Stories Told by the Actors

JAMES H. STODDART, the veteran actor, was five years old when he made his first appearance as the child of Martin Haywood in Jerrold's drama of "The Rent Day." He writes: "In the last scene, where Crumbs, played by my father, seizes Martin's goods and chattels and is about to turn him out of doors, I became fearfully excited, and when Martin, my stage father, began berating the real author of my being I could stand it no longer. I ran from Martin and clung wildly to old Crumbs. I had been announced as 'Master Stoddart, five years old; his first appearance on any stage,' so that my identity and my relation to Crumbs were known to the public. The audience yelled with delight, and the conclusion of the act was, of course, completely upset. My debut, therefore, proved highly injurious to my prospects, for some time afterward when other children were required Alexander would say to my father, 'Stoddart, don't bring "The Rent Day" boy.'"

J. H. STODDART.

Edgar L. Davenport of "The College Widow" company tells the following story on an Irishman: "Michael had been on American soil but a short time and had been walking around for several days in a ceaseless search for work. He finally stopped in front of a bookstore, in the window of which was a sign reading: 'Dickens' Works Here All Week, $3.' The Celt pondered over the sign for several minutes, spelling out each character. After scratching his head he said, 'Bedad, that Dickens feller is pretty hard oop fer wurrk if he stays here all week for t'ree dollars.'"

EDGAR L. DAVENPORT.

While Lawrence D'Orsay was appearing in "The Earl of Pawtucket" in St. Louis a few weeks ago he was a guest of the St. Louis club, as was also General Clyde Donaldson, an English army officer, who was not very well up on American affairs.

"I hear that the native Americans—ah—the red men, of course, I mean," remarked the general, "are pretty well exterminated. We shall not see any of them, shall we?"

"Well, you won't see many on your way east," replied their host, "but Mr. D'Orsay will see plenty of Indians on his way to the coast. In most of the larger towns he will find an American Indian standing in front of nearly every cigar store."

LAWRENCE D'ORSAY.

"Oh, that will be jolly good sport, D'Orsay. The only Indians I have ever seen were with the Buffalo Bill Wild West troupe at home," said the general.

"Oh, that is nothing, old chap," said D'Orsay; "the country's new yet. Why, bless my soul, at my summer home—ah—in New York city—I used to amuse myself at my library window—ah—watching a herd of twenty odd buffaloes peacefully grazing within a stone's throw of the house."

After the laugh had subsided the general said, "Oh, I say, D'Orsay, that is putting it a bit strong."

"Not at all. You see, I lived directly opposite the Bronx zoological park."

The general was convinced.

Francis Wilson, who is touring in a new piece entitled "Cousin Billy," once wrote some reminiscences for Collier's Weekly about his encounters with aspirants for fame on the stage. He said he was often called on for advice and nearly every mail brought him a letter reading somewhat like this:

Dear Sir—I have seen and admired your acting for years [oh, that's a familiar phrase!], and I regard you as the foremost representative of your profession. [And that's another—full of flattery!] I know you are a very busy man, and I dislike to rob you of the few moments' leisure vouchsafed you from your arduous and artistic efforts, but can you not spare an ambitious youth [or maiden] a few hours of your valuable time for the discussion of a subject—the stage—which is very near and very dear to his [or her] heart? My parents object to my going on the stage [that's painfully familiar!], and I should have to bear an assumed name, but this we can also discuss if you will only be good enough to grant the interview. Please do not throw this in the waste paper basket. [The writer has an idea perhaps that it should be gilded and framed!] You made a beginning once, and in memory of the difficulties that beset you then give a hearing to one [who besets you now—no!] who is knocking feebly [very feebly] at the door of your profession now! Yours ambitiously, STELLA.

