

Mark Twain, a Biography. Complete eBook

Mark Twain, a Biography. Complete by Albert Bigelow Paine

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Contents

Mark Twain, a Biography. Complete eBook.....	1
Contents.....	2
Table of Contents.....	41
Page 1.....	49
Page 2.....	51
Page 3.....	53
Page 4.....	55
Page 5.....	56
Page 6.....	57
Page 7.....	58
Page 8.....	59
Page 9.....	61
Page 10.....	63
Page 11.....	65
Page 12.....	66
Page 13.....	68
Page 14.....	70
Page 15.....	72
Page 16.....	73
Page 17.....	74
Page 18.....	75
Page 19.....	76
Page 20.....	77
Page 21.....	79
Page 22.....	81

Page 23.....	83
Page 24.....	85
Page 25.....	86
Page 26.....	87
Page 27.....	89
Page 28.....	90
Page 29.....	92
Page 30.....	93
Page 31.....	95
Page 32.....	97
Page 33.....	99
Page 34.....	100
Page 35.....	101
Page 36.....	102
Page 37.....	103
Page 38.....	104
Page 39.....	106
Page 40.....	108
Page 41.....	110
Page 42.....	112
Page 43.....	114
Page 44.....	115
Page 45.....	116
Page 46.....	118
Page 47.....	119
Page 48.....	121

Page 49.....	123
Page 50.....	124
Page 51.....	126
Page 52.....	127
Page 53.....	129
Page 54.....	131
Page 55.....	132
Page 56.....	133
Page 57.....	135
Page 58.....	136
Page 59.....	138
Page 60.....	140
Page 61.....	141
Page 62.....	143
Page 63.....	144
Page 64.....	145
Page 65.....	146
Page 66.....	147
Page 67.....	148
Page 68.....	150
Page 69.....	152
Page 70.....	154
Page 71.....	156
Page 72.....	158
Page 73.....	159
Page 74.....	161

Page 75.....	163
Page 76.....	165
Page 77.....	167
Page 78.....	168
Page 79.....	170
Page 80.....	172
Page 81.....	174
Page 82.....	175
Page 83.....	176
Page 84.....	178
Page 85.....	179
Page 86.....	180
Page 87.....	181
Page 88.....	183
Page 89.....	185
Page 90.....	186
Page 91.....	188
Page 92.....	189
Page 93.....	190
Page 94.....	191
Page 95.....	193
Page 96.....	195
Page 97.....	196
Page 98.....	197
Page 99.....	198
Page 100.....	200

Page 101.....	201
Page 102.....	203
Page 103.....	204
Page 104.....	206
Page 105.....	207
Page 106.....	208
Page 107.....	210
Page 108.....	211
Page 109.....	212
Page 110.....	213
Page 111.....	214
Page 112.....	216
Page 113.....	218
Page 114.....	219
Page 115.....	220
Page 116.....	222
Page 117.....	224
Page 118.....	226
Page 119.....	228
Page 120.....	229
Page 121.....	231
Page 122.....	232
Page 123.....	234
Page 124.....	235
Page 125.....	236
Page 126.....	237

Page 127.....	239
Page 128.....	241
Page 129.....	243
Page 130.....	245
Page 131.....	247
Page 132.....	249
Page 133.....	251
Page 134.....	252
Page 135.....	253
Page 136.....	255
Page 137.....	257
Page 138.....	258
Page 139.....	260
Page 140.....	262
Page 141.....	264
Page 142.....	266
Page 143.....	267
Page 144.....	269
Page 145.....	271
Page 146.....	273
Page 147.....	275
Page 148.....	277
Page 149.....	279
Page 150.....	281
Page 151.....	283
Page 152.....	284

Page 153.....	285
Page 154.....	287
Page 155.....	288
Page 156.....	289
Page 157.....	290
Page 158.....	292
Page 159.....	293
Page 160.....	295
Page 161.....	297
Page 162.....	299
Page 163.....	301
Page 164.....	303
Page 165.....	305
Page 166.....	307
Page 167.....	309
Page 168.....	311
Page 169.....	313
Page 170.....	315
Page 171.....	317
Page 172.....	319
Page 173.....	321
Page 174.....	322
Page 175.....	324
Page 176.....	326
Page 177.....	328
Page 178.....	329

Page 179.....	331
Page 180.....	333
Page 181.....	335
Page 182.....	337
Page 183.....	339
Page 184.....	341
Page 185.....	343
Page 186.....	345
Page 187.....	347
Page 188.....	349
Page 189.....	351
Page 190.....	352
Page 191.....	354
Page 192.....	356
Page 193.....	358
Page 194.....	360
Page 195.....	361
Page 196.....	363
Page 197.....	365
Page 198.....	367
Page 199.....	369
Page 200.....	370
Page 201.....	371
Page 202.....	373
Page 203.....	374
Page 204.....	376

Page 205.....	378
Page 206.....	380
Page 207.....	381
Page 208.....	383
Page 209.....	384
Page 210.....	386
Page 211.....	388
Page 212.....	389
Page 213.....	391
Page 214.....	393
Page 215.....	395
Page 216.....	397
Page 217.....	398
Page 218.....	400
Page 219.....	401
Page 220.....	403
Page 221.....	404
Page 222.....	406
Page 223.....	408
Page 224.....	409
Page 225.....	410
Page 226.....	411
Page 227.....	413
Page 228.....	415
Page 229.....	416
Page 230.....	418

Page 231.....	420
Page 232.....	422
Page 233.....	423
Page 234.....	424
Page 235.....	425
Page 236.....	426
Page 237.....	428
Page 238.....	430
Page 239.....	431
Page 240.....	432
Page 241.....	434
Page 242.....	435
Page 243.....	436
Page 244.....	438
Page 245.....	440
Page 246.....	442
Page 247.....	443
Page 248.....	445
Page 249.....	446
Page 250.....	448
Page 251.....	449
Page 252.....	451
Page 253.....	452
Page 254.....	453
Page 255.....	455
Page 256.....	457

Page 257.....	459
Page 258.....	461
Page 259.....	463
Page 260.....	464
Page 261.....	466
Page 262.....	468
Page 263.....	469
Page 264.....	470
Page 265.....	472
Page 266.....	473
Page 267.....	474
Page 268.....	476
Page 269.....	478
Page 270.....	480
Page 271.....	481
Page 272.....	482
Page 273.....	483
Page 274.....	484
Page 275.....	486
Page 276.....	488
Page 277.....	489
Page 278.....	491
Page 279.....	493
Page 280.....	495
Page 281.....	496
Page 282.....	497

Page 283.....	499
Page 284.....	501
Page 285.....	503
Page 286.....	505
Page 287.....	506
Page 288.....	508
Page 289.....	509
Page 290.....	511
Page 291.....	512
Page 292.....	514
Page 293.....	516
Page 294.....	518
Page 295.....	519
Page 296.....	521
Page 297.....	522
Page 298.....	524
Page 299.....	525
Page 300.....	526
Page 301.....	527
Page 302.....	529
Page 303.....	530
Page 304.....	531
Page 305.....	532
Page 306.....	534
Page 307.....	536
Page 308.....	538

Page 309.....	540
Page 310.....	542
Page 311.....	544
Page 312.....	546
Page 313.....	548
Page 314.....	549
Page 315.....	550
Page 316.....	552
Page 317.....	553
Page 318.....	555
Page 319.....	557
Page 320.....	559
Page 321.....	560
Page 322.....	561
Page 323.....	563
Page 324.....	565
Page 325.....	566
Page 326.....	567
Page 327.....	569
Page 328.....	571
Page 329.....	572
Page 330.....	574
Page 331.....	576
Page 332.....	577
Page 333.....	579
Page 334.....	581

Page 335.....	583
Page 336.....	584
Page 337.....	585
Page 338.....	586
Page 339.....	588
Page 340.....	589
Page 341.....	591
Page 342.....	592
Page 343.....	594
Page 344.....	596
Page 345.....	598
Page 346.....	600
Page 347.....	601
Page 348.....	603
Page 349.....	604
Page 350.....	606
Page 351.....	608
Page 352.....	610
Page 353.....	611
Page 354.....	613
Page 355.....	615
Page 356.....	616
Page 357.....	618
Page 358.....	620
Page 359.....	622
Page 360.....	624

Page 361.....	626
Page 362.....	628
Page 363.....	629
Page 364.....	631
Page 365.....	633
Page 366.....	634
Page 367.....	635
Page 368.....	637
Page 369.....	639
Page 370.....	640
Page 371.....	642
Page 372.....	643
Page 373.....	645
Page 374.....	646
Page 375.....	648
Page 376.....	650
Page 377.....	652
Page 378.....	654
Page 379.....	656
Page 380.....	658
Page 381.....	660
Page 382.....	662
Page 383.....	664
Page 384.....	665
Page 385.....	667
Page 386.....	668

Page 387.....	670
Page 388.....	672
Page 389.....	673
Page 390.....	674
Page 391.....	675
Page 392.....	677
Page 393.....	678
Page 394.....	680
Page 395.....	682
Page 396.....	684
Page 397.....	686
Page 398.....	688
Page 399.....	690
Page 400.....	691
Page 401.....	692
Page 402.....	694
Page 403.....	696
Page 404.....	697
Page 405.....	699
Page 406.....	700
Page 407.....	702
Page 408.....	703
Page 409.....	705
Page 410.....	707
Page 411.....	709
Page 412.....	710

Page 413.....	712
Page 414.....	713
Page 415.....	715
Page 416.....	716
Page 417.....	717
Page 418.....	719
Page 419.....	720
Page 420.....	721
Page 421.....	722
Page 422.....	724
Page 423.....	725
Page 424.....	727
Page 425.....	728
Page 426.....	729
Page 427.....	731
Page 428.....	733
Page 429.....	734
Page 430.....	736
Page 431.....	738
Page 432.....	740
Page 433.....	741
Page 434.....	743
Page 435.....	745
Page 436.....	747
Page 437.....	749
Page 438.....	750

Page 439.....	751
Page 440.....	753
Page 441.....	755
Page 442.....	757
Page 443.....	759
Page 444.....	761
Page 445.....	762
Page 446.....	764
Page 447.....	765
Page 448.....	767
Page 449.....	769
Page 450.....	771
Page 451.....	772
Page 452.....	773
Page 453.....	775
Page 454.....	777
Page 455.....	778
Page 456.....	780
Page 457.....	782
Page 458.....	784
Page 459.....	786
Page 460.....	787
Page 461.....	789
Page 462.....	791
Page 463.....	792
Page 464.....	793

Page 465.....	795
Page 466.....	797
Page 467.....	799
Page 468.....	800
Page 469.....	802
Page 470.....	804
Page 471.....	805
Page 472.....	806
Page 473.....	808
Page 474.....	810
Page 475.....	812
Page 476.....	814
Page 477.....	815
Page 478.....	816
Page 479.....	818
Page 480.....	820
Page 481.....	822
Page 482.....	824
Page 483.....	826
Page 484.....	827
Page 485.....	828
Page 486.....	830
Page 487.....	831
Page 488.....	833
Page 489.....	834
Page 490.....	835

Page 491.....	837
Page 492.....	839
Page 493.....	841
Page 494.....	842
Page 495.....	844
Page 496.....	846
Page 497.....	848
Page 498.....	849
Page 499.....	850
Page 500.....	852
Page 501.....	853
Page 502.....	854
Page 503.....	855
Page 504.....	857
Page 505.....	859
Page 506.....	861
Page 507.....	862
Page 508.....	864
Page 509.....	866
Page 510.....	868
Page 511.....	870
Page 512.....	872
Page 513.....	873
Page 514.....	875
Page 515.....	876
Page 516.....	878

Page 517.....	879
Page 518.....	881
Page 519.....	883
Page 520.....	884
Page 521.....	885
Page 522.....	886
Page 523.....	887
Page 524.....	889
Page 525.....	891
Page 526.....	892
Page 527.....	894
Page 528.....	896
Page 529.....	897
Page 530.....	899
Page 531.....	901
Page 532.....	903
Page 533.....	905
Page 534.....	906
Page 535.....	908
Page 536.....	909
Page 537.....	911
Page 538.....	913
Page 539.....	914
Page 540.....	916
Page 541.....	918
Page 542.....	920

Page 543.....	922
Page 544.....	924
Page 545.....	925
Page 546.....	927
Page 547.....	928
Page 548.....	929
Page 549.....	931
Page 550.....	932
Page 551.....	933
Page 552.....	935
Page 553.....	936
Page 554.....	937
Page 555.....	939
Page 556.....	941
Page 557.....	943
Page 558.....	945
Page 559.....	947
Page 560.....	949
Page 561.....	950
Page 562.....	952
Page 563.....	953
Page 564.....	955
Page 565.....	957
Page 566.....	958
Page 567.....	960
Page 568.....	962

Page 569.....	964
Page 570.....	966
Page 571.....	968
Page 572.....	970
Page 573.....	972
Page 574.....	974
Page 575.....	976
Page 576.....	977
Page 577.....	979
Page 578.....	981
Page 579.....	982
Page 580.....	983
Page 581.....	985
Page 582.....	987
Page 583.....	989
Page 584.....	991
Page 585.....	992
Page 586.....	993
Page 587.....	994
Page 588.....	996
Page 589.....	997
Page 590.....	999
Page 591.....	1001
Page 592.....	1003
Page 593.....	1004
Page 594.....	1006

Page 595.....	1007
Page 596.....	1009
Page 597.....	1011
Page 598.....	1013
Page 599.....	1014
Page 600.....	1016
Page 601.....	1017
Page 602.....	1018
Page 603.....	1020
Page 604.....	1022
Page 605.....	1024
Page 606.....	1025
Page 607.....	1026
Page 608.....	1027
Page 609.....	1029
Page 610.....	1030
Page 611.....	1032
Page 612.....	1034
Page 613.....	1036
Page 614.....	1038
Page 615.....	1040
Page 616.....	1042
Page 617.....	1043
Page 618.....	1044
Page 619.....	1046
Page 620.....	1048

Page 621.....	1050
Page 622.....	1052
Page 623.....	1054
Page 624.....	1056
Page 625.....	1057
Page 626.....	1058
Page 627.....	1060
Page 628.....	1062
Page 629.....	1063
Page 630.....	1065
Page 631.....	1067
Page 632.....	1069
Page 633.....	1071
Page 634.....	1073
Page 635.....	1074
Page 636.....	1075
Page 637.....	1076
Page 638.....	1078
Page 639.....	1079
Page 640.....	1081
Page 641.....	1083
Page 642.....	1085
Page 643.....	1086
Page 644.....	1088
Page 645.....	1090
Page 646.....	1091

Page 647.....	1093
Page 648.....	1094
Page 649.....	1095
Page 650.....	1097
Page 651.....	1098
Page 652.....	1100
Page 653.....	1102
Page 654.....	1104
Page 655.....	1106
Page 656.....	1108
Page 657.....	1110
Page 658.....	1111
Page 659.....	1113
Page 660.....	1114
Page 661.....	1115
Page 662.....	1116
Page 663.....	1118
Page 664.....	1119
Page 665.....	1120
Page 666.....	1122
Page 667.....	1124
Page 668.....	1126
Page 669.....	1128
Page 670.....	1130
Page 671.....	1132
Page 672.....	1134

Page 673.....	1136
Page 674.....	1138
Page 675.....	1140
Page 676.....	1142
Page 677.....	1144
Page 678.....	1146
Page 679.....	1148
Page 680.....	1149
Page 681.....	1151
Page 682.....	1152
Page 683.....	1155
Page 684.....	1157
Page 685.....	1159
Page 686.....	1161
Page 687.....	1163
Page 688.....	1165
Page 689.....	1166
Page 690.....	1168
Page 691.....	1170
Page 692.....	1171
Page 693.....	1173
Page 694.....	1174
Page 695.....	1176
Page 696.....	1178
Page 697.....	1179
Page 698.....	1181

Page 699.....	1183
Page 700.....	1185
Page 701.....	1186
Page 702.....	1187
Page 703.....	1189
Page 704.....	1191
Page 705.....	1193
Page 706.....	1195
Page 707.....	1197
Page 708.....	1198
Page 709.....	1200
Page 710.....	1202
Page 711.....	1204
Page 712.....	1206
Page 713.....	1207
Page 714.....	1208
Page 715.....	1209
Page 716.....	1211
Page 717.....	1213
Page 718.....	1215
Page 719.....	1217
Page 720.....	1219
Page 721.....	1221
Page 722.....	1223
Page 723.....	1224
Page 724.....	1225

Page 725.....	1227
Page 726.....	1229
Page 727.....	1231
Page 728.....	1232
Page 729.....	1234
Page 730.....	1236
Page 731.....	1238
Page 732.....	1240
Page 733.....	1242
Page 734.....	1244
Page 735.....	1246
Page 736.....	1247
Page 737.....	1248
Page 738.....	1250
Page 739.....	1252
Page 740.....	1253
Page 741.....	1255
Page 742.....	1256
Page 743.....	1257
Page 744.....	1259
Page 745.....	1261
Page 746.....	1262
Page 747.....	1263
Page 748.....	1265
Page 749.....	1267
Page 750.....	1269

Page 751.....	1271
Page 752.....	1272
Page 753.....	1274
Page 754.....	1275
Page 755.....	1277
Page 756.....	1279
Page 757.....	1281
Page 758.....	1283
Page 759.....	1285
Page 760.....	1287
Page 761.....	1288
Page 762.....	1290
Page 763.....	1291
Page 764.....	1293
Page 765.....	1294
Page 766.....	1295
Page 767.....	1296
Page 768.....	1298
Page 769.....	1299
Page 770.....	1300
Page 771.....	1301
Page 772.....	1303
Page 773.....	1304
Page 774.....	1305
Page 775.....	1306
Page 776.....	1308

Page 777.....	1310
Page 778.....	1312
Page 779.....	1314
Page 780.....	1316
Page 781.....	1318
Page 782.....	1319
Page 783.....	1320
Page 784.....	1322
Page 785.....	1324
Page 786.....	1326
Page 787.....	1328
Page 788.....	1330
Page 789.....	1332
Page 790.....	1334
Page 791.....	1335
Page 792.....	1337
Page 793.....	1339
Page 794.....	1340
Page 795.....	1342
Page 796.....	1344
Page 797.....	1346
Page 798.....	1348
Page 799.....	1349
Page 800.....	1350
Page 801.....	1352
Page 802.....	1353

Page 803.....	1354
Page 804.....	1356
Page 805.....	1357
Page 806.....	1359
Page 807.....	1361
Page 808.....	1362
Page 809.....	1364
Page 810.....	1365
Page 811.....	1367
Page 812.....	1369
Page 813.....	1371
Page 814.....	1373
Page 815.....	1375
Page 816.....	1377
Page 817.....	1378
Page 818.....	1380
Page 819.....	1382
Page 820.....	1383
Page 821.....	1385
Page 822.....	1387
Page 823.....	1389
Page 824.....	1391
Page 825.....	1392
Page 826.....	1393
Page 827.....	1395
Page 828.....	1397

Page 829.....	1399
Page 830.....	1401
Page 831.....	1402
Page 832.....	1404
Page 833.....	1406
Page 834.....	1408
Page 835.....	1410
Page 836.....	1412
Page 837.....	1413
Page 838.....	1415
Page 839.....	1417
Page 840.....	1419
Page 841.....	1421
Page 842.....	1423
Page 843.....	1425
Page 844.....	1427
Page 845.....	1429
Page 846.....	1431
Page 847.....	1432
Page 848.....	1434
Page 849.....	1435
Page 850.....	1437
Page 851.....	1439
Page 852.....	1440
Page 853.....	1442
Page 854.....	1444

Page 855.....	1446
Page 856.....	1448
Page 857.....	1450
Page 858.....	1452
Page 859.....	1454
Page 860.....	1455
Page 861.....	1457
Page 862.....	1459
Page 863.....	1461
Page 864.....	1462
Page 865.....	1464
Page 866.....	1466
Page 867.....	1468
Page 868.....	1470
Page 869.....	1472
Page 870.....	1474
Page 871.....	1476
Page 872.....	1478
Page 873.....	1480
Page 874.....	1481
Page 875.....	1483
Page 876.....	1485
Page 877.....	1487
Page 878.....	1489
Page 879.....	1491
Page 880.....	1492

Page 881.....	1494
Page 882.....	1496
Page 883.....	1498
Page 884.....	1499
Page 885.....	1501
Page 886.....	1502
Page 887.....	1504
Page 888.....	1506
Page 889.....	1507
Page 890.....	1509
Page 891.....	1511
Page 892.....	1512
Page 893.....	1513
Page 894.....	1515
Page 895.....	1517
Page 896.....	1519
Page 897.....	1521
Page 898.....	1523
Page 899.....	1525
Page 900.....	1527
Page 901.....	1528
Page 902.....	1530
Page 903.....	1532
Page 904.....	1534
Page 905.....	1536
Page 906.....	1538

Page 907.....	1540
Page 908.....	1542
Page 909.....	1544
Page 910.....	1546
Page 911.....	1548
Page 912.....	1550
Page 913.....	1552
Page 914.....	1554
Page 915.....	1556
Page 916.....	1558
Page 917.....	1560
Page 918.....	1562
Page 919.....	1564
Page 920.....	1566
Page 921.....	1568
Page 922.....	1569
Page 923.....	1571
Page 924.....	1573
Page 925.....	1575
Page 926.....	1577
Page 927.....	1579
Page 928.....	1580
Page 929.....	1582
Page 930.....	1584
Page 931.....	1586
Page 932.....	1588

Page 933.....	1590
Page 934.....	1591
Page 935.....	1592
Page 936.....	1593
Page 937.....	1595
Page 938.....	1597
Page 939.....	1598
Page 940.....	1600
Page 941.....	1602
Page 942.....	1604
Page 943.....	1606
Page 944.....	1608
Page 945.....	1610
Page 946.....	1612
Page 947.....	1614
Page 948.....	1615
Page 949.....	1616
Page 950.....	1617
Page 951.....	1618
Page 952.....	1619
Page 953.....	1620
Page 954.....	1621
Page 955.....	1623
Page 956.....	1624
Page 957.....	1625
Page 958.....	1627

Page 959.....	1629
Page 960.....	1631
Page 961.....	1633
Page 962.....	1635
Page 963.....	1637
Page 964.....	1639
Page 965.....	1641
Page 966.....	1643
Page 967.....	1645
Page 968.....	1647
Page 969.....	1648
Page 970.....	1649
Page 971.....	1651
Page 972.....	1652
Page 973.....	1654
Page 974.....	1656
Page 975.....	1658
Page 976.....	1660
Page 977.....	1662
Page 978.....	1663
Page 979.....	1664
Page 980.....	1665
Page 981.....	1667
Page 982.....	1669
Page 983.....	1671
Page 984.....	1673

Page 985.....	1675
Page 986.....	1677
Page 987.....	1679
Page 988.....	1681
Page 989.....	1683
Page 990.....	1685

Table of Contents

Section	Page
Start of eBook	1
THE PERSONAL AND LITERARY LIFE OF SAMUEL LANGHORNE CLEMENS	1
VOLUME I, Part 1: 1835-1866	1
AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT	1
II	3
III	6
IV	9
V	12
VI	13
VII	15
VIII	18
IX	20
X	23
XI	26
XII	32
XIII	39
XIV	41
XV	42
XVI	46
XVII	47
XVIII	50
XIX	53
XX	59
XXI	64
XXII	67
XXIII	70
XXIV	74
XXV	76
XXVI	80
XXVII	84
XXVIII	88
XXIX	94
XXX	95
XXXI	99
XXXII	101
XXXIII	106
XXXIV	109
XXXV	113

XXXVI	118
XXXVII	120
XXXVIII	123
XXXIX	127
XL	128
XLI	131
	135
XLIII	139
XLIV	141
XLV	145
XLVI	147
XLVII	150
XLVIII	153
XLIX	157
L	159
LI	161
LII	163
LIII	166
MARK TWAIN, A BIOGRAPHY	169
VOLUME I, Part 2: 1866-1875	169
LIV	169
LV	172
LVI	176
LVII	179
LVIII	181
LIX	184
LX	188
LXI	193
LXII	197
LXIII	201
LXIV	205
LXV	207
LXVI	210
LXVII	213
LXVIII	215
LXIX	217
LXX	219
LXXI	221
LXXIII	226
LXXIV	227
LXXV	230
LXXVI	231
LXXVII	234
LXXVIII	237
LXXIX	240
LXXX	243

LXXXI	247
LXXXII	251
LXXXIII	256
LXXXV	264
LXXXVI	266
LXXXVII	269
LXXXVIII	274
LXXXIX	278
XC	279
XCI	284
XCII	287
XCIII	290
XCIV	292
XCV	297
XCVI	301
XCVII	305
XCVIII	307
XCIX	310
C	312
CI	317
CII	319
CIII	321
CIV	323
MARK TWAIN, A BIOGRAPHY	326
VOLUME II, Part 1: 1875-1886	327
CV	327
CVI	330
CVII	332
CVIII	334
CIX	338
CX	340
CXI	342
CXII	344
CXIII	347
CXIV	349
CXV	353
CXVI	357
CXVII	358
CXVIII	363
CXIX	367
CXX	370
CXXI	372
CXXII	377
CXXIII	378
CXXIV	382
CXXV	384

CXXVI	386
CXXVII	390
CXXIX	396
CXXX	398
CXXXI	401
CXXXII	404
CXXXIII	406
CXXXIV	409
CXXXV	412
CXXXVI	414
CXXXVII	417
CXXXVIII	419
CXXXIX	423
CXL	426
CXLI	430
CXLII	433
CXLIII	434
CXLIV	436
CXLV	439
CXLVI	440
CXLVIII	443
CXLIX	448
CL	450
CLI	452
CLII	455
CLIII	461
CLIV	464
CLV	469
CLVI	473
CLVII	474
CLVIII	480
CLIX	482
CLX	485
CLXI	487
MARK TWAIN, A BIOGRAPHY	491
VOLUME II, Part 2: 1886-1900	491
CLXII	491
CLXIII	495
LETTER TO THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND	495
CLXIV	497
CLXV	499
CLVXI	504
CLXVII	507
CLXVIII	510
CLXIX	512

CLXX	514
CLXXI	516
CLXXII	520
CLXXIII	524
CLXXIV	526
CLXXV	533
	537
CLXXVII	541
CLXXVIII	543
CLXXIX	548
CLXXX	551
CLXXXI	554
CLXXXII	556
CLXXXIII	559
CLXXXIV	561
CLXXXV	566
CLXXXVI	568
CLXXXVII	573
CLXXXVIII	575
CLXXXIX	578
CXC	585
CXCI	588
CXCII	591
CXCII	599
CXCIV	602
CXCV	604
CXCVI	608
CXCVII	610
CXCVIII	613
CXCIX	616
CC	619
CCI	622
CCII	626
CCIII	629
CCIV	630
CCV	633
CCVI	637
CCVII	641
CCVIII	644
CCIX	646
CCX	649
CCXI	652
MARK TWAIN, A BIOGRAPHY	653
VOLUME III, Part 1: 1900-1907	653
CCXII	653
CCXIII	658

CCXIV	662
CCXV	668
CCXVI	672
CCXVII	674
CCXVIII	676
CCXIX	680
CCXX	685
CCXXI	686
CCXXII	689
CCXXIII	692
CCXXIV	695
CCXXV	698
CCXXVI	699
CCXXVII	702
CCXXVIII	706
CCXXXIX	709
CCXXX	711
CCXXXI	715
CCXXXII	717
CCXXXIII	719
CCXXXIV	721
CCXXXV	727
CCXXXVI	734
CCXXXVII	737
CCXXXVIII	739
CCXXXIX	744
CCXL	748
CCXLI	752
CCXLII	757
CCXLIII	759
CCXLIV	761
CCXLV	763
CCXLVI	768
CCXLVI	773
CCXLVIII	776
CCXLIX	778
CCL	783
CCLI	787
CCLII	794
CCLIII	802
CCLIV	803
CCLV	806
MARK TWAIN, A BIOGRAPHY	808
VOLUME III, Part 2: 1907-1910	808
CCLVI	808
CCLVII	811

CCLVIII	818
CCLIX	821
CCLX	826
CCLXI	829
CCLXII	833
CCLXIII	837
CCLXIV	840
CCLXV	841
CCLXVI	842
CCLXVII	847
CCLXVIII	850
CCLXIX	853
CCLXX	855
CCLXXI	857
CCLXXII	858
CCLXXIII	860
CCLXXIV	864
CCLXXV	866
CCLXXVI	868
CCLXXVII	871
CCLXXVIII	875
CCLXXIX	877
CCLXXX	878
CCLXXXI	882
CCLXXXII	884
CCLXXXIII	890
CCLXXXIV	893
CCLXXXV	894
CCLXXXVI	895
CCLXXXVII	902
CCLXXXVIII	905
CCLXXXIX	908
CCXC	912
CCXCI	914
CCXCII	917
CCXCIII	924
CCXCIV	926
CCXCV	927
CCXCVI	930
APPENDIX	931
APPENDIX A	931
LETTER FROM ORION CLEMENS	931
TO MISS WOOD CONCERNING	
HENRY CLEMENS	
APPENDIX B	932
	935

APPENDIX D	937
NOTICE OF MARK TWAIN'S LECTURE	939
APPENDIX E	940
III	941
APPENDIX F	942
APPENDIX G	942
APPENDIX H	944
APPENDIX I	946
APPENDIX J	950
APPENDIX K	953
APPENDIX L	954
APPENDIX M	956
APPENDIX N	958
CIRCULAR TO AMERICAN AUTHORS AND PUBLISHERS	960
II	960
APPENDIX O	963
APPENDIX P	965
APPENDIX Q	966
APPENDIX R	968
APPENDIX S	970
APPENDIX T	971
APPENDIX U	972
APPENDIX V	974
APPENDIX W	980
APPENDIX X	981

Page 1

THE PERSONAL AND LITERARY LIFE OF SAMUEL LANGHORNE CLEMENS

BY ALBERT BIGELOW PAINE

VOLUME I, Part 1: 1835-1866

To

Clara Clemens Gabrilowitsch who steadily upheld the author's purpose to write history rather than eulogy as the story of her father's life

AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Dear William Dean Howells, Joseph Hopkins Twichell, Joseph T. Goodman, and other old friends of Mark Twain:

I cannot let these volumes go to press without some grateful word to you who have helped me during the six years and more that have gone to their making.

First, I want to confess how I have envied you your association with Mark Twain in those days when you and he "went gipsying, a long time ago." Next, I want to express my wonder at your willingness to give me so unstintedly from your precious letters and memories, when it is in the nature of man to hoard such treasures, for himself and for those who follow him. And, lastly, I want to tell you that I do not envy you so much, any more, for in these chapters, one after another, through your grace, I have gone gipsying with you all. Neither do I wonder now, for I have come to know that out of your love for him grew that greater unselfishness (or divine selfishness, as he himself might have termed it), and that nothing short of the fullest you could do for his memory would have contented your hearts.

My gratitude is measureless; and it is world-wide, for there is no land so distant that it does not contain some one who has eagerly contributed to the story. Only, I seem so poorly able to put my thanks into words.

Albert Bigelow Paine.

Prefatory note

Certain happenings as recorded in this work will be found to differ materially from the same incidents and episodes as set down in the writings of Mr. Clemens himself. Mark Twain's spirit was built of the very fabric of truth, so far as moral intent was concerned,

but in his earlier autobiographical writings—and most of his earlier writings were autobiographical—he made no real pretense to accuracy of time, place, or circumstance—seeking, as he said, “only to tell a good story”—while in later years an ever-vivid imagination and a capricious memory made history difficult, even when, as in his so-called “Autobiography,” his effort was in the direction of fact.

“When I was younger I could remember anything, whether it happened or not,” he once said, quaintly, “but I am getting old, and soon I shall remember only the latter.”

The reader may be assured, where discrepancies occur, that the writer of this memoir has obtained his data from direct and positive sources: letters, diaries, account-books, or other immediate memoranda; also from the concurring testimony of eye-witnesses, supported by a unity of circumstance and conditions, and not from hearsay or vagrant printed items.

Page 2

Mark twain

A biography

I

ancestors

On page 492 of the old volume of Suetonius, which Mark Twain read until his very last day, there is a reference to one Flavius Clemens, a man of wide repute “for his want of energy,” and in a marginal note he has written:

“I guess this is where our line starts.”

It was like him to write that. It spoke in his whimsical fashion the attitude of humility, the ready acknowledgment of shortcoming, which was his chief characteristic and made him lovable—in his personality and in his work.

Historically, we need not accept this identity of the Clemens ancestry. The name itself has a kindly meaning, and was not an uncommon one in Rome. There was an early pope by that name, and it appears now and again in the annals of the Middle Ages. More lately there was a Gregory Clemens, an English landowner who became a member of Parliament under Cromwell and signed the death-warrant of Charles I. Afterward he was tried as a regicide, his estates were confiscated, and his head was exposed on a pole on the top of Westminster Hall.

Tradition says that the family of Gregory Clemens did not remain in England, but emigrated to Virginia (or New Jersey), and from them, in direct line, descended the Virginia Clemenses, including John Marshall Clemens, the father of Mark Twain. Perhaps the line could be traced, and its various steps identified, but, after all, an ancestor more or less need not matter when it is the story of a descendant that is to be written.

Of Mark Twain's immediate forebears, however, there is something to be said. His paternal grandfather, whose name also was Samuel, was a man of culture and literary taste. In 1797 he married a Virginia girl, Pamela Goggin; and of their five children John Marshall Clemens, born August 11, 1798, was the eldest—becoming male head of the family at the age of seven, when his father was accidentally killed at a house-raising. The family was not a poor one, but the boy grew up with a taste for work. As a youth he became a clerk in an iron manufactory, at Lynchburg, and doubtless studied at night. At all events, he acquired an education, but injured his health in the mean time, and somewhat later, with his mother and the younger children, removed to Adair County, Kentucky, where the widow presently married a sweetheart of her girlhood, one Simon Hancock, a good man. In due course, John Clemens was sent to Columbia, the countyseat, to study law. When the living heirs became of age he administered his

father's estate, receiving as his own share three negro slaves; also a mahogany sideboard, which remains among the Clemens effects to this day.

This was in 1821. John Clemens was now a young man of twenty-three, never very robust, but with a good profession, plenty of resolution, and a heart full of hope and dreams. Sober, industrious, and unswervingly upright, it seemed certain that he must make his mark. That he was likely to be somewhat too optimistic, even visionary, was not then regarded as a misfortune.

Page 3

It was two years later that he met Jane Lampton; whose mother was a Casey—a Montgomery-Casey whose father was of the Lamptons (Lambtons) of Durham, England, and who on her own account was reputed to be the handsomest girl and the wittiest, as well as the best dancer, in all Kentucky. The Montgomeries and the Caseys of Kentucky had been Indian fighters in the Daniel Boone period, and grandmother Casey, who had been Jane Montgomery, had worn moccasins in her girlhood, and once saved her life by jumping a fence and out-running a redskin pursuer. The Montgomery and Casey annals were full of blood-curdling adventures, and there is to-day a Casey County next to Adair, with a Montgomery County somewhat farther east. As for the Lamptons, there is an earldom in the English family, and there were claimants even then in the American branch. All these things were worth while in Kentucky, but it was rare Jane Lampton herself—gay, buoyant, celebrated for her beauty and her grace; able to dance all night, and all day too, for that matter—that won the heart of John Marshall Clemens, swept him off his feet almost at the moment of their meeting. Many of the characteristics that made Mark Twain famous were inherited from his mother. His sense of humor, his prompt, quaintly spoken philosophy, these were distinctly her contribution to his fame. Speaking of her in a later day, he once said:

“She had a sort of ability which is rare in man and hardly existent in woman—the ability to say a humorous thing with the perfect air of not knowing it to be humorous.”

She bequeathed him this, without doubt; also her delicate complexion; her wonderful wealth of hair; her small, shapely hands and feet, and the pleasant drawling speech which gave her wit, and his, a serene and perfect setting.

It was a one-sided love affair, the brief courtship of Jane Lampton and John Marshall Clemens. All her life, Jane Clemens honored her husband, and while he lived served him loyally; but the choice of her heart had been a young physician of Lexington with whom she had quarreled, and her prompt engagement with John Clemens was a matter of temper rather than tenderness. She stipulated that the wedding take place at once, and on May 6, 1823, they were married. She was then twenty; her husband twenty-five. More than sixty years later, when John Clemens had long been dead, she took a railway journey to a city where there was an Old Settlers’ Convention, because among the names of those attending she had noticed the name of the lover of her youth. She meant to humble herself to him and ask forgiveness after all the years. She arrived too late; the convention was over, and he was gone. Mark Twain once spoke of this, and added:

“It is as pathetic a romance as any that has crossed the field of my personal experience in a long lifetime.”

II

THE FORTUNES OF JOHN AND JANE CLEMENS

Page 4

With all his ability and industry, and with the-best of intentions, John Clemens would seem to have had an unerring faculty for making business mistakes. It was his optimistic outlook, no doubt—his absolute confidence in the prosperity that lay just ahead—which led him from one unfortunate locality or enterprise to another, as long as he lived. About a year after his marriage he settled with his young wife in Gainsborough, Tennessee, a mountain town on the Cumberland River, and here, in 1825, their first child, a boy, was born. They named him Orion—after the constellation, perhaps—though they changed the accent to the first syllable, calling it Orion. Gainsborough was a small place with few enough law cases; but it could hardly have been as small, or furnished as few cases; as the next one selected, which was Jamestown, Fentress County, still farther toward the Eastward Mountains. Yet Jamestown had the advantage of being brand new, and in the eye of his fancy John Clemens doubtless saw it the future metropolis of east Tennessee, with himself its foremost jurist and citizen. He took an immediate and active interest in the development of the place, established the county-seat there, built the first Court House, and was promptly elected as circuit clerk of the court.

It was then that he decided to lay the foundation of a fortune for himself and his children by acquiring Fentress County land. Grants could be obtained in those days at the expense of less than a cent an acre, and John Clemens believed that the years lay not far distant when the land would increase in value ten thousand, twenty, perhaps even a hundred thousandfold. There was no wrong estimate in that. Land covered with the finest primeval timber, and filled with precious minerals, could hardly fail to become worth millions, even though his entire purchase of 75,000 acres probably did not cost him more than \$500. The great tract lay about twenty nines to the southward of Jamestown. Standing in the door of the Court House he had built, looking out over the “Knob” of the Cumberland Mountains toward his vast possessions, he said:

“Whatever befalls me now, my heirs are secure. I may not live to see these acres turn into silver and gold, but my children will.”

Such was the creation of that mirage of wealth, the “Tennessee land,” which all his days and for long afterward would lie just ahead—a golden vision, its name the single watchword of the family fortunes—the dream fading with years, only materializing at last as a theme in a story of phantom riches, *The Gilded Age*.

Yet for once John Clemens saw clearly, and if his dream did not come true he was in no wise to blame. The land is priceless now, and a corporation of the Clemens heirs is to-day contesting the title of a thin fragment of it—about one thousand acres—overlooked in some survey.

Page 5

Believing the future provided for, Clemens turned his attention to present needs. He built himself a house, unusual in its style and elegance. It had two windows in each room, and its walls were covered with plastering, something which no one in Jamestown had ever seen before. He was regarded as an aristocrat. He wore a swallow-tail coat of fine blue jeans, instead of the coarse brown native-made cloth. The blue-jeans coat was ornamented with brass buttons and cost one dollar and twenty-five cents a yard, a high price for that locality and time. His wife wore a calico dress for company, while the neighbor wives wore homespun linsey-woolsey. The new house was referred to as the Crystal Palace. When John and Jane Clemens attended balls—there were continuous balls during the holidays—they were considered the most graceful dancers.

Jamestown did not become the metropolis he had dreamed. It attained almost immediately to a growth of twenty-five houses—mainly log houses—and stopped there. The country, too, was sparsely settled; law practice was slender and unprofitable, the circuit-riding from court to court was very bad for one of his physique. John Clemens saw his reserve of health and funds dwindling, and decided to embark in merchandise. He built himself a store and put in a small country stock of goods. These he exchanged for ginseng, chestnuts, lampblack, turpentine, rosin, and other produce of the country, which he took to Louisville every spring and fall in six-horse wagons. In the mean time he would seem to have sold one or more of his slaves, doubtless to provide capital. There was a second baby now—a little girl, Pamela,—born in September, 1827. Three years later, May 1830, another little girl, Margaret, came. By this time the store and home were in one building, the store occupying one room, the household requiring two—clearly the family fortunes were declining.

About a year after little Margaret was born, John Clemens gave up Jamestown and moved his family and stock of goods to a point nine miles distant, known as the Three Forks of Wolf. The Tennessee land was safe, of course, and would be worth millions some day, but in the mean time the struggle for daily substance was becoming hard.

He could not have remained at the Three Forks long, for in 1832 we find him at still another place, on the right bank of Wolf River, where a post-office called Pall Mall was established, with John Clemens as postmaster, usually addressed as “Squire” or “Judge.” A store was run in connection with the postoffice. At Pall Mall, in June, 1832, another boy, Benjamin, was born.

Page 6

The family at this time occupied a log house built by John Clemens himself, the store being kept in another log house on the opposite bank of the river. He no longer practised law. In *The Gilded Age* we have Mark Twain's picture of Squire Hawkins and Obedstown, written from descriptions supplied in later years by his mother and his brother Orion; and, while not exact in detail, it is not regarded as an exaggerated presentation of east Tennessee conditions at that time. The chapter is too long and too depressing to be set down here. The reader may look it up for himself, if he chooses. If he does he will not wonder that Jane Clemens's handsome features had become somewhat sharper, and her manner a shade graver, with the years and burdens of marriage, or that John Clemens at thirty-six-out of health, out of tune with his environment —was rapidly getting out of heart. After all the bright promise of the beginning, things had somehow gone wrong, and hope seemed dwindling away.

A tall man, he had become thin and unusually pale; he looked older than his years. Every spring he was prostrated with what was called "sunpain," an acute form of headache, nerve-racking and destroying to all persistent effort. Yet he did not retreat from his moral and intellectual standards, or lose the respect of that shiftless community. He was never intimidated by the rougher element, and his eyes were of a kind that would disconcert nine men out of ten. Gray and deep-set under bushy brows, they literally looked you through. Absolutely fearless, he permitted none to trample on his rights. It is told of John Clemens, at Jamestown, that once when he had lost a cow he handed the minister on Sunday morning a notice of the loss to be read from the pulpit, according to the custom of that community. For some reason, the minister put the document aside and neglected it. At the close of the service Clemens rose and, going to the pulpit, read his announcement himself to the congregation. Those who knew Mark Twain best will not fail to recall in him certain of his father's legacies.

The arrival of a letter from "Colonel Sellers" inviting the Hawkins family to come to Missouri is told in *The Gilded Age*. In reality the letter was from John Quarles, who had married Jane Clemens's sister, Patsey Lampton, and settled in Florida, Monroe County, Missouri. It was a momentous letter in *The Gilded Age*, and no less so in reality, for it shifted the entire scene of the Clemens family fortunes, and it had to do with the birthplace and the shaping of the career of one whose memory is likely to last as long as American history.

III

A HUMBLE BIRTHPLACE

Page 7

Florida, Missouri, was a small village in the early thirties—smaller than it is now, perhaps, though in that day it had more promise, even if less celebrity. The West was unassembled then, undigested, comparatively unknown. Two States, Louisiana and Missouri, with less than half a million white persons, were all that lay beyond the great river. St. Louis, with its boasted ten thousand inhabitants and its river trade with the South, was the single metropolis in all that vast uncharted region. There was no telegraph; there were no railroads, no stage lines of any consequence—scarcely any maps. For all that one could see or guess, one place was as promising as another, especially a settlement like Florida, located at the forks of a pretty stream, Salt River, which those early settlers believed might one day become navigable and carry the merchandise of that region down to the mighty Mississippi, thence to the world outside.

In those days came John A. Quarles, of Kentucky, with his wife, who had been Patsey Ann Lampton; also, later, Benjamin Lampton, her father, and others of the Lampton race. It was natural that they should want Jane Clemens and her husband to give up that disheartening east Tennessee venture and join them in this new and promising land. It was natural, too, for John Quarles—happy-hearted, generous, and optimistic—to write the letter. There were only twenty-one houses in Florida, but Quarles counted stables, out-buildings—everything with a roof on it—and set down the number at fifty-four.

Florida, with its iridescent promise and negligible future, was just the kind of a place that John Clemens with unerring instinct would be certain to select, and the Quarles letter could have but one answer. Yet there would be the longing for companionship, too, and Jane Clemens must have hungered for her people. In *The Gilded Age*, the Sellers letter ends:

“Come!—rush!—hurry!—don’t wait for anything!”

The Clemens family began immediately its preparation for getting away. The store was sold, and the farm; the last two wagon-loads of produce were sent to Louisville; and with the aid of the money realized, a few hundred dollars, John Clemens and his family “flitted out into the great mysterious blank that lay beyond the Knobs of Tennessee.” They had a two-horse barouche, which would seem to have been preserved out of their earlier fortunes. The barouche held the parents and the three younger children, Pamela, Margaret, and the little boy, Benjamin. There were also two extra horses, which Orion, now ten, and Jennie, the house-girl, a slave, rode. This was early in the spring of 1835.

They traveled by the way of their old home at Columbia, and paid a visit to relatives. At Louisville they embarked on a steamer bound for St. Louis; thence overland once more through wilderness and solitude into what was then the Far West, the promised land.

Page 8

They arrived one evening, and if Florida was not quite all in appearance that John Clemens had dreamed, it was at least a haven—with John Quarles, jovial, hospitable, and full of plans. The great Mississippi was less than fifty miles away. Salt River, with a system of locks and dams, would certainly become navigable to the Forks, with Florida as its head of navigation. It was a Sellers fancy, though perhaps it should be said here that John Quarles was not the chief original of that lovely character in *The Gilded Age*. That was another relative—James Lampton, a cousin—quite as lovable, and a builder of even more insubstantial dreams.

John Quarles was already established in merchandise in Florida, and was prospering in a small way. He had also acquired a good farm, which he worked with thirty slaves, and was probably the rich man and leading citizen of the community. He offered John Clemens a partnership in his store, and agreed to aid him in the selection of some land. Furthermore, he encouraged him to renew his practice of the law. Thus far, at least, the Florida venture was not a mistake, for, whatever came, matters could not be worse than they had been in Tennessee.

In a small frame building near the center of the village, John and Jane Clemens established their household. It was a humble one-story affair, with two main rooms and a lean-to kitchen, though comfortable enough for its size, and comparatively new. It is still standing and occupied when these lines are written, and it should be preserved and guarded as a shrine for the American people; for it was here that the foremost American-born author—the man most characteristically American in every thought and word and action of his life—drew his first fluttering breath, caught blinkingly the light of a world that in the years to come would rise up and in its wide realm of letters hail him as a king.

It was on a bleak day, November 30, 1835, that he entered feebly the domain he was to conquer. Long, afterward, one of those who knew him best said:

“He always seemed to me like some great being from another planet—never quite of this race or kind.”

He may have been, for a great comet was in the sky that year, and it would return no more until the day when he should be borne back into the far spaces of silence and undiscovered suns. But nobody thought of this, then.

He was a seven-months child, and there was no fanfare of welcome at his coming. Perhaps it was even suggested that, in a house so small and so sufficiently filled, there was no real need of his coming at all. One Polly Ann Buchanan, who is said to have put the first garment of any sort on him, lived to boast of the fact,—[This honor has been claimed also for Mrs. Millie Upton and a Mrs. Damrell. Probably all were present and assisted.]—but she had no particular pride in that matter then. It was only a puny baby with a wavering promise of life. Still, John Clemens must have regarded with favor this

first gift of fortune in a new land, for he named the little boy Samuel, after his father, and added the name of an old and dear Virginia friend, Langhorne. The family fortunes would seem to have been improving at this time, and he may have regarded the arrival of another son as a good omen.

Page 9

With a family of eight, now, including Jennie, the slavegirl, more room was badly needed, and he began building without delay. The result was not a mansion, by any means, being still of the one-story pattern, but it was more commodious than the tiny two-room affair. The rooms were larger, and there was at least one ell, or extension, for kitchen and dining-room uses. This house, completed in 1836, occupied by the Clemens family during the remainder of the years spent in Florida, was often in later days pointed out as Mark Twain's birthplace. It missed that distinction by a few months, though its honor was sufficient in having sheltered his early childhood.—[This house is no longer standing. When it was torn down several years ago, portions of it were carried off and manufactured into souvenirs. Mark Twain himself disclaimed it as his birthplace, and once wrote on a photograph of it: "No, it is too stylish, it is not my birthplace."]

IV

BEGINNING A LONG JOURNEY

It was not a robust childhood. The new baby managed to go through the winter—a matter of comment among the family and neighbors. Added strength came, but slowly; "Little Sam," as they called him, was always delicate during those early years.

It was a curious childhood, full of weird, fantastic impressions and contradictory influences, stimulating alike to the imagination and that embryo philosophy of life which begins almost with infancy. John Clemens seldom devoted any time to the company of his children. He looked after their comfort and mental development as well as he could, and gave advice on occasion. He bought a book now and then—sometimes a picture-book—and subscribed for Peter Parley's Magazine, a marvel of delight to the older children, but he did not join in their amusements, and he rarely, or never, laughed. Mark Twain did not remember ever having seen or heard his father laugh. The problem of supplying food was a somber one to John Clemens; also, he was working on a perpetual-motion machine at this period, which absorbed his spare time, and, to the inventor at least, was not a mirthful occupation. Jane Clemens was busy, too. Her sense of humor did not die, but with added cares and years her temper as well as her features became sharper, and it was just as well to be fairly out of range when she was busy with her employments.

Little Sam's companions were his brothers and sisters, all older than himself: Orion, ten years his senior, followed by Pamela and Margaret at intervals of two and three years, then by Benjamin, a kindly little lad whose gentle life was chiefly devoted to looking after the baby brother, three years his junior. But in addition to these associations, there were the still more potent influences Of that day and section, the intimate, enveloping institution of slavery, the daily companionship of the slaves. All the children of that time

were fond of the negroes and confided in them. They would, in fact, have been lost without such protection and company.

Page 10

It was Jennie, the house-girl, and Uncle Ned, a man of all work —apparently acquired with the improved prospects—who were in real charge of the children and supplied them with entertainment. Wonderful entertainment it was. That was a time of visions and dreams, small. gossip and superstitions. Old tales were repeated over and over, with adornments and improvements suggested by immediate events. At evening the Clemens children, big and little, gathered about the great open fireplace while Jennie and Uncle Ned told tales and hair-lifting legends. Even a baby of two or three years could follow the drift of this primitive telling and would shiver and cling close with the horror and delight of its curdling thrill. The tales always began with “Once ’pon a time,” and one of them was the story of the “Golden Arm” which the smallest listener would one day repeat more elaborately to wider audiences in many lands. Briefly it ran as follows:

“Once ’Pon a time there was a man, and he had a wife, and she had a’ arm of pure gold; and she died, and they buried her in the graveyard; and one night her husband went and dug her up and cut off her golden arm and tuck it home; and one night a ghost all in white come to him; and she was his wife; and she says:

“W-h-a-r-r’s my golden arm? W-h-a-r-r’s my golden arm? W-h-a-r-r’s my g-o-l-den arm?”

As Uncle Ned repeated these blood-curdling questions he would look first one and then another of his listeners in the eyes, with his bands drawn up in front of his breast, his fingers turned out and crooked like claws, while he bent with each question closer to the shrinking forms before him. The tone was sepulchral, with awful pause as if waiting each time for a reply. The culmination came with a pounce on one of the group, a shake of the shoulders, and a shout of:

“*You’ve got it!*” and she tore him all to pieces!”

And the children would shout “Lordy!” and look furtively over their shoulders, fearing to see a woman in white against the black wall; but, instead, only gloomy, shapeless shadows darted across it as the flickering flames in the fireplace went out on one brand and flared up on another. Then there was a story of a great ball of fire that used to follow lonely travelers along dark roads through the woods.

“Once ’pon a time there was a man, and he was riding along de road and he come to a ha’nted house, and he heard de chains’a-rattlin’ and a-rattlin’ and a-rattlin’, and a ball of fire come rollin’ up and got under his stirrup, and it didn’t make no difference if his horse galloped or went slow or stood still, de ball of fire staid under his stirrup till he got plum to de front do’, and his wife come out and say: ‘My Gord, dat’s devil fire!’ and she had to work a witch spell to drive it away.”

“How big was it, Uncle Ned?”

“Oh, 'bout as big as your head, and I 'spect it's likely to come down dis yere chimney 'most any time.”

Page 11

Certainly an atmosphere like this meant a tropic development for the imagination of a delicate child. All the games and daily talk concerned fanciful semi-African conditions and strange primal possibilities. The children of that day believed in spells and charms and bad-luck signs, all learned of their negro guardians.

But if the negroes were the chief companions and protectors of the children, they were likewise one of their discomforts. The greatest real dread children knew was the fear of meeting runaway slaves. A runaway slave was regarded as worse than a wild beast, and treated worse when caught. Once the children saw one brought into Florida by six men who took him to an empty cabin, where they threw him on the floor and bound him with ropes. His groans were loud and frequent. Such things made an impression that would last a lifetime.

Slave punishment, too, was not unknown, even in the household. Jennie especially was often saucy and obstreperous. Jane Clemens, with more strength of character than of body, once undertook to punish her for insolence, whereupon Jennie snatched the whip from her hand. John Clemens was sent for in haste. He came at once, tied Jennie's wrists together with a bridle rein, and administered chastisement across the shoulders with a cowhide. These were things all calculated to impress a sensitive child.

In pleasant weather the children roamed over the country, hunting berries and nuts, drinking sugar-water, tying knots in love-vine, picking the petals from daisies to the formula "Love me-love me not," always accompanied by one or more, sometimes by half a dozen, of their small darky followers. Shoes were taken off the first of April. For a time a pair of old woolen stockings were worn, but these soon disappeared, leaving the feet bare for the summer. One of their dreads was the possibility of sticking a rusty nail into the foot, as this was liable to cause lockjaw, a malady regarded with awe and terror. They knew what lockjaw was—Uncle John Quarles's black man, Dan, was subject to it. Sometimes when he opened his mouth to its utmost capacity he felt the joints slip and was compelled to put down the cornbread, or jole and greens, or the piece of 'possum he was eating, while his mouth remained a fixed abyss until the doctor came and restored it to a natural position by an exertion of muscular power that would have well-nigh lifted an ox.

Uncle John Quarles, his home, his farm, his slaves, all were sources of never-ending delight. Perhaps the farm was just an ordinary Missouri farm and the slaves just average negroes, but to those children these things were never apparent. There was a halo about anything that belonged to Uncle John Quarles, and that halo was the jovial, hilarious kindness of that gentle-hearted, humane man. To visit at his house was for a child to be in a heaven of mirth and pranks continually. When the children came for eggs he would say:

Page 12

"Your hens won't lay, eh? Tell your maw to feed 'em parched corn and drive 'em uphill," and this was always a splendid stroke of humor to his small hearers.

Also, he knew how to mimic with his empty hands the peculiar patting and tossing of a pone of corn-bread before placing it in the oven. He would make the most fearful threats to his own children, for disobedience, but never executed any of them. When they were out fishing and returned late he would say:

"You—if I have to hunt you again after dark, I will make you smell like a burnt horn!"

Nothing could exceed the ferocity of this threat, and all the children, with delightful terror and curiosity, wondered what would happen—if it ever did happen—that would result in giving a child that peculiar savor. Altogether it was a curious early childhood that Little Sam had—at least it seems so to us now. Doubtless it was commonplace enough for that time and locality.

V

THE WAY OF FORTUNE

Perhaps John Quarles's jocular, happy-go-lucky nature and general conduct did not altogether harmonize with John Clemens's more taciturn business methods. Notwithstanding the fact that he was a builder of dreams, Clemens was neat and methodical, with his papers always in order. He had a hearty dislike for anything resembling frivolity and confusion, which very likely were the chief features of John Quarles's storekeeping. At all events, they dissolved partnership at the end of two or three years, and Clemens opened business for himself across the street. He also practised law whenever there were cases, and was elected justice of the peace, acquiring the permanent title of "Judge." He needed some one to assist in the store, and took in Orion, who was by this time twelve or thirteen years old; but, besides his youth, Orion—all his days a visionary—was a studious, pensive lad with no taste for commerce. Then a partnership was formed with a man who developed neither capital nor business ability, and proved a disaster in the end. The modest tide of success which had come with John Clemens's establishment at Florida had begun to wane. Another boy, Henry, born in July, 1838, added one more responsibility to his burdens.

There still remained a promise of better things. There seemed at least a good prospect that the scheme for making Salt River navigable was likely to become operative. With even small boats (bateaux) running as high as the lower branch of the South Fork, Florida would become an emporium of trade, and merchants and property-owners of that village would reap a harvest. An act of the Legislature was passed incorporating the navigation company, with Judge Clemens as its president. Congress was petitioned to aid this work of internal improvement. So confident was the company of success that



the hamlet was thrown into a fever of excitement by the establishment of a boatyard and, the actual construction of a bateau; but a Democratic Congress turned its back on the proposed improvement. No boat bigger than a skiff ever ascended Salt River, though there was a wild report, evidently a hoax, that a party of picnickers had seen one night a ghostly steamer, loaded and manned, puffing up the stream. An old Scotchman, Hugh Robinson, when he heard of it, said:

Page 13

"I don't doubt a word they say. In Scotland, it often happens that when people have been killed, or are troubled, they send their spirits abroad and they are seen as much like themselves as a reflection in a looking-glass. That was a ghost of some wrecked steamboat."

But John Quarles, who was present, laughed:

"If ever anybody was in trouble, the men on that steamboat were," he said. "They were the Democratic candidates at the last election. They killed Salt River improvements, and Salt River has killed them. Their ghosts went up the river on a ghostly steamboat."

It is possible that this comment, which was widely repeated and traveled far, was the origin of the term "Going up Salt River," as applied to defeated political candidates.—[The dictionaries give this phrase as probably traceable to a small, difficult stream in Kentucky; but it seems more reasonable to believe that it originated in Quarles's witty comment.]

No other attempt was ever made to establish navigation on Salt River. Rumors of railroads already running in the East put an end to any such thought. Railroads could run anywhere and were probably cheaper and easier to maintain than the difficult navigation requiring locks and dams. Salt River lost its prestige as a possible water highway and became mere scenery. Railroads have ruined greater rivers than the Little Salt, and greater villages than Florida, though neither Florida nor Salt River has been touched by a railroad to this day. Perhaps such close detail of early history may be thought unnecessary in a work of this kind, but all these things were definite influences in the career of the little lad whom the world would one day know as Mark Twain.

VI

A NEW HOME

The death of little Margaret was the final misfortune that came to the Clemens family in Florida. Doubtless it hastened their departure. There was a superstition in those days that to refer to health as good luck, rather than to ascribe it to the kindness of Providence, was to bring about a judgment. Jane Clemens one day spoke to a neighbor of their good luck in thus far having lost no member of their family. That same day, when the sisters, Pamela and Margaret, returned from school, Margaret laid her books on the table, looked in the glass at her flushed cheeks, pulled out the trundle-bed, and lay down.

She was never in her right mind again. The doctor was sent for and diagnosed the case "bilious fever." One evening, about nine o'clock, Orion was sitting on the edge of the trundle-bed by the patient, when the door opened and Little Sam, then about four years

old, walked in from his bedroom, fast asleep. He came to the side of the trundle-bed and pulled at the bedding near Margaret's shoulder for some time before he woke. Next day the little girl was "picking at the coverlet," and it was known that she could not live. About a

Page 14

week later she died. She was nine years old, a beautiful child, plump in form, with rosy cheeks, black hair, and bright eyes. This was in August, 1839. It was Little Sam's first sight of death—the first break in the Clemens family: it left a sad household. The shoemaker who lived next door claimed to have seen several weeks previous, in a vision, the coffin and the funeral-procession pass the gate by the winding road, to the cemetery, exactly as it happened.

Matters were now going badly enough with John Clemens. Yet he never was without one great comforting thought—the future of the Tennessee land. It underlaid every plan; it was an anodyne for every ill.

“When we sell the Tennessee land everything will be all right,” was the refrain that brought solace in the darkest hours. A blessing for him that this was so, for he had little else to brighten his days. Negotiations looking to the sale of the land were usually in progress. When the pressure became very hard and finances were at their lowest ebb, it was offered at any price—at five cents an acre, sometimes. When conditions improved, however little, the price suddenly advanced even to its maximum of one thousand dollars an acre. Now and then a genuine offer came along, but, though eagerly welcomed at the moment, it was always refused after a little consideration.

“We will struggle along somehow, Jane,” he would say. “We will not throw away the children's fortune.”

There was one other who believed in the Tennessee land—Jane Clemens's favorite cousin, James Lampton, the courtliest, gentlest, most prodigal optimist of all that guileless race. To James Lampton the land always had “millions in it”—everything had. He made stupendous fortunes daily, in new ways. The bare mention of the Tennessee land sent him off into figures that ended with the purchase of estates in England adjoining those of the Durham Lamptons, whom he always referred to as “our kindred,” casually mentioning the whereabouts and health of the “present earl.” Mark Twain merely put James Lampton on paper when he created Colonel Sellers, and the story of the Hawkins family as told in *The Gilded Age* reflects clearly the struggle of those days. The words “Tennessee land,” with their golden promise, became his earliest remembered syllables. He grew to detest them in time, for they came to mean mockery.

One of the offers received was the trifling sum of two hundred and fifty dollars, and such was the moment's need that even this was considered. Then, of course, it was scornfully refused. In some autobiographical chapters which Orion Clemens left behind he said:

“If we had received that two hundred and fifty dollars, it would have been more than we ever made, clear of expenses, out of the whole of the Tennessee land, after forty years of worry to three generations.”

What a less speculative and more logical reasoner would have done in the beginning, John Clemens did now; he selected a place which, though little more than a village, was on a river already navigable—a steamboat town with at least the beginnings of manufacturing and trade already established—that is to say, Hannibal, Missouri—a point well chosen, as shown by its prosperity to-day.

Page 15

He did not delay matters. When he came to a decision, he acted quickly. He disposed of a portion of his goods and shipped the remainder overland; then, with his family and chattels loaded in a wagon, he was ready to set out for the new home. Orion records that, for some reason, his father did not invite him to get into the wagon, and how, being always sensitive to slight, he had regarded this in the light of deliberate desertion.

“The sense of abandonment caused my heart to ache. The wagon had gone a few feet when I was discovered and invited to enter. How I wished they had not missed me until they had arrived at Hannibal. Then the world would have seen how I was treated and would have cried ‘Shame!’”

This incident, noted and remembered, long after became curiously confused with another, in Mark Twain’s mind. In an autobiographical chapter published in *The North American Review* he tells of the move to Hannibal and relates that he himself was left behind by his absentminded family. The incident of his own abandonment did not happen then, but later, and somewhat differently. It would indeed be an absent-minded family if the parents, and the sister and brothers ranging up to fourteen years of age, should drive off leaving Little Sam, age four, behind.

—[As mentioned in the Prefatory Note, Mark Twain’s memory played him many tricks in later life. Incidents were filtered through his vivid imagination until many of them bore little relation to the actual occurrence. Some of these lapses were only amusing, but occasionally they worked an unintentional injustice. It is the author’s purpose in every instance, so far as is possible, to keep the record straight.]

VII

THE LITTLE TOWN OF HANNIBAL

Hannibal in 1839 was already a corporate community and had an atmosphere of its own. It was a town with a distinct Southern flavor, though rather more astir than the true Southern community of that period; more Western in that it planned, though without excitement, certain new enterprises and made a show, at least, of manufacturing. It was somnolent (a slave town could not be less than that), but it was not wholly asleep—that is to say, dead—and it was tranquilly content. Mark Twain remembered it as “the white town drowsing in the sunshine of a summer morning,. . . the great Mississippi, the magnificent Mississippi, rolling its mile-wide tide along; . . . the dense forest away on the other side.”

The little city was proud of its scenery, and justly so: circled with bluffs, with Holliday’s Hill on the north, Lover’s Leap on the south, the shining river in the foreground, there was little to be desired in the way of setting.

Page 16

The river, of course, was the great highway. Rafts drifted by; steamboats passed up and down and gave communication to the outside world; St. Louis, the metropolis, was only one hundred miles away. Hannibal was inclined to rank itself as of next importance, and took on airs accordingly. It had society, too—all kinds—from the negroes and the town drunkards ("General" Gaines and Jimmy Finn; later, Old Ben Blankenship) up through several nondescript grades of mechanics and tradesmen to the professional men of the community, who wore tall hats, ruffled shirt-fronts, and swallow-tail coats, usually of some positive color—blue, snuff-brown, and green. These and their families constituted the true aristocracy of the Southern town. Most of them had pleasant homes—brick or large frame mansions, with colonnaded entrances, after the manner of all Southern architecture of that period, which had an undoubted Greek root, because of certain drawing-books, it is said, accessible to the builders of those days. Most of them, also, had means—slaves and land which yielded an income in addition to their professional earnings. They lived in such style as was considered fitting to their rank, and had such comforts as were then obtainable.

It was to this grade of society that judge Clemens and his family belonged, but his means no longer enabled him to provide either the comforts or the ostentation of his class. He settled his family and belongings in a portion of a house on Hill Street—the Pavey Hotel; his merchandise he established modestly on Main Street, with Orion, in a new suit of clothes, as clerk. Possibly the clothes gave Orion a renewed ambition for mercantile life, but this waned. Business did not begin actively, and he was presently dreaming and reading away the time. A little later he became a printer's apprentice, in the office of the Hannibal Journal, at his father's suggestion.

Orion Clemens perhaps deserves a special word here. He was to be much associated with his more famous brother for many years, and his personality as boy and man is worth at least a casual consideration. He was fifteen now, and had developed characteristics which in a greater or less degree were to go with him through life. Of a kindly, loving disposition, like all of the Clemens children, quick of temper, but always contrite, or forgiving, he was never without the fond regard of those who knew him best. His weaknesses were manifold, but, on the whole, of a negative kind. Honorable and truthful, he had no tendency to bad habits or unworthy pursuits; indeed, he had no positive traits of any sort. That was his chief misfortune. Full of whims and fancies, unstable, indeterminate, he was swayed by every passing emotion and influence. Daily he laid out a new course of study and achievement, only to fling it aside because of some chance remark or printed paragraph or bit of advice that ran contrary to his purpose. Such a life is bound to be a succession of extremes—alternate periods of supreme exaltation and despair. In his autobiographical chapters, already mentioned, Orion sets down every impulse and emotion and failure with that faithful humility which won him always the respect, if not always the approval, of men.

Page 17

Printing was a step downward, for it was a trade, and Orion felt it keenly. A gentleman's son and a prospective heir of the Tennessee land, he was entitled to a profession. To him it was punishment, and the disgrace weighed upon him. Then he remembered that Benjamin Franklin had been a printer and had eaten only an apple and a bunch of grapes for his dinner. Orion decided to emulate Franklin, and for a time he took only a biscuit and a glass of water at a meal, foreseeing the day when he should electrify the world with his eloquence. He was surprised to find how clear his mind was on this low diet and how rapidly he learned his trade.

Of the other children Pamela, now twelve, and Benjamin, seven, were put to school. They were pretty, attractive children, and Henry, the baby, was a sturdy toddler, the pride of the household. Little Sam was the least promising of the flock. He remained delicate, and developed little beyond a tendency to pranks. He was a queer, fanciful, uncommunicative child that detested indoors and would run away if not watched—always in the direction of the river. He walked in his sleep, too, and often the rest of the household got up in the middle of the night to find him fretting with cold in some dark corner. The doctor was summoned for him oftener than was good for the family purse—or for him, perhaps, if we may credit the story of heavy dosings of those stern allopathic days.

Yet he would appear not to have been satisfied with his heritage of ailments, and was ambitious for more. An epidemic of measles—the black, deadly kind—was ravaging Hannibal, and he yearned for the complaint. He yearned so much that when he heard of a playmate, one of the Bowen boys, who had it, he ran away and, slipping into the house, crept into bed with the infection. The success of this venture was complete. Some days later, the Clemens family gathered tearfully around Little Sam's bed to see him die. According to his own after-confession, this gratified him, and he was willing to die for the glory of that touching scene. However, he disappointed them, and was presently up and about in search of fresh laurels.—[In later life Mr. Clemens did not recollect the precise period of this illness. With habitual indifference he assigned it to various years, as his mood or the exigencies of his theme required. Without doubt the "measles" incident occurred when he was very young.]—He must have been a wearing child, and we may believe that Jane Clemens, with her varied cares and labors, did not always find him a comfort.

"You gave me more uneasiness than any child I had," she said to him once, in her old age.

"I suppose you were afraid I wouldn't live," he suggested, in his tranquil fashion.

She looked at him with that keen humor that had not dulled in eighty years. "No; afraid you would," she said. But that was only her joke, for she was the most tenderhearted creature in the world, and, like mothers in general, had a weakness for the child that demanded most of her mother's care.

Page 18

It was mainly on his account that she spent her summers on John Quarles's farm near Florida, and it was during the first summer that an incident already mentioned occurred. It was decided that the whole family should go for a brief visit, and one Saturday morning in June Mrs. Clemens, with the three elder children and the baby, accompanied by Jennie, the slave-girl, set out in a light wagon for the day's drive, leaving Judge Clemens to bring Little Sam on horseback Sunday morning. The hour was early when Judge Clemens got up to saddle his horse, and Little Sam was still asleep. The horse being ready, Clemens, his mind far away, mounted and rode off without once remembering the little boy, and in the course of the afternoon arrived at his brother-in-law's farm. Then he was confronted by Jane Clemens, who demanded Little Sam.

"Why," said the judge, aghast, "I never once thought of him after I left him asleep."

Wharton Lampton, a brother of Jane Clemens and Patsey Quarles, hastily saddled a horse and set out, helter-skelter, for Hannibal. He arrived in the early dusk. The child was safe enough, but he was crying with loneliness and hunger. He had spent most of the day in the locked, deserted house playing with a hole in the meal-sack where the meal ran out, when properly encouraged, in a tiny stream. He was fed and comforted, and next day was safe on the farm, which during that summer and those that followed it, became so large a part of his boyhood and lent a coloring to his later years.

VIII

THE FARM

We have already mentioned the delight of the Clemens children in Uncle John Quarles's farm. To Little Sam it was probably a life-saver. With his small cousin, Tabitha,—[Tabitha Quarles, now Mrs. Greening, of Palmyra, Missouri, has supplied most of the material for this chapter.]—just his own age (they called her Puss), he wandered over that magic domain, fording new marvels at every step, new delights everywhere. A slave-girl, Mary, usually attended them, but she was only six years older, and not older at all in reality, so she was just a playmate, and not a guardian to be feared or evaded. Sometimes, indeed, it was necessary for her to threaten to tell "Miss Patsey" or "Miss Jane," when her little charges insisted on going farther or staying later than she thought wise from the viewpoint of her own personal safety; but this was seldom, and on the whole a stay at the farm was just one long idyllic dream of summer-time and freedom.

The farm-house stood in the middle of a large yard entered by a stile made of sawed-off logs of graduated heights. In the corner of the yard were hickory trees, and black walnut, and beyond the fence the hill fell away past the barns, the corn-cribs, and the tobacco-house to a brook—a divine place to wade, with deep, dark, forbidden pools. Down in the pasture there were swings under the big trees,

Page 19

and Mary swung the children and ran under them until their feet touched the branches, and then took her turn and “balanced” herself so high that their one wish was to be as old as Mary and swing in that splendid way. All the woods were full of squirrels—gray squirrels and the red-fox species—and many birds and flowers; all the meadows were gay with clover and butterflies, and musical with singing grasshoppers and calling larks; there were blackberries in the fence rows, apples and peaches in the orchard, and watermelons in the corn. They were not always ripe, those watermelons, and once, when Little Sam had eaten several pieces of a green one, he was seized with cramps so severe that most of the household expected him to die forthwith.

Jane Clemens was not heavily concerned.

“Sammy will pull through,” she said; “he wasn’t born to die that way.”

It is the slender constitution that bears the strain. “Sammy” did pull through, and in a brief time was ready for fresh adventure.

There were plenty of these: there were the horses to ride to and from the fields; the ox-wagons to ride in when they had dumped their heavy loads; the circular horsepower to ride on when they threshed the wheat. This last was a dangerous and forbidden pleasure, but the children would dart between the teams and climb on, and the slave who was driving would pretend not to see. Then in the evening when the black woman came along, going after the cows, the children would race ahead and set the cows running and jingling their bells—especially Little Sam, for he was a wild-headed, impetuous child of sudden ecstasies that sent him capering and swinging his arms, venting his emotions in a series of leaps and shrieks and somersaults, and spasms of laughter as he lay rolling in the grass.

His tendency to mischief grew with this wide liberty, improved health, and the encouragement of John Quarles’s good-natured, fun-loving slaves.

The negro quarters beyond the orchard were especially attractive. In one cabin lived a bed-ridden, white-headed old woman whom the children visited daily and looked upon with awe; for she was said to be a thousand years old and to have talked with Moses. The negroes believed this; the children, too, of course, and that she had lost her health in the desert, coming out of Egypt. The bald spot on her head was caused by fright at seeing Pharaoh drowned. She also knew how to avert spells and ward off witches, which added greatly to her prestige. Uncle Dan’l was a favorite, too-kind-hearted and dependable, while his occasional lockjaw gave him an unusual distinction. Long afterward he would become Nigger Jim in the Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn tales, and so in his gentle guilelessness win immortality and the love of many men.

Page 20

Certainly this was a heavenly place for a little boy, the farm of Uncle John Quarles, and the house was as wonderful as its surroundings. It was a two-story double log building, with a spacious floor (roofed in) connecting the two divisions. In the summer the table was set in the middle of that shady, breezy pavilion, and sumptuous meals were served in the lavish Southern style, brought to the table in vast dishes that left only room for rows of plates around the edge. Fried chicken, roast pig, turkeys, ducks, geese, venison just killed, squirrels, rabbits, partridges, pheasants, prairie-chickens—the list is too long to be served here. If a little boy could not improve on that bill of fare and in that atmosphere, his case was hopeless indeed. His mother kept him there until the late fall, when the chilly evenings made them gather around the wide, blazing fireplace. Sixty years later he wrote of that scene:

I can see the room yet with perfect clearness. I can see all its buildings, all its details: the family-room of the house, with the trundle-bed in one corner and the spinning-wheel in another a wheel whose rising and falling wail, heard from a distance, was the mournfullest of all sounds to me, and made me homesick and low-spirited, and filled my atmosphere with the wandering spirits of the dead; the vast fireplace, piled high with flaming logs, from whose ends a sugary sap bubbled out, but did not go to waste, for we scraped it off and ate it; . . . the lazy cat spread out on the rough hearthstones, the drowsy dogs braced against the jambs, blinking; my aunt in one chimney-corner and my uncle in the other smoking his corn-cob pipe; the slick and carpetless oak floor faintly mirroring the flame tongues, and freckled with black indentations where fire-coals had popped out and died a leisurely death; half a dozen children romping in the background twilight; splint-bottom chairs here and there—some with rockers; a cradle—out of service, but waiting with confidence.

One is tempted to dwell on this period, to quote prodigally from these vivid memories—the thousand minute impressions which the child's sensitive mind acquired in that long-ago time and would reveal everywhere in his work in the years to come. For him it was education of a more valuable and lasting sort than any he would ever acquire from books.

IX

SCHOOL-DAYS

Nevertheless, on his return to Hannibal, it was decided that Little Sam was now ready to go to school. He was about five years old, and the months on the farm had left him wiry and lively, even if not very robust. His mother declared that he gave her more trouble than all the other children put together.

“He drives me crazy with his didoes, when he is in the house,” she used to say; “and when he is out of it I am expecting every minute that some one will bring him home half dead.”

Page 21

He did, in fact, achieve the first of his “nine narrow escapes from drowning” about this time, and was pulled out of the river one afternoon and brought home in a limp and unpromising condition. When with mullein tea and castor-oil she had restored him to activity, she said: “I guess there wasn’t much danger. People born to be hanged are safe in water.”

She declared she was willing to pay somebody to take him off her hands for a part of each day and try to teach him manners. Perhaps this is a good place to say that Jane Clemens was the original of Tom Sawyer’s “Aunt Polly,” and her portrait as presented in that book is considered perfect. Kind-hearted, fearless, looking and acting ten years older than her age, as women did in that time, always outspoken and sometimes severe, she was regarded as a “character” by her friends, and beloved by them as, a charitable, sympathetic woman whom it was good to know. Her sense of pity was abnormal. She refused to kill even flies, and punished the cat for catching mice. She, would drown the young kittens, when necessary, but warmed the water for the purpose. On coming to Hannibal, she joined the Presbyterian Church, and her religion was of that clean-cut, strenuous kind which regards as necessary institutions hell and Satan, though she had been known to express pity for the latter for being obliged to surround himself with such poor society. Her children she directed with considerable firmness, and all were tractable and growing in grace except Little Sam. Even baby Henry at two was lisping the prayers that Sam would let go by default unless carefully guarded. His sister Pamela, who was eight years older and always loved him dearly, usually supervised these spiritual exercises, and in her gentle care earned immortality as the Cousin Mary of Tom Sawyer. He would say his prayers willingly enough when encouraged by sister Pamela, but he much preferred to sit up in bed and tell astonishing tales of the day’s adventure—tales which made prayer seem a futile corrective and caused his listeners to wonder why the lightning was restrained so long. They did not know they were glimpsing the first outcroppings of a genius that would one day amaze and entertain the nations. Neighbors hearing of these things (also certain of his narrations) remonstrated with Mrs. Clemens.

“You don’t believe anything that child says, I hope.”

“Oh yes, I know his average. I discount him ninety per cent. The rest is pure gold.” At another time she said: “Sammy is a well of truth, but you can’t bring it all up in one bucket.”

This, however, is digression; the incidents may have happened somewhat later.

A certain Miss E. Horr was selected to receive the payment for taking charge of Little Sam during several hours each day, directing him mentally and morally in the mean time. Her school was then in a log house on Main Street (later it was removed to Third Street), and was of the primitive old-fashioned kind, with pupils of all ages, ranging in advancement from the primer to the third reader, from the tables to long division, with a

little geography and grammar and a good deal of spelling. Long division and the third reader completed the curriculum in that school. Pupils who decided to take a post-graduate course went to a Mr. Cross, who taught in a frame house on the hill facing what is now the Public Square.

Page 22

Miss Horr received twenty-five cents a week for each pupil, and opened her school with prayer; after which came a chapter of the Bible, with explanations, and the rules of conduct. Then the A B C class was called, because their recital was a hand-to-hand struggle, requiring no preparation.

The rules of conduct that first day interested Little Sam. He calculated how much he would need to trim in, to sail close to the danger-line and still avoid disaster. He made a miscalculation during the forenoon and received warning; a second offense would mean punishment. He did not mean to be caught the second time, but he had not learned Miss Horr yet, and was presently startled by being commanded to go out and bring a stick for his own correction.

This was certainly disturbing. It was sudden, and then he did not know much about the selection of sticks. Jane Clemens had usually used her hand. It required a second command to get him headed in the right direction, and he was a trifle dazed when he got outside. He had the forests of Missouri to select from, but choice was difficult. Everything looked too big and competent. Even the smallest switch had a wiry, discouraging look. Across the way was a cooper-shop with a good many shavings outside.

One had blown across and lay just in front of him. It was an inspiration. He picked it up and, solemnly entering the school-room, meekly handed it to Miss Herr.

Perhaps Miss Horr's sense of humor prompted forgiveness, but discipline must be maintained.

"Samuel Langhorne Clemens," she said (he had never heard it all strung together in that ominous way), "I am ashamed of you! Jimmy Dunlap, go and bring a switch for Sammy." And Jimmy Dunlap went, and the switch was of a sort to give the little boy an immediate and permanent distaste for school. He informed his mother when he went home at noon that he did not care for school; that he had no desire to be a great man; that he preferred to be a pirate or an Indian and scalp or drown such people as Miss Horr. Down in her heart his mother was sorry for him, but what she said was that she was glad there was somebody at last who could take him in hand.

He returned to school, but he never learned to like it. Each morning he went with reluctance and remained with loathing—the loathing which he always had for anything resembling bondage and tyranny or even the smallest curtailment of liberty. A School was ruled with a rod in those days, a busy and efficient rod, as the Scripture recommended. Of the smaller boys Little Sam's back was sore as often as the next, and he dreamed mainly of a day when, grown big and fierce, he would descend with his band and capture Miss Horr and probably drag her by the hair, as he had seen Indians and pirates do in the pictures. When the days of early summer came again; when from his desk he could see the sunshine lighting the soft green of Holliday's Hill, with the

purple distance beyond, and the glint of the river, it seemed to him that to be shut up with a Webster's spelling-book and a cross old maid was more than human nature could bear. Among the records preserved from that far-off day there remains a yellow slip, whereon in neat old-fashioned penmanship is inscribed:

Page 23

Miss Pamela Clemens

Has won the love of her teacher and schoolmates by her amiable deportment and faithful application to her various studies.
E. Horr, Teacher.

If any such testimonial was ever awarded to Little Sam, diligent search has failed to reveal it. If he won the love of his teacher and playmates it was probably for other reasons.

Yet he must have learned, somehow, for he could read presently and was soon regarded as a good speller for his years. His spelling came as a natural gift, as did most of his attainments, then and later.

It has already been mentioned that Miss Horr opened her school with prayer and Scriptural readings. Little Sam did not especially delight in these things, but he respected them. Not to do so was dangerous. Flames were being kept brisk for little boys who were heedless of sacred matters; his home teaching convinced him of that. He also respected Miss Horr as an example of orthodox faith, and when she read the text "Ask and ye shall receive" and assured them that whoever prayed for a thing earnestly, his prayer would be answered, he believed it. A small schoolmate, the baker's daughter, brought gingerbread to school every morning, and Little Sam was just "honing" for some of it. He wanted a piece of that baker's gingerbread more than anything else in the world, and he decided to pray for it.

The little girl sat in front of him, but always until that morning had kept the gingerbread out of sight. Now, however, when he finished his prayer and looked up, a small morsel of the precious food lay in front of him. Perhaps the little girl could no longer stand that hungry look in his eyes. Possibly she had heard his petition; at all events his prayer bore fruit and his faith at that moment would have moved Holliday's Hill. He decided to pray for everything he wanted, but when he tried the gingerbread supplication next morning it had no result. Grieved, but still unshaken, he tried next morning again; still no gingerbread; and when a third and fourth effort left him hungry he grew despairing and silent, and wore the haggard face of doubt. His mother said:

"What's the matter, Sammy; are you sick?"

"No," he said, "but I don't believe in saying prayers any more, and I'm never going to do it again."

"Why, Sammy, what in the world has happened?" she asked, anxiously. Then he broke down and cried on her lap and told her, for it was a serious thing in that day openly to repudiate faith. Jane Clemens gathered him to her heart and comforted him.

“I’ll make you a whole pan of gingerbread, better than that,” she said, “and school will soon be out, too, and you can go back to Uncle John’s farm.”

And so passed and ended Little Sam’s first school-days.

X

EARLY VICISSITUDE AND SORROW

Page 24

Prosperity came laggingly enough to the Clemens household. The year 1840 brought hard times: the business venture paid little or no return; law practice was not much more remunerative. Judge Clemens ran for the office of justice of the peace and was elected, but fees were neither large nor frequent. By the end of the year it became necessary to part with Jennie, the slave-girl—a grief to all of them, for they were fond of her in spite of her wilfulness, and she regarded them as “her family.” She was tall, well formed, nearly black, and brought a good price. A Methodist minister in Hannibal sold a negro child at the same time to another minister who took it to his home farther South. As the steamboat moved away from the landing the child’s mother stood at the water’s edge, shrieking her anguish. We are prone to consider these things harshly now, when slavery has been dead for nearly half a century, but it was a sacred institution then, and to sell a child from its mother was little more than to sell to-day a calf from its lowing dam. One could be sorry, of course, in both instances, but necessity or convenience are matters usually considered before sentiment. Mark Twain once said of his mother:

“Kind-hearted and compassionate as she was, I think she was not conscious that slavery was a bald, grotesque, and unwarranted usurpation. She had never heard it assailed in any pulpit, but had heard it defended and sanctified in a thousand. As far as her experience went, the wise, the good, and the holy were unanimous in the belief that slavery was right, righteous, sacred, the peculiar pet of the Deity, and a condition which the slave himself ought to be daily and nightly thankful for.”

Yet Jane Clemens must have had qualms at times—vague, unassembled doubts that troubled her spirit. After Jennie was gone a little black chore-boy was hired from his owner, who had bought him on the east shore of Maryland and brought him to that remote Western village, far from family and friends.

He was a cheery spirit in spite of that, and gentle, but very noisy. All day he went about singing, whistling, and whooping until his noise became monotonous, maddening. One day Little Sam said:

“Ma—[that was the Southern term]—,make Sandy stop singing all the time. It’s awful.”

Tears suddenly came into his mother’s eyes.

“Poor thing! He is sold away from his home. When he sings it shows maybe he is not remembering. When he’s still I am afraid he is thinking, and I can’t bear it.”

Yet any one in that day who advanced the idea of freeing the slaves was held in abhorrence. An abolitionist was something to despise, to stone out of the community. The children held the name in horror, as belonging to something less than human; something with claws, perhaps, and a tail.

Page 25

The money received for the sale of Jennie made judge Clemens easier for a time. Business appears to have improved, too, and he was tided through another year during which he seems to have made payments on an expensive piece of real estate on Hill and Main streets. This property, acquired in November, 1839, meant the payment of some seven thousand dollars, and was a credit purchase, beyond doubt. It was well rented, but the tenants did not always pay; and presently a crisis came—a descent of creditors—and John: Clemens at forty-four found himself without business and without means. He offered everything—his cow, his household furniture, even his forks and spoons—to his creditors, who protested that he must not strip himself. They assured him that they admired his integrity so much they would aid him to resume business; but when he went to St. Louis to lay in a stock of goods he was coldly met, and the venture came to nothing.

He now made a trip to Tennessee in the hope of collecting some old debts and to raise money on the Tennessee land. He took along a negro man named Charlie, whom he probably picked up for a small sum, hoping to make something through his disposal in a better market. The trip was another failure. The man who owed him a considerable sum of money was solvent, but pleaded hard times:

It seems so very hard upon him—[John Clemens wrote home]—to pay such a sum that I could not have the conscience to hold him to it. . . I still have Charlie. The highest price I had offered for him in New Orleans was \$50, in Vicksburg \$40. After performing the journey to Tennessee, I expect to sell him for whatever he will bring. I do not know what I can commence for a business in the spring. My brain is constantly on the rack with the study, and I can't relieve myself of it. The future, taking its completion from the state of my health or mind, is alternately beaming in sunshine or over-shadowed with clouds; but mostly cloudy, as you may suppose. I want bodily exercise—some constant and active employment, in the first place; and, in the next place, I want to be paid for it, if possible.

This letter is dated January 7, 1842. He returned without any financial success, and obtained employment for a time in a commission-house on the levee. The proprietor found some fault one day, and Judge Clemens walked out of the premises. On his way home he stopped in a general store, kept by a man named Sehns, to make some purchases. When he asked that these be placed on account, Selms hesitated. Judge Clemens laid down a five-dollar gold piece, the last money he possessed in the world, took the goods, and never entered the place again.

When Jane Clemens reproached him for having made the trip to Tennessee, at a cost of two hundred dollars, so badly needed at this time, he only replied gently that he had gone for what he believed to be the best.

Page 26

"I am not able to dig in the streets," he added, and Orion, who records this, adds:

"I can see yet the hopeless expression of his face."

During a former period of depression, such as this, death had come into the Clemens home. It came again now. Little Benjamin, a sensitive, amiable boy of ten, one day sickened, and died within a week, May 12, 1842. He was a favorite child and his death was a terrible blow. Little Sam long remembered the picture of his parents' grief; and Orion recalls that they kissed each other, something hitherto unknown.

Judge Clemens went back to his law and judicial practice. Mrs. Clemens decided to take a few boarders. Orion, by this time seventeen and a very good journeyman printer, obtained a place in St. Louis to aid in the family support.

