

The school had been in operation for over a week before my enrollment, and the story had gone round the parish that the new teacher had had his hands full in reducing order out of chaos. The staccato tones of authority which arose at quickly recurring intervals, and which made my little heart beat rather wildly as we entered the porch, were tempered enough to convince me that there were still some evil-doers within who had not been completely subdued. The master was evidently conducting a class and at the same time keeping a sharp eye on delinquents elsewhere. Our arrival from the highway had probably not been noticed; for just as my mother put forth her hand to announce our arrival with a gentle tap at the door, an emphatic shout came from the master which instantly reduced the hum of industry around him to a silence still more emphatic.

"Sandy Macpherson, come up here instantly," was what we heard him saying, "Do you think I can allow such idling to pass unnoticed. Come up here at once."

My mother could not fail to perceive that her knock at the door had escaped the master's notice, and yet, as I have often since thought, she did not seem to be in much of a hurry to repeat it. Perhaps she was as much perturbed by the master's manner as I was, and lost her presence of mind for the moment, or possibly she was intent on catching a glimpse of his methods of discipline.

"Do you refuse to come up at my bidding, sir?" the master again shouted. Sandy was evidently one of the evil-doers I had been thinking about. Were there many of them? Was I to be one of them?

"I give you one more warning," said the teacher.

"I wasn't doin' nothin'," was the answer that came from a half-defiant voice.

"I cannot take that for an answer to my order. It will be time enough for you to enter a defence when you have obeyed me."

"You can ask Charley Nichols here, if I wasn't doin' nothin'. Aint that so, Charley?"

"That has nothing to do with the question," and we could hear the master step from the platform, and pass hastily across the floor.

"Make up your mind at once," we heard him say, "I have told you I mean to be obeyed, from the first day I took charge of this school. You have therefore but one of two things to do, Sandy," and it seemed to me as if all passion now left the master's voice, "you have either to pass up to my desk in front