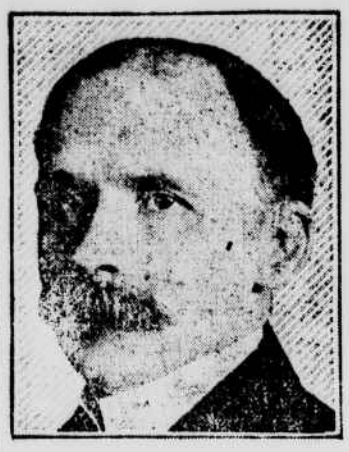
FRANCIS WILSON.

Mr. Wilson says it is hard to give advice to such aspirants for the honors of the stage.

FRANCIS B. LOOMIS.

Assistant Secretary of State and the Venezuelan Asphalt Case.

Francis B. Loomis, assistant secretary of state of the United States, whose official integrity has been assailed, has done much to promote commercial relations between South American countries and the United States and was appointed minister to Venezuela by President McKinley in 1897. The charge made against him by representatives of President Castro is that he acted as agent for the New York and Bermudez Asphalt company while minister to Venezuela and accepted a check for $10,000 in consideration for his services. Mr. Loomis says the charge is an absolute falsehood, that he never asked or received anything from the company and that the charge is based on an exchange of checks which took place between him and the asphalt company's manager when he was leaving Venezuela. Owing to the high rates of exchange due to unsettled conditions in Venezuela it is difficult to get Venezuelan money converted into United States money, and Mr. Loomis says that to get Venezuelan money he had in a bank turned into American legal tender he exchanged checks at the posted United States government rates, giving a check equivalent to that which he received. Secretary Taft of the war department is investigating the matter.



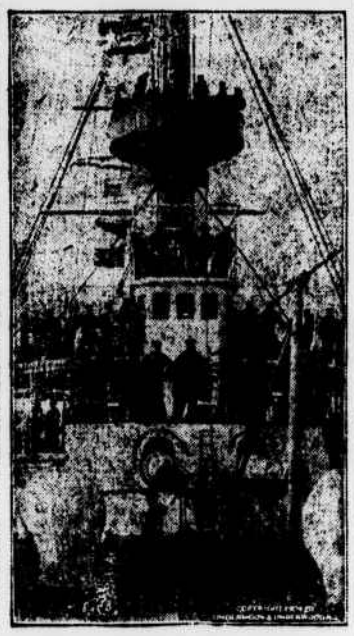
FRANCIS B. LOOMIS.

Mr. Loomis was born in Marietta, O., in 1861 and in 1883 was graduated from Marietta college. For several years he was on the staff of a New York daily paper. President Harrison made him consul at St. Etienne, France, and while there he wrote reports on commercial conditions which attracted much attention. On his return from France in 1893 he became editor in chief of the Cincinnati Commercial Tribune. He was minister to Venezuela from 1897 to 1901, when, at his own request, he was transferred to another diplomatic position and became minister to Portugal. He assumed the post of assistant secretary of state in 1903.

SPEEDY JAP CRUISERS.

The Asama and Three Like Her Make a Fast Quartet.

Though the Japanese have not many battleships they have an advantage in the possession of a large number of modern, up to date and speedy cruisers. Most of the cruisers are in the squadron under Admiral Kamimura, and it is said that every ship in his fleet went into dry dock after the fall of Port Arthur and that not one of his cruisers has less than nineteen knots speed. The Japanese have nine armored cruisers and a still larger number of protected cruisers. The former have a total of 73,686 tonnage as compared with 14,724 possessed by the Russian cruisers of the same class. The armored cruiser stands next in importance to the battleship. Four of the Japanese cruisers of this class, the Asama, Idzumo, Iwate and Tokiwa, were built about the same time and are of the same type. The Asama is one of the speediest of the quartet and can make twenty-three knots. She was laid down at Elswick, England, in 1898 has a displacement of 9,750 tons and a length of 408 feet. The batteries of the cruiser consist of four eight-inch and fourteen six-inch guns and twelve twelve-pounders and a dozen three-pounders, all rapid fire guns.



BIG GUNS AND FIGHTING TOP OF THE ARMORED CRUISER ASAMA.

