

CHRISTIE AT HOME.

A SEQUEL TO CHRISTIE'S CHRISTMAS.

By Pansy.

CHAPTER VII.—(Continued.)

"I might not be able to do so; you might not choose to believe my word, and you might be too foolish to reason about it. But if I had a son, whose life I had given in order to try to save you, and if you believed that I loved my son, unless you were very foolish indeed, it would go far towards showing you that I had been in earnest."

"I think we would be great fools not to ask you to untie us," spoke out Karl in some heat.

"It seems to me that you would be very foolish; and Wells thinks so too, but he doesn't care to tell us so."

Then came Christie, holding Nettie by the hand, and carrying the baby in her arms.

"Christie," said Mr. Keith, "come here and tell us what would you do if you were told to choose one book out of all there were in the world, because the rest were to be burned."

"Why!" said Christie. "How dreadful! Oh, I would take the Bible, of course."

"Why, of course?"

"Oh, because it is the only book that shows us the way to heaven; and we could get along without knowing anything else, if we knew what was in the Bible, and if we knew all that there was in all the other books, and had no Bible, in a little bit of a while what good would it do us?"

"Sure enough, but do you believe these boys don't think so?"

Christie turned on the two troubled eyes. Wells laughed, but Karl said stoutly, "Why, we didn't say any such thing!"

"Didn't you? I thought you both agreed that you paid very little attention to it? And of course, if you thought it so important, you would give it a good deal of time and thought; that would be common sense, you know."

But neither Nettie nor the baby were in the mood for any more quiet talking. Mr. Keith took the baby, and the two went into a frolic, while Wells set Nettie on his knee, and began a wonderful story of two pigs and a monkey.

It was a wonderfully pleasant evening; the supper was delightful; even the baby waved his spoon and called for "more." The chickens were stewed in cream, and the potatoes were made into the loveliest little brown balls! Mr. Keith ate two balls, and asked Christie if these were "warmed up" ones, and whether warmed up ones could possibly be better.

Then Mrs. Tucker looked so puzzled that Mr. Keith felt obliged to explain that he had been invited to a tea-party, or rather, to be truthful, had invited himself, and that there was to be warmed up potatoes. Then Wells questioned and cross-questioned, until it finally all came out about Lucius and Lucy Cox, and he asked a great many questions about them, and sent Christie off into a burst of laughter by inquiring whether Lucy looked like "Sarah Ann."

But no one save Christie heard his whisper, just as he was going out of the door after Dennis came for him:



EVEN THE BABY CALLED FOR MORE.

"I say, Christie, may I come to the party? Do ask me; I'll be as good—Oh, as good as anything you can imagine; and I like warmed up potatoes better than anything."

And so Christie, in much bewilderment and some dismay, found a party growing on her hands, and wondered what she should do with them all.

She and Karl sat up for half an hour after the minister went home, to talk over all the strange events of the day. "He liked the farm horses," said Karl, meaning Wells did, "he said they behaved much better than his pony, and he should think it would be great fun to ride without any saddle or halter."

