

THE NEW HOUSEKEEPER.

Down went the knife and fork, back the chair, and Jacob Foster arose from the breakfast table, exclaiming: This is more than the patience of a saint could stand!

Who, most likely, will be no better than her predecessor. We have had five within as many weeks. I tell you, brother, that first-class cooks will not come out of town, unless to a place offering more attractions than ours.

Humph! Speak of yourself, if you please, Rachel. But it seems to me some of our servants manage to exist here.

No; the horses are company enough for Peter, while John and Jane I really believe are attached to us. Having been with us in happier times, they do not feel like deserting us in our need.

I know that. Your wife was an admirable housekeeper. After her death, how hard dear little Susie tried to have everything as mamma did, to please.

Rachel Foster! how dare you speak of her to me? Have I not commanded you—

Brother, I obey only the commands of him who bade us forgive, as we hope to be forgiven. Well, after your cruelty to your child, I tried to make you as comfortable as I could.

I will get relief. I'll advertise for a housekeeper—

Never! The ungrateful, disobedient girl! Never! I bade her choose between a scolding and me. She did, and so shall abide by her decision.

Jacob, I should think six years might have softened your heart. Nay, you need not scowl, or try to stop my saying what I intend to do.

Never! once and forever! and to prevent any further remonstrance or pleading, Jacob Foster left the room, slamming the door after him.

A sigh of disappointment escaped Rachel's lips. For a long time she had determined to plead once more with Jacob Foster for his child.

Seated on the doorstep of a neat cottage, in the suburbs of a large city, was a little girl. Eagerly she was watching for the coming of some one. Soon her blue eyes grew brighter, and clapping her hands with a cry of joy, she ran to meet the welcome one.

A paper and letter for you, mamma. See! See! the little one cried, holding high above her head what she thought a great prize. With weary steps the little woman ascended and sank to a seat on the porch, dropping beside her a large bundle.

From the house came an elderly woman, who with a kind, gentle manner relieved her of the little black bonnet and wrapping, and handing them to the child said:

Take mamma's bonnet and shawl and put them away. See how tired she is.

Do open your letter. I hope it brings you some good news. I could hardly wait your coming to know.

With a sad look and shake of her head, which told how little hope she had of good news the letter was opened, and read in silence. Then passing it to the anxiously waiting one, the little widow said, with a sigh:

I have long since ceased to hope for good news from home.

Then opening the paper, she turned to a marked paragraph, and read aloud:

Wanted, a few miles in the country; a middle aged woman as housekeeper. Must come well recommended, and be thoroughly acquainted with her duties.

After a moment's silence, during which the elder woman seemed waiting some explanation, the other said:

Some friend has sent me this. But how could I hope to obtain the position? Oh if I only could!

Poor child! although I would grieve to lose you, still I wish you could. It would be so much easier than your toiling with your needle. But how can you? You are too young.

I will answer the advertisement and try, at any rate.

Jacob Foster looked in perfect dismay at the pile of letters in answer to his advertisement.

How should he decide? Rachel's advice was sought; and after mature consideration, they both thought favorably of the application of one recommended by a physician of high standing, and the pastor of the church of which she was a member.

The housekeeper arrived at a time of great need. A few days previous, Jacob Foster was thrown from his horse, and very severely injured.

And there trembling before him, her head and shoulders covered by a mass of bright wavy tresses, her eyes, eager, anxious, and terrified, gazing into his, was no longer the housekeeper, but Susie his child.

Forgive! Oh, forgive me, father! she cried, sinking beside him.

Please have pretty mamma stay, whispered Mary.

Forgive! forgive me! again she pleaded, clinging to his hand.

The hardened heart was bending, the iron will breaking.

Thank God! escaped Rachel's lips, as she saw the father's eyes grow dim with tears.

Jacob Foster raised his child to his bosom, and holding her there, whispered:

God has restored both my darlings to me. Forgiven! she murmured, in joyous, grateful tones.

And the angels in heaven caught the cry, and returned it, with one of additional joy and blessed promise:

Forgiven—as your Heavenly Father shall forgive you.

Jacob Foster, in losing his housekeeper, felt not the least regret, for her place is more than filled by Susie. And ever since has her father blessed the day that he advertised for a housekeeper, and Rachel's "ruse" in securing for him the only one that could have made him so happy.

THE PARSON CORNERED.

Parson Burcher was an irrepressible old codger, always seeking opportunity to combat somebody, and never so well satisfied as when he had cornered an opponent.

Often he would forget and call her Susie. At such times, little Mary's mother would turn aside to wipe away the tear which came in pity for the Susie whose sad story she knew.

Jacob Foster considered himself the most fortunate man in having secured such a model housekeeper as Mrs. Mordant; yet many times he found himself wondering if such a bright, beautiful little fairy as Mary could be really the child of a woman so grim, grave and very plain looking.

housekeeper had been a little younger and better looking, I think he would have been even better suited. The pleasant change in his household affairs produced a similar one in Jacob Foster's disposition.