The fighting top of the Asama shown in the picture is used by sharpshooters and is large enough for the employment of machine guns in this capacity.

WHY THE NEGRO IS BLACK.

Army Surgeon Says It Is to Protect Him From Tropical Sun.

Surgeon Major Charles Woodruff, U. S. A., now stationed in the Philippines, in a treatise just published in England on the effects of the tropical light on the white man incidentally answers the interesting question, "Why is the negro black?" His answer is that the negro's blackness is a defense against the dangerous rays of the sun, and he thus reasons:

"Sun rays are divided into two classes—long and short. The latter are dangerous to all persons who are not defended from them; the former make for heat. To avoid these dangers the pure negro has evolved a black skin.

"The defensive skin is an armor of pigment just under the outer skin. It varies in intensity of color from the coal black negro of the tropics to the white man of northern latitudes.

"The pigment is always there—just sufficient in strength to resist the danger in different climates. This accounts for the varying colors of different races—black, red, yellow, copper and white. It is only absent in albinos.

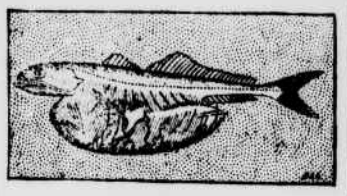
"The negro's natural armor is only protective against artificial heat. In a dark atmosphere the black skin ceases to throw off heat, and the negro suffers. In a stokehole, for instance, he is usually the first man to collapse, where white men are unaffected."

QUEER DEEP SEA FISHES.

They Can Swallow Others Twice Their Own Size.

That one animal can devour another twice its own size at a single swallow is a statement that may seem to the uninformed to be as incredible as any fish story ever invented. Nevertheless it is true of certain fishes. So far as known such fishes are inhabitants of the deep seas, where utter darkness perpetually prevails, with an unvarying temperature almost as cold as ice and a pressure ranging, according to depth, from a quarter to three or four tons upon every square inch of their body surface.

According to Gunther, three specimens of the saccopharynx, a deep sea eel several feet long, were found floating with fishes in their stomachs which many times exceeded the length of their destroyers. The Plagyodus ferox is about six feet long and very ferocious. From the stomach of one were taken several octopods, crustaceans, a young brama, twelve young boar fishes, a horse mackerel and one young of its own species. One peculiarity is that it has ribs symmetrically arranged the whole length of its abdomen.



THE CHIASMODUS NIGER.

The specimen of the Chiasmodus niger, or "great swallower," here illustrated is six and five-eighths inches long, but contains a fish in its stomach which is ten and a half inches long. The stomach of the devourer is stretched as thin as gold beater's skin. It has hooked teeth and teeth which cross each other from opposite sides of the mouth. The teeth of these rapacious fishes of the deep sea usually point backward. Gunther explains that the fish after having seized its victim with its capacious and very movable jaws partly presses it down as a snake would do and partly draws itself over it. The prey is received into an esophagus and stomach, the membranes of which are extensible as an india rubber pouch. The empty stomach is contracted and folded up and projects but little below the abdomen.—Dr. Sanderson Christison in Scientific American.

Tapeworm a Foe of Consumption.

"The tapeworm is the natural enemy of the germ of consumption, and the latter cannot exist when the former is present," says Consul Canada of Vera Cruz, Mexico, in a report to the state department. The consul states that two eminent scientists have discovered that the tapeworm prevents the organism from being infected with tuberculosis bacilli, and this was proved in the case of a consumptive who had a tapeworm and completely recovered his health. To positively establish the efficacy of this remedy the doctors injected a liquid prepared from the taenia into several consumptives, which resulted in a complete cure.

Sick Man Loses Eighteen Inches.

Professor Lannelongue recently described to the French Academy of Science the case of a man afflicted with an unusual illness called osteomalachy, which in three years caused his stature to diminish from four feet six inches to less than three feet. According to the physician, all the bones in the patient's body became softened and bent like rubber, and this condition lasted for more than three years, after which period the patient got well again without any apparent reason or cure and is now in good health, minus eighteen inches of his stature.