The tide of fortune having touched low-water mark, the usual gentle stage of improvement set in. Times grew better in Hannibal after those first two or three years; legal fees became larger and more frequent. Within another two years judge Clemens appears to have been in fairly hopeful circumstances again—able at least to invest some money in silkworm culture and lose it, also to buy a piano for Pamela, and to build a modest house on the Hill Street property, which a rich St. Louis cousin, James Clemens, had preserved for him. It was the house which is known today as the "Mark Twain Home."—[This house, in 1911, was bought by Mr. and Mrs. George A. Mahan, and presented to Hannibal for a memorial museum.]—Near it, toward the corner of Main Street, was his office, and here he dispensed law and justice in a manner which, if it did not bring him affluence, at least won for him the respect of the entire community. One example will serve:

Next to his office was a stone-cutter's shop. One day the proprietor, Dave Atkinson, got into a muss with one "Fighting" MacDonald, and there was a tremendous racket. Judge Clemens ran out and found the men down, punishing each other on the pavement.

"I command the peace!" he shouted, as he came up to them.

No one paid the least attention.

"I command the peace!" he shouted again, still louder, but with no result.

A stone-cutter's mallet lay there, handy. Judge Clemens seized it and, leaning over the combatants, gave the upper one, MacDonald, a smart blow on the head.

"I command the peace!" he said, for the third time, and struck a considerably smarter blow.

That settled it. The second blow was of the sort that made MacDonald roll over, and peace ensued. Judge Clemens haled both men into his court, fined them, and collected his fee. Such enterprise in the cause of justice deserved prompt reward.

XI

DAYS OF EDUCATION

The Clemens family had made one or two moves since its arrival in Hannibal, but the identity of these temporary residences and the period of occupation of each can no longer be established. Mark Twain once said:

Page 27

“In 1843 my father caught me in a lie. It is not this fact that gives me the date, but the house we lived in. We were there only a year.”

We may believe it was the active result of that lie that fixed his memory of the place, for his father seldom punished him. When he did, it was a thorough and satisfactory performance.

It was about the period of moving into the new house (1844) that the Tom Sawyer days—that is to say, the boyhood of Samuel Clemens—may be said to have begun. Up to that time he was just Little Sam, a child—wild, and mischievous, often exasperating, but still a child—a delicate little lad to be worried over, mothered, or spanked and put to bed. Now, at nine, he had acquired health, with a sturdy ability to look out for himself, as boys will, in a community like that, especially where the family is rather larger than the income and there is still a younger child to claim a mother’s protecting care. So “Sam,” as they now called him, “grew up” at nine, and was full of knowledge for his years. Not that he was old in spirit or manner—he was never that, even to his death—but he had learned a great number of things, mostly of a kind not acquired at school.

They were not always of a pleasant kind; they were likely to be of a kind startling to a boy, even terrifying. Once Little Sam—he was still Little Sam, then—saw an old man shot down on the main street, at noonday. He saw them carry him home, lay him on the bed, and spread on his breast an open family Bible which looked as heavy as an anvil. He thought, if he could only drag that great burden away, the poor, old dying man would not breathe so heavily. He saw a young emigrant stabbed with a bowie-knife by a drunken comrade, and noted the spurt of life-blood that followed; he saw two young men try to kill their uncle, one holding him while the other snapped repeatedly an Allen revolver which failed to go off. Then there was the drunken rowdy who proposed to raid the “Welshman’s” house one dark threatening night—he saw that, too. A widow and her one daughter lived there, and the ruffian woke the whole village with his coarse challenges and obscenities. Sam Clemens and a boon companion, John Briggs, went up there to look and listen. The man was at the gate, and the warren were invisible in the shadow of the dark porch. The boys heard the elder woman’s voice warning the man that she had a loaded gun, and that she would kill him if he stayed where he was. He replied with a ribald tirade, and she warned that she would count ten—that if he remained a second longer she would fire. She began slowly and counted up to five, with him laughing and jeering. At six he grew silent, but he did not go. She counted on: seven—eight—nine—The boys watching from the dark roadside felt their hearts stop. There was a long pause, then the final count, followed a second later by a gush of flame. The man dropped, his breast riddled. At the same instant the thunderstorm that had been gathering broke loose. The boys fled wildly, believing that Satan himself had arrived to claim the lost soul.

Page 28

Many such instances happened in a town like that in those days. And there were events incident to slavery. He saw a slave struck down and killed with a piece of slag for a trifling offense. He saw an abolitionist attacked by a mob, and they would have lynched him had not a Methodist minister defended him on a plea that he must be crazy. He did not remember, in later years, that he had ever seen a slave auction, but he added:

"I am suspicious that it is because the thing was a commonplace spectacle, and not an uncommon or impressive one. I do vividly remember seeing a dozen black men and women chained together lying in a group on the pavement, waiting shipment to a Southern slave-market. They had the saddest faces I ever saw."

It is not surprising that a boy would gather a store of human knowledge amid such happenings as these. They were wild, disturbing things. They got into his dreams and made him fearful when he woke in the middle of the night. He did not then regard them as an education. In some vague way he set them down as warnings, or punishments, designed to give him a taste for a better life. He felt that it was his own conscience that made these things torture him. That was his mother's idea, and he had a high respect for her moral opinions, also for her courage. Among other things, he had seen her one day defy a vicious devil of a Corsican—a common terror in the town—who was chasing his grown daughter with a heavy rope in his hand, declaring he would wear it out on her. Cautious citizens got out of her way, but Jane Clemens opened her door wide to the refugee, and then, instead of rushing in and closing it, spread her arms across it, barring the way. The man swore and threatened her with the rope, but she did not flinch or show any sign of fear. She stood there and shamed him and derided him and defied him until he gave up the rope and slunk off, crestfallen and conquered. Any one who could do that must have a perfect conscience, Sam thought. In the fearsome darkness he would say his prayers, especially when a thunderstorm was coming, and vow to begin a better life in the morning. He detested Sunday-school as much as day-school, and once Orion, who was moral and religious, had threatened to drag him there by the collar; but as the thunder got louder Sam decided that he loved Sunday-school and would go the next Sunday without being invited.

Fortunately there were pleasanter things than these. There were picnics sometimes, and ferry-boat excursions. Once there was a great Fourth-of-July celebration at which it was said a real Revolutionary soldier was to be present. Some one had discovered him living alone seven or eight miles in the country. But this feature proved a disappointment; for when the day came and he was triumphantly brought in he turned out to be a Hessian, and was allowed to walk home.

The hills and woods around Hannibal where, with his playmates, he roamed almost at will were never disappointing. There was the cave with its marvels; there was Bear Creek, where, after repeated accidents, he had learned to swim. It had cost him heavily to learn to swim. He had seen two playmates drown; also, time and again he had,

himself, been dragged ashore more dead than alive, once by a slave-girl, another time by a slaveman—Neal Champ, of the Pavey Hotel. In the end he had conquered; he could swim better than any boy in town of his age.

Page 29

It was the river that meant more to him than all the rest. Its charm was permanent. It was the path of adventure, the gateway to the world. The river with its islands, its great slow-moving rafts, its marvelous steamboats that were like fairyland, its stately current swinging to the sea! He would sit by it for hours and dream. He would venture out on it in a surreptitiously borrowed boat when he was barely strong enough to lift an oar out of the water. He learned to know all its moods and phases. He felt its kinship. In some occult way he may have known it as his prototype—that resistless tide of life with its ever-changing sweep, its shifting shores, its depths, its shadows, its gorgeous sunset hues, its solemn and tranquil entrance to the sea.

His hunger for the life aboard the steamers became a passion. To be even the humblest employee of one of those floating enchantments would be enough; to be an officer would be to enter heaven; to be a pilot was to be a god.

“You can hardly imagine what it meant,” he reflected once, “to a boy in those days, shut in as we were, to see those steamboats pass up and down, and never to take a trip on them.”

He had reached the mature age of nine when he could endure this no longer. One day, when the big packet came down and stopped at Hannibal, he slipped aboard and crept under one of the boats on the upper deck. Presently the signal-bells rang, the steamboat backed away and swung into midstream; he was really going at last. He crept from beneath the boat and sat looking out over the water and enjoying the scenery. Then it began to rain—a terrific downpour. He crept back under the boat, but his legs were outside, and one of the crew saw him. So he was taken down into the cabin and at the next stop set ashore. It was the town of Louisiana, and there were Lampton relatives there who took him home. Jane Clemens declared that his father had got to take him in hand; which he did, doubtless impressing the adventure on him in the usual way. These were all educational things; then there was always the farm, where entertainment was no longer a matter of girl-plays and swings, with a colored nurse following about, but of manlier sports with his older boy cousins, who had a gun and went hunting with the men for squirrels and partridges by day, for coons and possums by night. Sometimes the little boy had followed the hunters all night long and returned with them through the sparkling and fragrant morning fresh, hungry, and triumphant just in time for breakfast.

So it is no wonder that at nine he was no longer “Little Sam,” but Sam Clemens, quite mature and self-dependent, with a wide knowledge of men and things and a variety of accomplishments. He had even learned to smoke—a little—out there on the farm, and had tried tobacco-chewing, though that was a failure. He had been stung to this effort by a big girl at a school which, with his cousin Puss, he sometimes briefly attended.

Page 30

"Do you use terbacker?" the big girl had asked, meaning did he chew it.

"No," he said, abashed at the confession.

"Haw!" she cried to the other scholars; "here's a boy that can't chaw terbacker."

Degraded and ashamed, he tried to correct his fault, but it only made him very ill; and he did not try again.

He had also acquired the use of certain strong, expressive words, and used them, sometimes, when his mother was safely distant. He had an impression that she would "skin him alive" if she heard him swear. His education had doubtful spots in it, but it had provided wisdom.

He was not a particularly attractive lad. He was not tall for his years, and his head was somewhat too large for his body. He had a "great ruck" of light, sandy hair which he plastered down to keep it from curling; keen blue-gray eyes, and rather large features. Still, he had a fair, delicate complexion, when it was not blackened by grime or tan; a gentle, winning manner; a smile that, with his slow, measured way of speaking, made him a favorite with his companions. He did not speak much, and his mental attainments were not highly regarded; but, for some reason, whenever he did speak every playmate in hearing stopped whatever he was doing and listened. Perhaps it would be a plan for a new game or lark; perhaps it was something droll; perhaps it was just a commonplace remark that his peculiar drawl made amusing. Whatever it was, they considered it worth while. His mother always referred to his slow fashion of speaking as "Sammy's long talk." Her own speech was still more deliberate, but she seemed not to notice it. Henry—a much handsomer lad and regarded as far more promising—did not have it. He was a lovable, obedient little fellow whom the mischievous Sam took delight in teasing. For this and other reasons the latter's punishments were frequent enough, perhaps not always deserved. Sometimes he charged his mother with partiality. He would say:

"Yes, no matter what it is, I am always the one to get punished"; and his mother would answer:

"Well, Sam, if you didn't deserve it for that, you did for something else."

Henry Clemens became the Sid of Tom Sawyer, though Henry was in every way a finer character than Sid. His brother Sam always loved him, and fought for him oftener than with him.

With the death of Benjamin Clemens, Henry and Sam were naturally drawn much closer together, though Sam could seldom resist the temptation of tormenting Henry. A schoolmate, George Butler (he was a nephew of General Butler and afterward fought bravely in the Civil War), had a little blue suit with a leather belt to match, and was the



envy of all. Mrs. Clemens finally made Sam and Henry suits of blue cotton velvet, and the next Sunday, after various services were over, the two sauntered about, shedding glory for a time, finally going for a stroll in the woods. They walked along properly enough, at first, then just

Page 31

ahead Sam spied the stump of a newly cut tree, and with a wild whooping impulse took a running leap over it. There were splinters on the stump where the tree had broken away, but he cleared them neatly. Henry wanted to match the performance, but was afraid to try, so Sam dared him. He kept daring him until Henry was goaded to the attempt. He cleared the stump, but the highest splinters caught the slack of his little blue trousers, and the cloth gave way. He escaped injury, but the precious trousers were damaged almost beyond repair. Sam, with a boy's heartlessness, was fairly rolling on the ground with laughter at Henry's appearance.

"Cotton-tail rabbit!" he shouted. "Cotton-tail rabbit!" while Henry, weeping, set out for home by a circuitous and unfrequented road. Let us hope, if there was punishment for this mishap, that it fell in the proper locality.

These two brothers were of widely different temperament. Henry, even as a little boy, was sturdy, industrious, and dependable. Sam was volatile and elusive; his industry of an erratic kind. Once his father set him to work with a hatchet to remove some plaster. He hacked at it for a time well enough, then lay down on the floor of the room and threw his hatchet at such areas of the plaster as were not in easy reach. Henry would have worked steadily at a task like that until the last bit was removed and the room swept clean.

The home incidents in 'Tom Sawyer', most of them, really happened. Sam Clemens did clod Henry for getting him into trouble about the colored thread with which he sewed his shirt when he came home from swimming; he did inveigle a lot of boys into whitewashing, a fence for him; he did give Pain-killer to Peter, the cat. There was a cholera scare that year, and Pain-killer was regarded as a preventive. Sam had been ordered to take it liberally, and perhaps thought Peter too should be safeguarded. As for escaping punishment for his misdeeds in the manner described in that book, this was a daily matter, and the methods adapted themselves to the conditions. In the introduction to Tom Sawyer Mark Twain confesses to the general truth of the history, and to the reality of its characters. "Huck Finn was drawn from life," he tells us. "Tom Sawyer also, but not from an individual—he is a combination of the characteristics of three boys whom I knew."

The three boys were—himself, chiefly, and in a lesser degree John Briggs and Will Bowen. John Briggs was also the original of Joe Harper in that book. As for Huck Finn, his original was Tom Blankenship, neither elaborated nor qualified.

There were several of the Blankenships: there was old Ben, the father, who had succeeded "General" Gains as the town drunkard; young Ben, the eldest son—a hard case with certain good traits; and Tom—that is to say, Huck—who was just as he is

described in Tom Sawyer: a ruin of rags, a river-rat, an irresponsible bit of human drift, kind of heart and possessing that priceless

Page 32

boon, absolute unaccountability of conduct to any living soul. He could come and go as he chose; he never had to work or go to school; he could do all things, good or bad, that the other boys longed to do and were forbidden. He represented to them the very embodiment of liberty, and his general knowledge of important matters, such as fishing, hunting, trapping, and all manner of signs and spells and hoodoos and incantations, made him immensely valuable as a companion. The fact that his society was prohibited gave it a vastly added charm.

The Blankenships picked up a precarious living fishing and hunting, and lived at first in a miserable house of bark, under a tree, but later moved into quite a pretentious building back of the new Clemens home on Hill Street. It was really an old barn of a place—poor and ramshackle even then; but now, more than sixty years later, a part of it is still standing. The siding of the part that stands is of black walnut, which must have been very plentiful in that long-ago time. Old drunken Ben Blankenship never dreamed that pieces of his house would be carried off as relics because of the literary fame of his son Tom—a fame founded on irresponsibility and inconsequence. Orion Clemens, who was concerned with missionary work about this time, undertook to improve the Blankenships spiritually. Sam adopted them, outright, and took them to his heart. He was likely to be there at any hour of the day, and he and Tom had cat-call signals at night which would bring him out on the back single-story roof, and down a little arbor and flight of steps, to the group of boon companions which, besides Tom, included John Briggs, the Bowen boys, Will Pitts, and one or two other congenial spirits. They were not vicious boys; they were not really bad boys; they were only mischievous, fun-loving boys—thoughtless, and rather disregardful of the comforts and the rights of others.

XII

TOM SAWYER'S BAND

They ranged from Holliday's Hill on the north to the Cave on the south, and over the fields and through all the woods about. They navigated the river from Turtle Island to Glasscock's Island (now Pearl, or Tom Sawyer's Island), and far below; they penetrated the wilderness of the Illinois shore. They could run like wild turkeys and swim like ducks; they could handle a boat as if born in one. No orchard or melon patch was entirely safe from them; no dog or slave patrol so vigilant that they did not sooner or later elude it. They borrowed boats when their owners were not present. Once when they found this too much trouble, they decided to own a boat, and one Sunday gave a certain borrowed craft a coat of red paint (formerly it had been green), and secluded it for a season up Bear Creek. They borrowed the paint also, and the brush, though they carefully returned these the same evening about nightfall, so the painter could have them Monday morning. Tom Blankenship rigged up a sail for the new craft, and Sam

Clemens named it Cecilia, after which they didn't need to borrow boats any more, though the owner of it did; and he sometimes used to observe as he saw it pass that, if it had been any other color but red, he would have sworn it was his.

Page 33

Some of their expeditions were innocent enough. They often cruised up to Turtle Island, about two miles above Hannibal, and spent the day feasting. You could have loaded a car with turtles and their eggs up there, and there were quantities of mussels and plenty of fish. Fishing and swimming were their chief pastimes, with general marauding for adventure. Where the railroad-bridge now ends on the Missouri side was their favorite swimming-hole—that and along Bear Creek, a secluded limpid water with special interests of its own. Sometimes at evening they swam across to Glasscock's Island—the rendezvous of Tom Sawyer's "Black Avengers" and the hiding-place of Huck and Nigger Jim; then, when they had frolicked on the sand-bar at the head of the island for an hour or more, they would swim back in the dusk, a distance of half a mile, breasting the strong, steady Mississippi current without exhaustion or fear. They could swim all day, likely enough, those graceless young scamps. Once—though this was considerably later, when he was sixteen—Sam Clemens swam across to the Illinois side, and then turned and swam back again without landing, a distance of at least two miles, as he had to go. He was seized with a cramp on the return trip. His legs became useless, and he was obliged to make the remaining distance with his arms. It was a hardy life they led, and it is not recorded that they ever did any serious damage, though they narrowly missed it sometimes.

One of their Sunday pastimes was to climb Holliday's Hill and roll down big stones, to frighten the people who were driving to church. Holliday's Hill above the road was steep; a stone once started would go plunging and leaping down and bound across the road with the deadly swiftness of a twelve-inch shell. The boys would get a stone poised, then wait until they saw a team approaching, and, calculating the distance, would give it a start. Dropping down behind the bushes, they would watch the dramatic effect upon the church-goers as the great missile shot across the road a few yards before them. This was Homeric sport, but they carried it too far. Stones that had a habit of getting loose so numerous on Sundays and so rarely on other days invited suspicion, and the "Patterollers" (river patrol—a kind of police of those days) were put on the watch. So the boys found other diversions until the Patterollers did not watch any more; then they planned a grand coup that would eclipse anything before attempted in the stone-rolling line.

A rock about the size of an omnibus was lying up there, in a good position to go down hill, once, started. They decided it would be a glorious thing to see that great boulder go smashing down, a hundred yards or so in front of some unsuspecting and peaceful-minded church-goer. Quarrymen were getting out rock not far away, and left their picks and shovels over Sundays. The boys borrowed these, and went to work to undermine the big stone. It was a heavier job than they had counted on, but they worked faithfully, Sunday after Sunday. If their parents had wanted them to work like that, they would have thought they were being killed.

Page 34

Finally one Sunday, while they were digging, it suddenly got loose and started down. They were not quite ready for it. Nobody was coming but an old colored man in a cart, so it was going to be wasted. It was not quite wasted, however. They had planned for a thrilling result; and there was thrill enough while it lasted. In the first place, the stone nearly caught Will Bowen when it started. John Briggs had just that moment quit digging and handed Will the pick. Will was about to step into the excavation when Sam Clemens, who was already there, leaped out with a yell:

“Look out, boys, she’s coming!”

She came. The huge stone kept to the ground at first, then, gathering a wild momentum, it went bounding into the air. About half-way down the hill it struck a tree several inches through and cut it clean off. This turned its course a little, and the negro in the cart, who heard the noise, saw it come crashing in his direction and made a wild effort to whip up his horse. It was also headed toward a cooper-shop across the road. The boys watched it with growing interest. It made longer leaps with every bound, and whenever it struck the fragments the dust would fly. They were certain it would demolish the negro and destroy the cooper-shop. The shop was empty, it being Sunday, but the rest of the catastrophe would invite close investigation, with results. They wanted to fly, but they could not move until they saw the rock land. It was making mighty leaps now, and the terrified negro had managed to get directly in its path. They stood holding their breath, their mouths open. Then suddenly they could hardly believe their eyes; the boulder struck a projection a distance above the road, and with a mighty bound sailed clear over the negro and his mule and landed in the soft dirt beyond—only a fragment striking the shop, damaging but not wrecking it. Half buried in the ground, that boulder lay there for nearly forty years; then it was blasted up for milling purposes. It was the last rock the boys ever rolled down. They began to suspect that the sport was not altogether safe.

Sometimes the boys needed money, which was not easy to get in those days. On one occasion of this sort, Tom Blankenship had the skin of a coon he had captured, which represented the only capital in the crowd. At Selms’s store on Wild Cat corner the coonskin would bring ten cents, but that was not enough. They arranged a plan which would make it pay a good deal more than that. Selins’s window was open, it being summer-time, and his pile of pelts was pretty handy. Huck—that is to say, Tom—went in the front door and sold the skin for ten cents to Selms, who tossed it back on the pile. Tom came back with the money and after a reasonable period went around to the open window, crawled in, got the coonskin, and sold it to Selms again. He did this several times that afternoon; then John Pierce, Selins’s clerk, said:

“Look here, Selms, there is something wrong about this. That boy has been selling us coonskins all the afternoon.”

Page 35

Selms went to his pile of pelts. There were several sheepskins and some cowhides, but only one coonskin—the one he had that moment bought. Selms himself used to tell this story as a great joke.

Perhaps it is not adding to Mark Twain's reputation to say that the boy Sam Clemens—a pretty small boy, a good deal less than twelve at this time—was the leader of this unhallowed band; yet any other record would be less than historic. If the band had a leader, it was he. They were always ready to listen to him—they would even stop fishing to do that—and to follow his projects. They looked to him for ideas and organization, whether the undertaking was to be real or make-believe. When they played “Bandit” or “Pirate” or “Indian,” Sam Clemens was always chief; when they became real raiders it is recorded that he was no less distinguished. Like Tom Sawyer, he loved the glare and trappings of leadership. When the Christian Sons of Temperance came along with a regalia, and a red sash that carried with it rank and the privilege of inventing pass-words, the gaud of these things got into his eyes, and he gave up smoking (which he did rather gingerly) and swearing (which he did only under heavy excitement), also liquor (though he had never tasted it yet), and marched with the newly washed and pure in heart for a full month—a month of splendid leadership and servitude. Then even the red sash could not hold him in bondage. He looked up Tom Blankenship and said:

“Say, Tom, I’m blamed tired of this! Let’s go somewhere and smoke!” Which must have been a good deal of a sacrifice, for the uniform was a precious thing.

Limelight and the center of the stage was a passion of Sam Clemens’s boyhood, a love of the spectacular that never wholly died. It seems almost a pity that in those far-off barefoot old days he could not have looked down the years to a time when, with the world at his feet, venerable Oxford should clothe him in a scarlet gown.

He could not by any chance have dreamed of that stately honor. His ambitions did not lie in the direction of mental achievement. It is true that now and then, on Friday at school, he read a composition, one of which—a personal burlesque on certain older boys—came near resulting in bodily damage. But any literary ambition he may have had in those days was a fleeting thing. His permanent dream was to be a pirate, or a pilot, or a bandit, or a trapper-scout; something gorgeous and active, where his word—his nod, even—constituted sufficient law. The river kept the pilot ambition always fresh, and the cave supplied a background for those other things.

Page 36

The cave was an enduring and substantial joy. It was a real cave, not merely a hole, but a subterranean marvel of deep passages and vaulted chambers that led away into bluffs and far down into the earth's black silences, even below the river, some said. For Sam Clemens the cave had a fascination that never faded. Other localities and diversions might pall, but any mention of the cave found him always eager and ready for the three-mile walk or pull that brought them to its mystic door. With its long corridors, its royal chambers hung with stalactites, its remote hiding-places, its possibilities as the home of a gallant outlaw band, it contained everything that a romantic boy could love or long for. In Tom Sawyer Indian Joe dies in the cave. He did not die there in real life, but was lost there once, and was living on bats when they found him. He was a dissolute reprobate, and when, one night, he did die there came up a thunder-storm so terrific that Sam Clemens at home and in bed was certain that Satan had come in person for the half-breed's wicked soul. He covered his head and said his prayers industriously, in the fear that the evil one might conclude to save another trip by taking him along, too.

The treasure-digging adventure in the book had a foundation in fact. There was a tradition concerning some French trappers who long before had established a trading-post two miles above Hannibal, on what is called the "bay." It is said that, while one of these trappers was out hunting, Indians made a raid on the post and massacred the others. The hunter on returning found his comrades killed and scalped, but the Indians had failed to find the treasure which was buried in a chest. He left it there, swam across to Illinois, and made his way to St. Louis, where he told of the massacre and the burial of the chest of gold. Then he started to raise a party to go back for it, but was taken sick and died. Later some men came up from St. Louis looking for the chest. They did not find it, but they told the circumstances, and afterward a good many people tried to find the gold.

Tom Blankenship one morning came to Sam Clemens and John Briggs and said he was going to dig up the treasure. He said he had dreamed just where it was, and said if they would go with him and dig he would divide up. The boys had great faith in dreams, especially Tom's dreams. Tom's unlimited freedom gave him a large importance in their eyes. The dreams of a boy like that were pretty sure to mean something. They followed Tom to the place with some shovels and a pick, and he showed them where to dig. Then he sat down under the shade of a papaw-tree and gave orders.

They dug nearly all day. Now and then they stopped to rest, and maybe to wonder a little why Tom didn't dig some himself; but, of course, he had done the dreaming, which entitled him to an equal share.

Page 37

They did not find it that day, and when they went back next morning they took two long iron rods; these they would push and drive into the ground until they struck something hard. Then they would dig down to see what it was, but it never turned out to be money. That night the boys declared they would not dig any more. But Tom had another dream. He dreamed the gold was exactly under the, little papaw-tree. This sounded so circumstantial that they went back and dug another day. It was hot weather too, August, and that night they were nearly dead. Even Tom gave it up, then. He said there was something about the way they dug, but he never offered to do any digging himself.

This differs considerably from the digging incident in the book, but it gives us an idea of the respect the boys had for the ragamuffin original of Huckleberry Finn.—[Much of the detail in this chapter was furnished to the writer by John Briggs shortly before his death in 1907.]—Tom Blankenship's brother, Ben, was also drawn upon for that creation, at least so far as one important phase of Huck's character is concerned. He was considerably older, as well as more disreputable, than Tom. He was inclined to torment the boys by tying knots in their clothes when they went swimming, or by throwing mud at them when they wanted to come out, and they had no deep love for him. But somewhere in Ben Blankenship there was a fine generous strain of humanity that provided Mark Twain with that immortal episode in the story of Huck Finn—in sheltering the Nigger Jim.

This is the real story:

A slave ran off from Monroe County, Missouri, and got across the river into Illinois. Ben used to fish and hunt over there in the swamps, and one day found him. It was considered a most worthy act in those days to return a runaway slave; in fact, it was a crime not to do it. Besides, there was for this one a reward of fifty dollars, a fortune to ragged outcast Ben Blankenship. That money and the honor he could acquire must have been tempting to the waif, but it did not outweigh his human sympathy. Instead of giving him up and claiming the reward, Ben kept the runaway over there in the marshes all summer. The negro would fish and Ben would carry him scraps of other food. Then, by and by, it leaked out. Some wood-choppers went on a hunt for the fugitive, and chased him to what was called "Bird Slough." There trying to cross a drift he was drowned.

In the book, the author makes Huck's struggle a psychological one between conscience and the law, on one side, and sympathy on the other. With Ben Blankenship the struggle—if there was a struggle—was probably between sympathy and cupidity. He would care very little for conscience and still less for law. His sympathy with the runaway, however, would be large and elemental, and it must have been very large to offset the lure of that reward.

Page 38

There was a gruesome sequel to this incident. Some days following the drowning of the runaway, Sam Clemens, John Briggs, and the Bowen boys went to the spot and were pushing the drift about, when suddenly the negro rose before them, straight and terrible, about half his length out of the water. He had gone down feet foremost, and the loosened drift had released him. The boys did not stop to investigate. They thought he was after them and flew in wild terror, never stopping until they reached human habitation.

How many gruesome experiences there appear to have been in those early days! In 'The Innocents Abroad' Mark Twain tells of the murdered man he saw one night in his father's office. The man's name was McFarlane. He had been stabbed that day in the old Hudson-McFarlane feud and carried in there to die. Sam Clemens and John Briggs had run away from school and had been sky larking all that day, and knew nothing of the affair. Sam decided that his father's office was safer for him than to face his mother, who was probably sitting up, waiting. He tells us how he lay on the lounge, and how a shape on the floor gradually resolved itself into the outlines of a man; how a square of moonlight from the window approached it and gradually revealed the dead face and the ghastly stabbed breast.

"I went out of there," he says. "I do not say that I went away in any sort of a hurry, but I simply went; that is sufficient. I went out of the window, and I carried the sash along with me. I did not need the sash, but it was handier to take it than to, leave it, and so I took it. I was not scared, but I was considerably agitated."

He was not yet twelve, for his father was no longer alive when the boy reached that age. Certainly these were disturbing, haunting things. Then there was the case of the drunken tramp in the calaboose to whom the boys kind-heartedly enough carried food and tobacco. Sam Clemens spent some of his precious money to buy the tramp a box of Lucifer matches—a brand new invention then, scarce and high. The tramp started a fire with the matches and burned down the calaboose, himself in it. For weeks the boy was tortured, awake and in his dreams, by the thought that if he had not carried the man the matches the tragedy could not have happened. Remorse was always Samuel Clemens's surest punishment. To his last days on earth he never outgrew its pangs.

What a number of things crowded themselves into a few brief years! It is not easy to curtail these boyhood adventures of Sam Clemens and his scapegrace friends, but one might go on indefinitely with their mad doings. They were an unpromising lot. Ministers and other sober-minded citizens freely prophesied sudden and violent ends for them, and considered them hardly worth praying for. They must have proven a disappointing lot to those prophets. The Bowen boys became fine river-pilots; Will Pitts was in due time a leading merchant and bank director; John Briggs grew into a well-to-do and highly respected farmer; even Huck Finn—that is to say, Tom Blankenship—is reputed to have ranked as an honored citizen and justice of the peace in a Western town. But in

those days they were a riotous, fun-loving band with little respect for order and even less for ordinance.

Page 39

XIII

THE GENTLER SIDE

His associations were not all of that lawless breed. At his school (he had sampled several places of learning, and was now at Mr. Cross's on the Square) were a number of less adventurous, even if not intrinsically better playmates. There was George Robards, the Latin scholar, and John, his brother, a handsome boy, who rode away at last with his father into the sunset, to California, his golden curls flying in the wind. And there was Jimmy McDaniel, a kind-hearted boy whose company was worth while, because his father was a confectioner, and he used to bring candy and cake to school. Also there was Buck Brown, a rival speller, and John Meredith, the doctor's son, and John Garth, who was one day to marry little Helen Kercheval, and in the end would be remembered and honored with a beautiful memorial building not far from the site of the old school.

Furthermore, there were a good many girls. Tom Sawyer had an impressionable heart, and Sam Clemens no less so. There was Bettie Ormsley, and Artemisia Briggs, and Jennie Brady; also Mary Miller, who was nearly twice his age and gave him his first broken heart.

"I believe I was as miserable as a grown man could be," he said once, remembering.

Tom Sawyer had heart sorrows too, and we may imagine that his emotions at such times were the emotions of Sam Clemens, say at the age of ten.

But, as Tom Sawyer had one faithful sweetheart, so did he. They were one and the same. Becky Thatcher in the book was Laura Hawkins in reality. The acquaintance of these two had begun when the Hawkins family moved into the Virginia house on the corner of Hill and Main streets.—[The Hawkins family in real life bore no resemblance to the family of that name in *The Gilded Age*. Judge Hawkins of *The Gilded Age*, as already noted, was John Clemens. Mark Twain used the name Hawkins, also the name of his boyhood sweetheart, Laura, merely for old times' sake, and because in portraying the childhood of Laura Hawkins he had a picture of the real Laura in his mind.]—The Clemens family was then in the new home across the way, and the children were soon acquainted. The boy could be tender and kind, and was always gentle in his treatment of the other sex. They visited back and forth, especially around the new house, where there were nice pieces of boards and bricks for play-houses. So they played "keeping house," and if they did not always agree well, since the beginning of the world sweethearts have not always agreed, even in Arcady. Once when they were building a house—and there may have been some difference of opinion as to its architecture—the boy happened to let a brick fall on the little girl's finger. If there had been any disagreement it vanished instantly with that misfortune. He tried to comfort her and

soothe the pain; then he wept with her and suffered most of the two, no doubt. So, you see, he was just a little boy, after all, even though he was already chief of a red-handed band, the “Black Avengers of the Spanish Main.”

Page 40

He was always a tender-hearted lad. He would never abuse an animal, unless, as in the Pain-killer incident, his tendency to pranking ran away with him. He had indeed a genuine passion for cats; summers when he went to the farm he never failed to take his cat in a basket. When he ate, it sat in a chair beside him at the table. His sympathy included inanimate things as well. He loved flowers—not as the embryo botanist or gardener, but as a personal friend. He pitied the dead leaf and the murmuring dried weed of November because their brief lives were ended, and they would never know the summer again, or grow glad with another spring. His heart went out to them; to the river and the sky, the sunlit meadow and the drifted hill. That his observation of all nature was minute and accurate is shown everywhere in his writing; but it was never the observation of a young naturalist it was the subconscious observation of sympathetic love.

We are wandering away from his school-days. They were brief enough and came rapidly to an end. They will not hold us long. Undoubtedly Tom Sawyer's distaste for school and his excuses for staying at home—usually some pretended illness—have ample foundation in the boyhood of Sam Clemens. His mother punished him and pleaded with him, alternately. He detested school as he detested nothing else on earth, even going to church. "Church ain't worth shucks," said Tom Sawyer, but it was better than school.

As already noted, the school of Mr. Cross stood in or near what is now the Square in Hannibal. The Square was only a grove then, grown up with plum, hazel, and vine—a rare place for children. At recess and the noon hour the children climbed trees, gathered flowers, and swung in grape-vine swings. There was a spelling-bee every Friday afternoon, for Sam the only endurable event of the school exercises. He could hold the floor at spelling longer than Buck Brown. This was spectacular and showy; it invited compliments even from Mr. Cross, whose name must have been handed down by angels, it fitted him so well. One day Sam Clemens wrote on his slate:

Cross by name and cross by nature
Cross jumped over an Irish potato.

He showed this to John Briggs, who considered it a stroke of genius. He urged the author to write it on the board at noon, but the poet's ambition did not go so far.

"Oh, pshaw!" said John. "I wouldn't be afraid to do it.

"I dare you to do it," said Sam.

John Briggs never took a dare, and at noon, when Mr. Cross was at home at dinner, he wrote flamingly the descriptive couplet. When the teacher returned and "books" were called he looked steadily at John Briggs. He had recognized the penmanship.

“Did you do that?” he asked, ominously.

It was a time for truth.

“Yes, sir,” said John.

“Come here!” And John came, and paid for his exploitation of genius heavily. Sam Clemens expected that the next call would be for “author,” but for some reason the investigation ended there. It was unusual for him to escape. His back generally kept fairly warm from one “frailing” to the next.

Page 41

His rewards were not all of a punitive nature. There were two medals in the school, one for spelling, the other for amiability. They were awarded once a week, and the holders wore them about the neck conspicuously, and were envied accordingly. John Robards—he of the golden curls—wore almost continuously the medal for amiability, while Sam Clemens had a mortgage on the medal for spelling. Sometimes they traded, to see how it would seem, but the master discouraged this practice by taking the medals away from them for the remainder of the week. Once Sam Clemens lost the medal by leaving the first “r” out of February. He could have spelled it backward, if necessary; but Laura Hawkins was the only one on the floor against him, and he was a gallant boy.

The picture of that school as presented in the book written thirty years later is faithful, we may believe, and the central figure is a tender-hearted, romantic, devil-may-care lad, loathing application and longing only for freedom. It was a boon which would come to him sooner even than he had dreamed.

XIV

THE PASSING OF JOHN CLEMENS

Judge Clemens, who time and again had wrecked or crippled his fortune by devices more or less unusual, now adopted the one unfailing method of achieving disaster. He endorsed a large note, for a man of good repute, and the payment of it swept him clean: home, property, everything vanished again. The St. Louis cousin took over the home and agreed to let the family occupy it on payment of a small interest; but after an attempt at housekeeping with a few scanty furnishings and Pamela’s piano—all that had been saved from the wreck—they moved across the street into a portion of the Virginia house, then occupied by a Dr. Grant. The Grants proposed that the Clemens family move over and board them, a welcome arrangement enough at this time.

Judge Clemens had still a hope left. The clerkship of the Surrogate Court was soon to be filled by election. It was an important remunerative office, and he was regarded as the favorite candidate for the position. His disaster had aroused general sympathy, and his nomination and election were considered sure. He took no chances; he made a canvass on horseback from house to house, often riding through rain and the chill of fall, acquiring a cough which was hard to overcome. He was elected by a heavy majority, and it was believed he could hold the office as long as he chose. There seemed no further need of worry. As soon as he was installed in office they would live in style becoming their social position. About the end of February he rode to Palmyra to be sworn in. Returning he was drenched by a storm of rain and sleet, arriving at last half frozen. His system was in no condition to resist such a shock. Pneumonia followed; physicians came with torments of plasters and allopathic dosings that brought no relief. Orion returned from St. Louis to assist in caring for him, and sat by his bed, encouraging him and reading to him, but it was evident that he grew daily weaker. Now

and then he became cheerful and spoke of the Tennessee land as the seed of a vast fortune that must surely flower at last. He uttered no regrets, no complaints. Once only he said:

Page 42

"I believe if I had stayed in Tennessee I might have been worth twenty thousand dollars to-day."

On the morning of the 24th of March, 1847, it was evident that he could not live many hours. He was very weak. When he spoke, now and then, it was of the land. He said it would soon make them all rich and happy.

"Cling to the land," he whispered. "Cling to the land, and wait. Let nothing beguile it away from you."

A little later he beckoned to Pamela, now a lovely girl of nineteen, and, putting his arm about her neck, kissed her for the first time in years.

"Let me die," he said.

He never spoke after that. A little more, and the sad, weary life that had lasted less than forty-nine years was ended: A dreamer and a moralist, an upright man honored by all, he had never been a financier. He ended life with less than he had begun.

XV

A YOUNG BEN FRANKLIN

For a third time death had entered the Clemens home: not only had it brought grief now, but it had banished the light of new fortune from the very threshold. The disaster seemed complete.

The children were dazed. Judge Clemens had been a distant, reserved man, but they had loved him, each in his own way, and they had honored his uprightness and nobility of purpose. Mrs. Clemens confided to a neighbor that, in spite of his manner, her husband had been always warm-hearted, with a deep affection for his family. They remembered that he had never returned from a journey without bringing each one some present, however trifling. Orion, looking out of his window next morning, saw old Abram Kurtz, and heard him laugh. He wondered how anybody could still laugh.

The boy Sam was fairly broken down. Remorse, which always dealt with him unsparingly, laid a heavy hand on him now. Wildness, disobedience, indifference to his father's wishes, all were remembered; a hundred things, in themselves trifling, became ghastly and heart-wringing in the knowledge that they could never be undone. Seeing his grief, his mother took him by the hand and led him into the room where his father lay.

"It is all right, Sammy," she said. "What's done is done, and it does not matter to him any more; but here by the side of him now I want you to promise me——"

He turned, his eyes streaming with tears, and flung himself into her arms.

"I will promise anything," he sobbed, "if you won't make me go to school! Anything!"

His mother held him for a moment, thinking, then she said:

"No, Sammy; you need not go to school any more. Only promise me to be a better boy. Promise not to break my heart."

So he promised her to be a faithful and industrious man, and upright, like his father. His mother was satisfied with that. The sense of honor and justice was already strong within him. To him a promise was a serious matter at any time; made under conditions like these it would be held sacred.

Page 43

That night—it was after the funeral—his tendency to somnambulism manifested itself. His mother and sister, who were sleeping together, saw the door open and a form in white enter. Naturally nervous at such a time, and living in a day of almost universal superstition, they were terrified and covered their heads. Presently a hand was laid on the coverlet, first at the foot, then at the head of the bed. A thought struck Mrs. Clemens:

“Sam!” she said.

He answered, but he was sound asleep and fell to the floor. He had risen and thrown a sheet around him in his dreams. He walked in his sleep several nights in succession after that. Then he slept more soundly.

Orion returned to St. Louis. He was a very good book and job printer by this time and received a salary of ten dollars a week (high wages in those frugal days), of which he sent three dollars weekly to the family. Pamela, who had acquired a considerable knowledge of the piano and guitar, went to the town of Paris, in Monroe County, about fifty miles away, and taught a class of music pupils, contributing whatever remained after paying for her board and clothing to the family fund. It was a hard task for the girl, for she was timid and not over-strong; but she was resolute and patient, and won success. Pamela Clemens was a noble character and deserves a fuller history than can be afforded in this work.

Mrs. Clemens and her son Samuel now had a sober talk, and, realizing that the printing trade offered opportunity for acquiring further education as well as a livelihood, they agreed that he should be apprenticed to Joseph P. Ament, who had lately moved from Palmyra to Hannibal and bought a weekly Democrat paper, the Missouri Courier. The apprentice terms were not over-liberal. They were the usual thing for that time: board and clothes—“more board than clothes, and not much of either,” Mark Twain used to say.

“I was supposed to get two suits of clothes a year, like a nigger, but I didn’t get them. I got one suit and took the rest out in Ament’s old garments, which didn’t fit me in any noticeable way. I was only about half as big as he was, and when I had on one of his shirts I felt as if I had on a circus tent. I had to turn the trousers up to my ears to make them short enough.”

There was another apprentice, a young fellow of about eighteen, named Wales McCormick, a devilish fellow and a giant. Ament’s clothes were too small for Wales, but he had to wear them, and Sam Clemens and Wales McCormick together, fitted out with Ament’s clothes, must have been a picturesque pair. There was also, for a time, a boy named Ralph; but he appears to have presented no features of a striking sort, and the memory of him has become dim.

Page 44

The apprentices ate in the kitchen at first, served by the old slave-cook and her handsome mulatto daughter; but those printer's "devils" made it so lively there that in due time they were promoted to the family table, where they sat with Mr. and Mrs. Ament and the one journeyman, Pet McMurry—a name that in itself was an inspiration. What those young scamps did not already know Pet McMurry could teach them. Sam Clemens had promised to be a good boy, and he was, by the standards of boyhood. He was industrious, regular at his work, quick to learn, kind, and truthful. Angels could hardly be more than that in a printing-office; but when food was scarce even an angel—a young printer angel—could hardly resist slipping down the cellar stairs at night for raw potatoes, onions, and apples which they carried into the office, where the boys slept on a pallet on the floor, and this forage they cooked on the office stove. Wales especially had a way of cooking a potato that his associate never forgot.

It is unfortunate that no photographic portrait has been preserved of Sam Clemens at this period. But we may imagine him from a letter which, long years after, Pet McMurry wrote to Mark Twain. He said:

If your memory extends so far back, you will recall a little sandy- haired boy—[The color of Mark Twain's hair in early life has been variously referred to as red, black, and brown. It was, in fact, as stated by McMurry, "sandy" in boyhood, deepening later to that rich, mahogany tone known as auburn.]—of nearly a quarter of a century ago, in the printing-office at Hannibal, over the Brittingham drugstore, mounted upon a little box at the case, pulling away at a huge cigar or a diminutive pipe, who used to love to sing so well the expression of the poor drunken man who was supposed to have fallen by the wayside: "If ever I get up again, I'll stay up—if I kin." . . . Do you recollect any of the serious conflicts that mirth-loving brain of yours used to get you into with that diminutive creature Wales McCormick—how you used to call upon me to hold your cigar or pipe, whilst you went entirely through him?

This is good testimony, without doubt. When he had been with Ament little more than a year Sam had become office favorite and chief standby. Whatever required intelligence and care and imagination was given to Sam Clemens. He could set type as accurately and almost as rapidly as Pet McMurry; he could wash up the forms a good deal better than Pet; and he could run the job-press to the tune of "Annie Laurie" or "Along the Beach at Rockaway," without missing a stroke or losing a finger. Sometimes, at odd moments, he would "set up" one of the popular songs or some favorite poem like "The Blackberry Girl," and of these he sent copies printed on cotton, even on scraps of silk, to favorite girl friends; also to Puss Quarles, on his uncle's farm, where he seldom went now, because he was really grown up, associating with men and doing a man's

Page 45

work. He had charge of the circulation—which is to say, he carried the papers. During the last year of the Mexican War, when a telegraph-wire found its way across the Mississippi to Hannibal—a long sagging span, that for some reason did not break of its own weight—he was given charge of the extras with news from the front; and the burning importance of his mission, the bringing of news hot from the field of battle, spurred him to endeavors that won plaudits and success.

He became a sort of subeditor. When the forms of the paper were ready to close and Ament was needed to supply more matter, it was Sam who was delegated to find that rather uncertain and elusive person and labor with him until the required copy was produced. Thus it was he saw literature in the making.

It is not believed that Sam had any writing ambitions of his own. His chief desire was to be an all-round journeyman printer like Pet McMurry; to drift up and down the world in Pet's untrammelled fashion; to see all that Pet had seen and a number of things which Pet appeared to have overlooked. He varied on occasion from this ambition. When the first negro minstrel show visited Hannibal and had gone, he yearned for a brief period to be a magnificent "middle man" or even the "end-man" of that combination; when the circus came and went, he dreamed of the day when, a capering frescoed clown, he would set crowded tiers of spectators guffawing at his humor; when the traveling hypnotist arrived, he volunteered as a subject, and amazed the audience by the marvel of his performance.

In later life he claimed that he had not been hypnotized in any degree, but had been pretending throughout—a statement always denied by his mother and his brother Orion. This dispute was never settled, and never could be. Sam Clemens's tendency to somnambulism would seem to suggest that he really might have taken on a hypnotic condition, while his consummate skill as an actor, then and always, and his early fondness of exhibition and a joke, would make it not unlikely that he was merely "showing off" and having his fun. He could follow the dictates of a vivid imagination and could be as outrageous as he chose without incurring responsibility of any sort. But there was a penalty: he must allow pins and needles to be thrust into his flesh and suffer these tortures without showing discomfort to the spectators. It is difficult to believe that any boy, however great his exhibitory passion, could permit, in the full possession of his sensibilities, a needle to be thrust deeply into his flesh without manifestations of a most unmesmeric sort. The conclusion seems warranted that he began by pretending, but that at times he was at least under semi-mesmeric control. At all events, he enjoyed a week of dazzling triumph, though in the end he concluded to stick to printing as a trade.

We have said that he was a rapid learner and a neat workman. At Ament's he generally had a daily task, either of composition or press-work, after which he was free. When he

had got the hang of his work he was usually done by three in the afternoon; then away to the river or the cave, as in the old days, sometimes with his boy friends, sometimes with Laura Hawkins gathering wild columbine on that high cliff overlooking the river, Lover's Leap.

Page 46

He was becoming quite a beau, attending parties on occasion, where old-fashioned games—Forfeits, Ring-around-a-Rosy, Dusty Miller, and the like—were regarded as rare amusements. He was a favorite with girls of his own age. He was always good-natured, though he played jokes on them, too, and was often a severe trial. He was with Laura Hawkins more than the others, usually her escort. On Saturday afternoons in winter he carried her skates to Bear Creek and helped her to put them on. After which they skated “partners,” holding hands tightly, and were a likely pair of children, no doubt. In *The Gilded Age* Laura Hawkins at twelve is pictured “with her dainty hands propped into the ribbon-bordered pockets of her apron . . . a vision to warm the coldest heart and bless and cheer the saddest.” The author had the real Laura of his childhood in his mind when he wrote that, though the story itself bears no resemblance to her life.

They were never really sweethearts, those two. They were good friends and comrades. Sometimes he brought her magazines—exchanges from the printing—office—Godey’s and others. These were a treat, for such things were scarce enough. He cared little for reading, himself, beyond a few exciting tales, though the putting into type of a good deal of miscellaneous matter had beyond doubt developed in him a taste for general knowledge. It needed only to be awakened.

XVI

THE TURNING-POINT

There came into his life just at this period one of those seemingly trifling incidents which, viewed in retrospect, assume pivotal proportions. He was on his way from the office to his home one afternoon when he saw flying along the pavement a square of paper, a leaf from a book. At an earlier time he would not have bothered with it at all, but any printed page had acquired a professional interest for him now. He caught the flying scrap and examined it. It was a leaf from some history of Joan of Arc. The “maid” was described in the cage at Rouen, in the fortress, and the two ruffian English soldiers had stolen her clothes. There was a brief description and a good deal of dialogue—her reproaches and their ribald replies.

He had never heard of the subject before. He had never read any history. When he wanted to know any fact he asked Henry, who read everything obtainable. Now, however, there arose within him a deep compassion for the gentle Maid of Orleans, a burning resentment toward her captors, a powerful and indestructible interest in her sad history. It was an interest that would grow steadily for more than half a lifetime and culminate at last in that crowning work, the *Recollections*, the loveliest story ever told of the martyred girl.

Page 47

The incident meant even more than that: it meant the awakening of his interest in all history—the world’s story in its many phases—a passion which became the largest feature of his intellectual life and remained with him until his very last day on earth. From the moment when that fluttering leaf was blown into his hands his career as one of the world’s mentally elect was assured. It gave him his cue—the first word of a part in the human drama. It crystallized suddenly within him sympathy with the oppressed, rebellion against tyranny and treachery, scorn for the divine rights of kings. A few months before he died he wrote a paper on “The Turning-point of My Life.” For some reason he did not mention this incident. Yet if there was a turning-point in his life, he reached it that bleak afternoon on the streets of Hannibal when a stray leaf from another life was blown into his hands.

He read hungrily now everything he could find relating to the French wars, and to Joan in particular. He acquired an appetite for history in general, the record of any nation or period; he seemed likely to become a student. Presently he began to feel the need of languages, French and German. There was no opportunity to acquire French, that he could discover, but there was a German shoemaker in Hannibal who agreed to teach his native tongue. Sam Clemens got a friend—very likely it was John Briggs—to form a class with him, and together they arranged for lessons. The shoemaker had little or no English. They had no German. It would seem, however, that their teacher had some sort of a “word-book,” and when they assembled in his little cubby-hole of a retreat he began reading aloud from it this puzzling sentence:

“De hain eet flee whoop in de hayer.”

“Dere!” he said, triumphantly; “you know dose vord?”

The students looked at each other helplessly.

The teacher repeated the sentence, and again they were helpless when he asked if they recognized it.

Then in despair he showed them the book. It was an English primer, and the sentence was:

“The hen, it flies up in the air.”

They explained to him gently that it was German they wished to learn, not English—not under the circumstances. Later, Sam made an attempt at Latin, and got a book for that purpose, but gave it up, saying:

“No, that language is not for me. I’ll do well enough to learn English.” A boy who took it up with him became a Latin scholar.



His prejudice against oppression he put into practice. Boys who were being imposed upon found in him a ready protector. Sometimes, watching a game of marbles or tops, he would remark in his slow, impressive way:

"You mustn't cheat that boy." And the cheating stopped. When it didn't, there was a combat, with consequences.

XVII

The Hannibal "Journal"

Page 48

Orion returned from St. Louis. He felt that he was needed in Hannibal and, while wages there were lower, his expenses at home were slight; there was more real return for the family fund. His sister Pamela was teaching a class in Hannibal at this time. Orion was surprised when his mother and sister greeted him with kisses and tears. Any outward display of affection was new to him.

The family had moved back across the street by this time. With Sam supporting himself, the earnings of Orion and Pamela provided at least a semblance of comfort. But Orion was not satisfied. Then, as always, he had a variety of vague ambitions. Oratory appealed to him, and he delivered a temperance lecture with an accompaniment of music, supplied chiefly by Pamela. He aspired to the study of law, a recurring inclination throughout his career. He also thought of the ministry, an ambition which Sam shared with him for a time. Every mischievous boy has it, sooner or later, though not all for the same reasons.

"It was the most earnest ambition I ever had," Mark Twain once remarked, thoughtfully. "Not that I ever really wanted to be a preacher, but because it never occurred to me that a preacher could be damned. It looked like a safe job."

A periodical ambition of Orion's was to own and conduct a paper in Hannibal. He felt that in such a position he might become a power in Western journalism. Once his father had considered buying the Hannibal Journal to give Orion a chance, and possibly to further his own political ambitions. Now Orion considered it for himself. The paper was for sale under a mortgage, and he was enabled to borrow the \$500 which would secure ownership. Sam's two years at Ament's were now complete, and Orion induced him to take employment on the Journal. Henry at eleven was taken out of school to learn typesetting.

Orion was a gentle, accommodating soul, but he lacked force and independence.

"I followed all the advice I received," he says in his record. "If two or more persons conflicted with each other, I adopted the views of the last."

He started full of enthusiasm. He worked like a slave to save help: wrote his own editorials, and made his literary selections at night. The others worked too. Orion gave them hard tasks and long hours. He had the feeling that the paper meant fortune or failure to them all; that all must labor without stint. In his usual self-accusing way he wrote afterward:

I was tyrannical and unjust to Sam. He was as swift and as clean as a good journeyman. I gave him tasks, and if he got through well I begrudged him the time and made him work more. He set a clean proof, and Henry a very dirty one. The correcting was left to be done in the form the day before publication. Once we were kept late, and

Sam complained with tears of bitterness that he was held till midnight on Henry's dirty proofs.

Orion did not realize any injustice at the time. The game was too desperate to be played tenderly. His first editorials were so brilliant that it was not believed he could have written them. The paper throughout was excellent, and seemed on the high road to success. But the pace was too hard to maintain. Overwork brought weariness, and Orion's enthusiasm, never a very stable quantity, grew feeble. He became still more exacting.

Page 49

It is not to be supposed that Sam Clemens had given up all amusements to become merely a toiling drudge or had conquered in any large degree his natural taste for amusement. He had become more studious; but after the long, hard days in the office it was not to be expected that a boy of fifteen would employ the evening—at least not every evening—in reading beneficial books. The river was always near at hand—for swimming in the summer and skating in the winter—and once even at this late period it came near claiming a heavy tribute. That was one winter's night when with another boy he had skated until nearly midnight. They were about in the middle of the river when they heard a terrific and grinding noise near the shore. They knew what it was. The ice was breaking up, and they set out for home forthwith. It was moonlight, and they could tell the ice from the water, which was a good thing, for there were wide cracks toward the shore, and they had to wait for these to close. They were an hour making the trip, and just before they reached the bank they came to a broad space of water. The ice was lifting and falling and crunching all around them. They waited as long as they dared and decided to leap from cake to cake. Sam made the crossing without accident, but his companion slipped in when a few feet from shore. He was a good swimmer and landed safely, but the bath probably cost him his hearing. He was taken very ill. One disease followed another, ending with scarlet fever and deafness.

There was also entertainment in the office itself. A country boy named Jim Wolfe had come to learn the trade—a green, good-natured, bashful boy. In every trade tricks are played on the new apprentice, and Sam felt that it was his turn to play them. With John Briggs to help him, tortures for Jim Wolfe were invented and applied.

They taught him to paddle a canoe, and upset him. They took him sniping at night and left him “holding the bag” in the old traditional fashion while they slipped off home and went to bed.

But Jim Wolfe's masterpiece of entertainment was one which he undertook on his own account. Pamela was having a candy-pull down-stairs one night—a grown-up candy-pull to which the boys were not expected. Jim would not have gone, anyway, for he was bashful beyond belief, and always dumb, and even pale with fear, in the presence of pretty Pamela Clemens. Up in their room the boys could hear the merriment from below and could look out in the moonlight on the snowy sloping roof that began just beneath their window. Down at the eaves was the small arbor, green in summer, but covered now with dead vines and snow. They could hear the candymakers come out, now and then, doubtless setting out pans of candy to cool. By and by the whole party seemed to come out into the little arbor, to try the candy, perhaps the joking and laughter came plainly to the boys up-stairs. About this time there appeared on the roof from somewhere two disreputable cats, who set up a most disturbing duel of charge and recrimination. Jim detested the noise, and perhaps was gallant enough to think it would disturb the party. He had nothing to throw at them, but he said:

Page 50

"For two cents I'd get out there and knock their heads off."

"You wouldn't dare to do it," Sam said, purringly.

This was wormwood to Jim. He was really a brave spirit.

"I would too," he said, "and I will if you say that again."

"Why, Jim, of course you wouldn't dare to go out there. You might catch cold."

"You wait and see," said Jim Wolfe.

He grabbed a pair of yarn stockings for his feet, raised the window, and crept out on the snowy roof. There was a crust of ice on the snow, but Jim jabbed his heels through it and stood up in the moonlight, his legs bare, his single garment flapping gently in the light winter breeze. Then he started slowly toward the cats, sinking his heels in the snow each time for a footing, a piece of lath in his hand. The cats were on the corner of the roof above the arbor, and Jim cautiously worked his way in that direction. The roof was not very steep. He was doing well enough until he came to a place where the snow had melted until it was nearly solid ice. He was so intent on the cats that he did not notice this, and when he struck his heel down to break the crust nothing yielded. A second later Jim's feet had shot out from under him, and he vaulted like an avalanche down the icy roof out on the little vine-clad arbor, and went crashing through among those candypullers, gathered there with their pans of cooling taffy. There were wild shrieks and a general flight. Neither Jim nor Sam ever knew how he got back to their room, but Jim was overcome with the enormity of his offense, while Sam was in an agony of laughter.

"You did it splendidly, Jim," he drawled, when he could speak. "Nobody could have done it better; and did you see how those cats got out of there? I never had any idea when you started that you meant to do it that way. And it was such a surprise to the folks down-stairs. How did you ever think of it?"

It was a fearful ordeal for a boy like Jim Wolfe, but he stuck to his place in spite of what he must have suffered. The boys made him one of them soon after that. His initiation was thought to be complete.

An account of Jim Wolfe and the cats was the first original story Mark Twain ever told. He told it next day, which was Sunday, to Jimmy McDaniel, the baker's son, as they sat looking out over the river, eating gingerbread. His hearer laughed immoderately, and the story-teller was proud and happy in his success.

XVIII

THE BEGINNING OF A LITERARY LIFE

Orion's paper continued to go downhill. Following some random counsel, he changed the name of it and advanced the price—two blunders. Then he was compelled to reduce the subscription, also the advertising rates. He was obliged to adopt a descending scale of charges and expenditures to keep pace with his declining circulation—a fatal sign. A publisher must lead his subscription list, not follow it.

Page 51

"I was walking backward," he said, "not seeing where I stepped."

In desperation he broke away and made a trip to Tennessee to see if something could not be realized on the land, leaving his brother Sam in charge of the office. It was a journey without financial results; yet it bore fruit, for it marked the beginning of Mark Twain's literary career.

Sam, in his brother's absence, concluded to edit the paper in a way that would liven up the circulation. He had never done any writing—not for print—but he had the courage of his inclinations. His local items were of a kind known as "spicy"; his personals brought prompt demand for satisfaction. The editor of a rival paper had been in love, and was said to have gone to the river one night to drown himself. Sam gave a picturesque account of this, with all the names connected with the affair. Then he took a couple of big wooden block letters, turned them upside down, and engraved illustrations for it, showing the victim wading out into the river with a stick to test the depth of the water. When this issue of the paper came out the demand for it was very large. The press had to be kept running steadily to supply copies. The satirized editor at first swore that he would thrash the whole journal office, then he left town and did not come back any more. The embryo Mark Twain also wrote a poem. It was addressed "To Mary in Hannibal," but the title was too long to be set in one column, so he left out all the letters in Hannibal, except the first and the last, and supplied their place with a dash, with a startling result. Such were the early flickerings of a smoldering genius. Orion returned, remonstrated, and apologized. He reduced Sam to the ranks. In later years he saw his mistake.

"I could have distanced all competitors even then," he said, "if I had recognized Sam's ability and let him go ahead, merely keeping him from offending worthy persons."

Sam was subdued, but not done for. He never would be, now. He had got his first taste of print, and he liked it. He promptly wrote two anecdotes which he thought humorous and sent them to the Philadelphia Saturday Evening Post. They were accepted—without payment, of course, in those days; and when the papers containing them appeared he felt suddenly lifted to a lofty plane of literature. This was in 1851.

"Seeing them in print was a joy which rather exceeded anything in that line I have ever experienced since," he said, nearly sixty years later.

Yet he did not feel inspired to write anything further for the Post. Twice during the next two years he contributed to the Journal; once something about Jim Wolfe, though it was not the story of the cats, and another burlesque on a rival editor whom he pictured as hunting snipe with a cannon, the explosion of which was said to have blown the snipe out of the country. No contributions of this time have been preserved. High prices have been offered for copies of the Hannibal

Page 52

journal containing them, but without success. The Post sketches were unsigned and have not been identified. It is likely they were trivial enough. His earliest work showed no special individuality or merit, being mainly crude and imitative, as the work of a boy—even a precocious boy—is likely to be. He was not especially precocious—not in literature. His literary career would halt and hesitate and trifle along for many years yet, gathering impetus and equipment for the fuller, statelier swing which would bring a greater joy to the world at large, even if not to himself, than that first, far-off triumph.—[In Mark Twain's sketch "My First Literary Venture" he has set down with characteristic embroideries some account of this early authorship.]

Those were hard financial days. Orion could pay nothing on his mortgage—barely the interest. He had promised Sam three dollars and a half a week, but he could do no more than supply him with board and clothes—"poor, shabby clothes," he says in his record.

"My mother and sister did the housekeeping. My mother was cook. She used the provisions I supplied her. We therefore had a regular diet of bacon, butter, bread, and coffee."

Mrs. Clemens again took a few boarders; Pamela, who had given up teaching for a time, organized another music class. Orion became despondent. One night a cow got into the office, upset a typecase, and ate up two composition rollers. Orion felt that fate was dealing with a heavy hand. Another disaster quickly followed. Fire broke out in the office, and the loss was considerable. An insurance company paid one hundred and fifty dollars. With it Orion replaced such articles as were absolutely needed for work, and removed his plant into the front room of the Clemens dwelling. He raised the one-story part of the building to give them an added room up-stairs; and there for another two years, by hard work and pinching economies, the dying paper managed to drag along. It was the fire that furnished Sam Clemens with his Jim Wolfe sketch. In it he stated that Jim in his excitement had carried the office broom half a mile and had then come back after the wash-pan.

In the meantime Pamela Clemens married. Her husband was a well-to-do merchant, William A. Moffett, formerly of Hannibal, but then of St. Louis, where he had provided her with the comforts of a substantial home.

Orion tried the experiment of a serial story. He wrote to a number of well-known authors in the East, but was unable to find one who would supply a serial for the price he was willing to pay. Finally he obtained a translation of a French novel for the sum offered, which was five dollars. It did not save the sinking ship, however. He made the experiment of a tri-weekly, without success. He noticed that even his mother no longer read his editorials, but turned to the general news. This was a final blow.

“I sat down in the dark,” he says, “the moon glinting in at the open door. I sat with one leg over the chair and let my mind float.”

Page 53

He had received an offer of five hundred dollars for his office—the amount of the mortgage—and in his moonlight reverie he decided to dispose of it on those terms. This was in 1853.

His brother Samuel was no longer with him. Several months before, in June, Sam decided he would go out into the world. He was in his eighteenth year now, a good workman, faithful and industrious, but he had grown restless in unrewarded service. Beyond his mastery of the trade he had little to show for six years of hard labor. Once when he had asked Orion for a few dollars to buy a second-hand gun, Orion, exasperated by desperate circumstances, fell into a passion and rated him for thinking of such extravagance. Soon afterward Sam confided to his mother that he was going away; that he believed Orion hated him; that there was no longer a place for him at home. He said he would go to St. Louis, where Pamela was. There would be work for him in St. Louis, and he could send money home. His intention was to go farther than St. Louis, but he dared not tell her. His mother put together sadly enough the few belongings of what she regarded as her one wayward boy; then she held up a little Testament:

“I want you to take hold of the other end of this, Sam,” she said, “and make me a promise.”

If one might have a true picture of that scene: the thin, wiry woman of forty-nine, her figure as straight as her deportment, gray-eyed, tender, and resolute, facing the fair-cheeked, auburn-haired youth of seventeen, his eyes as piercing and unwavering as her own. Mother and son, they were of the same metal and the same mold.

“I want you to repeat after me, Sam, these words,” Jane Clemens said. “I do solemnly swear that I will not throw a card or drink a drop of liquor while I am gone.”

He repeated the oath after her, and she kissed him.

“Remember that, Sam, and write to us,” she said.

“And so,” Orion records, “he went wandering in search of that comfort and that advancement and those rewards of industry which he had failed to find where I was—gloomy, taciturn, and selfish. I not only missed his labor; we all missed his bounding activity and merriment.”

XIX

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF FRANKLIN

He went to St. Louis by the night boat, visited his sister Pamela, and found a job in the composing-room of the Evening News. He remained on the paper only long enough to

earn money with which to see the world. The “world” was New York City, where the Crystal Palace Fair was then going on. The railway had been completed by this time, but he had not traveled on it. It had not many comforts; several days and nights were required for the New York trip; yet it was a wonderful and beautiful experience. He felt that even Pet McMurry could hardly have done anything to surpass it. He arrived in New York with two or three dollars in his pocket and a ten-dollar bill concealed in the lining of his coat.

Page 54

New York was a great and amazing city. It almost frightened him. It covered the entire lower end of Manhattan Island; visionary citizens boasted that one day it would cover it all. The World's Fair building, the Crystal Palace, stood a good way out. It was where Bryant Park is now, on Forty-second Street and Sixth Avenue. Young Clemens classed it as one of the wonders of the world and wrote lavishly of its marvels. A portion of a letter to his sister Pamela has been preserved and is given here not only for what it contains, but as the earliest existing specimen of his composition. The fragment concludes what was doubtless an exhaustive description.

From the gallery (second floor) you have a glorious sight—the flags of the different countries represented, the lofty dome, glittering jewelry, gaudy tapestry, *etc.*, with the busy crowd passing to and fro 'tis a perfect fairy palace—beautiful beyond description. The machinery department is on the main floor, but I cannot enumerate any of it on account of the lateness of the hour (past 1 o'clock). It would take more than a week to examine everything on exhibition; and I was only in a little over two hours to-night. I only glanced at about one-third of the articles; and, having a poor memory, I have enumerated scarcely any of even the principal objects. The visitors to the Palace average 6,000 daily—double the population of Hannibal. The price of admission being 50 cents, they take in about \$3,000. The Latting Observatory (height about 280 feet) is near the Palace—from it you can obtain a grand view of the city and the country around. The Croton Aqueduct, to supply the city with water, is the greatest wonder yet. Immense sewers are laid across the bed of the Hudson River, and pass through the country to Westchester County, where a whole river is turned from its course and brought to New York. From the reservoir in the city to the Westchester County reservoir the distance is thirty-eight miles and, if necessary, they could easily supply every family in New York with one hundred barrels of water per day! I am very sorry to learn that Henry has been sick. He ought to go to the country and take exercise, for he is not half so healthy as Ma thinks he is. If he had my walking to do, he would be another boy entirely. Four times every day I walk a little over a mile; and working hard all day and walking four miles is exercise. I am used to it now, though, and it is no trouble. Where is it Orion's going to? Tell Ma my promises are faithfully kept; and if I have my health I will take her to Ky. in the spring—I shall save money for this. Tell Jim (Wolfe) and all the rest of them to write, and give me all the news(It has just struck 2 A.M., and I always get up at 6, and am at work at 7.) You ask where I spend my evenings. Where would you suppose, with a free printer's library containing more than 4,000 volumes within a quarter of a mile of me, and nobody at home to talk to? Write soon.

Truly your brother, *Sam*

Page 55

P.S.-I have written this by a light so dim that you nor Ma could not read by it. Write, and let me know how Henry is.

It is a good letter; it is direct and clear in its descriptive quality, and it gives us a scale of things. Double the population of Hannibal visited the Crystal Palace in one day! and the water to supply the city came a distance of thirty-eight miles! Doubtless these were amazing statistics.

Then there was the interest in family affairs—always strong—his concern for Henry, whom he loved tenderly; his memory of the promise to his mother; his understanding of her craving to visit her old home. He did not write to her direct, for the reason that Orion's plans were then uncertain, and it was not unlikely that he had already found a new location. From this letter, too, we learn that the boy who detested school was reveling in a library of four thousand books—more than he had ever seen together before. We have somehow the feeling that he had all at once stepped from boyhood to manhood, and that the separation was marked by a very definite line.

The work he had secured was in Cliff Street in the printing establishment of John A. Gray & Green, who agreed to pay him four dollars a week, and did pay that amount in wildcat money, which saved them about twenty-five per cent. of the sum. He lodged at a mechanics' boarding-house in Duane Street, and when he had paid his board and washing he sometimes had as much as fifty cents to lay away.

He did not like the board. He had been accustomed to the Southern mode of cooking, and wrote home complaining that New-Yorkers did not have "hot-bread" or biscuits, but ate "light-bread," which they allowed to get stale, seeming to prefer it in that way. On the whole, there was not much inducement to remain in New York after he had satisfied himself with its wonders. He lingered, however, through the hot months of 1853, and found it not easy to go. In October he wrote to Pamela, suggesting plans for Orion; also for Henry and Jim Wolfe, whom he seems never to have overlooked. Among other things he says:

I have not written to any of the family for some time, from the fact, firstly, that I didn't know where they were, and, secondly, because I have been fooling myself with the idea that I was going to leave New York every day for the last two weeks. I have taken a liking to the abominable place, and every time I get ready to leave I put it off a day or so, from some unaccountable cause. I think I shall get off Tuesday, though. Edwin Forrest has been playing for the last sixteen days at the Broadway Theater, but I never went to see him till last night. The play was the "Gladiator." I did not like parts of it much, but other portions were really splendid. In the latter part of the last act, where the "Gladiator" (Forrest) dies at his brother's feet (in all the fierce pleasure of gratified revenge), the man's whole

Page 56

soul seems absorbed in the part he is playing; and it is really startling to see him. I am sorry I did not see him play “Damon and Pythias” —the former character being the greatest. He appears in Philadelphia on Monday night.

I have not received a letter from home lately, but got a “Journal” the other day, in which I see the office has been sold

If my letters do not come often, you need not bother yourself about me; for if you have a brother nearly eighteen years of age who is not able to take care of himself a few miles from home, such a brother is not worth one’s thoughts; and if I don’t manage to take care of No. 1, be assured you will never know it. I am not afraid, however; I shall ask favors of no one and endeavor to be (and shall be) as “independent as a wood-sawyer’s clerk.” . . .

Passage to Albany (160 miles) on the finest steamers that ply the Hudson is now 25 cents—cheap enough, but is generally cheaper than that in the summer.

“I have been fooling myself with the idea that I was going to leave New York” is distinctly a Mark Twain phrase. He might have said that fifty years later.

He did go to Philadelphia presently and found work “subbing” on a daily paper, ‘The Inquirer.’ He was a fairly swift compositor. He could set ten thousand ems a day, and he received pay according to the amount of work done. Days or evenings when there was no vacant place for him to fill he visited historic sites, the art-galleries, and the libraries. He was still acquiring education, you see. Sometimes at night when he returned to his boardinghouse his room-mate, an Englishman named Sumner, grilled a herring, and this was regarded as a feast. He tried his hand at writing in Philadelphia, though this time without success. For some reason he did not again attempt to get into the Post, but offered his contributions to the Philadelphia ‘Ledger’—mainly poetry of an obituary kind. Perhaps it was burlesque; he never confessed that, but it seems unlikely that any other obituary poetry would have failed of print.

“My efforts were not received with approval,” was all he ever said of it afterward.

There were two or three characters in the ‘Inquirer’ office whom he did not forget. One of these was an old compositor who had “held a case” in that office for many years. His name was Frog, and sometimes when he went away the “office devils” would hang a line over his case, with a hook on it baited with a piece of red flannel. They never got tired of this joke, and Frog was always able to get as mad over it as he had been in the beginning. Another old fellow there furnished amusement. He owned a house in the distant part of the city and had an abnormal fear of fire. Now and then, when everything

was quiet except the clicking of the types, some one would step to the window and say with a concerned air:

“Doesn’t that smoke—[or that light, if it was evening]—seem to be in the northwestern part of the city?” or “There go the fire-bells again!” and away the old man would tramp up to the roof to investigate. It was not the most considerate sport, and it is to be feared that Sam Clemens had his share in it.

Page 57

He found that he liked Philadelphia. He could save a little money there, for one thing, and now and then sent something to his mother—small amounts, but welcome and gratifying, no doubt. In a letter to Orion —whom he seems to have forgiven with absence—written October 26th, he incloses a gold dollar to buy her a handkerchief, and “to serve as a specimen of the kind of stuff we are paid with in Philadelphia.” Further along he adds:

Unlike New York, I like this Philadelphia amazingly, and the people in it. There is only one thing that gets my “dander” up—and that is the hands are always encouraging me: telling me “it’s no use to get discouraged—no use to be downhearted, for there is more work here than you can do!” “Downhearted,” the devil! I have not had a particle of such a feeling since I left Hannibal, more than four months ago. I fancy they’ll have to wait some time till they see me downhearted or afraid of starving while I have strength to work and am in a city of 400,000 inhabitants. When I was in Hannibal, before I had scarcely stepped out of the town limits, nothing could have convinced me that I would starve as soon as I got a little way from home.

He mentions the grave of Franklin in Christ Churchyard with its inscription “Benjamin and Deborah Franklin,” and one is sharply reminded of the similarity between the early careers of Benjamin Franklin and Samuel Clemens. Each learned the printer’s trade; each worked in his brother’s printing-office and wrote for the paper; each left quietly and went to New York, and from New York to Philadelphia, as a journeyman printer; each in due season became a world figure, many-sided, human, and of incredible popularity.

The foregoing letter ends with a long description of a trip made on the Fairmount stage. It is a good, vivid description—impressions of a fresh, sensitive mind, set down with little effort at fine writing; a letter to convey literal rather than literary enjoyment. The Wire Bridge, Fairmount Park and Reservoir, new buildings—all these passed in review. A fine residence about completed impressed him:

It was built entirely of great blocks of red granite. The pillars in front were all finished but one. These pillars were beautiful, ornamental fluted columns, considerably larger than a hogshead at the base, and about as high as Clapinger’s second-story front windows To see some of them finished and standing, and then the huge blocks lying about, looks so massy, and carries one, in imagination, to the ruined piles of ancient Babylon. I despise the infernal bogus brick columns plastered over with mortar. Marble is the cheapest building-stone about Philadelphia.

There is a flavor of the ‘Innocents’ about it; then a little further along:

Page 58

I saw small steamboats, with their signs up—"For Wissahickon and Manayunk 25 cents." Geo. Lippard, in his *Legends of Washington* and his *Generals*, has rendered the Wissahickon sacred in my eyes, and I shall make that trip, as well as one to Germantown, soon . . . There is one fine custom observed in Phila. A gentleman is always expected to hand up a lady's money for her. Yesterday I sat in the front end of the bus, directly under the driver's box—a lady sat opposite me. She handed me her money, which was right. But, Lord! a St. Louis lady would think herself ruined if she should be so familiar with a stranger. In St. Louis a man will sit in the front end of the stage, and see a lady stagger from the far end to pay her fare.

There are two more letters from Philadelphia: one of November, 28th, to Orion, who by this time had bought a paper in Muscatine, Iowa, and located the family there; and one to Pamela dated December 5th. Evidently Orion had realized that his brother might be of value as a contributor, for the latter says:

I will try to write for the paper occasionally, but I fear my letters will be very uninteresting, for this incessant night work dulls one's ideas amazingly.... I believe I am the only person in the *Inquirer* office that does not drink. One young fellow makes \$18 for a few weeks, and gets on a grand "bender" and spends every cent of it.

How do you like "free soil"?—I would like amazingly to see a good old-fashioned negro. My love to all.

Truly your brother, *Sam*

In the letter to Pamela he is clearly homesick.

"I only want to return to avoid night work, which is injuring my eyes," is the excuse, but in the next sentence he complains of the scarcity of letters from home and those "not written as they should be." "One only has to leave home to learn how to write interesting letters to an absent friend," he says, and in conclusion, "I don't like our present prospect for cold weather at all."

He had been gone half a year, and the first attack of home-longing, for a boy of his age, was due. The novelty of things had worn off; it was coming on winter; changes had taken place among his home people and friends; the life he had known best and longest was going on and he had no part in it. Leaning over his case, he sometimes hummed:

"An exile from home, splendor dazzles in vain."

He weathered the attack and stuck it out for more than half a year longer. In January, when the days were dark and he grew depressed, he made a trip to Washington to see the sights of the capital. His stay was comparatively brief, and he did not work there. He returned to Philadelphia, working for a time on the *Ledger* and *North American*.

Finally he went back to New York. There are no letters of this period. His second experience in New York appears not to have been recorded, and in later years was only vaguely remembered. It was late in the summer of 1854 when he finally set out on his return to the West. His 'Wanderjahr' had lasted nearly fifteen months.

Page 59

He went directly to St. Louis, sitting up three days and nights in a smoking-car to make the journey. He was worn out when he arrived, but stopped there only a few hours to see Pamela. It was his mother he was anxious for. He took the Keokuk Packet that night, and, flinging himself on his berth, slept the clock three times around, scarcely rousing or turning over, only waking at last at Muscatine. For a long time that missing day confused his calculations.

When he reached Orion's house the family sat at breakfast. He came in carrying a gun. They had not been expecting him, and there was a general outcry, and a rush in his direction. He warded them off, holding the butt of the gun in front of him.

"You wouldn't let me buy a gun," he said, "so I bought one myself, and I am going to use it, now, in self-defense."

"You, Sam! You, Sam!" cried Jane Clemens. "Behave yourself," for she was wary of a gun.

Then he had had his joke and gave himself into his mother's arms.

XX

KEOKUK DAYS

Orion wished his brother to remain with him in the Muscatine office, but the young man declared he must go to St. Louis and earn some money before he would be able to afford that luxury: He returned to his place on the St. Louis Evening News, where he remained until late winter or early spring of the following year.

He lived at this time with a Pavey family, probably one of the Hannibal Paveys, rooming with a youth named Frank E. Burrough, a journeyman chair-maker with a taste for Dickens, Thackeray, Scott, and Disraeli. Burrough had really a fine literary appreciation for his years, and the boys were comrades and close friends. Twenty-two years later Mark Twain exchanged with Burrough some impressions of himself at that earlier time. Clemens wrote:

My dear Burrough,—As you describe me I can picture myself as I was 22 years ago. The portrait is correct. You think I have grown some; upon my word there was room for it. You have described a callow fool, a self-sufficient ass, a mere human tumble-bug, stern in air, heaving at his bit of dung, imagining that he is remodeling the world and is entirely capable of doing it right.... That is what I was at 19-20.

Orion Clemens in the mean time had married and removed to Keokuk. He had married during a visit to that city, in the casual, impulsive way so characteristic of him, and the

fact that he had acquired a wife in the operation seemed at first to have escaped his inner consciousness. He tells it himself; he says:

Page 60

At sunrise on the next morning after the wedding we left in a stage for Muscatine. We halted for dinner at Burlington. After despatching that meal we stood on the pavement when the stage drove up, ready for departure. I climbed in, gathered the buffalo robe around me, and leaned back unconscious that I had anything further to do. A gentleman standing on the pavement said to my wife, "Miss, do you go by this stage?" I said, "Oh, I forgot!" and sprang out and helped her in. A wife was a new kind of possession to which I had not yet become accustomed; I had forgotten her.

Orion's wife had been Mary Stotts; her mother a friend of Jane Clemens's girlhood. She proved a faithful helpmate to Orion; but in those early days of marriage she may have found life with him rather trying, and it was her homesickness that brought them to Keokuk. Brother Sam came up from St. Louis, by and by, to visit them, and Orion offered him five dollars a week and board to remain. He accepted. The office at this time, or soon after, was located on the third floor of 52 Main Street, in the building at present occupied by the Paterson Shoe Company. Henry Clemens, now seventeen, was also in Orion's employ, and a lad by the name of Dick Hingham. Henry and Sam slept in the office, and Dick came in for social evenings. Also a young man named Edward Brownell, who clerked in the book-store on the ground floor.

These were likely to be lively evenings. A music dealer and teacher, Professor Isbell, occupied the floor just below, and did not care for their diversions. He objected, but hardly in the right way. Had he gone to Samuel Clemens gently, he undoubtedly would have found him willing to make any concessions. Instead, he assailed him roughly, and the next evening the boys set up a lot of empty wine-bottles, which they had found in a barrel in a closet, and, with stones for balls, played tenpins on the office floor. This was Dick and Sam; Henry declined to join the game. Isbell rushed up-stairs and battered on the door, but they paid no attention. Next morning he waited for the young men and denounced them wildly. They merely ignored him, and that night organized a military company, made up of themselves and a new German apprentice-boy, and drilled up and down over the singing-class. Dick Hingham led these military manoeuvres. He was a girlish sort of a fellow, but he had a natural taste for soldiering. The others used to laugh at him. They called him a disguised girl, and declared he would run if a gun were really pointed in his direction. They were mistaken; seven years later Dick died at Fort Donelson with a bullet in his forehead: this, by the way.

Isbell now adopted new tactics. He came up very pleasantly and said:

"I like your military practice better than your tenpin exercise, but on the whole it seems to disturb the young ladies. You see how it is yourself. You couldn't possibly teach music with a company of raw recruits drilling overhead—now, could you? Won't you please stop it? It bothers my pupils."

Page 61

Sam Clemens regarded him with mild surprise.

“Does it?” he said, very deliberately. “Why didn’t you mention it before? To be sure we don’t want to disturb the young ladies.”

They gave up the horse-play, and not only stopped the disturbance, but joined one of the singing—classes. Samuel Clemens had a pretty good voice in those days and could drum fairly well on a piano and guitar. He did not become a brilliant musician, but he was easily the most popular member of the singing-class.

They liked his frank nature, his jokes, and his humor; his slow, quaint fashion of speech. The young ladies called him openly and fondly a “fool”—a term of endearment, as they applied it meaning only that he kept them in a more or less constant state of wonder and merriment; and indeed it would have been hard for them to say whether he was really light-minded and frivolous or the wisest of them all. He was twenty now and at the age for love-making; yet he remained, as in Hannibal, a beau rather than a suitor, good friend and comrade to all, wooer of none. Ella Creel, a cousin on the Lampton side, a great belle; also Ella Patterson (related through Orion’s wife and generally known as “Ick”), and Belle Stotts were perhaps his favorite companions, but there were many more. He was always ready to stop and be merry with them, full of his pranks and pleasantries; though they noticed that he quite often carried a book under his arm—a history or a volume of Dickens or the tales of Edgar Allan Poe.

He read at odd moments; at night voluminously—until very late, sometimes. Already in that early day it was his habit to smoke in bed, and he had made him an Oriental pipe of the hubble-bubble variety, because it would hold more and was more comfortable than the regular short pipe of daytime use.

But it had its disadvantages. Sometimes it would go out, and that would mean sitting up and reaching for a match and leaning over to light the bowl which stood on the floor. Young Brownell from below was passing upstairs to his room on the fourth floor one night when he heard Sam Clemens call. The two were great chums by this time, and Brownell poked his head in at the door.

“What will you have, Sam?” he asked.

“Come in, Ed; Henry’s asleep, and I am in trouble. I want somebody to light my pipe.”

“Why don’t you get up and light it yourself?” Brownell asked.

“I would, only I knew you’d be along in a few minutes and would do it for me.”

Brownell scratched the necessary match, stooped down, and applied it.

“What are you reading, Sam?” he asked.

“Oh, nothing much—a so-called funny book—one of these days I’ll write a funnier book than that, myself.”

Brownell laughed.

“No, you won’t, Sam,” he said. “You are too lazy ever to write a book.”

A good many years later when the name “Mark Twain” had begun to stand for American humor the owner of it gave his “Sandwich Island” lecture in Keokuk. Speaking of the unreliability of the islanders, he said: “The king is, I believe, one of the greatest liars on the face of the earth, except one; and I am very sorry to locate that one right here in the city of Keokuk, in the person of Ed Brownell.”

Page 62

The Keokuk episode in Mark Twain's life was neither very long nor very actively important. It extended over a period of less than two years—two vital years, no doubt, if all the bearings could be known—but they were not years of startling occurrence.

Yet he made at least one beginning there: at a printers' banquet he delivered his first after-dinner speech; a hilarious speech—its humor of a primitive kind. Whatever its shortcomings, it delighted his audience, and raised him many points in the public regard. He had entered a field of entertainment in which he would one day have no rival. They impressed him into a debating society after that, and there was generally a stir of attention when Sam Clemens was about to take the floor.

Orion Clemens records how his brother undertook to teach the German apprentice music.

"There was an old guitar in the office and Sam taught Fritz a song beginning:

"Grasshopper sitting on a sweet-potato vine,
Turkey came along and yanked him from behind."

The main point in the lesson was in giving to the word "yanked" the proper expression and emphasis, accompanied by a sweep of the fingers across the strings. With serious face and deep earnestness Fritz in his broken English would attempt these lines, while his teacher would bend over and hold his sides with laughter at each ridiculous effort. Without intending it, Fritz had his revenge. One day his tormentor's hand was caught in the press when the German boy was turning the wheel. Sam called to him to stop, but the boy's mind was slow to grasp the situation. The hand was badly wounded, though no bones were broken. In due time it recovered, its power and dexterity, but the trace of the scars remained.

Orion's printing-office was not a prosperous one; he had not the gift of prosperity in any form. When he found it difficult to pay his brother's wages, he took him into partnership, which meant that Sam got no wages at all, barely a living, for the office could not keep its head above water.

The junior partner was not disturbed, however. He cared little for money in those days, beyond his actual needs, and these were modest enough. His mother, now with Pamela, was amply provided for. Orion himself tells how his business dwindled away. He printed a Keokuk directory, but it did not pay largely. He was always too eager for the work; too low in his bid for it. Samuel Clemens in this directory is set down as "an antiquarian" a joke, of course, though the point of it is now lost.

Only two of his Keokuk letters have been preserved. The first indicates the general disorder of the office and a growing dissatisfaction. It is addressed to his mother and sister and bears date of June 10, 1856.

Page 63

I don't like to work at too many things at once. They take Henry and Dick away from me, too. Before we commenced the Directory, —[Orion printed two editions of the directory. This was probably the second one.]—I could tell before breakfast just how much work could be done during the day, and manage accordingly—but now, they throw all my plans into disorder by taking my hands away from their work.... I am not getting along well with the job-work. I can't work blindly—without system. I gave Dick a job yesterday, which I calculated he could set in two hours and I could work off on the press in three, and therefore just finish it by supper-time, but he was transferred to the Directory, and the job, promised this morning, remains untouched. Through all the great pressure of job- work lately, I never before failed in a promise of the kind . . .

The other letter is dated two months later, August 5th. It was written to Henry, who was visiting in St. Louis or Hannibal at the time, and introduces the first mention of the South American fever, which now possessed the writer. Lynch and Herndon had completed their survey of the upper Amazon, and Lieutenant Herndon's account of the exploration was being widely read. Poring over the book nights, young Clemens had been seized with a desire to go to the headwaters of the South American river, there to collect coca and make a fortune. All his life he was subject to such impulses as that, and ways and means were not always considered. It did not occur to him that it would be difficult to get to the Amazon and still more difficult to ascend the river. It was his nature to see results with a dazzling largeness that blinded him to the detail of their achievement. In the "Turning-point" article already mentioned he refers to this. He says:

That was more than fifty years ago. In all that time my temperament has not changed by even a shade. I have been punished many and many a time, and bitterly, for doing things and reflecting afterward, but these tortures have been of no value to me; I still do the thing commanded by Circumstance and Temperament, and reflect afterward. Always violently. When I am reflecting on these occasions, even deaf persons can hear me think.

In the letter to Henry we see that his resolve was already made, his plans matured; also that Orion had not as yet been taken into full confidence.

Ma knows my determination, but even she counsels me to keep it from Orion. She says I can treat him as I did her when I started to St. Louis and went to New York—I can start for New York and go to South America.

