Don't beat him any more; he may throw us down some awful pit."

"There's no knowing where he may have brought us, certainly," the vicar admitted; and with that, he relapsed into silence.

Presently, Charles began to give signs of a most uncomfortable restlessness. He stamped impatiently on the ground, whinnied loudly, and jerked himself more than once in the shafts in such a way as to suggest very disagreeable possibilities in the event of his being really on the brink of some precipice.

"I don't like this," said Mr. Venables. "I think I must unharness him; he will do some mischief, break the shafts, or upset us perhaps."

"Do be careful!" entreated his wife, seeing him preparing to dismount. "I wish you would not get out."

"Of course I shall be careful." The answer came in an irritable tone, for the vicar's temper was beginning to give way under these accumulated trials. His fingers were chilled, and the straps and buckles slippery with the rime; but he succeeded at last in freeing Charles, who gave a snort of relief, and instantly trotted away without, apparently, the smallest thought for the safety of his companions in misfortune. "Oh, he's gone!" exclaimed Mrs. Venables, whom this desertion by their dumb companion seemed to strike with additional dismay. "What on earth shall we do?"

"We had better shout, I suppose," said her husband, getting into his seat again; "there's a possibility, of course, that some one may hear us."

They shouted together: the old lady's thin piping contrasted oddly with her husband's stentorian bellows. There was no reply, save that when the noise of their voices ceased, there appeared to be a mournful murmuring in the air, but that was probably imagination. They waited a few minutes and then called again more loudly; and this time there was an extraordinary answer. A loud rattling rending sound broke the stillness, there was a sudden crash, and a sound of voices: a light flashed; something hard and metallic was flung to the ground at no great distance from them; and then, with a scuttering of feet, everything died away into silence again.

Mrs. Venables was too much frightened to speak; she clung closely to her husband's arm; and he himself was too much disconcerted for a moment to venture on speech.

"As to what may have been, I can't venture a guess," he said. "It seems likely that we shall be here for some time, however. You had better put on all the wraps we can find."

He rummaged about under the seat, and found a heavy carriage rug, which, when drawn up over them, promised to protect them very fairly from the cold.

"Come, it might be worse," said the parson. "I don't remember spending a night out of doors before: it will be a new experience.—Are you warm, my dear?"

Mrs. Venables was very warm; in fact, she was clothed in so many shawls that nothing short of Arctic frost could have reached her. She was in fact comfortable enough; and as everything around was now profoundly quiet, she soon began to yield to the drowsiness induced by the excitement of the last hour. The parson made her as comfortable as he could, and sat thoughtfully considering their position. Reflection brought out no new facts. Nor did it offer any better solution of the existing difficulty, than that they should sit still until something happened—for instance, until the day broke; though the unpleasant thought suggested itself that even then, unless the fog had lifted, their position would not be improved.

The situation was disagreeable enough; but the parson, who was not devoid of philosophy, was beginning to nod over it, while Mrs. Venables was snoring loudly, when a step was heard by the side of the wheel, a light was flashed into the vicar's eyes, and a rough voice exclaimed: "Why, master, what be ee sitting here for?"

"It's Hugh!" cried Mrs. Venables, joyfully awaking in an instant from her slumber. "O dear Hugh! how did you find us?"

"Ay, Hugh, where are we?" the vicar broke in. "Did you come out to look for us? What a good fellow you are! Are you sure you know the way back?"

"Way back!" repeated Hugh contemptuously. "Back where?"

"Where? Why, home! To the vicarage, to be sure! Where else could we want to go at this time of night?"

"And where do ee think you be, then?" asked Hugh, still more contemptuously than before.

"Now do, like a good fellow, ask no more questions," said the vicar, getting down from his seat; "but show us the way back, unless it is too far to walk."

"Well, I never knew the like of this!" said Hugh; and with that he laid his hand on his master's shoulder and guided him a few paces in advance of where the shafts of the pony-carriage touched the ground. "There!" he said gruffly, "what be that?"

"That's a wall, it seems," said the vicar, considerably mystified.

"Ay," said the man; "and what be that?"

"A gate, as I live!" shouted the vicar—"my own gate, the vicarage gate.—Anna, we are at home!"

"Do you mean to tell me, Theophilus," said the old lady in a tremulous voice, "that I have been sitting screaming myself hoarse, and catching my death of cold at my own gate all the time?"

"I am afraid you have, my dear.—Ho, ho! what a joke this is!—You mustn't tell Hattie, Anna.—Let me help you out."