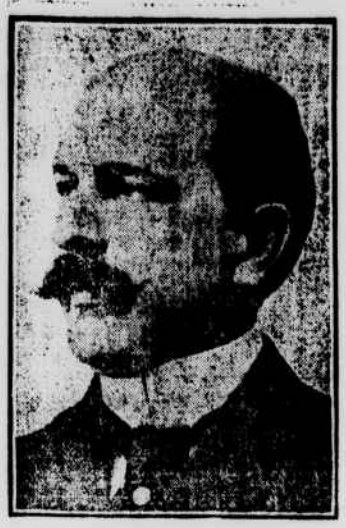
The Piano and the Nerves.

A Berlin physician says that out of 1,000 girls who played the piano before the age of twelve years he found 600 cases of nervous diseases, whereas out of the same number who did not play the instrument he found but 100 cases. The author of these experiments states that the piano should never be used by a child before the age of sixteen years and only two hours a day at the maximum.

MINISTER BOWEN'S CAREER.

He Has a Long and Creditable Record as a Diplomat.

The affairs of Venezuela have recently received a great deal of public attention, and the latest developments connected with them direct the public gaze upon Herbert W. Bowen, who was appointed minister to that country in 1901, and Francis B. Loomis, his predecessor in that office and now assistant secretary of state. Through Mr. Bowen charges reflecting upon Mr. Loomis' integrity as an official while representing the United States in Venezuela have been filed at Washington. An investigation has been ordered, and Mr. Bowen has been summoned home to testify at this inquiry. He will not return to Venezuela, but will, it is supposed, be transferred to another diplomatic post if he can show that there was no impropriety in his conduct in respect to the Loomis charges.



HERBERT W. BOWEN.

Minister Bowen won high praise for his efforts to obtain a peaceful settlement of the difficulties between Venezuela and European powers when the warships of European nations made hostile demonstrations off the Venezuelan coast in 1903. He succeeded in getting matters referred to The Hague.

Herbert Wolcott Bowen was born in Brooklyn in 1856 and studied at the Brooklyn Polytechnic institute, Yale university and the Columbia Law school. At Yale he was in the same class with William H. Taft, now secretary of war and also acting secretary of state, who will conduct the inquiry into the charges against Assistant Secretary Loomis. President Harrison appointed Mr. Bowen consul to Barcelona, Spain, and the creditable record he made there won him from President Cleveland, a political opponent, promotion to the office of consul general. President McKinley made him minister resident and consul general to Persia, from which post he went to Venezuela to succeed Mr. Loomis.

TOLSTOI AS A TAILOR.

Count Now Makes His Own Clothing. Some of His Eccentricities.

Count Leo Tolstoi carries his ideas of social equality and simplicity of life to the logical limit. This is strikingly shown in a picture which represents him garbed in attire of his own handiwork. It is a peasant's costume and is of coarse material and crude fashioning, but the grand old man of Russia looks distinguished even in so rough a garb. In making his own clothes the count is animated by the desire not to be dependent on hired labor for anything. He believes in each person doing his own share of the menial tasks of life, and if a ditch is to be dug or a field cultivated he does not hesitate to soil his hands in performance of the work. The picture shows the great writer and philosopher carrying a bag of provisions destined for the home of some poor family.

COUNT LEO TOLSTOI IN PEASANT'S GARB, MADE BY HIMSELF.

Long ago Count Tolstoi would have given away everything he possessed but for his wife. The Countess Tolstoi—or Mrs. Tolstoi, as she prefers to be called—has been not only her husband's inspiration, but a necessary check upon his career. To her care of his estate is due the fact that there is still wealth in the family and that he was compelled to accept royalties upon his books.

Zeb White's Only Child

The Old Possum Hunter Tells About His Son, Who Was Cantankerous.