He adds that Orion had promised him fifty or one hundred dollars, but that he does not depend upon it, and will make other arrangements. He fears obstacles may be put in his way, and he will bring various influences to bear.

Page 64

I shall take care that Ma and Orion are plentifully supplied with South American books: They have Herndon's report now. Ward and the Dr. and myself will hold a grand consultation to-night at the office. We have agreed that no more shall be admitted into our company.

He had enlisted those two adventurers in his enterprise: a Doctor Martin and the young man, Ward. They were very much in earnest, but the start was not made as planned, most likely for want of means.

Young Clemens, however, did not give up the idea. He made up his mind to work in the direction of his desire, following his trade and laying by money for the venture. But Fate or Providence or Accident—whatever we may choose to call the unaccountable—stepped in just then, and laid before him the means of turning another sharp corner in his career. One of those things happened which we refuse to accept in fiction as possible; but fact has a smaller regard for the credibilities.

As in the case of the Joan of Arc episode (and this adds to its marvel), it was the wind that brought the talismanic gift. It was a day in early November—bleak, bitter, and gusty, with curling snow; most persons were indoors. Samuel Clemens, going down Main Street, saw a flying bit of paper pass him and lodge against the side of a building. Something about it attracted him and he captured it. It was a fifty-dollar bill. He had never seen one before, but he recognized it. He thought he must be having a pleasant dream.

The temptation came to pocket his good-fortune and say nothing. His need of money was urgent, but he had also an urgent and troublesome conscience; in the end he advertised his find.

"I didn't describe it very particularly, and I waited in daily fear that the owner would turn up and take away my fortune. By and by I couldn't stand it any longer. My conscience had gotten all that was coming to it. I felt that I must take that money out of danger."

In the "Turning-point" article he says: "I advertised the find and left for the Amazon the same day," a statement which we may accept with a literary discount.

As a matter of fact, he remained ample time and nobody ever came for the money. It may have been swept out of a bank or caught up by the wind from some counting-room table. It may have materialized out of the unseen—who knows? At all events it carried him the first stage of a journey, the end of which he little dreamed.

XXI

SCOTCHMAN NAMED MACFARLANE

Page 65

He concluded to go to Cincinnati, which would be on the way either to New York or New Orleans (he expected to sail from one of these points), but first paid a brief visit to his mother in St. Louis, for he had a far journey and long absence in view. Jane Clemens made him renew his promise as to cards and liquor, and gave him her blessing. He had expected to go from St. Louis to Cincinnati, but a new idea—a literary idea—came to him, and he returned to Keokuk. The Saturday Post, a Keokuk weekly, was a prosperous sheet giving itself certain literary airs. He was in favor with the management, of which George Rees was the head, and it had occurred to him that he could send letters of his travels to the Post—for, a consideration. He may have had a still larger ambition; at least, the possibility of a book seems to have been in his consciousness. Rees agreed to take letters from him at five dollars each—good payment for that time and place. The young traveler, jubilant in the prospect of receiving money for literature, now made another start, this time by way of Quincy, Chicago, and Indianapolis according to his first letter in the Post.—[Supplied by Thomas Rees, of the Springfield (Illinois) Register, son of George Rees named.]

This letter is dated Cincinnati, November 14, 1856, and it is not a promising literary production. It was written in the exaggerated dialect then regarded as humorous, and while here and there are flashes of the undoubted Mark Twain type, they are few and far between. The genius that a little more than ten years later would delight the world flickered feebly enough at twenty-one. The letter is a burlesque account of the trip to Cincinnati. A brief extract from it, as characteristic as any, will serve.

I went down one night to the railroad office there, purty close onto the Laclede House, and bought about a quire o' yaller paper, cut up into tickets—one for each railroad in the United States, I thought, but I found out afterwards that the Alexandria and Boston Air-Line was left out—and then got a baggage feller to take my trunk down to the boat, where he spilled it out on the levee, bustin' it open and shakin' out the contents, consisting of "guides" to Chicago, and "guides" to Cincinnati, and travelers' guides, and all kinds of sich books, not excepting a "guide to heaven," which last aint much use to a Teller in Chicago, I kin tell you. Finally, that fast packet quit ringing her bell, and started down the river—but she hadn't gone morn a mile, till she ran clean up on top of a sand-bar, whar she stuck till plum one o'clock, spite of the Captain's swearin' —and they had to set the whole crew to cussin' at last afore they got her off.

This is humor, we may concede, of that early American type which a little later would have its flower in Nasby and Artemus Ward. Only careful examination reveals in it a hint of the later Mark Twain. The letters were signed "Snodgrass," and there are but two of them. The second, dated exactly four months after the first, is in the same assassinating dialect, and recounts among other things the scarcity of coal in Cincinnati and an absurd adventure in which Snodgrass has a baby left on his hands.

Page 66

From the fewness of the letters we may assume that Snodgrass found them hard work, and it is said he raised on the price. At all events, the second concluded the series. They are mainly important in that they are the first of his contributions that have been preserved; also the first for which he received a cash return.

He secured work at his trade in Cincinnati at the printing-office of Wrightson & Co., and remained there until April, 1857. That winter in Cincinnati was eventless enough, but it was marked by one notable association—one that beyond doubt forwarded Samuel Clemens's general interest in books, influenced his taste, and inspired in him certain views and philosophies which he never forgot.

He lodged at a cheap boarding-house filled with the usual commonplace people, with one exception. This exception was a long, lank, unsmiling Scotchman named Macfarlane, who was twice as old as Clemens and wholly unlike him—without humor or any comprehension of it. Yet meeting on the common plane of intellect, the two became friends. Clemens spent his evenings in Macfarlane's room until the clock struck ten; then Macfarlane grilled a herring, just as the Englishman Sumner in Philadelphia had done two years before, and the evening ended.

Macfarlane had books, serious books: histories, philosophies, and scientific works; also a Bible and a dictionary. He had studied these and knew them by heart; he was a direct and diligent talker. He never talked of himself, and beyond the statement that he had acquired his knowledge from reading, and not at school, his personality was a mystery. He left the house at six in the morning and returned at the same hour in the evening. His hands were hardened from some sort of toil-mechanical labor, his companion thought, but he never knew. He would have liked to know, and he watched for some reference to slip out that would betray Macfarlane's trade; but this never happened.

What he did learn was that Macfarlane was a veritable storehouse of abstruse knowledge; a living dictionary, and a thinker and philosopher besides. He had at least one vanity: the claim that he knew every word in the English dictionary, and he made it good. The younger man tried repeatedly to discover a word that Macfarlane could not define.

Perhaps Macfarlane was vain of his other mental attainments, for he never tired of discoursing upon deep and grave matters, and his companion never tired of listening. This Scotch philosopher did not always reflect the conclusions of others; he had speculated deeply and strikingly on his own account. That was a good while before Darwin and Wallace gave out—their conclusions on the Descent of Man; yet Macfarlane was already advancing a similar philosophy. He went even further: Life, he said, had been developed in the course of ages from a few microscopic seed-germs—from one, perhaps, planted by the Creator in the dawn of time, and that from this beginning development on

Page 67

an ascending scale had finally produced man. Macfarlane said that the scheme had stopped there, and failed; that man had retrograded; that man's heart was the only bad one in the animal kingdom: that man was the only animal capable of malice, vindictiveness, drunkenness—almost the only animal that could endure personal uncleanness. He said that man's intellect was a depraving addition to him which, in the end, placed him in a rank far below the other beasts, though it enabled him to keep them in servitude and captivity, along with many members of his own race.

They were long, fermenting discourses that young Samuel Clemens listened to that winter in Macfarlane's room, and those who knew the real Mark Twain and his philosophies will recognize that those evenings left their impress upon him for life.

XXII

THE OLD CALL OF THE RIVER

When spring came, with budding life and quickening impulses; when the trees in the parks began to show a hint of green, the Amazonian idea developed afresh, and the would-be coca-hunter prepared for his expedition. He had saved a little money—enough to take him to New Orleans—and he decided to begin his long trip with a peaceful journey down the Mississippi, for once, at least, to give himself up to that indolent luxury of the majestic stream that had been so large a part of his early dreams.

The Ohio River steamers were not the most sumptuous craft afloat, but they were slow and hospitable. The winter had been bleak and hard. "Spring fever" and a large love of indolence had combined in that drowsy condition which makes one willing to take his time.

Mark Twain tells us in *Life on the Mississippi* that he "ran away," vowing never to return until he could come home a pilot, shedding glory. This is a literary statement. The pilot ambition had never entirely died; but it was coca and the Amazon that were uppermost in his head when he engaged passage on the Paul Jones for New Orleans, and so conferred immortality on that ancient little craft. He bade good-by to Macfarlane, put his traps aboard, the bell rang, the whistle blew, the gang-plank was hauled in, and he had set out on a voyage that was to continue not for a week or a fortnight, but for four years—four marvelous, sunlit years, the glory of which would color all that followed them.

In the Mississippi book the author conveys the impression of being then a boy of perhaps seventeen. Writing from that standpoint he records incidents that were more or less inventions or that happened to others. He was, in reality, considerably more than twenty-one years old, for it was in April, 1857, that he went aboard the Paul Jones; and

he was fairly familiar with steamboats and the general requirements of piloting. He had been brought up in a town that turned out pilots; he had heard the talk of their trade. One at least of the Bowen boys was already on the river while

Page 68

Sam Clemens was still a boy in Hannibal, and had often been home to air his grandeur and dilate on the marvel of his work. That learning the river was no light task Sam Clemens very well knew. Nevertheless, as the little boat made its drowsy way down the river into lands that grew ever pleasanter with advancing spring, the old “permanent ambition” of boyhood stirred again, and the call of the far-away Amazon, with its coca and its variegated zoology, grew faint.

Horace Bixby, pilot of the Paul Jones, then a man of thirty-two, still living (1910) and at the wheel,—[The writer of this memoir interviewed Mr. Bixby personally, and has followed his phrasing throughout.]—was looking out over the bow at the head of Island No. 35 when he heard a slow, pleasant voice say:

“Good morning.”

Bixby was a clean-cut, direct, courteous man.

“Good morning, sir,” he said, briskly, without looking around.

As a rule Mr. Bixby did not care for visitors in the pilot-house. This one presently came up and stood a little behind him.

“How would you like a young man to learn the river?” he said.

The pilot glanced over his shoulder and saw a rather slender, loose-limbed young fellow with a fair, girlish complexion and a great tangle of auburn hair.

“I wouldn’t like it. Cub pilots are more trouble than they’re worth. A great deal more trouble than profit.”

The applicant was not discouraged.

“I am a printer by trade,” he went on, in his easy, deliberate way. “It doesn’t agree with me. I thought I’d go to South America.”

Bixby kept his eye on the river; but a note of interest crept into his voice.

“What makes you pull your words that way?” (“pulling” being the river term for drawling), he asked.

The young man had taken a seat on the visitors’ bench.

“You’ll have to ask my mother,” he said, more slowly than ever. “She pulls hers, too.”

Pilot Bixby woke up and laughed; he had a keen sense of humor, and the manner of the reply amused him. His guest made another advance.

“Do you know the Bowen boys?” he asked—“pilots in the St. Louis and New Orleans trade?”

“I know them well—all three of them. William Bowen did his first steering for me; a mighty good boy, too. Had a Testament in his pocket when he came aboard; in a week’s time he had swapped it for a pack of cards. I know Sam, too, and Bart.”

“Old schoolmates of mine in Hannibal. Sam and Will especially were my chums.”

“Come over and stand by the side of me,” he said. “What is your name?”

The applicant told him, and the two stood looking at the sunlit water.

“Do you drink?”

“No.”

“Do you gamble?”

“No, Sir.”

“Do you swear?”

“Not for amusement; only under pressure.”

“Do you chew?”

“No, sir, never; but I must smoke.”

Page 69

"Did you ever do any steering?" was Bixby's next question.

"I have steered everything on the river but a steamboat, I guess."

"Very well; take the wheel and see what you can do with a steamboat. Keep her as she is—toward that lower cottonwood, snag."

Bixby had a sore foot and was glad of a little relief. He sat down on the bench and kept a careful eye on the course. By and by he said:

"There is just one way that I would take a young man to learn the river: that is, for money."

"What do you charge?"

"Five hundred dollars, and I to be at no expense whatever."

In those days pilots were allowed to carry a learner, or "cub," board free. Mr. Bixby meant that he was to be at no expense in port, or for incidentals. His terms looked rather discouraging.

"I haven't got five hundred dollars in money," Sam said; "I've got a lot of Tennessee land worth twenty-five cents an acre; I'll give you two thousand acres of that."

Bixby dissented.

"No; I don't want any unimproved real estate. I have too much already."

Sam reflected upon the amount he could probably borrow from Pamela's husband without straining his credit.

"Well, then, I'll give you one hundred dollars cash and the rest when I earn it."

Something about this young man had won Horace Bixby's heart. His slow, pleasant speech; his unhurried, quiet manner with the wheel, his evident sincerity of purpose—these were externals, but beneath them the pilot felt something of that quality of mind or heart which later made the world love Mark Twain. The terms proposed were agreed upon. The deferred payments were to begin when the pupil had learned the river and was receiving pilot's wages. During Mr. Bixby's daylight watches his pupil was often at the wheel, that trip, while the pilot sat directing him and nursing his sore foot. Any literary ambitions Samuel Clemens may have had grew dim; by the time they had reached New Orleans he had almost forgotten he had been a printer, and when he learned that no ship would be sailing to the Amazon for an indefinite period the feeling grew that a directing hand had taken charge of his affairs.

From New Orleans his chief did not return to Cincinnati, but went to St. Louis, taking with him his new cub, who thought it fine, indeed, to come steaming up to that great city with its thronging water-front; its levee fairly packed with trucks, drays, and piles of freight, the whole flanked with a solid mile of steamboats lying side by side, bow a little up-stream, their belching stacks reared high against the blue—a towering front of trade. It was glorious to nose one's way to a place in that stately line, to become a unit, however small, of that imposing fleet. At St. Louis Sam borrowed from Mr. Moffett the funds necessary to make up his first payment, and so concluded his contract. Then, when he suddenly found himself on a fine big boat, in a pilot-house so far above the water that he seemed perched on a mountain—a “sumptuous temple”—his happiness seemed complete.

Page 70

XXIII

THE SUPREME SCIENCE

In his Mississippi book Mark Twain has given us a marvelous exposition of the science of river-piloting, and of the colossal task of acquiring and keeping a knowledge requisite for that work. He has not exaggerated this part of the story of developments in any detail; he has set down a simple confession.

Serenely enough he undertook the task of learning twelve hundred miles of the great changing, shifting river as exactly and as surely by daylight or darkness as one knows the way to his own features. As already suggested, he had at least an inkling of what that undertaking meant. His statement that he “supposed all that a pilot had to do was to keep his boat in the river” is not to be accepted literally. Still he could hardly have realized the full majesty of his task; nobody could do that—not until afterward.

Horace Bixby was a “lightning” pilot with a method of instruction as direct and forcible as it was effective. He was a small man, hot and quick-firing, though kindly, too, and gentle when he had blown off. After one rather pyrotechnic misunderstanding as to the manner of imparting and acquiring information he said:

“My boy, you must get a little memorandum-book, and every time I tell you a thing put it down right away. There’s only one way to be a pilot, and that is to get this entire river by heart. You have to know it just like A B C.”

So Sam Clemens got the little book, and presently it “fairly bristled” with the names of towns, points, bars, islands, bends, and reaches, but it made his heart ache to think that he had only half of the river set down; for, as the “watches” were four hours off and four hours on, there were long gaps during which he had slept.

The little note-book still exists—thin and faded, with black water-proof covers—its neat, tiny, penciled notes still, telling, the story of that first trip. Most of them are cryptographic abbreviations, not readily deciphered now. Here and there is an easier line:

MERIWEATHER'S *bend*

1/4 less 3—[Depth of water. One-quarter less than three fathoms.]—run shape of upper bar and go into the low place in willows about 200(ft.) lower down than last year.

One simple little note out of hundreds far more complicated. It would take days for the average mind to remember even a single page of such statistics. And those long four-hour gaps where he had been asleep, they are still there, and somehow, after more

than fifty years, the old heart-ache is still in them. He got a new book, maybe, for the next trip, and laid this one away.

Page 71

There is but one way to account for the fact that the man whom the world knew as Mark Twain—dreamy, unpractical, and indifferent to details—ever persisted in acquiring knowledge like that—in the vast, the absolutely limitless quantity necessary to Mississippi piloting. It lies in the fact that he loved the river in its every mood and aspect and detail, and not only the river, but a steam boat; and still more, perhaps, the freedom of the pilot's life and its prestige. Wherever he has written of the river—and in one way or another he was always writing of it we feel the claim of the old captivity and that it still holds him. In the Huckleberry Finn book, during those nights and days with Huck and Nigger Jim on the raft—whether in stormlit blackness, still noontide, or the lifting mists of morning—we can fairly “smell” the river, as Huck himself would say, and we know that it is because the writer loved it with his heart of hearts and literally drank in its environment and atmosphere during those halcyon pilot days.

So, in his love lay the secret of his marvelous learning, and it is recorded (not by himself, but by his teacher) that he was an apt pupil. Horace Bixby has more than once declared:

“Sam was always good-natured, and he had a natural taste for the river. He had a fine memory and never forgot anything I told him.”

Mark Twain himself records a different opinion of his memory, with the size of its appalling task. It can only be presented in his own words. In the pages quoted he had mastered somewhat of the problem, and had begun to take on airs. His chief was a constant menace at such moments:

One day he turned on me suddenly with this settler:

“What is the shape of Walnut Bend?”

He might as well have asked me my grandmother's opinion of protoplasm. I reflected respectfully, and then said I didn't know it had any particular shape. My gun-powdery chief went off with a bang, of course, and then went on loading and firing until he was out of adjectives.... I waited. By and by he said: “My boy, you've got to know the shape of the river perfectly. It is all there is left to steer by on a very dark night. Everything is blotted out and gone. But mind you, it hasn't the same shape in the night that it has in the daytime.”

“How on earth am I ever going to learn it, then?”

“How do you follow a hall at home in the dark? Because you know the shape of it. You can't see it.”

“Do you mean to say that I’ve got to know all the million trifling variations of shape in the banks of this interminable river as well as I know the shape of the front hall at home?”

“On my honor, you’ve got to know them better than any man ever did know the shapes of the halls in his own house.”

“I wish I was dead!”

“Now, I don’t want to discourage you, but——”

Page 72

"Well, pile it on me; I might as well have it now as another time."

"You see, this has got to be learned; there isn't any getting around it. A clear starlight night throws such heavy shadows that, if you didn't know the shape of a shore perfectly, you would claw away from every bunch of timber, because you would take the black shadow of it for a solid cape; and, you see, you would be getting scared to death every fifteen minutes by the watch. You would be fifty yards from shore all the time when you ought to be within fifty feet of it. You can't see a snag in one of those shadows, but you know exactly where it is, and the shape of the river tells you when you are coming to it. Then there's your pitch-dark night; the river is a very different shape on a pitch-dark night from what it is on a starlight night. All shores seem to be straight lines, then, and mighty dim ones, too; and you'd run them for straight lines, only you know better. You boldly drive your boat right into what seems to be a solid, straight wall (you know very well that in reality there is a curve there), and that wall falls back and makes way for you. Then there's your gray mist. You take a night when there's one of these grisly, drizzly, gray mists, and then there isn't any particular shape to a shore. A gray mist would tangle the head of the oldest man that ever lived. Well, then, different kinds of moonlight change the shape of the river in different ways. You see——""Oh, don't say any more, please! Have I got to learn the shape of the river according to all these five hundred thousand different ways? If I tried to carry all that cargo in my head it would make me stoop-shouldered.""No! you only learn the shape of the river; and you learn it with such absolute certainty that you can always steer by the shape that's in your head, and never mind the one that's before your eyes."

"Very well, I'll try it; but, after I have learned it, can I depend on it? Will it keep the same form, and not go fooling around?"

Before Mr. Bixby could answer, Mr. W. came in to take the watch, and he said:

"Bixby, you'll have to look out for President's island, and all that country clear away up above the Old Hen and Chickens. The banks are caving and the shape of the shores changing like everything. Why, you wouldn't know the point about 40. You can go up inside the old sycamore snag now." So that question was answered. Here were leagues of shore changing shape. My spirits were down in the mud again. Two things seemed pretty apparent to me. One was that in order to be a pilot a man had got to learn more than any one man ought to be allowed to know; and the other was that he must learn it all over again in a different way every twenty-four hours. I went to work now to learn the shape

Page 73

of the river; and of all the eluding and ungraspable objects that ever I tried to get mind or hands on, that was the chief. I would fasten my eyes upon a sharp, wooded point that projected far into the river some miles ahead of me and go to laboriously photographing its shape upon my brain; and just as I was beginning to succeed to my satisfaction we would draw up to it, and the exasperating thing would begin to melt away and fold back into the bank! It was plain that I had got to learn the shape of the river in all the different ways that could be thought of—upside down, wrong end first, inside out, fore-and-aft, and “thort-ships,”—and then know what to do on gray nights when it hadn’t any shape at all. So I set about it. In the course of time I began to get the best of this knotty lesson, and my self-complacency moved to the front once more. Mr. Bixby was all fixed and ready to start it to the rear again. He opened on me after this fashion:

“How much water did we have in the middle crossing at Hole-in-The-Wall, trip before last?”

I considered this an outrage. I said:

“Every trip down and up the leadsmen are singing through that tangled place for three-quarters of an hour on a stretch. How do you reckon I can remember such a mess as that?”

“My boy, you’ve got to remember it. You’ve got to remember the exact spot and the exact marks the boat lay in when we had the shoalest water, in every one of the five hundred shoal places between St. Louis and New Orleans; and you mustn’t get the shoal soundings and marks of one trip mixed up with the shoal soundings and marks of another, either, for they’re not often twice alike. You must keep them separate.”

When I came to myself again, I said:

“When I get so that I can do that, I’ll be able to raise the dead, and then I won’t have to pilot a steamboat to make a living. I want to retire from this business. I want a slush-bucket and a brush; I’m only fit for a roustabout. I haven’t got brains enough to be a pilot; and if I had I wouldn’t have strength enough to carry them around, unless I went on crutches.”

“Now drop that! When I say I’ll learn a man the river I mean it. And you can depend on it, I’ll learn him or kill him.”

We have quoted at length from this chapter because it seems of very positive importance here. It is one of the most luminous in the book so far as the mastery of the science of piloting is concerned, and shows better than could any other combination of words something of what is required of the learner. It does not cover the whole

problem, by any means—Mark Twain himself could not present that; and even considering his old-time love of the river and the pilot's trade, it is still incredible that a man of his temperament could have persisted, as he did, against such obstacles.

Page 74

XXIV

THE RIVER CURRICULUM

He acquired other kinds of knowledge. As the streets of Hannibal in those early days, and the printing-offices of several cities, had taught him human nature in various unvarnished aspects, so the river furnished an added course to that vigorous education. Morally, its atmosphere could not be said to be an improvement on the others. Navigation in the West had begun with crafts of the flat-boat type—their navigators rude, hardy men, heavy drinkers, reckless fighters, barbaric in their sports, coarse in their wit, profane in everything. Steam-boatmen were the natural successors of these pioneers—a shade less coarse, a thought less profane, a veneer less barbaric. But these things were mainly “above stairs.” You had but to scratch lightly a mate or a deck-hand to find the old keel-boatman savagery. Captains were overlords, and pilots kings in this estate; but they were not angels. In *Life on the Mississippi* Clemens refers to his chief’s explosive vocabulary and tells us how he envied the mate’s manner of giving an order. It was easier to acquire those things than piloting, and, on the whole, quicker. One could improve upon them, too, with imagination and wit and a natural gift for terms. That Samuel Clemens maintained his promise as to drink and cards during those apprentice days is something worth remembering; and if he did not always restrict his profanity to moments of severe pressure or sift the quality of his wit, we may also remember that he was an extreme example of a human being, in that formative stage which gathers all as grist, later to refine it for the uses and delights of men.

He acquired a vast knowledge of human character. He says:

In that brief, sharp schooling I got personally and familiarly acquainted with all the different types of human nature that are to be found in fiction, biography, or history. When I find a well- drawn character in fiction or biography, I generally take a warm personal interest in him, for the reason that I have, known him before—met him on the river.

Undoubtedly the river was a great school for the study of life’s broader philosophies and humors: philosophies that avoid vague circumlocution and aim at direct and sure results; humors of the rugged and vigorous sort that in Europe are known as “American” and in America are known as “Western.” Let us be thankful that Mark Twain’s school was no less than it was—and no more.

The demands of the Missouri River trade took Horace Bixby away from the Mississippi, somewhat later, and he consigned his pupil, according to custom, to another pilot—it is not certain, now, to just which pilot, but probably to Zeb Leavenworth or Beck Jolly, of the John J. Roe. The Roe was a freight-boat, “as slow as an island and as comfortable

as a farm.” In fact, the Roe was owned and conducted by farmers, and Sam Clemens thought if John Quarles’s

Page 75

farm could be set afloat it would greatly resemble that craft in the matter of good-fellowship, hospitality, and speed. It was said of her that up-stream she could even beat an island, though down-stream she could never quite overtake the current, but was a “love of a steamboat” nevertheless. The Roe was not licensed to carry passengers, but she always had a dozen “family guests” aboard, and there was a big boiler-deck for dancing and moonlight frolics, also a piano in the cabin. The young pilot sometimes played on the piano and sang to his music songs relating to the “grasshopper on the sweet-potato vine,” or to an old horse by the name of Methusalem:

Took him down and sold him in Jerusalem,
A long time ago.

There were forty-eight stanzas about this ancient horse, all pretty much alike; but the assembled company was not likely to be critical, and his efforts won him laurels. He had a heavenly time on the John J. Roe, and then came what seemed inferno by contrast. Bixby returned, made a trip or two, then left and transferred him again, this time to a man named Brown. Brown had a berth on the fine new steamer Pennsylvania, one of the handsomest boats on the river, and young Clemens had become a fine steersman, so it is not unlikely that both men at first were gratified by the arrangement.

But Brown was a fault-finding, tyrannical chief, ignorant, vulgar, and malicious. In the Mississippi book the author gives his first interview with Brown, also his last one. For good reasons these occasions were burned into his memory, and they may be accepted as substantially correct. Brown had an offensive manner. His first greeting was a surly question.

“Are you Horace Bigsby’s cub?”

“Bixby” was usually pronounced “Bigsby” on the river, but Brown made it especially obnoxious and followed it up with questions and comments and orders still more odious. His subordinate soon learned to detest him thoroughly. It was necessary, however, to maintain a respectable deportment—custom, discipline, even the law, required that—but it must have been a hard winter and spring the young steersman put in during those early months of 1858, restraining himself from the gratification of slaying Brown. Time would bring revenge—a tragic revenge and at a fearful cost; but he could not guess that, and he put in his spare time planning punishments of his own.

I could imagine myself killing Brown; there was no law against that, and that was the thing I always used to do the moment I was abed. Instead of going over my river in my mind, as was my duty, I threw business aside for pleasure and killed Brown. I killed Brown every night for a month; not in old, stale, commonplace ways, but in new and

picturesque ones—ways that were sometimes surprising for freshness of design and ghastly for situation and environment.

Once when Brown had been more insulting than usual his subordinate went to bed and killed him in “seventeen different ways—all of them new.”

Page 76

He had made an effort at first to please Brown, but it was no use. Brown was the sort of a man that refused to be pleased; no matter how carefully his subordinate steered, he as always at him.

"Here," he would shout, "where are you going now? Pull her down! Pull her down! Don't you hear me? Dod-derned mud-cat!"

His assistant lost all desire to be obliging to such a person and even took occasion now and then to stir him up. One day they were steaming up the river when Brown noticed that the boat seemed to be heading toward some unusual point.

"Here, where are you heading for now?" he yelled. "What in nation are you steerin' at, anyway? Deyned numskull!"

"Why," said Sam, in unruffled deliberation, "I didn't see much else I could steer for, and I was heading for that white heifer on the bank."

"Get away from that wheel! and get outen this pilothouse!" yelled Brown. "You ain't fit to become no pilot!"

Which was what Sam wanted. Any temporary relief from the carping tyranny of Brown was welcome.

He had been on the river nearly a year now, and, though universally liked and accounted a fine steersman, he was receiving no wages. There had been small need of money for a while, for he had no board to pay; but clothes wear out at last, and there were certain incidentals. The Pennsylvania made a round trip in about thirty-five days, with a day or two of idle time at either end. The young pilot found that he could get night employment, watching freight on the New Orleans levee, and thus earn from two and a half to three dollars for each night's watch. Sometimes there would be two nights, and with a capital of five or six dollars he accounted himself rich.

"It was a desolate experience," he said, long afterward, "watching there in the dark among those piles of freight; not a sound, not a living creature astir. But it was not a profitless one: I used to have inspirations as I sat there alone those nights. I used to imagine all sorts of situations and possibilities. Those things got into my books by and by and furnished me with many a chapter. I can trace the effect of those nights through most of my books in one way and another."

Many of the curious tales in the latter half of the Mississippi book came out of those long night-watches. It was a good time to think of such things.

XXV

LOVE-MAKING AND ADVENTURE

Of course, life with Brown was not all sorrow. At either end of the trip there was respite and recreation. In St. Louis, at Pamela's there was likely to be company: Hannibal friends mostly, schoolmates—girls, of course. At New Orleans he visited friendly boats, especially the John J. Roe, where he was generously welcomed. One such visit on the Roe he never forgot. A young girl was among the boat's guests that trip —another Laura, fifteen, winning, delightful. They met, and were mutually attracted; in the life of each it was one of those bright spots which are likely to come in youth: one of those sudden, brief periods of romance, love—call it what you will the thing that leads to marriage, if pursued.

Page 77

"I was not four inches from that girl's elbow during our waking hours for the next three days."

Then came a sudden interruption: Zeb Leavenworth came flying aft shouting:

"The Pennsylvania is backing out."

A flutter of emotion, a fleeting good-by, a flight across the decks, a flying leap from romance back to reality, and it was all over. He wrote her, but received no reply. He never saw her again, never heard from her for forty-eight years, when both were married, widowed, and old. She had not received his letter.

Even on the Pennsylvania life had its interests. A letter dated March 9, 1858, recounts a delightfully dangerous night-adventure in the steamer's yawl, hunting for soundings in the running ice.

Then the fun commenced. We made fast a line 20 fathoms long, to the bow of the yawl, and put the men (both crews) to it like horses on the shore. Brown, the pilot, stood in the bow, with an oar, to keep her head out, and I took the tiller. We would start the men, and all would go well till the yawl would bring up on a heavy cake of ice, and then the men would drop like so many tenpins, while Brown assumed the horizontal in the bottom of the boat. After an hour's hard work we got back, with ice half an inch thick on the oars. Sent back and warped up the other yawl, and then George (George Ealer, the other pilot) and myself took a double crew of fresh men and tried it again. This time we found the channel in less than half an hour, and landed on an island till the Pennsylvania came along and took us off. The next day was colder still. I was out in the yawl twice, and then we got through, but the infernal steamboat came near running over us.... We sounded Hat Island, warped up around a bar, and sounded again—but in order to understand our situation you will have to read Dr. Kane. It would have been impossible to get back to the boat. But the Maria Denning was aground at the head of the island—they hailed us—we ran alongside, and they hoisted us in and thawed us out. We had then been out in the yawl from four o'clock in the morning till half past nine without being near a fire. There was a thick coating of ice over men, and yawl, ropes and everything else, and we looked like rock- candy statuary.

This was the sort of thing he loved in those days. We feel the writer's evident joy and pride in it. In the same letter he says: "I can't correspond with the paper, because when one is learning the river he is not allowed to do or think about anything else." Then he mentions his brother Henry, and we get the beginning of that tragic episode for which, though blameless, Samuel Clemens always held himself responsible.

Page 78

Henry was doing little or nothing here (St. Louis), and I sent him to our clerk to work his way for a trip, measuring wood-piles, counting coal-boxes, and doing other clerkly duties, which he performed satisfactorily. He may go down with us again.

Henry Clemens was about twenty at this time, a handsome, attractive boy of whom his brother was lavishly fond and proud. He did go on the next trip and continued to go regularly after that, as third clerk in line of promotion. It was a bright spot in those hard days with Brown to have Henry along. The boys spent a good deal of their leisure with the other pilot, George Ealer, who "was as kindhearted as Brown wasn't," and quoted Shakespeare and Goldsmith, and played the flute to his fascinated and inspiring audience. These were things worth while. The young steersman could not guess that the shadow of a long sorrow was even then stretching across the path ahead.

Yet in due time he received a warning, a remarkable and impressive warning, though of a kind seldom heeded. One night, when the Pennsylvania lay in St. Louis, he slept at his sister's house and had this vivid dream:

He saw Henry, a corpse, lying in a metallic burial case in the sitting-room, supported on two chairs. On his breast lay a bouquet of flowers, white, with a single crimson bloom in the center.

When he awoke, it was morning, but the dream was so vivid that he believed it real. Perhaps something of the old hypnotic condition was upon him, for he rose and dressed, thinking he would go in and look at his dead brother. Instead, he went out on the street in the early morning and had walked to the middle of the block before it suddenly flashed upon him that it was only a dream. He bounded back, rushed to the sitting-room, and felt a great trembling revulsion of joy when he found it really empty. He told Pamela the dream, then put it out of his mind as quickly as he could. The Pennsylvania sailed from St. Louis as usual, and made a safe trip to New Orleans.

A safe trip, but an eventful one; on it occurred that last interview with Brown, already mentioned. It is recorded in the Mississippi book, but cannot be omitted here. Somewhere down the river (it was in Eagle Bend) Henry appeared on the hurricane deck to bring an order from the captain for a landing to be made a little lower down. Brown was somewhat deaf, but would never confess it. He may not have understood the order; at all events he gave no sign of having heard it, and went straight ahead. He disliked Henry as he disliked everybody of finer grain than himself, and in any case was too arrogant to ask for a repetition. They were passing the landing when Captain Klinefelter appeared on deck and called to him to let the boat come around, adding:

"Didn't Henry tell you to land here?"

"No, sir."

Captain. Klinefelter turned to Sam:

“Didn’t you hear him?”

Page 79

"Yes, sir."

Brown said: "Shut your mouth! You never heard anything of the kind."

By and by Henry came into the pilot-house, unaware of any trouble. Brown set upon him in his ugliest manner.

"Here, why didn't you tell me we had got to land at that plantation?" he demanded.

Henry was always polite, always gentle.

"I did tell you, Mr. Brown."

"It's a lie."

Sam Clemens could stand Brown's abuse of himself, but not of Henry. He said: "You lie yourself. He did tell you."

Brown was dazed for a moment and then he shouted:

"I'll attend to your case in half a minute!" and ordered Henry out of the pilot-house.

The boy had started, when Brown suddenly seized him by the collar and struck him in the face.—[In the Mississippi book the writer states that Brown started to strike Henry with a large piece of coal; but, in a letter written soon after the occurrence to Mrs. Orion Clemens, he says: "Henry started out of the pilot-house-Brown jumped up and collared him—turned him half-way around and struck him in the face!-and him nearly six feet high-struck my little brother. I was wild from that moment. I left the boat to steer herself, and avenged the insult—and the captain said I was right."]—Instantly Sam was upon Brown, with a heavy stool, and stretched him on the floor. Then all the bitterness and indignation that had been smoldering for months flamed up, and, leaping upon Brown and holding him with his knees, he pounded him with his fists until strength and fury gave out. Brown struggled free, then, and with pilot instinct sprang to the wheel, for the vessel had been drifting and might have got into trouble. Seeing there was no further danger, he seized a spy-glass as a weapon.

"Get out of this here pilot-house," he raged.

But his subordinate was not afraid of him now.

"You should leave out the 'here,'" he drawled, critically. "It is understood, and not considered good English form."

"Don't you give me none of your airs," yelled Brown. "I ain't going to stand nothing more from you."

“You should say, ‘Don’t give me any of your airs,’” Sam said, sweetly, “and the last half of your sentence almost defies correction.”

A group of passengers and white-aproned servants, assembled on the deck forward, applauded the victor.

Brown turned to the wheel, raging and growling. Clemens went below, where he expected Captain Klinefelter to put him in irons, perhaps, for it was thought to be felony to strike a pilot. The officer took him into his private room and closed the door. At first he looked at the culprit thoughtfully, then he made some inquiries:

“Did you strike him first?” Captain Klinefelter asked.

“Yes, sir.”

“What with?”

“A stool, sir.”

“Hard?”

“Middling, sir.”

Page 80

"Did it knock him down?"

"He—he fell, sir."

"Did you follow it up? Did you do anything further?"

"Yes, sir."

"What did you do?"

"Pounded him, sir."

"Pounded him?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you pound him much—that is, severely?"

"One might call it that, sir, maybe."

"I am deuced glad of it! Hark ye, never mention that I said that. You have been guilty of a great crime; and don't ever be guilty of it again on this boat, but—lay for him ashore! Give him a good sound thrashing; do you hear? I'll pay the expenses."—"Life on the Mississippi."]

Captain Klinefelter told him to clear out, then, and the culprit heard him enjoying himself as the door closed behind him. Brown, of course, forbade him the pilothouse after that, and he spent the rest of the trip "an emancipated slave" listening to George Ealer's flute and his readings from Goldsmith and Shakespeare; playing chess with him sometimes, and learning a trick which he would use himself in the long after-years—that of taking back the last move and running out the game differently when he saw defeat.

Brown swore that he would leave the boat at New Orleans if Sam Clemens remained on it, and Captain Klinefelter told Brown to go. Then when another pilot could not be obtained to fill his place, the captain offered to let Clemens himself run the daylight watches, thus showing his confidence in the knowledge of the young steersman, who had been only a little more than a year at the wheel. But Clemens himself had less confidence and advised the captain to keep Brown back to St. Louis. He would follow up the river by another boat and resume his place as steersman when Brown was gone. Without knowing it, he may have saved his life by that decision.

It is doubtful if he remembered his recent disturbing dream, though some foreboding would seem to have hung over him the night before the Pennsylvania sailed. Henry liked to join in the night-watches on the levee when he had finished his duties, and the

brothers often walked the round chatting together. On this particular night the elder spoke of disaster on the river. Finally he said:

“In case of accident, whatever you do, don’t lose your head—the passengers will do that. Rush for the hurricane deck and to the life-boat, and obey the mate’s orders. When the boat is launched, help the women and children into it. Don’t get in yourself. The river is only a mile wide. You can swim ashore easily enough.”

It was good manly advice, but it yielded a long harvest of sorrow.

XXVI

The tragedy of the “Pennsylvania”

Captain Klinefelter obtained his steersman a pass on the A. T. Lacey, which left two days behind the Pennsylvania. This was pleasant, for Bart Bowen had become captain of that fine boat. The Lacey touched at Greenville, Mississippi, and a voice from the landing shouted:

Page 81

"The Pennsylvania is blown up just below Memphis, at Ship Island! One hundred and fifty lives lost!"

Nothing further could be learned there, but that evening at Napoleon a Memphis extra reported some of the particulars. Henry Clemens's name was mentioned as one of those, who had escaped injury. Still farther up the river they got a later extra. Henry was again mentioned; this time as being scalded beyond recovery. By the time they reached Memphis they knew most of the details: At six o'clock that warm mid-June morning, while loading wood from a large flat-boat sixty miles below Memphis, four out of eight of the Pennsylvania's boilers had suddenly exploded with fearful results. All the forward end of the boat had been blown out. Many persons had been killed outright; many more had been scalded and crippled and would die. It was one of those hopeless, wholesale steamboat slaughters which for more than a generation had made the Mississippi a river of death and tears.

Samuel Clemens found his brother stretched upon a mattress on the floor of an improvised hospital—a public hall—surrounded by more than thirty others more or less desperately injured. He was told that Henry had inhaled steam and that his body was badly scalded. His case was considered hopeless.

Henry was one of those who had been blown into the river by the explosion. He had started to swim for the shore, only a few hundred yards away, but presently, feeling no pain and believing himself unhurt, he had turned back to assist in the rescue of the others. What he did after that could not be clearly learned. The vessel had taken fire; the rescued were being carried aboard the big wood-boat still attached to the wreck. The fire soon raged so that the rescuers and all who could be saved were driven into the wood-flat, which was then cut adrift and landed. There the sufferers had to lie in the burning sun many hours until help could come. Henry was among those who were insensible by that time. Perhaps he had really been uninjured at first and had been scalded in his work of rescue; it will never be known.

His brother, hearing these things, was thrown into the deepest agony and remorse. He held himself to blame for everything; for Henry's presence on the boat; for his advice concerning safety of others; for his own absence when he might have been there to help and protect the boy. He wanted to telegraph at once to his mother and sister to come, but the doctors persuaded him to wait—just why, he never knew. He sent word of the disaster to Orion, who by this time had sold out in Keokuk and was in East Tennessee studying law; then he set himself to the all but hopeless task of trying to bring Henry back to life. Many Memphis ladies were acting as nurses, and one, a Miss Wood, attracted by the boy's youth and striking features, joined in the desperate effort. Some medical students had come to assist the doctors, and one of these also took special interest in Henry's case. Dr. Peyton, an old Memphis practitioner, declared that with such care the boy might pull through.

Page 82

But on the fourth night he was considered to be dying. Half delirious with grief and the strain of watching, Samuel Clemens wrote to his mother and to his sister-in-law in Tennessee. The letter to Orion Clemens's wife has been preserved.

Memphis, Tenn., Friday, June 18, 1858.

Dear sister Mollie,—Long before this reaches you my poor Henry—my darling, my pride, my glory, my all will have finished his blameless career, and the light of my life will have gone out in utter darkness. The horrors of three days have swept over me—they have blasted my youth and left me an old man before my time. Mollie, there are gray hairs in my head to-night. For forty-eight hours I labored at the bedside of my poor burned and bruised but uncomplaining brother, and then the star of my hope went out and left me in the gloom of despair. Men take me by the hand and congratulate me, and call me “lucky” because I was not on the *Pennsylvania* when she blew up! May God forgive them, for they know not what they say. I was on the *Pennsylvania* five minutes before she left N. Orleans, and I must tell you the truth, Mollie—three hundred human beings perished by that fearful disaster. But may God bless Memphis, the noblest city on the face of the earth. She has done her duty by these poor afflicted creatures—especially Henry, for he has had five—aye, ten, fifteen, twenty times the care and attention that any one else has had. Dr. Peyton, the best physician in Memphis (he is exactly like the portraits of Webster), sat by him for 36 hours. There are 32 scalded men in that room, and you would know Dr. Peyton better than I can describe him if you could follow him around and hear each man murmur as he passes, “May the God of Heaven bless you, Doctor!” The ladies have done well, too. Our second mate, a handsome, noble-hearted young fellow, will die. Yesterday a beautiful girl of 15 stooped timidly down by his side and handed him a pretty bouquet. The poor suffering boy’s eyes kindled, his lips quivered out a gentle “God bless you, Miss,” and he burst into tears. He made them write her name on a card for him, that he might not forget it.

Pray for me, Mollie, and pray for my poor sinless brother.
Your unfortunate brother,

SAML. L. *Clemens*.

P. S.—I got here two days after Henry.

But, alas, this was not all, nor the worst. It would seem that Samuel Clemens’s cup of remorse must be always overfull. The final draft that would embitter his years was added the sixth night after the accident—the night that Henry died. He could never bring himself to write it. He was never known to speak of it but twice.

Henry had rallied soon after the foregoing letter had been mailed, and improved slowly that day and the next: Dr. Peyton came around about eleven o’clock on the sixth night and made careful examination. He said:

Page 83

"I believe he is out of danger and will get well. He is likely to be restless during the night; the groans and fretting of the others will disturb him. If he cannot rest without it, tell the physician in charge to give him one-eighth of a grain of morphine."

The boy did wake during the night, and was disturbed by the complaining of the other sufferers. His brother told the young medical student in charge what the doctor had said about the morphine. But morphine was a new drug then; the student hesitated, saying:

"I have no way of measuring. I don't know how much an eighth of a grain would be."

Henry grew rapidly worse—more and more restless. His brother was half beside himself with the torture of it. He went to the medical student.

"If you have studied drugs," he said, "you ought to be able to judge an eighth of a grain of morphine."

The young man's courage was over-swayed. He yielded and ladled out in the old-fashioned way, on the point of a knife-blade, what he believed to be the right amount. Henry immediately sank into a heavy sleep. He died before morning. His chance of life had been infinitesimal, and his death was not necessarily due to the drug, but Samuel Clemens, unsparing in his self-blame, all his days carried the burden of it.

He saw the boy taken to the dead room, then the long strain of grief, the days and nights without sleep, the ghastly realization of the end overcame him. A citizen of Memphis took him away in a kind of daze and gave him a bed in his house, where he fell into a stupor of fatigue and surrender. It was many hours before he woke; when he did, at last, he dressed and went to where Henry lay. The coffin provided for the dead were of unpainted wood, but the youth and striking face of Henry Clemens had aroused a special interest. The ladies of Memphis had made up a fund of sixty dollars and bought for him a metallic case. Samuel Clemens entering, saw his brother lying exactly as he had seen him in his dream, lacking only the bouquet of white flowers with its crimson center—a detail made complete while he stood there, for at that moment an elderly lady came in with a large white bouquet, and in the center of it was a single red rose.

Orion arrived from Tennessee, and the brothers took their sorrowful burden to St. Louis, subsequently to Hannibal, his old home. The death of this lovely boy was a heavy sorrow to the community where he was known, for he had been a favorite with all.—[For a fine characterization of Henry Clemens the reader is referred to a letter written by Orion Clemens to Miss Wood. See Appendix A, at the end of the last volume.]

From Hannibal the family returned to Pamela's home in St. Louis. There one night Orion heard his brother moaning and grieving and walking the floor of his room. By and

by Sam came in to where Orion was. He could endure it no longer, he said; he must, "tell somebody."

Page 84

Then he poured all the story of that last tragic night. It has been set down here because it accounts for much in his after-life. It magnified his natural compassion for the weakness and blunders of humanity, while it increased the poor opinion implanted by the Scotchman Macfarlane of the human being as a divine invention. Two of Mark Twain's chief characteristics were—consideration for the human species, and contempt for it.

In many ways he never overcame the tragedy of Henry's death. He never really looked young again. Gray hairs had come, as he said, and they did not disappear. His face took on the serious, pathetic look which from that time it always had in repose. At twenty-three he looked thirty. At thirty he looked nearer forty. After that the discrepancy in age and looks became less notable. In vigor, complexion, and temperament he was regarded in later life as young for his years, but never in looks.

XXVII

THE PILOT

The young pilot returned to the river as steersman for George Ealer, whom he loved, and in September of that year obtained a full license as Mississippi River pilot.—[In *Life on the Mississippi* he gives his period of learning at from two to two and a half years; but documentary evidence as well as Mr. Bixby's testimony places the apprenticeship at eighteen months]—Bixby had returned by this time, and they were again together, first on the *Crescent City*, later on a fine new boat called the *New Falls City*. Clemens was still a steersman when Bixby returned; but as soon as his license was granted (September 9, 1858) his old chief took him as full partner.

He was a pilot at last. In eighteen months he had packed away in his head all the multitude of volatile statistics and acquired that confidence and courage which made him one of the elect, a river sovereign. He knew every snag and bank and dead tree and reef in all those endless miles between St. Louis and New Orleans, every cut-off and current, every depth of water—the whole story—by night and by day. He could smell danger in the dark; he could read the surface of the water as an open page. At twenty-three he had acquired a profession which surpassed all others for absolute sovereignty and yielded an income equal to that then earned by the Vice-President of the United States. Boys generally finish college at about that age, but it is not likely that any boy ever finished college with the mass of practical information and training that was stored away in Samuel Clemens's head, or with his knowledge of human nature, his preparation for battle with the world.

"Not only was he a pilot, but a good one." These are Horace Bixby's words, and he added:

Page 85

"It is the fashion to-day to disparage Sam's piloting. Men who were born since he was on the river and never saw him will tell you that Sam was never much of a pilot. Most of them will tell you that he was never a pilot at all. As a matter of fact, Sam was a fine pilot, and in a day when piloting on the Mississippi required a great deal more brains and skill and application than it does now. There were no signal-lights along the shore in those days, and no search-lights on the vessels; everything was blind, and on a dark, misty night in a river full of snags and shifting sand—bars and changing shores, a pilot's judgment had to be founded on absolute certainty."

He had plenty of money now. He could help his mother with a liberal hand, and he did it. He helped Orion, too, with money and with advice. From a letter written toward the end of the year, we gather the new conditions. Orion would seem to have been lamenting over prospects, and the young pilot, strong and exalted in his new estate, urges him to renewed consistent effort:

What is a government without energy?—[he says]—. And what is a man without energy? Nothing—nothing at all. What is the grandest thing in "Paradise Lost"—the Arch-Fiend's terrible energy! What was the greatest feature in Napoleon's character? His unconquerable energy! Sum all the gifts that man is endowed with, and we give our greatest share of admiration to his energy. And to-day, if I were a heathen, I would rear a statue to Energy, and fall down and worship it!

I want a man to—I want you to—take up a line of action, and follow it out, in spite of the very devil.

Orion and his wife had returned to Keokuk by this time, waiting for something in the way of a business opportunity.

His pilot brother, wrote him more than once letters of encouragement and council. Here and there he refers to the tragedy of Henry's death, and the shadow it has cast upon his life; but he was young, he was successful, his spirits were naturally exuberant. In the exhilaration of youth and health and success he finds vent at times in that natural human outlet, self-approval. He not only exhibits this weakness, but confesses it with characteristic freedom.

Putting all things together, I begin to think I am rather lucky than otherwise—a notion which I was slow to take up. The other night I was about to "round to" for a storm, but concluded that I could find a smoother bank somewhere. I landed five miles below. The storm came, passed away and did not injure us. Coming up, day before yesterday, I looked at the spot I first chose, and half the trees on the bank were torn to shreds. We couldn't have lived 5 minutes in such a tornado. And I am also lucky in having a berth, while all the other young pilots are idle. This is the luckiest circumstance that ever befell me. Not on account of the wages—for that is a secondary

Page 86

consideration-but from the fact that the City of Memphis is the largest boat in the trade, and the hardest to pilot, and consequently I can get a reputation on her, which is a thing I never could accomplish on a transient boat. I can “bank” in the neighborhood of \$100 a month on her, and that will satisfy me for the present (principally because the other youngsters are sucking their fingers). Bless me! what a pleasure there is in revenge!—and what vast respect Prosperity commands! Why, six months ago, I could enter the “Rooms,” and receive only the customary fraternal greeting now they say, “Why, how are you, old fellow—when did you get in?” And the young pilots who use to tell me, patronizingly, that I could never learn the river cannot keep from showing a little of their chagrin at seeing me so far ahead of them. Permit me to “blow my horn,” for I derive a living pleasure from these things, and I must confess that when I go to pay my dues, I rather like to let the d—d rascals get a glimpse of a hundred-dollar bill peeping out from amongst notes of smaller dimensions whose face I do not exhibit! You will despise this egotism, but I tell you there is a “stern joy” in it.

We are dwelling on this period of Mark Twain’s life, for it was a period that perhaps more than any other influenced his future years. He became completely saturated with the river its terms, its memories, its influence remained a definite factor in his personality to the end of his days. Moreover, it was his first period of great triumph. Where before he had been a subaltern not always even a wage-earner—now all in a moment he had been transformed into a high chief. The fullest ambition of his childhood had been realized—more than realized, for in that day he had never dreamed of a boat or of an income of such stately proportions. Of great personal popularity, and regarded as a safe pilot, he had been given one of the largest, most difficult of boats. Single-handed and alone he had fought his way into the company of kings.

And we may pardon his vanity. He could hardly fail to feel his glory and revel in it and wear it as a halo, perhaps, a little now and then in the Association Rooms. To this day he is remembered as a figure there, though we may believe, regardless of his own statement, that it was not entirely because of his success. As the boys of Hannibal had gathered around to listen when Sam Clemens began to speak, so we may be certain that the pilots at St. Louis and New Orleans laid aside other things when he had an observation to make or a tale to tell.

He was much given to spinning yarns—[writes one associate of those days]—so funny that his hearers were convulsed, and yet all the time his own face was perfectly sober. If he laughed at all, it must have been inside. It would have killed his hearers to do that. Occasionally some of his droll yarns would get into the papers. He may have written them himself.

Another riverman of those days has recalled a story he heard Sam Clemens tell:

Page 87

We were speaking of presence of mind in accidents—we were always talking of such things; then he said:

“Boys, I had great presence of mind once. It was at a fire. An old man leaned out of a four-story building calling for help. Everybody in the crowd below looked up, but nobody did anything. The ladders weren’t long enough. Nobody had any presence of mind—nobody but me. I came to the rescue. I yelled for a rope. When it came I threw the old man the end of it. He caught it and I told him to tie it around his waist. He did so, and I pulled him down.”

This was one of the stories that got into print and traveled far. Perhaps, as the old pilot suggests, he wrote some of them himself, for Horace Bixby remembers that “Sam was always scribbling when not at the wheel.”

But if he published any work in those river-days he did not acknowledge it later—with one exception. The exception was not intended for publication, either. It was a burlesque written for the amusement of his immediate friends. He has told the story himself, more than once, but it belongs here for the reason that some where out of the general circumstance of it there originated a pseudonym, one day to become the best-known in the hemispheres the name Mark Twain.

That terse, positive, peremptory, dynamic pen-name was first used by an old pilot named Isaiah Sellers—a sort of “oldest inhabitant” of the river, who made the other pilots weary with the scope and antiquity of his reminiscent knowledge. He contributed paragraphs of general information and Nestorian opinions to the New Orleans Picayune, and signed them “Mark Twain.” They were quaintly egotistical in tone, usually beginning: “My opinion for the benefit of the citizens of New Orleans,” and reciting incidents and comparisons dating as far back as 1811.

Captain Sellers naturally was regarded as fair game by the young pilots, who amused themselves by imitating his manner and general attitude of speech. But Clemens went further; he wrote at considerable length a broadly burlesque imitation signed “Sergeant Fathom,” with an introduction which referred to the said Fathom as “one of the oldest cub pilots on the river.” The letter that followed related a perfectly impossible trip, supposed to have been made in 1763 by the steamer “the old first Jubilee” with a “Chinese captain and a Choctaw crew.” It is a gem of its kind, and will bear reprint in full today.—[See Appendix B, at the end of the last volume.]

The burlesque delighted Bart Bowen, who was Clemens’s pilot partner on the Edward J. Gay at the time. He insisted on showing it to others and finally upon printing it. Clemens was reluctant, but consented. It appeared in the True Delta (May 8 or 9, 1859), and was widely and boisterously enjoyed.

It broke Captain Sellers's literary heart. He never contributed another paragraph. Mark Twain always regretted the whole matter deeply, and his own revival of the name was a sort of tribute to the old man he had thoughtlessly wounded. If Captain Sellers has knowledge of material matters now, he is probably satisfied; for these things brought to him, and to the name he had chosen, what he could never himself have achieved — immortality.

Page 88

XXVIII

PILOTING AND PROPHECY

Those who knew Samuel Clemens best in those days say that he was a slender, fine-looking man, well dressed—even dandified—given to patent leathers, blue serge, white duck, and fancy striped shirts. Old for his years, he heightened his appearance at times by wearing his beard in the atrocious mutton-chop fashion, then popular, but becoming to no one, least of all to him. The pilots regarded him as a great reader—a student of history, travels, literature, and the sciences—a young man whom it was an education as well as an entertainment to know. When not at the wheel, he was likely to be reading or telling yarns in the Association Rooms.

He began the study of French one day when he passed a school of languages, where three tongues, French, German, and Italian, were taught, one in each of three rooms. The price was twenty-five dollars for one language, or three for fifty dollars. The student was provided with a set of cards for each room and supposed to walk from one apartment to another, changing tongues at each threshold. With his unusual enthusiasm and prodigality, the young pilot decided to take all three languages, but after the first two or three round trips concluded that for the present French would do. He did not return to the school, but kept his cards and bought text-books. He must have studied pretty faithfully when he was off watch and in port, for his river note-book contains a French exercise, all neatly written, and it is from the Dialogues of Voltaire.

This old note-book is interesting for other things. The notes are no longer timid, hesitating memoranda, but vigorous records made with the dash of assurance that comes from confidence and knowledge, and with the authority of one in supreme command. Under the head of “2d high-water trip—Jan., 1861—Alonzo Child,” we have the story of a rising river with its overflowing banks, its blind passages and cut-offs—all the circumstance and uncertainty of change.

Good deal of water all over Coles Creek Chute, 12 or 15 ft. bank
—could have gone up shore above General Taylor’s—too much drift....

Night—didn’t run either 77 or 76 towheads—8 ft. bank on main shore
Ozark Chute....

And so on page after page of cryptographic memoranda. It means little enough to the lay reader, yet one gets an impression somehow of the swirling, turbulent water and a lonely figure in that high glassed-in place peering into the dark for blind land-marks and possible dangers, picking his way up the dim, hungry river of which he must know every foot as well as a man knows the hall of his own home. All the qualifications must come into play, then memory, judgment, courage, and the high art of steering. “Steering is a

very high, art,” he says; “one must not keep a rudder dragging across a boat’s stern if he wants to get up the river fast.”

Page 89

He had an example of the perfection of this art one misty night on the Alonzo Child. Nearly fifty years later, sitting on his veranda in the dark, he recalled it. He said:

“There was a pilot in those days by the name of Jack Leonard who was a perfectly wonderful creature. I do not know that Jack knew anymore about the river than most of us and perhaps could not read the water any better, but he had a knack of steering away ahead of our ability, and I think he must have had an eye that could see farther into the darkness.

“I had never seen Leonard steer, but I had heard a good deal about it. I had heard it said that the crankiest old tub afloat—one that would kill any other man to handle—would obey and be as docile as a child when Jack Leonard took the wheel. I had a chance one night to verify that for myself. We were going up the river, and it was one of the nastiest nights I ever saw. Besides that, the boat was loaded in such a way that she steered very hard, and I was half blind and crazy trying to locate the safe channel, and was pulling my arms out to keep her in it. It was one of those nights when everything looks the same whichever way you look: just two long lines where the sky comes down to the trees and where the trees meet the water with all the trees precisely the same height—all planted on the same day, as one of the boys used to put it—and not a thing to steer by except the knowledge in your head of the real shape of the river. Some of the boats had what they call a ‘night hawk’ on the jackstaff, a thing which you could see when it was in the right position against the sky or the water, though it seldom was in the right position and was generally pretty useless.

“I was in a bad way that night and wondering how I could ever get through it, when the pilot-house door opened, and Jack Leonard walked in. He was a passenger that trip, and I had forgotten he was aboard. I was just about in the worst place and was pulling the boat first one way, then another, running the wheel backward and forward, and climbing it like a squirrel.

“‘Sam,’ he said, ‘let me take the wheel. Maybe I have been over this place since you have.’

“I didn’t argue the question. Jack took the wheel, gave it a little turn one way, then a little turn the other; that old boat settled down as quietly as a lamb—went right along as if it had been broad daylight in a river without snags, bars, bottom, or banks, or anything that one could possibly hit. I never saw anything so beautiful. He stayed my watch out for me, and I hope I was decently grateful. I have never forgotten it.”

Page 90

The old note-book contained the record of many such nights as that; but there were other nights, too, when the stars were blazing out, or when the moon on the water made the river a wide mysterious way of speculative dreams. He was always speculating; the planets and the remote suns were always a marvel to him. A love of astronomy—the romance of it, its vast distances, and its possibilities—began with those lonely river-watches and never waned to his last day. For a time a great comet blazed in the heavens, a “wonderful sheaf of light” that glorified his lonely watch. Night after night he watched it as it developed and then grew dim, and he read eagerly all the comet literature that came to his hand, then or afterward. He speculated of many things: of life, death, the reason of existence, of creation, the ways of Providence and Destiny. It was a fruitful time for such meditation; out of such vigils grew those larger philosophies that would find expression later, when the years had conferred the magic gift of phrase.

Life lay all ahead of him then, and during those still watches he must have revolved many theories of how the future should be met and mastered. In the old notebook there still remains a well-worn clipping, the words of some unknown writer, which he had preserved and may have consulted as a sort of creed. It is an interesting little document—a prophetic one, the reader may concede:

How to take life.—Take it just as though it was—as it is—an earnest, vital, and important affair. Take it as though you were born to the task of performing a merry part in it—as though the world had awaited for your coming. Take it as though it was a grand opportunity to do and achieve, to carry forward great and good schemes; to help and cheer a suffering, weary, it may be heartbroken, brother. Now and then a man stands aside from the crowd, labors earnestly, steadfastly, confidently, and straightway becomes famous for wisdom, intellect, skill, greatness of some sort. The world wonders, admires, idolizes, and it only illustrates what others may do if they take hold of life with a purpose. The miracle, or the power that elevates the few, is to be found in their industry, application, and perseverance under the promptings of a brave, determined spirit.

The old note-book contains no record of disasters. Horace Bixby, who should know, has declared:

“Sam Clemens never had an accident either as a steersman or as a pilot, except once when he got aground for a few hours in the bagasse (cane) smoke, with no damage to anybody though of course there was some good luck in that too, for the best pilots do not escape trouble, now and then.”

Bixby and Clemens were together that winter on the Alonzo Child, and a letter to Orion contains an account of great feasting which the two enjoyed at a “French restaurant” in New Orleans—“dissipating on a ten-dollar dinner—tell it not to Ma!”—where they had sheephead fish, oysters, birds, mushrooms, and what not, “after which the day was too far gone to do anything.” So it appears that he was not always reading Macaulay or

studying French and astronomy, but sometimes went frivolling with his old chief, now his chum, always his dear friend.

Page 91

Another letter records a visit with Pamela to a picture-gallery in St. Louis where was being exhibited Church's "Heart of the Andes." He describes the picture in detail and with vast enthusiasm.

"I have seen it several times," he concludes, "but it is always a new picture—totally new—you seem to see nothing the second time that you saw the first."

Further along he tells of having taken his mother and the girls—his cousin Ella Creel and another—for a trip down the river to New Orleans.

Ma was delighted with her trip, but she was disgusted with the girls for allowing me to embrace and kiss them—and she was horrified at the 'schottische' as performed by Miss Castle and myself. She was perfectly willing for me to dance until 12 o'clock at the imminent peril of my going to sleep on the after-watch—but then she would top off with a very inconsistent sermon on dancing in general; ending with a terrific broadside aimed at that heresy of heresies, the 'schottische'. I took Ma and the girls in a carriage round that portion of New Orleans where the finest gardens and residences are to be seen, and, although it was a blazing hot, dusty day, they seemed hugely delighted. To use an expression which is commonly ignored in polite society, they were "hell-bent" on stealing some of the luscious-looking oranges from branches which overhung the fence, but I restrained them.

In another letter of this period we get a hint of the future Mark Twain. It was written to John T. Moore, a young clerk on the John J. Roe.

What a fool old Adam was. Had everything his own way; had succeeded in gaining the love of the best-looking girl in the neighborhood, but yet, unsatisfied with his conquest, he had to eat a miserable little apple. Ah, John, if you had been in his place you would not have eaten a mouthful of the apple—that is, if it had required any exertion. I have noticed that you shun exertion. There comes in the difference between us. I court exertion. I love work. Why, sir, when I have a piece of work to perform, I go away to myself, sit down in the shade, and muse over the coming enjoyment. Sometimes I am so industrious that I muse too long.

There remains another letter of this period—a sufficiently curious document. There was in those days a famous New Orleans clairvoyant known as Madame Caprell. Some of the young pilot's friends had visited her and obtained what seemed to be satisfying results. From time to time they had urged him to visit the fortune-teller, and one idle day he concluded to make the experiment. As soon as he came away he wrote to Orion in detail.

Page 92

She's a very pleasant little lady—rather pretty—about 28—say 5 feet 2 1/4—would weigh 116—has black eyes and hair—is polite and intelligent—used good language, and talks much faster than I do. She invited me into the little back parlor, closed the door; and we were alone. We sat down facing each other. Then she asked my age. Then she put her hands before her eyes a moment, and commenced talking as if she had a good deal to say and not much time to say it in. Something after this style: 'Madame.' Yours is a watery planet; you gain your livelihood on the water; but you should have been a lawyer—there is where your talents lie; you might have distinguished yourself as an orator, or as an editor—, you have written a great deal; you write well—but you are rather out of practice; no matter—you will be in practice some day; you have a superb constitution, and as excellent health as any man in the world; you have great powers of endurance; in your profession your strength holds out against the longest sieges without flagging; still, the upper part of your lungs, the top of them, is slightly affected—you must take care of yourself; you do not drink, but you use entirely too much tobacco; and you must stop it; mind, not moderate, but stop the use of it, totally; then I can almost promise you 86, when you will surely die; otherwise, look out for 28, 31, 34, 47, and 65; be careful—for you are not of a long-lived race, that is, on your father's side; you are the only healthy member of your family, and the only one in it who has anything like the certainty of attaining to a great age—so, stop using tobacco, and be careful of yourself.... In some respects you take after your father, but you are much more like your mother, who belongs to the long-lived, energetic side of the house.... You never brought all your energies to bear upon any subject but what you accomplished it—for instance, you are self-made, self-educated.

'S. L. C.' Which proves nothing.

'Madame.' Don't interrupt. When you sought your present occupation, you found a thousand obstacles in your way—obstacles unknown—not even suspected by any save you and me, since you keep such matter to yourself—but you fought your way, and hid the long struggle under a mask of cheerfulness, which saved your friends anxiety on your account. To do all this requires the qualities which I have named.

'S. L. C.' You flatter well, Madame.

'Madame.' Don't interrupt. Up to within a short time you had always lived from hand to mouth—now you are in easy circumstances—for which you need give credit to no one but yourself. The turning-point in your life occurred in 1840-7-8.

'S. L. C.' Which was?

Page 93

'Madame.' A death, perhaps, and this threw you upon the world and made you what you are; it was always intended that you should make yourself; therefore, it was well that this calamity occurred as early as it did. You will never die of water, although your career upon it in the future seems well sprinkled with misfortune. You will continue upon the water for some time yet; you will not retire finally until ten years from now.... What is your brother's age? 23—and a lawyer? and in pursuit of an office? Well, he stands a better chance than the other two, and he may get it; he is too visionary—is always flying off on a new hobby; this will never do—tell him I said so. He is a good lawyer—a very good lawyer—and a fine speaker—is very popular and much respected, and makes many friends; but although he retains their friendship, he loses their confidence by displaying his instability of character.... The land he has now will be very valuable after a while—— 'S. L. C.' Say 250 years hence, or thereabouts, Madame—— 'Madame.' No—less time—but never mind the land, that is a secondary consideration—let him drop that for the present, and devote himself to his business and politics with all his might, for he must hold offices under Government....After a while you will possess a good deal of property—retire at the end of ten years—after which your pursuits will be literary—try the law—you will certainly succeed. I am done now. If you have any questions to ask—ask them freely—and if it be in my power, I will answer without reserve—without reserve. I asked a few questions of minor importance—paid her and left—under the decided impression that going to the fortune-teller's was just as good as going to the opera, and cost scarcely a trifle more—ergo, I will disguise myself and go again, one of these days, when other amusements fail. Now isn't she the devil? That is to say, isn't she a right smart little woman?

When you want money, let Ma know, and she will send it. She and Pamela are always fussing about change, so I sent them a hundred and twenty quarters yesterday—fiddler's change enough to last till I get back, I reckon.

Sam.

In the light of preceding and subsequent events, we must confess that Madame Caprell was "indeed a right smart little woman." She made mistakes enough (the letter is not quoted in full), but when we remember that she not only gave his profession at the moment, but at least suggested his career for the future; that she approximated the year of his father's death as the time when he was thrown upon the world; that she admonished him against his besetting habit, tobacco; that she read, minutely not only his characteristics, but his brother Orion's; that she outlined the struggle in his conquest of the river; that she seemingly had knowledge of Orion's legal bent and his connection with the Tennessee land, all seems remarkable enough, supposing, of course, she had no material means of acquiring knowledge—one can never know certainly about such things.

Page 94

XXIX

THE END OF PILOTING

It is curious, however, that Madame Caprell, with clairvoyant vision, should not have seen an important event then scarcely more than two months distant: the breaking-out of the Civil War, with the closing of the river and the end of Mark Twain's career as a pilot. Perhaps these things were so near as to be "this side" the range of second sight.

There had been plenty of war-talk, but few of the pilots believed that war was really coming. Traveling that great commercial highway, the river, with intercourse both of North and South, they did not believe that any political differences would be allowed to interfere with the nation's trade, or would be settled otherwise than on the street corners, in the halls of legislation, and at the polls. True, several States, including Louisiana, had declared the Union a failure and seceded; but the majority of opinions were not clear as to how far a State had rights in such a matter, or as to what the real meaning of secession might be. Comparatively few believed it meant war. Samuel Clemens had no such belief. His Madame Caprell letter bears date of February 6, 1861, yet contains no mention of war or of any special excitement in New Orleans —no forebodings as to national conditions.

Such things came soon enough: President Lincoln was inaugurated on the 4th of March, and six weeks later Fort Sumter was fired upon. Men began to speak out then and to take sides.

It was a momentous time in the Association Rooms. There were pilots who would go with the Union; there were others who would go with the Confederacy. Horace Bixby was one of the former, and in due time became chief of the Union River Service. Another pilot named Montgomery (Samuel Clemens had once steered for him) declared for the South, and later commanded the Confederate Mississippi fleet. They were all good friends, and their discussions, though warm, were not always acrimonious; but they took sides.

A good many were not very clear as to their opinions. Living both North and South as they did, they saw various phases of the question and divided their sympathies. Some were of one conviction one day and of another the next. Samuel Clemens was of the less radical element. He knew there was a good deal to be said for either cause; furthermore, he was not then bloodthirsty. A pilot-house with its elevated position and transparency seemed a poor place to be in when fighting was going on.

"I'll think about it," he said. "I'm not very anxious to get up into a glass perch and be shot at by either side. I'll go home and reflect on the matter."

He did not realize it, but he had made his last trip as a pilot. It is rather curious that his final brief note-book entry should begin with his future nom de plume—a memorandum of soundings—“mark twain,” and should end with the words “no lead.”

Page 95

He went up the river as a passenger on a steamer named the Uncle Sam. Zeb Leavenworth was one of the pilots, and Sam Clemens usually stood watch with him. They heard war-talk all the way and saw preparations, but they were not molested, though at Memphis they basely escaped the blockade. At Cairo, Illinois, they saw soldiers drilling—troops later commanded by Grant. The Uncle Sam came steaming up toward St. Louis, those on board congratulating themselves on having come through unscathed. They were not quite through, however. Abreast of Jefferson Barracks they suddenly heard the boom of a cannon and saw a great whorl of smoke drifting in their direction. They did not realize that it was a signal—a thunderous halt—and kept straight on. Less than a minute later there was another boom, and a shell exploded directly in front of the pilot-house, breaking a lot of glass and destroying a good deal of the upper decoration. Zeb Leavenworth fell back into a corner with a yell.

“Good Lord Almighty! Sam;” he said, “what do they mean by that?”

Clemens stepped to the wheel and brought the boat around. “I guess they want us to wait a minute, Zeb,” he said.

They were examined and passed. It was the last steamboat to make the trip from New Orleans to St. Louis. Mark Twain’s pilot-days were over. He would have grieved had he known this fact.

“I loved the profession far better than any I have followed since,” he long afterward declared, “and I took a measureless pride in it.”

The dreamy, easy, romantic existence suited him exactly. A sovereign and an autocrat, the pilot’s word was law; he wore his responsibilities as a crown. As long as he lived Samuel Clemens would return to those old days with fondness and affection, and with regret that they were no more.

XXX

THE SOLDIER

Clemens spent a few days in St. Louis (in retirement, for there was a pressing war demand for Mississippi pilots), then went up to Hannibal to visit old friends. They were glad enough to see him, and invited him to join a company of gay military enthusiasts who were organizing to “help Gov. ‘Claib’ Jackson repel the invader.” A good many companies were forming in and about Hannibal, and sometimes purposes were conflicting and badly mixed. Some of the volunteers did not know for a time which invader they intended to drive from Missouri soil, and more than one company in the beginning was made up of young fellows whose chief ambition was to have a lark regardless as to which cause they might eventually espouse.

—[The military organizations of Hannibal and Palmyra, in 1861, were as follows: The Marion Artillery; the Silver Grays; Palmyra Guards; the W. E. Dennis company, and one or two others. Most of them were small private affairs, usually composed of about half-and-half Union and Confederate men, who knew almost nothing of the questions or conditions, and disbanded in a brief time, to attach themselves to the regular service according as they developed convictions. The general idea of these companies was a little camping-out expedition and a good time. One such company one morning received unexpected reinforcements. They saw the approach of the recruits, and, remarking how well drilled the new arrivals seemed to be, mistook them for the enemy and fled.]

Page 96

Samuel Clemens had by this time decided, like Lee, that he would go with his State and lead battalions to victory. The “battalion” in this instance consisted of a little squad of young fellows of his own age, mostly pilots and schoolmates, including Sam Bowen, Ed Stevens, and Ab Grimes, about a dozen, all told. They organized secretly, for the Union militia was likely to come over from Illinois any time and look up any suspicious armies that made an open demonstration. An army might lose enthusiasm and prestige if it spent a night or two in the calaboose.

So they met in a secret place above Bear Creek Hill, just as Tom Sawyer’s red-handed bandits had gathered so long before (a good many of them were of the same lawless lot), and they planned how they would sell their lives on the field of glory, just as Tom Sawyer’s band might have done if it had thought about playing “War,” instead of “Indian” and “Pirate” and “Bandit” with fierce raids on peach orchards and melon patches. Then, on the evening before marching away, they stealthily called on their sweethearts—those who had them did, and the others pretended sweethearts for the occasion—and when it was dark and mysterious they said good-by and suggested that maybe those girls would never see them again. And as always happens in such a case, some of them were in earnest, and two or three of the little group that slipped away that night never did come back, and somewhere sleep in unmarked graves.

The “two Sams”—Sam Bowen and Sam Clemens—called on Patty Gore and Julia Willis for their good-by visit, and, when they left, invited the girls to “walk through the pickets” with them, which they did as far as Bear Creek Hill. The girls didn’t notice any pickets, because the pickets were away calling on girls, too, and probably wouldn’t be back to begin picketing for some time. So the girls stood there and watched the soldiers march up Bear Creek Hill and disappear among the trees.

The army had a good enough time that night, marching through the brush and vines toward New London, though this sort of thing grew rather monotonous by morning. When they took a look at themselves by daylight, with their nondescript dress and accoutrements, there was some thing about it all which appealed to one’s sense of humor rather than to his patriotism. Colonel Ralls, of Ralls County, however, received them cordially and made life happier for them with a good breakfast and some encouraging words. He was authorized to administer the oath of office, he said, and he proceeded to do it, and made them a speech besides; also he sent out notice to some of the neighbors—to Col. Bill Splawn, Farmer Nuck Matson, and others—that the community had an army on its hands and perhaps ought to do something for it. This brought in a number of contributions, provisions, paraphernalia, and certain superfluous horses and mules, which converted the battalion into a cavalry, and made it possible

Page 97

for it to move on to the front without further delay. Samuel Clemens, mounted on a small yellow mule whose tail had been trimmed down to a tassel at the end in a style that suggested his name, Paint Brush, upholstered and supplemented with an extra pair of cowskin boots, a pair of gray blankets, a home-made quilt, frying-pan, a carpet sack, a small valise, an overcoat, an old-fashioned Kentucky rifle, twenty yards of rope, and an umbrella, was a representative unit of the brigade. The proper thing for an army loaded like that was to go into camp, and they did it. They went over on Salt River, near Florida, and camped not far from a farm-house with a big log stable; the latter they used as headquarters. Somebody suggested that when they went into battle they ought to have short hair, so that in a hand-to-hand conflict the enemy could not get hold of it. Tom Lyon found a pair of sheep-shears in the stable and acted as barber. They were not very sharp shears, but the army stood the torture for glory in the field, and a group of little darkies collected from the farm-house to enjoy the performance. The army then elected its officers. William Ely was chosen captain, with Asa Glasscock as first lieutenant. Samuel Clemens was then voted second lieutenant, and there were sergeants and orderlies. There were only three privates when the election was over, and these could not be distinguished by their deportment. There was scarcely any discipline in this army.

Then it set in to rain. It rained by day and it rained by night. Salt River rose until it was bank full and overflowed the bottoms. Twice there was a false night alarm of the enemy approaching, and the battalion went slopping through the mud and brush into the dark, picking out the best way to retreat, plodding miserably back to camp when the alarm was over. Once they fired a volley at a row of mullen stalks, waving on the brow of a hill, and once a picket shot at his own horse that had got loose and had wandered toward him in the dusk.

The rank and file did not care for picket duty. Sam Bowen—ordered by Lieutenant Clemens to go on guard one afternoon—denounced his superior and had to be threatened with court-martial and death. Sam went finally, but he sat in a hot open place and swore at the battalion and the war in general, and finally went to sleep in the broiling sun. These things began to tell on patriotism. Presently Lieutenant Clemens developed a boil, and was obliged to make himself comfortable with some hay in a horse-trough, where he lay most of the day, violently denouncing the war and the fools that invented it. Then word came that “General” Tom Harris, who was in command of the district, was stopping at a farmhouse two miles away, living on the fat of the land.

That settled it. Most of them knew Tom Harris, and they regarded his neglect of them as perfidy. They broke camp without further ceremony.

Page 98

Lieutenant Clemens needed assistance to mount Paint Brush, and the little mule refused to cross the river; so Ab Grimes took the coil of rope, hitched one end of it to his own saddle and the other end to Paint Brush's neck. Grimes was mounted on a big horse, and when he started it was necessary for Paint Brush to follow. Arriving at the farther bank, Grimes looked around, and was horrified to see that the end of the rope led down in the water with no horse and rider in view. He spurred up the bank, and the hat of Lieutenant Clemens and the ears of Paint Brush appeared.

"Ah," said Clemens, as he mopped his face, "do you know that little devil waded all the way across?"

A little beyond the river they met General Harris, who ordered them back to camp. They admonished him to "go there himself." They said they had been in that camp and knew all about it. They were going now where there was food—real food and plenty of it. Then he begged them, but it was no use. By and by they stopped at a farm-house for supplies. A tall, bony woman came to the door:

"You're secesh, ain't you?"

They acknowledged that they were defenders of the cause and that they wanted to buy provisions. The request seemed to inflame her.

"Provisions!" she screamed. "Provisions for secesh, and my husband a colonel in the Union Army. You get out of here!"

She reached for a hickory hoop-pole that stood by the door, and the army moved on. When they arrived at Col. Bill Splawn's that night Colonel Splawn and his family had gone to bed, and it seemed unwise to disturb them. The hungry army camped in the barnyard and crept into the hay-loft to sleep. Presently somebody yelled "Fire!" One of the boys had been smoking and started the hay. Lieutenant Clemens suddenly awakened, made a quick rolling movement from the blaze, and rolled out of a big hay-window into the barnyard below. The rest of the army, startled into action, seized the burning hay and pitched it out of the same window. The lieutenant had sprained his ankle when he struck the ground, and his boil was far from well, but when the burning hay descended he forgot his disabilities. Literally and figuratively this was the final straw. With a voice and vigor suited to the urgencies of the case, he made a spring from under the burning stuff, flung off the remnants, and with them his last vestige of interest in the war. The others, now that the fire was out, seemed to think the incident boisterously amusing. Whereupon the lieutenant rose up and told them, collectively and individually, what he thought of them; also he spoke of the war and the Confederacy, and of the human race at large. They helped him in, then, for his ankle was swelling badly. Next morning, when Colonel Splawn had given them a good breakfast, the army set out for New London.

Page 99

But Lieutenant Clemens never got any farther than Nuck Matson's farm-house. His ankle was so painful by that time that Mrs. Matson had him put to bed, where he stayed for several weeks, recovering from the injury and stress of war. A little negro boy was kept on watch for Union detachments—they were passing pretty frequently now—and when one came in sight the lieutenant was secluded until the danger passed. When he was able to travel, he had had enough of war and the Confederacy. He decided to visit Orion in Keokuk. Orion was a Union abolitionist and might lead him to mend his doctrines.

As for the rest of the army, it was no longer a unit in the field. Its members had drifted this way and that, some to return to their occupations, some to continue in the trade of war. Sam Bowen is said to have been caught by the Federal troops and put to sawing wood in the stockade at Hannibal. Ab (A. C.) Grimes became a noted Confederate spy and is still among those who have lived to furnish the details here set down. Properly officered and disciplined, that detachment would have made as brave soldiers as any. Military effectiveness is a matter of leaders and tactics.

Mark Twain's own *Private History of a 'Campaign that Failed'* is, of course, built on this episode. He gives us a delicious account, even if it does not strikingly resemble the occurrence. The story might have been still better if he had not introduced the shooting of the soldier in the dark. The incident was invented, of course, to present the real horror of war, but it seems incongruous in this burlesque campaign, and, to some extent at least, it missed fire in its intention.

—[In a book recently published, Mark Twain's "nephew" is quoted as authority for the statement that Mark Twain was detailed for river duty, captured, and paroled, captured again, and confined in a tobacco-warehouse in St. Louis, *etc.* Mark Twain had but one nephew: Samuel E. Moffett, whose *Biographical Sketch* (vol. xxii, Mark Twain's Works) contains no such statement; and nothing of the sort occurred.]

XXXI

OVER THE HILLS AND FAR AWAY

When Madame Caprell prophesied that Orion Clemens would hold office under government, she must have seen with true clairvoyant vision. The inauguration of Abraham Lincoln brought Edward Bates into his Cabinet, and Bates was Orion's friend. Orion applied for something, and got it. James W. Nye had been appointed Territorial governor of Nevada, and Orion was made Territorial secretary. You could strain a point and refer to the office as "secretary of state," which was an imposing title. Furthermore, the secretary would be acting governor in the governor's absence, and there would be various subsidiary honors. When Lieutenant Clemens arrived in Keokuk, Orion was in

the first flush of his triumph and needed only money to carry him to the scene of new endeavor. The late lieutenant

Page 100

C. S. A. had accumulated money out of his pilot salary, and there was no comfortable place just then in the active Middle West for an officer of either army who had voluntarily retired from the service. He agreed that if Orion would overlook his recent brief defection from the Union and appoint him now as his (Orion's) secretary, he would supply the funds for both overland passages, and they would start with no unnecessary delay for a country so new that all human beings, regardless of previous affiliations and convictions, were flung into the common fusing-pot and recast in the general mold of pioneer.

The offer was a boon to Orion. He was always eager to forgive, and the money was vitally necessary. In the briefest possible time he had packed his belongings, which included a large unabridged dictionary, and the brothers were on their way to St. Louis for final leave-taking before setting out for the great mysterious land of promise—the Pacific West. From St. Louis they took the boat for St. Jo, whence the Overland stage started, and for six days “plodded” up the shallow, muddy, snaggy Missouri, a new experience for the pilot of the Father of Waters.

In fact, the boat might almost as well have gone to St. Jo by land, for she was walking most of the time, anyhow—climbing over reefs and clambering over snags patiently and laboriously all day long. The captain said she was a “bully” boat, and all she wanted was some “shear” and a bigger wheel. I thought she wanted a pair of stilts, but I had the deep sagacity not to say so.’—[‘Roughing It’.]—

At St. Jo they paid one hundred and fifty dollars apiece for their stage fare (with something extra for the dictionary), and on the twenty-sixth of July, 1861, set out on that long, delightful trip behind sixteen galloping horses—or mules—never stopping except for meals or to change teams, heading steadily into the sunset, following it from horizon to horizon over the billowy plains, across the snow-clad Rockies, covering the seventeen hundred miles between St. Jo and Carson City (including a two-day halt in Salt Lake City) in nineteen glorious days. What an inspiration in such a trip! In ‘Roughing It’ he tells it all, and says: “Even at this day it thrills me through and through to think of the life, the gladness, and the wild sense of freedom that used to make the blood dance in my face on those fine Overland mornings.”

The nights, with the uneven mail-bags for a bed and the bounding dictionary for company, were less exhilarating; but then youth does not mind.

All things being now ready, stowed the uneasy dictionary where it would lie as quiet as possible, and placed the water-canteen and pistols where we could find them in the dark. Then we smoked a final pipe and swapped a final yarn; after which we put the pipes, tobacco, and bag of coin in snug holes and caves among the mail-bags, and made the place as dark as the inside of a cow,

Page 101

as the conductor phrased it in his picturesque way. It was certainly as dark as any place could be—nothing was even dimly visible in it. And finally we rolled ourselves up like silkworms, each person in his own blanket, and sank peacefully to sleep.

Youth loves that sort of thing, despite its inconvenience. And sometimes the clatter of the pony-rider swept by in the night, carrying letters at five dollars apiece and making the Overland trip in eight days; just a quick beat of hoofs in the distance, a dash, and a hail from the darkness, the beat of hoofs again, then only the rumble of the stage and the even, swinging gallop of the mules. Sometimes they got a glimpse of the ponyrider by day—a flash, as it were, as he sped by. And every morning brought new scenery, new phases of frontier life, including, at last, what was to them the strangest phase of all, Mormonism.

They spent two wonderful days at Salt Lake City, that mysterious and remote capital of the great American monarchy, who still flaunts her lawless, orthodox creed the religion of David and Solomon—and thrives. An obliging official made it his business to show them the city and the life there, the result of which would be those amusing chapters in 'Roughing It' by and by. The Overland travelers set out refreshed from Salt Lake City, and with a new supply of delicacies—ham, eggs, and tobacco—things that make such a trip worth while. The author of 'Roughing It' assures us of this:

Nothing helps scenery like ham and eggs. Ham and eggs, and after these a pipe—an old, rank, delicious pipe—ham and eggs and scenery, a "down-grade," a flying coach, a fragrant pipe, and a contented heart—these make happiness. It is what all the ages have struggled for.

But one must read all the story of that long-ago trip. It was a trip so well worth taking, so well worth recording, so well worth reading and rereading to-day. We can only read of it now. The Overland stage long ago made its last trip, and will not start any more. Even if it did, the life and conditions, the very scenery itself, would not be the same.

XXXII

THE PIONEER

It was a hot, dusty August 14th that the stage reached Carson City and drew up before the Ormsby Hotel. It was known that the Territorial secretary was due to arrive; and something in the nature of a reception, with refreshments and frontier hospitality, had been planned. Governor Nye, formerly police commissioner in New York City, had arrived a short time before, and with his party of retainers ("heelers" we would call them now), had made an imposing entrance. Perhaps something of the sort was expected with the advent of the secretary of state. Instead, the committee saw two way-worn

individuals climb down from the stage, unkempt, unshorn—clothed in the roughest of frontier costume, the same they had put on at St. Jo—dusty, grimy, slouchy,

Page 102

and weather-beaten with long days of sun and storm and alkali desert dust. It is not likely there were two more unprepossessing officials on the Pacific coast at that moment than the newly arrived Territorial secretary and his brother: Somebody identified them, and the committee melted away; the half-formed plan of a banquet faded out and was not heard of again. Soap and water and fresh garments worked a transformation; but that first impression had been fatal to festivities of welcome.

Carson City, the capital of Nevada, was a “wooden town,” with a population of two thousand souls. Its main street consisted of a few blocks of small frame stores, some of which are still standing. In ‘*Roughing It*’ the author writes:

In the middle of the town, opposite the stores, was a “Plaza,” which is native to all towns beyond the Rocky Mountains, a large, unfenced, level vacancy with a Liberty Pole in it, and very useful as a place for public auctions, horse trades, and mass-meetings, and likewise for teamsters to camp in. Two other sides of the Plaza were faced by stores, offices, and stables. The rest of Carson City was pretty scattering.

One sees the place pretty clearly from this brief picture of his, but it requires an extract from a letter written to his mother somewhat later to populate it. The mineral excitement was at its height in those days of the early sixties, and had brought together such a congress of nations as only the greed for precious metal can assemble. The sidewalks and streets of Carson, and the Plaza, thronged all day with a motley aggregation—a museum of races, which it was an education merely to gaze upon. Jane Clemens had required him to write everything just as it was —“no better and no worse.”