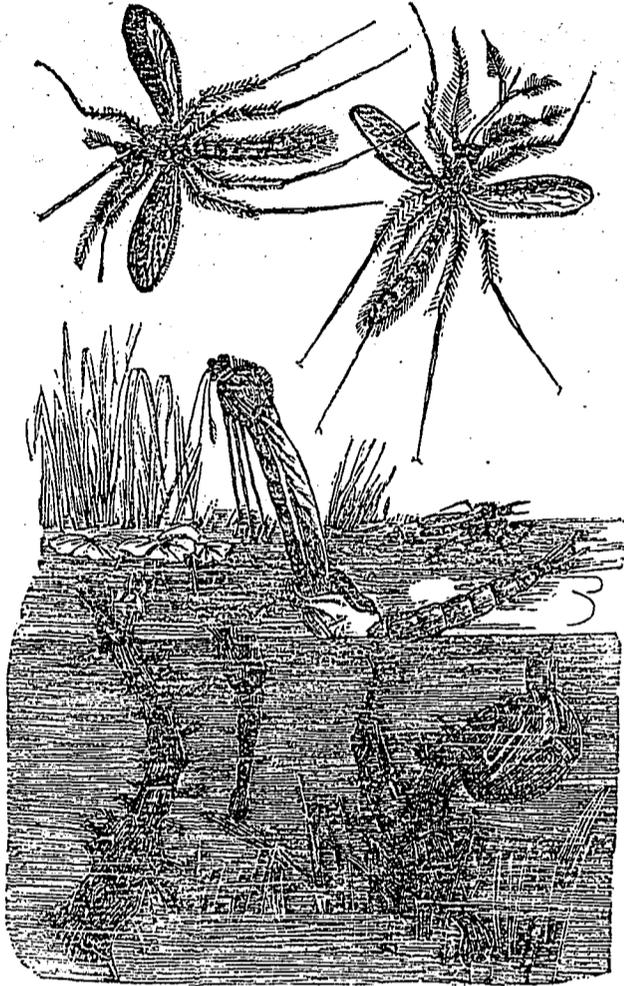
"Karl," said Christie, "did he tell Mr.

had been as much as they could do to furnish bread and beef and potatoes; and cake of all sorts had been left in the back-ground.

"I don't know when I have done such a thing," said Mrs. Tucker as she broke the third egg into her yellow bowl, and then began to whisk them about with skillful touch.

"It seems kind of extravagant, but I don't know how to make this cake with less than three eggs, and it is the one that I seem to remember the best. I used to like to make it, because it always behaved itself; never fell, nor cracked, nor anything."

"The hens laid a good many eggs this morning," Christie said encouragingly. "It seems as though they must have known



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Keith he did not believe the Bible was an important book."

"No," answered Karl indignantly, "he did not say such a word. All he said was, that they did not pay much attention to it at school; and that he did not know much about it, because he did not read it very often."

"Well, that was saying that he did not think it important, I suppose; we say things by our actions, Karl, though I never thought of it before. It seems queer that we can be telling people things without meaning too."

"It isn't true," persisted Karl; "I think the Bible is important, of course, and I don't read it in once a month."

"Well," said Christie, gravely, "if you had a geography, Karl, one of the new kind, you know well enough you wouldn't let it be in the house for a month without reading a good deal in it; now would you?"

But Karl declared that he was as tired as a dog, and was going right straight to bed. And to bed he went.

CHAPTER VIII.

Everything in the kitchen was cosy and bright, and very nice work was going on. Christie having once fully decided the matter of inviting Lucy and Lucius Cox to tea was in haste to carry out the plan; and that very morning a cake was being made to do honor to the occasion. Cake was something rare in the Tucker family; in her Eastern home Mrs. Tucker had been in the habit of spending every Saturday morning in her father's well-stocked kitchen, stirring up sweet mixtures for the next week's supply. This was when she was a girl. Mrs. Tucker in her Western home, had now and then baked a gingerbread, or made what she called a "batch" of seed cakes, or, on rarer occasions a pan of doughnuts, but, as a rule, it

what we wanted to do. I packed just as many for the grocery as usual, and yet had these five left. I don't think it is extravagant, mother; it isn't for us, you know, it is for the Cox children, and they never have a bit of cake, I do suppose."

"Good bread and butter and plenty of it would be better for them, child, than cake."

"Oh, I know it; but then bread and butter don't seem quite such a treat as cake; though that day when I was on the cars, and ate a piece of 'Sarah Ann's' bread and butter, I thought that a slice of our bread would be as great a treat as I could give her. It doesn't seem to me as though I could eat a piece of bread at the Cox's. Mother!"—A sudden thought had come to her, and a look of dismay passed over her face as she set her bowl of flour on the table.—"What if they should think they must ask us sometime to come to their house to tea?"

Mrs. Tucker stopped her egg-beating to laugh.