"SPEAKIN' 'bout folks who has children," said the old possum hunter as we sat and smoked our pipes one evening, "I'm rather glad I hain't got any to bring up. Gals may be all right, but yo' kin never tell how a boy is goin' to turn out. My naybur, Jim Filkins, is havin' heaps of trubble with his two boys jest now. One of 'em was over to the railroad t'other day and wanted to fight the bullgine, and t'other went to town and got his eye almost put out in a fight. Reckon they'll grow up to be a cantankerous pair."

"But you had a son who died some time ago, didn't you?" I asked.

"Yes, I had a son Sam—the only child we ever had—and he died some five y'ars ago. In one way I'm sorry and in another way glad. It made me kinder lonely to hev him go, but I could figger up that it was fur the best. He was growin' up to be cantankerous and ornery. I don't know whar he took it from, but he was that way, and a calamity was bound to happen sooner or later."

"BEFORE HE COULD WINK TWICE I FLOPPED HIM ON HIS BACK."

"How was he cantankerous?"

"Waal, that boy had a powerful good heart in him as a gineral thing, but thar was days when the devil seemed to hev possession of him. It wasn't no good to switch him, and when he was outer sorts it wasn't no good to argy with him. He was fifteen y'ars old when I cum home from the wah, and his head was swelled up big 'nuff fur a man of fo'ty. He finally got so that he felt like rubbin' up ag'in me. I was at work in the garden one day when he cums home from the Co'ners a-spittin' right and left, and bimeby he cums out to me and sez:

"'Pop, mebbe yo' calls yo'self the best man on this yere mounting!'

"'Mebbe I do,' sez I, as I looks at him outer my left eye.

"'But yo' ain't, though, and I kin prove it.'

"'Then who is?'

"'He stands right here befo' yo', and his cognomen ar' Sam White. Dad, I'm goin' to whop yo'!'

"'Better get into the house, boy, and hev yo'r mother gin yo' some bread and butter and 'lasses on it.'

"But that boy had the wust kind of swell head," said the old man, "and he was airnest in thinkin' he could whop his pop. He gits higher and higher, and bimeby he sails fur me. I knowed what was comin', and befo' he could wink twice I flopped him on his back and then whopped him till he hollered fur mercy. He lived fur two y'ars arter that, but he didn't try that game on me no mo'.

"One day he was down to Bristol, and tha' was a circus in town. We went in, and as we was lookin' at the animals one of the lions lies down, with his tail stickin' through the bars of the cage. I seen Sam a-grinnin', and I sez:

"'Young man, don't yo' go and make no fool of yo'self with that lion.'

"'I'm gwine to pinch that tail,' sez he.

"'What's the use?'

"'I've heard as how they were made of leather and had no feelin' in 'em, and I'm goin' to see about it.'

"I didn't say nothin' mo' kase I knowed Sam was bound to have his way if it busted him. He gets clus to the cage and grabs that tail and gives it a pinch and a twist and then hangs on to it with all his might. The lion jumps up with a roar fit to shake the hills, and in about a minit that hull menagerie was upsot and the circus folks a-pilin' on to Sam. One of the older lions in the cage clawed him across the hand, a dog bit him in the leg and then the circus folk whopped him till he didn't get outer bed fur six weeks. He was into all jest sich scrapes as that, and the wonder was that he lived as long as he did. The older he growed the mo' cantankerous he got, and one day the ole woman cum to me with tears in her eyes and sez:

"'Zeb White, Sam's a-gittin' wusser and wusser all the time, and I'm almost hopin' the Lawd will take him away.'

"'The Lawd couldn't manage him if he did git him,' sez I.

"'Mebbe he could. Mebbe he's got a pen up thar in heaven to put Sam into and keep him till he's bin made over. I'm goin' to dye my shawl black and fix up a mournin' bonnet, fur that boy of ours will be brung home dead befo' he's a month older.'