Well—[he says]—, “Gold Hill” sells at \$5,000 per foot, cash down; “Wild Cat” isn’t worth ten cents. The country is fabulously rich in gold, silver, copper, lead, coal, iron, quicksilver, marble, granite, chalk, plaster of Paris (gypsum), thieves, murderers, desperadoes, ladies, children, lawyers, Christians, Indians, Chinamen, Spaniards, gamblers, sharpeners; coyotes (pronounced ki-yo- ties), poets, preachers, and jackass rabbits. I overheard a gentleman say, the other day, that it was “the d—dest country under the sun,” and that comprehensive conception I fully subscribe to. It never rains here, and the dew never falls. No flowers grow here, and no green thing gladdens the eye. The birds that fly over the land carry their provisions with them. Only the crow and the raven tarry with us. Our city lies in the midst of a desert of the purest, most unadulterated and uncompromising sand, in which infernal soil nothing but that fag-end of vegetable creation, “sage- brush,” ventures to grow. . . . I said we are situated in a flat, sandy desert—true. And surrounded on all sides by such prodigious mountains that when you look disdainfully down (from them) upon the

Page 103

insignificant village of Carson, in that instant you are seized with a burning desire to stretch forth your hand, put the city in your pocket, and walk off with it.

As to churches, I believe they have got a Catholic one here, but, like that one the New York fireman spoke of, I believe “they don’t run her now.”

Carson has been through several phases of change since this was written—for better and for worse. It is a thriving place in these later days, and new farming conditions have improved the country roundabout. But it was a desert outpost then, a catch-all for the human drift which every whirlwind of discovery sweeps along. Gold and silver hunting and mine speculations were the industries—gambling, drinking, and murder were the diversions—of the Nevada capital. Politics developed in due course, though whether as a business or a diversion is not clear at this time.

The Clemens brothers took lodging with a genial Irishwoman, Mrs. Murphy, a New York retainer of Governor Nye, who boarded the camp-followers. —[The Mrs, O’Flannigan of ‘Roughing It’.]—This retinue had come in the hope of Territorial pickings and mine adventure—soldiers of fortune they were, and a good-natured lot all together. One of them, Bob Howland, a nephew of the governor, attracted Samuel Clemens by his clean-cut manner and commanding eye.

“The man who has that eye doesn’t need to go armed,” he wrote later. “He can move upon an armed desperado and quell him and take him a prisoner without saying a single word.” It was the same Bob Howland who would be known by and by as the most fearless man in the Territory; who, as city marshal of Aurora, kept that lawless camp in subjection, and, when the friends of a lot of condemned outlaws were threatening an attack with general massacre, sent the famous message to Governor Nye: “All quiet in Aurora. Five men will be hung in an hour.” And it was quiet, and the programme was carried out. But this is a digression and somewhat premature.

Orion Clemens, anxious for laurels, established himself in the meager fashion which he thought the government would approve; and his brother, finding neither duties nor salary attached to his secondary position, devoted himself mainly to the study of human nature as exhibited under frontier conditions. Sometimes, when the nights were cool, he would build a fire in the office stove, and, with Bob Howland and a few other choice members of the “Brigade” gathered around, would tell river yarns in that inimitable fashion which would win him devoted audiences all his days. His river life had increased his natural languor of habit, and his slow speech heightened the lazy impression which he was never unwilling to convey. His hearers generally regarded him as an easygoing, indolent good fellow with a love of humor—with talent, perhaps—but as one not likely ever to set the world afire. They did not happen to think that the same inclination which

made them crowd about to listen and applaud would one day win for him the attention of all mankind.

Page 104

Within a brief time Sam Clemens (he was never known as otherwise than “Sam” among those pioneers) was about the most conspicuous figure on the Carson streets. His great bushy head of auburn hair, his piercing, twinkling eyes, his loose, lounging walk, his careless disorder of dress, drew the immediate attention even of strangers; made them turn to look a second time and then inquire as to his identity.

He had quickly adapted himself to the frontier mode. Lately a river sovereign and dandy, in fancy percales and patent leathers, he had become the roughest of rough-clad pioneers, in rusty slouch hat, flannel shirt, coarse trousers slopping half in and half out of the heavy cowskin boots. Always something of a barbarian in love with the loose habit of unconvention, he went even further than others and became a sort of paragon of disarray. The more energetic citizens of Carson did not prophesy much for his future among them. Orion Clemens, with the stir and bustle of the official new broom, earned their quick respect; but his brother—well, they often saw him leaning for an hour or more at a time against an awning support at the corner of King and Carson streets, smoking a short clay pipe and staring drowsily at the human kaleidoscope of the Plaza, scarcely changing his position, just watching, studying, lost in contemplation—all of which was harmless enough, of course, but how could any one ever get a return out of employment like that?

Samuel Clemens did not catch the mining fever immediately; there was too much to see at first to consider any special undertaking. The mere coming to the frontier was for the present enough; he had no plans. His chief purpose was to see the world beyond the Rockies, to derive from it such amusement and profit as might fall in his way. The war would end, by and by, and he would go back to the river, no doubt. He was already not far from homesick for the “States” and his associations there. He closed one letter:

I heard a military band play “What Are the Wild Waves Saying” the other night, and it brought Ella Creel and Belle (Stotts) across the desert in an instant, for they sang the song in Orion’s yard the first time I ever heard it. It was like meeting an old friend. I tell you I could have swallowed that whole band, trombone and all, if such a compliment would have been any gratification to them.

His friends contracted the mining mania; Bob Howland and Raish Phillips went down to Aurora and acquired “feet” in mini-claims and wrote him enthusiastic letters. With Captain Nye, the governor’s brother, he visited them and was presented with an interest which permitted him to contribute an assessment every now and then toward the development of the mine; but his enthusiasm still languished.

He was interested more in the native riches above ground than in those concealed under it. He had heard that the timber around Lake Bigler (Tahoe) promised vast wealth which could be had for the asking. The lake itself and the adjacent mountains were said to be beautiful beyond the dream of art. He decided to locate a timber claim on its shores.

Page 105

He made the trip afoot with a young Ohio lad, John Kinney, and the account of this trip as set down in 'Roughing It' is one of the best things in the book. The lake proved all they had expected—more than they expected; it was a veritable habitation of the gods, with its delicious, winy atmosphere, its vast colonnades of pines, its measureless depths of water, so clear that to drift on it was like floating high aloft in mid-nothingness. They staked out a timber claim and made a semblance of fencing it and of building a habitation, to comply with the law; but their chief employment was a complete abandonment to the quiet luxury of that dim solitude: wandering among the trees, lounging along the shore, or drifting on that transparent, insubstantial sea. They did not sleep in their house, he says:

"It never occurred to us, for one thing; and, besides, it was built to hold the ground, and that was enough. We did not wish to strain it."

They lived by their camp-fire on the borders of the lake, and one day—it was just at nightfall—it got away from them, fired the forest, and destroyed their fence and habitation. His picture in 'Roughing It' of the superb night spectacle, the mighty mountain conflagration reflected in the waters of the lake, is splendidly vivid. The reader may wish to compare it with this extract from a letter written to Pamela at the time.

The level ranks of flame were relieved at intervals by the standard-bearers, as we called the tall, dead trees, wrapped in fire, and waving their blazing banners a hundred feet in the air. Then we could turn from the scene to the lake, and see every branch and leaf and cataract of flame upon its banks perfectly reflected, as in a gleaming, fiery mirror. The mighty roaring of the conflagration, together with our solitary and somewhat unsafe position (for there was no one within six miles of us), rendered the scene very impressive. Occasionally one of us would remove his pipe from his mouth and say, "Superb, magnificent!—beautiful—but—by the Lord God Almighty, if we attempt to sleep in this little patch to-night, we'll never live till morning!"

This is good writing too, but it lacks the fancy and the choice of phrasing which would develop later. The fire ended their first excursion to Tahoe, but they made others and located other claims—claims in which the "folks at home," Mr. Moffett, James Lampton, and others, were included. It was the same James Lampton who would one day serve as a model for Colonel Sellers. Evidently Samuel Clemens had a good opinion of his business capacity in that earlier day, for he writes:

This is just the country for cousin Jim to live in. I don't believe it would take him six months to make \$100,000 here if he had \$3,000 to commence with. I suppose he can't leave his family, though.

Further along in the same letter his own overflowing Seller's optimism develops.

Page 106

Orion and I have confidence enough in this country to think that if the war lets us alone we can make Mr. Moffett rich without its ever costing him a cent or a particle of trouble.

This letter bears date of October 25th, and from it we gather that a certain interest in mining claims had by this time developed.

We have got about 1,650 feet of mining ground, and, if it proves good, Mr. Moffett's name will go in, and if not I can get "feet" for him in the spring.

You see, Pamela, the trouble does not consist in getting mining ground—for there is plenty enough—but the money to work it with after you get it.

He refers to Pamela's two little children, his niece Annie and Baby Sam, —[Samuel E. Moffett, in later life a well-known journalist and editor.] —and promises to enter claims for them—timber claims probably—for he was by no means sanguine as yet concerning the mines. That was a long time ago. Tahoe land is sold by the lot, now, to summer residents. Those claims would have been riches to-day, but they were all abandoned presently, forgotten in the delirium which goes only with the pursuit of precious ores.

XXXIII

THE PROSPECTOR

It was not until early winter that Samuel Clemens got the real mining infection. Everybody had it by that time; the miracle is that he had not fallen an earlier victim. The wildest stories of sudden fortune were in the air, some of them undoubtedly true. Men had gone to bed paupers, on the verge of starvation, and awakened to find themselves millionaires. Others had sold for a song claims that had been suddenly found to be fairly stuffed with precious ores. Cart-loads of bricks—silver and gold—daily drove through the streets.

In the midst of these things reports came from the newly opened Humboldt region—flamed up with a radiance that was fairly blinding. The papers declared that Humboldt County "was the richest mineral region on God's footstool." The mountains were said to be literally bursting with gold and silver. A correspondent of the daily Territorial Enterprise fairly wallowed in rhetoric, yet found words inadequate to paint the measureless wealth of the Humboldt mines. No wonder those not already mad speedily became so. No wonder Samuel Clemens, with his natural tendency to speculative optimism, yielded to the epidemic and became as "frenzied as the craziest." The air to him suddenly began to shimmer; all his thoughts were of "leads" and "ledges" and

“veins”; all his clouds had silver linings; all his dreams were of gold. He joined an expedition at once; he reproached himself bitterly for not having started earlier.

Page 107

Hurry was the word! We wasted no time. Our party consisted of four persons—a blacksmith sixty years of age, two young lawyers, and myself. We bought a wagon and two miserable old horses. We put 1,800 pounds of provisions and mining tools in the wagon and drove out of Carson on a chilly December afternoon.

In a letter to his mother he states that besides provisions and mining tools, their load consisted of certain luxuries *viz.*, ten pounds of killikinick, Watts's Hymns, fourteen decks of cards, Dombey and Son, a cribbage-board, one small keg of lager-beer, and the "Carmina Sacra."

The two young lawyers were A. W.(Gus) Oliver (Oliphant in 'Roughing It'), and W. H. Clagget. Sam Clemens had known Billy Clagget as a law student in Keokuk, and they were brought together now by this association. Both Clagget and Oliver were promising young men, and would be heard from in time. The blacksmith's name was Tillou (Ballou), a sturdy, honest soul with a useful knowledge of mining and the repair of tools. There were also two dogs in the party—a small curly-tailed mongrel, Curney, the property of Mr. Tillou, and a young hound. The combination seemed a strong one.

It proved a weak one in the matter of horses. Oliver and Clemens had furnished the team, and their selection had not been of the best. It was two hundred miles to Humboldt, mostly across sand. The horses could not drag their load and the miners too, so the miners got out. Then they found it necessary to push.

Not because we were fond of it, Ma—oh, no! but on Bunker's account. Bunker was the "near" horse on the larboard side, named after the attorney-general of this Territory. My horse—and I am sorry you do not know him personally, Ma, for I feel toward him, sometimes, as if he were a blood relation of our family—he is so lazy, you know—my horse—I was going to say, was the "off" horse on the starboard side. But it was on Bunker's account, principally, that we pushed behind the wagon. In fact, Ma, that horse had something on his mind all the way to Humboldt.—[S. L. C. to his mother. Published in the Keokuk (Iowa) Gate city.]—

So they had to push, and most of that two hundred miles through snow and sand storm they continued to push and swear and groan, sustained only by the thought that they must arrive at last, when their troubles would all be at an end, for they would be millionaires in a brief time and never know want or fatigue any more.

There were compensations: the camp-fire at night was cheerful, the food satisfying. They bundled close under the blankets and, when it was too cold to sleep, looked up at the stars, while the future entertainer of kings would spin yarn after yarn that made his hearers forget their discomforts. Judge Oliver, the last one of the party alive, in a recent letter to the writer of this history, says:

Page 108

He was the life of the camp; but sometimes there would come a reaction and he could hardly speak for a day or two. One day a pack of wolves chased us, and the hound Sam speaks of never stopped to look back till he reached the next station, many miles ahead.

Judge Oliver adds that an Indian war had just ended, and that they occasionally passed the charred ruin of a shack, and new graves: This was disturbing enough. Then they came to that desolation of desolations, the Alkali Desert, where the sand is of unknown depth, where the road is strewn thickly with the carcasses of dead beasts of burden, the charred remains of wagons, chains, bolts, and screws, which thirsty emigrants, grown desperate, have thrown away in the grand hope of being able, when less encumbered, to reach water.

They traveled all day and night, pushing through that fierce, waterless waste to reach camp on the other side. It was three o'clock in the morning when they got across and dropped down utterly exhausted. Judge Oliver in his letter tells what happened then:

The sun was high in the heavens when we were aroused from our sleep by a yelling band of Piute warriors. We were upon our feet in an instant. The pictures of burning cabins and the lonely graves we had passed were in our minds. Our scalps were still our own, and not dangling from the belts of our visitors. Sam pulled himself together, put his hand on his head as if to make sure he had not been scalped, and then with his inimitable drawl said: "Boys, they have left us our scalps. Let's give them all the flour and sugar they ask for." And we did give them a good supply, for we were grateful.

They were eleven weary days pushing their wagon and team the two hundred miles to Unionville, Humboldt County, arriving at last in a driving snow-storm. Unionville consisted of eleven poor cabins built in the bottom of a canon, five on one side and six facing them on the other. They were poor, three-sided, one-room huts, the fourth side formed by the hill; the roof, a spread of white cotton. Stones used to roll down on them sometimes, and Mark Twain tells of live stock—specifically of a mule and cow—that interrupted the patient, long-suffering Oliver, who was trying to write poetry, and only complained when at last "an entire cow came rolling down the hill, crashed through on the table, and made a shapeless wreck of everything."—['The Innocents Abroad.']

Judge Oliver still does not complain; but he denies the cow. He says there were no cows in Humboldt in those days, so perhaps it was only a literary cow, though in any case it will long survive. Judge Oliver's name will go down with it to posterity.

In the letter which Samuel Clemens wrote home he tells of what they found in Unionville.

Page 109

"National" there was selling at \$50 per foot and assayed \$2,496 per ton at the mint in San Francisco. And the "Alda Nueva," "Peru," "Delirio," "Congress," "Independent," and others were immensely rich leads. And moreover, having winning ways with us, we could get "feet" enough to make us all rich one of these days.

"I confess with shame," says the author of 'Roughing It', "that I expected to find masses of silver lying all about the ground." And he adds that he slipped away from the cabin to find a claim on his own account, and tells how he came staggering back under a load of golden specimens; also how his specimens proved to be only worthless mica; and how he learned that in mining nothing that glitters is gold. His account in 'Roughing It' of the Humboldt mining experience is sufficiently good history to make detail here unnecessary. Tillou instructed them in prospecting, and in time they located a fairly promising claim. They went to work on it with pick and shovel, then with drill and blasting-powder. Then they gave it up.

"One week of this satisfied me. I resigned."

They tried to tunnel, but soon resigned again. It was pleasanter to prospect and locate and trade claims and acquire feet in every new ledge than it was to dig-and about as profitable. The golden reports of Humboldt had been based on assays of selected rich specimens, and were mainly delirium and insanity. The Clemens-Clagget-Oliver-Tillou combination never touched their claims again with pick and shovel, though their faith, or at least their hope, in them did not immediately die. Billy Clagget put out his shingle as notary public, and Gus Oliver put out his as probate judge. Sam Clemens and Tillou, with a fat-witted, arrogant Prussian named Pfersdoff (Ollendorf) set out for Carson City. It is not certain what became of the wagon and team, or of the two dogs.

The Carson travelers were water-bound at a tavern on the Carson River (the scene of the "Arkansas" sketch), with a fighting, drinking lot. Pfersdoff got them nearly drowned getting away, and finally succeeded in getting them absolutely lost in the snow. The author of 'Roughing It' tells us how they gave themselves up to die, and how each swore off whatever he had in the way of an evil habit, how they cast their tempters-tobacco, cards, and whisky-into the snow. He further tells us how next morning, when they woke to find themselves alive, within a few rods of a hostelry, they surreptitiously dug up those things again and, deep in shame and luxury, resumed their fallen ways: It was the 29th of January when they reached Carson City. They had been gone not quite two months, one of which had been spent in travel. It was a brief period, but it contained an episode, and it seemed like years.

XXXIV

TERRITORIAL CHARACTERISTICS

Page 110

Meantime, the Territorial secretary had found difficulties in launching the ship of state. There was no legislative hall in Carson City; and if Abram Curry, one of the original owners of the celebrated Gould and Curry mine—"Curry—old Curry—old Abe Curry," as he called himself—had not tendered the use of a hall rent free, the first legislature would have been obliged to "sit in the desert." Furthermore, Orion had met with certain acute troubles of his own. The government at Washington had not appreciated his economies in the matter of cheap office rental, and it had stipulated the price which he was to pay for public printing and various other services—prices fixed according to Eastern standards. These prices did not obtain in Nevada, and when Orion, confident that because of his other economies the comptroller would stretch a point and allow the increased frontier tariff, he was met with the usual thick-headed official lack of imagination, with the result that the excess paid was deducted from his slender salary. With a man of less conscience this condition would easily have been offset by another wherein other rates, less arbitrary, would have been adjusted to negotiate the official deficit. With Orion Clemens such a remedy was not even considered; yielding, unstable, blown by every wind of influence though he was, Orion's integrity was a rock.

Governor Nye was among those who presently made this discovery. Old politician that he was—former police commissioner of New York City—Nye took care of his own problems in the customary manner. To him, politics was simply a game—to be played to win. He was a popular, jovial man, well liked and thought of, but he did not lie awake, as Orion did, planning economies for the government, or how to make up excess charges out of his salary. To him Nevada was simply a doorway to the United States Senate, and in the mean time his brigade required official recognition and perquisites. The governor found Orion Clemens an impediment to this policy. Orion could not be brought to a proper political understanding of "special bills and accounts," and relations between the secretary of state and the governor were becoming strained.

It was about this time that the man who had been potentate of the pilot-house of a Mississippi River steamer returned from Humboldt. He was fond of the governor, but he had still higher regard for the family integrity. When he had heard Orion's troubled story, he called on Governor Nye and delivered himself in his own fashion. In his former employments he had acquired a vocabulary and moral backbone sufficient to his needs. We may regret that no stenographic report was made of the interview. It would be priceless now. But it is lost; we only know that Orion's rectitude was not again assailed, and that curiously enough Governor Nye apparently conceived a strong admiration and respect for his brother.

Page 111

Samuel Clemens, miner, remained but a brief time in Carson City—only long enough to arrange for a new and more persistent venture. He did not confess his Humboldt failure to his people; in fact, he had not as yet confessed it to himself; his avowed purpose was to return to Humboldt after a brief investigation of the Esmeralda mines. He had been paying heavy assessments on his holdings there; and, with a knowledge of mining gained at Unionville, he felt that his personal attention at Aurora might be important. As a matter of fact, he was by this time fairly daft on the subject of mines and mining, with the rest of the community for company.

His earlier praises of the wonders and climate of Tahoe had inspired his sister Pamela, always frail, with a desire to visit that health-giving land. Perhaps he felt that he recommended the country somewhat too highly.

“By George, Pamela,” he said, “I begin to fear that I have invoked a spirit of some kind or other, which I will find more than difficult to allay.” He proceeds to recommend California as a residence for any or all of them, but he is clearly doubtful concerning Nevada.

Some people are malicious enough to think that if the devil were set at liberty and told to confine himself to Nevada Territory, he would come here and look sadly around awhile, and then get homesick and go back to hell again Why, I have had my whiskers and mustaches so full of alkali dust that you’d have thought I worked in a starch factory and boarded in a flour barrel.

But then he can no longer restrain his youth and optimism. How could he, with a fortune so plainly in view? It was already in his grasp in imagination; he was on the way home with it.

I expect to return to St. Louis in July—per steamer. I don’t say that I will return then, or that I shall be able to do it—but I expect to—you bet. I came down here from Humboldt, in order to look after our Esmeralda interests. Yesterday, Bob Howland arrived here, and I have had a talk with him. He owns with me in the “Horatio and Derby” ledge. He says our tunnel is in 52 feet, and a small stream of water has been struck, which bids fair to become a “big thing” by the time the ledge is reached—sufficient to supply a mill. Now, if you knew anything of the value of water here, you would perceive at a glance that if the water should amount to 50 or 100 inches, we wouldn’t care whether school kept or not. If the ledge should prove to be worthless, we’d sell the water for money enough to give us quite a lift. But, you see, the ledge will not prove to be worthless. We have located, near by, a fine site for a mill, and when we strike the ledge, you know, we’ll have a mill- site, water-power, and payrock, all handy. Then we sha’n’t care whether we have capital or not. Mill folks will build us a mill, and wait for their pay. If nothing goes wrong, we’ll strike the ledge in June—and if we do, I’ll be home in July, you know.

He pauses at this point for a paragraph of self-analysis—characteristic and crystal-clear.

Page 112

So, just keep your clothes on, Pamela, until I come. Don't you know that undemonstrated human calculations won't do to bet on? Don't you know that I have only talked, as yet, but proved nothing? Don't you know that I have expended money in this country but have made none myself? Don't you know that I have never held in my hands a gold or silver bar that belonged to me? Don't you know that it's all talk and no cider so far? Don't you know that people who always feel jolly, no matter where they are or what happens to them—who have the organ of Hope preposterously developed—who are endowed with an unconcealable sanguine temperament—who never feel concerned about the price of corn—and who cannot, by any possibility, discover any but the bright side of a picture—are very apt to go to extremes and exaggerate with 40-horse microscopic power? But-but

In the bright lexicon of youth,
There is no such word as Fail—

and I'll prove it!

Whereupon, he lets himself go again, full-tilt:

By George, if I just had a thousand dollars I'd be all right! Now there's the "Horatio," for instance. There are five or six shareholders in it, and I know I could buy half of their interests at, say \$20 per foot, now that flour is worth \$50 per barrel and they are pressed for money, but I am hard up myself, and can't buy—and in June they'll strike the ledge, and then "good-by canary." I can't get it for love or money. Twenty dollars a foot! Think of it! For ground that is proven to be rich. Twenty dollars, Madam- and we wouldn't part with a foot of our 75 for five times the sum. So it will be in Humboldt next summer. The boys will get pushed and sell ground for a song that is worth a fortune. But I am at the helm now. I have convinced Orion that he hasn't business talent enough to carry on a peanut-stand, and he has solemnly promised me that he will meddle no more with mining or other matters not connected with the secretary's office. So, you see, if mines are to be bought or sold, or tunnels run or shafts sunk, parties have to come to me—and me only. I'm the "firm," you know.

There are pages of this, all glowing with golden expectations and plans. Ah, well! we have all written such letters home at one time and another-of gold-mines of one form or another.

He closes at last with a bit of pleasantry for his mother.

Ma says: "It looks like a man can't hold public office and be honest." Why, certainly not, Madam. A man can't hold public office and be honest. Lord bless you, it is a common practice with Orion to go about town stealing little things that happen to be lying around loose. And I don't remember having heard him speak the truth since we have been in

Nevada. He even tries to prevail upon me to do these things, Ma, but I wasn't brought up in that way, you know. You showed the public

Page 113

what you could do in that line when you raised me, Madam. But then you ought to have raised me first, so that Orion could have had the benefit of my example. Do you know that he stole all the stamps out of an 8-stamp quartz-mill one night, and brought them home under his overcoat and hid them in the back room?

XXXV

THE MINER

He had about exhausted his own funds by this time, and it was necessary that Orion should become the financier. The brothers owned their Esmeralda claims in partnership, and it was agreed that Orion, out of his modest depleted pay, should furnish the means, while the other would go actively into the field and develop their riches. Neither had the slightest doubt but that they would be millionaires presently, and both were willing to struggle and starve for the few intervening weeks.

It was February when the printer-pilot-miner arrived in Aurora, that rough, turbulent camp of the Esmeralda district lying about one hundred miles south of Carson City, on the edge of California, in the Sierra slopes. Everything was frozen and covered with snow; but there was no lack of excitement and prospecting and grabbing for "feet" in this ledge and that, buried deep under the ice and drift. The new arrival camped with Horatio Phillips (Raish), in a tiny cabin with a domestic roof (the ruin of it still stands), and they cooked and bunked together and combined their resources in a common fund. Bob Howland joined them presently, and later an experienced miner, Calvin H. Higbie (Cal), one day to be immortalized in the story of 'Roughing It' and in the dedication of that book. Around the cabin stove they would gather, and paw over their specimens, or test them with blow-pipe and "horn" spoon, after which they would plan tunnels and figure estimates of prospective wealth. Never mind if the food was poor and scanty, and the chill wind came in everywhere, and the roof leaked like a filter; they were living in a land where all the mountains were banked with nuggets, where all the rivers ran gold. Bob Howland declared later that they used to go out at night and gather up empty champagne-bottles and fruit-tins and pile them in the rear of their cabin to convey to others the appearance of affluence and high living. When they lacked for other employment and were likely to be discouraged, the ex-pilot would "ride the bunk" and smoke and, without money and without price, distribute riches more valuable than any they would ever dig out of those Esmeralda Hills. At other times he talked little or not at all, but sat in one corner and wrote, wholly oblivious of his surroundings. They thought he was writing letters, though letters were not many and only to Orion during this period. It was the old literary impulse stirring again, the desire to set things down for their own sake, the natural hunger for print. One or two of his earlier letters home had found their way into a Keokuk paper

Page 114

—the ‘Gate City’. Copies containing them had gone back to Orion, who had shown them to a representative of the Territorial Enterprise, a young man named Barstow, who thought them amusing. The Enterprise reprinted at least one of these letters, or portions of it, and with this encouragement the author of it sent an occasional contribution direct to that paper over the pen-name “Josh.” He did not care to sign his own name. He was a miner who was soon to be a magnate; he had no desire to be known as a camp scribbler.

He received no pay for these offerings, and expected none. They were sketches of a broadly burlesque sort, the robust horse-play kind of humor that belongs to the frontier. They were not especially promising efforts. One of them was about an old rackabones of a horse, a sort of preliminary study for “Oahu,” of the Sandwich Islands, or “Baalbec” and “Jericho,” of Syria. If any one had told him, or had told any reader of this sketch, that the author of it was knocking at the door of the house of fame such a person’s judgment or sincerity would have been open to doubt. Nevertheless, it was true, though the knock was timid and halting and the summons to cross the threshold long delayed.

A winter mining-camp is the most bleak and comfortless of places. The saloon and gambling-house furnished the only real warmth and cheer. Our Aurora miners would have been less than human, or more, if they had not found diversion now and then in the happy harbors of sin. Once there was a great ball given at a newly opened pavilion, and Sam Clemens is said to have distinguished himself by his unrestrained and spontaneous enjoyment of the tripping harmony. Cal Higbie, who was present, writes:

In changing partners, whenever he saw a hand raised he would grasp it with great pleasure and sail off into another set, oblivious to his surroundings. Sometimes he would act as though there was no use in trying to go right or to dance like other people, and with his eyes closed he would do a hoe-down or a double-shuffle all alone, talking to himself and saying that he never dreamed there was so much pleasure to be obtained at a ball. It was all as natural as a child’s play. By the second set, all the ladies were falling over themselves to get him for a partner, and most of the crowd, too full of mirth to dance, were standing or sitting around, dying with laughter.

What a child he always was—always, to the very end? With the first break of winter the excitement that had been fermenting and stewing around camp stoves overflowed into the streets, washed up the gullies, and assailed the hills. There came then a period of madness, beside which the Humboldt excitement had been mere intoxication. Higbie says:

Page 115

It was amazing how wild the people became all over the Pacific coast. In San Francisco and other large cities barbers, hack- drivers, servant-girls, merchants, and nearly every class of people would club together and send agents representing all the way from \$5,000 to \$500,000 or more to buy mines. They would buy anything. in the shape of quartz, whether it contained any mineral value or not.

The letters which went from the Aurora miner to Orion are humanly documentary. They are likely to be staccato in their movement; they show nervous haste in their composition, eagerness, and suppressed excitement; they are not always coherent; they are seldom humorous, except in a savage way; they are often profane; they are likely to be violent. Even the handwriting has a terse look; the flourish of youth has gone out of it. Altogether they reveal the tense anxiety of the gambling mania of which mining is the ultimate form. An extract from a letter of April is a fair exhibit:

Work not yet begun on the "Horatio and Derby"—haven't seen it yet. It is still in the snow. Shall begin on it within 3 or 4 weeks—strike the ledge in July: Guess it is good—worth from \$30 to \$50 a foot in California....

Man named Gebhart shot here yesterday while trying to defend a claim on Last Chance Hill. Expect he will die.

These mills here are not worth a d—n—except Clayton's—and it is not in full working trim yet.

Send me \$40 or \$50—by mail-immediately. I go to work to-morrow with pick and shovel. Something's got to come, by G—, before I let go here.

By the end of April work had become active in the mines, though the snow in places was still deep and the ground stony with frost. On the 28th he writes:

I have been at work all day blasting and digging, and d—ning one of our new claims—"Dashaway"—which I don't think a great deal of, but which I am willing to try. We are down, now, 10 or 12 a feet. We are following down under the ledge, but not taking it out. If we get up a windlass to-morrow we shall take out the ledge, and see whether it is worth anything or not.

It must have been hard work picking away at the flinty ledges in the cold; and the "Dashaway" would seem to have proven a disappointment, for there is no promising mention of it again. Instead, we hear of the "Flyaway;" and "Annipolitan" and the "Live Yankee" and of a dozen others, each of which holds out the beacon of hope for a little while and then passes from notice forever. In May it is the "Monitor" that is sure to bring affluence, though realization is no longer regarded as immediate.

To use a French expression, I have “got my d——d satisfy” at last.
Two years’ time will make us capitalists, in spite of anything.

Page 116

Therefore we need fret and fume and worry and doubt no more, but just lie still and put up with privation for six months. Perhaps 3 months will “let us out.” Then, if government refuses to pay the rent on your new office we can do it ourselves. We have got to wait six weeks, anyhow, for a dividend—maybe longer—but that it will come there is no shadow of a doubt. I have got the thing sifted down to a dead moral certainty. I own one-eighth of the new “Monitor Ledge, Clemens Company,” and money can’t buy a foot of it; because I know it to contain our fortune. The ledge is six feet wide, and one needs no glass to see gold and silver in it...When you and I came out here we did not expect ’63 or ’64 to find us rich men—and if that proposition had been made we would have accepted it gladly. Now, it is made. I am willing, now, that “Neary’s tunnel” or anybody else’s tunnel shall succeed. Some of them may beat us a few months, but we shall be on hand in the fullness of time, as sure as fate. I would hate to swap chances with any member of the tribe

It is the same man who twenty-five years later would fasten his faith and capital to a type-setting machine and refuse to exchange stock in it, share for share, with the Mergenthaler linotype. He adds:

But I have struck my tent in Esmeralda, and I care for no mines but those which I can superintend myself. I am a citizen here now, and I am satisfied, although Ratio and I are “strapped” and we haven’t three days’ rations in the house.... I shall work the “Monitor” and the other claims with my own hands. I prospected 3/4 of a pound of “Monitor” yesterday, and Raish reduced it with the blow-pipe, and got about 10 or 12 cents in gold and silver, besides the other half of it which we spilt on the floor and didn’t get....I tried to break a handsome chunk from a huge piece of my darling “Monitor” which we brought from the croppings yesterday, but it all splintered up, and I send you the scraps. I call that “choice”—any d—d fool would.

Don’t ask if it has been assayed, for it hasn’t. It don’t need it.
It is simply able to speak for itself. It is six feet wide on top,
and traversed through with veins whose color proclaims their worth.

What the devil does a man want with any more feet when he owns in
the invincible bomb-proof “Monitor”?

There is much more of this, and other such letters, most of them ending with demands for money. The living, the tools, the blasting-powder, and the help eat it up faster than Orion’s salary can grow.

“Send me \$50 or \$100, all you can spare; put away \$150 subject to my call—we shall need it soon for the tunnel.” The letters are full of such admonition, and Orion, more insane, if anything, than his brother, is scraping his dollars and pennies together to keep the mines going. He is constantly warned to buy no claims on his own account and

promises faithfully, but cannot resist now and then when luring baits are laid before him, though such ventures invariably result in violent and profane protests from Aurora.

Page 117

"The pick and shovel are the only claims I have any confidence in now," the miner concludes, after one fierce outburst. "My back is sore, and my hands are blistered with handling them to-day."

But even the pick and shovel did not inspire confidence a little later. He writes that the work goes slowly, very slowly, but that they still hope to strike it some day. "But—if we strike it rich—I've lost my guess, that's all." Then he adds: "Couldn't go on the hill to-day. It snowed. It always snows here, I expect"; and the final heart-sick line, "Don't you suppose they have pretty much quit writing at home?"

This is midsummer, and snow still interferes with the work. One feels the dreary uselessness of the quest.

Yet resolution did not wholly die, or even enthusiasm. These things were as recurrent as new prospects, which were plentiful enough. In a still subsequent letter he declares that he will never look upon his mother's face again, or his sister's, or get married, or revisit the "Banner State," until he is a rich man, though there is less assurance than desperation in the words.

In 'Roughing It' the author tells us that, when flour had reached one dollar a pound and he could no longer get the dollar, he abandoned mining and went to milling "as a common laborer in a quartz-mill at ten dollars a week." This statement requires modification. It was not entirely for the money that he undertook the laborious task of washing "riffles" and "screening tailings." The money was welcome enough, no doubt, but the greater purpose was to learn refining, so that when his mines developed he could establish his own mill and personally superintend the work. It is like him to wish us to believe that he was obliged to give up being a mining magnate to become a laborer in a quartz-mill, for there is a grim humor in the confession. That he abandoned the milling experiment at the end of a week is a true statement. He got a violent cold in the damp place, and came near getting salivated, he says in a letter, "working in the quicksilver and chemicals. I hardly think I shall try the experiment again. It is a confining business, and I will not be confined for love or money."

As recreation after this trying experience, Higbie took him on a tour, prospecting for the traditional "Cement Mine," a lost claim where, in a deposit of cement rock, gold nuggets were said to be as thick as raisins in a fruitcake. They did not find the mine, but they visited Mono Lake—that ghastly, lifeless alkali sea among the hills, which in 'Roughing It' he has so vividly pictured. It was good to get away from the stress of things; and they repeated the experiment. They made a walking trip to Yosemite, carrying their packs, camping and fishing in that far, tremendous isolation, which in those days few human beings had ever visited at all. Such trips furnished a delicious respite from the fevered struggle around tunnel and shaft. Amid mountain-peaks and giant forests and by tumbling falls the quest for gold hardly seemed worth while. More than once that

summer he went alone into the wilderness to find his balance and to get away entirely from humankind.

Page 118

XXXVI

LAST MINING DAYS

It was late in July when he wrote:

If I do not forget it, I will send you, per next mail, a pinch of decom. (decomposed rock) which I pinched with thumb and finger from Wide West ledge a while ago. Raish and I have secured 200 out of a company with 400 ft. in it, which perhaps (the ledge, I mean) is a spur from the W. W.—our shaft is about 100 ft. from the W. W. shaft. In order to get in, we agreed to sink 30 ft. We have sublet to another man for 50 ft., and we pay for powder and sharpening tools.

This was the “Blind Lead” claim of Roughing It, but the episode as set down in that book is somewhat dramatized. It is quite true that he visited and nursed Captain Nye while Higbie was off following the “Cement” ‘ignus fatuus’ and that the “Wide West” holdings were forfeited through neglect. But if the loss was regarded as a heavy one, the letters fail to show it. It is a matter of dispute to-day whether or not the claim was ever of any value. A well-known California author—[Ella Sterling Cummins, author of *The Story of the Files*, etc]—declares:

No one need to fear that he ran any chance of being a millionaire through the “Wide West” mine, for the writer, as a child, played over that historic spot and saw only a shut-down mill and desolate hole in the ground to mark the spot where over-hopeful men had sunk thousands and thousands, that they never recovered.

The “Blind Lead” episode, as related, is presumably a tale of what might have happened—a possibility rather than an actuality. It is vividly true in atmosphere, however, and forms a strong and natural climax for closing the mining episode, while the literary privilege warrants any liberties he may have taken for art’s sake.

In reality the close of his mining career was not sudden and spectacular; it was a lingering close, a reluctant and gradual surrender. The “Josh” letters to the *Enterprise* had awakened at least a measure of interest, and Orion had not failed to identify their author when any promising occasion offered; as a result certain tentative overtures had been made for similar material. Orion eagerly communicated such chances, for the money situation was becoming a desperate one. A letter from the Aurora miner written near the end of July presents the situation very fully. An extract or two will be sufficient:

My debts are greater than I thought for—I bought \$25 worth of clothing and sent \$25 to Higbie, in the cement diggings. I owe about \$45 or \$50, and have got about \$45 in my pocket. But how in the h—I am going to live on something over \$100 until October or November is singular. The fact is, I must have something to do, and that shortly, too....

Now write to the Sacramento Union folks, or to Marsh, and tell them I'll write as many letters a week as they want for \$10 a week. My board

Page 119

must be paid. Tell them I have corresponded with the N. Orleans Crescent and other papers—and the Enterprise. If they want letters from here—who'll run from morning till night collecting material cheaper? I'll write a short letter twice a week, for the present for the 'Age', for \$5 per week. Now it has been a long time since I couldn't make my own living, and it shall be a long time before I loaf another year.

Nothing came of these possibilities, but about this time Barstow, of the Enterprise, conferred with Joseph T. Goodman, editor and owner of the paper, as to the advisability of adding the author of the "Josh" letters to their local staff. Joe Goodman, who had as keen a literary perception as any man that ever pitched a journalistic tent on the Pacific coast (and there could be no higher praise than that), looked over the letters and agreed with Barstow that the man who wrote them had "something in him." Two of the sketches in particular he thought promising. One of them was a burlesque report of an egotistical lecturer who was referred to as "Professor Personal Pronoun." It closed by stating that it was "impossible to print his lecture in full, as the type-cases had run out of capital I's." But it was the other sketch which settled Goodman's decision. It was also a burlesque report, this time of a Fourth-of-July oration. It opened, "I was sired by the Great American Eagle and foaled by a continental dam." This was followed by a string of stock patriotic phrases absurdly arranged. But it was the opening itself that won Goodman's heart.

"That is the sort of thing we want," he said. "Write to him, Barstow, and ask him if he wants to come up here."

Barstow wrote, offering twenty-five dollars a week, a tempting sum. This was at the end of July, 1862.

In 'Roughing It' we are led to believe that the author regarded this as a gift from heaven and accepted it straightaway. As a matter of fact, he fasted and prayed a good while over the "call." To Orion he wrote Barstow has offered me the post as local reporter for the Enterprise at \$25 a week, and I have written him that I will let him know next mail, if possible.

There was no desperate eagerness, you see, to break into literature, even under those urgent conditions. It meant the surrender of all hope in the mines, the confession of another failure. On August 7th he wrote again to Orion. He had written to Barstow, he said, asking when they thought he might be needed. He was playing for time to consider.

Now, I shall leave at midnight to-night, alone and on foot, for a walk of 60 or 70 miles through a totally uninhabited country, and it is barely possible that mail facilities may prove infernally "slow." But do you write Barstow that I have left here for a week or so, and in case he should want me, he must write me here, or let me know through you.

Page 120

So he had gone into the wilderness to fight out his battle alone. But eight days later, when he had returned, there was still no decision. In a letter to Pamela of this date he refers playfully to the discomforts of his cabin and mentions a hope that he will spend the winter in San Francisco; but there is no reference in it to any newspaper prospects—nor to the mines, for that matter. Phillips, Howland, and Higbie would seem to have given up by this time, and he was camping with Dan Twing and a dog, a combination amusingly described. It is a pleasant enough letter, but the note of discouragement creeps in:

I did think for a while of going home this fall—but when I found that that was, and had been, the cherished intention and the darling aspiration every year of these old care-worn Californians for twelve weary years, I felt a little uncomfortable, so I stole a march on Disappointment and said I would not go home this fall. This country suits me, and it shall suit me whether or no.

He was dying hard, desperately hard; how could he know, to paraphrase the old form of Christian comfort, that his end as a miner would mean, in another sphere, “a brighter resurrection” than even his rainbow imagination could paint?

XXXVII

THE NEW ESTATE

It was the afternoon of a hot, dusty August day when a worn, travel-stained pilgrim drifted laggingly into the office of the Virginia City Enterprise, then in its new building on C Street, and, loosening a heavy roll of blankets from his shoulders, dropped wearily into a chair. He wore a rusty slouch hat, no coat, a faded blue flannel shirt, a Navy revolver; his trousers were hanging on his boot tops. A tangle of reddish-brown hair fell on his shoulders, and a mass of tawny beard, dingy with alkali dust, dropped half-way to his waist.

Aurora lay one hundred and thirty miles from Virginia. He had walked that distance, carrying his heavy load. Editor Goodman was absent at the moment, but the other proprietor, Denis E. McCarthy, signified that the caller might state his errand. The wanderer regarded him with a far-away look and said, absently and with deliberation:

“My starboard leg seems to be unshipped. I’d like about one hundred yards of line; I think I am falling to pieces.” Then he added: “I want to see Mr. Barstow, or Mr. Goodman. My name is Clemens, and I’ve come to write for the paper.”

It was the master of the world’s widest estate come to claim his kingdom:

William Wright, who had won a wide celebrity on the Coast as Dan de Quille, was in the editorial chair and took charge of the new arrival. He was going on a trip to the States

soon; it was mainly on this account that the new man had been engaged. The “Josh” letters were very good, in Dan’s opinion; he gave their author a cordial welcome, and took him around to his boarding-place. It was the beginning of an association that continued during Samuel Clemens’s stay in Virginia City and of a friendship that lasted many years.

Page 121

The Territorial Enterprise was one of the most remarkable frontier papers ever published. Its editor-in-chief, Joseph Goodman, was a man with rare appreciation, wide human understanding, and a comprehensive newspaper policy. Being a young man, he had no policy, in fact, beyond the general purpose that his paper should be a forum for absolutely free speech, provided any serious statement it contained was based upon knowledge. His instructions to the new reporter were about as follows:

“Never say we learn so and so, or it is rumored, or we understand so and so; but go to headquarters and get the absolute facts; then speak out and say it is so and so. In the one case you are likely to be shot, and in the other you are pretty certain to be; but you will preserve the public confidence.”

Goodman was not new to the West. He had come to California as a boy and had been a miner, explorer, printer, and contributor by turns. Early in '61, when the Comstock Lode—[Named for its discoverer, Henry T. P. Comstock, a half-crazy miner, who realized very little from his stupendous find.]—was new and Virginia in the first flush of its monster boom, he and Denis McCarthy had scraped together a few dollars and bought the paper. It had been a hand-to-hand struggle for a while, but in a brief two years, from a starving sheet in a shanty the Enterprise, with new building, new presses, and a corps of swift compositors brought up from San Francisco, had become altogether metropolitan, as well as the most widely considered paper on the Coast. It had been borne upward by the Comstock tide, though its fearless, picturesque utterance would have given it distinction anywhere. Goodman himself was a fine, forceful writer, and Dan de Quille and R. M. Daggett (afterward United States minister to Hawaii) were representative of Enterprise men.—[The Comstock of that day became famous for its journalism. Associated with the Virginia papers then or soon afterward were such men as Tom Fitch (the silver-tongued orator), Alf Doten, W. J. Forbes, C. C. Goodwin, H. R. Mighels, Clement T. Rice, Arthur McEwen, and Sam Davis—a great array indeed for a new Territory.]—Samuel Clemens fitted precisely into this group. He added the fresh, rugged vigor of thought and expression that was the very essence of the Comstock, which was like every other frontier mining-camp, only on a more lavish, more overwhelming scale.

There was no uncertainty about the Comstock; the silver and gold were there. Flanking the foot of Mount Davidson, the towns of Gold Hill and Virginia and the long street between were fairly underburrowed and underpinned by the gigantic mining construction of that opulent lode whose treasures were actually glutting the mineral markets of the world. The streets overhead seethed and swarmed with miners, mine owners, and adventurers—riotous, rollicking children of fortune, always ready to drink and make merry, as eager in their pursuit of pleasure as of gold. Comstockers would always laugh at a joke; the rougher the better. The town of Virginia itself was just a huge joke to most of them. Everybody had, money; everybody wanted to laugh and have a good time. The Enterprise, “Comstock to the backbone,” did what it could to help things along.

Page 122

It was a sort of free ring, with every one for himself. Goodman let the boys write and print in accordance with their own ideas and upon any subject. Often they wrote of each other—squibs and burlesques, which gratified the Comstock far more than mere news.—[The indifference to ‘news’ was noble—none the less so because it was so blissfully unconscious. Editors Mark or Dan would dismiss a murder with a couple of inches and sit down and fill up a column with a fancy sketch: “Arthur McEwen”]—It was the proper class-room for Mark Twain, an encouraging audience and free utterance: fortune could have devised nothing better for him than that.

He was peculiarly fitted for the position. Unspoiled humanity appealed to him, and the Comstock presented human nature in its earliest landscape forms. Furthermore, the Comstock was essentially optimistic—so was he; any hole in the ground to him held a possible, even a probable, fortune.

His pilot memory became a valuable asset in news-gathering. Remembering marks, banks, sounding, and other river detail belonged apparently in the same category of attainments as remembering items and localities of news. He could travel all day without a note-book and at night reproduce the day’s budget or at least the picturesqueness of it, without error. He was presently accounted a good reporter, except where statistics—measurements and figures—were concerned. These he gave “a lick and a promise,” according to De Quille, who wrote afterward of their associations. De Quille says further:

Mark and I agreed well in our work, which we divided when there was a rush of events; but we often cruised in company, he taking the items of news he could handle best, and I such as I felt competent to work up. However, we wrote at the same table and frequently helped each other with such suggestions as occurred to us during the brief consultations we held in regard to the handling of any matters of importance. Never was there an angry word between us in all the time we worked together.

De Quille tells how Clemens clipped items with a knife when there were no scissors handy, and slashed through on the top of his desk, which in time took on the semblance “of a huge polar star, spiritedly dashing forth a thousand rays.”

The author of ‘*Roughing It*’ has given us a better picture of the Virginia City of those days and his work there than any one else will ever write. He has made us feel the general spirit of affluence that prevailed; how the problem was not to get money, but to spend it; how “feet” in any one of a hundred mines could be had for the asking; how such shares were offered like apples or cigars or bonbons, as a natural matter of courtesy when one happened to have his supply in view; how any one connected with a newspaper would have stocks thrust upon him, and how in a brief time he had acquired a trunk full of such riches and usually had something to sell when any of the claims made a stir on the market. He has told us of the desperadoes and their trifling regard for human life, and preserved other elemental characters of these prodigal days. The

funeral of Buck Fanshaw that amazing masterpiece—is a complete epitome of the social frontier.

Page 123

It would not be the part of wisdom to attempt another inclusive presentation of Comstock conditions. We may only hope to add a few details of history, justified now by time and circumstances, to supplement the picture with certain data of personality preserved from the drift of years.

XXXVIII

One of the "Staff"

The new reporter found acquaintance easy. The office force was like one family among which there was no line of caste. Proprietors, editors, and printers were social equals; there was little ceremony among them—none at all outside of the office.—["The paper went to press at two in the morning, then all the staff and all the compositors gathered themselves together in the composing-room and drank beer and sang the popular war-songs of the day until dawn."—S. L. C., in 1908.]—Samuel Clemens immediately became "Sam," or "Josh," to his associates, just as De Quille was "Dan" and Goodman "Joe." He found that he disliked the name of Josh, and, as he did not sign it again, it was presently dropped. The office, and Virginia City generally, quickly grew fond of him, delighting in his originality and measured speech. Enterprise readers began to identify his work, then unsigned, and to enjoy its fresh phrasing, even when it was only the usual local item or mining notice. True to its name and reputation, the paper had added a new attraction.

It was only a brief time after his arrival in Virginia City that Clemens began the series of hoaxes which would carry his reputation, not always in an enviable fashion, across the Sierras and down the Pacific coast. With one exception these are lost to-day, for so far as known there is not a single file of the Enterprise in existence. Only a few stray copies and clippings are preserved, but we know the story of some of these literary pranks and of their results. They were usually intended as a special punishment of some particular individual or paper or locality; but victims were gathered by the wholesale in their seductive web. Mark Twain himself, in his book of Sketches, has set down something concerning the first of these, "The Petrified Man," and of another, "My Bloody Massacre," but in neither case has he told it all. "The Petrified Man" hoax was directed at an official named Sewall, a coroner and justice of the peace at Humboldt, who had been pompously indifferent in the matter of supplying news. The story, told with great circumstance and apparent care as to detail, related the finding of a petrified prehistoric man, partially imbedded in a rock, in a cave in the desert more than one hundred miles from Humboldt, and how Sewall had made the perilous five-day journey in the alkali waste to hold an inquest over a man that had been dead three hundred years; also how, "with that delicacy so characteristic of him," Sewall had forbidden the miners from blasting him from his position. The account further stated

Page 124

that the hands of the deceased were arranged in a peculiar fashion; and the description of the arrangement was so skilfully woven in with other matters that at first, or even second, reading one might not see that the position indicated was the ancient one which begins with the thumb at the nose and in many ages has been used impolitely to express ridicule and the word "sold." But the description was a shade too ingenious. The author expected that the exchanges would see the jolt and perhaps assist in the fun he would have with Sewall. He did not contemplate a joke on the papers themselves. As a matter of fact, no one saw the "sell" and most of the papers printed his story of the petrified man as a genuine discovery. This was a surprise, and a momentary disappointment; then he realized that he had builded better than he knew. He gathered up a bundle of the exchanges and sent them to Sewall; also he sent marked copies to scientific men in various parts of the United States. The papers had taken it seriously; perhaps the scientists would. Some of them did, and Sewall's days became unhappy because of letters received asking further information. As literature, the effort did not rank high, and as a trick on an obscure official it was hardly worth while; but, as a joke on the Coast exchanges and press generally, it was greatly regarded and its author, though as yet unnamed, acquired prestige.

Inquiries began to be made as to who was the smart chap in Virginia that did these things. The papers became wary and read Enterprise items twice before clipping them. Clemens turned his attention to other matters to lull suspicion. The great "Dutch Nick Massacre" did not follow until a year later.

Reference has already been made to the Comstock's delight in humor of a positive sort. The practical joke was legal tender in Virginia. One might protest and swear, but he must take it. An example of Comstock humor, regarded as the finest assay, is an incident still told of Leslie Blackburn and Pat Holland, two gay men about town. They were coming down C Street one morning when they saw some fine watermelons on a fruit-stand at the International Hotel corner. Watermelons were rare and costly in that day and locality, and these were worth three dollars apiece. Blackburn said:

"Pat, let's get one of those watermelons. You engage that fellow in conversation while I stand at the corner, where I can step around out of sight easily. When you have got him interested, point to something on the back shelf and pitch me a melon."

This appealed to Holland, and he carried out his part of the plan perfectly; but when he pitched the watermelon Blackburn simply put his hands in his pockets, and stepped around the corner, leaving the melon a fearful disaster on the pavement. It was almost impossible for Pat to explain to the fruit-man why he pitched away a three-dollar melon like that even after paying for it, and it was still more trying, also more expensive, to explain to the boys facing the various bars along C Street.

Page 125

Sam Clemens, himself a practical joker in his youth, found a healthy delight in this knock-down humor of the Comstock. It appealed to his vigorous, elemental nature. He seldom indulged physically in such things; but his printed squibs and hoaxes and his keen love of the ridiculous placed him in the joker class, while his prompt temper, droll manner, and rare gift of invective made him an enticing victim.

Among the Enterprise compositors was one by the name of Stephen E. Gillis (Steve, of course—one of the “fighting Gillises”), a small, fearless young fellow, handsome, quick of wit, with eyes like needle-points.

“Steve weighed only ninety-five pounds,” Mark Twain once wrote of him, “but it was well known throughout the Territory that with his fists he could whip anybody that walked on two legs, let his weight and science be what they might.”

Clemens was fond of Steve Gillis from the first. The two became closely associated in time, and were always bosom friends; but Steve was a merciless joker, and never as long as they were together could he “resist the temptation of making Sam swear,” claiming that his profanity was grander than any music.

A word hereabout Mark Twain’s profanity. Born with a matchless gift of phrase, the printing-office, the river, and the mines had developed it in a rare perfection. To hear him denounce a thing was to give one the fierce, searching delight of galvanic waves. Every characterization seemed the most perfect fit possible until he applied the next. And somehow his profanity was seldom an offense. It was not mere idle swearing; it seemed always genuine and serious. His selection of epithet was always dignified and stately, from whatever source—and it might be from the Bible or the gutter. Some one has defined dirt as misplaced matter. It is perhaps the greatest definition ever uttered. It is absolutely universal in its application, and it recurs now, remembering Mark Twain’s profanity. For it was rarely misplaced; hence it did not often offend. It seemed, in fact, the safety-valve of his high-pressure intellectual engine. When he had blown off he was always calm, gentle; forgiving, and even tender. Once following an outburst he said, placidly:

“In certain trying circumstances, urgent circumstances, desperate circumstances, profanity furnishes a relief denied even to prayer.”

It seems proper to add that it is not the purpose of this work to magnify or modify or excuse that extreme example of humankind which forms its chief subject; but to set him down as he was inadequately, of course, but with good conscience and clear intent.

Page 126

Led by Steve Gillis, the Enterprise force used to devise tricks to set him going. One of these was to hide articles from his desk. He detested the work necessary to the care of a lamp, and wrote by the light of a candle. To hide “Sam’s candle” was a sure way to get prompt and vigorous return. He would look for it a little; then he would begin a slow, circular walk—a habit acquired in the limitations of the pilot-house—and his denunciation of the thieves was like a great orchestration of wrong. By and by the office boy, supposedly innocent, would find another for him, and all would be forgotten. He made a placard, labeled with fearful threats and anathemas, warning any one against touching his candle; but one night both the placard and the candle were gone.

Now, among his Virginia acquaintances was a young minister, a Mr. Rising, “the fragile, gentle new fledgling” of the Buck Fanshaw episode. Clemens greatly admired Mr. Rising’s evident sincerity, and the young minister had quickly recognized the new reporter’s superiority of mind. Now and then he came to the office to call on him. Unfortunately, he happened to step in just at that moment when, infuriated by the latest theft of his property, Samuel Clemens was engaged in his rotary denunciation of the criminals, oblivious of every other circumstance. Mr. Rising stood spellbound by this, to him, new phase of genius, and at last his friend became dimly aware of him. He did not halt in his scathing treadmill and continued in the slow monotone of speech:

“I know, Mr. Rising, I know it’s wicked to talk like this; I know it is wrong. I know I shall certainly go to hell for it. But if you had a candle, Mr. Rising, and those thieves should carry it off every night, I know that you would say, just as I say, Mr. Rising, G-d d—n their impenitent souls, may they roast in hell for a million years.”

The little clergyman caught his breath.

“Maybe I should, Mr. Clemens,” he replied, “but I should try to say, ‘Forgive them, Father, they know not what they do.’”

“Oh, well! if you put it on the ground that they are just fools, that alters the case, as I am one of that class myself. Come in and we’ll try to forgive them and forget about it.”

Mark Twain had a good many experiences with young ministers. He was always fond of them, and they often sought him out. Once, long afterward, at a hotel, he wanted a boy to polish his shoes, and had rung a number of times without getting any response. Presently, he thought he heard somebody approaching in the hall outside. He flung open the door, and a small, youngish-looking person, who seemed to have been hesitating at the door, made a movement as though to depart hastily. Clemens grabbed him by the collar.

“Look here,” he said, “I’ve been waiting and ringing here for half an hour. Now I want you to take those shoes, and polish them, quick. Do you hear?”

The slim, youthful person trembled a good deal, and said: "I would, Mr. Clemens, I would indeed, sir, if I could. But I'm a minister of the Gospel, and I'm not prepared for such work."

Page 127

XXXIX

PHILOSOPHY AND POETRY

There was a side to Samuel Clemens that in those days few of his associates saw. This was the poetic, the philosophic, the contemplative side. Joseph Goodman recognized this phase of his character, and, while he perhaps did not regard it as a future literary asset, he delighted in it, and in their hours of quiet association together encouraged its exhibition. It is rather curious that with all his literary penetration Goodman did not dream of a future celebrity for Clemens. He afterward said:

"If I had been asked to prophesy which of the two men, Dan de Quille or Sam, would become distinguished, I should have said De Quille. Dan was talented, industrious, and, for that time and place, brilliant. Of course, I recognized the unusualness of Sam's gifts, but he was eccentric and seemed to lack industry; it is not likely that I should have prophesied fame for him then."

Goodman, like MacFarlane in Cincinnati, half a dozen years before, though by a different method, discovered and developed the deeper vein. Often the two, dining together in a French restaurant, discussed life, subtler philosophies, recalled various phases of human history, remembered and recited the poems that gave them especial enjoyment. "The Burial of Moses," with its noble phrasing and majestic imagery, appealed strongly to Clemens, and he recited it with great power. The first stanza in particular always stirred him, and it stirred his hearer as well. With eyes half closed and chin lifted, a lighted cigar between his fingers, he would lose himself in the music of the stately lines.

By Nebo's lonely mountain,
On this side Jordan's wave,
In a vale in the land of Moab,
There lies a lonely grave.

And no man knows that sepulchre,
And no man saw it e'er,
For the angels of God, upturned the sod,
And laid the dead man there.

Another stanza that he cared for almost as much was the one beginning:

And had he not high honor
—The hill-side for a pall,
To lie in state while angels wait
With stars for tapers tall,
And the dark rock-pines, like tossing plumes,

Over his bier to wave,
And God's own hand in that lonely land,
To lay him in the grave?

Without doubt he was moved to emulate the simple grandeur of that poem, for he often repeated it in those days, and somewhat later we find it copied into his notebook in full. It would seem to have become to him a sort of literary touchstone; and in some measure it may be regarded as accountable for the fact that in the fullness of time "he made use of the purest English of any modern writer." These are Goodman's words, though William Dean Howells has said them, also, in substance, and Brander Matthews, and many others who know about such things. Goodman adds, "The simplicity and beauty of his style are almost without a parallel, except in the common version of the Bible," which is also true. One is reminded of what Macaulay said of Milton:

Page 128

"There would seem at first sight to be no more in his words than in other words. But they are words of enchantment. No sooner are they pronounced than the past is present and the distance near. New forms of beauty start at once into existence, and all the burial-places of the memory give up their dead."

One drifts ahead, remembering these things. The triumph of words, the mastery of phrases, lay all before him at the time of which we are writing now. He was twenty-seven. At that age Rudyard Kipling had reached his meridian. Samuel Clemens was still in the classroom. Everything came as a lesson-phrase, form, aspect, and combination; nothing escaped unvalued. The poetic phase of things particularly impressed him. Once at a dinner with Goodman, when the lamp-light from the chandelier struck down through the claret on the tablecloth in a great red stain, he pointed to it dramatically "Look, Joe," he said, "the angry tint of wine."

It was at one of these private sessions, late in '62, that Clemens proposed to report the coming meeting of the Carson legislature. He knew nothing of such work and had small knowledge of parliamentary proceedings. Formerly it had been done by a man named Gillespie, but Gillespie was now clerk of the house. Goodman hesitated; then, remembering that whether Clemens got the reports right or not, he would at least make them readable, agreed to let him undertake the work.

XL

"Mark twain"

The early Nevada legislature was an interesting assembly. All State legislatures are that, and this was a mining frontier. No attempt can be made to describe it. It was chiefly distinguished for a large ignorance of procedure, a wide latitude of speech, a noble appreciation of humor, and plenty of brains. How fortunate Mark Twain was in his schooling, to be kept away from institutional training, to be placed in one after another of those universities of life where the sole curriculum is the study of the native inclinations and activities of mankind! Sometimes, in after-years, he used to regret the lack of systematic training. Well for him—and for us—that he escaped that blight.

For the study of human nature the Nevada assembly was a veritable lecture-room. In it his understanding, his wit, his phrasing, his self-assuredness grew like Jack's beanstalk, which in time was ready to break through into a land above the sky. He made some curious blunders in his reports, in the beginning; but he was so frank in his ignorance and in his confession of it that the very unsophistication of his early letters became their chief charm. Gillespie coached him on parliamentary matters, and in time the reports became technically as well as artistically good. Clemens in return christened Gillespie "Young, Jefferson's Manual," a title which he bore, rather proudly indeed, for many years.

Another “entitlement” growing out of those early reports, and possibly less satisfactory to its owner, was the one accorded to Clement T. Rice, of the Virginia City Union. Rice knew the legislative work perfectly and concluded to poke fun at the Enterprise letters.

Page 129

But this was a mistake. Clemens in his next letter declared that Rice's reports might be parliamentary enough, but that they covered with glittering technicalities the most festering mass of misstatement, and even crime. He avowed that they were wholly untrustworthy; dubbed the author of them "The Unreliable," and in future letters never referred to him by any other term. Carson and the Comstock and the papers of the Coast delighted in this burlesque journalistic warfare, and Rice was "The Unreliable" for life.

Rice and Clemens, it should be said, though rivals, were the best of friends, and there was never any real animosity between them.

Clemens quickly became a favorite with the members; his sharp letters, with their amusing turn of phrase and their sincerity, won general friendship. Jack Simmons, speaker of the house, and Billy Clagget, the Humboldt delegation, were his special cronies and kept him on the inside of the political machine. Clagget had remained in Unionville after the mining venture, warned his Keokuk sweetheart, and settled down into politics and law. In due time he would become a leading light and go to Congress. He was already a notable figure of forceful eloquence and tousled, unkempt hair. Simmons, Clagget, and Clemens were easily the three conspicuous figures of the session.

It must have been gratifying to the former prospector and miner to come back to Carson City a person of consequence, where less than a year before he had been regarded as no more than an amusing indolent fellow, a figure to smile at, but unimportant. There is a photograph extant of Clemens and his friends Clagget and Simmons in a group, and we gather from it that he now arrayed himself in a long broadcloth cloak, a starched shirt, and polished boots. Once more he had become the glass of fashion that he had been on the river. He made his residence with Orion, whose wife and little daughter Jennie had by this time come out from the States. "Sister Mollie," as wife of the acting governor, was presently social leader of the little capital; her brilliant brother-in-law its chief ornament. His merriment and songs and good nature made him a favorite guest. His lines had fallen in pleasant places; he could afford to smile at the hard Esmeralda days.

He was not altogether satisfied. His letters, copied and quoted all along the Coast, were unsigned. They were easily identified with one another, but not with a personality. He realized that to build a reputation it was necessary to fasten it to an individuality, a name.

He gave the matter a good deal of thought. He did not consider the use of his own name; the 'nom de plume' was the fashion of the time. He wanted something brief, crisp, definite, unforgettable. He tried over a good many combinations in his mind, but none seemed convincing. Just then—this was early in 1863—news came to him that the old pilot he had wounded by his satire, Isaiah Sellers, was dead. At once the pen-

name of Captain Sellers recurred to him. That was it; that was the sort of name he wanted. It was not trivial; it had all the qualities—Sellers would never need it again. Clemens decided he would give it a new meaning and new association in this far-away land. He went up to Virginia City.

Page 130

“Joe,” he said, to Goodman, “I want to sign my articles. I want to be identified to a wider audience.”

“All right, Sam. What name do you want to use ‘Josh’?”

“No, I want to sign them ‘Mark Twain.’ It is an old river term, a leads-man’s call, signifying two fathoms—twelve feet. It has a richness about it; it was always a pleasant sound for a pilot to hear on a dark night; it meant safe water.”

He did not then mention that Captain Isaiah Sellers had used and dropped the name. He was ashamed of his part in that episode, and the offense was still too recent for confession. Goodman considered a moment:

“Very well, Sam,” he said, “that sounds like a good name.”

It was indeed a good name. In all the nomenclature of the world no more forceful combination of words could have been selected to express the man for whom they stood. The name Mark Twain is as infinite, as fundamental as that of John Smith, without the latter’s wasting distribution of strength. If all the prestige in the name of John Smith were combined in a single individual, its dynamic energy might give it the carrying power of Mark Twain. Let this be as it may, it has proven the greatest ‘nom de plume’ ever chosen—a name exactly in accord with the man, his work, and his career.

It is not surprising that Goodman did not recognize this at the moment. We should not guess the force that lies in a twelve-inch shell if we had never seen one before or heard of its seismic destruction. We should have to wait and see it fired, and take account of the result.

It was first signed to a Carson letter bearing date of February 2, 1863, and from that time was attached to all Samuel Clemens’s work. The work was neither better nor worse than before, but it had suddenly acquired identification and special interest. Members of the legislature and friends in Virginia and Carson immediately began to address him as “Mark.” The papers of the Coast took it up, and within a period to be measured by weeks he was no longer “Sam” or “Clemens” or “that bright chap on the Enterprise,” but “Mark”—“Mark Twain.” No ‘nom de plume’ was ever so quickly and generally accepted as that. De Quille, returning from the East after an absence of several months, found his room and deskmate with the distinction of a new name and fame.

It is curious that in the letters to the home folks preserved from that period there is no mention of his new title and its success. In fact, the writer rarely speaks of his work at all, and is more inclined to tell of the mining shares he has accumulated, their present and prospective values. However, many of the letters are undoubtedly missing. Such as have been preserved are rather airy epistles full of his abounding joy of life and good

nature. Also they bear evidence of the renewal of his old river habit of sending money home—twenty dollars in each letter, with intervals of a week or so between.

Page 131

XLI

THE CREAM OF COMSTOCK HUMOR

With the adjournment of the legislature, Samuel Clemens returned to Virginia City distinctly a notability—Mark Twain. He was regarded as leading man on the Enterprise—which in itself was high distinction on the Comstock—while his improved dress and increased prosperity commanded additional respect. When visitors of note came along—well-known actors, lecturers, politicians—he was introduced as one of the Comstock features which it was proper to see, along with the Ophir and Gould and Curry mines, and the new hundred-stamp quartz-mill.

He was rather grieved and hurt, therefore, when, after several collections had been taken up in the Enterprise office to present various members of the staff with meerschaum pipes, none had come to him. He mentioned this apparent slight to Steve Gillis:

“Nobody ever gives me a meerschaum pipe,” he said, plaintively. “Don’t I deserve one yet?”

Unhappy day! To that remorseless creature, Steve Gillis, this was a golden opportunity for devilry of a kind that delighted his soul. This is the story, precisely as Gillis himself told it to the writer of these annals more than a generation later:

“There was a German kept a cigar store in Virginia City and always had a fine assortment of meerschaum pipes. These pipes usually cost anywhere from forty to seventy-five dollars.

“One day Denis McCarthy and I were walking by the old German’s place, and stopped to look in at the display in the window. Among other things there was one large imitation meerschaum with a high bowl and a long stem, marked a dollar and a half.

“I decided that that would be just the pipe for Sam. We went in and bought it, also a very much longer stem. I think the stem alone cost three dollars. Then we had a little German-silver plate engraved with Mark’s name on it and by whom presented, and made preparations for the presentation. Charlie Pope—[afterward proprietor of Pope’s Theater, St. Louis]—was playing at the Opera House at the time, and we engaged him to make the presentation speech.

“Then we let in Dan de Quille, Mark’s closest friend, to act the part of Judas—to tell Mark privately that he, was going to be presented with a fine pipe, so that he could have a speech prepared in reply to Pope’s. It was awful low-down in Dan. We arranged to have the affair come off in the saloon beneath the Opera House after the play was over.



“Everything went off handsomely; but it was a pretty remorseful occasion, and some of us had a hang-dog look; for Sam took it in such sincerity, and had prepared one of the most beautiful speeches I ever heard him make. Pope’s presentation, too, was beautifully done. He told Sam how his friends all loved him, and that this pipe, purchased at so great an expense, was but a small token of their affection. But Sam’s reply, which was supposed to be impromptu, actually brought the tears to the eyes of some of us, and he was interrupted every other minute with applause. I never felt so sorry for anybody.

Page 132

“Still, we were bent on seeing the thing through. After Sam’s speech was finished, he ordered expensive wines—champagne and sparkling Moselle. Then we went out to do the town, and kept things going until morning to drown our sorrow.

“Well, next day, of course, he started in to color the pipe. It wouldn’t color any more than a piece of chalk, which was about all it was. Sam would smoke and smoke, and complain that it didn’t seem to taste right, and that it wouldn’t color. Finally Denis said to him one day:

“‘Oh, Sam, don’t you know that’s just a damned old egg-shell, and that the boys bought it for a dollar and a half and presented you with it for a joke?’

“Then Sam was furious, and we laid the whole thing on Dan de Quille. He had a thunder-cloud on his face when he started up for the Local Room, where Dan was. He went in and closed the door behind him, and locked it, and put the key in his pocket—an awful sign. Dan was there alone, writing at his table.

“Sam said, ‘Dan, did you know, when you invited me to make that speech, that those fellows were going to give me a bogus pipe?’

“There was no way for Dan to escape, and he confessed. Sam walked up and down the floor, as if trying to decide which way to slay Dan. Finally he said:

“‘Oh, Dan, to think that you, my dearest friend, who knew how little money I had, and how hard I would work to prepare a speech that would show my gratitude to my friends, should be the traitor, the Judas, to betray me with a kiss! Dan, I never want to look on your face again. You knew I would spend every dollar I had on those pirates when I couldn’t afford to spend anything; and yet you let me do it; you aided and abetted their diabolical plan, and you even got me to get up that damned speech to make the thing still more ridiculous.’

“Of course Dan felt terribly, and tried to defend himself by saying that they were really going to present him with a fine pipe—a genuine one, this time. But Sam at first refused to be comforted; and when, a few days later, I went in with the pipe and said, ‘Sam, here’s the pipe the boys meant to give you all the time,’ and tried to apologize, he looked around a little coldly, and said:

“‘Is that another of those bogus old pipes?’

“He accepted it, though, and general peace was restored. One day, soon after, he said to me:

“‘Steve, do you know that I think that that bogus pipe smokes about as well as the good one?’”

Many years later (this was in his home at Hartford, and Joe Goodman was present) Mark Twain one day came upon the old imitation pipe.

“Joe,” he said, “that was a cruel, cruel trick the boys played on me; but, for the feeling I had during the moment when they presented me with that pipe and when Charlie Pope was making his speech and I was making my reply to it—for the memory of that feeling, now, that pipe is more precious to me than any pipe in the world!”

Page 133

Eighteen hundred and sixty-three was flood-tide on the Comstock. Every mine was working full blast. Every mill was roaring and crunching, turning out streams of silver and gold. A little while ago an old resident wrote:

When I close my eyes I hear again the respirations of hoisting- engines and the roar of stamps; I can see the “camels” after midnight packing in salt; I can see again the jam of teams on C Street and hear the anathemas of the drivers—all the mighty work that went on in order to lure the treasures from the deep chambers of the great lode and to bring enlightenment to the desert.

Those were lively times. In the midst of one of his letters home Mark Twain interrupts himself to say: “I have just heard five pistol-shots down the street—as such things are in my line, I will go and see about it,” and in a postscript added a few hours later:

5 A.M. The pistol-shot did its work well. One man, a Jackson County Missourian, shot two of my friends (police officers) through the heart—both died within three minutes. The murderer’s name is John Campbell.

“Mark and I had our hands full,” says De Quille, “and no grass grew under our feet.” In answer to some stray criticism of their policy, they printed a sort of editorial manifesto:

Our duty is to keep the universe thoroughly posted concerning murders and street fights, and balls, and theaters, and pack-trains, and churches, and lectures, and school-houses, and city military affairs, and highway robberies, and Bible societies, and hay-wagons, and the thousand other things which it is in the province of local reporters to keep track of and magnify into undue importance for the instruction of the readers of a great daily newspaper.

It is easy to recognize Mark Twain’s hand in that compendium of labor, which, in spite of its amusing apposition, was literally true, and so intended, probably with no special thought of humor in its construction. It may be said, as well here as anywhere, that it was not Mark Twain’s habit to strive for humor. He saw facts at curious angles and phrased them accordingly. In Virginia City he mingled with the turmoil of the Comstock and set down what he saw and thought, in his native speech. The Comstock, ready to laugh, found delight in his expression and discovered a vast humor in his most earnest statements.

On the other hand, there were times when the humor was intended and missed its purpose. We have already recalled the instance of the “Petrified Man” hoax, which was taken seriously; but the “Empire City Massacre” burlesque found an acceptance that even its author considered serious for a time. It is remembered to-day in Virginia City as the chief incident of Mark Twain’s Comstock career.

Page 134

This literary bomb really had two objects, one of which was to punish the San Francisco Bulletin for its persistent attacks on Washoe interests; the other, though this was merely incidental, to direct an unpleasant attention to a certain Carson saloon, the Magnolia, which was supposed to dispense whisky of the “forty rod” brand—that is, a liquor warranted to kill at that range. It was the Bulletin that was to be made especially ridiculous. This paper had been particularly disagreeable concerning the “dividend-cooking” system of certain of the Comstock mines, at the same time calling invidious attention to safer investments in California stocks. Samuel Clemens, with “half a trunkful” of Comstock shares, had cultivated a distaste for California things in general: In a letter of that time he says:

“How I hate everything that looks or tastes or smells like California!” With his customary fickleness of soul, he was glorifying California less than a year later, but for the moment he could see no good in that Nazareth. To his great satisfaction, one of the leading California corporations, the Spring Valley Water Company, “cooked” a dividend of its own about this time, resulting in disaster to a number of guileless investors who were on the wrong side of the subsequent crash. This afforded an inviting opportunity for reprisal. With Goodman’s consent he planned for the California papers, and the Bulletin in particular, a punishment which he determined to make sufficiently severe. He believed the papers of that State had forgotten his earlier offenses, and the result would show he was not mistaken.

There was a point on the Carson River, four miles from Carson City, known as “Dutch Nick’s,” and also as Empire City, the two being identical. There was no forest there of any sort nothing but sage-brush. In the one cabin there lived a bachelor with no household. Everybody in Virginia and Carson, of course, knew these things.

Mark Twain now prepared a most lurid and graphic account of how one Phillip Hopkins, living “just at the edge of the great pine forest which lies between Empire City and ‘Dutch Nick’s,’” had suddenly gone insane and murderously assaulted his entire family consisting of his wife and their nine children, ranging in ages from one to nineteen years. The wife had been slain outright, also seven of the children; the other two might recover. The murder had been committed in the most brutal and ghastly fashion, after which Hopkins had scalped his wife, leaped on a horse, cut his own throat from ear to ear, and ridden four miles into Carson City, dropping dead at last in front of the Magnolia saloon, the red-haired scalp of his wife still clutched in his gory hand. The article further stated that the cause of Mr. Hopkins’s insanity was pecuniary loss, he having withdrawn his savings from safe Comstock investments and, through the advice of a relative, one of the editors of the San Francisco Bulletin, invested them in the Spring Valley Water Company. This absurd tale with startling head-lines appeared in the Enterprise, in its issue of October 28, 1863.

Page 135

It was not expected that any one in Virginia City or Carson City would for a moment take any stock in the wild invention, yet so graphic was it that nine out of ten on first reading never stopped to consider the entire impossibility of the locality and circumstance. Even when these things were pointed out many readers at first refused to confess themselves sold. As for the Bulletin and other California papers, they were taken-in completely, and were furious. Many of them wrote and demanded the immediate discharge of its author, announcing that they would never copy another line from the Enterprise, or exchange with it, or have further relations with a paper that had Mark Twain on its staff. Citizens were mad, too, and cut off their subscriptions. The joker was in despair.

“Oh, Joe,” he said, “I have ruined your business, and the only reparation I can make is to resign. You can never recover from this blow while I am on the paper.”

“Nonsense,” replied Goodman. “We can furnish the people with news, but we can’t supply them with sense. Only time can do that. The flurry will pass. You just go ahead. We’ll win out in the long run.”

But the offender was in torture; he could not sleep. “Dan, Dan,” he said, “I am being burned alive on both sides of the mountains.”

“Mark,” said Dan. “It will all blow over. This item of yours will be remembered and talked about when the rest of your Enterprise work is forgotten.”

Both Goodman and De Quille were right. In a month papers and people had forgotten their humiliation and laughed. “The Dutch Nick Massacre” gave to its perpetrator and to the Enterprise an added vogue.

—[For full text of the “Dutch Nick” hoax see Appendix C, at the end of last volume: also, for an anecdote concerning a reporting excursion made by Alf. Doten and Mark Twain.]
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XLII REPORTORIAL DAYS

Reference has already been made to the fashion among Virginia City papers of permitting reporters to use the editorial columns for ridicule of one another. This custom was especially in vogue during the period when Dan de Quille and Mark Twain and The Unreliable were the shining journalistic lights of the Comstock. Scarcely a week went by that some apparently venomous squib or fling or long burlesque assault did not appear either in the Union or the Enterprise, with one of those jokers as its author and another as its target. In one of his “home” letters of that year Mark Twain says:

I have just finished writing up my report for the morning paper and giving The Unreliable a column of advice about how to conduct himself in church.

The advice was such as to call for a reprisal, but it apparently made no difference in personal relations, for a few weeks later he is with The Unreliable in San Francisco, seeing life in the metropolis, fairly swimming in its delights, unable to resist reporting them to his mother.

Page 136

We fag ourselves completely out every day and go to sleep without rocking every night. When I go down Montgomery Street shaking hands with Tom, Dick, and Harry, it is just like being on Main Street in Hannibal and meeting the old familiar faces. I do hate to go back to Washoe. We take trips across the bay to Oakland, and down to San Leandro and Alameda, and we go out to the Willows and Hayes Park and Fort Point, and up to Benicia; and yesterday we were invited out on a yachting excursion, and had a sail in the fastest yacht on the Pacific coast. Rice says: "Oh no—we are not having any fun, Mark —oh no—I reckon it's somebody else—it's probably the gentleman in the wagon" (popular slang phrase), and when I invite Rice to the Lick House to dinner the proprietor sends us champagne and claret, and then we do put on the most disgusting airs. The Unreliable says our caliber is too light—we can't stand it to be noticed.

Three days later he adds that he is going sorrowfully "to the snows and the deserts of Washoe," but that he has "lived like a lord to make up for two years of privation."

Twenty dollars is inclosed in each of these letters, probably as a bribe to Jane Clemens to be lenient with his prodigalities, which in his youthful love of display he could not bring himself to conceal. But apparently the salve was futile, for in another letter, a month later, he complains that his mother is "slinging insinuations" at him again, such as "where did you get that money" and "the company I kept in San Francisco." He explains:

Why, I sold Wild Cat mining ground that was given me, and my credit was always good at the bank for \$2,000 or \$3,000, and I never gamble in any shape or manner, and never drink anything stronger than claret and lager beer, which conduct is regarded as miraculously temperate in this place. As for company, I went in the very best company to be found in San Francisco. I always move in the best society in Virginia and have a reputation to preserve.

He closes by assuring her that he will be more careful in future and that she need never fear but that he will keep her expenses paid. Then he cannot refrain from adding one more item of his lavish life:

"Put in my washing, and it costs me one hundred dollars a month to live."

De Quille had not missed the opportunity of his comrade's absence to payoff some old scores. At the end of the editorial column of the Enterprise on the day following his departure he denounced the absent one and his "protege," The Unreliable, after the intemperate fashion of the day.

It is to be regretted that such scrubs are ever permitted to visit the bay, as the inevitable effect will be to destroy that exalted opinion of the manners and morality of our people which was inspired by the conduct of our senior editor—[which is to say, Dan himself]—.

The diatribe closed with a really graceful poem, and the whole was no doubt highly regarded by the Enterprise readers.

Page 137

What revenge Mark Twain took on his return has not been recorded, but it was probably prompt and adequate; or he may have left it to The Unreliable. It was clearly a mistake, however, to leave his own local work in the hands of that properly named person a little later. Clemens was laid up with a cold, and Rice assured him on his sacred honor that he would attend faithfully to the Enterprise locals, along with his own Union items. He did this, but he had been nursing old injuries too long. What was Mark Twain's amazement on looking over the Enterprise next morning to find under the heading "Apologetic" a statement over his own nom de plume, purporting to be an apology for all the sins of ridicule to the various injured ones.

To Mayor Arick, Hon. Wm. Stewart, Marshal Perry, Hon. J. B. Winters, Mr. Olin, and Samuel Wetherill, besides a host of others whom we have ridiculed from behind the shelter of our reportorial position, we say to these gentlemen we acknowledge our faults, and, in all weakness and humility upon our bended marrow bones, we ask their forgiveness, promising that in future we will give them no cause for anything but the best of feeling toward us. To "Young Wilson" and The Unreliable (as we have wickedly termed them), we feel that no apology we can make begins to atone for the many insults we have given them. Toward these gentlemen we have been as mean as a man could be—and we have always prided ourselves on this base quality. We feel that we are the least of all humanity, as it were. We will now go in sack-cloth and ashes for the next forty days.

This in his own paper over his own signature was a body blow; but it had the effect of curing his cold. He was back in the office forthwith, and in the next morning's issue denounced his betrayer.

We are to blame for giving The Unreliable an opportunity to misrepresent us, and therefore refrain from repining to any great extent at the result. We simply claim the right to deny the truth of every statement made by him in yesterday's paper, to annul all apologies he coined as coming from us, and to hold him up to public commiseration as a reptile endowed with no more intellect, no more cultivation, no more Christian principle than animates and adorns the sportive jackass-rabbit of the Sierras. We have done.

These were the things that enlivened Comstock journalism. Once in a boxing bout Mark Twain got a blow on the nose which caused it to swell to an unusual size and shape. He went out of town for a few days, during which De Quille published an extravagant account of his misfortune, describing the nose and dwelling on the absurdity of Mark Twain's ever supposing himself to be a boxer.

De Quille scored heavily with this item but his own doom was written. Soon afterward he was out riding and was thrown from his horse and bruised considerably.

This was Mark's opportunity. He gave an account of Dan's disaster; then, commenting, he said:

Page 138

The idea of a plebeian like Dan supposing he could ever ride a horse! He! why, even the cats and the chickens laughed when they saw him go by. Of course, he would be thrown off. Of course, any well-bred horse wouldn't let a common, underbred person like Dan stay on his back! When they gathered him up he was just a bag of scraps, but they put him together, and you'll find him at his old place in the Enterprise office next week, still laboring under the delusion that he's a newspaper man.

The author of 'Roughing It' tells of a literary periodical called the Occidental, started in Virginia City by a Mr. F. This was the silver-tongued Tom Fitch, of the Union, an able speaker and writer, vastly popular on the Coast. Fitch came to Clemens one day and said he was thinking of starting such a periodical and asked him what he thought of the venture. Clemens said:

"You would succeed if any one could, but start a flower-garden on the desert of Sahara; set up hoisting-works on Mount Vesuvius for mining sulphur; start a literary paper in Virginia City; h—!!!"

Which was a correct estimate of the situation, and the paper perished with the third issue. It was of no consequence except that it contained what was probably the first attempt at that modern literary abortion, the composite novel. Also, it died too soon to publish Mark Twain's first verses of any pretension, though still of modest merit—"The Aged Pilot Man"—which were thereby saved for 'Roughing It.'

Visiting Virginia now, it seems curious that any of these things could have happened there. The Comstock has become little more than a memory; Virginia and Gold Hill are so quiet, so voiceless, as to constitute scarcely an echo of the past. The International Hotel, that once so splendid edifice, through whose portals the tide of opulent life then ebbed and flowed, is all but deserted now. One may wander at will through its dingy corridors and among its faded fripperies, seeking in vain for attendance or hospitality, the lavish welcome of a vanished day. Those things were not lacking once, and the stream of wealth tossed up and down the stair and billowed up C Street, an ebullient tide of metals and men from which millionaires would be struck out, and individuals known in national affairs. William M. Stewart who would one day become a United States Senator, was there, an unnoticed unit; and John Mackay and James G. Fair, one a senator by and by, and both millionaires, but poor enough then—Fair with a pick on his shoulder and Mackay, too, at first, though he presently became a mine superintendent. Once in those days Mark Twain bantering offered to trade businesses with Mackay.

"No," Mackay said, "I can't trade. My business is not worth as much as yours. I have never swindled anybody, and I don't intend to begin now."

Neither of those men could dream that within ten years their names would be international property; that in due course Nevada would propose statues to their memory.

Page 139

Such things came out of the Comstock; such things spring out of every turbulent frontier.

XLIII

ARTEMUS WARD

Madame Caprell's warning concerning Mark Twain's health at twenty-eight would seem to have been justified. High-strung and neurotic, the strain of newspaper work and the tumult of the Comstock had told on him. As in later life, he was subject to bronchial colds, and more than once that year he found it necessary to drop all work and rest for a time at Steamboat Springs, a place near Virginia City, where there were boiling springs and steaming fissures in the mountain-side, and a comfortable hotel. He contributed from there sketches somewhat more literary in form than any of his previous work. "Curing a Cold" is a more or less exaggerated account of his ills.

[Included in Sketches New and Old. "Information for the Million," and "Advice to Good Little Girls," included in the "Jumping Frog" Collection, 1867, but omitted from the Sketches, are also believed to belong to this period.]

A portion of a playful letter to his mother, written from the springs, still exists.

You have given my vanity a deadly thrust. Behold, I am prone to boast of having the widest reputation as a local editor of any man on the Pacific coast, and you gravely come forward and tell me "if I work hard and attend closely to my business, I may aspire to a place on a big San Francisco daily some day." There's a comment on human vanity for you! Why, blast it, I was under the impression that I could get such a situation as that any time I asked for it. But I don't want it. No paper in the United States can afford to pay me what my place on the Enterprise is worth. If I were not naturally a lazy, idle, good-for-nothing vagabond, I could make it pay me \$20,000 a year. But I don't suppose I shall ever be any account. I lead an easy life, though, and I don't care a cent whether school keeps or not. Everybody knows me, and I fare like a prince wherever I go, be it on this side of the mountain or the other. And I am proud to say I am the most conceited ass in the Territory.

You think that picture looks old? Well, I can't help it—in reality I'm not as old as I was when I was eighteen.

Which was a true statement, so far as his general attitude was concerned. At eighteen, in New York and Philadelphia, his letters had been grave, reflective, advisory. Now they were mostly banter and froth, lightly indifferent to the serious side of things, though perhaps only pretendedly so, for the picture did look old. From the shock and

circumstance of his brother's death he—had never recovered. He was barely twenty-eight. From the picture he might have been a man of forty.

It was that year that Artemus Ward (Charles F. Browne) came to Virginia City. There was a fine opera-house in Virginia, and any attraction that billed San Francisco did not fail to play to the Comstock. Ward intended staying only a few days to deliver his lectures, but the whirl of the Comstock caught him like a maelstrom, and he remained three weeks.

Page 140

He made the Enterprise office his headquarters, and fairly reveled in the company he found there. He and Mark Twain became boon companions. Each recognized in the other a kindred spirit. With Goodman, De Quille, and McCarthy, also E. E. Hingston—Ward's agent, a companionable fellow—they usually dined at Chaumond's, Virginia's high-toned French restaurant.

