

"I didn't see anything, sir."

"You didn't, did you? Well, I will see."

He took the book, found the slip, inspected it carefully, and then laid it in again. There was not a mark on it.

"What did you mean by putting that paper in the book?"

"To mark the morning lesson, sir."

"Didn't you mean to deceive me by pretending to write on it?"

"How did I know you was watching me?"

This finished the examination. No offence had been committed, and the teacher felt that he had again been humbugged by a sharp-witted boy.

Not long after this an affair occurred which affected the whole school. On a warm summer afternoon, when the boys were out at recess, the teacher, who was much oppressed by the weather, sat down at his desk to think. The current of his thought, however, became disturbed by the influence of the weather. The warmth, the laughter of the boys at their play not near enough to be noisy, and the stillness of the room, had a drowsy effect on him, and in a few moments he fell asleep! The boys had been out beyond their time; and though they made no objection, they were curious to see how it was that they were thus favoured. They went very softly to the door, and peeped in; and, seeing the master asleep, they were much elated. It would not be good manners, they thought, to awaken him; for, if he chose to sleep it was no business of theirs: and therefore they "let him sleep on," like Sir John Moore at Coruana.

Some fifteen minutes more were added to his nap, and the waiting grew tiresome. Then the spirit of mischief inspired them to play some trick on the slumberer. So, after debating what to do, they delegated one of their number to do what he had a mind to.

The old school-bell was rung by a rope attached to a long curled iron lever on top, which rope came down behind the teacher's chair. Creeping in very softly, the boy set the bell noiselessly, tied the rope around the bottom rung of the chair, and left to await the result. They did not have to wait long: for they began to make a great noise; and one, putting his head in at the door, shouted "Muggins," as loud as he could bawl.

The teacher started "like a guilty thing," looked at his watch an instant, and then, leaving his seat, turned round to ring the bell and call them in. To his surprise the chair jumped up, turned over with a crash, and danced as if it were bewitched. In vain he asked who did it. Nobody knew. Then

he thought that to harshly push the inquiry might prove the worse for him, and so he apologized to the boys; and while he remained with them was less severe towards them, and got along a great deal better.

Ike got caught under the milder discipline. One day he and Clem Jackson contrived a rude checker-board on the cover of an atlas; and, as there was only a narrow space between the desks at which they sat, they determined on having a game. They watched the master to see if he was noticing them; but he had a number of the scholars round his desk, who were all asking questions, and they seemed quite hidden from his sight. So Ike put the board on a little pile of books upon the floor; and, preparing their men, the boys began to play. They would give an occasional glance toward the teacher, to assure themselves that they were safe, and having a fine time, the other boys in the vicinity looking on to note the progress of the game. The checker-men were small pieces of writing-book cover; one of the boys having the blue side, the other the white. They couldn't play very well, and so it required more attention. The interest increased as they went on, until their glances at the teacher were less frequent; but they thought they could see, out of the "corner of their eye," that he was still engaged with the crowd of questioners at his desk, and felt perfectly unobserved. They played on, therefore, in fancied security, and got to the most exciting part of the game, Jackson having the advantage, when—

"JUMP HIM, JACKSON!" said a terrible well-known voice right behind them.

It was the teacher, who had left the inquirers standing at the desk while he went for the delinquents, having seen them all the while.

"Jump him, Jackson," he repeated.

But Jackson at that moment would rather have jumped out of the window, and gone home, while Ike was overwhelmed. The boys laughed, and the teacher enjoyed a splendid triumph as he walked to his desk. He did not punish them, for he thought their mortification was enough; and Jackson was called "Jumping Jack" in school, by the boys, from that day.

CHAPTER III.

THE CREEK POETS.—BALLAD OF BULL PADDOCK.—ROUND THE OLD CELLAR.—IKE DROPS IN AT A FROGS' CONCERT.

There were lively times at the "Corner," the summer that Ike came there to live. The boys made it especially noisy on the summer