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The Coming of Caroline.

BY MARY E. Q. BRUSH.

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CHAPTER IV.

The echo of the Christmas bells had died away; the coming of the bright New Year had been ushered in. The days were short and sharp with cold; the nights long, dark, and genned with the wretched stars of midwinter.

And little Caroline still abode at the house of Mrs. Rossman! Ever since that Christmas Eve when the latter had watched the child lying there asleep, like a warm and comforted little lamb, there was but seldom a thought of orphan asylums or Houses of the Good Shepherd.

True, Mrs. Saltshy, spurred by resistless curiosity, had come over uninvited, and with unscrupled commiseration had said, "A thousand pities it was that a lady who was all alone in the world wid all she could do to win trink an' am for herself, should be imposed on by havin' a baby lit on the door!" It was an imposition, shure, and nobody'd blame her if she wouldn't put up wid it, at all, at all! And if Mrs. Rossman was that disposed, she, Mrs. Saltshy, wud spake to the Reverend Father O'Dooley and would see that the little girl would be put in the hands of the Sisters, shure, and Mrs. Rossman would have the burden taken off, any loike, and no trouble at all, at all!

Now, to confess the truth, Mrs. Rossman was not a pious woman. She took no interest, whatever in things spiritual; she was no strong in any particular faith. However, she was quick to resent Mrs. Saltshy's officiousness. A half-defined plan—a hazy idea which had been floating around in her mind for days—suddenly stood out clearly. If wavering there had been, it must cease; she would settle the matter once for all and let people know that she could manage her own affairs. So she turned, looked calmly at the expectant Mrs. Saltshy, and quenched her fire with the cool water of these words: "Thanks for your interest, my good woman, but I have decided to keep the little girl with me—for a time, at least."

So Mrs. Saltshy had gone away, shaking her head dubiously, to remark to Miss Spooler, "All the fools ain't dead yet! To think of takin' another mouth to feed and another body to clothe when she herself is as poor as Job's turkeys! An' there's no knowin' what the child'll turn out to be, shure!" Mrs. Rossman may be only a warning a snake in her brist! Howly Saint Patrick defend us all!

Possibly there might be some substance to Mrs. Saltshy's suggestion. Mrs. Rossman, a cool, clear-headed woman, had pondered not a little on the great law of heredity. Who were Caroline's parents? Was it not probable that they were worthless, improvident people even if not worse? What evil tendencies might she not have in her that the years would develop? Mrs. Rossman was not yet middle-aged, but she had lived long enough to have seen instances where adopted children had been total failures, bringing untold miseries on their benefactors. Besides, if Caroline remained with her, it meant harder work on her own part, harder work and self-denial, for there wud be two to provide for instead of one. She would have to face that big opponent, the world, and place her own, weary self between its frowns and the little creature she

had taken into her home. She could do this for her own child—all yes! the joy of that!—but would she have patience to do it for a stranger? Suppose she should spend years of hard work and self-sacrifice, and then should come base ingratitude?

Ingratitude! The word seemed to sting her lips as she uttered it, making her shudder. But just then there came a soft touch of little hands on her gown, and turning, she beheld Caroline, who had run in from her play and now stood looking at her with shining eyes.

"Mammy!" she exclaimed for she had begun to call Mrs. Rossman thus. "Mammy," shyly, "I—I—just comed in to kiss you, mammy!—because—because love was a-bubblin' up in my heart!" Mrs. Rossman stooped and caught the little figure in her arms. Could black ingratitude ever grow old and flourish where love—pure, simple, disinterested love—"bubbled up in the heart?" No, she would not worry about the future; she would thankfully accept the joy of the present. The child was a mysterious but beautiful gift to her, coming she knew not how. Like many others, Mrs. Rossman had only a vague, far-away conception of the Almighty; to her the Bible was as a bit of quaint history—a curiosity of literature. But if there was a Supreme Being who planned for weak human hearts—well, who knew but what he had something to do with the coming of Caroline!