Those were three memorable weeks in Mark Twain's life. Artemus Ward was in the height of his fame, and he encouraged his new-found brother-humorist and prophesied great things of him. Clemens, on his side, measured himself by this man who had achieved fame, and perhaps with good reason concluded that Ward's estimate was correct, that he too could win fame and honor, once he got a start. If he had lacked ambition before Ward's visit, the latter's unqualified approval inspired him with that priceless article of equipment. He put his soul into entertaining the visitor during those three weeks; and it was apparent to their associates that he was at least Ward's equal in mental stature and originality. Goodman and the others began to realize that for Mark Twain the rewards of the future were to be measured only by his resolution and ability to hold out. On Christmas Eve Artemus lectured in Silver City and afterward came to the Enterprise office to give the boys a farewell dinner. The Enterprise always published a Christmas carol, and Goodman sat at his desk writing it. He was just finishing as Ward came in:

"Slave, slave," said Artemus. "Come out and let me banish care from you."

They got the boys and all went over to Chaumond's, where Ward commanded Goodman to order the dinner. When the cocktails came on, Artemus lifted his glass and said:

"I give you Upper Canada."

The company rose, drank the toast in serious silence; then Goodman said:

"Of course, Artemus, it's all right, but why did you give us Upper Canada?"

"Because I don't want it myself," said Ward, gravely.

Then began a rising tide of humor that could hardly be matched in the world to-day. Mark Twain had awakened to a fuller power; Artemus Ward was in his prime. They were giants of a race that became extinct when Mark Twain died. The youth, the wine, the whirl of lights and life, the tumult of the shouting street—it was as if an electric stream of inspiration poured into those two human dynamos and sent them into a dazzling, scintillating whirl. All gone—as evanescent, as forgotten, as the lightnings of that vanished time; out of that vast feasting and entertainment only a trifling morsel remains. Ward now and then asked Goodman why he did not join in the banter. Goodman said:

“I’m preparing a joke, Artemus, but I’m keeping it for the present.”

It was near daybreak when Ward at last called for the bill. It was two hundred and thirty-seven dollars.

“What” exclaimed Artemus.

Page 141

"That's my joke." said Goodman.

"But I was only exclaiming because it was not twice as much," returned Ward.

He paid it amid laughter, and they went out into the early morning air. It was fresh and fine outside, not yet light enough to see clearly. Artemus threw his face up to the sky and said:

"I feel glorious. I feel like walking on the roofs."

Virginia was built on the steep hillside, and the eaves of some of the houses almost touched the ground behind them.

"There is your chance, Artemus," Goodman said, pointing to a row of these houses all about of a height.

Artemus grabbed Mark Twain, and they stepped out upon the long string of roofs and walked their full length, arm in arm. Presently the others noticed a lonely policeman cocking his revolver and getting ready to aim in their direction. Goodman called to him:

"Wait a minute. What are you going to do?"

"I'm going to shoot those burglars," he said.

"Don't for your life. Those are not burglars. That's Mark Twain and Artemus Ward."

The roof-walkers returned, and the party went down the street to a corner across from the International Hotel. A saloon was there with a barrel lying in front, used, perhaps for a sort of sign. Artemus climbed astride the barrel, and somebody brought a beer-glass and put it in his hand. Virginia City looks out over the Eastward Desert. Morning was just breaking upon the distant range-the scene as beautiful as when the sunrise beams across the plain of Memnon. The city was not yet awake. The only living creatures in sight were the group of belated diners, with Artemus Ward, as King Gambrinus, pouring a libation to the sunrise.

That was the beginning of a week of glory. The farewell dinner became a series. At the close of one convivial session Artemus went to a concert-hall, the "Melodeon," blacked his face, and delivered a speech. He got away from Virginia about the close of the year.

A day or two later he wrote from Austin, Nevada, to his new-found comrade as "My dearest Love," recalling the happiness of his stay:

"I shall always remember Virginia as a bright spot in my existence, as all others must or rather cannot be, as it were."

Then reflectively he adds:

“Some of the finest intellects in the world have been blunted by liquor.”

Rare Artemus Ward and rare Mark Twain! If there lies somewhere a place of meeting and remembrance, they have not failed to recall there those closing days of '63.

XLIV

Governor of the “Third house”

With Artemus Ward’s encouragement, Clemens began to think of extending his audience eastward. The New York Sunday Mercury published literary matter. Ward had urged him to try this market, and promised to write a special letter to the editors, introducing Mark Twain and his work. Clemens prepared a sketch of the Comstock variety, scarcely refined in character and full of personal allusion, a humor not suited to the present-day reader. Its general subject was children; it contained some absurd remedies, supposedly sent to his old pilot friend Zeb Leavenworth, and was written as much for a joke on that good-natured soul as for profit or reputation.

Page 142

"I wrote it especially for Beck Jolly's use," the author declares, in a letter to his mother, "so he could pester Zeb with it."

We cannot know to-day whether Zeb was pestered or not. A faded clipping is all that remains of the incident. As literature the article, properly enough, is lost to the world at large. It is only worth remembering as his metropolitan beginning. Yet he must have thought rather highly of it (his estimation of his own work was always unsafe), for in the letter above quoted he adds:

I cannot write regularly for the Mercury, of course, I sha'n't have time. But sometimes I throw off a pearl (there is no self-conceit about that, I beg you to observe) which ought for the eternal welfare of my race to have a more extensive circulation than is afforded by a local daily paper. And if Fitzhugh Ludlow (author of the 'Hasheesh Eater') comes your way, treat him well. He published a high encomium upon Mark Twain (the same being eminently just and truthful, I beseech you to believe) in a San Francisco paper. Artemus Ward said that when my gorgeous talents were publicly acknowledged by such high authority I ought to appreciate them myself, leave sage-brush obscurity, and journey to New York with him, as he wanted me to do. But I preferred not to burst upon the New York public too suddenly and brilliantly, so I concluded to remain here.

He was in Carson City when this was written, preparing for the opening of the next legislature. He was beyond question now the most conspicuous figure of the capital; also the most wholesomely respected, for his influence had become very large. It was said that he could control more votes than any legislative member, and with his friends, Simmons and Clagget, could pass or defeat any bill offered. The Enterprise was a powerful organ—to be courted and dreaded—and Mark Twain had become its chief tribune. That he was fearless, merciless, and incorruptible, without doubt had a salutary influence on that legislative session. He reveled in his power; but it is not recorded that he ever abused it. He got a bill passed, largely increasing Orion's official fees, but this was a crying need and was so recognized. He made no secret promises, none at all that he did not intend to fulfill. "Sam's word was as fixed as fate," Orion records, and it may be added that he was morally as fearless.

The two Houses of the last territorial legislature of Nevada assembled January 12, 1864.—[Nevada became a State October 31, 1864.]—A few days later a "Third House" was organized—an institution quite in keeping with the happy atmosphere of that day and locality, for it was a burlesque organization, and Mark Twain was selected as its "Governor."

The new House prepared to make a public occasion of this first session, and its Governor was required to furnish a message. Then it was decided to make it a church benefit. The letters exchanged concerning this proposition still exist; they explain themselves:

Page 143

Carson city, January 23, 1864.

Gov. Mark twain, Understanding from certain members of the Third House of the territorial Legislature that that body will have effected a permanent organization within a day or two, and be ready for the reception of your Third Annual Message,—[There had been no former message. This was regarded as a great joke.]—we desire to ask your permission, and that of the Third House, to turn the affair to the benefit of the Church by charging toll-roads, franchises, and other persons a dollar apiece for the privilege of listening to your communication.

S. Pixley,
G. A. Sears,
Trustees.

Carson city, January 23, 1864.

Gentlemen,—Certainly. If the public can find anything in a grave state paper worth paying a dollar for, I am willing they should pay that amount, or any other; and although I am not a very dusty Christian myself, I take an absorbing interest in religious affairs, and would willingly inflict my annual message upon the Church itself if it might derive benefit thereby. You can charge what you please; I promise the public no amusement, but I do promise a reasonable amount of instruction. I am responsible to the Third House only, and I hope to be permitted to make it exceedingly warm for that body, without caring whether the sympathies of the public and the Church be enlisted in their favor, and against myself, or not.

Respectfully,
mark twain.

Mark Twain's reply is closely related to his later style in phrase and thought. It might have been written by him at almost any subsequent period. Perhaps his association with Artemus Ward had awakened a new perception of the humorous idea—a humor of repression, of understatement. He forgot this often enough, then and afterward, and gave his riotous fancy free rein; but on the whole the simpler, less florid form seemingly began to attract him more and more.

His address as Governor of the Third House has not been preserved, but those who attended always afterward referred to it as the "greatest effort of his life." Perhaps for that audience and that time this verdict was justified.

It was his first great public opportunity. On the stage about him sat the membership of the Third House; the building itself was packed, the aisles full. He knew he could let himself go in burlesque and satire, and he did. He was unsparing in his ridicule of the Governor, the officials in general, the legislative members, and of individual citizens.

From the beginning to the end of his address the audience was in a storm of laughter and applause. With the exception of the dinner speech made to the printers in Keokuk, it was his first public utterance —the beginning of a lifelong series of triumphs.

Page 144

Only one thing marred his success. Little Carrie Pixley, daughter of one of the “trustees,” had promised to be present and sit in a box next the stage. It was like him to be fond of the child, and he had promised to send a carriage for her. Often during his address he glanced toward the box; but it remained empty. When the affair was ended, he drove home with her father to inquire the reason. They found the little girl, in all her finery, weeping on the bed. Then he remembered he had forgotten to send the carriage; and that was like him, too.

For his Third House address Judge A. W. (Sandy) Baldwin and Theodore Winters presented him with a gold watch inscribed to “Governor Mark Twain.” He was more in demand now than ever; no social occasion was regarded as complete without him. His doings were related daily and his sayings repeated on the streets. Most of these things have passed away now, but a few are still recalled with smiles. Once, when conundrums were being asked at a party, he was urged to make one.

“Well,” he said, “why am I like the Pacific Ocean?”

Several guesses were made, but none satisfied him. Finally all gave it up.

“Tell us, Mark, why are you like the Pacific Ocean?”

“I don’t know,” he drawled. “I was just asking for information.”

At another time, when a young man insisted on singing a song of eternal length, the chorus of which was, “I’m going home, I’m going home, I’m going home tomorrow,” Mark Twain put his head in the window and said, pleadingly:

“For God’s sake go to-night.”

But he was also fond of quieter society. Sometimes, after the turmoil of a legislative morning, he would drop in to Miss Keziah Clapp’s school and listen to the exercises, or would call on Colonel Curry—“old Curry, old Abe Curry”—and if the colonel happened to be away, he would talk with Mrs. Curry, a motherly soul (still alive at ninety-three, in 1910), and tell her of his Hannibal boyhood or his river and his mining adventures, and keep her laughing until the tears ran.

He was a great pedestrian in those days. Sometimes he walked from Virginia to Carson, stopping at Colonel Curry’s as he came in for rest and refreshment.

“Mrs. Curry,” he said once, “I have seen tired men than I am, and lazier men, but they were dead men.” He liked the home feeling there—the peace and motherly interest. Deep down, he was lonely and homesick; he was always so away from his own kindred.

Clemens returned now to Virginia City, and, like all other men who ever met her, became briefly fascinated by the charms of Adah Isaacs Menken, who was playing

Mazeppa at the Virginia Opera House. All men—kings, poets, priests, prize-fighters—fell under Menken's spell. Dan de Quille and Mark Twain entered into a daily contest as to who could lavish the most fervid praise on her in the *Enterprise*. The latter carried her his literary work to criticize. He confesses this in one of his home letters, perhaps with a sort of pride.

Page 145

I took it over to show to Miss Menken the actress, Orpheus C. Ken's wife. She is a literary cuss herself.

She has a beautiful white hand, but her handwriting is infamous; she writes fast and her chirography is of the door-plate order—her letters are immense. I gave her a conundrum, thus:

"My dear madam, why ought your hand to retain its present grace and beauty always? Because you fool away devilish little of it on your manuscript."

But Menken was gone presently, and when he saw her again, somewhat later, in San Francisco, his "madness" would have seemed to have been allayed.

XLV

A COMSTOCK DUEL

The success—such as it was—of his occasional contributions to the New York Sunday Mercury stirred Mark Twain's ambition for a wider field of labor. Circumstance, always ready to meet his wishes, offered assistance, though in an unexpected form.

Goodman, temporarily absent, had left Clemens in editorial charge. As in that earlier day, when Orion had visited Tennessee and returned to find his paper in a hot personal warfare with certain injured citizens, so the Enterprise, under the same management, had stirred up trouble. It was just at the time of the "Flour Sack Sanitary Fund," the story of which is related at length in 'Roughing It'. In the general hilarity of this occasion, certain Enterprise paragraphs of criticism or ridicule had incurred the displeasure of various individuals whose cause naturally enough had been espoused by a rival paper, the Chronicle. Very soon the original grievance, whatever it was, was lost sight of in the fireworks and vitriol-throwing of personal recrimination between Mark Twain and the Chronicle editor, then a Mr. Laird.

A point had been reached at length when only a call for bloodshed—a challenge—could satisfy either the staff or the readers of the two papers. Men were killed every week for milder things than the editors had spoken each of the other. Joe Goodman himself, not so long before, had fought a duel with a Union editor—Tom Fitch—and shot him in the leg, so making of him a friend, and a lame man, for life. In Joe's absence the prestige of the paper must be maintained.

Mark Twain himself has told in burlesque the story of his duel, keeping somewhat nearer to the fact than was his custom in such writing, as may be seen by comparing it with the account of his abettor and second—of course, Steve Gillis. The account is from Mr. Gillis's own hand:

When Joe went away, he left Sam in editorial charge of the paper. That was a dangerous thing to do. Nobody could ever tell what Sam was going to write. Something he said stirred up Mr. Laird, of the Chronicle, who wrote a reply of a very severe kind. He said some things that we told Mark could only be wiped out with blood. Those were the days when almost every man in Virginia

Page 146

City had fought with pistols either impromptu or premeditated duels. I had been in several, but then mine didn't count. Most of them were of the impromptu kind. Mark hadn't had any yet, and we thought it about time that his baptism took place. He was not eager for it; he was averse to violence, but we finally prevailed upon him to send Laird a challenge, and when Laird did not send a reply at once we insisted on Mark sending him another challenge, by which time he had made himself believe that he really wanted to fight, as much as we wanted him to do. Laird concluded to fight, at last. I helped Mark get up some of the letters, and a man who would not fight after such letters did not belong in Virginia City—in those days.

Laird's acceptance of Mark's challenge came along about midnight, I think, after the papers had gone to press. The meeting was to take place next morning at sunrise.

Of course I was selected as Mark's second, and at daybreak I had him up and out for some lessons in pistol practice before meeting Laird. I didn't have to wake him. He had not been asleep. We had been talking since midnight over the duel that was coming. I had been telling him of the different duels in which I had taken part, either as principal or second, and how many men I had helped to kill and bury, and how it was a good plan to make a will, even if one had not much to leave. It always looked well, I told him, and seemed to be a proper thing to do before going into a duel. So Mark made a will with a sort of gloomy satisfaction, and as soon as it was light enough to see, we went out to a little ravine near the meeting- place, and I set up a board for him to shoot at. He would step out, raise that big pistol, and when I would count three he would shut his eyes and pull the trigger. Of course he didn't hit anything; he did not come anywhere near hitting anything. Just then we heard somebody shooting over in the next ravine. Sam said:

"What's that, Steve?"

"Why," I said, "that's Laud. His seconds are practising him over there."

It didn't make my principal any more cheerful to hear that pistol go off every few seconds over there. Just then I saw a little mud-hen light on some sage-brush about thirty yards away.

"Mark," I said, "let me have that pistol. I'll show you how to shoot."

He handed it to me, and I let go at the bird and shot its head off, clean. About that time Laird and his second came over the ridge to meet us. I saw them coming and handed Mark back the pistol. We were looking at the bird when they came up.

“Who did that?” asked Laird’s second.

“Sam,” I said.

“How far off was it?”

“Oh, about thirty yards.”

“Can he do it again?”

“Of course,” I said; “every time. He could do it twice that far.”

Page 147

Laud's second turned to his principal.

"Laird," he said, "you don't want to fight that man. It's just like suicide. You'd better settle this thing, now."

So there was a settlement. Laird took back all he had said; Mark said he really had nothing against Laird—the discussion had been purely journalistic and did not need to be settled in blood. He said that both he and Laird were probably the victims of their friends. I remember one of the things Laird said when his second told him he had better not fight.

"Fight! H—I, no! I am not going to be murdered by that d—d desperado."

Sam had sent another challenge to a man named Cutler, who had been somehow mixed up with the muss and had written Sam an insulting letter; but Cutler was out of town at the time, and before he got back we had received word from Jerry Driscoll, foreman of the Grand jury, that the law just passed, making a duel a penitentiary offense for both principal and second, was to be strictly enforced, and unless we got out of town in a limited number of hours we would be the first examples to test the new law.

We concluded to go, and when the stage left next morning for San Francisco we were on the outside seat. Joe Goodman had returned by this time and agreed to accompany us as far as Henness Pass. We were all in good spirits and glad we were alive, so Joe did not stop when he got to Henness Pass, but kept on. Now and then he would say, "Well, I had better be going back pretty soon," but he didn't go, and in the end he did not go back at all, but went with us clear to San Francisco, and we had a royal good time all the way. I never knew any series of duels to close so happily.

So ended Mark Twain's career on the Comstock. He had come to it a weary pilgrim, discouraged and unknown; he was leaving it with a new name and fame—elate, triumphant, even if a fugitive.

XLVI

GETTING SETTLED IN SAN FRANCISCO

This was near the end of May, 1864. The intention of both Gillis and Clemens was to return to the States; but once in San Francisco both presently accepted places, Clemens as reporter and Gillis as compositor, on the 'Morning Call'.

From 'Roughing It' the reader gathers that Mark Twain now entered into a life of butterfly idleness on the strength of prospective riches to be derived from the "half a trunkful of mining stocks," and that presently, when the mining bubble exploded, he was a pauper.

But a good many liberties have been taken with the history of this period. Undoubtedly he expected opulent returns from his mining stocks, and was disappointed, particularly in an investment in Hale and Norcross shares, held too long for the large profit which could have been made by selling at the proper time.

Page 148

The fact is, he spent not more than a few days—a fortnight at most—in “butterfly idleness,” at the Lick House before he was hard at work on the ‘Call’, living modestly with Steve Gillis in the quietest place they could find, never quiet enough, but as far as possible from dogs and cats and chickens and pianos, which seemed determined to make the mornings hideous, when a weary night reporter and compositor wanted to rest. They went out socially, on occasion, arrayed in considerable elegance; but their recreations were more likely to consist of private midnight orgies, after the paper had gone to press—mild dissipations in whatever they could find to eat at that hour, with a few glasses of beer, and perhaps a game of billiards or pool in some all-night resort. A printer by the name of Ward—“Little Ward,”—[L. P. Ward; well known as an athlete in San Francisco. He lost his mind and fatally shot himself in 1903.]—they called him—often went with them for these refreshments. Ward and Gillis were both bantam game-cocks, and sometimes would stir up trouble for the very joy of combat. Clemens never cared for that sort of thing and discouraged it, but Ward and Gillis were for war. “They never assisted each other. If one had offered to assist the other against some overgrown person, it would have been an affront, and a battle would have followed between that pair of little friends.”—[S. L. C., 1906.]—Steve Gillis in particular, was fond of incidental encounters, a characteristic which would prove an important factor somewhat later in shaping Mark Twain’s career. Of course, the more strenuous nights were not frequent. Their home-going was usually tame enough and they were glad enough to get there.

Clemens, however, was never quite ready for sleep. Then, as ever, he would prop himself up in bed, light his pipe, and lose himself in English or French history until sleep conquered. His room-mate did not approve of this habit; it interfered with his own rest, and with his fiendish tendency to mischief he found reprisal in his own fashion. Knowing his companion’s highly organized nervous system he devised means of torture which would induce him to put out the light. Once he tied a nail to a string; an arrangement which he kept on the floor behind the bed. Pretending to be asleep, he would hold the end of the string, and lift it gently up and down, making a slight ticking sound on the floor, maddening to a nervous man. Clemens would listen a moment and say:

“What in the nation is that noise”

Gillis’s pretended sleep and the ticking would continue.

Clemens would sit up in bed, fling aside his book, and swear violently.

“Steve, what is that d—d noise?” he would say.

Steve would pretend to rouse sleepily.

“What’s the matter, Sam? What noise? Oh, I guess that is one of those death-ticks; they don’t like the light. Maybe it will stop in a minute.”

Page 149

It usually did stop about that time, and the reading would be apt to continue. But no sooner was there stillness than it began again—tick, tick, tick. With a wild explosion of blasphemy, the book would go across the floor and the light would disappear. Sometimes, when he couldn't sleep, he would dress and walk out in the street for an hour, while the cruel Steve slept like the criminal that he was.

At last, one night, he overdid the thing and was caught. His tortured room-mate at first reviled him, then threatened to kill him, finally put him to shame. It was curious, but they always loved each other, those two; there was never anything resembling an estrangement, and to his last days Mark Twain never could speak of Steve Gillis without tenderness.

They moved a great many times in San Francisco. Their most satisfactory residence was on a bluff on California Street. Their windows looked down on a lot of Chinese houses—"tin-can houses," they were called—small wooden shanties covered with beaten-out cans. Steve and Mark would look down on these houses, waiting until all the Chinamen were inside; then one of them would grab an empty beer-bottle, throw it down on those tin can roofs, and dodge behind the blinds. The Chinamen would swarm out and look up at the row of houses on the edge of the bluff, shake their fists, and pour out Chinese vituperation. By and by, when they had retired and everything was quiet again, their tormentors would throw another bottle. This was their Sunday amusement.

At a place on Minna Street they lived with a private family. At first Clemens was delighted.

"Just look at it, Steve," he said. "What a nice, quiet place. Not a thing to disturb us."

But next morning a dog began to howl. Gillis woke this time, to find his room-mate standing in the door that opened out into a back garden, holding a big revolver, his hand shaking with cold and excitement.

"Came here, Steve," he said. "Come here and kill him. I'm so chilled through I can't get a bead on him."

"Sam," said Steve, "don't shoot him. Just swear at him. You can easily kill him at that range with your profanity."

Steve Gillis declares that Mark Twain then let go such a scorching, singeing blast that the brute's owner sold him next day for a Mexican hairless dog.

We gather that they moved, on an average, about once a month. A home letter of September 25, 1864, says:

We have been here only four months, yet we have changed our lodging five times. We are very comfortably fixed where we are now and have no fault to find with the rooms or

the people. We are the only lodgers-in a well-to-do private family But I need change and must move again.

This was the Minna Street place—the place of the dog. In the same letter he mentions having made a new arrangement with the Call, by which he is to receive twenty-five dollars a week, with no more night-work; he says further that he has closed with the Californian for weekly articles at twelve dollars each.

Page 150

XLVII

BOHEMIAN DAYS

Mark Twain's position on the 'Call' was uncongenial from the start. San Francisco was a larger city than Virginia; the work there was necessarily more impersonal, more a routine of news-gathering and drudgery. He once set down his own memories of it:

At nine in the morning I had to be at the police court for an hour and make a brief history of the squabbles of the night before. They were usually between Irishmen and Irishmen, and Chinamen and Chinamen, with now and then a squabble between the two races, for a change. During the rest of the day we raked the town from end to end, gathering such material as we might, wherewith to fill our required columns; and if there were no fires to report, we started some. At night we visited the six theaters, one after the other, seven nights in the week. We remained in each of those places five minutes, got the merest passing glimpse of play and opera, and with that for a text we "wrote up" those plays and operas, as the phrase goes, torturing our souls every night in the effort to find something to say about those performances which we had not said a couple of hundred times before.

It was fearful drudgery-soulless drudgery—and almost destitute of interest. It was an awful slavery for a lazy man.

On the Enterprise he had been free, with a liberty that amounted to license. He could write what he wished, and was personally responsible to the readers. On the Call he was simply a part of a news-machine; restricted by a policy, the whole a part of a still greater machine —politics. Once he saw some butchers set their dogs on an unoffending Chinaman, a policeman looking on with amused interest. He wrote an indignant article criticizing the city government and raking the police. In Virginia City this would have been a welcome delight; in San Francisco it did not appear.

At another time he found a policeman asleep on his beat. Going to a near-by vegetable stall he borrowed a large cabbage-leaf, came back and stood over the sleeper, gently fanning him. It would be wasted effort to make an item of this incident; but he could publish it in his own fashion. He stood there fanning the sleeping official until a large crowd collected. When he thought it was large enough he went away. Next day the joke was all over the city.

Only one of the several severe articles he wrote criticizing officials and institutions seems to have appeared—an attack on an undertaker whose establishment formed a branch of the coroner's office. The management of this place one day refused information to a Call reporter, and the next morning its proprietor was terrified by a scathing denunciation of his firm. It began, "Those body-snatchers" and continued

through half a column of such scorching strictures as only Mark Twain could devise. The Call's policy of suppression evidently did not include criticisms of deputy coroners.

Page 151

Such liberty, however, was too rare for Mark Twain, and he lost interest. He confessed afterward that he became indifferent and lazy, and that George E. Barnes, one of the publishers of the *Call*, at last allowed him an assistant. He selected from the counting-room a big, hulking youth by the name of McGlooral, with the acquired prefix of “Smiggy.” Clemens had taken a fancy to Smiggy McGlooral—on account of his name and size perhaps—and Smiggy, devoted to his patron, worked like a slave gathering news nights—daytimes, too, if necessary—all of which was demoralizing to a man who had small appetite for his place anyway. It was only a question of time when Smiggy alone would be sufficient for the job.

There were other and pleasanter things in San Francisco. The personal and literary associations were worth while. At his right hand in the *Call* office sat Frank Soule—a gentle spirit—a graceful versifier who believed himself a poet. Mark Twain deferred to Frank Soule in those days. He thought his verses exquisite in their workmanship; a word of praise from Soule gave him happiness. In a luxurious office up-stairs was another congenial spirit—a gifted, handsome fellow of twenty-four, who was secretary of the *Mint*, and who presently became editor of a new literary weekly, the *Californian*, which Charles Henry Webb had founded. This young man’s name was Francis Bret Harte, originally from Albany, later a miner and school-teacher on the Stanislaus, still later a compositor, finally a contributor, on the *Golden Era*. His fame scarcely reached beyond San Francisco as yet; but among the little coterie of writing folk that clustered about the *Era* office his rank was high. Mark Twain fraternized with Bret Harte and the *Era* group generally. He felt that he had reached the land—or at least the borderland—of Bohemia, that Ultima Thule of every young literary dream.

San Francisco did, in fact, have a very definite literary atmosphere and a literature of its own. Its coterie of writers had drifted from here and there, but they had merged themselves into a California body-poetic, quite as individual as that of Cambridge, even if less famous, less fortunate in emoluments than the Boston group. Joseph E. Lawrence, familiarly known as “Joe” Lawrence, was editor of the *Golden Era*,—[The *Golden Era*, California’s first literary publication, was founded by Rollin M. Daggett and J. McDonough Foard in 1852.]—and his kindness and hospitality were accounted sufficient rewards even when his pecuniary acknowledgments were modest enough. He had a handsome office, and the literati, local and visiting, used to gather there. Names that would be well known later were included in that little band. Joaquin Miller recalls from an old diary, kept by him then, having seen Adah Isaacs Menken, Prentice Mulford, Bret Harte, Charles Warren Stoddard, Fitzhugh Ludlow, Mark Twain, Orpheus C. Kerr, Artemus Ward, Gilbert Densmore, W. S. Kendall, and Mrs. Hitchcock assembled there at one time. The *Era* office would seem to have been a sort of Mount Olympus, or Parnassus, perhaps; for these were mainly poets, who had scarcely yet attained to the dignity of gods. Miller was hardly more than a youth then, and this grand assemblage impressed him, as did the imposing appointments of the place.

Page 152

The Era rooms were elegant—[he says]—,the most grandly carpeted and most gorgeously furnished that I have ever seen. Even now in my memory they seem to have been simply palatial. I have seen the world well since then—all of its splendors worth seeing—yet those carpeted parlors, with Joe Lawrence and his brilliant satellites, outshine all things else, as I turn to look back.

More than any other city west of the Alleghanies, San Francisco has always been a literary center; and certainly that was a remarkable group to be out there under the sunset, dropped down there behind the Sierras, which the transcontinental railway would not climb yet, for several years. They were a happy-hearted, aspiring lot, and they got as much as five dollars sometimes for an Era article, and were as proud of it as if it had been a great deal more. They felt that they were creating literature, as they were, in fact; a new school of American letters mustered there.

Mark Twain and Bret Harte were distinctive features of this group. They were already recognized by their associates as belonging in a class by themselves, though as yet neither had done any of the work for which he would be remembered later. They were a good deal together, and it was when Harte was made editor of the *Californian* that Mark Twain was put on the weekly staff at the then unexampled twelve-dollar rate. The *Californian* made larger pretensions than the Era, and perhaps had a heavier financial backing. With Mark Twain on the staff and Bret Harte in the chair, himself a frequent contributor, it easily ranked as first of San Francisco periodicals. A number of the sketches collected by Webb later, in Mark Twain's first little volume, the *Celebrated Jumping Frog, Etc.*, appeared in the Era or *Californian* in 1864 and 1865. They were smart, bright, direct, not always refined, but probably the best humor of the day. Some of them are still preserved in this volume of sketches. They are interesting in what they promise, rather than in what they present, though some of them are still delightful enough. "The Killing of Julius Caesar Localized" is an excellent forerunner of his burlesque report of a gladiatorial combat in *The Innocents Abroad*. The Answers to Correspondents, with his vigorous admonition of the statistical moralist, could hardly have been better done at any later period. The *Jumping Frog* itself was not originally of this harvest. It has a history of its own, as we shall see a little further along.

The reportorial arrangement was of brief duration. Even the great San Francisco earthquake of that day did not awaken in Mark Twain any permanent enthusiasm for the drudgery of the 'Call'. He had lost interest, and when Mark Twain lost interest in a subject or an undertaking that subject or that undertaking were better dead, so far as he was concerned. His conclusion of service with the Call was certain, and he wondered daily why it was delayed so long.

Page 153

The connection had become equally unsatisfactory to proprietor and employee. They had a heart-to-heart talk presently, with the result that Mark Twain was free. He used to claim, in after-years, with his usual tendency to confess the worst of himself, that he was discharged, and the incident has been variously told. George Barnes himself has declared that Clemens resigned with great willingness. It is very likely that the paragraph at the end of Chapter *lviii* in 'Roughing It' presents the situation with fair accuracy, though, as always, the author makes it as unpleasant for himself as possible:

"At last one of the proprietors took me aside, with a charity I still remember with considerable respect, and gave me an opportunity to resign my berth, and so save myself the disgrace of a dismissal."

As an extreme contrast with the supposititious "butterfly idleness" of his beginning in San Francisco, and for no other discoverable reason, he doubtless thought it necessary, in the next chapter of that book, to depict himself as having reached the depths of hard luck, debt, and poverty.

"I became an adept at slinking," he says. "I slunk from back street to back street.... I slunk to my bed. I had pawned everything but the clothes I had on."

This is pure fiction. That he occasionally found himself short of funds is likely enough—a literary life invites that sort of thing—but that he ever clung to a single "silver ten-cent piece," as he tells us, and became the familiar of mendicancy, was a condition supplied altogether by his later imagination to satisfy what he must have regarded as an artistic need. Almost immediately following his separation from the 'Call' he arranged with Goodman to write a daily letter for the Enterprise, reporting San Francisco matters after his own notion with a free hand. His payment for this work was thirty dollars a week, and he had an additional return from his literary sketches. The arrangement was an improvement both as to labor and income.

Real affluence appeared on the horizon just then, in the form of a liberal offer for the Tennessee land. But alas! it was from a wine-grower who wished to turn the tract into great vineyards, and Orion had a prohibition seizure at the moment, so the trade was not made. Orion further argued that the prospective purchaser would necessarily be obliged to import horticultural labor from Europe, and that those people might be homesick, badly treated, and consequently unhappy in those far eastern Tennessee mountains. Such was Orion's way.

XLVIII

THE REFUGE OF THE HILLS

Those who remember Mark Twain's Enterprise letters (they are no longer obtainable)—[Many of these are indeed now obtainable by a simple Web search. D.W.]—declare them to have been the greatest series of daily philippics ever written. However this may be, it is certain that they made a stir. Goodman permitted him to say absolutely what he pleased upon any subject. San Francisco was fairly weltering in corruption, official and private. He assailed whatever came first to hand with all the fierceness of a flaming indignation long restrained.

Page 154

Quite naturally he attacked the police, and with such ferocity and penetration that as soon as copies of the Enterprise came from Virginia the City Hall began to boil and smoke and threaten trouble. Martin G. Burke, then chief of police, entered libel suit against the Enterprise, prodigiously advertising that paper, copies of which were snatched as soon as the stage brought them.

Mark Twain really let himself go then. He wrote a letter that on the outside was marked, "Be sure and let Joe see this before it goes in." He even doubted himself whether Goodman would dare to print it, after reading. It was a letter describing the city's corrupt morals under the existing police government. It began, "The air is full of lechery, and rumors of lechery," and continued in a strain which made even the Enterprise printers aghast.

"You can never afford to publish that," the foreman said to, Goodman.

"Let it all go in, every word," Goodman answered. "If Mark can stand it, I can!"

It seemed unfortunate (at the time) that Steve Gillis should select this particular moment to stir up trouble that would involve both himself and Clemens with the very officials which the latter had undertaken to punish. Passing a saloon one night alone, Gillis heard an altercation going on inside, and very naturally stepped in to enjoy it. Including the barkeeper, there were three against two. Steve ranged himself on the weaker side, and selected the barkeeper, a big bruiser, who, when the fight was over, was ready for the hospital. It turned out that he was one of Chief Burke's minions, and Gillis was presently indicted on a charge of assault with intent to kill. He knew some of the officials in a friendly way, and was advised to give a straw bond and go into temporary retirement. Clemens, of course, went his bail, and Steve set out for Virginia City, until the storm blew over.

This was Burke's opportunity. When the case was called and Gillis did not appear, Burke promptly instituted an action against his bondsman, with an execution against his loose property. The watch that had been given him as Governor of the Third House came near being thus sacrificed in the cause of friendship, and was only saved by skilful manipulation.

Now, it was down in the chain of circumstances that Steve Gillis's brother, James N. Gillis, a gentle-hearted hermit, a pocket-miner of the halcyon Tuolumne district—the Truthful James of Bret Harte—happened to be in San Francisco at this time, and invited Clemens to return with him to the far seclusion of his cabin on Jackass Hill. In that peaceful retreat were always rest and refreshment for the wayfarer, and more than one weary writer besides Bret Harte had found shelter there. James Gillis himself had fine literary instincts, but he remained a pocket-miner because he loved that quiet pursuit of gold, the Arcadian life, the companionship of his books, the occasional Bohemian pilgrim who found refuge in his retreat.

Page 155

It is said that the sick were made well, and the well made better, in Jim Gillis's cabin on the hilltop, where the air was nectar and the stillness like enchantment. One could mine there if he wished to do so; Jim would always furnish him a promising claim, and teach him the art of following the little fan-like drift of gold specks to the nested deposit of nuggets somewhere up the hillside. He regularly shared his cabin with one Dick Stoker (Dick Baker, of 'Roughing It'), another genial soul who long ago had retired from the world to this forgotten land, also with Dick's cat, Tom Quartz; but there was always room for guests.

In 'Roughing It', and in a later story, "The Californian's Tale," Mark Twain has made us acquainted with the verdant solitude of the Tuolumne hills, that dreamy, delicious paradise where once a vast population had gathered when placer-mining had been in its bloom, a dozen years before. The human swarm had scattered when the washings failed to pay, leaving only a quiet emptiness and the few pocket-miners along the Stanislaus and among the hills. Vast areas of that section present a strange appearance to-day. Long stretches there are, crowded and jammed and drifted with ghostly white stones that stand up like fossils of a prehistoric life—the earth deposit which once covered them entirely washed away, every particle of it removed by the greedy hordes, leaving only this vast bleaching drift, literally the "picked bones of the land." At one place stands Columbia, regarded once as a rival to Sacramento, a possible State capital—a few tumbling shanties now—and a ruined church.

It was the 4th of December, 1864, when Mark Twain arrived at Jim Gillis's cabin. He found it a humble habitation made of logs and slabs, partly sheltered by a great live-oak tree, surrounded by a stretch of grass. It had not much in the way of pretentious furniture, but there was a large fireplace, and a library which included the standard authors. A younger Gillis boy, William, was there at this time, so that the family numbered five in all, including Tom Quartz, the cat. On rainy days they would gather about the big, open fire and Jim Gillis, with his back to the warmth, would relate diverting yarns, creations of his own, turned out hot from the anvil, forged as he went along. He had a startling imagination, and he had fostered it in that secluded place. His stories usually consisted of wonderful adventures of his companion, Dick Stoker, portrayed with humor and that serene and vagrant fancy which builds as it goes, careless as to whither it is proceeding and whether the story shall end well or ill, soon or late, if ever. He always pretended that these extravagant tales of Stoker were strictly true; and Stoker—"forty-six and gray as a rat"—earnest, thoughtful, and tranquilly serene, would smoke and look into the fire and listen to those astonishing things of himself, smiling a little now and then but saying never a word.

Page 156

What did it matter to him? He had no world outside of the cabin and the hills, no affairs; he would live and die there; his affairs all had ended long ago. A number of the stories used in Mark Twain's books were first told by Jim Gillis, standing with his hands crossed behind him, back to the fire, in the cabin on Jackass Hill. The story of Dick Baker's cat was one of these; the jaybird and Acorn story of 'A Tramp Abroad' was another; also the story of the "Burning Shame," and there are others. Mark Twain had little to add to these stories; in fact, he never could get them to sound as well, he said, as when Jim Gillis had told them.

James Gillis's imagination sometimes led him into difficulties. Once a feeble old squaw came along selling some fruit that looked like green plums. Stoker, who knew the fruit well enough, carelessly ventured the remark that it might be all right, but he had never heard of anybody eating it, which set Gillis off into eloquent praises of its delights, all of which he knew to be purely imaginary; whereupon Stoker told him if he liked the fruit so well, to buy some of it. There was no escape after that; Jim had to buy some of those plums, whose acid was of the hair-lifting aqua-fortis variety, and all the rest of the day he stewed them, adding sugar, trying to make them palatable, tasting them now and then, boasting meanwhile of their nectar-like deliciousness. He gave the others a taste by and by—a withering, corroding sup—and they derided him and rode him down. But Jim never weakened. He ate that fearful brew, and though for days his mouth was like fire he still referred to the luscious health-giving joys of the "Californian plums."

Jackass Hill was not altogether a solitude; here and there were neighbors. Another pocket-miner; named Carrington, had a cabin not far away, and a mile or two distant lived an old couple with a pair of pretty daughters, so plump and trim and innocent, that they were called the "Chapparal Quails." Young men from far and near paid court to them, and on Sunday afternoons so many horses would be tied to their front fence as to suggest an afternoon service there. Young "Billy" Gillis knew them, and one Sunday morning took his brother's friend, Sam Clemens, over for a call. They went early, with forethought, and promptly took the girls for a walk. They took a long walk, and went wandering over the hills, toward Sandy Bar and the Stanislaus—through that reposeful land which Bret Harte would one day light with idyllic romance—and toward evening found themselves a long way from home. They must return by the nearest way to arrive before dark. One of the young ladies suggested a short cut through the Chemisal, and they started. But they were lost, presently, and it was late, very late, when at last they reached the ranch. The mother of the "Quails" was sitting up for them, and she had something to say. She let go a perfect storm of general denunciation, then narrowed the attack to Samuel Clemens as the oldest of the party. He remained mildly serene.

Page 157

"It wasn't my fault," he ventured at last; "it was Billy Gillis's fault."

"No such thing. You know better. Mr. Gillis has been here often. It was you."

"But do you realize, ma'am, how tired and hungry we are? Haven't you got a bite for us to eat?"

"No, sir, not a bite—for such as you."

The offender's eyes, wandering about the room, spied something in a corner.

"Isn't that a guitar over there?" he asked.

"Yes, sir, it is; what of it?"

The culprit walked over, and taking it up, tuned the strings a little and struck the chords. Then he began to sing. He began very softly and sang "Fly Away, Pretty Moth," then "Araby's Daughter." He could sing very well in those days, following with the simpler chords. Perhaps the mother "Quail" had known those songs herself back in the States, for her manner grew kindlier, almost with the first notes. When he had finished she was the first to ask him to go on.

"I suppose you are just like all young folks," she said. "I was young myself once. While you sing I'll get some supper."

She left the door to the kitchen open so that she could hear, and cooked whatever she could find for the belated party.

XLIX

THE JUMPING FROG

It was the rainy season, the winter of 1864 and 1865, but there were many pleasant days, when they could go pocket-hunting, and Samuel Clemens soon added a knowledge of this fascinating science to his other acquirements. Sometimes he worked with Dick Stoker, sometimes with one of the Gillis boys. He did not make his fortune at pocket-mining; he only laid its corner-stone. In the old note-book he kept of that sojourn we find that, with Jim Gillis, he made a trip over into Calaveras County soon after Christmas and remained there until after New Year's, probably prospecting; and he records that on New Year's night, at Vallecito, he saw a magnificent lunar rainbow in a very light, drizzling rain. A lunax rainbow is one of the things people seldom see. He thought it an omen of good-fortune.



They returned to the cabin on the hill; but later in the month, on the they crossed over into Calaveras again, and began pocket-hunting not far from Angel's Camp. The notebook records that the bill of fare at the Camp hotel consisted wholly of beans and something which bore the name of coffee; also that the rains were frequent and heavy.

January 27. Same old diet—same old weather—went out to the pocket-claim—had to rush back.

Page 158

They had what they believed to be a good claim. Jim Gillis declared the indications promising, and if they could only have good weather to work it, they were sure of rich returns. For himself, he would have been willing to work, rain or shine. Clemens, however, had different views on the subject. His part was carrying water for washing out the pans of dirt, and carrying pails of water through the cold rain and mud was not very fascinating work. Dick Stoker came over before long to help. Things went a little better then; but most of their days were spent in the bar-room of the dilapidated tavern at Angel's Camp, enjoying the company of a former Illinois River pilot, Ben Coon,—[This name has been variously given as "Ros Coon," "Coon Drayton," *etc.* It is given here as set down in Mark Twain's notes, made on the spot. Coon was not (as has been stated) the proprietor of the hotel (which was kept by a Frenchman), but a frequenter of it.]—a solemn, fat-witted person, who dozed by the stove, or old slow, endless stories, without point or application. Listeners were a boon to him, for few came and not many would stay. To Mark Twain and Jim Gillis, however, Ben Coon was a delight. It was soothing and comfortable to listen to his endless narratives, told in that solemn way, with no suspicion of humor. Even when his yarns had point, he did not recognize it. One dreary afternoon, in his slow, monotonous fashion, he told them about a frog—a frog that had belonged to a man named Coleman, who trained it to jump, but that failed to win a wager because the owner of a rival frog had surreptitiously loaded the trained jumper with shot. The story had circulated among the camps, and a well-known journalist, named Samuel Seabough, had already made a squib of it, but neither Clemens nor Gillis had ever happened to hear it before. They thought the tale in itself amusing, and the "spectacle of a man drifting serenely along through such a queer yarn without ever smiling was exquisitely absurd." When Coon had talked himself out, his hearers played billiards on the frowsy table, and now and then one would remark to the other:

"I don't see no p'int about that frog that's any better'n any other frog," and perhaps the other would answer:

"I ain't got no frog, but if I had a frog I'd bet you."

Out on the claim, between pails of water, Clemens, as he watched Jim Gillis or Dick Stoker "washing," would be apt to say, "I don't see no p'int about that pan o' dirt that's any better'n any other pan o' dirt," and so they kept it up.

Then the rain would come again and interfere with their work. One afternoon, when Clemens and Gillis were following certain tiny-sprayed specks of gold that were leading them to pocket—somewhere up the long slope, the chill downpour set in. Gillis, as usual, was washing, and Clemens carrying water. The "color" was getting better with every pan, and Jim Gillis believed that now, after their long waiting, they were to be rewarded. Possessed with the miner's passion, he would have gone on washing and climbing toward the precious pocket, regardless of everything. Clemens, however, shivering and disgusted, swore that each pail of water was his last. His teeth were chattering and he was wet through. Finally he said, in his deliberate way:

Page 159

"Jim, I won't carry any more water. This work is too disagreeable."

Gillis had just taken out a panful of dirt.

"Bring one more pail, Sam," he pleaded.

"Oh, hell, Jim, I won't do it; I'm freezing!"

"Just one more pail, Sam," he pleaded.

"No, sir, not a drop, not if I knew there were a million dollars in that pan."

Gillis tore a page out of his note-book, and hastily posted a thirty-day claim notice by the pan of dirt, and they set out for Angel's Camp. It kept on raining and storming, and they did not go back. A few days later a letter from Steve Gillis made Clemens decide to return to San Francisco. With Jim Gillis and Dick Stoker he left Angel's and walked across the mountains to Jackass Hill in the snow-storm—"the first I ever saw in California," he says in his notes.

In the mean time the rain had washed away the top of the pan of earth they had left standing on the hillside, and exposed a handful of nuggets-pure gold. Two strangers, Austrians, had come along and, observing it, had sat down to wait until the thirty-day claim notice posted by Jim Gillis should expire. They did not mind the rain—not with all that gold in sight—and the minute the thirty days were up they followed the lead a few pans farther and took out—some say ten, some say twenty, thousand dollars. In either case it was a good pocket. Mark Twain missed it by one pail of water. Still, it is just as well, perhaps, when one remembers that vaster nugget of Angel's Camp—the Jumping Frog. Jim Gillis always declared, "If Sam had got that pocket he would have remained a pocket-miner to the end of his days, like me."

In Mark Twain's old note-book occurs a memorandum of the frog story—a mere casual entry of its main features:

Coleman with his jumping frog—bet stranger \$50—stranger had no frog, and C. got him one:—in the mean time stranger filled C.'s frog full of shot and he couldn't jump. The stranger's frog won.

It seemed unimportant enough, no doubt, at the time; but it was the nucleus around which was built a surpassing fame. The hills along the Stanislaus have turned out some wonderful nuggets in their time, but no other of such size as that.

L

BACK TO THE TUMULT

From the note-book:

February 25. Arrived in Stockton 5 P.m. Home again home again at the Occidental Hotel, San Francisco—find letters from Artemus Ward asking me to write a sketch for his new book of Nevada Territory Travels which is soon to come out. Too late—ought to have got the letters three months ago. They are dated early in November.

He was sorry not to oblige Ward, sorry also not to have representation in his book. He wrote explaining the circumstance, and telling the story of his absence. Steve Gillis, meantime, had returned to San Francisco, and settled his difficulties there. The friends again took up residence together.

Page 160

Mark Twain resumed his daily letters to the Enterprise, without further annoyance from official sources. Perhaps there was a temporary truce in that direction, though he continued to attack various abuses—civic, private, and artistic—becoming a sort of general censor, establishing for himself the title of the “Moralist of the Main.” The letters were reprinted in San Francisco and widely read. Now and then some one had the temerity to answer them, but most of his victims maintained a discreet silence. In one of these letters he told of the Mexican oyster, a rather tough, unsatisfactory article of diet, which could not stand criticism, and presently disappeared from the market. It was a mistake, however, for him to attack an Alta journalist by the name of Evans. Evans was a poet, and once composed an elegy with a refrain which ended:

Gone, gone, gone
—Gone to his endeavor;
Gone, gone, gone,
Forever and forever.

In the Enterprise letter following its publication Mark Twain referred to this poem. He parodied the refrain and added, “If there is any criticism to make on it I should say there is a little too much ‘gone’ and not enough ‘forever.’”

It was a more or less pointless witticism, but it had a humorous quotable flavor, and it made Evans mad. In a squib in the Alta he retaliated:

Mark Twain has killed the Mexican oyster. We only regret that the act was not inspired by a worthier motive. Mark Twain’s sole reason for attacking the Mexican oyster was because the restaurant that sold them refused him credit.

A deadly thrust like that could not be parried in print. To deny or recriminate would be to appear ridiculous. One could only sweat and breathe vengeance.

“Joe,” he said to Goodman, who had come over for a visit, “my one object in life now is to make enough money to stand trial and then go and murder Evans.”

He wrote verses himself sometimes, and lightened his Enterprise letters with jingles. One of these concerned Tom Maguire, the autocrat manager of San Francisco theaters. It details Maguire’s assault on one of his actors.

Tom Maguire,
Roused to ire,
Lighted on McDougal;
Tore his coat,
Clutched his throat,
And split him in the bugle.



For shame! oh, fie!
Maguire, why
Will you thus skyugle?
Why curse and swear,
And rip and tear
The innocent McDougal?

Of bones bereft,
Almost, you've left
Vestvali, gentle Jew gal;
And now you've smashed
And almost hashed
The form of poor McDougall

Page 161

Goodman remembers that Clemens and Gillis were together again on California Street at this time, and of hearing them sing, “The Doleful Ballad of the Rejected Lover,” another of Mark Twain’s compositions. It was a wild, blasphemous outburst, and the furious fervor with which Mark and Steve delivered it, standing side by side and waving their fists, did not render it less objectionable. Such memories as these are set down here, for they exhibit a phase of that robust personality, built of the same primeval material from which the world was created—built of every variety of material, in fact, ever incorporated in a human being—equally capable of writing unprintable coarseness and that rarest and most tender of all characterizations, the ‘Recollections of *Joan of arc*’.

LI

THE CORNER-STONE

Along with his *Enterprise* work, Clemens continued to write occasionally for the *Californian*, but for some reason he did not offer the story of the jumping frog. For one thing, he did not regard it highly as literary material. He knew that he had enjoyed it himself, but the humor and fashion of its telling seemed to him of too simple and mild a variety in that day of boisterous incident and exaggerated form. By and by Artemus Ward turned up in San Francisco, and one night Mark Twain told him his experiences with Jim Gillis, and in Angel’s Camp; also of Ben Coon and his tale of the Calaveras frog. Ward was delighted.

“Write it,” he said. “There is still time to get it into my volume of sketches. Send it to Carleton, my publisher in New York.”—[This is in accordance with Mr. Clemens’s recollection of the matter. The author can find no positive evidence that Ward was on the Pacific coast again in 1865. It seems likely, therefore, that the telling of the frog story and his approval of it were accomplished by exchange of letters.]—Clemens promised to do this, but delayed fulfilment somewhat, and by the time the sketch reached Carleton, Ward’s book was about ready for the press. It did not seem worth while to Carleton to make any change of plans that would include the frog story. The publisher handed it over to Henry Clapp, editor of the *Saturday Press*, a perishing sheet, saying: “Here, Clapp, here’s something you can use in your paper.” Clapp took it thankfully enough, we may believe.

“Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog”—[This was the original title.] —appeared in the *Saturday Press* of November 18, 1865, and was immediately copied and quoted far and near. It brought the name of Mark Twain across the mountains, bore it up and down the Atlantic coast, and out over the prairies of the Middle West. Away from the Pacific slope only a reader here and there had known the name before. Now every one who took a newspaper was treated to the tale of the wonderful Calaveras frog, and received a

mental impress of the author's signature. The name Mark Twain became hardly an institution, as yet, but it made a strong bid for national acceptance.

Page 162

As for its owner, he had no suspicion of these momentous happenings for a considerable time. The telegraph did not carry such news in those days, and it took a good while for the echo of his victory to travel to the Coast. When at last a lagging word of it did arrive, it would seem to have brought disappointment, rather than exaltation, to the author. Even Artemus Ward's opinion of the story had not increased Mark Twain's regard for it as literature. That it had struck the popular note meant, as he believed, failure for his more highly regarded work. In a letter written January 20, 1866, he says these things for himself:

I do not know what to write; my life is so uneventful. I wish I was back there piloting up and down the river again. Verily, all is vanity and little worth—save piloting.

To think that, after writing many an article a man might be excused for thinking tolerably good, those New York people should single out a villainous backwoods sketch to compliment me on! "Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog"—a squib which would never have been written but to please Artemus Ward, and then it reached New York too late to appear in his book.

But no matter. His book was a wretchedly poor one, generally speaking, and it could be no credit to either of us to appear between its covers.

This paragraph is from the New York correspondence of the San Francisco Alta:

"Mark Twain's story in the Saturday Press of November 18th, called 'Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog,' has set all New York in a roar, and he may be said to have made his mark. I have been asked fifty times about it and its author, and the papers are copying it far and near. It is voted the best thing of the day. Cannot the 'Californian' afford to keep Mark all to itself? It should not let him scintillate so widely without first being filtered through the California press."

The New York publishing house of Carleton & Co. gave the sketch to the Saturday Press when they found it was too late for the book.

It is difficult to judge the jumping Frog story to-day. It has the intrinsic fundamental value of one of AEsop's Fables.—[The resemblance of the frog story to the early Greek tales must have been noted by Prof. Henry Sidgwick, who synopsisized it in Greek form and phrase for his book, Greek Prose Composition. Through this originated the impression that the story was of Athenian root. Mark Twain himself was deceived, until in 1899, when he met Professor Sidgwick, who explained that the Greek version was the translation and Mark Twain's the original; that he had thought it unnecessary to give credit for a story so well known. See The Jumping Frog, Harper & Bros., 1903, p. 64.]

—It contains a basic idea which is essentially ludicrous, and the quaint simplicity of its telling is convincing and full of charm. It appeared in print at a time

Page 163

when American humor was chaotic, the public taste unformed. We had a vast appreciation for what was comic, with no great number of opportunities for showing it. We were so ready to laugh that when a real opportunity came along we improved it and kept on laughing and repeating the cause of our merriment, directing the attention of our friends to it. Whether the story of "Jim Smiley's Frog," offered for the first time today, would capture the public, and become the initial block of a towering fame, is another matter. That the author himself underrated it is certain. That the public, receiving it at what we now term the psychological moment, may have overrated it is by no means impossible. In any case, it does not matter now. The stone rejected by the builder was made the corner-stone of his literary edifice. As such it is immortal.

In the letter already quoted, Clemens speaks of both Bret Harte and himself as having quit the 'Californian' in future expecting to write for Eastern papers. He adds:

Though I am generally placed at the head of my breed of scribblers in this part of the country, the place properly belongs to Bret Harte, I think, though he denies it, along with the rest. He wants me to club a lot of old sketches together with a lot of his, and publish a book. I wouldn't do it, only he agrees to take all the trouble. But I want to know whether we are going to make anything out of it, first. However, he has written to a New York publisher, and if we are offered a bargain that will pay for a month's labor we will go to work and prepare the volume for the press.

Nothing came of the proposed volume, or of other joint literary schemes these two had then in mind. Neither of them would seem to have been optimistic as to their future place in American literature; certainly in their most exalted moments they could hardly have dreamed that within half a dozen years they would be the head and front of a new school of letters—the two most talked-of men in America.

LII

A COMMISSION TO THE SANDWICH ISLANDS

Whatever his first emotions concerning the success of "Jim Smiley's Frog" may have been, the sudden astonishing leap of that batrachian into American literature gave the author an added prestige at home as well as in distant parts. Those about him were inclined to regard him, in some degree at least, as a national literary figure and to pay tribute accordingly. Special honors began to be shown to him. A fine new steamer, the *Ajax*, built for the Sandwich Island trade, carried on its initial trip a select party of guests of which he was invited to make one. He did not go, and reproached himself sorrowfully afterward.

If the Ajax were back I would go quick, and throw up my correspondence. She had fifty-two invited guests aboard—the cream of the town—gentlemen and ladies, and a splendid brass band. I could not accept because there would be no one to write my correspondence while I was gone.

Page 164

In fact, the daily letter had grown monotonous. He was restless, and the Ajax excursion, which he had been obliged to forego, made him still more dissatisfied. An idea occurred to him: the sugar industry of the islands was a matter of great commercial interest to California, while the life and scenery there, picturesquely treated, would appeal to the general reader. He was on excellent terms with James Anthony and Paul Morrill, of the Sacramento Union; he proposed to them that they send him as their special correspondent to report to their readers, in a series of letters, life, trade, agriculture, and general aspect of the islands. To his vast delight, they gave him the commission. He wrote home joyously now:

I am to remain there a month and ransack the islands, the cataracts and volcanoes completely, and write twenty or thirty letters, for which they pay as much money as I would get if I stayed at home.

He adds that on his return he expects to start straight across the continent by way of the Columbia River, the Pend Oreille Lakes, through Montana and down the Missouri River. "Only two hundred miles of land travel from San Francisco to New Orleans."

So it is: man proposes, while fate, undisturbed, spins serenely on.

He sailed by the Ajax on her next trip, March 7 (1866), beginning his first sea voyage—a brand-new experience, during which he acquired the names of the sails and parts of the ship, with considerable knowledge of navigation, and of the islands he was to visit—whatever information passengers and sailors could furnish. It was a happy, stormy voyage altogether. In 'Roughing It' he has given us some account of it.

It was the 18th of March when he arrived at Honolulu, and his first impression of that tranquil harbor remained with him always. In fact, his whole visit there became one of those memory-pictures, full of golden sunlight and peace, to be found somewhere in every human past.

The letters of introduction he had brought, and the reputation which had preceded him, guaranteed him welcome and hospitality. Officials and private citizens were alike ready to show him their pleasant land, and he fairly reveled in its delicious air, its summer warmth, its soft repose.

Oh, islands there are on the face of the deep
Where the leaves never fade and the skies never weep,

he quotes in his note-book, and adds:

Went with Mr. Damon to his cool, vine-shaded home; no careworn or eager, anxious faces in this land of happy contentment. God, what a contrast with California and the Washoe!

And in another place:

They live in the S. I.—no rush, no worry—merchant goes down to his store like a gentleman at nine—goes home at four and thinks no more of business till next day. D—n San F. style of wearing out life.

Page 165

He fitted in with the languorous island existence, but he had come for business, and he lost not much time. He found there a number of friends from Washoe, including the Rev. Mr. Rising, whose health had failed from overwork. By their direction, and under official guidance, he set out on Oahu, one of the several curious horses he has immortalized in print, and, accompanied by a pleasant party of ladies and gentlemen, encircled the island of that name, crossed it and recrossed it, visited its various battle-fields, returning to Honolulu, lame, sore, sunburnt, but triumphant. His letters home, better even than his Union correspondence, reveal his personal interest and enthusiasms.

I have got a lot of human bones which I took from one of these battle-fields. I guess I will bring you some of them. I went with the American Minister and took dinner this evening with the King's Grand Chamberlain, who is related to the royal family, and though darker than a mulatto he has an excellent English education, and in manners is an accomplished gentleman. He is to call for me in the morning; we will visit the King in the palace, After dinner they called in the "singing girls," and we had some beautiful music, sung in the native tongue.

It was his first association with royalty, and it was human that he should air it a little. In the same letter he states: "I will sail in a day or two on a tour of the other islands, to be gone two months."

'In Roughing It' he has given us a picture of his visits to the islands, their plantations, their volcanoes, their natural and historic wonders. He was an insatiable sight-seer then, and a persevering one. The very name of a new point of interest filled him with an eager enthusiasm to be off. No discomfort or risk or distance discouraged him. With a single daring companion—a man who said he could find the way—he crossed the burning floor of the mighty crater of Kilauea (then in almost constant eruption), racing across the burning lava floor, jumping wide and bottomless crevices, when a misstep would have meant death.

By and by Marlette shouted "Stop!" I never stopped quicker in my life. I asked what the matter was. He said we were out of the path. He said we must not try to go on until we found it again, for we were surrounded with beds of rotten lava, through which we could easily break and plunge down 1,000 feet. I thought Boo would answer for me, and was about to say so, when Marlette partly proved his statement, crushing through and disappearing to his arm-pits.

They made their way across at last, and stood the rest of the night gazing down upon a spectacle of a crater in quivering action, a veritable lake of fire. They had risked their lives for that scene, but it seemed worth while.

His open-air life on the river, and the mining camps, had prepared Samuel Clemens for adventurous hardships. He was thirty years old, with his full account of mental and

physical capital. His growth had been slow, but he was entering now upon his golden age; he was fitted for conquest of whatever sort, and he was beginning to realize his power.

Page 166

LIII

ANSON BURLINGAME AND THE “HORNET” DISASTER

It was near the end of June when he returned to Honolulu from a tour of all the islands, fairly worn out and prostrated with saddle boils. He expected only to rest and be quiet for a season, but all unknown to him startling and historic things were taking place in which he was to have a part—events that would mark another forward stride in his career.

The Ajax had just come in, bringing his Excellency Anson Burlingame, then returning to his post as minister to China; also General Van Valkenburg, minister to Japan; Colonel Rumsey and Minister Burlingame’s son, Edward, —[Edward L. Burlingame, now for many years editor of Scribner’s Magazine.]—then a lively boy of eighteen. Young Burlingame had read “The Jumping Frog,” and was enthusiastic about Mark Twain and his work. Learning that he was in Honolulu, laid up at his hotel, the party sent word that they would call on him next morning.

Clemens felt that he must not accept this honor, sick or well. He crawled out of bed, dressed and shaved himself as quickly as possible, and drove to the American minister’s, where the party was staying. They had a hilariously good time. When he returned to his hotel he sent them, by request, whatever he had on hand of his work. General Van Valkenburg had said to him:

“California is proud of Mark Twain, and some day the American people will be, too, no doubt.”

There has seldom been a more accurate prophecy.

But a still greater event was imminent. On that very day (June 21, 1866) there came word of the arrival at Sanpahoe, on the island of Hawaii, of an open boat containing fifteen starving wretches, who on short, ten-day rations had been buffeting a stormy sea for forty-three days! A vessel, the Hornet, from New York, had taken fire and burned “on the line,” and since early in May, on that meager sustenance, they had been battling with hundreds of leagues of adverse billows, seeking for land.

A few days following the first report, eleven of the rescued men were brought to Honolulu and placed in the hospital. Mark Twain recognized the great news importance of the event. It would be a splendid beat if he could interview the castaways and be the first to get their story to his paper. There was no cable in those days; a vessel for San Francisco would sail next morning. It was the opportunity of a lifetime, and he must not miss it. Bedridden as he was, the undertaking seemed beyond his strength.

But just at this time the Burlingame party descended on him, and almost before he knew it he was on the way to the hospital on a cot, escorted by the heads of the joint legations of China and Japan. Once there, Anson Burlingame, with his splendid human sympathy and handsome, courtly presence, drew from those enfeebled castaways all the story of their long privation and struggle, that had stretched across forty-three distempered days and four thousand miles of sea. All that Mark Twain had to do was to listen and make the notes.

Page 167

He put in the night-writing against time. Next morning, just as the vessel for the States was drifting away from her dock, a strong hand flung his bulky envelope of manuscript aboard, and if the vessel arrived his great beat was sure. It did arrive, and the three-column story on the front page of the Sacramento Union, in its issue of July 19th, gave the public the first detailed history of the terrible Hornet disaster and the rescue of those starving men. Such a story occupied a wider place in the public interest than it would in these crowded days. The telegraph carried it everywhere, and it was featured as a sensation.

Mark Twain always adored the name and memory of Anson Burlingame. In his letter home he tells of Burlingame's magnanimity in "throwing away an invitation to dine with princes and foreign dignitaries" to help him. "You know I appreciate that kind of thing," he says; which was a true statement, and in future years he never missed an opportunity of paying an instalment on his debt of gratitude. It was proper that he should do so, for the obligation was a far greater one than that contracted in obtaining the tale of the Hornet disaster. It was the debt which one owes to a man who, from the deep measure of his understanding, gives encouragement and exactly needed and convincing advice. Anson Burlingame said to Samuel Clemens:

"You have great ability; I believe you have genius. What you need now is the refinement of association. Seek companionship among men of superior intellect and character. Refine yourself and your work. Never affiliate with inferiors; always climb."

Clemens never forgot that advice. He did not always observe it, but he rarely failed to realize its gospel. Burlingame urged him to travel.

"Come to Pekin next winter," he said, "and visit me. Make my house your home. I will give you letters and introduce you. You will have facilities for acquiring information about China."

It is not surprising then that Mark Twain never felt his debt to Anson Burlingame entirely paid. Burlingame came more than once to the hotel, for Clemens was really ill now, and they discussed plans for his future betterment.

He promised, of course, to visit China, and when he was alone put in a good deal of time planning a trip around the world which would include the great capitals. When not otherwise employed he read; though there was only one book in the hotel, a "blue and gold" edition of Dr. Holmes's Songs in Many Keys, and this he soon knew almost by heart, from title-page to finis.

He was soon up and about. No one could remain ill long in those happy islands. Young Burlingame came, and suggested walks. Once, when Clemens hesitated, the young man said:

“But there is a Scriptural command for you to go.”

“If you can quote one I’ll obey it,” said Clemens.

“Very well. The Bible says, ‘If any man require thee to walk a mile, go with him, Twain.’”

Page 168

The command was regarded as sufficient. Clemens quoted the witticism later (in his first lecture), and it was often repeated in after-years, ascribed to Warner, Ward, and a dozen others. Its origin was as here set down.

Under date of July 4 (1866), Mark Twain's Sandwich Island note-book says:

Went to a ball 8.30 P.M.—danced till 12.30; stopped at General Van Valkenburg's room and talked with him and Mr. Burlingame and Ed Burlingame until 3 A.M.

From which we may conclude that he had altogether recovered. A few days later the legation party had sailed for China and Japan, and on the 19th Clemens himself set out by a slow sailing-vessel to San Francisco. They were becalmed and were twenty-five days making the voyage. Captain Mitchell and others of the wrecked Hornet were aboard, and he put in a good deal of time copying their diaries and preparing a magazine article which, he believed, would prove his real entrance to the literary world.

The vessel lay almost perfectly still, day after day, and became a regular playground at sea. Sundays they had services and Mark Twain led the choir.

"I hope they will have a better opinion of our music in heaven than I have down here," he says in his notes. "If they don't, a thunderbolt will knock this vessel endways." It is perhaps worthy of mention that on the night of the 27th of July he records having seen another "splendidly colored, lunar rainbow." That he regarded this as an indication of future good-fortune is not surprising, considering the events of the previous year.

It was August 13th when he reached San Francisco, and the note-book entry of that day says:

Home again. No—not home again—in prison again, end all the wild sense of freedom gone. The city seems so cramped and so dreary with toil and care and business anxiety. God help me, I wish I were at sea again!

There were compensations, however. He went over to Sacramento, and was abundantly welcomed. It was agreed that, in addition to the twenty dollars allowed for each letter, a special bill should be made for the Hornet report.

"How much do you think it ought to be, Mark?" James Anthony asked.

"Oh, I'm a modest man; I don't want the whole Union office. Call it \$100 a column."

There was a general laugh. The bill was made out at that figure, and he took it to the business office for payment.



“The cashier didn’t faint,” he wrote, many years later, “but he came rather near it. He sent for the proprietors, and they only laughed in their jolly fashion, and said it was a robbery, but ‘no matter, pay it. It’s all right.’ The best men that ever owned a newspaper.”—[“My Debut as a Literary Person.”—Collected works.]—Though inferior to the descriptive writing which a year later would give him a world-wide fame, the Sandwich Island letters added greatly to

Page 169

his prestige on the Pacific coast. They were convincing, informing; tersely—even eloquently—descriptive, with a vein of humor adapted to their audience. Yet to read them now, in the fine nonpareil type in which they were set, is such a wearying task that one can only marvel at their popularity. They were not brilliant literature, by our standards to-day. Their humor is usually of a muscular kind, varied with grotesque exaggerations; the literary quality is pretty attenuated. Here and there are attempts at verse. He had a fashion in those days of combining two or more poems with distracting, sometimes amusing, effect. Examples of these dislocations occur in the Union letters; a single stanza will present the general idea:

The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold,

The turf with their bayonets turning,
And his cohorts were gleaming with purple and gold,
And our lanterns dimly burning.

Only a trifling portion of the letters found their way into his Sandwich Island chapters of 'Roughing It', five years later. They do, however, reveal a sort of transition stage between the riotous florescence of the Comstock and the mellowness of his later style. He was learning to see things with better eyes, from a better point of view. It is not difficult to believe that this literary change of heart was in no small measure due to the influence of Anson Burlingame.

MARK TWAIN, A BIOGRAPHY

By Albert Bigelow Paine

VOLUME I, Part 2: 1866-1875

LIV

THE LECTURER

It was not easy to take up the daily struggle again, but it was necessary.—[Clemens once declared he had been so blue at this period that one morning he put a loaded pistol to his head, but found he lacked courage to pull the trigger.]—Out of the ruck of possibilities (his brain always thronged with plans) he constructed three or four resolves. The chief of these was the trip around the world; but that lay months ahead, and in the mean time ways and means must be provided. Another intention was to finish the Hornet article, and forward it to Harper's Magazine—a purpose carried

immediately into effect. To his delight the article found acceptance, and he looked forward to the day of its publication as the beginning of a real career. He intended to follow it up with a series on the islands, which in due time might result in a book and an income. He had gone so far as to experiment with a dedication for the book—an inscription to his mother, modified later for use in 'The Innocents Abroad'. A third plan of action was to take advantage of the popularity of the Hawaiian letters, and deliver a lecture on the same subject. But this was a fearsome prospect—he trembled when he thought of it. As Governor of the Third House he had been

Page 170

extravagantly received and applauded, but in that case the position of public entertainer had been thrust upon him. To come forward now, offering himself in the same capacity, was a different matter. He believed he could entertain, but he lacked the courage to declare himself; besides, it meant a risk of his slender capital. He confided his situation to Col. John McComb, of the Alta California, and was startled by McComb's vigorous endorsement.

"Do it, by all means!" urged McComb. "It will be a grand success—I know it! Take the largest house in town, and charge a dollar a ticket."

Frightened but resolute, he went to the leading theater manager the same Tom Maguire of his verses—and was offered the new opera-house at half rates. The next day this advertisement appeared:

*Maguire's academy of music
pine street, near Montgomery*

The Sandwich islands

Mark twain

*(Honolulu correspondent of the Sacramento union)
will deliver A
lecture on the Sandwich islands*

*At the academy of music
on Tuesday evening, Oct. 2d
(1866)*

In which passing mention will be made of Harris, Bishop Staley, the American missionaries, etc., and the absurd customs and characteristics of the natives duly discussed and described. The great volcano of Kilauea will also receive proper attention.

*A splendid orchestra
is in town, but has not been engaged
also*

*A den of ferocious wild beasts
will be on exhibition in the next block
magnificent fireworks*

were in contemplation for this occasion, but the idea has been abandoned
A grand Torchlight procession

may be expected; in fact, the public are privileged to expect whatever they please.

Dress Circle, \$1.00 Family Circle, 50c

Doors open at 7 o'clock The Trouble to begin at 8 o'clock

The story of that first lecture, as told in *Roughing It*, is a faithful one, and need only be summarized here.

Expecting to find the house empty, he found it packed from the footlights to the walls. Sidling out from the wings—wobbly-kneed and dry of tongue—he was greeted by a murmur, a roar, a very crash of applause that frightened away his remaining vestiges of courage. Then, came reaction—these were his friends, and he began to talk to them. Fear melted away, and as tide after tide of applause rose and billowed and came breaking at his feet, he knew something of the exaltation of Monte Cristo when he declared “The world is mine!”

It was a vast satisfaction to have succeeded. It was particularly gratifying at this time, for he dreaded going back into newspaper harness. Also; it softened later the disappointment resulting from another venture; for when the December Harper appeared, with his article, the printer and proof-reader had somehow converted Mark Twain into “Mark Swain,” and his literary dream perished.

Page 171

As to the literary value of his lecture, it was much higher than had, been any portion of his letters, if we may judge from its few remaining fragments. One of these—a part of the description of the great volcano Haleakala, on the island of Maui—is a fair example of his eloquence.

It is somewhat more florid than his later description of the same scene in *Roughing It*, which it otherwise resembles; and we may imagine that its poetry, with the added charm of its delivery, held breathless his hearers, many of whom believed that no purer eloquence had ever been uttered or written.

It is worth remembering, too, that in this lecture, delivered so long ago, he advocated the idea of American ownership of these islands, dwelling at considerable length on his reasons for this ideal.

—[For fragmentary extracts from this first lecture of Mark Twain and news comment, see Appendix D, end of last volume.]—There was a gross return from his venture of more than \$1,200, but with his usual business insight, which was never foresight, he had made an arrangement by which, after paying bills and dividing with his manager, he had only about one-third of, this sum left. Still, even this was prosperity and triumph. He had acquired a new and lucrative profession at a bound. The papers lauded him as the “most piquant and humorous writer and lecturer on the Coast since the days of the lamented John Phoenix.” He felt that he was on the highroad at last.

Denis McCarthy, late of the *Enterprise*, was in San Francisco, and was willing to become his manager. Denis was capable and honest, and Clemens was fond of him. They planned a tour of the near-by towns, beginning with Sacramento, extending it later even to the mining camps, such as Red Dog and Grass Valley; also across into Nevada, with engagements at Carson City, Virginia, and Gold Hill. It was an exultant and hilarious excursion—that first lecture tour made by Denis McCarthy and Mark Twain. Success traveled with them everywhere, whether the lecturer looked across the footlights of some pretentious “opera-house” or between the two tallow candles of some camp “academy.” Whatever the building, it was packed, and the returns were maximum.

Those who remember him as a lecturer in that long-ago time say that his delivery was more quaint, his drawl more exaggerated, even than in later life; that his appearance and movements on the stage were natural, rather than graceful; that his manuscript, which he carried under his arm, looked like a ruffled hen. It was, in fact, originally written on sheets of manila paper, in large characters, so that it could be read easily by dim light, and it was doubtless often disordered.

There was plenty of amusing experience on this tour. At one place, when the lecture was over, an old man came to him and said:

“Be them your natural tones of eloquence?”

At Grass Valley there was a rival show, consisting of a lady tight-rope walker and her husband. It was a small place, and the tight-rope attraction seemed likely to fail. The lady’s husband had formerly been a compositor on the Enterprise, so that he felt there was a bond of brotherhood between him and Mark Twain.

Page 172

"Look here," he said. "Let's combine our shows. I'll let my wife do the tight-rope act outside and draw a crowd, and you go inside and lecture."

The arrangement was not made.

Following custom, the lecturer at first thought it necessary to be introduced, and at each place McCarthy had to skirmish around and find the proper person. At Red Dog, on the Stanislaus, the man selected failed to appear, and Denis had to provide another on short notice. He went down into the audience and captured an old fellow, who ducked and dodged but could not escape. Denis led him to the stage, a good deal frightened.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "this is the celebrated Mark Twain from the celebrated city of San Francisco, with his celebrated lecture about the celebrated Sandwich Islands."

That was as far as he could go; but it was far enough. Mark Twain never had a better introduction. The audience was in a shouting humor from the start.

Clemens himself used to tell of an introduction at another camp, where his sponsor said:

"Ladies and gentlemen, I know only two things about this man: the first is that he's never been in jail, and the second is I don't know why."

But this is probably apocryphal; there is too much "Mark Twain" in it.

When he reached Virginia, Goodman said to him:

"Sam, you do not need anybody to introduce you. There's a piano on the stage in the theater. Have it brought out in sight, and when the curtain rises you be seated at the piano, playing and singing that song of yours, 'I Had an Old Horse Whose Name Was Methusalem,' and don't seem to notice that the curtain is up at first; then be surprised when you suddenly find out that it is up, and begin talking, without any further preliminaries."

This proved good advice, and the lecture, thus opened, started off with general hilarity and applause.

LV

HIGHWAY ROBBERY

His Nevada, lectures were bound to be immensely successful. The people regarded him as their property over there, and at Carson and Virginia the houses overflowed. At

Virginia especially his friends urged and begged him to repeat the entertainment, but he resolutely declined.

“I have only one lecture yet,” he said. “I cannot bring myself to give it twice in the same town.”

But that irresponsible imp, Steve Gillis, who was again in Virginia, conceived a plan which would make it not only necessary for him to lecture again, but would supply him with a subject. Steve’s plan was very simple: it was to relieve the lecturer of his funds by a friendly highway robbery, and let an account of the adventure furnish the new lecture.

In ‘*Roughing It*’ Mark Twain has given a version of this mock robbery which is correct enough as far as it goes; but important details are lacking. Only a few years ago (it was April, 1907), in his cabin on Jackass Hill, with Joseph Goodman and the writer of this history present, Steve Gillis made his “death-bed” confession as is here set down:

Page 173

“Mark’s lecture was given in Piper’s Opera House, October 30, 1866. The Virginia City people had heard many famous lectures before, but they were mere sideshows compared with Mark’s. It could have been run to crowded houses for a week. We begged him to give the common people a chance; but he refused to repeat himself. He was going down to Carson, and was coming back to talk in Gold Hill about a week later, and his agent, Denis McCarthy, and I laid a plan to have him robbed on the Divide between Gold Hill and Virginia, after the Gold Hill lecture was over and he and Denis would be coming home with the money. The Divide was a good lonely place, and was famous for its hold-ups. We got City Marshal George Birdsall into it with us, and took in Leslie Blackburn, Pat Holland, Jimmy Eddington, and one or two more of Sam’s old friends. We all loved him, and would have fought for him in a moment. That’s the kind of friends Mark had in Nevada. If he had any enemies I never heard of them.

“We didn’t take in Dan de Quille, or Joe here, because Sam was Joe’s guest, and we were afraid he would tell him. We didn’t take in Dan because we wanted him to write it up as a genuine robbery and make a big sensation. That would pack the opera-house at two dollars a seat to hear Mark tell the story.

“Well, everything went off pretty well. About the time Mark was finishing his lecture in Gold Hill the robbers all went up on the Divide to wait, but Mark’s audience gave him a kind of reception after his lecture, and we nearly froze to death up there before he came along. By and by I went back to see what was the matter. Sam and Denis were coming, and carrying a carpet-sack about half full of silver between them. I shadowed them and blew a policeman’s whistle as a signal to the boys when the lecturers were within about a hundred yards of the place. I heard Sam say to Denis:

“‘I’m glad they’ve got a policeman on the Divide. They never had one in my day.’

“Just about that time the boys, all with black masks on and silver dollars at the sides of their tongues to disguise their voices, stepped out and stuck six-shooters at Sam and Denis and told them to put up their hands. The robbers called each other ‘Beauregard’ and ‘Stonewall Jackson.’ Of course Denis’s hands went up, and Mark’s, too, though Mark wasn’t a bit scared or excited. He talked to the robbers in his regular fashion. He said:

“‘Don’t flourish those pistols so promiscuously. They might go off by accident.’

“They told him to hand over his watch and money; but when he started to take his hands down they made him put them up again. Then he asked how they expected him to give them his valuables with his hands up in the sky. He said his treasures didn’t lie in heaven. He told them not to take his watch, which was the one Sandy Baldwin and Theodore Winters had given him as Governor of the Third House, but we took it all the same.

Page 174

“Whenever he started to put his hands down we made him put them up again. Once he said:

“‘Don’t you fellows be so rough. I was tenderly reared.’

“Then we told him and Denis to keep their hands up for fifteen minutes after we were gone—this was to give us time to get back to Virginia and be settled when they came along. As we were going away Mark called:

“‘Say, you forgot something.’

“‘What is it?’

“‘Why, the carpet-bag.’

“He was cool all the time. Senator Bill Stewart, in his Autobiography, tells a great story of how scared Mark was, and how he ran; but Stewart was three thousand miles from Virginia by that time, and later got mad at Mark because he made a joke about him in ‘Roughing It’.

“Denis wanted to take his hands down pretty soon after we were gone, but Mark said:

“‘No, Denis, I’m used to obeying orders when they are given in that convincing way; we’ll just keep our hands up another fifteen minutes or so for good measure.’

“We were waiting in a big saloon on C Street when Mark and Denis came along. We knew they would come in, and we expected Mark would be excited; but he was as unruffled as a mountain lake. He told us they had been robbed, and asked me if I had any money. I gave him a hundred dollars of his own money, and he ordered refreshments for everybody. Then we adjourned to the Enterprise office, where he offered a reward, and Dan de Quille wrote up the story and telegraphed it to the other newspapers. Then somebody suggested that Mark would have to give another lecture now, and that the robbery would make a great subject. He entered right into the thing, and next day we engaged Piper’s Opera House, and people were offering five dollars apiece for front seats. It would have been the biggest thing that ever came to Virginia if it had come off. But we made a mistake, then, by taking Sandy Baldwin into the joke. We took in Joe here, too, and gave him the watch and money to keep, which made it hard for Joe afterward. But it was Sandy Baldwin that ruined us. He had Mark out to dinner the night before the show was to come off, and after he got well warmed up with champagne he thought it would be a smart thing to let Mark into what was really going on.

“Mark didn’t see it our way. He was mad clear through.”

At this point Joseph Goodman took up the story. He said:



“Those devils put Sam’s money, watch, keys, pencils, and all his things into my hands. I felt particularly mean at being made accessory to the crime, especially as Sam was my guest, and I had grave doubts as to how he would take it when he found out the robbery was not genuine.

“I felt terribly guilty when he said:

“Joe, those d—n thieves took my keys, and I can’t get into my trunk. Do you suppose you could get me a key that would fit my trunk?”

Page 175

"I said I thought I could during the day, and after Sam had gone I took his own key, put it in the fire and burnt it to make it look black. Then I took a file and scratched it here and there, to make it look as if I had been fitting it to the lock, feeling guilty all the time, like a man who is trying to hide a murder. Sam did not ask for his key that day, and that evening he was invited to judge Baldwin's to dinner. I thought he looked pretty silent and solemn when he came home; but he only said:

"Joe, let's play cards; I don't feel sleepy."

"Steve here, and two or three of the other boys who had been active in the robbery, were present, and they did not like Sam's manner, so they excused themselves and left him alone with me. We played a good while; then he said:

"Joe, these cards are greasy. I have got some new ones in my trunk. Did you get that key to-day?"

"I fished out that burnt, scratched-up key with fear and trembling. But he didn't seem to notice it at all, and presently returned with the cards. Then we played, and played, and played—till one o'clock—two o'clock—Sam hardly saying a word, and I wondering what was going to happen. By and by he laid down his cards and looked at me, and said:

"Joe, Sandy Baldwin told me all about that robbery to-night. Now, Joe, I have found out that the law doesn't recognize a joke, and I am going to send every one of those fellows to the penitentiary."

"He said it with such solemn gravity, and such vindictiveness, that I believed he was in dead earnest.

"I know that I put in two hours of the hardest work I ever did, trying to talk him out of that resolution. I used all the arguments about the boys being his oldest friends; how they all loved him, and how the joke had been entirely for his own good; I pleaded with him, begged him to reconsider; I went and got his money and his watch and laid them on the table; but for a time it seemed hopeless. And I could imagine those fellows going behind the bars, and the sensation it would make in California; and just as I was about to give it up he said:

"Well, Joe, I'll let it pass—this time; I'll forgive them again; I've had to do it so many times; but if I should see Denis McCarthy and Steve Gillis mounting the scaffold to-morrow, and I could save them by turning over my hand, I wouldn't do it!"

"He canceled the lecture engagement, however, next morning, and the day after left on the Pioneer Stage, by the way of Donner Lake, for California. The boys came rather sheepishly to see him off; but he would make no show of relenting. When they introduced themselves as Beauregard, Stonewall Jackson, etc., he merely said:



“Yes, and you’ll all be behind the bars some day. There’s been a good deal of robbery around here lately, and it’s pretty clear now who did it.’ They handed him a package containing the masks which the robbers had worn. He received it in gloomy silence; but as the stage drove away he put his head out of the window, and after some pretty vigorous admonition resumed his old smile, and called out: ‘Good-by, friends; good-by, thieves; I bear you no malice.’ So the heaviest joke was on his tormentors after all.”

Page 176

This is the story of the famous Mark Twain robbery direct from headquarters. It has been garbled in so many ways that it seems worth setting down in full. Denis McCarthy, who joined him presently in San Francisco, received a little more punishment there.

“What kind of a trip did you boys have?” a friend asked of them.

Clemens, just recovering from a cold which the exposure on the Divide had given him, smiled grimly:

“Oh, pretty good, only Denis here mistook it for a spree.”

He lectured again in San Francisco, this time telling the story of his Overland trip in 1861, and he did the daring thing of repeating three times the worn-out story of Horace Greeley’s ride with Hank Monk, as given later in ‘*Roughing It*’. People were deadly tired of that story out there, and when he told it the first time, with great seriousness, they thought he must be failing mentally. They did not laugh—they only felt sorry. He waited a little, as if expecting a laugh, and presently led around to it and told it again. The audience was astonished still more, and pitied him thoroughly. He seemed to be waiting pathetically in the dead silence for their applause, then went on with his lecture; but presently, with labored effort, struggled around to the old story again, and told it for the third time. The audience suddenly saw the joke then, and became vociferous and hysterical in their applause; but it was a narrow escape. He would have been hysterical himself if the relief had not come when it did.

—[A side-light on the Horace Greeley story and on Mr. Greeley’s eccentricities is furnished by Mr. Goodman:

When I was going East in 1869 I happened to see Hank Monk just before I started. “Mr. Goodman,” he said, “you tell Horace Greeley that I want to come East, and ask him to send me a pass.” “All right, Hank,” I said, “I will.” It happened that when I got to New York City one of the first men I met was Greeley. “Mr. Greeley,” said, “I have a message for you from Hank Monk.” Greeley bristled and glared at me. “That—rascal?” he said, “He has done me more injury than any other man in America.”]

LVI

BACK TO THE STATES

In the mean time Clemens had completed his plan for sailing, and had arranged with General McComb, of the *Alta California*, for letters during his proposed trip around the world. However, he meant to visit his people first, and his old home. He could go back with means now, and with the prestige of success.



"I sail to-morrow per Opposition—telegraphed you to-day," he wrote on December 14th, and a day later his note-book entry says:

Sailed from San Francisco in Opposition (line) steamer America, Capt. Wakeman, at noon, 15th Dec., 1866. Pleasant sunny day, hills brightly clad with green grass and shrubbery.

Page 177

So he was really going home at last! He had been gone five and a half years—eventful, adventurous years that had made him over completely, at least so far as ambitions and equipment were concerned. He had came away, in his early manhood, a printer and a pilot, unknown outside of his class. He was returning a man of thirty-one, with a fund of hard experience, three added professions—mining, journalism, and lecturing —also with a new name, already famous on the sunset slopes of its adoption, and beginning to be heard over the hills and far away. In some degree, at least, he resembled the prince of a fairy tale who, starting out humble and unnoticed, wins his way through a hundred adventures and returns with gifts and honors.

The homeward voyage was a notable one. It began with a tempest a little way out of San Francisco—a storm terrible but brief, that brought the passengers from their berths to the deck, and for a time set them praying. Then there was Captain Ned Wakeman, a big, burly, fearless sailor, who had visited the edges of all continents and archipelagos; who had been born at sea, and never had a day's schooling in his life, but knew the Bible by heart; who was full of human nature and profanity, and believed he was the only man on the globe who knew the secret of the Bible miracles. He became a distinct personality in Mark Twain's work —the memory of him was an unfailing delight. Captain "Ned Blakely," in 'Roughing It', who with his own hands hanged Bill Noakes, after reading him promiscuous chapters from the Bible, was Captain Wakeman. Captain "Stormfield," who had the marvelous visit to heaven, was likewise Captain Wakeman; and he appears in the "Idle Excursion" and elsewhere.

Another event of the voyage was crossing the Nicaragua Isthmus—the trip across the lake and down the San Juan River—a, brand-new experience, between shores of splendid tropic tangle, gleaming with vivid life. The luxuriance got into his note-book.

Dark grottos, fairy festoons, tunnels, temples, columns, pillars, towers, pilasters, terraces, pyramids, mounds, domes, walls, in endless confusion of vine-work—no shape known to architecture unimitated—and all so webbed together that short distances within are only gained by glimpses. Monkeys here and there; birds warbling; gorgeous plumaged birds on the wing; Paradise itself, the imperial realm of beauty—nothing to wish for to make it perfect.

But it was beyond the isthmus that the voyage loomed into proportions somber and terrible. The vessel they took there, the San Francisco, sailed from Greytown January 1, 1867, the beginning of a memorable year in Mark Twain's life. Next day two cases of Asiatic cholera were reported in the steerage. There had been a rumor of it in Nicaragua, but no one expected it on the ship.

Page 178

The nature of the disease was not hinted at until evening, when one of the men died. Soon after midnight, the other followed. A minister making the voyage home, Rev. J. G. Fackler, read the burial service. The gaiety of the passengers, who had become well acquainted during the Pacific voyage, was subdued. When the word “cholera” went among them, faces grew grave and frightened. On the morning of January 4th Reverend Fackler’s services were again required. The dead man was put overboard within half an hour after he had ceased to breathe.

