

A WONDERFUL CURE;

OR, A NEW VERSION OF THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN.

"I heard you wanted a housekeeper, sir," said a trim-looking, middle-aged woman, with a firm, direct expression that was pleasant to see, though there was with it a mixture of strong self-satisfaction.

"I do want one," replied the gentleman, turning from an office-table before which he was seated.

"If I can suit you, sir, I want a place," said the woman. "I have a ten years' character."

"Good," said the gentleman, who forthwith made the inquiries usual in such cases, to which he received answers that were only too satisfactory, that is as the candidate expressed them; every succeeding one showed him more plainly that whatsoever she was in the opinion of the world, she stood tip-top in her own. Her references, however, were too recommendatory to be slighted, so he told her he would make inquiries, and engage her if he found all correct.

He, Mr. Burns, did find all correct, and engaged her. He was a merchant, his family lived in the country, and the housekeeper he wanted was for his business residence in town. For this place a trustworthy person was eminently needful, as very important property and papers were deposited in the house, from which he was always absent on Sunday, and generally at night, his sleeping there being the exception from the rule,

Hannah Teague was to be trusted, if any faith could be placed in the report of others, or in her own self-confidence, and although Mr. Burns was almost prejudiced against her by her very self-righteous sentiments, he felt constrained to try her.

So, in a short time she was established as head of the domicile in Brook Street; having under her a young girl to do such work as she considered below the functions of a housekeeper of ten years' character.

Mr. Burns soon saw a great difference

VOL. 4,

in the house. The mats that used to return to his shoes with interest the dirt he had rubbed off, were now thoroughly cleaned, and executed their purpose; the handles of the doors that had become black through long estrangement from brick-dust and leather, shone out like stars in the dark passage; the windows lost the gloomy film that had settled on them from want of any washing but what they had received now and then from a good-natured shower; and daylight came in on all sides and made the house quite cheerful.

Mr. Burns had grown so used to the neglect of his old housekeeper, that he had borne all the evils of dirt without remonstrance—scarcely considering them as evils that could be lessened, but rather as disagreeable necessities connected with a house of business; but when cleanliness smiled around him he smiled in return, and rejoiced in the change. Then, as to his accounts, he must have been sadly cheated before; there was such a wide difference in the baker's bill, the butcher's bill, the grocer's bill; such retrenching in all things, and yet so much more comfort, and so improved a bill of fare. He was more than satisfied with her; in fact, he liked everything about her but—herself and she liked herself so much, he felt it, utterly impossible to do that.

Now, Mrs. Teague, although she so entirely believed in her own excellence, that the want of praise from others would by no means have shaken her good opinion herself, had a warning after approbation while she affected indifference to it; and it was a mortification to her that her master, when he expressed himself well pleased with what she did, said not a word that indicated she was personally growing in his esteem.

"I do believe," ruminated Mrs. Teague one afternoon,—after having received her second quarter's salary, and had the same cold commendations, "Oh, yes, perfectly

NO. 10,