

How "Ma" and I Go Marketin'

By ABNER STUBBLECHAFF

ONE day last fall as I driv in from the fields to dinner, onhooked my team an' was waterin' of 'em, I saw a rig comin' up the road a sailin'—from ol' Si Green's place. I didn't pay enny more 'ention to it x'cept that whoever it was, thay was sure goin' some.

I fed the team, sorted out haff a hatfull of aigs from the manger an' was headin' for the house, when I heard the "blat" of one of them tar-nal fish-horns, an' here come a young feller right slap into my barnyard with an awtomobeel.

It was the first time one of the durn things had ever tress-past on my ol' homestead without leaf'r license—an' it made me kinda rathy. I don't aim to get hoss-tile at every liddle thing, but I certainly don't want my rights trompled on. I flared up at first, but I sez "This won't do Ab; swoller yer anger," an' I did.

Turnin' 'round to see who he was an' what was wantin', I seen a fine lookin' young feller—bring his vehickle to a stan' still an' hop out.

"How air ye, Mister Stubblechaff,"

"Yessur," sez Ma, "I've jest took it out of the oven—not more'n five min-its ago. Come in, Mr. Vince."

"Pa," she sez, "Mebby Mr. Vincin' would like to wash up a bit. You go an' get a clean towl—an' that piece of sope in the upper left-han' corner of the—"

"No, no, missus—don't go to enny trubble fer me—he sez. "I'll jest wash up here with yer husbin." Ma wouldn't hear to it. She rushed into the house like her apen was afire—an' gets the bokay sope an' a bran new towl in one han' an' the blue chiny wash bole in the other. Fin'ly we set down to dinner, him an' I, ma she's a plyin' 'round like a liddle gal with her first set of toy dishes. I know'd what was up. She was a gettin' out some of her home-made jell—preserves an' chow-chow.

"We're jest plain people, Mister Vince," I sez. "We don't have nuthin' but plain grub. Have some of the spareribs. Try some of this milk gravy. As I was a sayin'—plain grub an' plenty of it, that's us. No caffy-teery or tabbel-dote stuff fer us. Try



he sez, jest like that, with a smile that made me think of one of my own boys.

"Howdy," I sez. "I was jest goin' to dinner—won't ye set in an' have a bite with me?"

"Well—seein' I am some hungry I don't mind if I do," he sez—a shakin' han's with me. "It's a fine day." "It is fer a fact," sez I, leadin' the way to the house. Ma was a stannin' at the kitchen door—curious-like.

"Ma," I sez—"this is Mister —"

"Vincin'," put in the young feller, a bowin' to Ma jest like she was a lady. Ma blushed—I ganny! She was that flustered.

"My friends all call me Con—for short," he sez. Turnin' 'round he sized up the posies, an' hollyhocks.

"What a fine place you have here—Missus Stubblechaff. It puts me in mind of home." Throwin' up his head like a colt that had bin shet away from its mother all day an' jest caught sight of 'er—sez.

"What's that. Can't be possible that I smell a bakin' of fresh salt-risin' bread!"

some of Ma's han' made butter. Help yerself to the bread."

"That is jest what I like," he sez. "Good wholesome food! First I've et sense I left home. I was raised on a farm myself," he sez. "My parents live on a farm a few miles from Chicago, right today."

"Sat so," sez I. "What's yed father's line. Hay, grain, hogs—or what."

"Oh, he raises a leetle mite of everything in the garden an' truck line. He also sells milk, butter an' aigs—small fruit an' veg'tables. Livin' in easy distance of the market—only sixteen miles away, he delivers his stuff every mornin'."

"Sat so? I should think it kep' 'im perty bizzy—drivin' thirty-two miles a day; don't see how he has time to do enny work. Have some more coffee, Mr. Vince."

"Thanks! B'leeve I'll have 'nuther p'tater an' gravy—too. Yes, dad gets up in the mornin'—his stuff all nice an' fresh—an' in forty minits at the outside—he's dumpin' his stuff an' ready fer home. Oh, dad wouldn't

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