Gloom settled upon the ship. All steam was made to put into Key West. Then some of the machinery gave way and the ship lay rolling, helplessly becalmed in the fierce heat of the Gulf, while repairs were being made. The work was done at a disadvantage, and the parts did not hold. Time and again they were obliged to lie to, in the deadly tropic heat, listening to the hopeless hammering, wondering who would be the next to be sewed up hastily in a blanket and slipped over the ship’s side. On the 5th seven new cases of illness were reported. One of the crew, a man called “Shape,” was said to be dying. A few hours later he was dead. By this time the Reverend Fackler himself had been taken.

“So they are burying poor ‘Shape’ without benefit of clergy,” says the note-book.

General consternation now began to prevail. Then it was learned that the ship’s doctor had run out of medicines. The passengers became demoralized. They believed their vessel was to become a charnel ship. Strict sanitary orders were issued, and a hospital was improvised.

Verily the ship is becoming a floating hospital herself—not an hour passes but brings its fresh sensation, its new disaster, its melancholy tidings. When I think of poor “Shape” and the preacher, both so well when I saw them yesterday evening, I realize that I myself may be dead to-morrow.

Since the last two hours all laughter, all levity, has ceased on the ship—a settled gloom is upon the faces of the passengers.

By noon it was evident that the minister could not survive. He died at two o’clock next morning; the fifth victim in less than five days. The machinery continued to break and the vessel to drag. The ship’s doctor confessed to Clemens that he was helpless. There were eight patients in the hospital.

But on January 6th they managed to make Key West, and for some reason were not quarantined. Twenty-one passengers immediately deserted the ship and were heard of no more.

“I am glad they are gone. D—n them,” says the notebook. Apparently he had never considered leaving, and a number of others remained. The doctor restocked his

medicine-locker, and the next day they put to sea again. Certainly they were a daring lot of voyagers. On the 8th another of the patients died. Then the cooler weather seemed to check the contagion, and it was not until the night of the 11th, when the New York harbor lights were in view, that the final death occurred. There were no new cases by this time, and the other patients were convalescent. A certificate was made out that the last man had died of "dropsy." There would seem to have been no serious difficulty in docking the vessel and landing the passengers. The matter would probably be handled differently to-day.

Page 179

LVII

OLD FRIENDS AND NEW PLANS

It had been more than thirteen years since his first arrival in New York. Then he had been a youth, green, untraveled, eager to get away from home. Now a veteran, he was as eager to return.

He stopped only long enough in New York to see Charles Henry Webb, late of California, who had put together a number of the Mark Twain sketches, including "The Jumping Frog," for book publication. Clemens himself decided to take the book to Carleton, thinking that, having missed the fame of the "Frog" once, he might welcome a chance to stand sponsor for it now. But Carleton was wary; the "Frog" had won favor, and even fame, in its fugitive, vagrant way, but a book was another matter. Books were undertaken very seriously and with plenty of consideration in those days. Twenty-one years later, in Switzerland, Carleton said to Mark Twain:

"My chief claim to immortality is the distinction of having declined your first book."

Clemens was ready enough to give up the book when Carleton declined it, but Webb said he would publish it himself, and he set about it forthwith. The author waited no longer now, but started for St. Louis, and was soon with his mother and sister, whom he had not seen since that eventful first year of the war. They thought he looked old, which was true enough, but they found him unchanged in his manner: buoyant, full of banter and gravely quaint remarks—he was always the same. Jane Clemens had grown older, too. She was nearly sixty-four, but as keen and vigorous as ever-proud (even if somewhat critical) of this handsome, brilliant man of new name and fame who had been her mischievous, wayward boy. She petted him, joked with him, scolded him, and inquired searchingly into his morals and habits. In turn he petted, comforted, and teased her. She decided that he was the same Sam, and always would be—a true prophecy.

He went up to Hannibal to see old friends. Many were married; some had moved away; some were dead—the old story. He delivered his lecture there, and was the center of interest and admiration—his welcome might have satisfied even Tom Sawyer. From Hannibal he journeyed to Keokuk, where he lectured again to a crowd of old friends and new, then returned to St. Louis for a more extended visit.

It was while he was in St. Louis that he first saw the announcement of the Quaker City Holy Land Excursion, and was promptly fascinated by what was then a brand-new idea in ocean travel—a splendid picnic—a choice and refined party that would sail away for a long summer's journeying to the most romantic of all lands and seas, the shores of the

Mediterranean. No such argosy had ever set out before in pursuit of the golden fleece of happiness.

His projected trip around the world lost its charm in the light of this idyllic dream. Henry Ward Beecher was advertised as one of the party; General Sherman as another; also ministers, high-class journalists—the best minds of the nation. Anson Burlingame had told him to associate with persons of refinement and intellect. He lost no time in writing to the *Alta*, proposing that they send him in this select company.

Page 180

Noah Brooks, who was then on the *Alta*, states—[In an article published in the *Century Magazine*.]—that the management was staggered by the proposition, but that Col. John McComb insisted that the investment in Mark Twain would be sound. A letter was accordingly sent, stating that a check for his passage would be forwarded in due season, and that meantime he could contribute letters from New York City. The rate for all letters was to be twenty dollars each. The arrangement was a godsend, in the fullest sense of the word, to Mark Twain.

It was now April, and he was eager to get back to New York to arrange his passage. The *Quaker City* would not sail for two months yet (two eventful months), but the advertisement said that passages must be secured by the 5th, and he was there on that day. Almost the first man he met was the chief of the New York *Alta* bureau with a check for twelve hundred and fifty dollars (the amount of his ticket) and a telegram saying, “Ship Mark Twain in the Holy Land Excursion and pay his passage.”

—[The following letter, which bears no date, was probably handed to him later in the New York *Alta* office as a sort of credential:

Alta California office, 42 John street, new York.

Sam'l Clemens, Esq., New York.

Dear sir,—I have the honor to inform you that Fred'k. MacCrellish & Co., Proprietors of *Alta California*, San Francisco, Cal., desire to engage your services as Special Correspondent on the pleasure excursion now about to proceed from this City to the Holy Land. In obedience to their instructions I have secured a passage for you on the vessel about to convey the excursion party referred to, and made such arrangements as I hope will secure your comfort and convenience. Your only instructions are that you will continue to write at such times and from such places as you deem proper, and in the same style that heretofore secured you the favor of the readers of the *Alta California*. I have the honor to remain, with high respect and esteem,

Your ob'dt. Servant,

John J. Murphy.]

The *Alta*, it appears, had already applied for his berth; but, not having been vouched for by Mr. Beecher or some other eminent divine, Clemens was fearful he might not be accepted. Quite casually he was enlightened on this point. While waiting for attention in the shipping-office, with the *Alta* agent, he heard a newspaper man inquire what notables were going. A clerk, with evident pride, rattled off the names:

“Lieutenant-General Sherman, Henry Ward Beecher, and Mark Twain; also probably General Banks.”



So he was billed as an attraction. It was his first surreptitious taste of fame on the Atlantic coast, and not without its delight. The story often told of his being introduced by Ned House, of the Tribune, as a minister, though often repeated by Mark Twain himself, was in the nature of a joke, and mainly apocryphal. Clemens was a good deal in House's company at the time, for he had made an arrangement to contribute occasional letters to the Tribune, and House no doubt introduced him jokingly as one of the Quaker City ministers.

Page 181

LVIII

A NEW BOOK AND A LECTURE

Webb, meantime, had pushed the Frog book along. The proofs had been read and the volume was about ready for issue. Clemens wrote to his mother April 15th:

My book will probably be in the bookseller's hands in about two weeks. After that I shall lecture. Since I have been gone, the boys have gotten up a "call" on me signed by two hundred Californians.

The lecture plan was the idea of Frank Fuller, who as acting Governor of Utah had known Mark Twain on the Comstock, and prophesied favorably of his future career. Clemens had hunted up Fuller on landing in New York in January, and Fuller had encouraged the lecture then; but Clemens was doubtful.

"I have no reputation with the general public here," he said. "We couldn't get a baker's dozen to hear me."

But Fuller was a sanguine person, with an energy and enthusiasm that were infectious. He insisted that the idea was sound. It would solidify Mark Twain's reputation on the Atlantic coast, he declared, insisting that the largest house in New York, Cooper Union, should be taken. Clemens had partially consented, and Fuller had arranged with all the Pacific slope people who had come East, headed by ex-Governor James W. Nye (by this time Senator at Washington), to sign a call for the "Inimitable Mark Twain" to appear before a New York audience. Fuller made Nye agree to be there and introduce the lecturer, and he was burningly busy and happy in the prospect.

But Mark Twain was not happy. He looked at that spacious hall and imagined the little crowd of faithful Californian stragglers that might gather in to hear him, and the ridicule of the papers next day. He begged Fuller to take a smaller hall, the smallest he could get. But only the biggest hall in New York would satisfy Fuller. He would have taken a larger one if he could have found it. The lecture was announced for May 6th. Its subject was "Kanakadom, or the Sandwich Islands"—tickets fifty cents. Fuller timed it to follow a few days after Webb's book should appear, so that one event might help the other.

Mark Twain's first book, 'The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveyas County, and Other Sketches', was scheduled for May 1st, and did, in fact, appear on that date; but to the author it was no longer an important event. Jim Smiley's frog as standard-bearer of his literary procession was not an interesting object, so far as he was concerned—not with that vast, empty hall in the background and the insane undertaking of trying to fill it. The San Francisco venture had been as nothing compared with this. Fuller was working night and day with abounding joy, while the subject of his labor felt as if he were on the

brink of a fearful precipice, preparing to try a pair of wings without first learning to fly. At one instant he was cold with fright, the next glowing with an infection of Fuller's faith. He devised a hundred schemes for the sale of seats. Once he came rushing to Fuller, saying:

Page 182

"Send a lot of tickets down to the Chickering Piano Company. I have promised to put on my programme, 'The piano used at this entertainment is manufactured by Chickering.'"

"But you don't want a piano, Mark," said Fuller, "do you?"

"No, of course not; but they will distribute the tickets for the sake of the advertisement, whether we have the piano or not."

Fuller got out a lot of handbills and hung bunches of them in the stages, omnibuses, and horse-cars. Clemens at first haunted these vehicles to see if anybody noticed the bills. The little dangling bunches seemed untouched. Finally two men came in; one of them pulled off a bill and glanced at it. His friend asked:

"Who's Mark Twain?"

"God knows; I don't!"

The lecturer could not ride any more. He was desperate.

"Fuller," he groaned, "there isn't a sign—a ripple of interest."

Fuller assured him that everything was working all right "working underneath," Fuller said—but the lecturer was hopeless. He reported his impressions to the folks at home:

Everything looks shady, at least, if not dark; I have a good agent; but now, after we have hired the Cooper Institute, and gone to an expense in one way or another of \$500, it comes out that I have got to play against Speaker Colfax at Irving Hall, Ristori, and also the double troop of Japanese jugglers, the latter opening at the great Academy of Music—and with all this against me I have taken the largest house in New York and cannot back water.

He might have added that there were other rival entertainments: "The Flying Scud" was at Wallack's, the "Black Crook" was at Niblo's, John Brougham at the Olympic; and there were at least a dozen lesser attractions. New York was not the inexhaustible city in those days; these things could gather in the public to the last man. When the day drew near, and only a few tickets had been sold, Clemens was desperate.

"Fuller," he said, "there'll be nobody in the Cooper Union that night but you and me. I am on the verge of suicide. I would commit suicide if I had the pluck and the outfit. You must paper the house, Fuller. You must send out a flood of complementaries."

"Very well," said Fuller; "what we want this time is reputation anyway—money is secondary. I'll put you before the choicest, most intelligent audience that ever was gathered in New York City. I will bring in the school-instructors—the finest body of men and women in the world."

Fuller immediately sent out a deluge of complimentary tickets, inviting the school-teachers of New York and Brooklyn, and all the adjacent country, to come free and hear Mark Twain's great lecture on Kanakadom. This was within forty-eight hours of the time he was to appear.

Senator Nye was to have joined Clemens and Fuller at the Westminster, where Clemens was stopping, and they waited for him there with a carriage, fuming and swearing, until it was evident that he was not coming. At last Clemens said:

Page 183

“Fuller, you’ve got to introduce me.”

“No,” suggested Fuller; “I’ve got a better scheme than that. You get up and begin by bemeaning Nye for not being there. That will be better anyway.”

Clemens said:

“Well, Fuller, I can do that. I feel that way. I’ll try to think up something fresh and happy to say about that horse-thief.”

They drove to Cooper Union with trepidation. Suppose, after all, the school-teachers had declined to come? They went half an hour before the lecture was to begin. Forty years later Mark Twain said:

“I couldn’t keep away. I wanted to see that vast Mammoth cave and die. But when we got near the building I saw that all the streets were blocked with people, and that traffic had stopped. I couldn’t believe that these people were trying to get into Cooper Institute; but they were, and when I got to the stage at last the house was jammed full-packed; there wasn’t room enough left for a child.

“I was happy and I was excited beyond expression. I poured the Sandwich Islands out on those people, and they laughed and shouted to my entire content. For an hour and fifteen minutes I was in paradise.”

And Fuller to-day, alive and young, when so many others of that ancient time and event have vanished, has added:

“When Mark appeared the Californians gave a regular yell of welcome. When that was over he walked to the edge of the platform, looked carefully down in the pit, round the edges as if he were hunting for something. Then he said: ‘There was to have been a piano here, and a senator to introduce me. I don’t seem to discover them anywhere. The piano was a good one, but we will have to get along with such music as I can make with your help. As for the senator—Then Mark let himself go and did as he promised about Senator Nye. He said things that made men from the Pacific coast, who had known Nye, scream with delight. After that came his lecture. The first sentence captured the audience. From that moment to the end it was either in a roar of laughter or half breathless by his beautiful descriptive passages. People were positively ill for days, laughing at that lecture.’”

So it was a success: everybody was glad to have been there; the papers were kind, congratulations numerous.

—[Kind but not extravagant; those were burning political times, and the doings of mere literary people did not excite the press to the extent of headlines. A jam around Cooper Union to-day, followed by such an artistic triumph, would be a news event. On the other

hand, Schuyler Colfax, then Speaker of the House, was reported to the extent of a column, nonpareil. His lecture was of no literary importance, and no echo of it now remains. But those were political, not artistic, days.

Of Mark Twain's lecture the Times notice said:

Page 184

"Nearly every one present came prepared for considerable provocation for enjoyable laughter, and from the appearance of their mirthful faces leaving the hall at the conclusion of the lecture but few were disappointed, and it is not too much to say that seldom has so large an audience been so uniformly pleased as the one that listened to Mark Twain's quaint remarks last evening. The large hall of the Union was filled to its utmost capacity by fully two thousand persons, which fact spoke well for the reputation of the lecturer and his future success. Mark Twain's style is a quaint one both in manner and method, and through his discourse he managed to keep on the right side of the audience, and frequently convulsed it with hearty laughter.... During a description of the topography of the Sandwich Islands the lecturer surprised his hearers by a graphic and eloquent description of the eruption of the great volcano, which occurred in 1840, and his language was loudly applauded.

"Judging from the success achieved by the lecturer last evening, he should repeat his experiment at an early date."]

Cooper institute

By Invitation of s large number of prominent Californians and
Citizens of New York,

Mark twain

Will deliver A

Serio-HUMEROUS lecture
CONERNING

KANAKDOM

or

the Sandwich islands,

Cooper institute,

On Monday Evening, May 6,1867.

Tickets fifty gents.

For Sale at Chickering and Sons, 852 Broadway, and at the Principal
Hotel

Doors open at 7 o'clock. The Wisdom will begin to flow at 8.

Mark Twain always felt grateful to the school-teachers for that night. Many years later, when they wanted him to read to them in Steinway Hall, he gladly gave his services without charge.

Nor was the lecture a complete financial failure. In spite of the flood of complementaries, there was a cash return of some three hundred dollars from the sale

of tickets—a substantial aid in defraying the expenses which Fuller assumed and insisted on making good on his own account. That was Fuller’s regal way; his return lay in the joy of the game, and in the winning of the larger stake for a friend.

“Mark,” he said, “it is all right. The fortune didn’t come, but it will. The fame has arrived; with this lecture and your book just out you are going to be the most talked-of man in the country. Your letters for the *Alta* and the *Tribune* will get the widest reception of any letters of travel ever written.”

LIX

THE FIRST BOOK

Page 185

With the shadow of the Cooper Institute so happily dispelled, The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County, and his following of Other Sketches, became a matter of more interest. The book was a neat blue-and-gold volume printed by John A. Gray & Green, the old firm for which the boy, Sam Clemens, had set type thirteen years before. The title-page bore Webb's name as publisher, with the American News Company as selling agents. It further stated that the book was edited by "John Paul," that is to say by Webb himself. The dedication was in keeping with the general irresponsible character of the venture. It was as follows:

To
John Smith
*whom I have known in divers and sundry
places about the world, and whose
many and manifold virtues did
always command my esteem,
I dedicate this book*

It is said that the man to whom a volume is dedicated always buys a copy. If this prove true in the present instance, a princely affluence is about to burst upon
the author.

The "advertisement" stated that the author had "scaled the heights of popularity at a single jump, and won for himself the sobriquet of the 'Wild Humorist of the Pacific Slope'; furthermore, that he was known to fame as the 'Moralist of the Main,'" and that as such he would be likely to go down to posterity, adding that it was in his secondary character, as humorist, rather than in his primal one of moralist, that the volume aimed to present him.—[The advertisement complete, with extracts from the book, may be found under Appendix E, at the end of last volume.]

Every little while, during the forty years or more that have elapsed since then, some one has come forward announcing Mark Twain to be as much a philosopher as a humorist, as if this were a new discovery. But it was a discovery chiefly to the person making the announcement. Every one who ever knew Mark Twain at any period of his life made the same discovery. Every one who ever took the trouble to familiarize himself with his work made it. Those who did not make it have known his work only by hearsay and quotation, or they have read it very casually, or have been very dull. It would be much more of a discovery to find a book in which he has not been serious—a philosopher, a moralist, and a poet. Even in the Jumping Frog sketches, selected particularly for their inconsequence, the under-vein of reflection and purpose is not lacking. The answer to Moral Statistician—[In "Answers to Correspondents," included now in Sketches New and Old. An extract from it, and from "A Strange Dream," will be found in Appendix E.] —is fairly alive with human wisdom and righteous wrath. The "Strange Dream," though ending in a joke, is aglow with poetry. Webb's "advertisement" was playfully written, but it was earnestly intended, and he writes Mark Twain down a moralist—not as a

discovery, but as a matter of course. The discoveries came along later, when the author's fame as a humorist had dazzled the nations.

Page 186

It is as well to say it here as anywhere, perhaps, that one reason why Mark Twain found it difficult to be accepted seriously was the fact that his personality was in itself so essentially humorous. His physiognomy, his manner of speech, this movement, his mental attitude toward events—all these were distinctly diverting. When we add to this that his medium of expression was nearly always full of the quaint phrasing and those surprising appositions which we recognize as amusing, it is not so astonishing that his deeper, wiser, more serious purpose should be overlooked. On the whole these unabated discoverers serve a purpose, if only to make the rest of their species look somewhat deeper than the comic phrase.

The little blue-and-gold volume which presented the Frog story and twenty-six other sketches in covers is chiefly important to-day as being Mark Twain's first book. The selections in it were made for a public that had been too busy with a great war to learn discrimination, and most of them have properly found oblivion. Fewer than a dozen of them were included in his collected Sketches issued eight years later, and some even of those might have been spared; also some that were added, for that matter; but detailed literary criticism is not the province of this work. The reader may investigate and judge for himself.

Clemens was pleased with the appearance of his book. To Bret Harte he wrote:

The book is out and it is handsome. It is full of damnable errors of grammar and deadly inconsistencies of spelling in the Frog sketch, because I was away and did not read proofs; but be a friend and say nothing about these things. When my hurry is over, I will send you a copy to pisen the children with.

That he had no exaggerated opinion of the book's contents or prospects we may gather from his letter home:

As for the Frog book, I don't believe it will ever pay anything worth a cent. I published it simply to advertise myself, and not with the hope of making anything out of it.

He had grown more lenient in his opinion of the merits of the Frog story itself since it had made friends in high places, especially since James Russell Lowell had pronounced it "the finest piece of humorous writing yet produced in America"; but compared with his lecture triumph, and his prospective journey to foreign seas, his book venture, at best, claimed no more than a casual regard. A Sandwich Island book (he had collected his Union letters with the idea of a volume) he gave up altogether after one unsuccessful offer of it to Dick & Fitzgerald.

Frank Fuller's statement, that the fame had arrived, had in it some measure of truth. Lecture propositions came from various directions. Thomas Nast, then in the early day of his great popularity, proposed a joint tour, in which Clemens would lecture, while he, Nast, illustrated the remarks with lightning caricatures. But the time was too short; the

Quaker City would sail on the 8th of June, and in the mean time the Alta correspondent was far behind with his New York letters. On May 29th he wrote:

Page 187

I am 18 Alta letters behind, and I must catch up or bust. I have refused all invitations to lecture. Don't know how my book is coming on.

He worked like a slave for a week or so, almost night and day, to clean up matters before his departure. Then came days of idleness and reaction-days of waiting, during which his natural restlessness and the old-time regret for things done and undone, beset him.

My passage is paid, and if the ship sails I sail on her; but I make no calculations, have bought no cigars, no sea-going clothing—have made no preparations whatever—shall not pack my trunk till the morning we sail. All I do know or feel is that I am wild with impatience to move—move—move! Curse the endless delays! They always kill me—they make me neglect every duty, and then I have a conscience that tears me like a wild beast. I wish I never had to stop anywhere a month. I do more mean things the moment I get a chance to fold my hands and sit down than ever I get forgiveness for.

Yes, we are to meet at Mr. Beach's next Thursday night, and I suppose we shall have to be gotten up regardless of expense, in swallow-tails, white kids and everything 'en regle'.

I am resigned to Rev. Mr. Hutchinson's or anybody else's supervision. I don't mind it. I am fixed. I have got a splendid, immoral, tobacco-smoking, wine-drinking, godless roommate who is as good and true and right-minded a man as ever lived—a man whose blameless conduct and example will always be an eloquent sermon to all who shall come within their influence. But send on the professional preachers—there are none I like better to converse with; if they're not narrowminded and bigoted they make good companions.

The "splendid immoral room-mate" was Dan Slote—"Dan," of The Innocents, a lovable character—all as set down. Samuel Clemens wrote one more letter to his mother and sister—a conscience-stricken, pessimistic letter of good-by written the night before sailing. Referring to the Alta letters he says:

I think they are the stupidest letters ever written from New York. Corresponding has been a perfect drag ever since I got to the States. If it continues abroad, I don't know what the Tribune and Alta folk will think.

He remembers Orion, who had been officially eliminated when Nevada had received statehood.

I often wonder if his law business is going satisfactorily. I wish I had gone to Washington in the winter instead of going West. I could have gouged an office out of Bill Stewart for him, and that would have atoned for the loss of my home visit. But I am

so worthless that it seems to me I never do anything or accomplish anything that lingers in my mind as a pleasant memory. My mind is stored full of unworthy conduct toward Orion and toward you all, and an accusing conscience

Page 188

gives me peace only in excitement and restless moving from place to place. If I could only say I had done one thing for any of you that entitled me to your good opinions (I say nothing of your love, for I am sure of that, no matter how unworthy of it I may make myself—from Orion down, you have always given me that; all the days of my life, when God Almighty knows I have seldom deserved it), I believe I could go home and stay there—and I know I would care little for the world's praise or blame. There is no satisfaction in the world's praise anyhow, and it has no worth to me save in the way of business. I tried to gather up its compliments to send you, but the work was distasteful and I dropped it. You observe that under a cheerful exterior I have got a spirit that is angry with me and gives me freely its contempt. I can get away from that at sea, and be tranquil and satisfied; and so, with my parting love and benediction for Orion and all of you, I say good-by and God bless you all—and welcome the wind that wafts a weary soul to the sunny lands of the Mediterranean!

Yrs. forever,
Sam

LX

THE INNOCENTS AT SEA

Holy land pleasure excursion

Steamer: Quaker City.

Captain C. C. Duncan.

Left New York at 2 P.m., June 8, 1867.

Rough weather—anchored within the harbor to lay all night.

That first note recorded an event momentous in Mark Twain's career—an event of supreme importance; if we concede that any link in a chain regardless of size is of more importance than any other link. Undoubtedly it remains the most conspicuous event, as the world views it now, in retrospect.

The note further heads a new chapter of history in sea-voyaging. No such thing as the sailing of an ocean steamship with a pleasure-party on a long transatlantic cruise had ever occurred before. A similar project had been undertaken the previous year, but owing to a cholera scare in the East it had been abandoned. Now the dream had become a fact—a stupendous fact when we consider it. Such an important beginning as that now would in all likelihood furnish the chief news story of the day.

But they had different ideas of news in those days. There were no headlines announcing the departure of the Quaker City—only the barest mention of the ship's sailing, though a prominent position was given to an account of a senatorial excursion-party which set out that same morning over the Union Pacific Railway, then under construction. Every name in that political party was set down, and not one of them except General Hancock will ever be heard of again. The New York Times, however, had some one on its editorial staff who thought it worth while to comment a little on the history-making Quaker City

Page 189

excursion. The writer was pleasantly complimentary to officers and passengers. He referred to Moses S. Beach, of the Sun, who was taking with him type and press, whereby he would “skilfully utilize the brains of the company for their mutual edification.” Mr. Beecher and General Sherman would find talent enough aboard to make the hours go pleasantly (evidently the writer had not interested himself sufficiently to know that these gentlemen were not along), and the paragraph closed by prophesying other such excursions, and wishing the travelers “good speed, a happy voyage, and a safe return.”

That was handsome, especially for those days; only now, some fine day, when an airship shall start with a band of happy argonauts to land beyond the sunrise for the first time in history, we shall feature it and emblazon it with pictures in the Sunday papers, and weeklies, and in the magazines.—[The Quaker City idea was so unheard-of that in some of the foreign ports visited, the officials could not believe that the vessel was simply a pleasure-craft, and were suspicious of some dark, ulterior purpose.]

That Henry Ward Beecher and General Sherman had concluded not to go was a heavy disappointment at first; but it proved only a temporary disaster. The inevitable amalgamation of all ship companies took place. The sixty-seven travelers fell into congenial groups, or they mingled and devised amusements, and gossiped and became a big family, as happy and as free from contention as families of that size are likely to be.

The Quaker City was a good enough ship and sizable for her time. She was registered eighteen hundred tons—about one-tenth the size of Mediterranean excursion-steamers today—and when conditions were favorable she could make ten knots an hour under steam—or, at least, she could do it with the help of her auxiliary sails. Altogether she was a cozy, satisfactory ship, and they were a fortunate company who had her all to themselves and went out on her on that long-ago ocean gipsying. She has grown since then, even to the proportions of the Mayflower. It was necessary for her to grow to hold all of those who in later times claimed to have sailed in her on that voyage with Mark Twain.—[The Quaker City passenger list will be found under Appendix F, at the end of last volume.]

They were not all ministers and deacons aboard the Quaker City. Clemens found other congenial spirits besides his room-mate Dan Slote—among them the ship’s surgeon, Dr. A. Reeve Jackson (the guide-destroying “Doctor” of The Innocents); Jack Van Nostrand, of New Jersey (“Jack”); Julius Moulton, of St. Louis (“Moult”), and other care-free fellows, the smoking-room crowd which is likely to make comradeship its chief watchword. There were companionable people in the cabin crowd also—fine, intelligent men and women, especially one of the latter, a middle-aged, intellectual, motherly soul—Mrs. A. W. Fairbanks, of Cleveland, Ohio. Mrs. Fairbanks—herself

Page 190

a newspaper correspondent for her husband's paper, the Cleveland Herald had a large influence on the character and general tone of those Quaker City letters which established Mark Twain's larger fame. She was an able writer herself; her judgment was thoughtful, refined, unbiased—altogether of a superior sort. She understood Samuel Clemens, counseled him, encouraged him to read his letters aloud to her, became in reality "Mother Fairbanks," as they termed her, to him and to others of that ship who needed her kindly offices.

In one of his home letters, later, he said of her:

She was the most refined, intelligent, cultivated lady in the ship, and altogether the kindest and best. She sewed my buttons on, kept my clothing in presentable trim, fed me on Egyptian jam (when I behaved), lectured me awfully on the quarter-deck on moonlit promenading evenings, and cured me of several bad habits. I am under lasting obligations to her. She looks young because she is so good, but she has a grown son and daughter at home.

In one of the early letters which Mrs. Fairbanks wrote to her paper she is scarcely less complimentary to him, even if in a different way.

We have D.D.'s and M.D.'s—we have men of wisdom and men of wit. There is one table from which is sure to come a peal of laughter, and all eyes are turned toward Mark Twain, whose face is, perfectly mirth-provoking. Sitting lazily at the table, scarcely genteel in his appearance, there is something, I know not what, that interests and attracts. I saw to-day at dinner venerable divines and sage-looking men convulsed with laughter at his drolleries and quaint, odd manners.

It requires only a few days on shipboard for acquaintances to form, and presently a little afternoon group was gathering to hear Mark Twain read his letters. Mrs. Fairbanks was there, of course, also Mr. and Mrs. S. L. Severance, likewise of Cleveland, and Moses S. Beach, of the Sun, with his daughter Emma, a girl of seventeen. Dan Slote was likely to be there, too, and Jack, and the Doctor, and Charles J. Langdon, of Elmira, New York, a boy of eighteen, who had conceived a deep admiration for the brilliant writer. They were fortunate ones who first gathered to hear those daring, wonderful letters.

But the benefit was a mutual one. He furnished a priceless entertainment, and he derived something equally priceless in return—the test of immediate audience and the boon of criticism. Mrs. Fairbanks especially was frankly sincere. Mr. Severance wrote afterward:

One afternoon I saw him tearing up a bunch of the soft, white paper- copy paper, I guess the newspapers call it-on which he had written something, and throwing the

fragments into the Mediterranean. I inquired of him why he cast away the fruits of his labors in that manner.

“Well,” he drawled, “Mrs. Fairbanks thinks it oughtn’t to be printed, and, like as not, she is right.”

Page 191

And Emma Beach (Mrs. Abbott Thayer) remembers hearing him say:

“Well, Mrs. Fairbanks has just destroyed another four hours’ work for me.”

Sometimes he played chess with Emma Beach, who thought him a great hero because, once when a crowd of men were tormenting a young lad, a passenger, Mark Twain took the boy’s part and made them desist.

“I am sure I was right, too,” she declares; “heroism came natural to him.”

Mr. Severance recalls another incident which, as he says, was trivial enough, but not easy to forget:

We were having a little celebration over the birthday anniversary of Mrs. Duncan, wife of our captain. Mark Twain got up and made a little speech, in which he said Mrs. Duncan was really older than Methuselah because she knew a lot of things that Methuselah never heard of. Then he mentioned a number of more or less modern inventions, and wound up by saying, “What did Methuselah know about a barbed-wire fence?”

Except *Following the Equator*, *The Innocents Abroad* comes nearer to being history than any other of Mark Twain’s travel-books. The notes for it were made on the spot, and there was plenty of fact, plenty of fresh, new experience, plenty of incident to set down. His idea of descriptive travel in those days was to tell the story as it happened; also, perhaps, he had not then acquired the courage of his inventions. We may believe that the adventures with Jack, Dan, and the Doctor are elaborated here and there; but even those happened substantially as recorded. There is little to add, then, to the story of that halcyon trip, and not much to elucidate.

The old note-books give a light here and there that is interesting. It is curious to be looking through them now, trying to realize that these penciled memoranda were the fresh, first impressions that would presently grow into the world’s most delightful book of travel; that they were set down in the very midst of that care-free little company that frolicked through Italy, climbed wearily the arid Syrian hills. They are all dead now; but to us they are as alive and young to-day as when they followed the footprints of the Son of Man through Palestine, and stood at last before the Sphinx, impressed and awed by its “five thousand slow-revolving years.”

Some of the items consist of no more than a few terse, suggestive words —serious, humorous, sometimes profane. Others are statistical, descriptive, elaborated. Also there are drawings—“not copied,” he marks them, with a pride not always justified by the result. The earlier notes are mainly comments on the “pilgrims,” the freak pilgrims: “the Frenchy-looking woman who owns a dog and keeps up an interminable biography of him to the passengers”; the “long-legged, simple, wide-mouthed, horse-laughing

young fellow who once made a sea voyage to Fortress Monroe, and quotes eternally from his experiences"; also, there is reference to another young man, "good,

Page 192

accommodating, pleasant but fearfully green.” This young person would become the “Interrogation Point,” in due time, and have his picture on page 71 (old edition), while opposite him, on page 70, would appear the “oracle,” identified as one Doctor Andrews, who (the note-book says) had the habit of “smelling in guide-books for knowledge and then trying to play it for old information that has been festering in his brain.” Sometimes there are abstract notes such as:

How lucky Adam was. He knew when he said a good thing that no one had ever said it before.

Of the “character” notes, the most important and elaborated is that which presents the “Poet Lariat.” This is the entry, somewhat epitomized:

Bloodgood H. Cutter

He is fifty years old, and small of his age. He dresses in homespun, and is a simple-minded, honest, old-fashioned farmer, with a strange proclivity for writing rhymes. He writes them on all possible subjects, and gets them printed on slips of paper, with his portrait at the head. These he will give to any man who comes along, whether he has anything against him or not

Dan said:

“It must be a great happiness to you to sit down at the close of day and put its events all down in rhymes and poetry, like Byron and Shakespeare and those fellows.”

“Oh yes, it is—it is—Why, many’s the time I’ve had to get up in the night when it comes on me:

Whether we’re on the sea or the land
We’ve all got to go at the word of command—

“Hey! how’s that?”

A curious character was Cutter—a Long Island farmer with the obsession of rhyme. In his old age, in an interview, he said:

“Mark was generally writing and he was glum. He would write what we were doing, and I would write poetry, and Mark would say:

“‘For Heaven’s sake, Cutter, keep your poems to yourself.’

“Yes, Mark was pretty glum, and he was generally writing.”

Poor old Poet Lariat—dead now with so many others of that happy crew. We may believe that Mark learned to be “glum” when he saw the Lariat approaching with his sheaf of rhymes. We may believe, too, that he was “generally writing.” He contributed fifty-three letters to the Alta during that five months and six to the Tribune. They would average about two columns nonpareil each, which is to say four thousand words, or something like two hundred and fifty thousand words in all. To turn out an average of fifteen hundred words a day, with continuous sight-seeing besides, one must be generally writing during any odd intervals; those who are wont to regard Mark Twain as lazy may consider these statistics. That he detested manual labor is true enough, but at the work for which he was fitted and intended it may be set down here upon authority (and despite his own frequent assertions to the contrary) that to his last year he was the most industrious of men.

Page 193

LXI

THE INNOCENTS ABROAD

It was Dan, Jack, and the Doctor who with Mark Twain wandered down through Italy and left moral footprints that remain to this day. The Italian guides are wary about showing pieces of the True Cross, fragments of the Crown of Thorns, and the bones of saints since then. They show them, it is true, but with a smile; the name of Mark Twain is a touch-stone to test their statements. Not a guide in Italy but has heard the tale of that iconoclastic crew, and of the book which turned their marvels into myths, their relics into bywords.

It was Doctor Jackson, Colonel Denny, Doctor Birch, and Samuel Clemens who evaded the quarantine and made the perilous night trip to Athens and looked upon the Parthenon and the sleeping city by moonlight. It is all set down in the notes, and the account varies little from that given in the book; only he does not tell us that Captain Duncan and the quartermaster, Pratt, connived at the escapade, or how the latter watched the shore in anxious suspense until he heard the whistle which was their signal to be taken aboard. It would have meant six months' imprisonment if they had been captured, for there was no discretion in the Greek law.

It was T. D. Crocker, A. N. Sanford, Col. Peter Kinney, and William Gibson who were delegated to draft the address to the Emperor of Russia at Yalta, with Samuel L. Clemens as chairman of that committee. The chairman wrote the address, the opening sentence of which he grew so weary of hearing:

We are a handful of private citizens of America, traveling simply for recreation, and unostentatiously, as becomes our unofficial state.

The address is all set down in the notes, and there also exists the first rough draft, with the emendations in his own hand. He deplores the time it required:

That job is over. Writing addresses to emperors is not my strong suit. However, if it is not as good as it might be it doesn't signify—the other committeemen ought to have helped me write it; they had nothing to do, and I had my hands full. But for bothering with this I would have caught up entirely with my New York Tribune correspondence and nearly up with the San Francisco.

They wanted him also to read the address to the Emperor, but he pointed out that the American consul was the proper person for that office. He tells how the address was presented:

August 26th. The Imperial carriages were in waiting at eleven, and at twelve we were at the palace....

The Consul for Odessa read the address and the Czar said frequently, "Good—very good; indeed"—and at the close, "I am very, very grateful."

It was not improper for him to set down all this, and much more, in his own note-book—not then for publication. It was in fact a very proper record—for today.

Page 194

One incident of the imperial audience Mark Twain omitted from his book, perhaps because the humor of it had not yet become sufficiently evident. "The humorous perception of a thing is a pretty slow growth sometimes," he once remarked. It was about seventeen years before he could laugh enjoyably at a slight mistake he made at the Emperor's reception. He set down a memorandum of it, then, for fear it might be lost:

There were a number of great dignitaries of the Empire there, and although, as a general thing, they were dressed in citizen's clothing, I observed that the most of them wore a very small piece of ribbon in the lapels of their coats. That little touch of color struck my fancy, and it seemed to me a good idea to add it to my own attractions; not imagining that it had any special significance. So I stepped aside, hunted up a bit of red ribbon, and ornamented my lapel with it. Presently, Count Festetics, the Grand Master of ceremonies, and the only man there who was gorgeously arrayed, in full official costume, began to show me a great many attentions. He was particularly polite, and pleasant, and anxious to be of service to me. Presently, he asked me what order of nobility I belonged to? I said, "I didn't belong to any." Then he asked me what order of knighthood I belonged to? I said, "None." Then he asked me what the red ribbon in my buttonhole stood for? I saw, at once, what an ass I had been making of myself, and was accordingly confused and embarrassed. I said the first thing that came into my mind, and that was that the ribbon was merely the symbol of a club of journalists to which I belonged, and I was not pursued with any more of Count Festetic's attentions. Later, I got on very familiar terms with an old gentleman, whom I took to be the head gardener, and walked him all about the gardens, slipping my arm into his without invitation, yet without demur on his part, and by and by was confused again when I found that he was not a gardener at all, but the Lord High Admiral of Russia! I almost made up my mind that I would never call on an Emperor again.

Like all Mediterranean excursionists, those first pilgrims were insatiable collectors of curios, costumes, and all manner of outlandish things. Dan Slote had the stateroom hung and piled with such gleanings. At Constantinople his room-mate writes:

I thought Dan had got the state-room pretty full of rubbish at last, but awhile ago his dragoman arrived with a brand-new ghastly tombstone of the Oriental pattern, with his name handsomely carved and gilted on it in Turkish characters. That fellow will buy a Circassian slave next.

It was Church, Denny, Jack, Davis, Dan, Moulton, and Mark Twain who made the "long trip" through Syria from Beirut to Jerusalem with their elaborate camping outfit and decrepit nags "Jericho," "Baalbec," and the rest. It was better camping than that Humboldt journey of six years before,

Page 195

though the horses were not so dissimilar, and altogether it was a hard, nerve-racking experience, climbing the arid hills of Palestine in that torrid summer heat. Nobody makes that trip in summer-time now. Tourists hurry out of Syria before the first of April, and they do not go back before November. One brief quotation from Mark Twain's book gives us an idea of what that early party of pilgrims had to undergo:

We left Damascus at noon and rode across the plain a couple of hours, and then the party stopped a while in the shade of some fig- trees to give me a chance to rest. It was the hottest day we had seen yet—the sun-flames shot down like the shafts of fire that stream out before a blow-pipe; the rays seemed to fall in a deluge on the head and pass downward like rain from a roof. I imagined I could distinguish between the floods of rays. I thought I could tell when each flood struck my head, when it reached my shoulders, and when the next one came. It was terrible.

He had been ill with cholera at Damascus, a light attack; but any attack of that dread disease is serious enough. He tells of this in the book, but he does not mention, either in the book or in his notes, the attack which Dan Slote had some days later. It remained for William F. Church, of the party, to relate that incident, for it was the kind of thing that Mark Twain was not likely to record, or even to remember. Doctor Church was a deacon with orthodox views and did not approve of Mark Twain; he thought him sinful, irreverent, profane.

"He was the worst man I ever knew," Church said; then he added, "And the best."

What happened was this: At the end of a terrible day of heat, when the party had camped on the edge of a squalid Syrian village, Dan was taken suddenly ill. It was cholera, beyond doubt. Dan could not go on—he might never go on. The chances were that way. It was a serious matter all around. To wait with Dan meant to upset their travel schedule—it might mean to miss the ship. Consultation was held and a resolution passed (the pilgrims were always passing resolutions) to provide for Dan as well as possible, and leave him behind. Clemens, who had remained with Dan, suddenly appeared and said:

"Gentlemen, I understand that you are going to leave Dan Slote here alone. I'll be d——d if I do!"

And he didn't. He stayed there and brought Dan into Jerusalem, a few days late, but convalescent.

Perhaps most of them were not always reverent during that Holy Land trip. It was a trying journey, and after fierce days of desert hills the reaction might not always spare even the holiest memories. Jack was particularly sinful. When they learned the price for a boat on Galilee, and the deacons who had traveled nearly half around the world to sail on that sacred water were confounded by the charge, Jack said:

“Well, Denny, do you wonder now that Christ walked?”

Page 196

It was the irreverent Jack who one morning (they had camped the night before by the ruins of Jericho) refused to get up to see the sun rise across the Jordan. Deacon Church went to his tent.

“Jack, my boy, get up. Here is the place where the Israelites crossed over into the Promised Land, and beyond are the mountains of Moab, where Moses lies buried.”

“Moses who!” said Jack.

“Oh, Jack, my boy, Moses, the great lawgiver—who led the Israelites out of Egypt-forty years through the wilderness—to the Promised Land.”

“Forty years!” said Jack. “How far was it?”

“It was three hundred miles, Jack; a great wilderness, and he brought them through in safety.”

Jack regarded him with scorn. “Huh, Moses—three hundred miles forty years—why, Ben Holiday would have brought them through in thirty-six hours!”—[Ben Holiday, owner of the Overland stages, and a man of great executive ability. This incident, a true one, is more elaborately told in *Roughing It*, but it seems pertinent here.]

Jack probably learned more about the Bible during that trip—its history and its heroes—than during all his former years. Nor was Jack the only one of that group thus benefited. The sacred landmarks of Palestine inspire a burning interest in the Scriptures, and Mark Twain probably did not now regret those early Sunday-school lessons; certainly he did not fail to review them exhaustively on that journey. His note-books fairly overflow with Bible references; the Syrian chapters in *The Innocents Abroad* are permeated with the poetry and legendary beauty of the Bible story. The little Bible he carried on that trip, bought in Constantinople, was well worn by the time they reached the ship again at Jaffa. He must have read it with a large and persistent interest; also with a double benefit. For, besides the knowledge acquired, he was harvesting a profit—probably unsuspected at the time—viz., the influence of the most direct and beautiful English—the English of the King James version—which could not fail to affect his own literary method at that impressionable age. We have already noted his earlier admiration for that noble and simple poem, “The Burial of Moses,” which in the Palestine note-book is copied in full. All the tendency of his expression lay that way, and the intense consideration of stately Bible phrase and imagery could hardly fail to influence his mental processes. The very distinct difference of style, as shown in *The Innocents Abroad* and in his earlier writings, we may believe was in no small measure due to his study of the King James version during those weeks in Palestine.

He bought another Bible at Jerusalem; but it was not for himself. It was a little souvenir volume bound in olive and balsam wood, and on the fly-leaf is inscribed:

Mrs. Jane Clemens from her son. Jerusalem, Sept. 24, 1867.

There is one more circumstance of that long cruise-recorded neither in the book nor the notes—an incident brief, but of more importance in the life of Samuel Clemens than any heretofore set down. It occurred in the beautiful Bay of Smyrna, on the fifth or sixth of September, while the vessel lay there for the Ephesus trip.

Page 197

Reference has been made to young Charles Langdon, of Elmira (the “Charley” once mentioned in the Innocents), as an admirer of Mark Twain. There was a good deal of difference in their ages, and they were seldom of the same party; but sometimes the boy invited the journalist to his cabin and, boy-like, exhibited his treasures. He had two sisters at home; and of Olivia, the youngest, he had brought a dainty miniature done on ivory in delicate tints—a sweet-pictured countenance, fine and spiritual. On that fateful day in the day of Smyrna, Samuel Clemens, visiting in young Langdon’s cabin, was shown this portrait. He looked at it with long admiration, and spoke of it reverently, for the delicate face seemed to him to be something more than a mere human likeness. Each time he came, after that, he asked to see the picture, and once even begged to be allowed to take it away with him. The boy would not agree to this, and the elder man looked long and steadily at the miniature, resolving in his mind that some day he would meet the owner of that lovely face—a purpose for once in accord with that which the fates had arranged for him, in the day when all things were arranged, the day of the first beginning.

LXII

THE RETURN OF THE PILGRIMS

The last note-book entry bears date of October 11th:

At sea, somewhere in the neighborhood of Malta. Very stormy.

Terrible death to be talked to death. The storm has blown two small land birds and a hawk to sea and they came on board. Sea full of flying-fish.

That is all. There is no record of the week’s travel in Spain, which a little group of four made under the picturesque Gibraltar guide, Benunes, still living and quite as picturesque at last accounts. This side-trip is covered in a single brief paragraph in the Innocents, and the only account we have of it is in a home letter, from Cadiz, of October 24th:

We left Gibraltar at noon and rode to Algeciras (4 hours), thus dodging the quarantine—took dinner, and then rode horseback all night in a swinging trot, and at daylight took a caleche (a-wheeled vehicle), and rode 5 hours—then took cars and traveled till twelve at night. That landed us at Seville, and we were over the hard part of our trip and somewhat tired. Since then we have taken things comparatively easy, drifting around from one town to another and attracting a good deal of attention—for I guess strangers do not wander through Andalusia and the other southern provinces of Spain often. The country is precisely what it was when Don Quixote and Sancho Panza were possible characters. But I see now what the glory of Spain must have been when it was under

Moorish domination. No, I will not say that—but then when one is carried away, infatuated, entranced, with the wonders of the Alhambra and the supernatural beauty of

Page 198

the Alcazar, he is apt to overflow with admiration for the splendid intellects that created them.

We may wish that he had left us a chapter of that idyllic journey, but it will never be written now. A night or two before the vessel reached New York there was the usual good-by assembly, and for this occasion, at Mrs. Severance's request, Mark Twain wrote some verses. They were not especially notable, for meter and rhyme did not come easy to him, but one prophetic stanza is worth remembering. In the opening lines the passengers are referred to as a fleet of vessels, then follows:

Lo! other ships of that parted fleet
Shall suffer this fate or that:
One shall be wrecked, another shall sink,
Or ground on treacherous flat.
Some shall be famed in many lands
As good ships, fast and fair,
And some shall strangely disappear,
Men know not when or where.

The Quaker City returned to America on November 19, 1867, and Mark Twain found himself, if not famous, at least in very wide repute. The fifty-three letters to the *Alta* and the half-dozen to the *New York Tribune* had carried his celebrity into every corner of the States and Territories. Vivid, fearless, full of fresh color, humor, poetry, they came as a revelation to a public weary of the driveling, tiresome travel-letters of that period. They preached a new gospel in travel-literature: the gospel of seeing with an overflowing honesty; a gospel of sincerity in according praises to whatever seemed genuine, and ridicule to the things considered sham. It was the gospel that Mark Twain would continue to preach during his whole career. It became his chief literary message to the world—a world waiting for that message.

Moreover, the letters were literature. He had received, from whatever source, a large and very positive literary impulse, a loftier conception and expression. It was at Tangier that he first struck the grander chord, the throbbing cadence of human story.

Here is a crumbling wall that was old when Columbus discovered America; old when Peter the Hermit roused the knightly men of the Middle Ages to arm for the first Crusade; old when Charlemagne and his paladins beleaguered enchanted castles and battled with giants and genii in the fabled days of the olden time; old when Christ and his disciples walked the earth; stood where it stands to-day when the lips of Memnon were vocal and men bought and sold in the streets of ancient Thebes.

This is pure poetry. He had never touched so high a strain before, but he reached it often after that, and always with an ever-increasing mastery and confidence. In Venice,

in Rome, in Athens, through the Holy Land, his retrospection becomes a stately epic symphony, a processional crescendo that swings ever higher until it reaches that sublime strain, the ageless contemplation of the Sphinx. We cannot forego a paragraph or two of that word-picture:

Page 199

After years of waiting it was before me at last. The great face was so sad, so earnest, so longing, so patient. There was a dignity not of earth in its mien, and in its countenance a benignity such as never anything human wore. It was stone, but it seemed sentient. If ever image of stone thought, it was thinking. It was looking toward the verge of the landscape, yet looking at nothing—nothing but distance and vacancy. It was looking over and beyond everything of the present, and far into the past.... It was thinking of the wars of the departed ages; of the empires it had seen created and destroyed; of the nations whose birth it had witnessed, whose progress it had watched, whose annihilation it had noted; of the joy and sorrow, the life and death, the grandeur and decay, of five thousand slow-revolving years . . . The Sphinx is grand in its loneliness; it is imposing in its magnitude; it is impressive in the mystery that hangs over its story. And there is that in the overshadowing majesty of this eternal figure of stone, with its accusing memory of the deeds of all ages, which reveals to one something of what we shall feel when we shall stand at last in the awful presence of God.

Then that closing word of Egypt. He elaborated it for the book, and did not improve it. Let us preserve here its original form.

We are glad to have seen Egypt. We are glad to have seen that old land which taught Greece her letters—and through Greece, Rome—and through Rome, the world—that venerable cradle of culture and refinement which could have humanized and civilized the Children of Israel, but allowed them to depart out of her borders savages—those Children whom we still revere, still love, and whose sad shortcomings we still excuse—not because they were savages, but because they were the chosen savages of God.

The Holy Land letters alone would have brought him fame. They presented the most graphic and sympathetic picture of Syrian travel ever written—one that will never become antiquated or obsolete so long as human nature remains unchanged. From beginning to end the tale is rarely, reverently told. Its closing paragraph has not been surpassed in the voluminous literature of that solemn land:

Palestine sits in sackcloth and ashes. Over it broods the spell of a curse that has withered its fields and fettered its energies. Where Sodom and Gomorrah reared their domes and towers that solemn sea now floods the plain, in whose bitter waters no living thing exists—over whose waveless surface the blistering air hangs motionless and dead—about whose borders nothing grows but weeds and scattering tufts of cane, and that treacherous fruit that promises refreshment to parching lips, but turns to ashes at the touch. Nazareth is forlorn; about that ford of Jordan where the hosts of Israel entered the Promised Land with songs of rejoicing one finds only a

Page 200

squalid camp of fantastic Bedouins of the desert; Jericho the accursed lies a moldering ruin today, even as Joshua's miracle left it more than three thousand years ago; Bethlehem and Bethany, in their poverty and their humiliation, have nothing about them now to remind one that they once knew the high honor of the Saviour's presence; the hallowed spot where the shepherds watched their flocks by night, and where the angels sang Peace on earth, goodwill to men, is untenanted by any living creature, and unblessed by any feature that is pleasant to the eye. Renowned Jerusalem itself, the stateliest name in history, has lost all its ancient grandeur, and is become a pauper village; the riches of Solomon are no longer there to compel the admiration of visiting Oriental queens; the wonderful temple which was the pride and the glory of Israel is gone, and the Ottoman crescent is lifted above the spot where, on that most memorable day in the annals of the world, they reared the Holy Cross. The noted Sea of Galilee, where Roman fleets once rode at anchor and the disciples of the Saviour sailed in their ships, was long ago deserted by the devotees of war and commerce, and its borders are a silent wilderness; Capernaum is a shapeless ruin; Magdala is the home of beggared Arabs; Bethsaida and Chorazin have vanished from the earth, and the "desert places" round about them where thousands of men once listened to the Saviour's voice and ate the miraculous bread sleep in the hush of a solitude that is inhabited only by birds of prey and skulking foxes.

Palestine is desolate and unlovely. And why should it be otherwise?
Can the curse of the Deity beautify a land?

It would be easy to quote pages here—a pictorial sequence from Gibraltar to Athens, from Athens to Egypt, a radiant panoramic march. In time he would write technically better. He would avoid solecism, he would become a greater master of vocabulary and phrase, but in all the years ahead he would never match the lambent bloom and spontaneity of those fresh, first impressions of Mediterranean lands and seas. No need to mention the humor, the burlesque, the fearless, unrestrained ridicule of old masters and of sacred relics, so called. These we have kept familiar with much repetition. Only, the humor had grown more subtle, more restrained; the burlesque had become impersonal and harmless, the ridicule so frank and good-natured, that even the old masters themselves might have enjoyed it, while the most devoted churchman, unless blinded by bigotry, would find in it satisfaction, rather than sacrilege.

The final letter was written for the New York Herald after the arrival, and was altogether unlike those that preceded it. Gaily satirical and personal—inclusively so—it might better have been left unwritten, for it would seem to have given needless offense to a number of goodly people, whose chief sin was the sedateness of years. However, it is all past now, and those who were old then, and perhaps queer and pious and stingy, do not mind any more, and those who were young and frivolous have all grown old too, and most of them have set out on the still farther voyage. Somewhere, it may be, they gather, now; and then, and lightly, tenderly recall their old-time journeying.

Page 201

LXIII

IN WASHINGTON—A PUBLISHING PROPOSITION

Clemens remained but one day in New York. Senator Stewart had written, about the time of the departure of the Quaker City, offering him the position of private secretary—a position which was to give him leisure for literary work, with a supporting salary as well. Stewart no doubt thought it would be considerably to his advantage to have the brilliant writer and lecturer attached to his political establishment, and Clemens likewise saw possibilities in the arrangement. From Naples, in August, he had written accepting Stewart's offer; he lost no time now in discussing the matter in person.—[In a letter home, August 9th, he referred to the arrangement: "I wrote to Bill Stewart to-day accepting his private secretaryship in Washington, next winter."]

There seems to have been little difficulty in concluding the arrangement. When Clemens had been in Washington a week we find him writing:

Dear folks, Tired and sleepy—been in Congress all day and making newspaper acquaintances. Stewart is to look up a clerkship in the Patent Office for Orion. Things necessarily move slowly where there is so much business and such armies of office-seekers to be attended to. I guess it will be all right. I intend it shall be all right.

I have 18 invitations to lecture, at \$100 each, in various parts of the Union—have declined them all. I am for business now.

Belong on the Tribune Staff, and shall write occasionally. Am offered the same berth to-day on the Herald by letter. Shall write Mr. Bennett and accept, as soon as I hear from Tribune that it will not interfere. Am pretty well known now—intend to be better known. Am hobnobbing with these old Generals and Senators and other humbugs for no good purpose. Don't have any more trouble making friends than I did in California. All serene. Good-by. Shall continue on the Alta.
Yours affectionately,
Sam.

P.S.—I room with Bill Stewart and board at Willard's Hotel.

But the secretary arrangement was a brief matter. It is impossible to conceive of Mark Twain as anybody's secretary, especially as the secretary of Senator Stewart.

—[In Senator Stewart's memoirs he refers unpleasantly to Mark Twain, and after relating several incidents that bear only strained relations to the truth, states that when the writer returned from the Holy Land he (Stewart) offered him a secretaryship as a

sort of charity. He adds that Mark Twain's behavior on his premises was such that a threat of a thrashing was necessary. The reason for such statements becomes apparent, however, when he adds that in 'Roughing It' the author accuses him of cheating, prints a picture of him with a hatch over his eye, and claims to have given him a sound thrashing, none of which statements, save only the one concerning the picture (an apparently unforgivable offense to his dignity), is true, as the reader may easily ascertain for himself.]

Page 202

Within a few weeks he was writing humorous accounts of “My Late Senatorial Secretaryship,” “Facts Concerning the Recent Resignation,” *etc.*, all good-natured burlesque, but inspired, we may believe, by the change: These articles appeared in the New York Tribune, the New York Citizen, and the Galaxy Magazine.

There appears to have been no ill-feeling at this time between Clemens and Stewart. If so, it is not discoverable in any of the former’s personal or newspaper correspondence. In fact, in his article relating to his “late senatorial secretaryship” he puts the joke, so far as it is a joke, on Senator James W. Nye, probably as an additional punishment for Nye’s failure to appear on the night of his lecture. He established headquarters with a brilliant newspaper correspondent named Riley. “One of the best men in Washington—or elsewhere,” he tells us in a brief sketch of that person.—[See Riley, newspaper correspondent. Sketches New and Old.]—He had known Riley in San Francisco; the two were congenial, and settled down to their several undertakings.

Clemens was chiefly concerned over two things: he wished to make money and he wished to secure a government appointment for Orion. He had used up the most of his lecture accumulations, and was moderately in debt. His work was in demand at good rates, for those days, and with working opportunity he could presently dispose of his financial problem. The Tribune was anxious for letters; the Enterprise and Alta were waiting for them; the Herald, the Chicago Tribune, the magazines—all had solicited contributions; the lecture bureaus pursued him. Personally his outlook was bright.

The appointment for Orion was a different matter. The powers were not especially interested in a brother; there were too many brothers and assorted relatives on the official waiting-list already. Clemens was offered appointments for himself—a consulship, a post-mastership; even that of San Francisco. From the Cabinet down, the Washington political contingent had read his travel-letters, and was ready to recognize officially the author of them in his own person and personality.

Also, socially: Mark Twain found himself all at once in the midst of receptions, dinners, and speech-making; all very exciting for a time at least, but not profitable, not conducive to work. At a dinner of the Washington Correspondents Club his response to the toast, “Women,” was pronounced by Schuyler Colfax to be “the best after dinner speech ever made.” Certainly it was a refreshing departure from the prosy or clumsy-witted efforts common to that period. He was coming altogether into his own.—[This is the first of Mark Twain’s after-dinner speeches to be preserved. The reader will find it complete, as reported next day, in Appendix G, at the end of last volume.]

Page 203

He was not immediately interested in the matter of book publication. The *Jumping Frog* book was popular, and in England had been issued by Routledge; but the royalty returns were modest enough and slow in arrival. His desire was for prompter results. His interest in book publication had never been an eager one, and related mainly to the advertising it would furnish, which he did not now need; or to the money return, in which he had no great faith. Yet at this very moment a letter for him was lying in the Tribune office in New York which would bring the book idea into first prominence and spell the beginning of his fortune.

Among those who had read and found delight in the Tribune letters was Elisha Bliss, Jr., of the American Publishing Company, of Hartford. Bliss was a shrewd and energetic man, with a keen appreciation for humor and the American fondness for that literary quality. He had recently undertaken the management of a Hartford concern, and had somewhat alarmed its conservative directorate by publishing books that furnished entertainment to the reader as well as moral instruction. Only his success in paying dividends justified this heresy and averted his downfall. Two days after the arrival of the Quaker City Bliss wrote the letter above mentioned. It ran as follows:

*Office of the American publishing co.
Hartford, Conn., November 21, 1867.*

Samuel L. Clemens, Esq., Tribune Office, New York.

Dear sir,—We take the liberty to address you this, in place of a letter which we had recently written and were about to forward to you, not knowing your arrival home was expected so soon. We are desirous of obtaining from you a work of some kind, perhaps compiled from your letters from the past, etc., with such interesting additions as may be proper. We are the publishers of A. D. Richardson's works, and flatter ourselves that we can give an author a favorable term and do as full justice to his productions as any other house in the country. We are perhaps the oldest subscription house in the country, and have never failed to give a book an immense circulation. We sold about 100,000 copies of Richardson's F. D. and E. ('Field, Dungeon and Escape'), and are now printing 41,000 of 'Beyond the Mississippi', and large orders ahead. If you have any thought of writing a book, or could be induced to do so, we should be pleased to see you, and will do so. Will you do us the favor of reply at once, at your earliest convenience.

Very truly etc.,

*E. Bliss, Jr.,
Secretary.*

After ten days' delay this letter was forwarded to the Tribune bureau in Washington, where Clemens received it. He replied promptly.

Washington, December 2, 1867.

E. *Bliss, Jr., Esq.*, Secretary American Publishing Co.

Page 204

Dear sir,—I only received your favor of November 21st last night, at the rooms of the Tribune Bureau here. It was forwarded from the Tribune office, New York where it had lain eight or ten days. This will be a sufficient apology for the seeming discourtesy of my silence.

I wrote fifty-two letters for the San Francisco Alta California during the Quaker City excursion, about half of which number have been printed thus far. The Alta has few exchanges in the East, and I suppose scarcely any of these letters have been copied on this side of the Rocky Mountains. I could weed them of their chief faults of construction and inelegancies of expression, and make a volume that would be more acceptable in many respects than any I could now write. When those letters were written my impressions were fresh, but now they have lost that freshness; they were warm then, they are cold now. I could strike out certain letters, and write new ones wherewith to supply their places. If you think such a book would suit your purpose, please drop me a line, specifying the size and general style of the volume—when the matter ought to be ready; whether it should have pictures in it or not; and particularly what your terms with me would be, and what amount of money I might possibly make out of it. The latter clause has a degree of importance for me which is almost beyond my own comprehension. But you understand that, of course.

I have other propositions for a book, but have doubted the propriety of interfering with good newspaper engagements, except my way as an author could be demonstrated to be plain before me. But I know Richardson, and learned from him some months ago something of an idea of the subscription plan of publishing. If that is your plan invariably it looks safe.

I am on the New York Tribune staff here as an “occasional,” among other things, and a note from you addressed to

Very truly, *etc.*,

Sam. L. Clemens,

New York Tribune Bureau, Washington

will find me, without fail.

The exchange of those two letters marked the beginning of one of the most notable publishing connections in American literary history.

Consummation, however, was somewhat delayed. Bliss was ill when the reply came, and could not write again in detail until nearly a month later. In this letter he recited the profits made by Richardson and others through subscription publication, and named the royalties paid. Richardson had received four per cent. of the sale price, a small enough rate for these later days; but the cost of manufacture was larger then, and the sale and delivery of books through agents has ever been an expensive process. Even Horace Greeley had received but a fraction more on his Great American Conflict. Bliss especially suggested and emphasized a “humorous work—that is to say, a work

humorously inclined.” He added that they had two arrangements for paying authors: outright purchase, and royalty. He invited a meeting in New York to arrange terms.

Page 205

LXIV

OLIVIA LANGDON

Clemens did in fact go to New York that same evening, to spend Christmas with Dan Slote, and missed Bliss's second letter. It was no matter. Fate had his affairs properly in hand, and had prepared an event of still larger moment than the publication even of *Innocents Abroad*. There was a pleasant reunion at Dan Slote's. He wrote home about it:

Charley Langdon, Jack Van Nostrand, Dan and I (all Quaker City night-hawks) had a blow-out at Dan's house and a lively talk over old times. I just laughed till my sides ached at some of our reminiscences. It was the unholiest gang that ever cavorted through Palestine, but those are the best boys in the world.

This, however, was not the event; it was only preliminary to it. We are coming to that now. At the old St. Nicholas Hotel, which stood on the west of Broadway between Spring and Broome streets, there were stopping at this time Jervis Langdon, a wealthy coal-dealer and mine-owner of Elmira, his son Charles and his daughter Olivia, whose pictured face Samuel Clemens had first seen in the Bay of Smyrna one September day. Young Langdon had been especially anxious to bring his distinguished Quaker City friend and his own people together, and two days before Christmas Samuel Clemens was invited to dine at the hotel. He went very willingly. The lovely face of that miniature had been often a part of his waking dreams. For the first time now he looked upon its reality. Long afterward he said:

"It is forty years ago. From that day to this she has never been out of my mind."

Charles Dickens was in New York then, and gave a reading that night in Steinway Hall. The Langdons went, and Samuel Clemens accompanied them. He remembered afterward that Dickens wore a black velvet coat with a fiery red flower in his buttonhole, and that he read the storm scene from *Copperfield*—the death of James Steerforth. But he remembered still more clearly the face and dress of that slender girlish figure at his side.

Olivia Langdon was twenty-two years old at this time, delicate as the miniature he had seen, fragile to look upon, though no longer with the shattered health of her girlhood. At sixteen, through a fall upon the ice, she had become a complete invalid, confined to her bed for two years, unable to sit, even when supported, unable to lie in any position except upon her back. Great physicians and surgeons, one after another, had done their best for her but she had failed steadily until every hope had died. Then, when nothing else was left to try, a certain Doctor Newton, of spectacular celebrity, who cured

by “laying on of hands,” was brought to Elmira to see her. Doctor Newton came into the darkened room and said:

“Open the windows—we must have light!”

Page 206

They protested that she could not bear the light, but the windows were opened. Doctor Newton came to the bedside of the helpless girl, delivered a short, fervent prayer, put his arm under her shoulders, and bade her sit up. She had not moved for two years, and the family were alarmed, but she obeyed, and he assisted her into a chair. Sensation came back to her limbs. With his assistance she even made a feeble attempt to walk. He left then, saying that she would gradually improve, and in time be well, though probably never very strong. On the same day he healed a boy, crippled and drawn with fever.

It turned out as he had said. Olivia Langdon improved steadily, and now at twenty-two, though not robust—she was never that—she was comparatively well. Gentle, winning, lovable, she was the family idol, and Samuel Clemens joined in their worship from the moment of that first meeting.

Olivia Langdon, on her part, was at first dazed and fascinated, rather than attracted, by this astonishing creature, so unlike any one she had ever known. Her life had been circumscribed, her experiences of a simple sort. She had never seen anything resembling him before. Indeed, nobody had. Somewhat carelessly, even if correctly, attired; eagerly, rather than observantly, attentive; brilliant and startling, rather than cultured, of speech—a blazing human solitaire, unfashioned, unset, tossed by the drift of fortune at her feet. He disturbed rather than gratified her. She sensed his heresy toward the conventions and forms which had been her gospel; his bantering, indifferent attitude toward life—to her always so serious and sacred; she suspected that he even might have unorthodox views on matters of religion. When he had gone she somehow had the feeling that a great fiery meteor of unknown portent had swept across her sky.

To her brother, who was eager for her approval of his celebrity, Miss Langdon conceded admiration. As for her father, he did not qualify his opinion. With hearty sense of humor, and a keen perception of verity and capability in men, Jervis Langdon accepted Samuel Clemens from the start, and remained his stanch admirer and friend. Clemens left that night with an invitation to visit Elmira by and by, and with the full intention of going—soon. Fate, however, had another plan. He did not see Elmira for the better part of a year.

He saw Miss Langdon again within the week. On New-Year's Day he set forth to pay calls, after the fashion of the time—more lavish then than now. Miss Langdon was receiving with Miss Alice Hooker, a niece of Henry Ward Beecher, at the home of a Mrs. Berry; he decided to go there first. With young Langdon he arrived at eleven o'clock in the morning, and they did not leave until midnight. If his first impression upon Olivia Langdon had been meteoric, it would seem that he must now have become to her as a streaming comet that swept from zenith to horizon. One thing is certain: she had

Page 207

become to him the single, unvarying beacon of his future years. He visited Henry Ward Beecher on that trip and dined with him by invitation. Harriet Beecher Stowe was present, and others of that eminent family. Likewise his old Quaker City comrades, Moses S. and Emma Beach. It was a brilliant gathering, a conclave of intellectual gods—a triumph to be there for one who had been a printer-boy on the banks of the Mississippi, and only a little while before a miner with pick and shovel. It was gratifying to be so honored; it would be pleasant to write home; but the occasion lacked something too—everything, in fact—for when he ran his eye around the board the face of the miniature was not there.

Still there were compensations; inadequate, of course, but pleasant enough to remember. It was Sunday evening and the party adjourned to Plymouth Church. After services Mr. Beecher invited him to return home with him for a quiet talk. Evidently they had a good time, for in the letter telling of these things Samuel Clemens said: “Henry Ward Beecher is a brick.”

LXV

A contract with Elisha Bliss, Jr.

He returned to Washington without seeing Miss Langdon again, though he would seem to have had permission to write—friendly letters. A little later (it was on the evening of January 9th) he lectured in Washington—on very brief notice indeed. The arrangement for his appearance had been made by a friend during his absence—“a friend,” Clemens declared afterward, “not entirely sober at the time.” To his mother he wrote:

I scared up a doorkeeper and was ready at the proper time, and by pure good luck a tolerably good house assembled and I was saved. I hardly knew what I was going to talk about, but it went off in splendid style.

The title of the lecture delivered was “The Frozen Truth”—“more truth in the title than in the lecture,” according to his own statement. What it dealt with is not remembered now. It had to do with the Quaker City trip, perhaps, and it seems to have brought a financial return which was welcome enough. Subsequently he delivered it elsewhere; though just how far the tour extended cannot be learned from the letters, and he had but little memory of it in later years.

There was some further correspondence with Bliss, then about the 21st of January (1868) Clemens made a trip to Hartford to settle the matter. Bliss had been particularly anxious to meet him, personally and was a trifle disappointed with his appearance.

Mark Twain's traveling costume was neither new nor neat, and he was smoking steadily a pipe of power. His general make-up was hardly impressive.

Bliss's disturbance was momentary. Once he began to talk the rest did not matter. He was the author of those letters, and Bliss decided that personally he was even greater than they. The publisher, confined to his home with illness, offered him the hospitality of his household. Also, he made him two propositions: he would pay him ten thousand dollars cash for his copyright, or he would pay five per cent. royalty, which was a fourth more than Richardson had received. He advised the latter arrangement.

Page 208

Clemens had already taken advice and had discussed the project a good deal with Richardson. The ten thousand dollars was a heavy temptation, but he withstood it and closed on the royalty basis—"the best business judgment I ever displayed," he was wont to declare. A letter written to his mother and sister near the end of this Hartford stay is worth quoting pretty fully here, for the information and "character" it contains. It bears date of January 24th.

This is a good week for me. I stopped in the Herald office, as I came through New York, to see the boys on the staff, and young James Gordon Bennett asked me to write twice a week, impersonally, for the Herald, and said if I would I might have full swing, and about anybody and everything I wanted to. I said I must have the very fullest possible swing, and he said, "All right." I said, "It's a contract—" and that settled that matter. I'll make it a point to write one letter a week anyhow. But the best thing that has happened is here. This great American Publishing Company kept on trying to bargain with me for a book till I thought I would cut the matter short by coming up for a talk. I met Henry Ward Beecher in Brooklyn, and with his usual whole-souled way of dropping his own work to give other people a lift when he gets a chance, he said: "Now, here, you are one of the talented men of the age—nobody is going to deny that—but in matters of business I don't suppose you know more than enough to come in when it rains. I'll tell you what to do and how to do it." And he did. And I listened well, and then came up here and made a splendid contract for a Quaker City book of 5 or 600 large pages, with illustrations, the manuscript to be placed in the publisher's hands by the middle of July. —[The contract was not a formal one. There was an exchange of letters agreeing to the terms, but no joint document was drawn until October 16 (1868).]—My percentage is to be a fourth more than they have ever paid any author except Greeley. Beecher will be surprised, I guess, when he hears this. These publishers get off the most tremendous editions of their books you can imagine. I shall write to the Enterprise and Alta every week, as usual, I guess, and to the Herald twice a week, occasionally to the Tribune and the magazines (I have a stupid article in the Galaxy, just issued), but I am not going to write to this and that and the other paper any more. I have had a tiptop time here for a few days (guest of Mr. Jno. Hooker's family—Beecher's relatives—in a general way of Mr. Bliss also, who is head of the publishing firm). Puritans are mighty straight-laced, and they won't let me smoke in the parlor, but the Almighty don't make any better people.

I have to make a speech at the annual Herald dinner on the 6th of May.

So the book, which would establish his claim to a peerage in the literary land, was arranged for, and it remained only to prepare the manuscript, a task which he regarded as not difficult. He had only to collate the Alta and Tribune letters, edit them, and write such new matter as would be required for completeness.

Page 209

Returning to Washington, he plunged into work with his usual terrific energy, preparing the copy—in the mean time writing newspaper correspondence and sketches that would bring immediate return. In addition to his regular contributions, he entered into a syndicate arrangement with John Swinton (brother of William Swinton, the historian) to supply letters to a list of newspapers.

“I have written seven long newspaper letters and a short magazine article in less than two days,” he wrote home, and by the end of January he had also prepared several chapters of his book.

The San Francisco post-mastership was suggested to him again, but he put the temptation behind him. He refers to this more than once in his home letters, and it is clear that he wavered.

Judge Field said if I wanted the place he could pledge me the President’s appointment, and Senator Corners said he would guarantee me the Senate’s confirmation. It was a great temptation, but it would render it impossible to fill my book contract, and I had to drop the idea....

And besides I did not want the office.

He made this final decision when he heard that the chief editor of the Alta wanted the place, and he now threw his influence in that quarter. “I would not take ten thousand dollars out of a friend’s pocket,” he said.

But then suddenly came the news from Goodman that the Alta publishers had copyrighted his Quaker City letters and proposed getting them out in a book, to reimburse themselves still further on their investment. This was sharper than a serpent’s tooth. Clemens got confirmation of the report by telegraph. By the same medium he protested, but to no purpose. Then he wrote a letter and sat down to wait. He reported his troubles to Orion:

I have made a superb contract for a book, and have prepared the first ten chapters of the sixty or eighty, but I will bet it never sees the light. Don’t you let the folks at home hear that. That thieving Alta copyrighted the letters, and now shows no disposition to let me use them. I have done all I can by telegraph, and now await the final result by mail. I only charged them for 50 letters what (even in) greenbacks would amount to less than two thousand dollars, intending to write a good deal for high-priced Eastern papers, and now they want to publish my letters in book form themselves to get back that pitiful sum.

Orion was by this time back from Nevada, setting type in St. Louis. He was full of schemes, as usual, and his brother counsels him freely. Then he says:

We chase phantoms half the days of our lives. It is well if we learn wisdom even then, and save the other half.

I am in for it. I must go on chasing them, until I marry, then I am done with literature and all other bosh—that is, literature wherewith to please the general public.

Page 210

I shall write to please myself then.

He closes by saying that he rather expects to go with Anson Burlingame on the Chinese embassy. Clearly he was pretty hopeless as to his book prospects.

His first meeting with General Grant occurred just at this time. In one of his home letters he mentions, rather airily, that he will drop in someday on the General for an interview; and at last, through Mrs. Grant, an appointment was made for a Sunday evening when the General would be at home. He was elated with the prospect of an interview; but when he looked into the imperturbable, square, smileless face of the soldier he found himself, for the first time in his life, without anything particular to say. Grant nodded slightly and waited. His caller wished something would happen. It did. His inspiration returned.

“General,” he said, “I seem to be a little embarrassed. Are you?”

That broke the ice. There were no further difficulties.—[Mark Twain has variously related this incident. It is given here in accordance with the letters of the period.]

LXVI

BACK TO SAN FRANCISCO

Reply came from the Alta, but it was not promising. It spoke rather vaguely of prior arrangements and future possibilities. Clemens gathered that under certain conditions he might share in the profits of the venture. There was but one thing to do; he knew those people—some of them—Colonel McComb and a Mr. McCrellish intimately. He must confer with them in person.

He was weary of Washington, anyway. The whole pitiful machinery of politics disgusted him. In his notebook he wrote:

Whiskey is taken into the committee rooms in demijohns and carried out in demagogues.

And in a letter:

This is a place to get a poor opinion of everybody in. There are some pitiful intellects in this Congress! There isn't one man in Washington in civil office who has the brains of Anson Burlingame, and I suppose if China had not seized and saved his great talents to the world this government would have discarded him when his time was up.—[Anson Burlingame had by this time become China's special ambassador to the nations.]

Furthermore, he was down on the climate of Washington. He decided to go to San Francisco and see “those Alta thieves face to face.” Then, if a book resulted, he could prepare it there among friends. Also, he could lecture.

He had been anxious to visit his people before sailing, but matters were too urgent to permit delay. He obtained from Bliss an advance of royalty and took passage, by way of Aspinwall, on the sidewheel steamer Henry Chauncey, a fine vessel for those days. The name of Mark Twain was already known on the isthmus, and when it was learned he had arrived on the Chauncey a delegation welcomed him on the wharf, and provided him with refreshments and entertainment. Mr.

Page 211

Tracy Robinson, a poet, long a resident of that southern land, was one of the group. Beyond the isthmus Clemens fell in again with his old captain, Ned Wakeman, who during the trip told him the amazing dream that in due time would become Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven. He made the first draft of this story soon after his arrival in San Francisco, as a sort of travesty of Elizabeth Stuart Phelps's Gates Ajar, then very popular. Clemens, then and later, had a high opinion of Capt. Ned Wakeman's dream, but his story of it would pass through several stages before finally reaching the light of publication.—[Mr. John P. Vollmer, now of Lewiston, Idaho, a companion of that voyage, writes of a card game which took place beyond the isthmus. The notorious crippled gambler, "Smithy," figured in it, and it would seem to have furnished the inspiration for the exciting story in Chapter XXXVI of the Mississippi book.]

In San Francisco matters turned out as he had hoped. Colonel McComb was his stanch friend; McCrellish and Woodward, the proprietors, presently conceded that they had already received good value for the money paid. The author agreed to make proper acknowledgments to the Alta in his preface, and the matter was settled with friendliness all around.

The way was now clear, the book assured. First, however, he must provide himself with funds. He delivered a lecture, with the Quaker City excursion as his subject. On the 5th of May he wrote to Bliss:

I lectured here on the trip the other night; over \$1,600 in gold in the house; every seat taken and paid for before night.

He reports that he is steadily at work, and expects to start East with the completed manuscript about the middle of June.

But this was a miscalculation. Clemens found that the letters needed more preparation than he had thought. His literary vision and equipment had vastly altered since the beginning of that correspondence. Some of the chapters he rewrote; others he eliminated entirely. It required two months of fairly steady work to put the big manuscript together.

Some of the new chapters he gave to Bret Harte for the Overland Monthly, then recently established. Harte himself was becoming a celebrity about this time. His "Luck of Roaring Camp" and "The Outcasts of Poker Flat," published in early numbers of the Overland, were making a great stir in the East, arousing there a good deal more enthusiasm than in the magazine office or the city of their publication. That these two friends, each supreme in his own field, should have entered into their heritage so nearly at the same moment, is one of the many seemingly curious coincidences of literary history.

Page 212

Clemens now concluded to cover his lecture circuit of two years before. He was assured that it would be throwing away a precious opportunity not to give his new lecture to his old friends. The result justified that opinion. At Virginia, at Carson, and elsewhere he was received like a returned conqueror. He might have been accorded a Roman triumph had there been time and paraphernalia. Even the robbers had reformed, and entire safety was guaranteed him on the Divide between Virginia and Gold Hill. At Carson he called on Mrs. Curry, as in the old days, and among other things told her how snow from the Lebanon Mountains is brought to Damascus on the backs of camels.

"Sam," she said, "that's just one of your yarns, and if you tell it in your lecture to-night I'll get right up and say so."

But he did tell it, for it was a fact; and though Mrs. Curry did not rise to deny it she shook her finger at him in a way he knew.

He returned to San Francisco and gave one more lecture, the last he would ever give in California. His preparatory advertising for that occasion was wholly unique, characteristic of him to the last degree. It assumed the form of a handbill of protest, supposed to have been issued by the foremost citizens of San Francisco, urging him to return to the States without inflicting himself further upon them. As signatures he made free with the names of prominent individuals, followed by those of organizations, institutions, "Various Benevolent Societies, Citizens on Foot and Horseback, and fifteen hundred in the Steerage."

Following this (on the same bill) was his reply, "To the fifteen hundred and others," in which he insisted on another hearing:

I will torment the people if I want to.... It only costs the people \$1 apiece, and if they can't stand it what do they stay here for?... My last lecture was not as fine as I thought it was, but I have submitted this discourse to several able critics, and they have pronounced it good. Now, therefore, why should I withhold it?

He promised positively to sail on the 6th of July if they would let him talk just this once. Continuing, the handbill presented a second protest, signed by the various clubs and business firms; also others bearing variously the signatures of the newspapers, and the clergy, ending with the brief word:

You had better go. Yours, *chief of police*.

All of which drollery concluded with his announcement of place and date of his lecture, with still further gaiety at the end. Nothing short of a seismic cataclysm—an earthquake, in fact—could deter a San Francisco audience after that. Mark Twain's farewell address, given at the Mercantile Library July 2 (1868), doubtless remains today

the leading literary event in San Francisco's history.—[Copy of the lecture announcement, complete, will be found in Appendix H, at the end of last volume.]

Page 213

He sailed July 6th by the Pacific mail steamer Montana to Acapulco, caught the Henry Chauncey at Aspinwall, reached New York on the 28th, and a day or two later had delivered his manuscript at Hartford.

But a further difficulty had arisen. Bliss was having troubles himself, this time, with his directors. Many reports of Mark Twain's new book had been traveling the rounds of the press, some of which declared it was to be irreverent, even blasphemous, in tone. The title selected, *The New Pilgrim's Progress*, was in itself a sacrilege. Hartford was a conservative place; the American Publishing Company directors were of orthodox persuasion. They urged Bliss to relieve the company of this impending disaster of heresy. When the author arrived one or more of them labored with him in person, without avail. As for Bliss, he was stanch; he believed in the book thoroughly, from every standpoint. He declared if the company refused to print it he would resign the management and publish the book himself. This was an alarming suggestion to the stockholders. Bliss had returned dividends—a boon altogether too rare in the company's former history. The objectors retired and were heard of no more. The manuscript was placed in the hands of Fay and Cox, illustrators, with an order for about two hundred and fifty pictures.

Fay and Cox turned it over to True Williams, one of the well-known illustrators of that day. Williams was a man of great talent—of fine imagination and sweetness of spirit—but it was necessary to lock him in a room when industry was required, with nothing more exciting than cold water as a beverage. Clemens himself aided in the illustrating by obtaining of Moses S. Beach photographs from the large collection he had brought home.

LXVII

A VISIT TO ELMIRA

Meantime he had skilfully obtained a renewal of the invitation to spend a week in the Langdon home.

He meant to go by a fast train, but, with his natural gift for misunderstanding time-tables, of course took a slow one, telegraphing his approach from different stations along the road. Young Langdon concluded to go down the line as far as Waverly to meet him. When the New York train reached there the young man found his guest in the smoking-car, travel-stained and distressingly clad. Mark Twain was always scrupulously neat and correct of dress in later years, but in that earlier day neatness and style had not become habitual and did not give him comfort. Langdon greeted him warmly but with doubt. Finally he summoned courage to say, hesitatingly—"You've got some other clothes, haven't you?"

The arriving guest was not in the least disturbed.

“Oh yes,” he said with enthusiasm, “I’ve got a fine brand-new outfit in this bag, all but a hat. It will be late when we get in, and I won’t see any one to-night. You won’t know me in the morning. We’ll go out early and get a hat.”

Page 214

This was a large relief to the younger man, and the rest of the journey was happy enough. True to promise, the guest appeared at daylight correctly, even elegantly clad, and an early trip to the shops secured the hat. A gay and happy week followed—a week during which Samuel Clemens realized more fully than ever that in his heart there was room for only one woman in all the world: Olivia Langdon—“Livy,” as they all called her—and as the day of departure drew near it may be that the gentle girl had made some discoveries, too.

No word had passed between them. Samuel Clemens had the old-fashioned Southern respect for courtship conventions, and for what, in that day at least, was regarded as honor. On the morning of the final day he said to young Langdon:

“Charley, my week is up, and I must go home.”

The young man expressed a regret which was genuine enough, though not wholly unqualified. His older sister, Mrs. Crane, leaving just then for a trip to the White Mountains, had said:

“Charley, I am sure Mr. Clemens is after our Livy. You mustn’t let him carry her off before our return.”

The idea was a disturbing one. The young man did not urge his guest to prolong his visit. He said:

“We’ll have to stand it, I guess, but you mustn’t leave before to-night.”

“I ought to go by the first train,” Clemens said, gloomily. “I am in love.”

“In what!”

“In love-with your sister, and I ought to get away from here.”

The young man was now very genuinely alarmed. To him Mark Twain was a highly gifted, fearless, robust man—a man’s man—and as such altogether admirable—lovable. But Olivia—Livy—she was to him little short of a saint. No man was good enough for her, certainly not this adventurous soldier of letters from the West. Delightful he was beyond doubt, adorable as a companion, but not a companion for Livy.

“Look here, Clemens,” he said, when he could get his voice. “There’s a train in half an hour. I’ll help you catch it. Don’t wait till to-night. Go now.”

Clemens shook his head.

“No, Charley,” he said, in his gentle drawl, “I want to enjoy your hospitality a little longer. I promise to be circumspect, and I’ll go to-night.”

That night, after dinner, when it was time to take the New York train, a light two-seated wagon was at the gate. The coachman was in front, and young Langdon and his guest took the back seat. For some reason the seat had not been locked in its place, and when, after the good-bys, the coachman touched the horse it made a quick spring forward, and the back seat, with both passengers, described a half-circle and came down with force on the cobbled street. Neither passenger was seriously hurt; Clemens not at all—only dazed a little for a moment. Then came an inspiration; here was a chance to prolong his visit. Evidently it was not intended that he should take that train. When the Langdon household gathered around with restoratives he did not recover too quickly. He allowed them to support or carry him into the house and place him in an arm-chair and apply remedies. The young daughter of the house especially showed anxiety and attention. This was pure happiness. He was perjuring himself, of course, but they say Jove laughs at such things.

Page 215

He recovered in a day or two, but the wide hospitality of the handsome Langdon home was not only offered now; it was enforced. He was still there two weeks later, after which he made a trip to Cleveland to confide in Mrs. Fairbanks how he intended to win Livy Langdon for his wife.

LXVIII

THE REV. "JOE" TWICHELL

He returned to Hartford to look after the progress of his book. Some of it was being put into type, and with his mechanical knowledge of such things he was naturally interested in the process.

He made his headquarters with the Blisses, then living at 821 Asylum Avenue, and read proof in a little upper room, where the lamp was likely to be burning most of the time, where the atmosphere was nearly always blue with smoke, and the window-sill full of cigar butts. Mrs. Bliss took him into the quiet social life of the neighborhood—to small church receptions, society gatherings and the like—all of which he seemed to enjoy. Most of the dwellers in that neighborhood were members of the Asylum Hill Congregational Church, then recently completed; all but the spire. It was a cultured circle, well-off in the world's goods, its male members, for the most part, concerned in various commercial ventures.

The church stood almost across the way from the Bliss home, and Mark Twain, with his picturesque phrasing, referred to it as the "stub-tailed church," on account of its abbreviated spire; also, later, with a knowledge of its prosperous membership, as the "Church of the Holy Speculators." He was at an evening reception in the home of one of its members when he noticed a photograph of the unfinished building framed and hanging on the wall.

"Why, yes," he commented, in his slow fashion, "this is the 'Church of the Holy Speculators.'"

"Sh," cautioned Mrs. Bliss. "Its pastor is just behind you. He knows your work and wants to meet you." Turning, she said: "Mr. Twichell, this is Mr. Clemens. Most people know him as Mark Twain."

And so, in this casual fashion, he met the man who was presently to become his closest personal friend and counselor, and would remain so for more than forty years.

Joseph Hopkins Twichell was a man about his own age, athletic and handsome, a student and a devout Christian, yet a man familiar with the world, fond of sports, with an exuberant sense of humor and a wide understanding of the frailties of humankind. He

had been “port waist oar” at Yale, and had left college to serve with General “Dan” Sickles as a chaplain who had followed his duties not only in the camp, but on the field.

Page 216

Mention has already been made of Mark Twain's natural leaning toward ministers of the gospel, and the explanation of it is easier to realize than to convey. He was hopelessly unorthodox—rankly rebellious as to creeds. Anything resembling cant or the curtailment of mental liberty roused only his resentment and irony. Yet something in his heart always warmed toward any laborer in the vineyard, and if we could put the explanation into a single sentence, perhaps we might say it was because he could meet them on that wide, common ground sympathy with mankind. Mark Twain's creed, then and always, may be put into three words, "liberty, justice, humanity." It may be put into one word, "humanity."

