

The Home Mission Journal.

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THE HOME MISSION JOURNAL,  
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Our New Serial.

Having finished the story, "Rolling with Christ," with our last issue, we now begin a new serial entitled, "The Coming of Caroline." It is a story of thrilling interest, and we feel sure that those of our readers who appreciate a story of real life as this is, will be pleased with its perusal. We are careful in selecting serials for this paper, to choose one that presents a typical or ideal character. Something that tends to mollify the minds of our young people. The feelings, disposition and temperament of youth are largely made up of what kind of literature they read. If their minds are fed with sensational, or titillating novels they will find it difficult to cherish high moral principles. But a story of Christian heroism, or of good moral behaviour on the part of a young person persevered in through many trials tends to uplift the youthful mind, and for that reason, and with that object in view we reproduce these stories.

The Coming of Caroline.

BY MARY E. D. BAURLE.

CHAPTER I.

THE big wax doll leaned languidly against a divan made of boxes containing manure sets, and stared manfully with great blue eyes at Mrs. Rossman.

When that lady had her hat on the counter, the blue eyes closed stupidly, and when the lace-trimmed corsage was squeezed slightly, there was a muffled whirring inside, and then there came forth a husky squeak which a vivid imagination might ascribe was "Mamma."

There were crowds of children in the street that afternoon of December the twentieth, their soft little bodies pushed and pulled. Mrs. Rossman as she stood there, examining the big doll. There were children of all sorts and conditions—from the petted darling in white plush, black and satin hood, to the little match-girl in her mother's tattered shawl, with a torn handkerchief for head gear.

But not one of the children belonged to Mrs. Rossman—more's the pity! A glance at her pale, worn face revealed the hungry mother-love, the ever-yearning desire, the bitter consciousness of loss and desolation. The face itself was of the Madonna type with its low, broad brow, and waves of hair parting softly over it; the deep, brooding dark eyes, the tender, wistful mouth.

A rarely beautiful woman had Mrs. Rossman once been, when health, joy and pride of life had been hers, but now her countenance was as a garden over which a storm had passed. Yet she was still young, though a widow and childless, and esteeming herself as one who has reached the end of the pleasant path marking a happy interest in home and things and her own affairs.

She looked with lack-lustre eyes at the faces of the children taronged about her; their shrill clamor jarred on her nerves, nevertheless something impelled her to watch them. Half involuntarily she sought to find in some one of the dozen faces a resemblance to the child she had loved and lost. But a mocking smile soon curled her lips. "Commonplace faces! Ordinary faces—every one of them?" she said to herself with a mother's proud partiality. "Not one of them

has the soul sweetness, the grace and refinement of my little Lois! They simply add to the number of life; she would have added to its worth—its to-day beauty. But she was taken and they are left!"

Mrs. Rossman laid down the doll—its stiff limbs standing up like blue and white billows all around it—and walked quietly out of the store.

"I was foolish to go in there! I'm sure I don't know what I'm for!" Habit, I suppose, or the subtle influence of the season, may be a morbid desire to tear open the half-healed wound, or a silly whim to gratify myself for the moment by wondering that my sorrow was but an evil dream, that I was as jealous as it once was, and that I must perform the heavy duty of selecting presents. To-day was the day before Christmas, and the bright eyes—ah! those dear eyes—would be all expectant for the green tree, and somebody's stockings were to be hung up to-night."

Mrs. Rossman went slowly down the street. The frosty air was all a tinkle with merry sleigh-bells; the evergreen sprays, flushed and sparkled in the sunshine, and a fringe of icicles glittered along the eaves of the houses. There was sunshine, too, in almost every face, and one heard merry bursts of laughter, and voices with gay Christmas greetings in them rang out here and there. The shops were decked with the greenery of holly and a round pine and bright with holly-berries; wagons from the country came creaking in, trailing the fragrance of Christmas trees.

Suddenly along the white road came a gleam of silver-plated harness—a glimpse of horses groomed until their backs and limbs shone like black satin. There was a flash display of rich fur robes, crimson-lined, with a large, luxurious sleigh, its occupants rosy and warmly arrayed.

Mrs. Rossman's eyes followed the fine equipage. "That is Mrs. Gregory!" she said with a touch of scorn in her tone. "Her child died two years ago—the same day my little Lois was taken. She had grieved herself to death, I've been told. She is a middle-aged woman—the child was her all! But it seems that now she has tried to console herself. She has adopted a child—a little girl, a tounling it is said. And Mrs. Gregory's praises are on everybody's tongue. She has set an example for all childless people of means. I heard that the minister had spoken of it and commended it in prayer-meeting the other evening."