But, as the days pass'd by, there came, side by side with the growing love for the child, a shadowy fear based on her uncertain tenure of the little one. Suppose that the woman called "Mag" should walk in upon her some day and claim Caroline? Or maybe the "Captain" might come! Of the latter she had not so much dread, because, according to Caroline's report, the "Captain" was gentle and kind and would no doubt be reasonable. Besides—this last fact was given one day by the little girl was in an unusually communicative mood—besides, as she said, "the Captain might have gone to heaven!" Caroline remembered that the Captain had been taken away from the tenement house, "her face, oh, so white!" and with a spot like a red, red rose on each cheek. She was sick—very sick, and they were going to take her to the hospital. Even Mag had cried when she said that she "expected the Captain was about done for!" Now Mrs. Rossman had made many queries in regard to this mysterious Mag, the woman who had brought Carol me, but little information had been obtained. The holiday time had been one of confusion; many strangers had been coming and going; Mag had doubtless come on the train and returned in it; her presence had been noticed by but few of the residents on Stubbs' Extension. Tim Murphy, the man at the bakery on the corner, had seen a woman answering to her description; she had come into his place to buy some onions for herself and the child. Miss Spooler, too, had observed her, and her report tallied with Tim's. "Yes, a tall, blue-eyed woman with rather a bold face. Didn't look like a lady, though she was quiet enough as far as talking went; seemed in a hurry to get away; wore a brown dress, a navy-blue jacket, and a felt hat with a red feather and a scarlet ribbon bow on it. No, she wun't nobody that I ever seen before, though I'm sure I'd know her again if she was to come around." Everybody on Stubbs' Extension was eagerly on the look-out for the return of this mysterious stranger. But as the days and weeks passed and no Mag appeared, Mrs. Rossman's heart grew easier. Caroline was to remain with her; the dear little presence was to brighten her home, not only temporarily, but always!

"She is my inspiration!" Mrs. Rossman declared.

"Mammy," said the little girl one day, as she cuddled close in the loving arms, "mammy, you tell me the most beautiful stories when you put me to bed at night; I just love to hear you. You see, I haven't any brothers or sisters, and the children you tell me about in the stories seem just like brothers and sisters. And do you know, mammy, I have been thinking that other girls like to hear the stories. Why can't you write the stories and have them put in papers and magazines? Don't you think there would be a printer man who would be glad to put them in, mammy?"

"I'm sure I don't know, childie," Mrs. Rossman replied in an absent-minded way. She was pondering over Caroline's suggestion. Write stories? Could she? It would do no harm to try—there was always a waste-basket! But there might be some chance of success. In her girlhood days fond friends had prophesied great things from her pen. However, when wealth and ease had been her portion her time had been occupied with social duties. Poverty and affliction had brought depression of spirits and lack of interest in all things. It was not until recently, when she had this happy, appreciative auditor, that the fairy gift of story-telling had seemed to come back to her. Would the editor and the public be as kindly a critic as little Caroline? Could she win their ear at all?

To be Continued.

We have just received the catalogue of Acadia Seminary, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, for 1902-1903. It is a neat, well gotten up pamphlet, full of information concerning that Institution. Any of our young friends who would like to avail themselves of the opportunities afforded there for a sound education will do well to secure a copy of this little book. It can be obtained by writing to the principle, Rev. H. T. DeWolf, Wolfville, N. S.

The Seminary teaching staff is now the largest in the history of the school, and including the teachers of the new departments of Business and Domestic Science, the department of Stenography and one additional teacher on the literary staff, in place of assistant hitherto employed, will number sixteen. The quality of the school's work is guaranteed by the training and efficiency of the staff. They are as follows:

INSTRUCTORS.

1902-1903.

- Rev. H. T. DeWolf, B. A., Principal,
History, Ethics, Psychology, Bible;
- Evelina K. Patten, M. A., Vice-Principal,
Mathematics;
- Prof. E. W. Sawyer, B. A.,
Latin;
- Adella G. Jackson, M. A.,
English, Science;
- M. Blanche Bishop, M. A.,
French, German;
- Assistant in English and Science,
- Margaret Lynds, Emerson College of Oratory,
Elocution, Physical Culture;
- Prof. W. H. A. Moore, Stuttgart, Germany,
Director of Piano;
- Louise T. Churchill, Leipzig, Germany,
Piano;
- Violin,
- Minnie E. Chipman,
Drawing, Painting, History of Art;
- Bianche Sloat,
Assistant in Art;
- Mabel Marvin, Syracuse University,
Voice;
- C. M. Baird,
Stenography and Typewriting;
- Cora P. Archibald,
Domestic Science;
- Mrs. Edw. Kilcup, Matron.
- Eleanor Henry, Nurse.

Write for particulars of courses in Domestic Science and Business.

Quarterly Meeting.

The Albert Co., quarterly meeting met with the Dawson Settlement church on Tuesday and Wednesday, Sept. 2 and 3. The attendance was larger than usual and the meetings were characterized by a spirit of helpfulness and the addresses and discussions related to questions of practical Christian work. This being the annual meeting officers for the coming year were elected as follows: Pres., Pastor Ganong of Hillsboro; 1st vice-pres., Pastor Fletcher of Harvey; 2nd vice, Pastor C. N. Thorne; 3rd Elgin. Sec.-Treas., Pastor Davidson of Hopewell. Especial interest centered in the sessions given to the work of the Sunday schools, and it is most gratifying to see a substantial increase of interest in this department of the Master's work. The question, some problems of the snpt. called forth a very interesting discussion. Plans are being