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As The Elizabethan Said—

"STOP ME IF YOU'VE HEARD THIS ONE"

"THAT'S a new one to me!" says B, when he has heard A's latest joke. He is blissfully ignorant of the possibility that the 18th century may have laughed at the same joke, and the 17th century before that, and the 16th before that . . . way back, maybe to the Greeks.

Everyone knows that collections of jokes can be bought, but how many are aware that such books were on sale centuries ago. It is one of the many interesting points made in Professor Arnold Wall's new series of talks, "The Art of Jesting," that soon after the invention of printing, publishers began to print collections of jests for sale. These collections kept appearing down the centuries. Current jests about St. Peter at Heaven's Gate must be almost as numerous as those about unhappy marriages. Well, in a 16th century collection of jokes there is a tale that combines both classes—of a thrice-married man whom St. Peter turned away because he had not learned from experience. And so on, and so on.

There are many tales in New Zealand of bullocks and waggons lost in mud. Are they founded on fact, or do they date to an English "boghole" story of 1670, which Professor Wall relates? He also gives the history of the religious joke, the married life joke (one form of joke in this class is known to be over 2,000 years old), the old maid joke, the country bumpkin joke, the ignorant



townsman joke, the smart answer joke, the nationality joke, and others.

There is a New Zealand flavour in these rambles. Professor Wall explains that as the old books were written by townsmen the joke went against the countryman, but in the new lands the typical settler has been a countryman, and he has got his own back. There is, for example, the story of the new chum who is told to go and kill a sheep and is found in one of the pens laying about him with an axe. "Well, have you killed that sheep yet?" "No, but I've wounded a good many."

These rambles among the anecdotes begin at 4YA on Friday, February 7.

ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD

★ 3ZB Staff Perform Ambitious Play ★

HISTORIANS are inclined to laugh at the bandit known as Robin Hood, but his exploits are nevertheless an ever-green subject for stories, ballads, films and plays. Now Station 3ZB

has evolved a radio presentation of "Robin Hood," and it is being heard every Tuesday afternoon at 5.15 o'clock during the children's session.

"Robin Hood," which has been adapted for radio by Paula Matthews of Christchurch, is played by a cast which includes many well known 3ZB personalities. The cast is as follows: Robin Hood: Maurice King; Little John: Jacko; Will Scarlett: Fred Hyde; Friar Tuck: Te Ari Pitama; Maid Marion: Paula Matthews; Will Stutley: Cyril Cook; Alan Adale; Teddy Grundy; Sheriff of Nottingham: Cyril Cook; Richard Coeur de Lion: Bob Speirs.

The first episode was heard on Tuesday, January 14, and it is estimated that it will run to about eight episodes altogether.

It is in some ways a pity that the play cannot be seen as well as heard, for the players take an obvious delight in the exciting, melodramatic story. One of the highlights is the Friar Tuck of Te Ari Pitama, who, to use a stage expression, "gets his teeth into the part."

"Robin Hood" is produced by Grace Green.



TE ARI PITAMA

"Gets his teeth into the part"