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Stories For All Moods.

THEREBY HANGS A TALE. LET'S

HAT—TAMING OF THE SHREW

Mr. William Allison is a writer on sport who has no superior in popularity or authority to-day. In his new book "My Kingdom for a Horse" Grant Richards, 21s. net), he has given of his very best. It is the kind of volume which even the most un-lookish type of sportsman will read again and again. There is, of course, much about horses and horseracing of absorbing interest to followers of the turf, but under the headings of Yorkshire, Rugby, Balliol, The Bar, and Journalism, he has written much that will appeal to all, for it is one of the most entertaining books of reminiscence of our time. An amusing story of his Rugby days is that about "Stevenson's Ghost."

STEVENSON'S GHOST.

A boy named W. E. Stevenson was sitting alone in his study one evening when he was startled by a weird rapping noise, followed by moans, coming from the floor of his room. He was so frightened when the noise was repeated that he rushed into the passage outside and called to the boys

that happened to be about. One of them was Allison. They laughed at his alarm and told him not to be foolish. The following night the rapping and the moaning was repeated, and it was suggested to Stevenson that the floor should be torn up, and this was done, but nothing was found. Directly the boards and the carpet were replaced the noise commenced, and this time the other boys were alarmed. The house butler was summoned and he heard the rap and the groan, and with "Ooh! Is, you know," he beat a hasty retreat. The boy Stevenson was given another study, but the one he had left continued to be haunted, and, according to Mr. Allison, defied the detective powers of Mr. H. Lee Warner, then a scholar there.

THE BROOM AND THE FUNNEL.

But no one discovered the originator of the ghost, and apparently Mr. Allison is the first to tell the true story in print. What happened was that he and other boys discovered when hunting rats with a terrier that below the floor and in the partition wall dividing Stevenson's study

from another there was a brick missing. A small boy named Arbuthnot was let down through the floor of the adjoining study, with a candle to enable him to see, and provided with a half broom handle and a long paper funnel. The broom he pushed through the aperture and tapped under Stevenson's floor and he sent the moans through the funnel. Whistle signals were arranged, by which the boy knew when to operate and when to stop or put out his candle. The fact of the door of the adjoining study being open, with a light burning in it, and the carpet down and nothing disarranged disarmed suspicion.

A JOWETT STORY.

The author has an entertaining reminiscence of Balliol and of the great Jowett. Exploring an underground region under the College he and his fellows discovered a huge Bacchanalian picture "of a really startling character." It was hidden in a student's room until a Sunday afternoon, and then when the Master and several important guests had gone into the hall to dine, "this appalling picture" was brought out and hung on a lamp-post immediately facing and within ten yards of the Master's house. The sequel was that all the available culprits were "sent down" for the rest of the term. But Allison happened to have gone away the next day, and when he returned he found that it had been left to the Master to deal with him and he prepared for the worst.

This was what occurred when he saw Jowett. The great man was absorbed in his work, which, as Jowett's Plato, became a classic from the moment it went to press. "He looked up as I entered but seemed hardly to recognize me, for his mind was concentrated on his work. At last he said: 'Ah! Mr. Allison.' Then after a pause: 'Your tutor tells me you haven't been attending lectures regularly.' In an instant it flashed across me that he was not thinking of me at all and that if I could get away without diverting his thoughts from Plato all might yet be well; so I said very quietly, that I would be more regular in future, and backed as noiselessly as possible towards the door. I had hardly got there when he said: 'Ah! there was something else I had to speak to you about.' 'Now for it,' thought I, but I felt instinctively that there was still a chance if I made no noise, and held my breath; and so it proved, for the slight spark of recollection about me died out; he was again immersed in Plato, and glancing up for a fraction of a second he said: 'I'll not detain you any longer!' Even so, no burglar ever opened a door or passed from a room more silently than I did from his that night."

A STORY OF PHIL MAY.

Mr. Allison is never so happy as when he is writing of his celebrated venture in Journalism, the satirical St. Stephen's Review, which at one time had a great vogue, and which died after many vicissitudes.

A TREMENDOUS BALL.

It was Mr. Allison who gave that great humorous artist, Phil May, his first real chance in his pages, and he tells many amusing stories about him. Here is one: A certain Colonel North gave a tremendous fancy-dress ball at the Metropole Hotel "when the nitrate boom was in full blast," and an invitation was obtained for the artist. Says the author: "The whole of the ground floor and the whole basement of the hotel were taken for the

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THE RETURN OF BOVRIL & VIROL.

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ball, and the whole of the champagne in the hotel was consumed. Phil May did a splendid double-page drawing of the affair. . . . Colonel North on first sight of the paper, tore it up in wrath and kicked out the old canvasser who had come to ask him how many copies he wanted. What specially annoyed him was the sketch of himself as Henry VIII, saying: 'Cost me £28,000 and I can't get a drink.'