Suffer little children to come unto me is a saying that seems to be variously construed. One of the meanings seems to be that the large, empty homes of the wealthy are to become a sort of nursery or kindergarten for the offspring of the poorest and the indigent. "Well!"—here Mrs. Rossman stops quickened impatiently. "Well!" as if the holy love of parenthood was a thing of choice. You buy, beg, or borrow a child, feed, clothe, and educate it, and in return for this it is supposed to give you love and reverence. The mystery of the blood-tie, the holy right and privilege won by the mother's fond expectation, her painful sufferings—these are lost sight of! How can a woman really love an adopted child? She might like it, or feel an interest in it, but for real love—why, and here Mrs. Rossman's small feet came down with a sudden stamp in the soft snow—"why if I were to take a child into my home, I'd feel as though I were trying to obliterate the image of my dead darling; that I was selfishly trying to banish my sacred grief by a bit of mummery!"

She walked on silently, after this fierce little outbreak, but her thoughts were still busily at work. By this time, she had left the main street of the town; its merry bells and bustle were far behind her; she was on the outskirts now; the houses were few and straggling. On one side, the open fields lay white and glittering in the sun. A strip of woodland bordering the road reached out evergreen boughs heavy-laden with winter's emerald; there was the promise of a splendid sunset in the western sky and cloud-jewels of ruby and topaz, pearls and amethysts, were being strung on threads of gold. Something of the beauty and peace of the scene began to creep into the heart of the lonely woman, hushing in a degree the tumult raging there.

A flock of birds were hopping and twittering along the stone wall beside the road, merrily feasting in holiday glee on the dry, purple berries of the woodbine trailing its leafless length there. "It is said that he careth for these!" Mrs.

Rossman said, and her lip quivered. "Not one of them shall fall to the ground without his knowing it. Is this only a far-away, pretty, poetic fancy? If it is something more—if it is love—with sudden energy—"then how about the men and women who fall crushed and broken? How about my heart, so sore and empty? How about my life void of everything?" Then the thought that had come into her mind, returned again.

"As for my adopting a child myself," she continued, reflectively, "it would be a bit of folly! I couldn't do it even if I wanted to! Mrs. Gregory—oh well, Mrs. Gregory! She is rich and able to gratify every whim. But I am poor; I cannot pose as a benefactor. I have to work hard to support myself, or at least to make no large inroads on my small income. The feeding and clothing of a child are no small items—yet! how gladly I could have done it for little Lois! Self-denial and hardships for her! Toiling until late into the night—that would have been a joy and an inspiration! But for no one else! I could not have the patience to do it for an adopted child!"—this last with a little touch of contempt.

To be Continued.

Baptist Doctrines.

III.

The Spirituality of the Church.

LEWELL MOSS D. D.

ACCORDING to the New Testament, membership in the Christian Church must be preceded by discipleship with Jesus Christ. Regeneration, faith, conversion, the personal acceptance of Christ as Savior and Sovereign, the consciousness of the forgiveness of sin, and the free and joyous purpose of obedience to all the commands of Christ—these all are antecedent to Church membership and conditions requisite to it. Baptism, which is, in a sense, the door of entrance into the Church, is itself a profession of an intelligent personal faith in Christ. Baptism cannot be the means of salvation, nor an instrument of regeneration, since the ordinance itself has no significance except as administered to one who is already a believer and because he is a believer. This is the unvarying teaching of the New Testament Scripture. Luke says, concerning Peter and his hearers on the Day of Pentecost: "They then that welcomed his words were baptized; and there were added on that day about three thousand souls; and they were constantly attending on the teaching of the apostles, and the fellowship, the breaking of bread, and the prayers." (Acts ii: 41, 42.) No description could better cover and include all that can be meant when we speak of the Spirituality of the Church; that is, the spiritual characteristics and activities of the individual members of the Church.

Very naturally this subject is often mentioned in the apostolic epistles, as they are for the most part addressed to organized churches; and it would be well for our readers to take up these letters one by one, with this thought in mind and go over them carefully, noticing how impressively and instructively the writers continually emphasize the importance of the spirituality in mind and heart and conduct of all who are professed disciples of Christ and therefore members of Christian churches. "For as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. "For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit. . . . Now ye are Christ's body, and severally members of it." (I Cor. xii: 12-27.) "So, then, ye are no longer strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God; having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom every building, fitly framed together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are being built together into a habitation of God in the Spirit." (Eph. ii: 19-22.) Regenerated by the