

## The Debut of Caroline Ovum

By GRACE MANNING.

A long time ago, so far back in our life's history, that memory fails us, there was once a tiny egg named Caroline Ovum, living happily with her companions in a funny little almond-shaped house, no bigger than a pigeon's egg, which was called "the ovary." Now, this little domicile was situated at the back of the broad ligament which is made up of a double fold of that delicate smooth membrane, draping all the abdominal organs, and also lining the abdominal wall.

Caroline Ovum, if you believe all her mother says about her, was always a very pushing young lady, and looked upon warnings as a presumption on the part of the giver, so it happened one day, when Caroline had one of her most bounciful fits upon her, she found herself elbowed right to the very door of her home, and without one second's warning, a slight push from her companions, sent her careering headlong into mid-air, and she landed, in a state of hysteria, into the midst of the fimbriae which fringe the mouth of the fallopian tube.

There is no denying the fact that Caroline was frightened and wished herself home again in the snug little cottage which was still in sight; but the fimbriae gave Caroline no rest, and it was easily seen they did not expect her to remain with them permanently, for they politely but firmly told her to take herself off down the fallopian tube en route for the uterus.

Caroline, like the rest of her sex, set out for an argument, but the fimbriae nodding assent to each other, passed her on through the tube where the villi there caught her in their swaying movement, and wafted her on in spite of all her objections.

"Oh, well," thought Caroline, "this is better than staying home all my life, I'll have a change of scenery anyway," and she was just beginning to settle down to enjoy her adventures when she was tumbled pell-mell into a huge hall, pear-shaped, and covered with a rough lining.

"Oh, how lovely," cries Caroline, but the next moment her happy smile froze

on her face, and a spasm of terror seized her, for she saw, making straight for her, in undue haste, a queer little creature with a tail which he used as a kind of propellor, to work his way about. "Cheer-o, Caroline," he shrieked with delight, "I've been looking for you everywhere, you're a sport, and no mistake," and overcome by his great joy at meeting the little ovum, he embraced her so tightly that the poor little egg almost lost consciousness, and in fact the last thing Caroline remembered was feeling that long tail wind around her as her strength gave out, and she fell, still in the tight embrace of that vigorous little spermatazoon on to the side of the soft wall near where they were standing.

When Caroline came to herself again, she realised that a great change had taken place within her, she really felt that she was not herself.

"I wonder who I am," she said, "I'm quite sure that Mr. Spermatazoon has attached himself to me in some way, for I feel I do not know myself as I once did. Impertinence of the creature; rushing at me in that manner, why I had never seen him in my life before, and hope I never will again," and with a toss of her head which was a little bit of our old Caroline, she turned her attention to her surroundings.

"I've grown some," she murmured, and looking around she was astonished to find that she had on a lovely new overcoat which enveloped her entirely.

"How dinky," she gurgled, "I wonder what make of a coat is this," and on inspection she came across the brand marked in bold lettering, "Membranes," guaranteed to hold water. The outer covering of her coat was opaque (chorion) and covered with shaggy branching filaments known as the chorionic villi; but the interior of her new garment, with its shiny, smooth, white surface, drove her into ecstasies beyond description.

"A real genuine aminotic lining," she cried, "gee, this is some coat." And no maiden in this big world could have been prouder of her new, silk-lined fur coat,