Ministers always loved Mark Twain. They did not always approve of him, but they adored him: The Rev. Mr. Rising, of the Comstock, was an early example of his ministerial friendships, and we have seen that Henry Ward Beecher cultivated his company. In a San Francisco letter of two years before, Mark Twain wrote his mother, thinking it would please her:

I am as thick as thieves with the Reverend Stebbins. I am laying for the Reverend Scudder and the Reverend Doctor Stone. I am running on preachers now altogether, and I find them gay.

So it may be that his first impulse toward Joseph Twichell was due to the fact that he was a young member of that army whose mission is to comfort and uplift mankind. But it was only a little time till the impulse had grown into a friendship that went beyond any profession or doctrine, a friendship that ripened into a permanent admiration and love for "Joe" Twichell himself, as one of the noblest specimens of his race.

He was invited to the Twichell home, where he met the young wife and got a glimpse of the happiness of that sweet and peaceful household. He had a neglected, lonely look, and he loved to gather with them at their fireside. He expressed his envy of their happiness, and Mrs. Twichell asked him why, since his affairs were growing prosperous, he did not establish a household of his own. Long afterward Mr. Twichell wrote:

Mark made no answer for a little, but, with his eyes bent on the floor, appeared to be deeply pondering. Then he looked up, and said slowly, in a voice tremulous with earnestness (with what sympathy he was heard may be imagined): "I am taking thought of it. I am in love beyond all telling with the dearest and best girl in the whole world. I don't suppose she will marry me. I can't think it possible. She ought not to. But if she doesn't I shall be sure that the best thing I ever did was to fall in love with her, and proud to have it known that I tried to win her!"

It was only a brief time until the Twichell fireside was home to him. He came and went, and presently it was "Mark" and "Joe," as by and by it would be "Livy" and "Harmony," and in a few years "Uncle Joe" and "Uncle Mark," "Aunt Livy" and "Aunt Harmony," and so would remain until the end.

Page 217

LXIX

A LECTURE TOUR

James Redpath, proprietor of the Boston Lyceum Bureau, was the leading lecture agent of those days, and controlled all, or nearly all, of the platform celebrities. Mark Twain's success at the Cooper Union the year before had interested Redpath. He had offered engagements then and later, but Clemens had not been free for the regular circuit. Now there was no longer a reason for postponement of a contract. Redpath was eager for the new celebrity, and Clemens closed with him for the season of 1868-9. With his new lecture, "The Vandal Abroad," he was presently earning a hundred dollars and more a night, and making most of the nights count.

This was affluence indeed. He had become suddenly a person of substance—an associate of men of consequence, with a commensurate income. He could help his mother lavishly now, and he did.

His new lecture was immensely popular. It was a resume of the 'Quaker City' letters—a foretaste of the book which would presently follow. Wherever he went, he was hailed with eager greetings. He caught such drifting exclamations as, "There he is! There goes Mark Twain!" People came out on the street to see him pass. That marvelous miracle which we variously call "notoriety," "popularity," "fame," had come to him. In his notebook he wrote, "Fame is a vapor, popularity an accident; the only, earthly certainty oblivion."

The newspapers were filled with enthusiasm both as to his matter and method. His delivery was described as a "long, monotonous drawl, with the fun invariably coming in at the end of a sentence—after a pause." His appearance at this time is thus set down:

Mark Twain is a man of medium height, about five feet ten, sparsely built, with dark reddish-brown hair and mustache. His features are fair, his eyes keen and twinkling. He dresses in scrupulous evening attire. In lecturing he hangs about the desk, leaning on it or flirting around the corners of it, then marching and countermarching in the rear of it. He seldom casts a glance at his manuscript.

No doubt this fairly presents Mark Twain, the lecturer of that day. It was a new figure on the platform, a man with a new method. As to his manuscript, the item might have said that he never consulted it at all. He learned his lecture; what he consulted was merely a series of hieroglyphics, a set of crude pictures drawn by himself, suggestive of the subject-matter underneath new head. Certain columns represented the Parthenon; the Sphinx meant Egypt, and so on. His manuscript lay there in case of accident, but the accident did not happen.

A number of his engagements were in the central part of New York, at points not far distant from Elmira. He had a standing invitation to visit the Langdon home, and he made it convenient to avail himself of that happiness.

Page 218

His was not an unruffled courtship. When at last he reached the point of proposing for the daughter of the house, neither the daughter nor the household offered any noticeable encouragement to his suit. Many absurd anecdotes have been told of his first interview with Mr. Langdon on the subject, but they are altogether without foundation. It was a proper and dignified discussion of a very serious matter. Mr. Langdon expressed deep regard for him and friendship but he was not inclined to add him to the family; the young lady herself, in a general way, accorded with these views. The applicant for favor left sadly enough, but he could not remain discouraged or sad. He lectured at Cleveland with vast success, and the news of it traveled quickly to Elmira. He was referred to by Cleveland papers as a “lion” and “the coming man of the age.” Two days later, in Pittsburgh (November 19th), he “played” against Fanny Kemble, the favorite actress of that time, with the result that Miss Kemble had an audience of two hundred against nearly ten times the number who gathered to hear Mark Twain. The news of this went to Elmira, too. It was in the papers there next morning; surely this was a conquering hero—a gay Lochinvar from out of the West—and the daughter of the house must be guarded closely, that he did not bear her away. It was on the second morning following the Pittsburgh triumph, when the Langdon family were gathered at breakfast, that a bushy auburn head poked fearfully in at the door, and a low, humble voice said:

“The calf has returned; may the prodigal have some breakfast?”

No one could be reserved or reprovingly distant, or any of those unfriendly things with a person like that; certainly not Jervis Langdon, who delighted in the humor and the tricks and turns and oddities of this eccentric visitor. Giving his daughter to him was another matter, but even that thought was less disturbing than it had been at the start. In truth, the Langdon household had somehow grown to feel that he belonged to them. The elder sister’s husband, Theodore Crane, endorsed him fully. He had long before read some of the Mark Twain sketches that had traveled eastward in advance of their author, and had recognized, even in the crudest of them, a classic charm. As for Olivia Langdon’s mother and sister, their happiness lay in hers. Where her heart went theirs went also, and it would appear that her heart, in spite of herself, had found its rightful keeper. Only young Langdon was irreconciled, and eventually set out for a voyage around the world to escape the situation.

There was only a provisional engagement at first. Jervis Langdon suggested, and Samuel Clemens agreed with him, that it was proper to know something of his past, as well as of his present, before the official parental sanction should be given. When Mr. Langdon inquired as to the names of persons of standing to whom he might write for credentials, Clemens pretty confidently gave him the name of the Reverend Stebbins and others of San Francisco, adding that he might write also to Joe Goodman if he wanted to, but that he had lied for Goodman a hundred times and Goodman would lie for him if necessary, so his testimony would be of no value. The letters to the clergy were written, and Mr. Langdon also wrote one on his own account.

Page 219

It was a long mail-trip to the Coast and back in those days. It might be two months before replies would come from those ministers. The lecturer set out again on his travels, and was radiantly and happily busy. He went as far west as Illinois, had crowded houses in Chicago, visited friends and kindred in Hannibal, St. Louis, and Keokuk, carrying the great news, and lecturing in old familiar haunts.

LXX

Innocents at home—and “The innocents abroad”

He was in Jacksonville, Illinois, at the end of January (1869), and in a letter to Bliss states that he will be in Elmira two days later, and asks that proofs of the book be sent there. He arrived at the Langdon home, anxious to hear the reports that would make him, as the novels might say, “the happiest or the most miserable of men.” Jervis Langdon had a rather solemn look when they were alone together. Clemens asked:

“You’ve heard from those gentlemen out there?”

“Yes, and from another gentleman I wrote concerning you.”

“They don’t appear to have been very enthusiastic, from your manner.”

“Well, yes, some of them were.”

“I suppose I may ask what particular form their emotion took?”

“Oh yes, yes; they agree unanimously that you are a brilliant, able man, a man with a future, and that you would make about the worst husband on record.”

The applicant for favor had a forlorn look.

“There’s nothing very evasive about that,” he said:

There was a period of reflective silence. It was probably no more than a few seconds, but it seemed longer.

“Haven’t you any other friend that you could suggest?” Langdon said.

“Apparently none whose testimony would be valuable.”

Jervis Langdon held out his hand. “You have at least one,” he said. “I believe in you. I know you better than they do.”

And so came the crown of happiness. The engagement of Samuel Langhorne Clemens and Olivia Lewis Langdon was ratified next day, February 4, 1869.

But if the friends of Mark Twain viewed the idea of the marriage with scant favor, the friends of Miss Langdon regarded it with genuine alarm. Elmira was a conservative place—a place of pedigree and family tradition; that a stranger, a former printer, pilot, miner, wandering journalist and lecturer, was to carry off the daughter of one of the oldest and wealthiest families, was a thing not to be lightly permitted. The fact that he had achieved a national fame did not count against other considerations. The social protest amounted almost to insurrection, but it was not availing. The Langdon family had their doubts too, though of a different sort. Their doubts lay in the fear that one, reared as their daughter had been, might be unable to hold a place as the wife of this intellectual giant, whom they felt that the world was preparing to honor. That this delicate, sheltered girl could have the strength of mind and body for her position seemed hard to believe. Their faith overbore such questionings, and the future years proved how fully it was justified.

Page 220

To his mother Samuel Clemens wrote:

She is only a little body, but she hasn't her peer in Christendom. I gave her only a plain gold engagement ring, when fashion imperatively demands a two-hundred-dollar diamond one, and told her it was typical of her future life—namely, that she would have to flourish on substance, rather than luxuries (but you see I know the girl—she don't care anything about luxuries).... She spends no money but her astral year's allowance, and spends nearly every cent of that on other people. She will be a good, sensible little wife, without any airs about her. I don't make intercession for her beforehand, and ask you to love her, for there isn't any use in that—you couldn't help it if you were to try. I warn you that whoever comes within the fatal influence of her beautiful nature is her willing slave forevermore.

To Mrs. Crane, absent in March, her father wrote:

Dear sue,—I received your letter yesterday with a great deal of pleasure, but the letter has gone in pursuit of one S. L. Clemens, who has been giving us a great deal of trouble lately. We cannot have a joy in our family without a feeling, on the part of the little incorrigible in our family, that this wanderer must share it, so, as soon as read, into her pocket and off upstairs goes your letter, and in the next two minutes into the mail, so it is impossible for me now to refer to it, or by reading it over gain an inspiration in writing you. . .

Clemens closed his lecture tour in March, and went immediately to Elmira. He had lectured between fifty and sixty times, with a return of something more than \$8,000, not a bad aggregate for a first season on the circuit. He had planned to make a spring tour to California, but the attraction at Elmira was of a sort that discouraged distant travel. Furthermore, he disliked the platform, then and always. It was always a temptation to him because of its quick and abundant return, but it was none the less distasteful. In a letter of that spring he wrote:

I most cordially hate the lecture field. And after all, I shudder to think I may never get out of it. In all conversation with Gough, and Anna Dickinson, Nasby, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Wendell Phillips, and the other old stagers, I could not observe that they ever expected or hoped to get out of the business. I don't want to get wedded to it as they are.

He declined further engagements on the excuse that he must attend to getting out his book. The revised proofs were coming now, and he and gentle Livy Langdon read them together. He realized presently that with her sensitive nature she had also a keen literary perception. What he lacked in delicacy—and his lack was likely to be large enough in that direction—she detected, and together they pruned it away. She became his editor during those happy courtship days—a position which she held to her death. The world

Page 221

owed a large debt of gratitude to Mark Twain's wife, who from the very beginning—and always, so far as in her strength she was able—inspired him to give only his worthiest to the world, whether in written or spoken word, in counsel or in deed. Those early days of their close companionship, spiritual and mental, were full of revelation to Samuel Clemens, a revelation that continued from day to day, and from year to year, even to the very end.

The letter to Bliss and the proofs were full of suggested changes that would refine and beautify the text. In one of them he settles the question of title, which he says is to be:

The innocents abroad
or
the new pilgrim's progress

and we may be sure that it was Olivia Langdon's voice that gave the deciding vote for the newly adopted chief title, which would take any suggestion of irreverence out of the remaining words.

The book was to have been issued in the spring, but during his wanderings proofs had been delayed, and there was now considerable anxiety about it, as the agencies had become impatient for the canvass. At the end of April Clemens wrote: "Your printers are doing well. I will hurry the proofs"; but it was not until the early part of June that the last chapters were revised and returned. Then the big book, at last completed, went to press on an edition of twenty thousand, a large number for any new book, even to-day.

In later years, through some confusion of circumstance, Mark Twain was led to believe that the publication of *The Innocents Abroad* was long and unnecessarily delayed. But this was manifestly a mistake. The book went to press in June. It was a big book and a large edition. The first copy was delivered July 20 (1869), and four hundred and seventeen bound volumes were shipped that month. Even with the quicker mechanical processes of to-day a month or more is allowed for a large book between the final return of proofs and the date of publication. So it is only another instance of his remembering, as he once quaintly put it, "the thing that didn't happen."—[In an article in the *North American Review* (September 21, 1906) Mr. Clemens stated that he found it necessary to telegraph notice that he would bring suit if the book was not immediately issued. In none of the letters covering this period is there any suggestion of delay on the part of the publishers, and the date of the final return of proofs, together with the date of publication, preclude the possibility of such a circumstance. At some period of his life he doubtless sent, or contemplated sending, such a message, and this fact, through some curious psychology, became confused in his mind with the first edition of *The Innocents Abroad*.]

LXXI

THE GREAT BOOK OF TRAVEL

Page 222

'The Innocents Abroad' was a success from the start. The machinery for its sale and delivery was in full swing by August 1, and five thousand one hundred and seventy copies were disposed of that month—a number that had increased to more than thirty-one thousand by the first of the year. It was a book of travel; its lowest price was three and a half dollars. No such record had been made by a book of that description; none has equaled it since.—[One must recall that this was the record only up to 1910. D.W.]

If Mark Twain was not already famous, he was unquestionably famous now. As the author of *The New Pilgrim's Progress* he was swept into the domain of letters as one riding at the head of a cavalcade—doors and windows wide with welcome and jubilant with applause. Newspapers chorused their enthusiasm; the public voiced universal approval; only a few of the more cultured critics seemed hesitant and doubtful.

They applauded—most of them—but with reservation. Doctor Holland regarded Mark Twain as a mere fun maker of ephemeral popularity, and was not altogether pleasant in his dictum. Doctor Holmes, in a letter to the author, speaks of the "frequently quaint and amusing conceits," but does not find it in his heart to refer to the book as literature. It was naturally difficult for the East to concede a serious value to one who approached his subject with such militant aboriginality, and occasionally wrote "those kind." William Dean Howells reviewed the book in the *Atlantic*, which was of itself a distinction, whether the review was favorable or otherwise. It was favorable on the whole, favorable to the humor of the book, its "delicious impudence," the charm of its good-natured irony. The review closed:

It is no business of ours to fix his rank among the humorists California has given us, but we think he is, in an entirely different way from all the others, quite worthy of the company of the best.

This is praise, but not of an intemperate sort, nor very inclusive. The descriptive, the poetic, the more pretentious phases of the book did not receive attention. Mr. Howells was perhaps the first critic of eminence to recognize in Mark Twain not only the humorist, but the supreme genius—the "Lincoln of our literature." This was later. The public—the silent public—with what Howells calls "the inspired knowledge of the simple-hearted multitude," reached a similar verdict forthwith. And on sufficient evidence: let the average unprejudiced person of to-day take up the old volume and read a few chapters anywhere and decide whether it is the work of a mere humorist, or also of a philosopher, a poet, and a seer. The writer well remembers a little group of "the simple-hearted multitude" who during the winter of '69 and '70 gathered each evening to hear the *Innocents* read aloud, and their unanimous verdict that it was the "best book of modern times."

It was the most daring book of its day. Passages of it were calculated to take the breath of the orthodox reader; only, somehow, it made him smile, too. It was all so good-natured, so openly sincere. Without doubt it preached heresy—the heresy of viewing

revered landmarks and relics joyously, rather than lugubriously; reverentially, when they inspired reverence; satirically, when they invited ridicule, and with kindness always.

Page 223

The Innocents Abroad is Mark Twain's greatest book of travel. The critical and the pure in speech may object to this verdict. Brander Matthews regards it second to A Tramp Abroad, the natural viewpoint of the literary technician. The 'Tramp' contains better usage without doubt, but it lacks the "color" which gives the Innocents its perennial charm. In the Innocents there is a glow, a fragrance, a romance of touch, a subtle something which is idyllic, something which is not quite of reality, in the tale of that little company that so long ago sailed away to the harbors of their illusions beyond the sea, and, wandered together through old palaces and galleries, and among the tombs of the saints, and down through ancient lands. There is an atmosphere about it all, a dream-like quality that lies somewhere in the telling, maybe, or in the tale; at all events it is there, and the world has felt it ever since. Perhaps it could be defined in a single word, perhaps that word would be "youth." That the artist, poor True Williams, felt its inspiration is certain. We may believe that Williams was not a great draftsman, but no artist ever caught more perfectly the light and spirit of the author's text. Crude some of the pictures are, no doubt, but they convey the very essence of the story; they belong to it, they are a part of it, and they ought never to perish. 'A Tramp Abroad' is a rare book, but it cannot rank with its great predecessor in human charm. The public, which in the long run makes mistakes, has rendered that verdict. The Innocents by far outsells the Tramp, and, for that matter, any other book of travel. *The purchase of A paper*

It is curious to reflect that Mark Twain still did not regard himself as a literary man. He had no literary plans for the future; he scarcely looked forward to the publication of another book. He considered himself a journalist; his ambition lay in the direction of retirement in some prosperous newspaper enterprise, with the comforts and companionship of a home. During his travels he had already been casting about for a congenial and substantial association in newspaperdom, and had at one time considered the purchase of an interest in the Cleveland Herald. But Buffalo was nearer Elmira, and when an opportunity offered, by which he could acquire a third interest in the Buffalo Express for \$25,000, the purchase was decided upon. His lack of funds prompted a new plan for a lecture tour to the Pacific coast, this time with D. R. Locke (Nasby), then immensely popular, in his lecture "Cussed Be Canaan."

Clemens had met Nasby on the circuit, and was very fond of him. The two had visited Boston together, and while there had called on Doctor Holmes; this by the way. Nasby was fond of Clemens too, but doubtful about the trip-doubtful about his lecture:

Page 224

Your proposition takes my breath away. If I had my new lecture completed I wouldn't hesitate a moment, but really isn't "Cussed Be Canaan" too old? You know that lemon, our African brother, juicy as he was in his day, has been squeezed dry. Why howl about his wrongs after said wrongs have been redressed? Why screech about the "damnable spirit of Cahst" when the victim thereof sits at the first table, and his oppressor mildly takes, in hash, what he leaves? You see, friend Twain, the Fifteenth Amendment busted "Cussed Be Canaan." I howled feelingly on the subject while it was a living issue, for I felt all that I said and a great deal more; but now that we have won our fight why dance frantically on the dead corpse of our enemy? The Reliable Contraband is contraband no more, but a citizen of the United States, and I speak of him no more. Give me a week to think of your proposition. If I can jerk a lecture in time I will go with you. The Lord knows I would like to. —[Nasby's lecture, "Cussed Be Canaan," opened, "We are all descended from grandfathers!" He had a powerful voice, and always just on the stroke of eight he rose and vigorously delivered this sentence. Once, after lecturing an entire season—two hundred and twenty-five nights—he went home to rest. That evening he sat, musingly drowsing by the fire, when the clock struck eight. Without a moment's thought Nasby sprang to his feet and thundered out, "We are all descended from grandfathers!"]

Nasby did not go, and Clemens's enthusiasm cooled at the prospect of setting out alone on that long tour. Furthermore, Jervis Langdon promptly insisted on advancing the money required to complete the purchase of the Express, and the trade was closed.—[Mr. Langdon is just as good for \$25,000 for me, and has already advanced half of it in cash. I wrote and asked whether I had better send him my note, or a due bill, or how he would prefer to have the indebtedness made of record, and he answered every other topic in the letter pleasantly, but never replied to that at all. Still, I shall give my note into a hands of his business agent here, and pay him the interest as it falls due.—S. L. C. to his mother.]

The Buffalo Express was at this time in the hands of three men—Col. George F. Selkirk, J. L. Lamed, and Thomas A. Kennett. Colonel Selkirk was business manager, Lamed was political editor. With the purchase of Kennett's share Clemens became a sort of general and contributing editor, with a more or less "roving commission"—his hours and duties not very clearly defined. It was believed by his associates, and by Clemens himself, that his known connection with the paper would give it prestige and circulation, as Nasby's connection had popularized the Toledo Blade. The new editor entered upon his duties August 14 (1869). The members of the Buffalo press gave him a dinner that evening, and after the manner of newspaper men the world over, were handsomely cordial to the "new enemy in their midst."

Page 225

There is an anecdote which relates that next morning, when Mark Twain arrived in the Express office (it was then at 14 Swan Street), there happened to be no one present who knew him. A young man rose very bruskly and asked if there was any one he would like to see. It is reported that he replied, with gentle deliberation:

“Well, yes, I should like to see some young man offer the new editor a chair.”

It is so like Mark Twain that we are inclined to accept it, though it seems of doubtful circumstance. In any case it deserves to be true. His “Salutatory” (August 18th) is sufficiently genuine:

Being a stranger, it would be immodest for me to suddenly and violently assume the associate editorship of the Buffalo Express without a single word of comfort or encouragement to the unoffending patrons of the paper, who are about to be exposed to constant attacks of my wisdom and learning. But the word shall be as brief as possible. I only want to assure parties having a friendly interest in the prosperity of the journal that I am not going to hurt the paper deliberately and intentionally at any time. I am not going to introduce any startling reforms, nor in any way attempt to make trouble.... I shall not make use of slang and vulgarity upon any occasion or under any circumstances, and shall never use profanity except when discussing house rent and taxes. Indeed, upon a second thought, I shall not use it even then, for it is unchristian, inelegant, and degrading; though, to speak truly, I do not see how house rent and taxes are going to be discussed worth a cent without it. I shall not often meddle with politics, because we have a political Editor who is already excellent and only needs to serve a term or two in the penitentiary to be perfect. I shall not write any poetry unless I conceive a spite against the subscribers.

Such is my platform. I do not see any use in it, but custom is law and must be obeyed.

John Harrison Mills, who was connected with the Express in those days, has written:

I cannot remember that there was any delay in getting down to his work. I think within five minutes the new editor had assumed the easy look of one entirely at home, pencil in hand and a clutch of paper before him, with an air of preoccupation, as of one intent on a task delayed. It was impossible to be conscious of the man sitting there, and not feel his identity with all that he had enjoyed, and the reminiscence of it he that seemed to radiate; for the personality was so absolutely in accord with all the record of himself and his work. I cannot say he seemed to be that vague thing they call a type in race or blood, though the word, if used in his case for temperament, would decidedly mean what they used to call the “sanguine.” I thought that, pictorially, the noble costume of the Albanian would have well become him. Or he might have been a Goth, and worn the

Page 226

horned bull-pate helmet of Alaric's warriors; or stood at the prow of one of the swift craft of the Vikings. His eyes, which have been variously described, were, it seemed to me, of an indescribable depth of the bluish moss-agate, with a capacity of pupil dilation that in certain lights had the effect of a deep black....

Mr. Mills adds that in dress he was now "well groomed," and that consequently they were obliged to revise their notions as to the careless negligee which gossip had reported.—[From unpublished Reminiscences kindly lent to the author by Mr. Mills]

LXXIII

THE FIRST MEETING WITH HOWELLS

Clemens' first period of editorial work was a brief one, though he made frequent contributions to the paper: sketches, squibs, travel-notes, and experiences, usually humorous in character. His wedding-day had been set for early in the year, and it was necessary to accumulate a bank account for that occasion. Before October he was out on the lecture circuit, billed now for the first time for New England, nervous and apprehensive in consequence, though with good hope. To Pamela he wrote (November 9th):

To-morrow night I appear for the first time before a Boston audience —4,000 critics—and on the success of this matter depends my future success in New England. But I am not distressed. Nasby is in the same boat. Tonight decides the fate of his brand-new lecture. He has just left my room—been reading his lecture to me—was greatly depressed. I have convinced him that he has little to fear.

Whatever alarm Mark Twain may have felt was not warranted. His success with the New England public was immediate and complete. He made his headquarters in Boston, at Redpath's office, where there was pretty sure to be a congenial company, of which he was presently the center.

It was during one of these Boston sojourns that he first met William Dean Howells, his future friend and literary counselor. Howells was assistant editor of the Atlantic at this time; James T. Fields, its editor. Clemens had been gratified by the Atlantic review, and had called to express his thanks for it. He sat talking to Fields, when Howells entered the editorial rooms, and on being presented to the author of the review, delivered his appreciation in the form of a story, sufficiently appropriate, but not qualified for the larger types.—[He said: "When I read that review of yours, I felt like the woman who was so glad her baby had come white."]

His manner, his humor, his quaint colloquial forms all delighted Howells —more, in fact, than the opulent sealskin overcoat which he affected at this period—a garment astonishing rather than esthetic, as Mark Twain's clothes in those days of his first regeneration were likely to be startling enough, we may believe; in the conservative atmosphere of the Atlantic rooms. And Howells—gentle,

Page 227

genial, sincere—filled with the early happiness of his calling, won the heart of Mark Twain and never lost it, and, what is still more notable, won his absolute and unvarying confidence in all literary affairs. It was always Mark Twain's habit to rely on somebody, and in matters pertaining to literature and to literary people in general he laid his burden on William Dean Howells from that day. Only a few weeks after that first visit we find him telegraphing to Howells, asking him to look after a Californian poet, then ill and friendless in Brooklyn. Clemens states that he does not know the poet, but will contribute fifty dollars if Howells will petition the steamboat company for a pass; and no doubt Howells complied, and spent a good deal more than fifty dollars' worth of time to get the poet relieved and started; it would be like him.

LXXIV

THE WEDDING-DAY

The wedding was planned, at first, either for Christmas or New-Year's Day; but as the lecture engagements continued into January it was decided to wait until these were filled. February 2d, a date near the anniversary of the engagement, was agreed upon, also a quiet wedding with no "tour." The young people would go immediately to Buffalo, and take up a modest residence, in a boardinghouse as comfortable, even as luxurious, as the husband's financial situation justified. At least that was Samuel Clemens's understanding of the matter. He felt that he was heavily in debt—that his first duty was to relieve himself of that obligation.

There were other plans in Elmira, but in the daily and happy letters he received there was no inkling of any new purpose.

He wrote to J. D. F. Slee, of Buffalo, who was associated in business with Mr. Langdon, and asked him to find a suitable boarding-place, one that would be sufficiently refined for the woman who was to be his wife, and sufficiently reasonable to insure prosperity. In due time Slee replied that, while boarding was a "miserable business anyhow," he had been particularly fortunate in securing a place on one of the most pleasant streets—"the family a small one and choice spirits, with no predilection for taking boarders, and consenting to the present arrangement only because of the anticipated pleasure of your company." The price, Slee added, would be reasonable. As a matter of fact a house on Delaware Avenue—still the fine residence street of Buffalo—had been bought and furnished throughout as a present to the bride and groom. It stands to-day practically unchanged—brick and mansard without, Eastlake within, a type then much in vogue—spacious and handsome for that period. It was completely appointed. Diagrams of the rooms had been sent to Elmira and Miss Langdon herself had selected the furnishings.

Everything was put in readiness, including linen, cutlery, and utensils. Even the servants had been engaged and the pantry and cellar had been stocked.

Page 228

It must have been hard for Olivia Langdon to keep this wonderful surprise out of those daily letters. A surprise like that is always watching a chance to slip out unawares, especially when one is eagerly impatient to reveal it.

However, the traveler remained completely in the dark. He may have wondered vaguely at the lack of enthusiasm in the boarding idea, and could he have been certain that the sales of the book would continue, or that his newspaper venture would yield an abundant harvest, he might have planned his domestic beginning on a more elaborate scale. If only the Tennessee land would yield the long-expected fortune now! But these were all incalculable things. All that he could be sure of was the coming of his great happiness, in whatever environment, and of the dragging weeks between.

At last the night of the final lecture came, and he was off for Elmira with the smallest possible delay. Once there, the intervening days did not matter. He could join in the busy preparations; he could write exuberantly to his friends. To Laura Hawkins, long since Laura Frazer he sent a playful line; to Jim Gillis, still digging and washing on the slopes of the old Tuolumne hills, he wrote a letter which eminently belongs here:

Elmira, N. Y., January 26, 1870.

Dear Jim,—I remember that old night just as well! And somewhere among my relics I have your remembrance stored away. It makes my heart ache yet to call to mind some of those days. Still it shouldn't, for right in the depths of their poverty and their pocket-hunting vagabondage lay the germ of my coming good fortune. You remember the one gleam of jollity that shot across our dismal sojourn in the rain and mud of Angel's Camp—I mean that day we sat around the tavern stove and heard that chap tell about the frog and how they filled him with shot. And you remember how we quoted from the yarn and laughed over it out there on the hillside while you and dear old Stoker panned and washed. I jotted the story down in my note-book that day, and would have been glad to get ten or fifteen dollars for it—I was just that blind. But then we were so hard up. I published that story, and it became widely known in America, India, China, England, and the reputation it made for me has paid me thousands and thousands of dollars since. Four or five months ago I bought into the Express (I have ordered it sent to you as long as you live, and if the bookkeeper sends you any bills you let me hear of it). I went heavily in debt—never could have dared to do that, Jim, if we hadn't heard the jumping Frog story that day. And wouldn't I love to take old Stoker by the hand, and wouldn't I love to see him in his great specialty, his wonderful rendition of Rinalds in the "Burning Shame!" Where is Dick and what is he doing? Give him my fervent love and warm old remembrances.

A week from to-day I shall be married-to

Page 229

a girl even better and lovelier than the peerless “Chapparral Quails.” You can’t come so far, Jim, but still I cordially invite you to come anyhow, and I invite Dick too. And if you two boys were to land here on that pleasant occasion we would make you right royally welcome. Truly your friend,
SAML. L. Clemens.

P.S.—California plums are good. Jim, particularly when they are stewed.

It had been only five years before—that day in Angel’s Camp—but how long ago and how far away it seemed to him now! So much had happened since then, so much of which that was the beginning—so little compared with the marvel of the years ahead, whose threshold he was now about to cross, and not alone.

A day or two before the wedding he was asked to lecture on the night of February 2d. He replied that he was sorry to disappoint the applicant, but that he could not lecture on the night of February 2d, for the reason that he was going to marry a young lady on that evening, and that he would rather marry that young lady than deliver all the lectures in the world.

And so came the wedding-day. It began pleasantly; the postman brought a royalty check that morning of \$4,000, the accumulation of three months’ sales, and the Rev. Joseph Twichell and Harmony, his wife, came from Hartford—Twichell to join with the Rev. Thomas K. Beecher in solemnizing the marriage. Pamela Moffett, a widow now, with her daughter Annie, grown to a young lady, had come all the way from St. Louis, and Mrs. Fairbanks from Cleveland.

Yet the guests were not numerous, not more than a hundred at most, so it was a quiet wedding there in the Langdon parlors, those dim, stately rooms that in the future would hold so much of his history—so much of the story of life and death that made its beginning there.

The wedding-service was about seven o’clock, for Mr. Beecher had a meeting at the church soon after that hour. Afterward followed the wedding-supper and dancing, and the bride’s father danced with the bride. To the interested crowd awaiting him at the church Mr. Beecher reported that the bride was very beautiful, and had on the longest white gloves he had ever seen; he declared they reached to her shoulders.—[Perhaps for a younger generation it should be said that Thomas K. Beecher was a brother of Henry Ward Beecher. He lived and died in Elmira, the almost worshiped pastor of the Park Congregational Church. He was a noble, unorthodox teacher. Samuel Clemens

at the time of his marriage already strongly admired him, and had espoused his cause in an article signed "S'cat!" in the Elmira Advertiser, when he (Beecher) had been assailed by the more orthodox Elmira clergy. For the "S'cat" article see Appendix I, at the end of last volume.]

Page 230

It was the next afternoon when they set out for Buffalo, accompanied by the bride's parents, the groom's relatives, the Beechers, and perhaps one or two others of that happy company. It was nine o'clock at night when they arrived, and found Mr. Slee waiting at the station with sleighs to convey the party to the "boarding-house" he had selected. They drove and drove, and the sleigh containing the bride and groom got behind and apparently was bound nowhere in particular, which disturbed the groom a good deal, for he thought it proper that they should arrive first, to receive their guests. He commented on Slee's poor judgment in selecting a house that was so hard to find, and when at length they turned into fashionable Delaware Avenue, and stopped before one of the most attractive places in the neighborhood, he was beset with fear concerning the richness of the locality.

They were on the steps when the doors opened, and a perfect fairyland of lights and decoration was revealed within. The friends who had gone ahead came out with greetings, to lead in the bride and groom. Servants hurried forward to take bags and wraps. They were ushered inside; they were led through beautiful rooms, all newly appointed and garnished. The bridegroom was dazed, unable to understand the meaning of things, the apparent ownership and completeness of possession.

At last the young wife put her hand upon his arm:

"Don't you understand, Youth," she said; that was always her name for him. "Don't you understand? It is ours, all ours—everything—a gift from father!"

But even then he could not grasp it; not at first, not until Mr. Langdon brought a little box and, opening it, handed them the deeds.

Nobody quite remembers what was the first remark that Samuel Clemens made then; but either then or a little later he said:

"Mr. Langdon, whenever you are in Buffalo, if it's twice a year, come right here. Bring your bag and stay overnight if you want to. It sha'n't cost you a cent!"

They went in to supper then, and by and by the guests were gone and the young wedded pair were alone.

Patrick McAleer, the young coachman, who would grow old in their employ, and Ellen, the cook, came in for their morning orders, and were full of Irish delight at the inexperience and novelty of it all. Then they were gone, and only the lovers in their new house and their new happiness remained.

And so it was they entered the enchanted land.

LXXV

AS TO DESTINY

If any reader has followed these chapters thus far, he may have wondered, even if vaguely, at the seeming fatality of events. Mark Twain had but to review his own life for justification of his doctrine of inevitability —an unbroken and immutable sequence of cause and effect from the beginning. Once he said:

“When the first living atom found itself afloat on the great Laurentian sea the first act of that first atom led to the second act of that first atom, and so on down through the succeeding ages of all life, until, if the steps could be traced, it would be shown that the first act of that first atom has led inevitably to the act of my standing here in my dressing-gown at this instant talking to you.”

Page 231

It seemed the clearest presentment ever offered in the matter of predestined circumstance—predestined from the instant when that primal atom felt the vital thrill. Mark Twain's early life, however imperfectly recorded, exemplifies this postulate. If through the years still ahead of us the course of destiny seems less clearly defined, it is only because thronging events make the threads less easy to trace. The web becomes richer, the pattern more intricate and confusing, but the line of fate neither breaks nor falters, to the end.

LXXVI

On the buffalo "Express"

With the beginning of life in Buffalo, Mark Twain had become already a world character—a man of large consequence and events. He had no proper realization of this, no real sense of the size of his conquest; he still regarded himself merely as a lecturer and journalist, temporarily popular, but with no warrant to a permanent seat in the world's literary congress. He thought his success something of an accident. The fact that he was prepared to settle down as an editorial contributor to a newspaper in what was then only a big village is the best evidence of a modest estimate of his talents.

He "worked like a horse," is the verdict of those who were closely associated with him on the Express. His hours were not regular, but they were long. Often he was at his desk at eight in the morning, and remained there until ten or eleven at night.

His working costume was suited to comfort rather than show. With coat, vest, collar, and tie usually removed (sometimes even his shoes), he lounged in his chair, in any attitude that afforded the larger ease, pulling over the exchanges; scribbling paragraphs, editorials, humorous skits, and what not, as the notion came upon him. J. L. Lamed, his co-worker (he sat on the opposite side of the same table), remembers that Mark Twain enjoyed his work as he went along—the humor of it—and that he frequently laughed as some whimsicality or new absurdity came into his mind.

"I doubt," writes Lamed, "if he ever enjoyed anything more than the jackknife engraving that he did on a piece of board of a military map of the siege of Paris, which was printed in the Express from his original plate, with accompanying explanations and comments. His half-day of whittling and laughter that went with it are something that I find pleasant to remember. Indeed, my whole experience of association with him is a happy memory, which I am fortunate in having.... What one saw of him was always the actual Mark Twain, acting out of his own nature simply, frankly, without pretense, and almost without reserve. It was that simplicity and naturalness in the man which carried his greatest charm."

Lamed, like many others, likens Mark Twain to Lincoln in various of his characteristics. The two worked harmoniously together: Lamed attending to the political direction of the journal, Clemens to the literary, and what might be termed the sentimental side. There was no friction in the division of labor, never anything but good feeling between them. Clemens had a poor opinion of his own comprehension of politics, and perhaps as little regard for Lamed's conception of humor. Once when the latter attempted something in the way of pleasantry his associate said:

Page 232

“Better leave the humor on this paper to me, Lamed”; and once when Lamed was away attending the Republican State Convention at Saratoga, and some editorial comment seemed necessary, Clemens thought it best to sign the utterance, and to make humor of his shortcomings.

I do not know much about politics, and am not sitting up nights to learn

I am satisfied that these nominations are all right and sound, and that they are the only ones that can bring peace to our distracted country (the only political phrase I am perfectly familiar with and competent to hurl at the public with fearless confidence—the other editor is full of them), but being merely satisfied is not enough. I always like to know before I shout. But I go for Mr. Curtis with all my strength! Being certain of him, I hereby shout all I know how. But the others may be a split ticket, or a scratched ticket, or whatever you call it. I will let it alone for the present. It will keep. The other young man will be back to-morrow, and he will shout for it, split or no split, rest assured of that. He will prance into this political ring with his tomahawk and his war-whoop, and then you will hear a crash and see the scalps fly. He has none of my diffidence. He knows all about these nominees, and if he don't he will let on to in such a natural way as to deceive the most critical. He knows everything—he knows more than Webster's Unabridged and the American Encyclopedia—but whether he knows anything about a subject or not he is perfectly willing to discuss it. When he gets back he will tell you all about these candidates as serenely as if he had been acquainted with them a hundred years, though, speaking confidentially, I doubt if he ever heard of any of them till to-day. I am right well satisfied it is a good, sound, sensible ticket, and a ticket to win; but wait till he comes.

In the mean time I go for George William Curtis and take the chances.

Mark twain.

He had become what Mr. Howells calls entirely “desouthernized” by this time. From having been of slaveholding stock, and a Confederate soldier, he had become a most positive Republican, a rampant abolitionist—had there been anything left to abolish. His sympathy had been always with the oppressed, and he had now become their defender. His work on the paper revealed this more and more. He wrote fewer sketches and more editorials, and the editorials were likely to be either savage assaults upon some human abuse, or fierce espousals of the weak. They were fearless, scathing, terrific. Of some farmers of Cohocton, who had taken the law into their own hands to punish a couple whom they believed to be a detriment to the community, he wrote:

“The men who did that deed are capable of doing any low, sneaking, cowardly villainy that could be invented in perdition. They are the very bastards of the devil.”

Page 233

He appended a full list of their names, and added:

"If the farmers of Cohocton are of this complexion, what on earth must a Cohocton rough be like?"

But all this happened a long time ago, and we need not detail those various old interests and labors here. It is enough to say that Mark Twain on the Express was what he had been from the beginning, and would be to the end—the zealous champion of justice and liberty; violent and sometimes wrong in his viewpoint, but never less than fearless and sincere. Invariably he was for the oppressed. He had a natural instinct for the right, but, right or wrong, he was for the under dog.

Among the best of his editorial contributions is a tribute to Anson Burlingame, who died February 23, 1870, at St. Petersburg, on his trip around the world as special ambassador for the Chinese Empire. In this editorial Clemens endeavored to pay something of his debt to the noble statesman. He reviewed Burlingame's astonishing career—the career which had closed at forty-seven, and read like a fairy-tale—and he dwelt lovingly on his hero's nobility of character. At the close he said:

"He was a good man, and a very, very great man. America, lost a son, and all the world a servant, when he died."

Among those early contributions to the Express is a series called "Around the World," an attempt at collaboration with Prof. D. R. Ford, who did the actual traveling, while Mark Twain, writing in the first person, gave the letters his literary stamp. At least some of the contributions were written in this way, such as "Adventures in Hayti," "The Pacific," and "Japan." These letters exist to-day only in the old files of the Express, and indeed this is the case with most of Clemens's work for that paper. It was mainly ephemeral or timely work, and its larger value has disappeared. Here and there is a sentence worth remembering. Of two practical jokers who sent in a marriage notice of persons not even contemplating matrimony, he said: "This deceit has been practised maliciously by a couple of men whose small souls will escape through their pores some day if they do not varnish their hides."

Some of the sketches have been preserved. "Journalism in Tennessee," one of the best of his wilder burlesques, is as enjoyable to-day as when written. "A Curious Dream" made a lasting impression on his Buffalo readers, and you are pretty certain to hear of it when you mention Mark Twain in that city to-day. It vividly called attention to the neglect of the old North Street graveyard. The gruesome vision of the ancestors deserting with their coffins on their backs was even more humiliating than amusing, and inspired a movement for reform. It has been effective elsewhere since then, and may still be read with profit—or satisfaction—for in a note at the end the reader is assured that if the cemeteries of his town are kept in good order the dream is not leveled at his town at all, but "particularly and venomously at the next town."

Page 234

LXXVII

The "Galaxy"

Mark Twain's work on the Express represented only a portion of his literary activities during his Buffalo residence. The Galaxy, an ambitious New York magazine of that day —[published by Sheldon & Co. at 498 and 500 Broadway]—, proposed to him that he conduct for them a humorous department. They would pay \$2,400 a year for the work, and allow him a free hand. There was some discussion as to book rights, but the arrangement was concluded, and his first instalment, under the general title of "Memoranda," appeared in the May number, 1870. In his Introductory he outlined what the reader might expect, such as "exhaustive statistical tables," "Patent Office reports," and "complete instructions about farming, even from the grafting of the seed to the harrowing of the matured crops." He declared that he would throw a pathos into the subject of agriculture that would surprise and delight the world. He added that the "Memoranda" was not necessarily a humorous department.

I would not conduct an exclusively and professedly humorous department for any one. I would always prefer to have the privilege of printing a serious and sensible remark, in case one occurred to me, without the reader's feeling obliged to consider himself outraged.... Puns cannot be allowed a place in this department.... No circumstance, however dismal, will ever be considered a sufficient excuse for the admission of that last and saddest evidence of intellectual poverty, the pun.

The Galaxy was really a fine magazine, with the best contributors obtainable; among them Justin McCarthy, S. M. B. Piatt, Richard Grant White, and many others well known in that day, with names that still flicker here and there in its literary twilight. The new department appealed to Clemens, and very soon he was writing most of his sketches for it. They were better literature, as a rule, than those published in his own paper.

The first number of the "Memoranda" was fairly representative of those that followed it. "The Facts in the Case of the Great Beef Contract," a manuscript which he had undertaken three years before and mislaid, was its initial contribution. Besides the "Beef Contract," there was a tribute to George Wakeman, a well-known journalist of those days; a stricture on the Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage, who had delivered from the pulpit an argument against workingmen occupying pews in fashionable churches; a presentment of the Chinese situation in San Francisco, depicting the cruel treatment of the Celestial immigrant; a burlesque of the Sunday-school "good little boy" story,—["The Story of the Good Little Boy Who Did Not Prosper" and the "Beef Contract" are included in Sketches New and Old; also the Chinese sketch, under the title, "Disgraceful Persecution of a Boy."]—and several shorter skits—and anecdotes, ten pages in all; a rather generous contract.

Page 235

Mark Twain's comment on Talmage was prompted by an article in which Talmage had assumed the premise that if workingmen attended the churches it would drive the better class of worshipers away. Among other things he said:

I have a good Christian friend who, if he sat in the front pew in church, and a workingman should enter the door at the other end, would smell him instantly. My friend is not to blame for the sensitiveness of his nose, any more than you would flog a pointer for being keener on the scent than a stupid watch-dog. The fact is, if you had all the churches free, by reason of the mixing of the common people with the uncommon, you would keep one-half of Christendom sick at their stomach. If you are going to kill the church thus with bad smells I will have nothing to do with this work of evangelization.

Commenting on this Mark Twain said—well, he said a good deal more than we have room for here, but a portion of his closing paragraphs is worth preserving. He compares the Reverend Mr. Talmage with the early disciples of Christ—Paul and Peter and the others; or, rather, he contrasts him with them.

They healed the very beggars, and held intercourse with people of a villainous odor every day. If the subject of these remarks had been chosen among the original Twelve Apostles he would not have associated with the rest, because he could not have stood the fishy smell of some of his comrades who came from around the Sea of Galilee. He would have resigned his commission with some such remark as he makes in the extract quoted above: "Master, if thou art going to kill the church thus with bad smells I will have nothing to do with this work of evangelization." He is a disciple, and makes that remark to the Master; the only difference is that he makes it in the nineteenth instead of the first century.

Talmage was immensely popular at this time, and Mark Twain's open attack on him must have shocked a good many Galaxy readers, as perhaps his article on the Chinese cruelties offended the citizens of San Francisco. It did not matter. He was not likely to worry over the friends he would lose because of any stand taken for human justice. Lamed said of him: "He was very far from being one who tried in any way to make himself popular." Certainly he never made any such attempt at the expense of his convictions.

The first Galaxy instalment was a sort of platform of principles for the campaign that was to follow. Not that each month's contribution contained personal criticism, or a defense of the Chinese (of whom he was always the champion as long as he lived), but a good many of them did. In the October number he began a series of letters under the general title of "Goldsmith's Friend Abroad Again," supposed to have been written by a Chinese immigrant in San Francisco, detailing his experience there. In a note the author says: "No experience is set down in the following letters which had to

Page 236

be invented. Fancy is not needed to give variety to the history of the Chinaman's sojourn in America. Plain fact is amply sufficient." The letters show how the supposed Chinese writer of them had set out for America, believing it to be a land whose government was based on the principle that all men are created equal, and treated accordingly; how, upon arriving in San Francisco, he was kicked and bruised and beaten, and set upon by dogs, flung into jail, tried and condemned without witnesses, his own race not being allowed to testify against Americans—Irish-Americans—in the San Francisco court. They are scathing, powerful letters, and one cannot read them, even in this day of improved conditions, without feeling the hot waves of resentment and indignation which Mark Twain must have felt when he penned them.

Reverend Mr. Talmage was not the only divine to receive attention in the "Memoranda." The Reverend Mr. Sabine, of New York, who had declined to hold a church burial service for the old actor, George Holland, came in for the most caustic as well as the most artistic stricture of the entire series. It deserves preservation to-day, not only for its literary value, but because no finer defense of the drama, no more searching sermon on self-righteousness, has ever been put into concrete form. —["The Indignity Put Upon the Remains of Gorge Holland by the Rev. Mr. Sabine"; *Galaxy* for February, 1871. The reader will find it complete under Appendix J, at the end of last volume.]

The "Little Church Around the Corner" on Twenty-ninth Street received that happy title from this incident.

"There is a little church around the corner that will, perhaps, permit the service," Mr. Sabine had said to Holland's friends.

The little church did permit the service, and there was conferred upon it the new name, which it still bears. It has sheltered a long line of actor folk and their friends since then, earning thereby reverence, gratitude, and immortal memory.—[Church of the Transfiguration. Memorial services were held there for Joseph Jefferson; and a memorial window, by John La Farge, has been placed there in memory of Edwin Booth.]

Of the *Galaxy* contributions a number are preserved in *Sketches New and Old*. "How I Edited an Agricultural Paper" is one of the best of these—an excellent example of Mark Twain's more extravagant style of humor. It is perennially delightful; in France it has been dramatized, and is still played.

A successful *Galaxy* feature, also preserved in the *Sketches*, was the "Burlesque Map of Paris," reprinted from the *Express*. The Franco-Prussian War was in progress, and this travesty was particularly timely. It creates only a smile of amusement to-day, but it was all fresh and delightful then. Schuyler Colfax, by this time Vice-President, wrote to

him: "I have had the heartiest possible laugh over it, and so have all my family. You are a wicked, conscienceless wag, who ought to be punished severely."

Page 237

The “Official Commendations,” which accompany the map, are its chief charm. They are from Grant, Bismarck, Brigham Young, and others, the best one coming from one J. Smith, who says:

My wife was for years afflicted with freckles, and though everything was done for her relief that could be done, all was in vain. But, sir, since her first glance at your map they have entirely left her. She has nothing but convulsions now.

It is said that the “Map of Paris” found its way to Berlin, where the American students in the beer-halls used to pretend to quarrel over it until they attracted the attention of the German soldiers that might be present. Then they would wander away and leave it on the table and watch results. The soldiers would pounce upon it and lose their tempers over it; then finally abuse it and revile its author, to the satisfaction of everybody.

The larger number of “Memoranda” sketches have properly found oblivion to-day. They were all, or nearly all, collected by a Canadian pirate, C. A. Backas, in a volume bearing the title of Memoranda,—[Also by a harpy named John Camden Hotten (of London), of whom we shall hear again. Hotten had already pirated *The Innocents*, and had it on the market before Routledge could bring out the authorized edition. Routledge later published the “Memoranda” under the title of *Sketches*, including the contents of the *Jumping Frog* book.]—a book long ago suppressed. Only about twenty of the *Galaxy* contributions found place in *Sketches New and Old*, five years later, and some of these might have been spared as literature. “To Raise Poultry,” “John Chinaman in New York,” and “History Repeats Itself” are valuable only as examples of his work at that period. The reader may consult them for himself.

LXXVIII

THE PRIMROSE PATH

But we are losing sight of more important things. From the very beginning Mark Twain’s home meant always more to him than his work. The life at 472 Delaware Avenue had begun with as fair a promise as any matrimonial journey ever undertaken: There seemed nothing lacking: a beautiful home, sufficient income, bright prospects—these things, with health and love; constitute married happiness. Mrs. Clemens wrote to her sister, Mrs. Crane, at the end of February: “Sue, we are two as happy people as you ever saw. Our days seem to be made up of only bright sunlight, with no shadow in them.” In the same letter the husband added: “Livy pines and pines every day for you, and I pine and pine every day for you, and when we both of us are pining at once you would think it was a whole pine forest let loose.”

To Redpath, who was urging lecture engagements for the coming season, he wrote:

Dear red,—I am not going to lecture any more forever. I have got things ciphered down to a fraction now. I know just about what it will cost to live, and I can make the money without lecturing. Therefore, old man, count me out.

And still later, in May:

Page 238

I guess I am out of the field permanently. Have got a lovely wife, a lovely house, bewitchingly furnished, a lovely carriage, and a coachman whose style and dignity are simply awe-in-spiring, nothing less; and I am making more money than necessary, by considerable, and therefore why crucify myself nightly on the platform? The subscriber will have to be excused for the present season at least.

So they were very happy during those early months, acquiring pleasantly the education which any matrimonial experience is sure to furnish, accustoming themselves to the uses of housekeeping, to life in partnership, with all the discoveries and mental and spiritual adaptations that belong to the close association of marriage. They were far, very far, apart on many subjects. He was unpolished, untrained, impulsive, sometimes violent. Twichell remembers that in the earlier days of their acquaintance he wore a slouch hat pulled down in front, and smoked a cigar that sometimes tilted up and touched the brim of it. The atmosphere and customs of frontier life, the Westernisms of that day, still clung to him. Mrs. Clemens, on the other hand, was conservative, dainty, cultured, spiritual. He adored her as little less than a saint, and she became, indeed, his saving grace. She had all the personal refinement which he lacked, and she undertook the work of polishing and purifying her life companion. She had no wish to destroy his personality, to make him over, but only to preserve his best, and she set about it in the right way—gently, and with a tender gratitude in each achievement.

She did not entirely approve of certain lines of his reading; or, rather, she did not understand them in those days. That he should be fond of history and the sciences was natural enough, but when the *Life of P. T. Barnum, Written by Himself*, appeared, and he sat up nights to absorb it, and woke early and lighted the lamp to follow the career of the great showman, she was at a loss to comprehend this particular literary passion, and indeed was rather jealous of it. She did not realize then his vast interest in the study of human nature, or that such a book contained what Mr. Howells calls “the root of the human matter,” the inner revelation of the human being at first hand.

Concerning his religious observances her task in the beginning was easy enough. Clemens had not at that time formulated any particular doctrines of his own. His natural kindness of heart, and especially his love for his wife, inclined him toward the teachings and customs of her Christian faith—unorthodox but sincere, as Christianity in the Langdon family was likely to be. It took very little persuasion on his wife’s part to establish family prayers in their home, grace before meals, and the morning reading of a Bible chapter. Joe Goodman, who made a trip East, and visited them during the early days of their married life, was dumfounded to see Mark Twain ask a blessing and join in family worship. Just how long these forms continued cannot be known to-day; the time of their abandonment has perished from the recollection of any one now living.

Page 239

It would seem to have been the Bible-reading that wrought the change. The prayer and the blessing were to him sincere and gracious; but as the readings continued he realized that he had never before considered the Bible from a doctrinal point of view, as a guide to spiritual salvation. To his logical reasoning mind, a large portion of it seemed absurd: a mass of fables and traditions, mere mythology. From such material humanity had built its mightiest edifice of hope, the doctrines of its faith. After a little while he could stand it no longer.

“Livy,” he said one day, “you may keep this up if you want to, but I must ask you to excuse me from it. It is making me a hypocrite. I don’t believe in this Bible. It contradicts my reason. I can’t sit here and listen to it, letting you believe that I regard it, as you do, in the light of gospel, the word of God.”

He was moved to write an article on the human idea of God, ancient and modern. It contained these paragraphs:

The difference in importance, between the God of the Bible and the God of the present day, cannot be described, it can only be vaguely and inadequately figured to the mind . . . If you make figures to represent the earth and moon, and allow a space of one inch between them, to represent the four hundred thousand miles of distance which lies between the two bodies, the map will have to be eleven miles long in order to bring in the nearest fixed star. —[His figures were far too small. A map drawn on the scale of 400,000 miles to the inch would need to be 1,100 miles long to take in both the earth and the nearest fixed star. On such a map the earth would be one-fiftieth of an inch in diameter—the size of a small grain of sand.]—So one cannot put the modern heavens on a map, nor the modern God; but the Bible God and the Bible heavens can be set down on a slate and yet not be discommoded . . . The difference between that universe and the modern one revealed by science is as the difference between a dust-flecked ray in a barn and the sublime arch of the Milky Way in the skies. Its God was strictly proportioned to its dimensions. His sole solicitude was about a handful of truculent nomads. He worried and fretted over them in a peculiarly and distractingly human way. One day he coaxed and petted them beyond their due, the next he harried and lashed them beyond their deserts. He sulked, he cursed, he raged, he grieved, according to his mood and the circumstances, but all to no purpose; his efforts were all vain, he could not govern them. When the fury was on him he was blind to all reason—he not only slaughtered the offender, but even his harmless little children and dumb cattle....To trust the God of the Bible is to trust an irascible, vindictive, fierce and ever fickle and changeful master; to trust the true God is to trust a Being who has uttered no promises, but whose beneficent, exact, and changeless ordering

Page 240

of the machinery of his colossal universe is proof that he is at least steadfast to his purposes; whose unwritten laws, so far as they affect man, being equal and impartial, show that he is just and fair; these things, taken together, suggest that if he shall ordain us to live hereafter, he will still be steadfast, just, and fair toward us. We shall not need to require anything more.

It seems mild enough, obvious, even orthodox, now—so far have we traveled in forty years. But such a declaration then would have shocked a great number of sincerely devout persons. His wife prevailed upon him not to print it. She respected his honesty—even his reasoning, but his doubts were a long grief to her, nevertheless. In time she saw more clearly with his vision, but this was long after, when she had lived more with the world, had become more familiar with its larger needs, and the proportions of created things.

They did not mingle much or long with the social life of Buffalo. They received and returned calls, attended an occasional reception; but neither of them found such things especially attractive in those days, so they remained more and more in their own environment. There is an anecdote which seems to belong here.

One Sunday morning Clemens noticed smoke pouring from the upper window of the house across the street. The owner and his wife, comparatively newcomers, were seated upon the veranda, evidently not aware of impending danger. The Clemens household thus far had delayed calling on them, but Clemens himself now stepped briskly across the street. Bowing with leisurely politeness, he said:

“My name is Clemens; we ought to have called on you before, and I beg your pardon for intruding now in this informal way, but your house is on fire.”

Almost the only intimate friends they had in Buffalo were in the family of David Gray, the poet-editor of the Courier. Gray was a gentle, lovable man. “The gentlest spirit and the loveliest that ever went clothed in clay, since Sir Galahad laid him to rest,” Mark Twain once said of him. Both Gray and Clemens were friends of John Hay, and their families soon became intimate. Perhaps, in time, the Clemens household would have found other as good friends in the Buffalo circles; but heavy clouds that had lain unseen just beyond the horizon during those earlier months of marriage rose suddenly into view, and the social life, whatever it might have become, was no longer a consideration.

LXXIX

THE OLD HUMAN STORY



Jervis Langdon was never able to accept his son-in-law's invitation to the new home. His health began to fail that spring, and at the end of March, with his physician and Mrs. Langdon, he made a trip to the South. In a letter written at Richmond he said, "I have thrown off all care," and named a list of the four great interests in which he was involved. Under "number 5," he included

Page 241

“everything,” adding, “so you see how good I am to follow the counsel of my children.” He closed: “Samuel, I love your wife and she loves me. I think it is only fair that you should know it, but you need not flare up. I loved her before you did, and she loved me before she did you, and has not ceased since. I see no way but for you to make the most of it.” He was already a very ill man, and this cheerful letter was among the last he ever wrote.

He was absent six weeks and seemed to improve, but suffered an attack early in May; in June his condition became critical. Clemens and his wife were summoned to Elmira, and joined in the nursing, day and night. Clemens surprised every one by his ability as a nurse. His delicacy and thoughtfulness were unailing; his original ways of doing things always amused and interested the patient. In later years Mark Twain once said:

“How much of the nursing did I do? My main watch was from midnight to four in the morning, nearly four hours. My other watch was a midday watch, and I think it was nearly three hours. The two sisters divided the remaining seventeen hours of the twenty-four hours between them, and each of them tried generously and persistently to swindle the other out of a part of her watch. I went to bed early every night, and tried to get sleep enough by midnight to fit me for my work, but it was always a failure. I went on watch sleepy and remained miserable, sleepy, and wretched, straight along through the four hours. I can still see myself sitting by that bed in the melancholy stillness of the sweltering night, mechanically waving a palm-leaf fan over the drawn, white face of the patient. I can still recall my noddings, my fleeting unconsciousness, when the fan would come to a standstill in my hand, and I woke up with a start and a hideous shock. During all that dreary time I began to watch for the dawn long before it came. When the first faint gray showed through the window-blinds I felt as no doubt a castaway feels when the dim threads of the looked-for ship appear against the sky. I was well and strong, but I was a man, afflicted with a man’s infirmity—lack of endurance.”

He always dealt with himself in this unsparing way; but those who were about him then have left a different story.

It was all without avail. Mr. Langdon rallied, and early in July there was hope for his recovery. He failed again, and on the afternoon of the 6th of August he died. To Mrs. Clemens, delicate and greatly worn with the anxiety and strain of watching, the blow was a crushing one. It was the beginning of a series of disasters which would mark the entire remaining period of their Buffalo residence.

There had been a partial plan for spending the summer in England, and a more definite one for joining the Twichells in the Adirondacks. Both of these projects were now abandoned. Mrs. Clemens concluded that she would be better at home than anywhere else, and invited an old school friend, a Miss Emma Nye, to visit her.

Page 242

But the shadow of death had not been lifted from the Clemens household. Miss Nye presently fell ill with typhoid fever. There followed another long period of anxiety and nursing, ending with the death of the visitor in the new home, September 29th. The young wife was now in very delicate health; genuinely ill, in fact. The happy home had become a place of sorrow-of troubled nights and days. Another friend came to cheer them, and on this friend's departure Mrs. Clemens drove to the railway station. It was a hurried trip over rough streets to catch the train. She was prostrated on her return, and a little later, November 7, 1870, her first child, Langdon, was prematurely born. A dangerous illness followed, and complete recovery was long delayed. But on the 12th the crisis seemed passed, and the new father wrote a playful letter to the Twichells, as coming from the late arrival:

Dear uncle and aunt,—I came into the world on the 7th inst., and consequently am about five days old now. I have had wretched health ever since I made my appearance . . . I am not corpulent, nor am I robust in any way. At birth I only weighed four and one-half pounds with my clothes on—and the clothes were the chief feature of the weight, too, I am obliged to confess, but I am doing finely, all things considered . . . My little mother is very bright and cheery, and I guess she is pretty happy, but I don't know what about. She laughs a great deal, notwithstanding she is sick abed.

P. S.—Father says I had better write because you will be more interested in me, just now, than in the rest of the family.

A week later Clemens, as himself, wrote:

Livy is up and the prince keeps her busy and anxious these latter days and nights, but I am a bachelor up-stairs and don't have to jump up and get the soothing sirup, though I would as soon do it as not, I assure you. (Livy will be certain to read this letter.) Tell Harmony that I do hold the baby, and do it pretty handily too, though with occasional apprehensions that his loose head will fall off. I don't have to quiet him; he hardly ever utters a cry. He is always thinking about something. He is a patient, good little baby.

Further along he refers to one of his reforms:

Smoke? I always smoke from three till five on Sunday afternoons, and in New York, the other day, I smoked a week, day and night. But when Livy is well I smoke only those two hours on Sunday. I'm boss of the habit now, and shall never let it boss me any more. Originally I quit solely on Livy's account (not that I believed there was the faintest reason in the matter, but just as I would deprive myself of sugar in my coffee if she wished it, or quit wearing socks if she thought them immoral), and I stick to it yet on Livy's account, and shall always continue to do so without a pang. But somehow it seems

Page 243

a pity that you quit, for Mrs. T. didn't mind it, if I remember rightly. Ah, it is turning one's back upon a kindly Providence to spurn away from us the good creature he sent to make the breath of life a luxury as well as a necessity, enjoyable as well as useful. To go quit smoking, when there ain't any sufficient excuse for it!—why, my old boy, when they used to tell me I would shorten my life ten years by smoking, they little knew the devotee they were wasting their puerile words upon; they little knew how trivial and valueless I would regard a decade that had no smoking in it! But I won't persuade you, Twichell—I won't until I see you again—but then we'll smoke for a week together, and then shut off again.

LXXX

LITERARY PROJECTS

The success of the Innocents naturally made a thrifty publisher like Bliss anxious for a second experiment. He had begun early in the year to talk about another book, but nothing had come of it beyond a project or two, more or less hazy and unpursued. Clemens at one time developed a plan for a Noah's Ark book, which was to detail the cruise of the Ark in diaries kept by various members of it—Shem, Ham, and the others. He really wrote some of it at the time, and it was an idea he never entirely lost track of. All along among his manuscripts appear fragments from those ancient voyagers. One of the earlier entries will show the style and purpose of the undertaking. It is from Shem's record:

Friday: Papa's birthday. He is 600 years old. We celebrated it in a big, black tent. Principal men of the tribe present. Afterward they were shown over the ark, which was looking desolate and empty and dreary on account of a misunderstanding with the workmen about wages. Methuselah was as free with his criticisms as usual, and as voluble and familiar, which I and my brothers do not like; for we are past our one hundredth year and married. He still calls me Shemmy, just as he did when I was a child of sixty. I am still but a youth, it is true, but youth has its feelings, and I do not like this

Saturday: Keeping the Sabbath.

Sunday: Papa has yielded the advance and everybody is hard at work. The shipyard is so crowded that the men hinder each other; everybody hurrying or being hurried; the rush and confusion and shouting and wrangling are astonishing to our family, who have always been used to a quiet, country life.

It was from this germ that in a later day grew the diaries of Adam and Eve, though nothing very satisfactory ever came of this preliminary attempt. The author had faith in it, however. To Bliss he wrote:

I mean to take plenty of time and pains with the Noah's Ark book; maybe it will be several years before it is all written, but it will be a perfect lightning striker when it is done.

Page 244

You can have the first say (that is plain enough) on that or any other book I may prepare for the press, as long as you deal in a fair, open, and honorable way with me. I do not think you will ever find me doing otherwise with you. I can get a book ready for you any time you want it; but you can't want one before this time next year, so I have plenty of time.

Bliss was only temporarily appeased. He realized that to get a book ready by the time he wanted it—a book of sufficient size and importance to maintain the pace set by the *Innocents* meant rather more immediate action than his author seemed to contemplate. Furthermore, he knew that other publishers were besieging the author of the *Innocents*; a disquieting thought. In early July, when Mr. Langdon's condition had temporarily improved, Bliss had come to Elmira and proposed a book which should relate the author's travels and experiences in the Far West. It was an inviting subject, and Clemens, by this time more attracted by the idea of authorship and its rewards, readily enough agreed to undertake the volume. He had been offered half profits, and suggested that the new contract be arranged upon these terms. Bliss, figuring on a sale of 100,000 copies, proposed seven and one-half per cent. royalty as an equivalent, and the contract was so arranged. In after-years, when the cost of manufacture and paper had become greatly reduced, Clemens, with but a confused notion of business details, believed he had been misled by Bliss in this contract, and was bitter and resentful accordingly. The figures remain, however, to show that Bliss dealt fairly. Seven and one-half per cent. of a subscription book did represent half profits up to 100,000 copies when the contract was drawn; but it required ten years to sell that quantity, and in that time conditions had changed. Bliss could hardly foresee that these things would be so, and as he was dead when the book touched the 100,000 mark he could not explain or readjust matters, whatever might have been his inclination.

Clemens was pleased enough with the contract when it was made. To Orion he wrote July 15 (1870):

Per contract I must have another six-hundred-page book ready for my publisher January 1st, and I only began it to-day. The subject of it is a secret, because I may possibly change it. But as it stands I propose to do up Nevada and California, beginning with the trip across the country in the stage. Have you a memorandum of the route we took, or the names of any of the stations we stopped at? Do you remember any of the scenes, names, incidents, or adventures of the coach trip?—for I remember next to nothing about the matter. Jot down a foolscap page of items for me. I wish I could have two days' talk with you.

I suppose I am to get the biggest copyright this time ever paid on a subscription book in this country.

The work so promptly begun made little progress. Hard days of illness and sorrow followed, and it was not until September that it was really under way. His natural enthusiasm over any new undertaking possessed him. On the 4th he wrote Bliss:

Page 245

During the past week I have written the first four chapters of the book, and I tell you 'The Innocents Abroad' will have to get up early to beat it. It will be a book that will jump straight into continental celebrity the first month it is issued.

He prophesied a sale of 90,000 copies during the first twelve months and declared, "I see the capabilities of the subject."

But further disasters, even then impending, made continued effort impossible; the prospect of the new book for a time became gloomy, the idea of it less inspiring. Other plans presented themselves, and at one time he thought of letting the Galaxy publishers get out a volume of his sketches. In October he wrote Bliss that he was "driveling along tolerably fair on the book, getting off from twelve to twenty pages of manuscript a day." Bliss naturally discouraged the Galaxy idea, and realizing that the new book might be long delayed, agreed to get out a volume of miscellany sufficiently large and important for subscription sales. He was doubtful of the wisdom of this plan, and when Clemens suddenly proposed a brand-new scheme his publisher very readily agreed to hold back the publication of Sketches indefinitely.

The new book was to be adventures in the diamond mines of South Africa, then newly opened and of wide public interest. Clemens did not propose to visit the mines himself, but to let another man do the traveling, make the notes, and write or tell him the story, after which Clemens would enlarge and elaborate it in his own fashion. His adaptation of the letters of Professor Ford, a year earlier, had convinced him that his plan would work out successfully on a larger scale; he fixed upon his old friend, J. H. Riley, of Washington—"Riley-Newspaper Correspondent." See Sketches.]—(earlier of San Francisco), as the proper person to do the traveling. At the end of November he wrote Bliss:

I have put my greedy hands upon the best man in America for my purpose, and shall start him to the diamond field in South Africa within a fortnight at my expense . . . that the book will have a perfectly beautiful sale.

He suggested that Bliss advance Riley's expense money, the amount to be deducted from the first royalty returns; also he proposed an increased royalty, probably in view of the startling splendor of the new idea. Bliss was duly impressed, and the agreement was finally made on a basis of eight and one-half per cent., with an advance of royalty sufficient to see Riley to South Africa and return.

Clemens had not yet heard from Riley definitely when he wrote his glowing letter to Bliss. He took it for granted that Riley, always an adventurous sort, would go. When Riley wrote him that he felt morally bound to the Alta, of which he was then Washington correspondent, also in certain other directions till the end of the session, Clemens wrote him at great length, detailing his scheme in full and urging him to write instantly to the

Alta and others, asking a release on the ground of being offered a rare opportunity to improve his fortunes.

Page 246

You know right well that I would not have you depart a hair from any obligation for any money. The, boundless confidence that I have in you is born of a conviction of your integrity in small as well as in great things. I know plenty of men whose integrity I would trust to here, but not off yonder in Africa.

His proposal, in brief, to Riley was that the latter should make the trip to Africa without expense to himself, collect memoranda, and such diamond mines as might be found lying about handy. Upon his return he was to take up temporary residence in the Clemens household until the book was finished, after which large benefits were to accrue to everybody concerned. In the end Riley obtained a release from his obligations and was off for the diamond mines and fortune.

Poor fellow! He was faithful in his mission, and it is said that he really located a mining claim that would have made him and his independent for all time to come; but returning home with his precious memoranda and the news of good fortune, he accidentally wounded himself with a fork while eating; blood-poisoning set in (they called it cancer then), and he was only able to get home to die. His memoranda were never used, his mining claim was never identified. Certainly, death was closely associated with Mark Twain's fortunes during those earlier days of his married life.

On the whole the Buffalo residence was mainly a gloomy one; its ventures were attended by ill-fortune. For some reason Mark Twain's connection with the Express, while it had given the paper a wide reputation, had not largely increased its subscription. Perhaps his work on it was too varied and erratic. Nasby, who had popularized the Toledo Blade, kept steadily to one line. His farmer public knew always just what to expect when their weekly edition arrived.

Clemens and his wife dreamed of a new habitation, and new faces and surroundings. They agreed to offer their home and his interests in the Express for sale. They began to talk of Hartford, where Twichell lived, and where Orion Clemens and his wife had recently located.

Mark Twain's new fortunes had wrought changes in the affairs of his relatives. Already, before his marriage, he had prospected towns here and there with a view to finding an Eastern residence for his mother and sister, and he had kept Orion's welfare always in mind. When Pamela and her daughter came to his wedding he told them of a little city by the name of Fredonia (New York), not far from Buffalo, where he thought they might find a pleasant home.

"I went in there by night and out by night," he said, "so I saw none of it, but I had an intelligent, attractive audience. Prospect Fredonia and let me know what it is like. Try to select a place where a good many funerals pass. Ma likes funerals. If you can pick a good funeral corner she will be happy."

Page 247

It was in her later life that Jane Clemens had developed this particular passion. She would consult the morning paper for any notice of obsequies and attend those that were easy of access. Watching the processions go by gave her a peculiar joy. Mrs. Moffett and her daughter did go to Fredonia immediately following the wedding. They found it residentially attractive, and rented a house before returning to St. Louis, a promptness that somewhat alarmed the old lady, who did not altogether fancy the idea of being suddenly set down in a strange house, in a strange land, even though it would be within hailing distance of Sam and his new wife. Perhaps the Fredonia funerals were sufficiently numerous and attractive, for she soon became attached to the place, and entered into the spirit of the life there, joining its temperance crusades, and the like, with zest and enjoyment.

Onion remained in St. Louis, but when Bliss established a paper called *The Publisher*, and wanted an editor, he was chosen for the place, originally offered to his brother; the latter, writing to Onion, said:

If you take the place with an air of perfect confidence in yourself, never once letting anything show in your bearing but a quiet, modest, entire, and perfect confidence in your ability to do pretty much anything in the world, Bliss will think you are the very man he needs; but don't show any shadow of timidity or unsoldierly diffidence, for that sort of thing is fatal to advancement.

I warn you thus because you are naturally given to knocking your pot over in this way, when a little judicious conduct would make it boil.

LXXXI

SOME FURTHER LITERARY MATTERS

Meantime *The Innocents Abroad* had continued to prosper. Its author ranked mainly as a humorist, but of such colossal proportions that his contemporaries had seemed to dwindle; the mighty note of the "Frog of Calaveras" had dwarfed a score of smaller peepers. At the end of a year from its date of publication the book had sold up to 67,000 and was continuing at the rate of several thousand monthly.

"You are running it in staving, tiptop, first-class style," Clemens wrote to Bliss. "On the average ten people a day come and hunt me up to tell me I am a benefactor! I guess that is a part of the program we didn't expect, in the first place."

Apparently the book appealed to readers of every grade. One hundred and fifteen copies were in constant circulation at the Mercantile Library, in New York, while in the most remote cabins of America it was read and quoted. Jack Van Nostrand, making a long horseback tour of Colorado, wrote:

I stopped a week ago in a ranch but a hundred miles from nowhere. The occupant had just two books: the Bible and *The Innocents Abroad*—the former in good repair.

Across the ocean the book had found no less favor, and was being translated into many and strange tongues. By what seems now some veritable magic its author's fame had become literally universal. The consul at Hongkong, discussing English literature with a Chinese acquaintance, a mandarin, mentioned *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

Page 248

“Yes, indeed, I have read it!” the mandarin said, eagerly. “We are enjoying it in China, and shall have it soon in our own language. It is by Mark Twain.”

In England the book had an amazing vogue from the beginning, and English readers were endeavoring to outdo the Americans in appreciation. Indeed, as a rule, English readers of culture, critical readers, rose to an understanding of Mark Twain’s literary value with greater promptness than did the same class of readers at home. There were exceptions, of course. There were English critics who did not take Mark Twain seriously, there were American critics who did. Among the latter was a certain William Ward, an editor of a paper down in Macon, Georgia—The Beacon. Ward did not hold a place with the great magazine arbiters of literary rank. He was only an obscure country editor, but he wrote like a prophet. His article—too long to quote in full—concerned American humorists in general, from Washington Irving, through John Phoenix, Philander Doesticks, Sut Lovingwood, Artemus Ward, Josh Billings and Petroleum V. Nasby, down to Mark Twain. With the exception of the first and last named he says of them:

They have all had, or will have, their day. Some of them are resting beneath the sod, and others still live whose work will scarcely survive them. Since Irving no humorist in prose has held the foundation of a permanent fame except it be Mark Twain, and this, as in the case of Irving, is because he is a pure writer. Aside from any subtle mirth that lurks through his composition, the grace and finish of his more didactic and descriptive sentences indicate more than mediocrity.

The writer then refers to Mark Twain’s description of the Sphinx, comparing it with Bulwer’s, which he thinks may have influenced it. He was mistaken in this, for Clemens had not read Bulwer—never could read him at any length.

Of the English opinions, that of The Saturday Review was perhaps most doubtful. It came along late in 1870, and would hardly be worth recalling if it were not for a resulting, or collateral, interest. Clemens saw notice of this review before he saw the review itself. A paragraph in the Boston Advertiser spoke of The Saturday Review as treating the absurdities of the Innocents from a serious standpoint. The paragraph closed:

We can imagine the delight of the humorist in reading this tribute to his power; and indeed it is so amusing in itself that he can hardly do better than reproduce the article in full in his next monthly “Memoranda.”

The old temptation to hoax his readers prompted Mark Twain to “reproduce” in the Galaxy, not the Review article, which he had not yet seen, but an imaginary Review article, an article in which the imaginary reviewer would be utterly devoid of any sense of humor and treat the most absurd incidents of The New Pilgrim’s Progress as if set down by the author in solemn and serious earnest. The pretended review began:

Page 249

Lord Macaulay died too soon. We never felt this so deeply as when we finished the last chapter of the above-named extravagant work. Macaulay died too soon; for none but he could mete out complete and comprehensive justice to the insolence, the impudence, the presumption, the mendacity, and, above all, the majestic ignorance of this author.

The review goes on to cite cases of the author's gross deception. It says:

Let the cultivated English student of human nature picture to himself this Mark Twain as a person capable of doing the following described things; and not only doing them, but, with incredible innocence, printing them tranquilly and calmly in a book. For instance:

He states that he entered a hair-dresser's in Paris to get a shave, and the first "rake" the barber gave him with his razor it loosened his "hide," and lifted him out of the chair.

This is unquestionably extravagant. In Florence he was so annoyed by beggars that he pretends to have seized and eaten one in a frantic spirit of revenge. There is, of course, no truth in this. He gives at full length the theatrical program, seventeen or eighteen hundred years old, which he professes to have found in the ruins of the Colosseum, among the dirt-and mold and rubbish. It is a sufficient comment upon this subject to remark that even a cast-iron program would not have lasted so long under the circumstances.

There were two and one-half pages of this really delightful burlesque which the author had written with huge-enjoyment, partly as a joke on the Review, partly to trick American editors, who he believed would accept it as a fresh and startling proof of the traditional English lack of humor.

But, as in the early sage-brush hoaxes, he rather overdid the thing. Readers and editors readily enough accepted it as genuine, so far as having come from The Saturday Review; but most of them, regarded it as a delicious bit of humor which Mark Twain himself had taken seriously, and was therefore the one sold. This was certainly startling, and by no means gratifying. In the next issue he undertook that saddest of all performances with tongue or pen: he explained his joke, and insisted on the truth of the explanation. Then he said:

If any man doubts my word now I will kill him. No, I will not kill him; I will win his money. I will bet him twenty to one, and let any New York publisher hold the stakes, that the statements I have above made as to the authorship of the article in question are entirely true.

But the Cincinnati Enquirer persisted in continuing the joke—in "rubbing it in," as we say now. The Enquirer declared that Mark Twain had been intensely mortified at having

been so badly taken in; that his explanation in the Galaxy was “ingenious, but unfortunately not true.” The Enquirer maintained that The Saturday Review of October 8, 1870, did contain the article exactly as printed in the “Memoranda,” and advised Mark Twain to admit that he was sold, and say no more about it.

Page 250

This was enraging. Mark Twain had his own ideas as to how far a joke might be carried without violence, and this was a good way beyond the limits. He denounced the Enquirer's statement as a "pitiful, deliberate falsehood," in his anger falling into the old-time phrasing of newspaper editorial abuse. He offered to bet them a thousand dollars in cash that they could not prove their assertions, and asked pointedly, in conclusion: "Will they swallow that falsehood ignominiously, or will they send an agent to the Galaxy office? I think the Cincinnati Enquirer must be edited by children." He promised that if they did not accept his financial proposition he would expose them in the next issue.

The incident closed there. He was prevented, by illness in his household, from contributing to the next issue, and the second issue following was his final "Memoranda" installment. So the matter perished and was forgotten. It was his last editorial hoax. Perhaps he concluded that hoaxes in any form were dangerous playthings; they were too likely to go off at the wrong end.

It was with the April number (1871) that he concluded his relations with the Galaxy. In a brief valedictory he gave his reasons:

I have now written for the Galaxy a year. For the last eight months, with hardly an interval, I have had for my fellows and comrades, night and day, doctors and watchers of the sick! During these eight months death has taken two members of my home circle and malignantly threatened two others. All this I have experienced, yet all the time have been under contract to furnish "humorous" matter, once a month, for this magazine. I am speaking the exact truth in the above details. Please to put yourself in my place and contemplate the grisly grotesqueness of the situation. I think that some of the "humor" I have written during this period could have been injected into a funeral sermon without disturbing the solemnity of the occasion. The "Memoranda" will cease permanently with this issue of the magazine. To be a pirate on a low salary, and with no share in the profits of the business, used to be my idea of an uncomfortable occupation, but I have other views now. To be a monthly humorist in a cheerless time is drearier.

Without doubt he felt a glad relief in being rid of this recurrent, imperative demand. He wrote to Orion that he had told the Galaxy people he would not write another article, long or short, for less than \$500, and preferred not to do it at all.

The Galaxy department and the work on the Express were Mark Twain's farewell to journalism; for the "Memoranda" was essentially journalistic, almost as much so, and as liberally, as his old-time Enterprise position. Apparently he wrote with absolute freedom, unhampered by editorial policy or restriction. The result was not always pleasant, and it was not always refined. We may be certain that it was because of Mrs. Clemens's heavy burdens that year, and her consequent inability to exert a beneficent censorship, that more than one—more than a dozen—of the "Memoranda" contributions were permitted to see the light of print.

Page 251

As a whole, the literary result of Mark Twain's Buffalo period does not reach the high standard of *The Innocents Abroad*. It was a retrogression—in some measure a return to his earlier form. It had been done under pressure, under heavy stress of mind, as he said. Also there was another reason; neither the subject treated nor the environment of labor had afforded that lofty inspiration which glorified every step of the Quaker City journey. Buffalo was a progressive city—a beautiful city, as American cities go—but it was hardly an inspiring city for literature, and a dull, dingy newspaper office was far, very far, from the pleasant decks of the Quaker City, the camp-fires of Syria, the blue sky and sea of the Mediterranean.

LXXXII

The writing of "Roughing it"

The third book published by Mark Twain was not the Western book he was preparing for Bliss. It was a small volume, issued by Sheldon & Co., entitled Mark Twain's *Autobiography (Burlesque) and First Romance*. The Romance was the "Awful, Terrible Medieval Romance" which had appeared in the *Express* at the beginning of 1870. The burlesque autobiography had not previously appeared. The two made a thin little book, which, in addition to its literary features, had running through it a series of full-page, irrelevant pictures—cartoons of the Erie Railroad Ring, presented as illustrations of a slightly modified version of "The House That Jack Built." The "House" was the Erie headquarters, the purpose being to illustrate the swindling methods of the Ring. The faces of Jay Gould, James Fisk, Jr., John T. Hoffman, and others of the combination, are chiefly conspicuous. The publication was not important, from any standpoint. Literary burlesque is rarely important, and it was far from Mark Twain's best form of expression. A year or two later he realized the mistake of this book, bought in the plates and destroyed them.

Meantime the new Western book was at a standstill. To Orion, in March, he wrote:

I am still nursing Livy night and day. I am nearly worn out. We shall go to Elmira ten days hence (if Livy can travel on a mattress then), and stay there until I finish the California book, say three months. But I can't begin work right away when I get there; must have a week's rest, for I have been through thirty days' terrific siege.

He promised to forward some of the manuscript soon.

Hold on four or five days and I will see if I can get a few chapters fixed to send to Bliss

I have offered this house and the Express for sale, and when we go to Elmira we leave here for good. I shall not select a new home till the book is finished, but we have little doubt that Hartford will be the place.

He disposed of his interest in the Express in April, at a sacrifice of \$10,000 on the purchase price. Mrs. Clemens and the baby were able to travel, and without further delay he took them to Elmira, to Quarry Farm.

Page 252

Quarry Farm, the home of Mrs. Clemens's sister, Mrs. Theodore Crane, is a beautiful hilltop, with a wide green slope, overlooking the hazy city and the Chemung River, beyond which are the distant hills. It was bought quite incidentally by Mr. and Mrs. Langdon, who, driving by one evening, stopped to water the horses and decided that it would make a happy summer retreat, where the families could combine their housekeeping arrangements during vacation days. When the place had first been purchased, they had debated on a name for it. They had tried several, among them "Go-as-you-please Hall," "Crane's Nest," and had finally agreed upon "Rest and Be Thankful." But this was only its official name. There was an abandoned quarry up the hill, a little way from the house, and the title suggested by Thomas K. Beecher came more naturally to the tongue. The place became Quarry Farm, and so remains.

Clemens and his wife had fully made up their minds to live in Hartford. They had both conceived an affection for the place, Clemens mainly because of Twichell, while both of them yearned for the congenial literary and social atmosphere, and the welcome which they felt awaited them. Hartford was precisely what Buffalo in that day was not—a home for the literary man. It held a distinguished group of writers, most of whom the Clemenses already knew. Furthermore, with Bliss as publisher of the Mark Twain books, it held their chief business interests.

Their plans for going were not very definite as to time. Clemens found that his work went better at the farm, and that Mrs. Clemens and the delicate baby daily improved. They decided to remain at Quarry Farm for the summer, their first summer in that beautiful place which would mean so much to them in the years to come.

It was really Joe Goodman, as much as anything, that stirred a fresh enthusiasm in the new book. Goodman arrived just when the author's spirits were at low ebb.

"Joe," he said, "I guess I'm done for. I don't appear to be able to get along at all with my work, and what I do write does not seem valuable. I'm afraid I'll never be able to reach the standard of 'The Innocents Abroad' again. Here is what I have written, Joe. Read it, and see if that is your opinion."

Goodman took the manuscript and seated himself in a chair, while Clemens went over to a table and pretended to work. Goodman read page after page, critically, and was presently absorbed in it. Clemens watched him furtively, till he could stand it no longer. Then he threw down his pen, exclaiming:

"I knew it! I knew it! I am writing nothing but rot. You have sat there all this time reading without a smile, and pitying the ass I am making of myself. But I am not wholly to blame. I am not strong enough to fight against fate. I have been trying to write a funny book, with dead people and sickness everywhere. Mr. Langdon died first, then a young lady in our house, and now Mrs. Clemens and the baby have been at the point of death all winter! Oh, Joe, I wish to God I could die myself!"

Page 253

"Mark," said Joe, "I was reading critically, not for amusement, and so far as I have read, and can judge, this is one of the best things you have ever written. I have found it perfectly absorbing. You are doing a great book!"

Clemens knew that Goodman never spoke except from conviction, and the verdict was to him like a message of life handed down by an archangel. He was a changed man instantly. He was all enthusiasm, full of his subject, eager to go on. He proposed to pay Goodman a salary to stay there and keep him company and furnish him with inspiration—the Pacific coast atmosphere and vernacular, which he feared had slipped away from him. Goodman declined the salary, but extended his visit as long as his plans would permit, and the two had a happy time together, recalling old Comstock days. Every morning, for a month or more, they used to tramp over the farm. They fell into the habit of visiting the old quarry and pawing over the fragments in search of fossil specimens. Both of them had a poetic interest in geology, its infinite remotenesses and its testimonies. Without scientific knowledge, they took a deep pleasure in accumulating a collection, which they arranged on boards torn from an old fence, until they had enough specimens to fill a small museum. They imagined they could distinguish certain geological relations and families, and would talk about trilobites, the Old Red Sandstone period, and the azoic age, or follow random speculation to far-lying conclusions, developing vague humors of phrase and fancy, having altogether a joyful good time.

Another interest that developed during Goodman's stay was in one Ruloff, who was under death sentence for a particularly atrocious murder. The papers were full of Ruloff's prodigious learning. It was said that he had in preparation a work showing the unity of all languages. Goodman and Clemens agreed that Ruloff's death would be a great loss to mankind, even though he was clearly a villain and deserved his sentence. They decided that justice would be served just as well if some stupid person were hung in his place, and following out this fancy Clemens one morning put aside his regular work and wrote an article to the Tribune, offering to supply a substitute for Ruloff. He signed it simply "Samuel Langhorne," and it was published as a serious communication, without comment, so far as the Tribune was concerned. Other papers, however, took it up and it was widely copied and commented upon. Apparently no one ever identified, Mark Twain with the authorship of the letter, which, by the way, does not appear to have prolonged Ruloff's earthly usefulness.—[The reader will find the Ruloff letter in full under Appendix K, at the end of last volume.]

Life at the farm may have furnished agricultural inspiration, for Clemens wrote something about Horace Greeley's farming, also a skit concerning Henry Ward Beecher's efforts in that direction. Of Mr. Beecher's farming he said:

Page 254

"His strawberries would be a comfortable success if robins would eat turnips."

The article amused Beecher, and perhaps Greeley was amused too, for he wrote:

Mark,—You are mistaken as to my criticisms on your farming. I never publicly made any, while you have undertaken to tell the exact cost per pint of my potatoes and cabbages, truly enough the inspiration of genius. If you will really betake yourself to farming, or even to telling what you know about it, rather than what you don't know about mine, I will not only refrain from disparaging criticism, but will give you my blessing.