"It is a fact that the Colonel could not get a glass of champagne at the conclusion of the proceedings; but after thinking about what Phil May had done he saw the humor of it, and as I told him when I met him, the 'can't get a drink sketch' only illustrated his unbounded hospitality. 'If,' said I, 'we had represented any of your guests as unable to get a drink, that would have been a very different matter.'"

"NOT SOME OLD JAMAICA"

One of Mr. Allison's best stories is concerned with his days at the Bar, and it is about an election petition in which he was briefed because he knew all the people concerned and could tell his leaders more than the solicitor dared to do in his instructions. A friend of Allison's had carried the war so far into the enemy's camp that from contiguous premises he had contrived "what King James I. called 'a Lug,'" and in it he could both hear and see what went on in the office of the petitioner's solicitor, a Mr. Cass. Now, one of the witnesses for the petitioner was "a leading light of Nonconformity and teetotalism." He was seen and heard in Mr. Cass's office when his "proof" was being settled, and he had been invited to take a drink. He had at first refused, but the solicitor had said: "What!

Not some old Jamaica?" and had produced a bottle. This had proved too much for the total abstainer, who succumbed to the temptation and drank.

Says Mr. Allison: "I had all the details of the incident and wrote them down. My leader received the memo. somewhat sceptically, and I could not explain, but assured him that it was right; so he proceeded to ask the witness if he had been supplied with drink in Mr. Cass's office. This he indignantly denied, saying, 'I have never tasted whisky, gin, rum, ale, or anything else for seven and twenty years' (laughter). Instantly there there came the question in the exact words that had been used by Mr. Cass, 'What! Not some old Jamaica?' This so startled the witness that he fairly broke down, believing that Cass had given him away, while Cass, on his part, evidently regarded the witness as a traitor. This was but one of many instances in which my secret information enabled our side to dumbfound the witnesses for the petitioner."—John O'London's Weekly.

Wooden Submarines.

Who built the original submarine? The idea was first suggested by a British seaman in 1578, but it remained for a Dutchman, named Van Drebbel, to build a boat able to travel under the water for a short distance. Van Drebbel constructed two submarines about the year 1620, which were launched on the Thames. They were built of wood, strengthened inside with iron bands, and covered externally with tightly stretched hides soaked in grease.

The larger one pulled twelve oars, which passed through holes in her sides. The holes were made watertight by leathern sleeves attached both to the oars and the vessel's side. According to one account the balance between flotation and submergence was so fine that she could be kept below water by the oars alone, resumably used in the same way as the living fins of a modern submarine.

Van Drebbel also invented what he called a "certain Quintessence," or chemical liquor, by which he was enabled to renew the air in his boat when it had become exhausted. It is even said that King James I., cautious as he was, ventured on a submarine trip in Van Drebbel's under-water boat.

WEAK CHESTED PEOPLE

and elderly people particularly, who are so subject to ailments of the breathing tubes and lungs, are frequently difficult to prescribe for owing to their frail constitutions. For all such people Peps are the safest remedy for coughs, colds, bronchitis, asthma, etc., as Peps contains absolutely no harmful drugs. Mrs. David Fairquhar of Mattatall Lake, N.S., writes: "I have just been cured of a very bad cough by the use of Peps. As I am seventy-five years of age I consider this cure all the more remarkable." For very young people, too, Peps are just as good. All dealers 50c.

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Ambassadorial Privileges.

Ambassadors have curious privileges. Most people know that they and their households are immune from arrest, an embassy being considered a geographical part of the Ambassador's own country.

But there are many privileges less well known. The Ambassador is the only person about a court who has the right to turn his back on the Sovereign or ruler at the conclusion of an audience. And curiously enough, he always exercises this right, turning to bow after walking three paces. This, of course, refers only to state occasions.

This rule worked rather oddly in Queen Victoria's time. To turn one's back on a lady would be rude, to retire backward would be to resign a privilege; so the Ambassadors always compromised by edging sideways toward the door like a crab.

Another privilege of Ambassadors is the right of having both leaves of the folding doors thrown open when being ushered into the ruler's presence. No one else can claim this privilege.

Another highly-prized privilege of the Ambassador—one that Sovereigns must often regret—is that of being able to demand an interview whenever he chooses, at any hour of the day or night.

The sword is the Ambassador's emblem of honour. It is a long rapier with a blunted point. One great diplomat, the late Lord Dufferin, used to say that the only practical use he ever found for it was to poke fires with and file bills on.

American Ambassadors wear neither swords nor costumes. They stick to plain black.

Household Notes.

Furniture should be stained before being waxed.

Charcoal powder is excellent for cleaning fine knives.

Shoe polish on clothing can be removed by vinegar.

For stringing large beads violin strings are excellent.

Never stir meringue while making it—always beat it.

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