

CHAPTER III.

The Rag Baby.

MADAME CHARBONNEAU gave such entire satisfaction as *Maitresse d'Hôpital* that I purchased her interest in the lease of the house, and employed her permanently as my aide-de-camp. In a short time we established quite a reputation, and applications for accommodation poured in from all quarters.

One bitter cold day towards the end of March a lady and gentleman arrived by the morning train from the United States. The lady was apparently about thirty-five years of age, while the gentleman might have been from five to ten years her senior, and, although plainly attired, they had the appearance of belonging to the better class of society. The gentleman informed me that they had just arrived from New York, and had put up at the St. Lawrence Hall; but that his wife had taken ill unexpectedly, and, hearing that she would be better cared for in my house than at the Hall, he wished, if possible, to secure rooms and professional attendance. The house being rather full at the time, Madame Charbonneau was obliged to give her the nurse's room (which contained two beds) till some of the other rooms should become vacant; this her husband