

**MISS ASHTON'S NEW
PUPIL: A SCHOOL
GIRL'S STORY**

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Miss Ashton's New Pupil: A School Girl's Story by Mrs. S. S. Robbins

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Marion turned, threw both arms around Kate's neck, kissing her over and over again. — Page 89.

Miss Ashton's New Pupil.

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A SCHOOL GIRL'S STORY

By MRS. S. S. ROBBINS

Author of "Hulda Brent's Will," "Paul's Angel," etc., etc.



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MISS ASHTON'S NEW PUPIL.

CHAPTER I.

MISS ASHTON RECEIVES A LETTER.

MISS ASHTON, principal of the Montrose Academy, established for the higher education of young ladies, sat with a newly arrived letter in her hand, looking with a troubled face over its contents.

Letters of this kind were of constant occurrence, but this had in it a different tone from any she had previously received.

"It's tender and true," she said to herself. "How sorry I am, I can do nothing for her!"

This was the letter:—

DEAR MISS ASHTON,—I have a daughter Marion, now sixteen years old. Developing at this age what we think rather an unusual amount of talent, we are desirous to send her to a good school at the East.

• We have been at the West twenty years as Home Missionaries. When I tell you that, I need not add that we have been made very happy by being able to save money enough to give Marion at least a year under your kind care, if you can receive her into your school.

I think I can safely promise you that she will be faithful and industrious; and I earnestly hope that the lovely Christian character

she has sustained at home, may deepen and brighten in the new life which will open to her in the East.

May I ask your patience while she is accustoming herself to it; of your kindness I am well assured.

Truly yours,

E. G. PARKE.

"The child of a poor, far western missionary, so different from the class of girls that she will be with here," thought Miss Ashton as she slowly folded the letter.

She sat for some time thinking over its contents, then she took her pen, and wrote:—

DEAR MRS. PARKE,— Send your daughter to me. I have great interest in, and sympathy with, all Home Missionary work. I wish I could do something to lighten the expenses she must incur; but this is a chartered institution, and at present all the places to be filled by those who need assistance have been taken. I will, however, bear her in mind; and should she prove a good scholar, exemplary in her behavior, I may be able to render her in the future some acceptable assistance.

Wishing you all success in your trying and arduous life, and the help of the great Helper,

I am, truly yours,

C. S. ASHTON.

Miss Ashton did not seal this note; she tossed it upon her desk, meaning to look it over before it was mailed; but she had no time, and, with many misgivings as to what might come of it, she allowed it to go as it was.

Her school had never been fuller than it promised to be on the opening of this new year. Through the summer vacation letters had been coming to her from all parts of the country asking to put girls who

had finished graded and high school education under her care. Established for many years, the academy had grown from what, in the religious world, was considered a "missionary training-school," and from which many able and faithful women had gone forth to win laurels in the over-ripe harvest fields, to a school better adapted to the wants of the nineteenth century.

While it held its religious prestige, it also offered unusual advantages to that important and numerous class of girls who, not wishing a college education, were yet desirous to spend the years that should change them from girls into women in preparation for a future great in its aims, and also great in its results.

Miss Ashton, large-hearted and strong-headed, seeing wisely into this future, had succeeded in offering to this class exactly what it had demanded.

Ably seconded by an efficient and generous board of trustees, with ample funds, excellent teachers to assist her, a convenient and handsome building in which to hold the school, she had readily made it a success. There were more applications for admittance than she could find room for ; indeed, every available corner of the house had been promised when she received Mrs. Parke's letter.

Sometimes it happened that a scholar for some unforeseen reason failed to appear ; that might make an opening for Marion. She wanted this Western girl ; the missionary spirit of olden times came back