

CHRISTIE AT HOME.

A SEQUEL TO CHRISTIE'S CHRISTMAS.

By Pansy.

CHAPTER IX.—(Continued.)

She got over it after a while, and had only very rosy cheeks and bright eyes all the afternoon. The pretty music stool was unpacked and Christie mounted it, and drew forth such soft, sweet sounds from the wonderful instrument that her father said admiringly: "Well, I declare! I thought they had to spend months learning to play the piano, but I don't see but you make pretty music on it, without any learning."

It was that very afternoon that Lucius and Lucy Cox were to come to tea. "Enough in itself to upset a whole family," Mrs. Tucker said, "and when you added a piano, it was, as Father Tucker said, 'too much.'" But that afternoon is the very thing that you must hear about.

The first one who came was Wells Burton. "I didn't mean to come so early, for fear I should be in the way," he explained, "but it is lonesome enough at home. My mother was hindered from coming home yesterday, my brother isn't so well, and father has been delayed by a freshet, and everything was disappointing and dismal, so I ran away. I would have gone into town this morning if it had not been for the warmed-up potatoes, you know, and other things. Besides, I was in a hurry to see something that I knew had come."

"Oh," said Christie, her eyes aglow, "do you know about it? Did you know before? Come in quick and see it. I don't know what to think nor to do."

"What you must do is to take music lessons, and make the thing talk to you," Wells said, walking into the bright little parlor, and going up to the great shining beauty which seemed to the rest of the family to fill all the space in the room. Wells seemed in no wise amazed at its appearance, called it a "neat little thing," drew out the music stool, adjusted it to the right height with great deliberation, and then seating himself, whirled his fingers over the keys in a fashion that almost took Christie's breath away. The sounds that he produced were quite unlike those which Christie had made. Even Father Tucker in the kitchen, wiping his great brown hands on the great brown towel felt that, and stopped and listened and nodded his head, and said: "That is music, eh, mother! Our girl must make it go like that."

"Yes," said Mrs. Tucker, "that is music; just think of that boy being able to play like that!"

There was a worried look in her eyes, and after a moment's silence she added: "That will be the next thing. The child will want to learn, and she will be crazy to, I can see it in her eyes, and how is she ever going to do it? Music lessons cost a sight of money, even East, and of course they are worse out here, everything is. And you know, Jonas, we might as well try to have her fly and be done with it, as to give her a chance to take music lessons."

Her father laughed. "I should as soon have tried to fly myself as to get her a piano, and yet there the thing is, and she is playing on it; there's no tellin' what may come, in this world, I've given up trying. We must talk with the minister about it. There may be some kind of a way of turning work. Who knows!"

But the troubled look did not go out of the mother's eyes. "There's another thing," she said, as she laid the spoons she had been polishing, in a shining heap on the white table. "Jonas, don't it seem wonderful strange to you that they should send her such a great big present as that? Why, pianos cost almost a fortune. And that is a good toned one, I remember the one at grandfather's well enough to know that. I don't see but it sounds every bit as good as the one at uncle Daniel's, and to send it to a stranger and a little girl! I don't understand it, and sometimes it doesn't seem quite the thing for us to let her take such things as a matter of course and say nothing."

"Well, now," Father Tucker said, taking his wet head out of the shining wash basin and beginning to polish his face on the towel, "there's two ways of looking at things. In one sense it is a big present, and a wonderful thing to happen to a little girl like Christie; and in another sense, how do you suppose it compares with that baby of hers that Christie took care of? I don't

say but that it would have got taken care of somehow if Christie hadn't been there, though there didn't seem to be a great many people of sense to depend upon that day, besides Christie; anyhow, she was the one did it, and did it well, and while she didn't do it for pay, nor expect pay, still, I suppose it was an awful day to the mother; and if I was rich, and it was our baby, seems to me I wouldn't consider even a piano very great things when it came to showing what I thought of my baby."

"Well," said Mother Tucker reflectively, "that way of looking at it does make a difference, to be sure. What are forty pianos compared with a baby?"

Meantime, in the front room, the same thing was being talked about from a different stand-point. "Did you ever hear of people doing such a wonderful thing?" This was the question that Christie asked of Wells. He let the music soften, so he could answer.

"Why, it was a nice thing, and I rather like my lady for thinking of it. It is the first time I have forgiven her for leaving her baby and spoiling our day, but on the whole I am glad now that she did it. But as to being wonderful, it was natural enough. Her husband is a piano dealer; they have a great warehouse on Pearl street full of pianos, of all sorts and sizes, and when she heard that you liked music, and wanted to see a piano, what was more reasonable than to suppose that you would like one of your own?"

"How did she know that Christie wanted to see a piano?" asked Karl, who was watch-

looked. Face and hands, however, were clean, and poor Lucy having put on an old-fashioned linen collar of her mother's, that had not been used in seven years, nor washed, had done all that she could to honor the great day. Such efforts were beyond Lucius; but he, too, had combed his hair, and washed his face and hands, and tied his shoes with green strings, and although his clothes needed washing and patching, on the whole, he looked better than Karl had feared.

Christie turned toward them timidly, and glanced in great doubt and distress from them to Wells. He did not know them, and she had a dim idea that they ought to be introduced, but how was it to be done, and what would he say?

"I am glad you have come," she said gently. "Will you sit down?" Now what should she say? "This is Mr. Wells Burton?" And if she did, what would they say, or would he notice them?

He did not give her long to study the question. He swung himself from the piano stool and went towards the staring children. "How are you, Lucius?" he said, nodding pleasantly, as though they had visited together all their lives. "So this is your little sister Lucy. Why, Lucius, how far ahead of her you have grown! Aren't you just the same age?" Lucius nodded.