So, a few days after, the kind-hearted Rachel placed in her brother's hand a letter from his child. Pleadingly Susie wrote to be allowed to come to him.

She was alone with her little child, struggling for a living. Rachel watched him read the letter through, and then she entreated more earnestly than ever before for Susie. But in vain. No she should not come.

Soon after this, little Mary's bright eyes grew heavy; the rosy lips became parched with fever, and her sunny head drooped on Jacob Foster's shoulder.

Mary was ill; and when the physician came and pronounced it an alarming disease, the hearts that she had made happy with her smiles grew awed and sad.

Scarcely less anxious than the mother, Jacob Foster watched beside little Mary's couch.

Many times he heard her calling out for her "pretty mamma," and she would put up her little hands, and cry, bring back my pretty mamma, please! He thought her wandering, crazed with fever.

The day of great hope and terrible fear came.

To-day, said the doctor, will decide if we shall keep her.

After a long natural sleep, by which the mother, Rachel and Jacob Foster watched, Mary opened her sweet eyes, and smiling, whispered:

Grandpa!

A frightened look came on the mother's and Rachel's face, but Jacob Foster neared the little form, and pressing his lips to hers, said, turning to the housekeeper:

She has been dreaming of her grandfather, I suppose. She will live, I feel sure, to bless him with her love.

Where is he? Would you not like to have him here?

Before the housekeeper could reply, or raise her head from close beside her child the little hands had caught hold, and clung with wonderful strength to the cap which entirely covered and concealed the housekeeper's hair.

In the attempt to retain the disguise, the spectacles were dropped, and in an instant Mary cried:

Now I've got my pretty mamma!

And there trembling before him, her head and shoulders covered by a mass of bright wavy tresses, her eyes, eager, anxious, and terrified, gazing into his, was no longer the housekeeper, but Susie his child.

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Ugh! said he, with a shake and a shrug—this is what I call a cold wet rain.

It sartinly is, responded Crummett. I'd like to ask, put in the Parson, with dictatorial dignity, if you ever heard of any other kind of rain.

Eh? said Uncle Sol, looking up. I ask, repeated the Parson, with the air and emphasis of a master, did you ever hear of any other kind of storm, or rain?

I said this was cold and wet, persisted Uncle Sol.

And did you ever hear of a rain that was hot and dry? asked Parson Burcher, triumphantly.

Ye-es,—I think I have, replied Uncle Sol, with a very assured nod of the head, and a quiet smile twinkling around his eyes.

How was it, Parson, about the "rain that the Lord sent down upon Sodom and Gomorrah?"

For once in his life Parson Burcher was so completely cornered that he had not another word to offer.

"PATRICK, the widow Malony tells me that you stole one of her finest pigs. Is it correct?" "Yis, yer honor." "What have you done with it?" "Killed it and ate it, yer honor." "Oh, Patrick, Patrick! when you are brought face to face with the widow and her pig on the judgment day, what account will you be able to give of yourself when the widow accuses you of stealing?"

"Did you say the pig would be there, yer reverence?" "To be sure I did!" "Well, then, yer reverence, I'll say, Mrs. Malony there's yer pig!"

In a crowded tavern in Ohio a newly arrived emigrant and a judge were put to sleep in the same room, and as they were retiring, the judge said, "My good man, you'd have had to stay a long time in Ireland before you could have roomed with a judge."

"That's so," said the emigrant, coolly surveying his room-mate, "but you'd have had to stay a great deal longer in Ireland before you could have become a judge."

A BOSTON merchant having advertised for a porter, was called on the next day by a stalwart Yankee, who said, "I say, boss, be you the man what advertised for a porter?" "Yes," sternly replied the merchant, "and I expressly stated that all applications must be made by mail."

"Jes' so, boss," responded the Yankee, "an' ef I an't a male, I'd be obleeged of you'd tell me what I am!" He got the situation.

THAT was rather a philosophical urchin who, when he was nine years old, having lost his rabbits by dogs and his pigeons by rats, said to his little sister, "Sis, my opinion is that the happiest period of a boy's life is when he is between three and four years old."

ROMEO, Forepaugh's great performing elephant, died in Chicago recently of an ailment in one of his front feet, which was partly amputated to save his life.

The result was, however, that the elephant lost his fore-paw, and Forepaugh lost his elephant.

PUNCTUATION.—A stranger in a printing-office asked the youngest apprentice, what his rule of punctuation was.

"I set up as long as I can hold my breath, and then I put a comma; when I gape, I insert a semicolon; and when I want a quid of tobacco, I make a paragraph."

"Do you know," asked an old farmer of a politician, "the difference between yourself and my old specked hen?"

The politician gave it up. "Well," said the old farmer, "the difference is this: she never cackles till she's laid her egg, and you are cackling all the time without ever laying any eggs at all."

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