"I can get out very well by myself," said Mrs. Venables testily; "and as for helping me, you might have thought of that an hour ago, and saved me from this ridiculous position."

"My dear," said the vicar, rather dismayed at the suddenness of this attack, "I did all I could."

"Oh, I don't know," his wife answered impatiently. "We shall be the laughing-stock of the neighbourhood.—And what has become of Charles, I should like to know?"

"Yes, Hugh, what has become of Charles?" repeated the vicar, relieved to have the opportunity of changing the subject.

"In the parlour," replied Hugh. "Came in forty-five minutes ago—so the boy says; and he'd have told me at once, if he hadn't had a fool's head atop of his shoulders."

"No! No wonder the poor beast was restive!" commented the parson. "I shouldn't have sat so quietly myself, if I had known my supper was within fifty yards of me."

As they stood on the doorstep waiting for an answer to their summons, Mrs. Venables whispered to her husband: "We needn't tell Belinda." The parson nodded, and at that moment the door was opened by a trim maid-servant, and Miss Belinda came running out into the hall.

"Oh, Uncle Theophilus!" she cried—"oh Aunt Anna, I have been so frightened!"

"Frightened, you silly child—what at?" asked Mrs. Venables.

"There were such horrid shrieks at the garden gate," said Miss Belinda; "you never heard such howls and howlings."

"Some one of the farmers going home from the inn," said the parson. "What is there so terrible in that?"

"O no!" said his niece. "They were not human voices—they were much too harsh; they were screaming of fiends."

The vicar looked at his wife as if to satisfy himself what she thought of this plain speaking about her vocal powers.

"Stuff and nonsense, Belinda!" said the old lady angrily. "I can't listen to such trash. How could there have been any fiends at the gate of the vicarage?"

"Oh, but there were," Miss Belinda persisted; "for Jane said she would go out and see what it was, though I advised her not; and she went as far as the gate with a lantern; and there she saw a hearse with plumes on it, and she was so frightened that she dropped the lantern and ran" back, and we barred the door and bolted it."

"Now, don't let us have any more of this," said the vicar decisively. "Your head is too full of these things, Belinda; and Jane is as foolish as you are. Let us have our supper, and pray, oblige me by forgetting this nonsense."

And the truth about Parson Venables' adventure is now for the first time made generally known.

[THE END.]

### All Like Her.

There is a type of girl that everybody likes. Nobody can tell exactly why, but after you have met her you turn away to some other woman and say: "Don't you like Miss Grosvenor?" Now, the reason you like her is a subtle one; without knowing all about her you feel just the sort of a girl she is.

She is the girl who is not "too bright and good" to be able to find joy and pleasure all over the world.

She is the girl who appreciates the fact that she cannot always have the first choice of everything in the world.

She is the girl who is not aggressive and does not find joy in inciting aggressive people.

She is the girl who has tact enough not to say the very thing that will cause the skeleton in her friend's closet to rattle his bones.

She is the girl who, whether it is warm or cold, clear or stormy, finds no fault with the weather.

She is the girl who, when you invite her to any place, compliments you by looking her best.

She is the girl who is sweet and womanly to look at and listen to, and who doesn't strike you as a poor imitation of a demimondaine.

She is the girl who makes this world a pleasant place because she is so pleasant herself.

And, by and by, when you come to think of it, isn't she the girl who makes you feel she likes you, and therefore, you like her? —[Boston Globe.]

### Chivalrous Devotion.

At the most extensive aquarium in England, the Brighton Zoo, the female lobster recently cast her shell. She screwed herself up together on the toes and tail, and suddenly bent her body. Snap went the shell in its centre, and the case of the back came away in one piece. The claws were her next care, and she worked away at them for a long time.

It was a proceeding of extreme delicacy, considering that all the flesh of the great claw had to be passed through the small base. During the operation one claw came off altogether, and this must have seemed to the lobster lady a serious misfortune, as it will not grow to its full size again until the second year. The tail and legs gave very little trouble, and the body, when thus undressed, proved to be of a pale blue.

The shell-casting over, the lobster sank on the sand, and this action seemed a signal for the attack of every creature in the tank.

The defenceless victim bade fair to succumb to the fury of her enemies, when the male lobster suddenly came to the rescue. Stand over his shell-less better half, he fought her assailants relentlessly. Day and night did he watch over her, until her shell was sufficiently hardened to protect her in fighting her own battles.