"What an idea, child!" she said. "They haven't a whole plate in the house, nor a decent dish of any kind; and as for company, such a wild thing never entered their minds. You needn't be distressed about that. I wonder what keeps Karl? I'm afraid I shall have to wait for that baking powder. Hurry with your flour, Christie, and then beat that butter and sugar to a cream. When I have cake, I like to have it nice. I'm sure I hope I haven't forgotten anything. It is so long since I have done such a thing as make a nice cake, that I'm in a kind of a fluster. If I had known that Burton boy was to have been here the other night, I suppose I should have made a cake then; though I don't know as I would have thought of such a thing now, if you hadn't coaxed. I heard Mr. Keith say once that he liked soft gingerbread better than

any kind of cake, and I'm sure he ate it as though he did."

"So did Wells," said Christie, laughing; "he asked me if I thought you would see him if he took a second piece. Mother, shall I put in the raisins now?"

(To be continued.)

WONDERS AT HOME.

If the mosquito were a very rare insect, found only in some far-off country, we should look upon it as one of the most curious of living creatures, and read its history with wonder—that an animal could live two such very different lives, one in the water and the other in the air. The female mosquito lays her eggs on the water.

She forms a little boat, gluing the eggs together side by side, until she has from 250 to 350 thus fastened together. The boat or raft is oval in shape, highest at the ends, and floats away merrily for a few days. The eggs then hatch, and the young mosquito enters the water, where the early part of its life is to be passed. You can find the young insects in this, their larval stage, in pools of fresh water, or even in a tub of rain-water which has been standing uncovered for a few days. They are called wigglers on account of the droll way in which they jerk about through the water. They feed upon very minute creatures, and also upon decaying vegetable matter. Near the tail the wiggler has a tube through which it breathes. If you approach the pool or tub very quietly, you can see them in great numbers, heads downward, with their breathing tube above the surface. If you make the least disturbance, they will scamper down into deep water. After wriggling about for two weeks, and changing their skins several times, the larva becomes a pupa. You know that most insects in the pupa state do not move, but take a sleep of greater or less length. Not so the lively little mosquito. In its pupa state it becomes a big-headed creature which does not eat. It moves about quite rapidly, but not with the same wriggling motion; it now has a pair of paddles at its tail end, which cause it to tumble and roll over in the water. In this state these tumblers move head foremost, and when they go to the surface to breathe, the head is uppermost, and they take in air through tubes near the head. In five or ten days the mosquito ends its life in the water, and becomes a winged insect. The pupa comes to the surface, and the skin cracks open on the back, allowing first its head and chest to come forth, and finally the legs, wings, and the rest. This is a most trying moment in the life of the insect; if a slight puff of wind should upset it before the wings are dry, it will surely drown; only a small proportion of the whole number succeed in safely leaving the pupa case, the greater share become food for the fishes. If the wings once get fairly dry, then the insect can sail away, humming its tiny song of gladness.

How does it sing? Perhaps when you heard its note at night you did not stop to consider. It is a point which has puzzled many naturalists, and it is not certainly known how the note is produced, but probably the rapid motion of the wings and the vibration of the muscles of the chest are both concerned in it. The most interesting part about the insect—the "business part," as some one has called it—is its sting, or sucker. This is not a simple, sharp-pointed tube, but consists of six parts, which lie together in a sheath, and are used as one. How sharp these must be to go through our skin so easily! After the puncture is made, it then acts as a sucker to draw up the blood. The insect which visits us is the female. We rarely see the male mosquito.

Blood is not necessary to the existence of the mosquito, and probably but a small share of them ever taste it. The countries in which mosquitoes live in greatest numbers—actual clouds—are not inhabited, and there are but few animals.—*American Agriculturist.*

THE BEST WAY to cure disorder is to prevent it—holding attention so closely that there is no time for thought of it. Perhaps all might not succeed in doing this by talking; then try something else,—showing pictures, printing sentences on the blackboard, etc. Keep the child employed every moment it is in school; otherwise you are responsible for its misconduct. There lies the secret,—keep the children busy, in some way.