

THE POSTMASTER

"Why, Zebulon!" she whispers, grabbin' me by the arm, "what are you doin'? You're not goin' to buy a silk hat!"

"Yes, I am," says I.

"But you aren't goin' to *wear* it."

To save me, when I looked at her face I couldn't help laughin'.

"Ain't I?" says I. "Why, I think I'd look too cute for anything in a tall hat. What's your opinion?" turnin' to the clerk.

He coughed behind his hand and then made proclamation that a silk hat would become me very well, he was sure.

"Then you're a whole lot surer than I am," says I. "However, trot one out, the best article you've got in stock."

That clerk's back was gettin' limberer every second. "Yes, sir," says he, bowin'. "Our imported hat at ten dollars is the finest in New York. If you and the lady will step this way, please."

We stepped; that is, I did. I pretty nigh had to *drag* Mary.

"What size, sir?" asked the clerk.

"Oh, I don't know," says I. "Any nice genteel size will do, I guess."

I had consider'ble fun with that clerk, fust and last, and when we came out of that store I was luggin' a fine leather box with the imported tall hat