When this happy moment arrived, he deliberately picked up the old claw, broke it in his nippers, and ate the meat. He then dug a hole in the sand, placed in it the broken bits of shell, buried them, and piled a number of small stones above the grave.

Among the many noble ladies of England who have "gone into trade" may be numbered Mrs. Arthur Wellesley, a grandniece of the Iron Duke. Mrs. Wellesley and Mrs. Heskoth Smith have opened a fashionable flower shop in Grosvenor Street, London. The bouquets that come from this establishment are said to be especially artistic.

The Princess of Wales will be represented among the exhibitors in Vienna this month at the International Exhibition of Amateur Photographers to be held there under the patronage of the Archduchess Maria Theresa. There will be numerous other royal contributors to the collection, among them the Archduchess Maria Theresa herself and the Grand Duke Ferdinand of Tuscany.

### What Baby Thinks.

BY KATE THORN.

Somebody wants to know what the baby thinking of?

And we, too, would like to know. It is a subject on which considerable conjecture may be indulged, but to get at the truth of the matter might be somewhat difficult. And we should not, probably, recognize the truth when we found it.

A baby of the genuine, orthodox style—hairless, colorless, shapeless as to body, with a head round as a bullet, a forehead as puckered and wrinkled as his grandmother's, and two little blinking eyes set far back in a mass of putty-colored layers of fat—is not to our mind a very attractive spectacle to contemplate, though we are well aware that every worshipping mother of a baby will hate us most devoutly in consequence of our opinion.

A big apple-dumpling, with two huckleberries judiciously set therein, might sit for almost any small baby's photograph, with good hope of success.

The baby's sole idea, if one may be allowed to judge from his actions, is how best to get both his fists into his mouth at once; and after that comes the problem of how he can best turn his heels over his head without getting off his back to accomplish the feat. And when he finds he cannot do either of these things to his satisfaction, he gets mad and cries, and his loving mother is terrified for fear cholera infantum is coming on, and she gives him a dose of soothing syrup, and sends for a doctor.

No doubt a baby has some notions of his own, if he were only given the faculty of speech to express them.

The world to him smells of flannel and sour milk. We wonder if his very soul does not breathe paregoric.

And if he could not like to rid the universe of that vile abomination which has so many times been employed to ransack his infantile stomach, and which is designed by the label—CASTOR OIL?

Does he like being caught suddenly, and tossed up to the ceiling, and turned upside down, and downside up, in the reckless way people have of handling babies? Does he relish snappy kisses from fond old aunts and uncles who eat onions to kill the taint of whiskey and tobacco, or vice versa, we do not know which?

What does he think when a pin sticks in him, and he yells with agony, and his mother takes him on her knee, and trots him, and tells the nurse she is afraid the "little precious" is going to have that "dreadful, nasty colic" again? And then comes the castor oil bottle?

Is it happiness for the baby to be swathed in flannel, and smothered in pillows, in a furnace-heated room where the mercury is higher than it has any legitimate right to be on the first of July?

Does he like to have his feet produced from their wrappings and shown to admiring visitors as the "prettiest little footsies tootsies" in the world? Does he like to have his toes felt and squeezed? Does he like to have fingers thrust in his mouth to make him show his new teeth?

Don't you suppose he wishes the man that invented soothing syrup could be hung?

Why does he like to pull hair? Why does he contemplate his toes by the hour, and break into spasms of shrieking if anybody crosses the fascinating objects?

How does he like his mother to churn him up and down on her knee after he is fed, and then put him in the cradle and rock him till his wretched little head bounces from side to side, and the world turns round before his dizzy vision, and, weary with trying to keep pace with it, he falls asleep at last?

We were all babies ourselves once, but we are none the wiser for it; and it seems quite likely that time will go on, and we shall none of us know what the baby thinks.

An English statistician estimates the world's indebtedness at \$150,000,000,000.

Grant Allen, the English novelist, is a fair-haired, thin-made, intellectual-looking man of forty-five or so, with light blue eyes, and iron gray hair of a wavy texture. He was born in Canada, but has resided in England so many years that he calls himself an Englishman. He keeps a note book, and is quite an adept as a shorthand writer. Whenever and wherever an idea strikes him, he pulls out pencil and notebook and crystallizes it then and there. Very often he has two or more novels or stories underway at the same time. When he tires of one he takes up another, as the mood seizes him, and seldom fails to make a success of anything towards which he seriously bends his energies.