

WHAT EZRY'S SISTER DID

By Lorena M. Page

THE windows and door of the little school-house were wide open. A group of girls made dandelion chains in the shade of the building, and the few small boys who could be spared from the farm work paddled in a tiny brook under some overhanging willows near at hand.

"Teacher come to our house to board last night," said Jimmy Weed, the smallest boy in the group. "Hope I'll stand in with him like you did, Ezry, while he was to your house. Seemed 'sif you could do most anything, and he never licked you."

"Aw, 'twasn't 'cause teacher boarded there," spoke up a larger boy; "'twas 'cause he liked Ezry's sister Marth', Wasn't it, Ezry?"

"I dunno; but that's all the good it done him, if 'twas," Ezry answered. "I heard my sister tell him last night, 'fore he went over to your house, that she didn't like him, nohow. Say, maybe he wasn't mad! That's why he went somewhere else to live."

At that moment the tall, lank, young man under discussion came to the door and rang the bell.

The girls dropped their dandelion chains and went in; the boys followed, leaving a trail of wet footprints behind them. Ezry came in last.

There was an unusual sternness about the teacher's usually stern face. He eyed the boys suspiciously as they passed him, and after giving Ezry one searching glance he took him roughly by the shoulder.

"What have you got in your pocket, sir?" he asked in a tart voice. "You know that I don't allow boys in the school-room with pockets filled in that manner."

Now, Ezry well knew that it always had been the teacher's hobby to keep an eye on the boys' pockets; but somehow his had not been noticed in this way before. But Ezry's time had come at last, and now he saw the things dear to his boyish heart find their way, one by one, through the open window to the yard below.

The boys looked at each other knowingly; the girls wondered.

The morning passed, and the noon hour came. Ezry hurried out and gathered up his belongings again, and not wishing the boys to think him afraid, or perhaps not fully realizing that his old standing with the teacher was at an end, he came into school in the afternoon with the same identical bulge in the offending pocket. The emptying process was followed this time by a sound thrashing.

He fully realized when the teacher got through with him that he indeed had fallen from grace; but he bore up bravely.

The bell rang at nine sharp as usual the next morning, and Ezry did not appear till the last arrivals were in their places. There was the most innocent expression in the world on his face, and—could they believe their eyes?—a bigger bulge than ever was in his pocket this morning.

There was a moment of breathless suspense; then the teacher broke the silence:

"Ezry Grove, come here."

"Y-y-yes, sir."

"What have you got in your pocket?"

"I-i-it's my dinner, sir."

"A likely story; take it out of there and give it to me."

Ezry stood with drooping head, and made no movement to obey.

"Do you hear, Ezry Grove? Give it to me."

"I-I can't, sir; it's—"

"You can't; well, I can. And I'll tan your jacket when I've finished!"

"It—it—isn't—anything you'll—want

—sir," Ezry gasped between the lifts on his collar as the exploring hand went into the well-filled pocket.

The next instant Ezry was dropped, and the exploring member was withdrawn, and something was sticking to it with the tenacity of glue. Up went the hand into the air and a yell broke from the teacher's lips; still the stuff clung fast. Then, with hand beating and waving, its owner seemed to dance a hornpipe as he flew over the space between himself and the entry. His exit was followed by a splash, and then silence.

The interest now turned to Ezry, who had his face studiously buried in his reader.

"What was it, Ezry?" whispered little Jimmy Weed, his nearest neighbor. Two dozen ears were strained to catch the reply.

"'Twas my dinner, and he's spoilt it." "Your dinner?" incredulously. "Aw, go on!"

"Yes, my dinner. Stop whisperin'."

"Say, what did you have for dinner?" questioned another.

"Mush! Hot! With a shingle behind it! Marth' put it up for me. Now shut up."

"Oh, gee!"

ONE OF QUAY'S JOKES

THE late Senator Quay was not a man given to laughing; but one would have been grossly mistaken who therefore had set him down as unappreciative of a joke; and it even may be added with truth that the statesman seemed to enjoy the joke a little more heartily if it chanced to be upon himself.

He used to tell with evident pleasure of a meeting he had had with a Florida farmer, when he once was returning from his fishing bungalow at St. Lucie. The man shared the seat with Quay in an accommodation train.

Naturally enough the conversation lagged considerably, the Senator not being well up on local gossip or crops, and the countryman knowing nothing at all of the general news of the day. At

The teacher came in. Every-one was busy; but the suspense was awful. Nothing happened. Perhaps the hand wrapped in the handkerchief was hardly in condition to handle the rod just yet.

The noon hour came without incident, except the teacher's restless pacing. When they were dismissed he put on his hat and took his way to the nearest house, which was Ezry's.

"Now, mebbe you ain't in fer it, Ezry!" said little Jimmy Weed. "Look, there goes the teacher!"

"Ah, I don't care. Only Marth's home. Pa and ma's gone to town. Guess I'll go home and get some dinner, seem' the teacher's spoilt mine."

"How did you ever happen to think of it?" one of them called admiringly after him.

"I didn't think of it; Marth' did. She won't see me run over by nobody."

He went, and the boys waited anxiously for his return, and all went to meet him when they saw him coming toward them.

"Say, where's the teacher?" they asked in chorus.

"Aw, he's over to the house. Marth's a-doin' up his hand, an' a-cryin' 'cause it's burnt. Girls is queer. But, say, she'd do anything to keep me from havin' a lickin'. An', boys, he's a-comin' back to our house to board to-night."

last the latter asked if Mr. Quay was making his first visit to Florida.

"No," was the reply. "I've been here occasionally in the course of my wanderings."

"An' why be ye wanderin'?" came the next question.

Solemnly Quay answered: "I'm trying to see if I cannot ameliorate the condition of the inner man."

The farmer looked, but said nothing. Indeed, he made not a single remark on any topic till they reached the next station, where, with a brief good-by, he alighted.

As he stepped upon the platform he said to the brakeman, who repeated it to Quay: "See that serious-lookin' feller I was sittin' with? He's one o' them blame faith-healers."

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WAY TO SERVE SYRUP

IT was in the dining-room of a country hotel, and the free-and-easy waitress, after the manner of her kind, held a glass syrup pitcher above three or four steaming buckwheat cakes she had placed by the plate of the guest from the city.

"Syr'p on your cakes?" she asked.

"If you please."

"Will you have it raound and raound on 'em, or in a puddle?"

"Beg pardon?"

"Raound and raound, or in a puddle?"

"I—I—in a puddle, I think."

"Some gents peefers it raound and raound but I like it best in a puddle myself."

NO ANCHOR TO WINDWARD

SHE always has been rather reckless." "Yes. She actually applied for a divorce before she was engaged again."

WASTING MONEY

YOUNG Tutterly says it costs him five thousand dollars a year merely to live." "He's a fool to pay it. His life isn't worth it."

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