"And yet you are a head taller! That's good. I always like to see a boy taller than a girl. He can take care of her better. How old are you, Lucy? Ten? I had a little sister once who would be just your age now if she had lived. Her name was

but, finding that he took very little notice of them, that the others were glad to see him, and that he gave most of his attention to the new piano, they settled down, the startled look going out of their eyes, and I don't think either of them know just when they began to join in the talk, and even answer the minister's questions, without feeling afraid.

And now the supper was ready. That wonderful supper, the like of which the Cox children had never seen. How their plates were heaped with the warmed-up potatoes, what dishes of hot apple sauce did they make away with! And as for the bread, Christie had as much as she could do to keep from looking her astonishment, for though the visitors were frightened at the idea of sitting down to a table covered with a white cloth, and using knife and fork, yet the taste of the food had overcome their timidity to such an extent that they gave themselves up to the joy of eating and having enough.

(To be Continued.)

GIVING UP TOBACCO.

Rev. Sam Jones and Rev. Sam Small, during their late memorable mission in Chicago, gave added evidence of their consecration and sincerity by publicly renouncing the tobacco habit. In one of his sermons, to an immense audience, he referred to his "Brother Small" and tobacco as follows:

"My good friends say the use of tobacco is a sin, and therefore, I am happy to announce to the audience that before breakfast Sunday morning Brother Small put all of his stock in his hand, threw it on the grate, and burned the whole thing up. (Applause.) He has thrown it to the wind for ever. He will never do that any more. I said to him: 'Have you quit to stay?' 'Yes,' says I: 'Old fellow, tell me why, won't you?' 'Well,' he said, 'Brother Jones, I didn't quit because I believed it was a sin; but they kept after me about it until I got resentful, and I said I won't perpetuate anything in my mind that will make me resentful toward people, and I have given it up for ever.' As soon as I ever have that sort of a feeling in my heart I am going to give it up, too. (Laughter and applause, Dr. Scudder saying: 'Give it up anyhow.') Nothing shall stand between me and love to God and love to men. I would run over anything in earth or heaven that would make me feel unkind toward any human being in this world. If anything harms you or hurts you, give it up. I believe Mr. Moody told the biggest truth of his life when he said a man who used tobacco could be a Christian, but he would be a nasty Christian."

A little later, in a Sunday morning discourse, Mr. Jones announced that he, too, had given up tobacco, and said:

"Down in my country I have never been in a soul's way that I know of. In a hundred different instances I have been notified that a habit that I was given to is a stumbling-block to souls in this city, and I want to say to this congregation to-night, from this day till we meet up in heaven, you can tell this world that Sam Jones has got no habit that is a stumbling block to anybody. For your prayers and for your sympathy I am grateful, and if I don't do any good in Chicago let Chicago thank God Almighty she has done the poor little pale Southern preacher some good for the balance of his life."

It would be a great gain and safeguard, especially for young men, if all tobacco-using ministers would follow the praiseworthy example of these Southern evangelists. *Temperance Advocate.*

THE GREAT TRAGEDIAN, Mr. W. C. Macready, said: "None of my children shall ever, with my consent or on any pretence, enter a theatre or have any visiting connection with actors or actresses." When such men think the place too vile for their children, is it not time Christians cease to apologize for it? Is it not time we cease talking about the ideal theatre, when it does not and never has existed? Is it not high time when an actor, a man whose sympathy should be with the institution, finds that it is so low and base he will not let his children enter a theatre under any circumstances—is it not high time, I say, that Christians tell their children they must not go?



LUCIUS AND LUCY COX.

ing this entire conversation with the greatest interest.

"Why, you see, we spent quite a long day together when we went our journey, and we talked about a good many things, pianos among the rest, and I suppose somebody happened to mention to her something that Christie said. Look here, let me play this *Rain Dance* for you, and you listen and see if you can't hear the drops patter!"

There were reasons why Wells did not want that subject looked into any farther, so he bewitched them with the raindrops.

During the playing, the door opened softly, and there came in Lucy and Lucius Cox. I wish I had photographs of them for you. They had been all day getting ready to make a good appearance. Lucy had not only combed her black hair, but banged it, and the straight locks hung down over her eyebrows, straight into her eyes, so that she winked and blinked continually. Her brown calico dress was soiled and torn, but she had pinned the torn place as well as she could, and then tried to cover its defects with a bit of very soiled, very faded pink ribbon which she had knotted up and fastened over it, and as the rent was half-way down the skirt on the left side, towards the back breadth, you may imagine how she

Lorine. Well, what are we going to do first?"

"What's that?" asked Lucy, pointing her small thin finger at the shining case of the piano.

"That," said Wells, "is a music box. It plays any tune that you have a mind to make it. Do you want to hear it?" He seated himself again on the music stool, and the group closed in around him, while he rushed through waltzes and marches, and snatches of tunes which he hummed and whistled. Christie in her delight and relief almost forgot that she was hostess and had the great care of entertaining the Cox children on her heart. Indeed, from that moment she had no need to feel it a burden. Wells gave himself to the work with such zeal and success, telling stories, singing songs, playing tunes, answering questions, that, when promptly at five o'clock Mr. Keith made his appearance, he found the five young people well acquainted and apparently entirely satisfied with one another.

There was no denying that both Lucius and Lucy were a good deal startled at the coming of the minister. They knew him by sight, and had scud over the fields in alarm many a time to avoid speaking to him, or rather having him speak to them,