"Waal, so he was—so he was," said the old man, with a touch of pathos in his voice. "He was down to the Co'ners one day to blow and brag with the crowd a-hangin' out thar in them days, when a man cums ridin' up on a mewl to say that Bill Clark's bull had broken out of the field and was comin' up the road. That bull was a big un and hooked two hosses to death. As the man was givin' the alarm the bull showed up down the road. He was pawin' the airth and makin' the heavens quake with his beller, and sich as had hosses tied up was mighty spry to set 'em loose and git 'em away. Nobody didn't propose to git in the way of that bull and take chances—nobody but my son Sam. It was a chance fur him to show off, and he riz off and yelled:

"'This is the day I hev bin livin' fur! I'll go fo'th and take that bull by the horns and flop him on his back.'

"The men tried to argy with Sam, but he was sot, and, pullin' off his coat and flingin' down his hat, he walked out and begins to paw and beller same as the bull. The critter stops to look at him, and fur a minit or two he must hev wondered what it was. Then his eyes began to glare and his tail to stand out, and the crowd hollered to Sam to git over the fence. He never minded 'em, but with a roar and a beller he run in on the bull."

"And what happened?" I asked as the old man paused.

"Jest what might hev bin looked fur," he replied. "Sam was tossed twenty feet at the fust go off, and when that bull got through with him thar wasn't much left to bury. A man cums up to break the news to us. I wasn't home, and he sez to the old woman:

"'Mrs. White, ar' yo' son Sam home today?'

"'He ain't,' says she.

"'And do yo' know why he ain't?'

"'Not exactly, but I reckon it's kase he's sumwhar else.'

"'That's right, Mrs. White—perfeckly right and proper. Yo'r son Sam ain't home and ain't comin' home kase he's got bizness up thar in the land of angels and golden streets which will detain him fur sum time.'"

"And so he was brought home dead?" I queried.

"Jest mashed right to a pulp, sah. Couldn't be otherwise than dead when that bull had bin tossin' him in the air and walkin' around on him fur a quarter of an hour. Yes, that was the last of Sam. All we could do was to hold a funeral and bury him."

"It was a sad case."

"Yes, but me and the old woman hev allus reckoned that Providence had a hand in it. Sam had got that cantankerous that thar was no holdin' him back. He'd got to fuss around or bust. If he hadn't tackled the bull he might have got into a row in town on 'leckshun day and bin the means of a dozen men bein' killed. Yes, it was better so. I hated to see him go, and he was an only child, but cantankerousness was bound to smash him all to squash sooner or later, and we had to make the best of it and reckon that Providence knowed her bizness." M. QUAD.

Cautioned.

"Henrietta," said Mr. Newrich, "they told me where I bought this wine that it was over thirty years old."

"You look out for them people," his wife replied. "They'd 'a' never admitted it if they hadn't expected to stick you hard on something else."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Asked and Answered.

"One more question, pa," began little Willie.

"Now, see here!" fumed his pa.

"Pa," Willie hastened to ask, "what kind of glass are glass eyes made of?"

"Why—er—looking glass, I suppose. Now go to bed."—Catholic Standard and Times.

Girls Will Be Girls.

Mrs. Buster—I wonder that Miss Korsage should appear at such a function as this in a gown that covers her up to the chin! What could have possessed her—modesty?

Mrs. Da Kollatay—Boniness, I presume.—Boston Transcript.

Astonished.

"Why, yes," said Miss Pertie Goodwin to her intimate friend, "Harry and I are going to have a secret wedding. Not a soul is going to know of it till after it's over. Hadn't you heard?"—Chicago Tribune.

Pa's Warning Unheeded.

"Look here! Another foolish question and you go to bed!"

"But this ain't foolish. I only want to know if ma had married somebody else 'a you what would my last name be?"—New York World.

'Twere Best to Lose.

'Twere better not to win, I'd say—
I mean not poker, now, nor euchre—
If, having won, a man must pay
A sum each month of filthy lucre.
I'd say, since wedlock's bark is tossed
So oft these days on beaches stony,
'Tis better to have loved and lost
Than have to pay out alimony!
—Roy Farrell Greene in New York Press.