Yours, *Horace Greeley*.

The letter is in Mr. Greeley's characteristic scrawl, and no doubt furnished inspiration for the turnip story in 'Roughing It', also the model for the pretended facsimile of Greeley's writing.

Altogether that was a busy, enterprising summer at Quarry Farm. By the middle of May, Clemens wrote to Bliss that he had twelve hundred manuscript pages of the new book already written, and that he was turning out the remainder at the rate of from thirty to sixty-five per day. He was in high spirits by this time. The family health had improved, and prospects were bright.

I have enough manuscript on hand now to make (allowing for engravings) about four hundred pages of the book, consequently am two-thirds done. I intended to run up to Hartford about the middle of the week and take it along, but I find myself so thoroughly interested in my work now (a thing I have not experienced for months) that I can't bear to lose a single moment of the inspiration. So I will stay here and peg away as long as it lasts. My present idea is to write as much more as I have already written, and then collect from the mass the very best chapters and discard the rest. When I get it done I want to see the man who will begin to read it and not finish it. Nothing grieves me now; nothing troubles me, nothing bothers me or gets my attention. I don't think of anything but the book, and don't have an hour's unhappiness about anything, and don't care two cents whether school keeps or not. The book will be done soon now. It will be a starchy book; the dedication will be worth the price of the volume. Thus:

*To the late Cain
this book is dedicated*

not on account of respect for his memory, for it merits little respect; not on account of sympathy for him, for his bloody deed places him without the pale of sympathy, strictly speaking, but out of a mere humane commiseration for him, in that it was his misfortune to live in a dark age that knew not the beneficent insanity plea.

Probably Mrs. Clemens diverted this picturesque dedication in favor of the Higbie inscription, or perhaps the author never really intended the literary tribute to Cain. The impulse that inspired it, however, was characteristic.

Page 255

In a postscript to this letter he adds:

My stock is looking up. I am getting the bulliest offers for books and almanacs; am flooded with lecture invitations, and one periodical offers me \$6,000 cash for twelve articles of any length, and on any subject, treated humorously or otherwise.

He set in to make hay while the sun was shining. In addition to the California book, which was now fast nearing completion, he discussed a scheme with Goodman for a six-hundred-page work which they were to do jointly; he planned and wrote one or two scenes from a Western play, to be built from episodes in the new book (one of them was the "Arkansas" incident, related in Chapter XXXI); he perfected one of his several inventions—an automatically adjusting vest-strap; he wrote a number of sketches, made an occasional business trip to New York and Hartford; prospected the latter place for a new home. The shadow which had hung over the sojourn in Buffalo seemed to have lifted.

He had promised Bliss some contributions for his new paper, and in June he sent three sketches. In an accompanying letter he says:

Here are three articles which you may have if you will pay \$125 for the lot. If you don't want them I'll sell them to the Galaxy, but not for a cent less than three times the money.... If you take them pay one-tenth of the \$125 in weekly instalments to Orion till he has received it all.

He reconsidered his resolution not to lecture again, and closed with Redpath for the coming season. He found himself in a lecture-writing fever. He wrote three of them in succession: one on Artemus Ward, another on "Reminiscences of Some Pleasant Characters I Have Met," and a third one based on chapters from the new book. Of the "Reminiscence" lecture he wrote Redpath:

"It covers my whole acquaintance; kings, lunatics, idiots, and all." Immediately afterward he wrote that he had prepared still another lecture, "title to be announced later."

"During July I'll decide which one I like best," he said. He instructed Redpath not to make engagements for him to lecture in churches. "I never made a success of a lecture in a church yet. People are afraid to laugh in a church."

Redpath was having difficulties in arranging a circuit to suit him. Clemens had prejudices against certain towns and localities, prejudices that were likely to change overnight. In August he wrote:

Dear red,—I am different from other women; my mind changes oftener. People who have no mind can easily be stead fast and firm, but when a man is loaded down to the

guards with it, as I am, every heavy sea of foreboding or inclination, maybe of indolence, shifts the cargo. See? Therefore, if you will notice, one week I am likely to give rigid instructions to confine me to New England; the next week send me to Arizona; the next week withdraw my name; the next week give

Page 256

you full, untrammelled swing; and the week following modify it. You must try to keep the run of my mind, Redpath that is your business, being the agent, and it always was too many for me.... Now about the West this week, I am willing that you shall retain all the Western engagements. But what I shall want next week is still with God.

Yours, *mark*.

He was in Hartford when this letter was written, arranging for residence there and the removal of his belongings. He finally leased the fine Hooker house on Ford Street, in that pleasant seclusion known as Nook Farm—the literary part of Hartford, which included the residence of Charles Dudley Warner and Harriet Beecher Stowe. He arranged for possession of the premises October 1st. So the new home was settled upon; then learning that Nasby was to be in Boston, he ran over to that city for a few days of recreation after his season's labors.

Preparations for removal to Hartford were not delayed. The Buffalo property was disposed of, the furnishings were packed and shipped away. The house which as bride and groom they had entered so happily was left empty and deserted, never to be entered by them again. In the year and a half of their occupancy it had seen well-nigh all the human round, all that goes to make up the happiness and the sorrow of life.

LXXXIII

LECTURING DAYS

Life in Hartford, in the autumn of 1871, began in the letter, rather than in the spirit. The newcomers were received with a wide, neighborly welcome, but the disorder of establishment and the almost immediate departure of the head of the household on a protracted lecturing tour were disquieting things; the atmosphere of the Clemens home during those early Hartford days gave only a faint promise of its future loveliness.

As in a far later period, Mark Twain had resorted to lecturing to pay off debt. He still owed a portion of his share in the Express; also he had been obliged to obtain an advance from the lecture bureau. He dreaded, as always, the tedium of travel, the clatter of hotel life, the monotony of entertainment, while, more than most men, he loved the tender luxury of home. It was only that he could not afford to lose the profit offered on the platform.

His season opened at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, October 16th, and his schedule carried him hither and thither, to and fro, over distances that lie between Boston and Chicago. There were opportunities to run into Hartford now and then, when he was not too far away, and in November he lectured there on Artemus Ward.

He changed his entertainment at least twice that season. He began with the “Reminiscences,” the lecture which he said would treat of all those whom he had met, “idiots, lunatics, and kings,” but he did not like it, or it did not go well. He wrote Redpath of the Artemus Ward address:

Page 257

"It suits me, and I'll never deliver the nasty, nauseous 'Reminiscences' any more."

But the Ward lecture was good for little more than a month, for on December 8th he wrote again:

Notify all hands that from this time I shall talk nothing but selections from my forthcoming book, 'Roughing It'. Tried it twice last night; suits me tiptop.

And somewhat later:

Had a splendid time with a splendid audience in Indianapolis last night; a perfectly jammed house, just as I have all the time out here.... I don't care now to have any appointments canceled. I'll even "fetch" those Dutch Pennsylvanians with this lecture.

Have paid up \$4,000 indebtedness. You are the last on my list. Shall begin to pay you in a few days, and then I shall be a free man again.

Undoubtedly he reveled in the triumphs of a platform tour, though at no time did he regard it as a pleasure excursion. During those early weeks the proofs of his new book, chasing him from place to place, did not add to his comfort. Still, with large, substantial rewards in hand and in prospect, one could endure much.

In the neighborhood of Boston there were other compensations. He could spend a good part of his days at the Lyceum headquarters, in School Street, where there was always congenial fellowship—Nasby, Josh Billings, and the rest of the peripatetic group that about the end of the year collected there. Their lectures were never tried immediately in Boston, but in the outlying towns; tried and perfected—or discarded. When the provincial audiences were finally satisfied, then the final test in the Boston Music Hall was made, and if this proved successful the rest of the season was safe. Redpath's lecturers put up at Young's Hotel, and spent their days at the bureau, smoking and spinning yarns, or talking shop. Early in the evening they scattered to the outlying towns, Lowell, Lexington, Concord, New Bedford. There is no such a condition to-day: lecturers are few, lecture bureaus obscure; there are no great reputations made on the platform.

Neither is there any such distinct group of humorists as the one just mentioned. Humor has become universal since then. Few writers of this age would confess to taking their work so seriously as to be at all times unsmiling in it; only about as many, in fact, as in that day would confess to taking their work so lightly that they could regard life's sterner phases and philosophies with a smile.

Josh Billings was one of the gentlest and loveliest of our pioneers of laughter. The present generation is not overfamiliar even with his name, but both the name and sayings of that quaint soul were on everybody's lips at the time of which we are writing. His true name was Henry W. Shaw, and he was a genuine, smiling philosopher, who might have built up a more permanent and serious reputation had he not been induced

Page 258

to disfigure his maxims with ridiculous spelling in order to popularize them and make them bring a living price. It did not matter much with Nasby's work. An assumed illiteracy belonged with the side of life which he presented; but it is pathetic now to consider some of the really masterly sayings of Josh Billings presented in that uncouth form which was regarded as a part of humor a generation ago. Even the aphorisms that were essentially humorous lose value in that degraded spelling.

"When a man starts down hill everything is greased for the occasion," could hardly be improved upon by distorted orthography, and here are a few more gems which have survived that deadly blight.

"Some folks mistake vivacity for wit; whereas the difference between vivacity and wit is the same as the difference between the lightning-bug and the lightning."

"Don't take the bull by the horns-take him by the tail; then you can let go when you want to."

"The difficulty is not that we know so much, but that we know so much that isn't so."

Josh Billings, Nasby, and Mark Twain were close friends. They had themselves photographed in a group, and there was always some pleasantry going on among them. Josh Billings once wrote on "Lekturing," and under the head of "Rule Seven," which treated of unwisdom of inviting a lecturer to a private house, he said:

Think of asking Mark Twain home with yu, for instance. Yure good wife has put her house in apple-pie order for the ockashun; everything is just in the right place. Yu don't smoke in yure house, never. Yu don't put yure feet on the center-table, yu don't skatter the nuzepapers all over the room, in utter confushion: order and ekonemy governs yure premises. But if yu expect Mark Twain to be happy, or even kumfortable yu hav got to buy a box of cigars worth at least seventeen dollars and yu hav got to move all the tender things out ov yure parlor. Yu hav got to skatter all the latest papers around the room careless, you hav got to hav a pitcher ov icewater handy, for Mark is a dry humorist. Yu hav got to ketch and tie all yure yung ones, hed and foot, for Mark luvs babys only in theory; yu hav got to send yure favorite kat over to the nabors and hide yure poodle. These are things that hav to be done, or Mark will pak hiz valise with hiz extry shirt collar and hiz lektur on the Sandwich Islands, and travel around yure streets, smoking and reading the sighns over the store doorways untill lektur time begins.

As we-are not likely to touch upon Mark Twain's lecturing, save only lightly, hereafter, it may be as well to say something of his method at this period. At all places visited by lecturers there was a committee, and it was the place of the chairman to introduce the lecturer, a privilege which he valued, because it gave him a momentary association with

distinction and fame. Clemens was a great disappointment to these officials. He had learned long ago that

Page 259

he could introduce himself more effectively than any one else. His usual formula was to present himself as the chairman of the committee, introducing the lecturer of the evening; then, with what was in effect a complete change of personality, to begin his lecture. It was always startling and amusing, always a success; but the papers finally printed this formula, which took the freshness out of it, so that he had to invent others. Sometimes he got up with the frank statement that he was introducing himself because he had never met any one who could pay a proper tribute to his talents; but the newspapers printed that too, and he often rose and began with no introduction at all.

Whatever his method of beginning, Mark Twain's procedure probably was the purest exemplification of the platform entertainer's art which this country has ever seen. It was the art that makes you forget the artisanship, the art that made each hearer forget that he was not being personally entertained by a new and marvelous friend, who had traveled a long way for his particular benefit. One listener has written that he sat "simmering with laughter" through what he supposed was the continuation of the introduction, waiting for the traditional lecture to begin, when presently the lecturer, with a bow, disappeared, and it was over. The listener looked at his watch; he had been there more than an hour. He thought it could be no more than ten minutes, at most. Many have tried to set down something of the effect his art produced on them, but one may not clearly convey the story of a vanished presence and a silent voice.

There were other pleasant associations in Boston. Howells was there, and Aldrich; also Bret Harte, who had finished his triumphal progress across the continent to join the Atlantic group. Clemens appears not to have met Aldrich before, though their acquaintance had begun a year earlier, when Aldrich, as editor of *Every Saturday*, had commented on a poem entitled, "The Three Aces," which had appeared in the *Buffalo Express*. Aldrich had assumed the poem to be the work of Mark Twain, and had characterized it as "a feeble imitation of Bret Harte's 'Heathen Chinees.'" Clemens, in a letter, had mildly protested as to the charge of authorship, and Aldrich had promptly printed the letter with apologetic explanation. A playful exchange of personal letters followed, and the beginning of a lifelong friendship.

One of the letters has a special interest here. Clemens had followed his protest with an apology for it, asking that no further notice be taken of the matter. Aldrich replied that it was too late to prevent "doing him justice," as his explanation was already on the press, but that if Clemens insisted he would withdraw it in the next issue. Clemens then wrote that he did not want it withdrawn, and explained that he hated to be accused of plagiarizing Bret Harte, to whom he was deeply indebted for literary schooling in the California days. Continuing he said:

Page 260

Do you know the prettiest fancy and the neatest that ever shot through Harte's brain? It was this. When they were trying to decide upon a vignette cover for the Overland a grizzly bear (of the arms of the State of California) was chosen. Nahl Bros. carved him and the page was printed with him in it. As a bear he was a success. He was a good bear, but then, it was objected, he was an objectless bear—a bear that meant nothing, signified nothing, simply stood there, snarling over his shoulder at nothing, and was painfully and manifestly a boorish and ill-natured intruder upon the fair page. All hands said that none were satisfied; they hated badly to give him up, and yet they hated as much to have him there when there was no point to him. But presently Harte took a pencil and drew two simple lines under his feet, and behold he was a magnificent success!—the ancient symbol of California savagery, snarling at the approaching type of high and progressive civilization, the first Overland locomotive! I just think that was nothing less than an inspiration.—[The “bear” was that which has always appeared on the Overland cover; the “two lines” formed a railway track under his feet. Clemens's original letter contained crude sketches illustrating these things.]

Among the Boston group was another Californian, Ralph Keeler, an eccentric, gifted, and altogether charming fellow, whom Clemens had known on the Pacific slope. Keeler had been adopted by the Boston writers, and was grateful and happy accordingly. He was poor of purse, but inexhaustibly rich in the happier gifts of fortune. He was unfailingly buoyant, light-hearted, and hopeful. On an infinitesimal capital he had made a tour of many lands, and had written of it for the Atlantic. In that charmed circle he was as overflowing happy as if he had been admitted to the company of the gods. Keeler was affectionately regarded by all who knew him, and he offered a sort of worship in return. He often accompanied Mark Twain on his lecture engagements to the various outlying towns, and Clemens brought him back to his hotel for breakfast, where they had good, enjoyable talks together. Once Keeler came eagerly to the hotel and made his way up to Clemens's room.

“Come with me,” he said. “Quick!”

“What is it? What's happened?”

“Don't wait to talk. Come with me.”

They tramped briskly through the streets till they reached the public library, entered, Keeler leading the way, not stopping till he faced a row of shelves filled with books. He pointed at one of them, his face radiant with joy.

“Look,” he said. “Do you see it?”

Clemens looked carefully now and identified one of the books as a still-born novel which Keeler had published.

“This is a library,” said Keeler, eagerly, “and they’ve got it!”

His whole being was aglow with the wonder of it. He had been investigating; the library records showed that in the two years the book had been there it had been taken out and read three times! It never occurred to Clemens even to smile. Knowing Mark Twain, one would guess that his eyes were likely to be filled with tears.

Page 261

In his book about Mark Twain, Howells tells of a luncheon which Keeler gave to his more famous associates—Aldrich, Fields, Harte, Clemens, and Howells himself—a merry informal occasion. Says Howells:

Nothing remains to me of the happy time but a sense of idle and aimless and joyful talk—play, beginning and ending nowhere, of eager laughter, of countless good stories from Fields, of a heat-lightning shimmer of wit from Aldrich, of an occasional concentration of our joint mockeries upon our host, who took it gladly; and amid the discourse, so little improving, but so full of good-fellowship, Bret Harte's leering dramatization of Clemens's mental attitude toward a symposium of Boston illuminates. "Why, fellows," he spluttered, "this is the dream of Mark's life," and I remember the glance from under Clemens's feathery eyebrows which betrayed his enjoyment of the fun.

Very likely Keeler gave that luncheon in celebration of his book's triumph; it would be like him.

Keeler's end was a mystery. The New York Tribune commissioned him to go to Cuba to report the facts of some Spanish outrages. He sailed from New York in the steamer, and was last seen alive the night before the vessel reached Havana. He had made no secret of his mission, but had discussed it in his frank, innocent way. There were some Spanish military men on the ship.

Clemens, commenting on the matter, once said:

"It may be that he was not flung into the sea, still the belief was general that that was what had happened."

In his book Howells refers to the doubt with which Mark Twain was then received by the polite culture of Boston; which, on the other hand, accepted Bret Harte as one of its own, forgiving even social shortcomings.

The reason is not difficult to understand. Harte had made his appeal with legitimate fiction of the kind which, however fresh in flavor and environment, was of a sort to be measured and classified. Harte spoke a language they could understand; his humor, his pathos, his point of view were all recognizable. It was an art already standardized by a master. It is no reflection on the genius of Bret Harte to liken his splendid achievements to those of Charles Dickens. Much of Harte's work is in no way inferior to that of his great English prototype. Dickens never wrote a better short story than "The Outcasts of Poker Flats." He never wrote as good a short story as "The Luck of Roaring Camp." Boston critics promptly realized these things and gave Harte his correct rating. That they failed to do this with Mark Twain, lay chiefly in the fact that he spoke to them in new and startling tongues. His gospels were likely to be heresies; his literary eccentricities were all unclassified. Of the ultrafastidious set Howells tells us that Charles Eliot Norton and Prof. Francis J. Child were about the only ones who accorded



him unqualified approval. The others smiled and enjoyed him, but with that condescension which the courtier is likely to accord to motley and the cap and bells. Only the great, simple-hearted, unbiased multitude, the public, which had no standards but the direct appeal from one human heart to another, could recognize immediately his mightier heritage, could exalt and place him on the throne. LXXXIV "*Roughing it*"

Page 262

Telegram to Redpath:

How in the name of God does a man find his way from here to Amherst, and when must he start? Give me full particulars, and send a man with me. If I had another engagement I would rot before I would fill it. S. L. *Clemens*.

This was at the end of February, and he believed that he was standing on the platform for the last time. He loathed the drudgery of the work, and he considered there was no further need. He was no longer in debt, and his income he accounted ample. His new book, 'Roughing It',—[It was Bliss who had given the new book the title of Roughing It. *Innocents at Home* had been its provision title, certainly a misleading one, though it has been retained in England for the second volume; for what reason it would be difficult to explain.]—had had a large advance sale, and its earnings promised to rival those of the 'Innocents'. He resolved in the future to confine himself to the trade and profits of authorship.

The new book had advantages in its favor. Issued early in the year, it was offered at the best canvassing season; particularly so, as the author's lectures had prepared the public for its reception. Furthermore, it dealt with the most picturesque phases of American life, scenes and episodes vastly interesting at that time, and peculiarly adapted to Mark Twain's literary expression. In a different way 'Roughing It' is quite as remarkable as 'The Innocents Abroad.' If it has less charm, it has greater interest, and it is by no means without charm. There is something delicious, for instance, in this bit of pure enjoyment of the first day's overland travel:

It was now just dawn, and as we stretched our cramped legs full length on the mail-sacks, and gazed out through the windows across the wide wastes of greensward clad in cool, powdery mist to where there was an expectant look in the Eastern horizon, our perfect enjoyment took the form of a tranquil and contented ecstasy. The stage whirled along at a spanking gait, the breeze flapping the curtains and suspended coats in a most exhilarating way; the cradle swayed and swung luxuriously, the pattering of the horses' hoofs, the cracking of the driver's whip, and his "Hi-yi! g'lang!" were music; the spinning ground and the waltzing trees appeared to give us a mute hurrah as we went by, and then slack up and look after us with interest and envy, or something; and as we lay and smoked the pipe of peace, and compared all this luxury with the years of tiresome city life that had gone before it, we felt that there was only one complete and satisfying happiness in the world, and we had found it.

Also, there is that lofty presentation of South Pass, and a picture of the alkali desert, so parching, so withering in its choking realism, that it makes the throat ache and the tongue dry to read it. Just a bit of the desert in passing:

Page 263

The sun beats down with a dead, blistering, relentless malignity; the perspiration is welling from every pore in man and beast, but scarcely a sign of it finds its way to the surface—it is absorbed before it gets there; there is not the faintest breath of air stirring; there is not a merciful shred of cloud in all the brilliant firmament; there is not a living creature visible in any direction whither one searches the blank level that stretches its monotonous miles on every hand; there is not a sound, not a sigh, not a whisper, not a buzz, or a whir of wings, or distant pipe of bird; not even a sob from the lost souls that doubtless people that dead air.

As for the humor of the book, it has been chiefly famous for that. “Buck Fanshaw’s Funeral” has become a classic, and the purchase of the “Mexican Plug.” But it is to no purpose to review the book here in detail. We have already reviewed the life and environment out of which it grew.

Without doubt the story would have contained more of the poetic and contemplative, in which he was always at his best, if the subject itself, as in the *Innocents*, had lent itself oftener to this form of writing. It was the lack of that halo perhaps which caused the new book never quite to rank with its great forerunner in public favor. There could hardly be any other reason. It presented a fresher theme; it abounded in humor; technically, it was better written; seemingly it had all the elements of popularity and of permanence. It did, in fact, possess these qualities, but its sales, except during the earlier months of its canvass, never quite equaled those of *The Innocents Abroad*.

‘*Roughing It*’ was accepted by the public for just what it was and is, a great picture of the Overland Pioneer days—a marvelous picture of frontier aspects at a time when the frontier itself, even with its hardships and its tragedies, was little more than a vast primal joke; when all frontiersmen were obliged to be laughing philosophers in order to survive the stress of its warfares.

A word here about this Western humor: It is a distinct product. It grew out of a distinct condition—the battle with the frontier. The fight was so desperate, to take it seriously was to surrender. Women laughed that they might not weep; men, when they could no longer swear. “Western humor” was the result. It is the freshest, wildest humor in the world, but there is tragedy behind it.

‘*Roughing It*’ presented the picture of those early conditions with the startling vividness and truth of a great novel, which, in effect, it was. It was not accurate history, even of the author’s own adventures. It was true in its aspects, rather than in its details. The greater artist disregards the truth of detail to render more strikingly a phase or a condition, to produce an atmosphere, to reconstruct a vanished time. This was what Mark Twain did in ‘*Roughing It*’. He told the story of overland travel and the frontier, for his own and future generations, in what is essentially a picaresque novel, a work of unperishing fiction, founded on fact.

Page 264

The sales of 'Roughing It' during the first three months aggregated nearly forty thousand copies, and the author was lavishly elate accordingly. To Orion (who had already closed his career with Bliss, by exercise of those hereditary eccentricities through which he so often came to grief) he gave \$1,000 out of the first royalty check, in acknowledgment of the memorandum book and other data which Orion had supplied. Clemens believed the new book would sell one hundred thousand copies within the year; but the sale diminished presently, and at the end of the first year it was considerably behind the Innocents for the same period. As already stated, it required ten years for Roughing It to reach the one-hundred-thousand mark, which the Innocents reached in three.

LXXXV

A BIRTH, A DEATH, AND A VOYAGE

The year 1872 was an eventful one in Mark Twain's life. At Elmira, on March 19th, his second child, a little girl, whom they named Susan Olivia, was born. On June 2d, in the new home in Hartford, to which they had recently moved, his first child, a little boy, Langdon, died. He had never been strong, his wavering life had often been uncertain, always more of the spirit than the body, and in Elmira he contracted a heavy cold, or perhaps it was diphtheria from the beginning. In later years, whenever Clemens spoke of the little fellow, he never failed to accuse himself of having been the cause of the child's death. It was Mrs. Clemens's custom to drive out each morning with Langdon, and once when she was unable to go Clemens himself went instead.

"I should not have been permitted to do it," he said, remembering. "I was not qualified for any such responsibility as that. Some one should have gone who had at least the rudiments of a mind. Necessarily I would lose myself dreaming. After a while the coachman looked around and noticed that the carriage-ropes had dropped away from the little fellow, and that he was exposed to the chilly air. He called my attention to it, but it was too late. Tonsillitis or something of the sort set in, and he did not get any better, so we took him to Hartford. There it was pronounced diphtheria, and of course he died."

So, with or without reason, he added the blame of another tragedy to the heavy burden of remorse which he would go on piling up while he lived.

The blow was a terrible one to Mrs. Clemens; even the comfort of the little new baby on her arm could not ease the ache in her breast. It seemed to her that death was pursuing her. In one of her letters she says:

"I feel so often as if my path is to be lined with graves," and she expresses the wish that she may drop out of life herself before her sister and her husband—a wish which the years would grant.



They did not return to Elmira, for it was thought that the air of the shore would be better for the little girl; so they spent the summer at Saybrook, Connecticut, at Fenwick Hall, leaving Orion and his wife in charge of the house at Hartford.

Page 265

Beyond a few sketches, Clemens did very little literary work that summer, but he planned a trip to Europe, and he invented what is still known and sold as the “Mark Twain Scrap-Book.”

He wrote to Orion of his proposed trip to England, and dilated upon his scrap-book with considerable enthusiasm. The idea had grown out of the inconvenience of finding a paste-jar, and the general mussiness of scrap-book keeping. His new plan was a self-pasting scrap-book with the gum laid on in narrow strips, requiring only to be dampened with a sponge or other moist substance to be ready for the clipping. He states that he intends to put the invention into the hands of Slote, Woodman & Co., of whom Dan Slote, his old Quaker City room-mate, was the senior partner, and have it manufactured for the trade.

About this time began Mark Twain's long and active interest in copyright. Previously he had not much considered the subject; he had taken it for granted there was no step that he could take, while international piracy was a recognized institution. On both sides of the water books were appropriated, often without profit, sometimes even without credit, to the author. To tell the truth, Clemens had at first regarded it rather in the nature of a compliment that his books should be thought worth pirating in England, but as time passed he realized that he was paying heavily for this recognition. Furthermore, he decided that he was forfeiting a right; rather that he was being deprived of it: something which it was in his nature to resent.

When ‘*Roughing It*’ had been ready for issue he agreed with Bliss that they should try the experiment of copyrighting it in England, and see how far the law would protect them against the voracious little publisher, who thus far had not only snapped up everything bearing Mark Twain's signature, but had included in a volume of Mark Twain sketches certain examples of very weak humor with which Mark Twain had been previously unfamiliar.

Whatever the English pirate's opinion of the copyright protection of ‘*Roughing It*’ may have been, he did not attempt to violate it. This was gratifying. Clemens came to regard England as a friendly power. He decided to visit it and spy out the land. He would make the acquaintance of its people and institutions and write a book, which would do these things justice.

He gave out no word of his real purpose. He merely said that he was going over to see his English publishers, and perhaps to arrange for a few lectures. He provided himself with some stylographic note-books, by which he could produce two copies of his daily memoranda—one for himself and one to mail to Mrs. Clemens—and sailed on the *Scotia* August 21, 1872.

Page 266

Arriving in Liverpool he took train for London, and presently the wonderful charm of that old, finished country broke upon him. His "first hour in England was an hour of delight," he records; "of rapture and ecstasy. These are the best words I can find, but they are not adequate; they are not strong enough to convey the feeling which this first vision of rural England brought me." Then he noticed that the gentleman opposite in his compartment paid no attention to the scenery, but was absorbed in a green-covered volume. He was so absorbed in it that, by and by, Clemens's curiosity was aroused. He shifted his position a little and his eye caught the title. It was the first volume of the English edition of *The Innocents Abroad*. This was gratifying for a moment; then he remembered that the man had never laughed, never even smiled during the hour of his steady reading. Clemens recalled what he had heard of the English lack of humor. He wondered if this was a fair example of it, and if the man could be really taking seriously every word he was reading. Clemens could not look at the scenery any more for watching his fellow-passenger, waiting with a fascinated interest for the paragraph that would break up that iron-clad solemnity. It did not come. During all the rest of the trip to London the atmosphere of the compartment remained heavy with gloom.

He drove to the Langham Hotel, always popular with Americans, established himself, and went to look up his publishers. He found the Routledges about to sit down to luncheon in a private room, up-stairs, in their publishing house. He joined them, and not a soul stirred from that table again until evening. The Routledges had never heard Mark Twain talk before, never heard any one talk who in the least resembled him. Various refreshments were served during the afternoon, came and went, while this marvelous creature talked on and they listened, reveling, and wondering if America had any more of that sort at home. By and by dinner was served; then after a long time, when there was no further excuse for keeping him there, they took him to the Savage Club, where there were yet other refreshments and a gathering of the clans to welcome this new arrival as a being from some remote and unfamiliar star.

Tom Hood, the younger, was there, and Harry Lee, and Stanley the explorer, who had but just returned from finding Livingstone, and Henry Irving, and many another whose name remains, though the owners of those names are all dead now, and their laughter and their good-fellowship are only a part of that intangible fabric which we call the past.'—[Clemens had first known Stanley as a newspaper man. "I first met him when he reported a lecture of mine in St. Louis," he said once in a conversation where the name of Stanley was mentioned.]

LXXXVI

ENGLAND

From that night Mark Twain's stay in England could not properly be called a gloomy one.

Page 267

Routledge, Hood, Lee, and, in fact, all literary London, set themselves the task of giving him a good time. Whatever place of interest they could think of he was taken there; whatever there was to see he saw it. Dinners, receptions, and assemblies were not complete without him. The White Friars' Club and others gave banquets in his honor. He was the sensation of the day. When he rose to speak on these occasions he was greeted with wild cheers. Whatever he said they eagerly applauded—too eagerly sometimes, in the fear that they might be regarded as insensible to American humor. Other speakers delighted in chaffing him in order to provoke his retorts. When a speaker humorously referred to his American habit of carrying a cotton umbrella, his reply that he followed this custom because a cotton umbrella was the only kind of an umbrella that an Englishman wouldn't steal, was all over England next day, and regarded as one of the finest examples of wit since the days of Swift.

The suddenness and completeness of his acceptance by the great ones of London rather overwhelmed and frightened him made him timid. Joaquin Miller writes:

He was shy as a girl, although time was already coyly flirting white flowers at his temples, and could hardly be coaxed to meet the learned and great who wanted to take him by the hand.

Many came to call on him at his hotel, among them Charles Reade and Canon Kingsley. Kingsley came twice without finding him; then wrote, asking for an appointment. Reade invited his assistance on a novel. Indeed, it was in England that Mark Twain was first made to feel that he had come into his rightful heritage. Whatever may have been the doubts concerning him in America, there was no question in England. Howells says:

In England rank, fashion, and culture rejoiced in him. Lord mayors, lord chief justices, and magnates of many kinds were his hosts; he was desired in country houses, and his bold genius captivated the favor of periodicals which spurned the rest of our nation.

After that first visit of Mark Twain's, when Americans in England, referring to their great statesmen, authors, and the like, naturally mentioned the names of Seward, Webster, Lowell, or Holmes, the English comment was likely to be: "Never mind those. We can turn out academic Seward by the dozen, and cultured humorists like Lowell and Holmes by the score. Tell us of Lincoln, Artemus Ward, and Mark Twain. We cannot match these; they interest us." And it was true. History could not match them, for they were unique.

Clemens would have been more than human if in time he had not realized the fuller meaning of this triumph, and exulted in it a little to the folks at home. There never lived a more modest, less pretentious, less aggressive man than Mark Twain, but there never lived a man who took a more childlike delight in genuine appreciation; and, being

childlike, it was only human that he should wish those nearest to him to share his happiness. After one memorable affair he wrote:

Page 268

I have been received in a sort of tremendous way to-night by the brains of London, assembled at the annual dinner of the sheriffs of London; mine being (between you and me) a name which was received with a thundering outburst of spontaneous applause when the long list of guests was called.

I might have perished on the spot but for the friendly support and assistance of my excellent friend, Sir John Bennett.

This letter does not tell all of the incident or the real reason why he might have perished on the spot. During the long roll-call of guests he had lost interest a little, and was conversing in whispers with his “excellent friend,” Sir John Bennett, stopping to applaud now and then when the applause of the others indicated that some distinguished name had been pronounced. All at once the applause broke out with great vehemence. This must be some very distinguished person indeed. He joined in it with great enthusiasm. When it was over he whispered to Sir John:

“Whose name was that we were just applauding?”

“Mark Twain’s.”

Whereupon the support was needed.

Poor little pirate Hotten did not have a happy time during this visit. He had reveled in the prospect at first, for he anticipated a large increase to be derived from his purloined property; but suddenly, one morning, he was aghast to find in the Spectator a signed letter from Mark Twain, in which he was repudiated, referred to as “John Camden Hottentot,” an unsavory person generally. Hotten also sent a letter to the Spectator, in which he attempted to justify himself, but it was a feeble performance. Clemens prepared two other communications, each worse than the other and both more destructive than the first one. But these were only to relieve his mind. He did not print them. In one of them he pursued the fancy of John Camden Hottentot, whom he offers as a specimen to the Zoological Gardens.

It is not a bird. It is not a man. It is not a fish. It does not seem to be in all respects a reptile. It has the body and features of a man, but scarcely any of the instincts that belong to such a structure.... I am sure that this singular little creature is the missing link between the man and the hyena.

Hotten had preyed upon explorer Stanley and libeled him in a so-called biography to a degree that had really aroused some feeling against Stanley in England. Only for the moment—the Queen invited Stanley to luncheon, and newspaper criticism ceased. Hotten was in general disrepute, therefore, so it was not worth while throwing a second brick at him.

In fact, now that Clemens had expended his venom, on paper, Hotten seemed to him rather an amusing figure than otherwise. An incident grew out of it all, however, that was not amusing. E. P. Hingston, whom the reader may remember as having been with Artemus Ward in Virginia City, and one of that happy group that wine and dined the year away, had been engaged by Hotten to write the introductory to his edition of *The Innocents Abroad*. It was a well-written, highly complimentary appreciation. Hingston did not dream that he was committing an offense, nor did Clemens himself regard it as such in the beginning.

Page 269

But Mark Twain's views had undergone a radical change, and with characteristic dismissal of previous conditions he had forgotten that he had ever had any other views than those he now held. Hingston was in London, and one evening, at a gathering, approached Clemens with outstretched hand. But Clemens failed to see Hingston's hand or to recognize him. In after-years his conscience hurt him terribly for this. He remembered it only with remorse and shame. Once, in his old age, he spoke of it with deep sorrow.

LXXXVII

THE BOOK THAT WAS NEVER WRITTEN

The book on England, which he had prepared for so carefully, was never written. Hundreds of the stylographic pages were filled, and the duplicates sent home for the entertainment of Olivia Clemens, but the notes were not completed, and the actual writing was never begun. There was too much sociability in London for one thing, and then he found that he could not write entertainingly of England without introducing too many personalities, and running the risk of offending those who had taken him into their hearts and homes. In a word, he would have to write too seriously or not at all.

He began his memoranda industriously enough, and the volume might have been as charming and as valuable as any he has left behind. The reader will hardly fail to find a few of the entries interesting. They are offered here as examples of his daily observation during those early weeks of his stay, and to show somewhat of his purpose:

An expatriate

There was once an American thief who fled his country and took refuge in England. He dressed himself after the fashion of the Londoners, and taught his tongue the peculiarities of the London pronunciation and did his best in all ways to pass himself for a native. But he did two fatal things: he stopped at the Langham Hotel, and the first trip he took was to visit Stratford-on-Avon and the grave of Shakespeare. These things betrayed his nationality.

Stanley and the queen

See the power a monarch wields! When I arrived here, two weeks ago, the papers and geographers were in a fair way to eat poor Stanley up without salt or sauce. The Queen says, "Come four hundred miles up into Scotland and sit at my luncheon-table fifteen minutes"; which, being translated, means, "Gentlemen, I believe in this man and take him under my protection"; and not another yelp is heard.

At the British museum



What a place it is!

Page 270

Mention some very rare curiosity of a peculiar nature—a something which you have read about somewhere but never seen—they show you a dozen! They show you all the possible varieties of that thing! They show you curiously wrought jeweled necklaces of beaten gold, worn by the ancient Egyptians, Assyrians, Etruscans, Greeks, Britons—every people of the forgotten ages, indeed. They show you the ornaments of all the tribes and peoples that live or ever did live. Then they show you a cast taken from Cromwell's face in death; then the venerable vase that once contained the ashes of Xerxes. I am wonderfully thankful for the British Museum. Nobody comes bothering around me—nobody elbows me—all the room and all the light I want, under this huge dome—no disturbing noises—and people standing ready to bring me a copy of pretty much any book that ever was printed under the sun—and if I choose to go wandering about the long corridors and galleries of the great building the secrets of all the earth and all the ages are laid open to me. I am not capable of expressing my gratitude for the British Museum—it seems as if I do not know any but little words and weak ones.

Westminster Abbey by night

It was past eleven o'clock and I was just going to bed. But this friend of mine was as reliable as he was eccentric, and so there was not a doubt in my mind that his "expedition" had merit in it. I put on my coat and boots again, and we drove away.

"Where is it? Where are we going?"

"Don't worry. You'll see."

He was not inclined to talk. So I thought this must be a weighty matter. My curiosity grew with the minutes, but I kept it manfully under the surface. I watched the lamps, the signs, the numbers as we thundered down the long street. I am always lost in London, day or night. It was very chilly, almost bleak. People leaned against the gusty blasts as if it were the dead of winter. The crowds grew thinner and thinner, and the noises waxed faint and seemed far away. The sky was overcast and threatening. We drove on, and still on, till I wondered if we were ever going to stop. At last we passed by a spacious bridge and a vast building, and presently entered a gateway, passed through a sort of tunnel, and stopped in a court surrounded by the black outlines of a great edifice. Then we alighted, walked a dozen steps or so, and waited. In a little while footsteps were heard, a man emerged from the darkness, and we dropped into his wake without saying anything. He led us under an archway of masonry, and from that into a roomy tunnel, through a tall iron gate, which he locked behind us. We followed him down this tunnel, guided more by his footsteps on the stone flagging than by anything we could very distinctly see. At the end of it we came to another iron gate, and our conductor stopped there and lit a bull's-eye

Page 271

lantern. Then he unlocked the gate; and I wished he had oiled it first, it grated so dismally. The gate swung open and we stood on the threshold of what seemed a limitless domed and pillared cavern, carved out of the solid darkness. The conductor and my friend took off their hats reverently, and I did likewise. For the moment that we stood thus there was not a sound, and the stillness seemed to add to the solemnity of the gloom. I looked my inquiry!

"It is the tomb of the great dead of England-Westminster Abbey."...

We were among the tombs; on every hand dull shapes of men, sitting, standing, or stooping, inspected us curiously out of the darkness —reached out their hands toward us—some appealing, some beckoning, some warning us away. Effigies they were—statues over the graves; but they looked human and natural in the murky shadows. Now a little half-grown black and white cat squeezed herself through the bars of the iron gate and came purring lovingly about us, unawed by the time or the place, unimpressed by the marble pomp that sepulchers a line of mighty dead that ends with a great author of yesterday and began with a sceptered monarch away back in the dawn of history, more than twelve hundred years ago . . . Mr. Wright flashed his lantern first upon this object and then upon that, and kept up a running commentary that showed there was nothing about the venerable Abbey that was trivial in his eyes or void of interest. He is a man in authority, being superintendent, and his daily business keeps him familiar with every nook and corner of the great pile. Casting a luminous ray now here, now yonder, he would say: "Observe the height of the Abbey—one hundred and three feet to the base of the roof; I measured it myself the other day. Notice the base of this column—old, very old—hundreds and hundreds of years —and how well they knew how to build in those old days! Notice it —every stone is laid horizontally; that is to say, just as nature laid it originally in the quarry not set up edgewise; in our day some people set them on edge, and then wonder why they split and flake. Architects cannot teach nature anything. Let me remove this matting—it is put here to preserve the pavement; now there is a bit of pavement that is seven hundred years old; you can see by these scattering clusters of colored mosaics how beautiful it was before time and sacrilegious idlers marred it. Now there, in the border, was an inscription, once see, follow the circle—you can trace it by the ornaments that have been pulled out—here is an A and there is an O, and yonder another A—all beautiful Old English capitals; there is no telling what the inscription was—no record left now. Now move along in this direction, if you please. Yonder is where old King Sebert the Saxon lies his monument is the oldest one in the Abbey; Sebert died in 616,—[Clemens probably misunderstood

Page 272

the name. It was Ethelbert who died in 616. The name Sebert does not appear in any Saxon annals accessible to the author.]—and that's as much, as twelve hundred and fifty years ago think of it! Twelve hundred and fifty years! Now yonder is the last one—Charles Dickens—there on the floor, with the brass letters on the slab—and to this day the people come and put flowers on it.... There is Garrick's monument; and Addison's, and Thackeray's bust—and Macaulay lies there. And close to Dickens and Garrick lie Sheridan and Dr. Johnson—and here is old Parr....“That stone there covers Campbell the poet. Here are names you know pretty well—Milton, and Gray who wrote the Elegy, and Butler who wrote Hudibras; and Edmund Spenser, and Ben Jonson—there are three tablets to him scattered about the Abbey, and all got 'O, Rare Ben Jonson' cut on them. You were standing on one of them just now he is buried standing up. There used to be a tradition here that explains it. The story goes that he did not dare ask to be buried in the Abbey, so he asked King James if he would make him a present of eighteen inches of English ground, and the King said 'yes,' and asked him where he would have it, and he said in Westminster Abbey. Well, the King wouldn't go back on his word, and so there he is, sure enough—stood up on end.”

The reader may regret that there are not more of these entries, and that the book itself was never written. Just when he gave up the project is not recorded. He was urged to lecture in London, but declined. To Mrs. Clemens, in September, he wrote:

Everybody says lecture, lecture, lecture, but I have not the least idea of doing it; certainly not at present. Mr. Dolby, who took Dickens to America, is coming to talk business tomorrow, though I have sent him word once before that I can't be hired to talk here; because I have no time to spare. There is too much sociability; I do not get along fast enough with work.

In October he declared that he was very homesick, and proposed that Mrs. Clemens and Susie join him at once in London, unless she would prefer to have him come home for the winter and all of them return to London in the spring. So it is likely that the book was not then abandoned. He felt that his visit was by no means ended; that it was, in fact, only just begun, but he wanted the ones he loved most to share it with him. To his mother and sister, in November, he wrote:

I came here to take notes for a book, but I haven't done much but attend dinners and make speeches. I have had a jolly good time, and I do hate to go away from these English folks; they make a stranger feel entirely at home, and they laugh so easily that it is a comfort to make after-dinner speeches here. I have made hundreds of friends; and last night, in the crush at the opening of the new Guild Hall Library and Museum, I was surprised to meet a familiar face every other step.

Page 273

All his impressions of England had been happy ones. He could deliver a gentle satire now and then at certain British institutions—certain London localities and features—as in his speech at the Savage Club, —[September 28, 1872. This is probably the most characteristic speech made by Mark Twain during his first London visit; the reader will find it in full in Appendix L, at the end of last volume.]—but taking the snug island as a whole, its people, its institutions, its fair, rural aspects, he had found in it only delight. To Mrs. Crane he wrote:

If you and Theodore will come over in the spring with Livy and me, and spend the summer, you shall see a country that is so beautiful that you will be obliged to believe in fairy-land. There is nothing like it elsewhere on the globe. You should have a season ticket and travel up and down every day between London and Oxford and worship nature. And Theodore can browse with me among dusty old dens that look now as they looked five hundred years ago; and puzzle over books in the British Museum that were made before Christ was born; and in the customs of their public dinners, and the ceremonies of every official act, and the dresses of a thousand dignitaries, trace the speech and manners of all the centuries that have dragged their lagging decades over England since the Heptarchy fell asunder. I would a good deal rather live here if I could get the rest of you over.

He sailed November 12th, on the *Batavia*, loaded with Christmas presents for everybody; jewelry, furs, laces; also a practical steam-engine for his namesake, Sam Moffett. Half-way across the Atlantic the *Batavia* ran into a hurricane and was badly damaged by heavy seas, and driven far out of her course. It was a lucky event on the whole, for she fell in with a water-logged lumber bark, a complete wreck, with nine surviving sailors clinging to her rigging. In the midst of the wild gale a lifeboat was launched and the perishing men were rescued. Clemens prepared a graphic report of the matter for the Royal Humane Society, asking that medals be conferred upon the brave rescuers, a document that was signed by his fellow-passengers and obtained for the men complete recognition and wide celebrity. Closing, the writer said:

As might have been anticipated, if I have been of any service toward rescuing these nine shipwrecked human beings by standing around the deck in a furious storm, without an umbrella, keeping an eye on things and seeing that they were done right, and yelling whenever a cheer seemed to be the important thing, I am glad and I am satisfied. I ask no reward. I would do it again under the same circumstances. But what I do plead for, earnestly and sincerely, is that the Royal Humane Society will remember our captain and our life-boat crew, and in so remembering them increase the high honor and esteem in which the society is held all over the civilized world.

The *Batavia* reached New York November 26, 1872. Mark Twain had been absent three months, during which he had been brought to at least a partial realization of what his work meant to him and to mankind.

Page 274

An election had taken place during his absence—an election which gratified him deeply, for it had resulted in the second presidency of General Grant and in the defeat of Horace Greeley, whom he admired perhaps, but not as presidential material. To Thomas Nast, who had aided very effectually in Mr. Greeley's overwhelming defeat, Clemens wrote:

Nast, you more than any other man have won a prodigious victory for Grant—I mean, rather, for civilization and progress. Those pictures were simply marvelous, and if any man in the land has a right to hold his head up and be honestly proud of his share in this year's vast events that man is unquestionably yourself. We all do sincerely honor you, and are proud of you.

Horace Greeley's peculiar abilities and eccentricities won celebrity for him, rather than voters. Mark Twain once said of him:

“He was a great man, an honest man, and served his, country well and was an honor to it. Also, he was a good-natured man, but abrupt with strangers if they annoyed him when he was busy. He was profane, but that is nothing; the best of us is that. I did not know him well, but only just casually, and by accident. I never met him but once. I called on him in the Tribune office, but I was not intending to. I was looking for Whitelaw Reid, and got into the wrong den. He was alone at his desk, writing, and we conversed—not long, but just a little. I asked him if he was well, and he said, ‘What the hell do you want?’ Well, I couldn’t remember what I wanted, so I said I would call again. But I didn’t.”

Clemens did not always tell the incident just in this way. Sometimes it was John Hay he was looking for instead of Reid, and the conversation with Greeley varied; but perhaps there was a germ of history under it somewhere, and at any rate it could have happened well enough, and not have been out of character with either of the men.

LXXXVIII

“The gilded age”

Mark Twain did not go on the lecture circuit that winter. Redpath had besought him as usual, and even in midsummer had written:

“Will you? Won’t you? We have seven thousand to eight thousand dollars in engagements recorded for you,” and he named a list of towns ranging geographically from Boston to St. Paul.

But Clemens had no intention then of ever lecturing any more, and again in November, from London, he announced (to Redpath):

“When I yell again for less than \$500 I’ll be pretty hungry, but I haven’t any intention of yelling at any price.”

Page 275

Redpath pursued him, and in January proposed \$400 for a single night in Philadelphia, but without result. He did lecture two nights in Steinway Hall for the Mercantile Library Association, on the basis of half profits, netting \$1,300 for the two nights as his share; and he lectured one night in Hartford, at a profit Of \$1,500, for charity. Father Hawley, of Hartford, had announced that his missionary work was suffering for lack of funds. Some of his people were actually without food, he said, their children crying with hunger. No one ever responded to an appeal like that quicker than Samuel Clemens. He offered to deliver a lecture free, and to bear an equal proportion of whatever expenses were incurred by the committee of eight who agreed to join in forwarding the project. He gave the Sandwich Island lecture, and at the close of it a large card was handed him with the figures of the receipts printed upon it. It was held up to view, and the house broke into a storm of cheers.

He did very little writing during the early weeks following his return. Early in the year (January 3 and 6, 1873) he contributed two Sandwich Island letters to the Tribune, in which, in his own peculiar fashion, he urged annexation.

"We must annex those people," he declared, and proceeded to specify the blessings we could give them, such as "leather-headed juries, the insanity law, and the Tweed Ring."

We can confer Woodhull and Claflin on them, and George Francis Train.
We can give them lecturers! I will go myself.

We can make that little bunch of sleepy islands the hottest corner on earth, and array it in the moral splendor of our high and holy civilization. Annexation is what the poor islanders need!

"Shall we, to men benighted, the lamp of life deny?"

His success in England became an incentive to certain American institutions to recognize his gifts at home. Early in the year he was dined as the guest of the Lotos Club of New York, and a week or two later elected to its membership. This was but a beginning. Some new membership or honor was offered every little while, and so many banquets that he finally invented a set form for declining them. He was not yet recognized as the foremost American man of letters, but undoubtedly he had become the most popular; and Edwin Whipple, writing at this time, or but little later, said:

"Mark Twain is regarded chiefly as a humorist, but the exercise of his real talents would rank him with the ablest of our authors in the past fifty years." So he was beginning to be "discovered" in high places.

It was during this winter that the Clemens household enjoyed its first real home life in Hartford, its first real home life anywhere since those earliest days of marriage. The Hooker mansion was a comfortable place. The little family had comparatively good

health. Their old friends were stanch and lavishly warm-hearted, and they had added many new ones. Their fireside was a delightful nucleus around which gathered those they cared for most, the Twichells, the Warner families, the Trumbulls—all certain of a welcome there. George Warner, only a little while ago, remembering, said:

Page 276

"The Clemens house was the only one I have ever known where there was never any preoccupation in the evenings, and where visitors were always welcome. Clemens was the best kind of a host; his evenings after dinner were an unending flow of stories."

Friends living near by usually came and went at will, often without the ceremony of knocking or formal leave-taking. They were more like one great family in that neighborhood, with a community of interests, a unity of ideals. The Warner families and the Clemenses were particularly intimate, and out of their association grew Mark Twain's next important literary undertaking, his collaboration with Charles Dudley Warner in 'The Gilded Age'.

A number of more or less absurd stories have been printed about the origin of this book. It was a very simple matter, a perfectly natural development.

At the dinner-table one night, with the Warners present, criticisms of recent novels were offered, with the usual freedom and severity of dinner-table talk. The husbands were inclined to treat rather lightly the novels in which their wives were finding entertainment. The wives naturally retorted that the proper thing for the husbands to do was to furnish the American people with better ones. This was regarded in the nature of a challenge, and as such was accepted—mutually accepted: that is to say, in partnership. On the spur of the moment Clemens and Warner agreed that they would do a novel together, that they would begin it immediately. This is the whole story of the book's origin; so far, at least, as the collaboration is concerned. Clemens, in fact, had the beginning of a story in his mind, but had been unwilling to undertake an extended work of fiction alone. He welcomed only too eagerly, therefore, the proposition of joint authorship. His purpose was to write a tale around that lovable character of his youth, his mother's cousin, James Lampton—to let that gentle visionary stand as the central figure against a proper background. The idea appealed to Warner, and there was no delay in the beginning. Clemens immediately set to work and completed 399 pages of the manuscript, the first eleven chapters of the book, before the early flush of enthusiasm waned.

Warner came over then, and Clemens read it aloud to him. Warner had some plans for the story, and took it up at this point, and continued it through the next twelve chapters; and so they worked alternately, "in the superstition," as Mark Twain long afterward declared, "that we were writing one coherent yarn, when I suppose, as a matter of fact, we were writing two incoherent ones."—[The reader may be interested in the division of labor. Clemens wrote chapters I to XI; also chapters XXIV, XXV, xxvii, XXVIII, xxx, XXXII, xxxiii, XXXIV, XXXVI, XXXVII, XLII, xliii, XLV, li, lij, LIII, lvii, lix, lx, LXI, LXII, and portions of chapters xxxv, xlix, LVI. Warner wrote chapters XII to XXIII; also chapters xxvi, XXIX, XXXI, xxxviii, XXXIX, XL, xli, xliv, XLVI, xlvii, XLVIII, L, liv, lv, lviii, lxiii, and portions of chapters xxxv, xlix, and LVI. The work was therefore very evenly divided.

Page 277

There was another co-worker on *The Gilded Age* before the book was finally completed. This was J. Hammond Trumbull, who prepared the variegated, marvelous cryptographic chapter headings: Trumbull was the most learned man that ever lived in Hartford. He was familiar with all literary and scientific data, and according to Clemens could swear in twenty-seven languages. It was thought to be a choice idea to get Trumbull to supply a lingual medley of quotations to precede the chapters in the new book, the purpose being to excite interest and possibly to amuse the reader—a purpose which to some extent appears to have miscarried.]

The book was begun in February and finished in April, so the work did not lag. The result, if not highly artistic, made astonishingly good reading. Warner had the touch of romance, Clemens, the gift of creating, or at least of portraying, human realities. Most of his characters reflected intimate personalities of his early life. Besides the apotheosis of James Lampton into the immortal Sellers, Orion became Washington Hawkins, Squire Clemens the judge, while Mark Twain's own personality, in a greater or lesser degree, is reflected in most of his creations. As for the Tennessee land, so long a will-o'the-wisp and a bugbear, it became tangible property at last. Only a year or two before Clemens had written to Orion:

Oh, here! I don't want to be consulted at all about Tennessee. I don't want it even mentioned to me. When I make a suggestion it is for you to act upon it or throw it aside, but I beseech you never to ask my advice, opinion, or consent about that hated property.

But it came in good play now. It is the important theme of the story.

Mark Twain was well qualified to construct his share of the tale. He knew his characters, their lives, and their atmospheres perfectly. Senator Dilworthy (otherwise Senator Pomeroy, of Kansas, then notorious for attempted vote-buying) was familiar enough. That winter in Washington had acquainted Clemens with the life there, its political intrigues, and the disrepute of Congress. Warner was equally well qualified for his share of the undertaking, and the chief criticism that one may offer is the one stated by Clemens himself—that the divisions of the tale remain divisions rather than unity.

As for the story itself—the romance and tragedy of it—the character of Laura in the hands of either author is one not easy to forget. Whether this means that the work is well done, or only strikingly done, the reader himself must judge. Morally, the character is not justified. Laura was a victim of circumstance from the beginning. There could be no poetic justice in her doom. To drag her out of a steamer wreck, only to make her the victim of a scoundrel, later an adventuress, and finally a murderess, all may be good art, but of a very bad kind. Laura is a sort of American Becky Sharp; but there is retributive justice in Becky's fate, whereas Laura's doom is warranted only by the author's whim. As for her end, whatever the virtuous public of that day might have done, a present-day

audience would not have pelted her from the stage, destroyed her future, taken away her life.

Page 278

The authors regarded their work highly when it was finished, but that is nothing. Any author regards his work highly at the moment of its completion. In later years neither of them thought very well of their production; but that also is nothing. The author seldom cares very deeply for his offspring once it is turned over to the public charge. The fact that the story is still popular, still delights thousands of readers, when a myriad of novels that have been written since it was completed have lived their little day and died so utterly that even their names have passed out of memory, is the best verdict as to its worth.

LXXXIX

PLANNING A NEW HOME

Clemens and his wife bought a lot for the new home that winter, a fine, sightly piece of land on Farmington Avenue—table-land, sloping down to a pretty stream that wound through the willows and among the trees. They were as delighted as children with their new purchase and the prospect of building. To her sister Mrs. Clemens wrote:

Mr. Clemens seems to glory in his sense of possession; he goes daily into the lot, has had several falls trying to lay off the land by sliding around on his feet....

For three days the ice has covered the trees, and they have been glorious. We could do nothing but watch the beauty outside; if you looked at the trees as the sun struck them, with your back toward the sun, they were covered with jewels. If you looked toward the sun it was all crystal whiteness, a perfect fairy-land. Then the nights were moonlight, and that was a great beauty, the moon giving us the same prismatic effect.

This was the storm of which Mark Twain wrote his matchless description, given first in his speech on New England weather, and later preserved in 'Following the Equator', in more extended form. In that book he likens an ice-storm to his impressions derived from reading descriptions of the Taj Mahal, that wonderful tomb of a fair East Indian queen. It is a marvelous bit of word-painting—his description of that majestic vision: "When every bough and twig is strung with ice-beads, frozen dewdrops, and the whole tree sparkles cold and white, like the Shah of Persia's diamond plume." It will pay any one to look up that description and read it all, though it has been said, by the fortunate one or two who heard him first give it utterance as an impromptu outburst, that in the subsequent process of writing the bloom of its original magnificence was lost.

The plans for the new house were drawn forthwith by that gentle architect Edward Potter, whose art to-day may be considered open to criticism, but not because of any lack of originality. Hartford houses of that period were mainly of the goods-box form of

architecture, perfectly square, typifying the commercial pursuits of many of their owners. Potter agreed to get away from this idea, and a radical and even frenzied

Page 279

departure was the result. Certainly his plans presented beautiful pictures, and all who saw them were filled with wonder and delight. Architecture has lavished itself in many florescent forms since then, but we may imagine that Potter's "English violet" order of design, as he himself designated it, startled, dazzled, and captivated in a day, when most houses were mere habitations, built with a view to economy and the largest possible amount of room.

Workmen were put on the ground without delay, to prepare for the builders, and work was rapidly pushed along. Then in May the whole matter was left in the hands of the architect and the carpenters (with Lawyer Charles E. Perkins to stand between Potter and the violent builder, who roared at Potter and frightened him when he wanted changes), while the Clemens household, with Clara Spaulding, a girlhood friend of Mrs. Clemens, sailed away to England for a half-year holiday.

XC

A LONG ENGLISH HOLIDAY

They sailed on the Batavia, and with them went a young man named Thompson, a theological student whom Clemens had consented to take as an amanuensis. There is a pathetic incident connected with this young man, and it may as well be set down here. Clemens found, a few weeks after his arrival in England, that so great was the tax upon his time that he could make no use of Thompson's services. He gave Thompson fifty dollars, and upon the possibility of the young man's desiring to return to America, advanced him another fifty dollars, saying that he could return it some day, and never thought of it again. But the young man remembered it, and one day, thirty-six years later, after a life of hardship and struggle, such as the life of a country minister is apt to be, he wrote and inclosed a money-order, a payment on his debt. That letter and its inclosure brought only sorrow to Mark Twain. He felt that it laid upon him the accumulated burden of the weary thirty-six years' struggle with ill-fortune. He returned the money, of course, and in a biographical note commented:

How pale painted heroisms of romance look beside it! Thompson's heroism, which is real, which is colossal, which is sublime, and which is costly beyond all estimate, is achieved in profound obscurity, and its hero walks in rags to the end of his days. I had forgotten Thompson completely, but he flashes before me as vividly as lightning. I can see him now. It was on the deck of the Batavia, in the dock. The ship was casting off, with that hubbub and confusion and rushing of sailors, and shouting of orders and shrieking of boatswain whistles, which marked the departure preparations in those days—an impressive contrast with the solemn silence which marks the departure



preparations of the giant ships of the present day. Mrs. Clemens, Clara Spaulding, little Susy, and the nurse-maid were all properly garbed for the occasion. We all had on our

Page 280

storm-rig, heavy clothes of somber hue, but new and designed and constructed for the purpose, strictly in accordance with sea-going etiquette; anything wearable on land being distinctly and odiously out of the question. Very well. On that deck, and gliding placidly among those honorable and properly upholstered groups, appeared Thompson, young, grave, long, slim, with an aged fuzzy plug hat towering high on the upper end of him and followed by a gray duster, which flowed down, without break or wrinkle, to his ankles. He came straight to us, and shook hands and compromised us. Everybody could see that we knew him. A nigger in heaven could not have created a profounder astonishment. However, Thompson didn't know that anything was happening. He had no prejudices about clothes. I can still see him as he looked when we passed Sandy Hook and the winds of the big ocean smote us. Erect, lofty, and grand he stood facing the blast, holding his plug on with both hands and his generous duster blowing out behind, level with his neck. There were scoffers observing, but he didn't know it; he wasn't disturbed. In my mind, I see him once afterward, clothed as before, taking me down in shorthand. The Shah of Persia had come to England and Dr. Hosmer, of the Herald, had sent me to Ostend, to view his Majesty's progress across the Channel and write an account of it. I can't recall Thompson after that, and I wish his memory had been as poor as mine.

They had been a month in London, when the final incident referred to took place—the arrival of the Shah of Persia—and were comfortably quartered at the Langham Hotel. To Twichell Clemens wrote:

We have a luxuriously ample suite of apartments on the third floor, our bedroom looking straight up Portland Place, our parlor having a noble array of great windows looking out upon both streets (Portland Place and the crook that joins it onto Regent Street).

Nine p.m. full twilight, rich sunset tints lingering in the west.

I am not going to write anything; rather tell it when I get back.
I love you and Harmony, and that is all the fresh news I've got
anyway. And I mean to keep that fresh all the time.

Mrs. Clemens, in a letter to her sister, declared: "It is perfectly discouraging to try to write you. There is so much to write about that it makes me feel as if it was no use to begin."

It was a period of continuous honor and entertainment. If Mark Twain had been a lion on his first visit, he was little less than royalty now. His rooms at the Langham were like a court. Miss Spaulding (now Mrs. John B. Stanchfield) remembers that Robert Browning, Turgeneff, Sir John Millais, Lord Houghton, and Sir Charles Dilke (then at the height of his fame) were among those that called to pay their respects. In a recent letter she says:

Page 281

I remember a delightful luncheon that Charles Kingsley gave for Mr. Clemens; also an evening when Lord Dunraven brought Mr. Home, the medium, Lord Dunraven telling many of the remarkable things he had seen Mr. Home do. I remember I wanted so much to see him float out of a seven or eight story window, and enter another, which Lord Dunraven said he had seen him do many times. But Mr. Home had been very ill, and said his power had left him. My great regret was that we did not see Carlyle, who was too sad and ill for visits.

Among others they met Lewis Carroll, the author of Alice in Wonderland, and found him so shy that it was almost impossible to get him to say a word on any subject.

"The shyest full-grown man, except Uncle Remus, I ever met," Clemens once wrote. "Dr. MacDonald and several other lively talkers were present, and the talk went briskly on for a couple of hours, but Carroll sat still all the while, except now and then when he answered a question."

At a dinner given by George Smalley they met Herbert Spencer, and at a luncheon-party at Lord Houghton's, Sir Arthur Helps, then a world-wide celebrity.

Lord Elcho, a large, vigorous man, sat at some distance down the table. He was talking earnestly about the town of Godalming. It was a deep, flowing, and inarticulate rumble, but I caught the Godalming pretty nearly every time it broke free of the rumbling, and as all the strength was on the first end of the word, it startled me every time, because it sounded so like swearing. In the middle of the luncheon Lady Houghton rose, remarked to the guests on her right and on her left, in a matter-of-fact way, "Excuse me, I have an engagement," and without further ceremony, she went off to meet it. This would have been doubtful etiquette in America. Lord Houghton told a number of delightful stories. He told them in French, and I lost nothing of them but the nubs.

Little Susy and her father thrived on London life, but after a time it wore on Mrs. Clemens. She delighted in the English cordiality and culture, but the demands were heavy, the social forms sometimes trying. Life in London was interesting, and in its way charming, but she did not enter into it with quite her husband's enthusiasm and heartiness. In the end they canceled all London engagements and quietly set out for Scotland. On the way they rested a few days in York, a venerable place such as Mark Twain always loved to describe. In a letter to Mrs. Langdon he wrote:

For the present we shall remain in this queer old walled town, with its crooked, narrow lanes, that tell us of their old day that knew no wheeled vehicles; its plaster-and-timber dwellings, with upper stories far overhanging the street, and thus marking their date, say three hundred years ago; the stately city walls, the castellated gates, the ivy-grown, foliage-sheltered, most noble and picturesque ruin of St. Mary's Abbey,

Page 282

suggesting their date, say five hundred years ago, in the heart of Crusading times and the glory of English chivalry and romance; the vast Cathedral of York, with its worn carvings and quaintly pictured windows, preaching of still remoter days; the outlandish names of streets and courts and byways that stand as a record and a memorial, all these centuries, of Danish dominion here in still earlier times; the hint here and there of King Arthur and his knights and their bloody fights with Saxon oppressors round about this old city more than thirteen hundred years gone by; and, last of all, the melancholy old stone coffins and sculptured inscriptions, a venerable arch and a hoary tower of stone that still remain and are kissed by the sun and caressed by the shadows every day, just as the sun and the shadows have kissed and, caressed them every lagging day since the Roman Emperor's soldiers placed them here in the times when Jesus the Son of Mary walked the streets of Nazareth a youth, with no more name or fame than the Yorkshire boy who is loitering down this street this moment.

They reached Edinburgh at the end of July and secluded themselves in Veitch's family hotel in George Street, intending to see no one. But this plan was not a success; the social stress of London had been too much for Mrs. Clemens, and she collapsed immediately after their arrival. Clemens was unacquainted in Edinburgh, but remembered that Dr. John Brown, who had written *Rab and His Friend*, lived there. He learned his address, and that he was still a practising physician. He walked around to 23 Rutland Street, and made himself known. Dr. Brown came forthwith, and Mrs. Clemens speedily recovered under his able and inspiring treatment.

The association did not end there. For nearly a month Dr. Brown was their daily companion, either at the hotel, or in his own home, or on protracted drives when he made his round of visits, taking these new friends along. Dr. John was beloved by everybody in Edinburgh, everybody in Scotland, for that matter, and his story of *Rab* had won him a following throughout Christendom. He was an unpretentious sovereign. Clemens once wrote of him:

His was a sweet and winning face, as beautiful a face as I have ever known. Reposeful, gentle, benignant; the face of a saint at peace with all the world and placidly beaming upon it the sunshine of love that filled his heart.

He was the friend of all dogs, and of all people. It has been told of him that once, when driving, he thrust his head suddenly out of the carriage window, then resumed his place with a disappointed look.

"Who was it?" asked his companion. "Some one you know?"

"No," he said. "A dog I don't know."

He became the boon companion and playmate of little Susy, then not quite a year and a half old. He called her Megalopis, a Greek term, suggested by her eyes; those deep, burning eyes that seemed always so full of life's sadder philosophies, and impending tragedy. In a collection of Dr. Brown's letters he refers to this period. In one place he says:

Page 283

Had the author of *The Innocents Abroad* not come to Edinburgh at that time we in all human probability might never have met, and what a deprivation that would have been to me during the last quarter of a century!

And in another place:

I am attending the wife of Mark Twain. His real name is Clemens. She is a quite lovely little woman, modest and clever, and she has a girlie eighteen months old, her ludicrous miniature—and such eyes!

Those playmates, the good doctor and Megalopis, romped together through the hotel rooms with that complete abandon which few grown persons can assume in their play with children, and not all children can assume in their play with grown-ups. They played “bear,” and the “bear” (which was a very little one, so little that when it stood up behind the sofa you could just get a glimpse of yellow hair) would lie in wait for her victim, and spring out and surprise him and throw him into frenzies of fear.

Almost every day they made his professional rounds with him. He always carried a basket of grapes for his patients. His guests brought along books to read while they waited. When he stopped for a call he would say:

“Entertain yourselves while I go in and reduce the population.”

There was much sight-seeing to do in Edinburgh, and they could not quite escape social affairs. There were teas and luncheons and dinners with the Dunfermlines and the Abercrombies, and the MacDonalds, and with others of those brave clans that no longer slew one another among the grim northern crags and glens, but were as sociable and entertaining lords and ladies as ever the southland could produce. They were very gentle folk indeed, and Mrs. Clemens, in future years, found her heart going back oftener to Edinburgh than to any other haven of those first wanderings. August 24th she wrote to her sister:

We leave Edinburgh to-morrow with sincere regret; we have had such a delightful stay here—we do so regret leaving Dr. Brown and his sister, thinking that we shall probably never see them again [as indeed they never did].

They spent a day or two at Glasgow and sailed for Ireland, where they put in a fortnight, and early in September were back in England again, at Chester, that queer old city where; from a tower on the wall, Charles I. read the story of his doom. Reginald Cholmondeley had invited them to visit his country seat, beautiful Conover Hall, near Shrewsbury, and in that lovely retreat they spent some happy, restful days. Then they were in the whirl of London once more, but escaped for a fortnight to Paris, sight-seeing and making purchases for the new home.

Mrs. Clemens was quite ready to return to America, by this time.

Page 284

I am blue and cross and homesick [she wrote]. I suppose what makes me feel the latter is because we are contemplating to stay in London another month. There has not one sheet of Mr. Clemens's proof come yet, and if he goes home before the book is published here he will lose his copyright. And then his friends feel that it will be better for him to lecture in London before his book is published, not only that it will give him a larger but a more enviable reputation. I would not hesitate one moment if it were simply for the money that his copyright will bring him, but if his reputation will be better for his staying and lecturing, of course he ought to stay.... The truth is, I can't bear the thought of postponing going home.

It is rather gratifying to find Olivia Clemens human, like that, now and then. Otherwise, on general testimony, one might well be tempted to regard her as altogether of another race and kind.

XCI

A LONDON LECTURE

Clemens concluded to hasten the homeward journey, but to lecture a few nights in London before starting. He would then accompany his little family home, and return at once to continue the lecture series and protect his copyright. This plan was carried out. In a communication to the Standard, October 7th, he said:

Sir,—In view of the prevailing frenzy concerning the Sandwich Islands, and the inflamed desire of the public to acquire information concerning them, I have thought it well to tarry yet another week in England and deliver a lecture upon this absorbing subject. And lest it should be thought unbecoming in me, a stranger, to come to the public rescue at such a time, instead of leaving to abler hands a matter of so much moment, I desire to explain that I do it with the best motives and the most honorable intentions. I do it because I am convinced that no one can allay this unwholesome excitement as effectually as I can, and to allay it, and allay it as quickly as possible, is surely one thing that is absolutely necessary at this juncture. I feel and know that I am equal to this task, for I can allay any kind of an excitement by lecturing upon it. I have saved many communities in this way. I have always been able to paralyze the public interest in any topic that I chose to take hold of and elucidate with all my strength. Hoping that this explanation will show that if I am seeming to intrude I am at least doing it from a high impulse, I am, sir, your obedient servant,

mark twain.

A day later the following announcement appeared:

*Queen's concert rooms,
Hanover square.*

Mr. George Dolby begs to announce that

Mr. Mark twain

Page 285

*Will deliver A
lecture
of A
humorous character,*

*As above, on Monday evening next, October 13th, 1873,
and repeat it in the same place, on Tuesday evening, October 14th,
Wednesday " " 15th,
Thursday " " 16th,
Friday " " 17th,*

*At Eight o'Clock,
and
Saturday afternoon, October 18th,
At Three o'Clock.*

Subject:
"Our Fellow Savages of the Sandwich Islands."

As Mr. *Twain* has spent several months in these Islands, and is well acquainted with his subject, the Lecture may be expected to furnish matter of interest.

Stalls, 5s. Unreserved seats, 3s.

The prospect of a lecture from Mark Twain interested the London public. Those who had not seen him were willing to pay even for that privilege. The papers were encouraging; Punch sounded a characteristic note:

Welcome to A lecturer

"'Tis time we Twain did show ourselves." 'Twas said
By Caesar, when one Mark had lost his head:
By Mark, whose head's quite bright, 'tis said again:
Therefore, "go with me, friends, to bless this Twain."

—Punch.

Dolby had managed the Dickens lectures, and he proved his sound business judgment and experience by taking the largest available hall in London for Mark Twain.

On the evening of October 13th, in the spacious Queen's Concert Rooms, Hanover Square, Mark Twain delivered his first public address in England. The subject was "Our Fellow Savages of the Sandwich Islands," the old lecture with which he had made his

first great successes. He was not introduced. He appeared on the platform in evening dress, assuming the character of a manager announcing a disappointment.

Mr. Clemens, he said, had fully expected to be present. He paused and loud murmurs arose from the audience. He lifted his hand and they subsided. Then he added, "I am happy to say that Mark Twain is present, and will now give his lecture." Whereupon the audience roared its approval.

It would be hardly an exaggeration to say that his triumph that week was a regal one. For five successive nights and a Saturday matinee the culture and fashion of London thronged to hear him discourse of their "fellow savages." It was a lecture event wholly without precedent. The lectures of Artemus Ward,—["Artemus the delicious," as Charles Reade called him, came to London in June, 1866, and gave his "piece" in Egyptian Hall. The refined, delicate, intellectual countenance, the sweet, gave, mouth, from which one might have expected philosophical lectures retained their seriousness while listeners were convulsed with laughter. There was something magical about it. Every sentence

Page 286

was a surprise. He played on his audience as Liszt did on a piano most easily when most effectively. Who can ever forget his attempt to stop his Italian pianist—"a count in his own country, but not much account in this"—who went on playing loudly while he was trying to tell us an "affecting incident" that occurred near a small clump of trees shown on his panorama of the Far West. The music stormed on—we could see only lips and arms pathetically moving till the piano suddenly ceased, and we heard—it was all we heard "and, she fainted in Reginald's arms." His tricks have been at tempted in many theaters, but Artemus Ward was inimitable. And all the time the man was dying. (Moneure D. Conway, Autobiography.)—who had quickly become a favorite in London, had prepared the public for American platform humor, while the daily doings of this new American product, as reported by the press, had aroused interest, or curiosity, to a high pitch. On no occasion in his own country had he won such a complete triumph. The papers for a week devoted columns of space to appreciation and editorial comment. The Daily News of October 17th published a column-and-a-half editorial on American humor, with Mark Twain's public appearance as the general text. The Times referred to the continued popularity of the lectures:

They can't be said to have more than whetted the public appetite, if we are to take the fact which has been imparted to us, that the holding capacity of the Hanover Square Rooms has been inadequate to the demand made upon it every night by Twain's lecturing, as a criterion. The last lecture of this too brief course was delivered yesterday before an audience which crammed to discomfort every part of the principal apartment of the Hanover Square Rooms....

At the close of yesterday's lecture Mark Twain was so loudly applauded that he returned to the stage, and, as soon as the audience gave him a chance of being heard, he said, with much apparent emotion:

"Ladies and Gentlemen,—I won't keep you one single moment in this suffocating atmosphere. I simply wish to say that this is the last lecture I shall have the honor to deliver in London until I return from America, four weeks from now. I only wish to say (here Mr. Clemens faltered as if too much affected to proceed) I am very grateful. I do not wish to appear pathetic, but it is something magnificent for a stranger to come to the metropolis of the world and be received so handsomely as I have been. I simply thank you."

The Saturday Review devoted a page, and Once a Week, under the head of "Cracking jokes," gave three pages, to praise of the literary and lecture methods of the new American humorist. With the promise of speedy return, he left London, gave the lecture once in Liverpool, and with his party (October 21st) set sail for home.

In mid-Atlantic he remembered Dr. Brown, and wrote him:

Page 287

We have plowed a long way over the sea, and there's twenty-two hundred miles of restless water between us now, besides the railway stretch. And yet you are so present with us, so close to us, that a span and a whisper would bridge the distance.

So it would seem that of all the many memories of that eventful half-year, that of Dr. Brown was the most present, the most tender.

XCII

FURTHER LONDON LECTURE TRIUMPHS

Orion Clemens records that he met “Sam and Livy” on their arrival from England, November 2d, and that the president of the Mercantile Library Association sent up his card “four times,” in the hope of getting a chance to propose a lecture engagement—an incident which impressed Orion deeply in its evidence of his brother’s towering importance. Orion himself was by this time engaged in various projects. He was inventing a flying-machine, for one thing, writing a Jules Verne story, reading proof on a New York daily, and contemplating the lecture field. This great blaze of international appreciation which had come to the little boy who used to set type for him in Hannibal, and wash up the forms and cry over the dirty proof, made him gasp.

They went to see Booth in Hamlet [he says], and Booth sent for Sam to come behind the scenes, and when Sam proposed to add a part to Hamlet, the part of a bystander who makes humorous modern comment on the situations in the play, Booth laughed immoderately.

Proposing a sacrilege like that to Booth! To what heights had this printer-pilot, miner-brother not attained!—[This idea of introducing a new character in Hamlet was really attempted later by Mark Twain, with the connivance of Joe Goodman [of all men], sad to relate. So far as is known it is the one stain on Goodman’s literary record.]

Clemens returned immediately to England—the following Saturday, in fact—and was back in London lecturing again after barely a month’s absence. He gave the “Roughing It” address, this time under the title of “Roughing It on the Silver Frontier,” and if his audiences were any less enthusiastic, or his houses less crowded than before, the newspapers of that day have left no record of it. It was the height of the season now, and being free to do so, he threw himself into the whirl of it, and for two months, beyond doubt, was the most talked-of figure in London. The Athenaeum Club made him a visiting member (an honor considered next to knighthood); Punch quoted him; societies banqueted him; his apartments, as before; were besieged by callers. Afternoons one was likely to find him in “Poets’ Corner” of the Langham smoking-room, with a group of London and American authors—Reade, Collins, Miller, and the others—frankly rioting in his bold fancies. Charles Warren Stoddard was in London at the time, and acted as his

secretary. Stoddard was a gentle poet, a delightful fellow, and Clemens was very fond of him. His only complaint of Stoddard was that he did not laugh enough at his humorous yarns. Clemens once said:

Page 288

“Dolby and I used to come in after the lecture, or perhaps after being out to some dinner, and we liked to sit down and talk it over and tell yarns, and we expected Stoddard to laugh at them, but Stoddard would lie there on the couch and snore. Otherwise, as a secretary, he was perfect.”

The great Tichborne trial was in progress then, and the spectacle of an illiterate impostor trying to establish his claim as the rightful heir to a great estate was highly diverting to Mark Twain.—[In a letter of this period he speaks of having attended one of the Claimant’s “Evenings.”] —He wanted to preserve the evidence as future literary material, and Stoddard day after day patiently collected the news reports and neatly pasted them into scrap-books, where they still rest, a complete record of that now forgotten farce. The Tichborne trial recalled to Mark Twain the claimant in the Lampton family, who from time to time wrote him long letters, urging him to join in the effort to establish his rights to the earldom of Durham. This American claimant was a distant cousin, who had “somehow gotten hold of, or had fabricated a full set of documents.”

Colonel Henry Watterson, just quoted (also a Lampton connection), adds:

During the Tichborne trial Mark and I were in London, and one day he said to me: “I have investigated this Durham business down at the Herald’s office. There is nothing to it. The Lamptons passed out of the earldom of Durham a hundred years ago. There were never any estates; the title lapsed; the present earldom is a new creation, not in the same family at all. But I’ll tell you what: if you’ll put up \$500, I’ll put up \$500 more; we’ll bring our chap over here and set him in as claimant, and, my word for it, Kenealy’s fat boy won’t be a marker to him.”

It was a characteristic Mark Twain project, one of the sort he never earned out in reality, but loved to follow in fancy, and with the pen sometimes. The “Rightful Earl of Durham” continued to send letters for a long time after that (some of them still exist), but he did not establish his claim. No one but Mark Twain ever really got anything out of it. Like the Tennessee land, it furnished material by and by for a book. Colonel Watterson goes on to say that Clemens was only joking about having looked up the matter in the peerage; that he hadn’t really looked it up at all, and that the earldom lies still in the Lampton family.

Another of Clemens’s friends in London at this time was Prentice Mulford, of California. In later years Mulford acquired a wide reputation for his optimistic and practical psychologies. Through them he lifted himself out of the slough of despond, and he sought to extend a helping hand to others. His “White Cross Library” had a wide reading and a wide influence; perhaps has to this day. But in 1873 Mulford had not found the tangibility of thought, the secret of strength; he was only finding it, maybe, in his frank acknowledgment of shortcoming:

Page 289

Now, Mark, I am down-very much down at present; you are up-where you deserve to be. I can't ask this on the score of any past favors, for there have been none. I have not always spoken of you in terms of extravagant praise; have sometimes criticized you, which was due, I suppose, in part to an envious spirit. I am simply human. Some people in the same profession say they entertain no jealousy of those more successful. I can't. They are divine; I am not.

It was only that he wished Clemens to speak a word for him to Routledge, to get him a hearing for his work. He adds:

I shall be up myself some day, although my line is far apart from yours. Whether you can do anything that I ask of you or not, I shall be happy then, as I would be now, to do you any just and right service.... Perhaps I have mistaken my vocation. Certainly, if I was back with my rocker on the Tuolumne, I'd make it rattle livelier than ever I did before. I have occasionally thought of London Bridge, but the Thames is now so d—d cold and dirty, and besides I can swim, and any attempt at drowning would, through the mere instinct of self-preservation, only result in my swimming ashore and ruining my best clothes; wherefore I should be worse off than ever.

Of course Mark Twain granted the favor Mulford asked, and a great deal more, no doubt, for that was his way. Mulford came up, as he had prophesied, but the sea in due time claimed him, though not in the way he had contemplated. Years after he was one day found drifting off the shores of Long Island in an open boat, dead.

Clemens made a number of notable dinner speeches during this second London lecture period. His response to the toast of the "Ladies," delivered at the annual dinner of the Scottish Corporation of London, was the sensational event of the evening.

He was obliged to decline an invitation to the Lord Mayor's dinner, whereupon his Lordship wrote to urge him to be present at least at the finale, when the welcome would be "none the less hearty," and bespoke his attendance for any future dinners.

Clemens lectured steadily at the Hanover Square Rooms during the two months of his stay in London, and it was only toward the end of this astonishing engagement that the audience began to show any sign of diminishing. Early in January he wrote to Twichell:

I am not going to the provinces because I cannot get halls that are large enough. I always felt cramped in the Hanover Square Rooms, but I find that everybody here speaks with awe and respect of that prodigious hall and wonders that I could fill it so long.

I am hoping to be back in twenty days, but I have so much to go home to and enjoy with a jubilant joy that it hardly seems possible that it can come to pass in so uncertain a world as this.

In the same letter he speaks of attending an exhibition of Landseer's paintings at the Royal Academy:

Page 290

Ah, they are wonderfully beautiful! There are such rich moonlights and dusks in the "Challenge" and the "Combat," and in that long flight of birds across a lake in the subdued flush of sunset (or sunrise, for no man can ever tell t'other from which in a picture, except it has the filmy morning mist breathing itself up from the water), and there is such a grave analytical profundity in the face of the connoisseurs; and such pathos in the picture of a fawn suckling its dead mother on a snowy waste, with only the blood in the footprints to hint that she is not asleep. And the way that he makes animals' flesh and blood, insomuch that if the room were darkened ever so little, and a motionless living animal placed beside the painted one, no man could tell which was which.

I interrupted myself here, to drop a line to Shirley Brooks and suggest a cartoon for Punch. It was this: in one of the Academy saloons (in a suite where these pictures are) a fine bust of Landseer stands on a pedestal in the center of the room. I suggested that some of Landseer's best known animals be represented as having come down out of their frames in the moonlight and grouped themselves about the bust in mourning attitudes.

He sailed January 13 (1874.), on the Paythia, and two weeks later was at home, where all was going well. The Gilded Age had been issued a day or two before Christmas, and was already in its third edition. By the end of January 26,000 copies had been sold, a sale that had increased to 40,000 a month later. The new house was progressing, though it was by no means finished. Mrs. Clemens was in good health. Little Susy was full of such American activities as to earn the name of "The Modoc." The promise of the year was bright.

XCIII

THE REAL COLONEL SELLERS-GOLDEN DAYS

There are bound to be vexations, flies in the ointment, as we say. It was Warner who conferred the name of Eschol Sellers on the chief figure of the collaborated novel. Warner had known it as the name of an obscure person, or perhaps he had only heard of it. At all events, it seemed a good one for the character and had been adopted. But behold, the book had been issued but a little while when there rose "out of the vasty deeps" a genuine Eschol Sellers, who was a very respectable person. He was a stout, prosperous-looking man, gray and about fifty-five years old. He came into the American Publishing Company offices and asked permission to look at the book. Mr. Bliss was out at the moment, but presently arrived. The visitor rose and introduced himself.

"My name is Eschol Sellers," he said. "You have used it in one of your publications. It has brought upon me a lot of ridicule. My people wish me to sue you for \$10,000 damages."

Page 291

He had documents to prove his identity, and there was only one thing to be done; he must be satisfied. Bliss agreed to recall as many of the offending volumes as possible and change the name on the plates. He contacted the authors, and the name Beriah was substituted for the offending Eschol. It turned out that the real Sellers family was a large one, and that the given name Eschol was not uncommon in its several branches. This particular Eschol Sellers, curiously enough, was an inventor and a promoter, though of a much more substantial sort than his fiction namesake. He was also a painter of considerable merit, a writer and an antiquarian. He was said to have been a grandson of the famous painter, Rembrandt Peale.

Clemens vowed that he would not lecture in America that winter. The irrepressible Redpath besieged him as usual, and at the end of January Clemens telegraphed him, as he thought, finally. Following it with a letter of explanation, he added:

"I said to her, 'There isn't money enough in America to hire me to leave you for one day.'"

But Redpath was a persistent devil. He used arguments and held out inducements which even Mrs. Clemens thought should not be resisted, and Clemens yielded from time to time, and gave a lecture here and there during February. Finally, on the 3d of March (1879.) he telegraphed his tormentor:

"Why don't you congratulate me? I never expect to stand on a lecture platform again after Thursday night."

Howells tells delightfully of a visit which he and Aldrich paid to Hartford just at this period. Aldrich went to visit Clemens and Howells to visit Charles Dudley Warner, Clemens coming as far as Springfield to welcome them.

In the good-fellowship of that cordial neighborhood we had two such days as the aging sun no longer shines on in his round. There was constant running in and out of friendly houses where the lively hosts and guests called one another by their Christian names or nicknames, and no such vain ceremony as knocking or ringing at doors. Clemens was then building the stately mansion in which he satisfied his love of magnificence as if it had been another sealskin coat, and he was at the crest of the prosperity which enabled him to humor every whim or extravagance.

Howells tells how Clemens dilated on the advantages of subscription sale over the usual methods of publication, and urged the two Boston authors to prepare something which canvassers could handle.

"Why, any other means of bringing out a book is privately printing it," he declared, and added that his subscription books in Bliss's hands sold right along, "just like the Bible."

On the way back to Boston Howells and Aldrich planned a subscription book which would sell straight along, like the Bible. It was to be called "Twelve Memorable Murders." They had dreamed two or three fortunes by the time they had reached Boston, but the project ended there.

Page 292

"We never killed a single soul," Howells said once to the writer of this memoir.

Clemens was always urging Howells to visit him after that. He offered all sorts of inducements.

You will find us the most reasonable people in the world. We had thought of precipitating upon you, George Warner and his wife one day, Twichell and his jewel of a wife another day, and Charles Perkins and wife another. Only those—simply members of our family they are. But I'll close the door against them all, which will "fix" all of the lot except Twichell, who will no more hesitate to climb in the back window than nothing.

And you shall go to bed when you please, get up when you please,
talk when you please, read when you please.

A little later he was urging Howells or Aldrich, or both of them; to come to Hartford to live.

Mr. Hall, who lives in the house next to Mrs. Stowe's (just where we drive in to go to our new house), will sell for \$16,000 or \$17,000. You can do your work just as well here as in Cambridge, can't you? Come! Will one of you boys buy that house? Now, say yes.

Certainly those were golden, blessed days, and perhaps, as Howells says, the sun does not shine on their like any more—not in Hartford, at least, for the old group that made them no longer assembles there. Hartford about this time became a sort of shrine for all literary visitors, and for other notables as well, whether of America or from overseas. It was the half-way place between Boston and New York, and pilgrims going in either direction rested there. It is said that travelers arriving in America, were apt to remember two things they wished to see: Niagara Falls and Mark Twain. But the Falls had no such recent advertising advantage as that spectacular success in London. Visitors were apt to begin in Hartford.

Howells went with considerable frequency after that, or rather with regularity, twice a year, or oftener, and his coming was always hailed with great rejoicing. They visited and ate around at one place and another among that pleasant circle of friends. But they were happiest afterward together, Clemens smoking continually, "soothing his tense nerves with a mild hot Scotch," says Howells, "while we both talked, and talked, and tasked of everything in the heavens and on the earth, and the waters under the earth. After two days of this talk I would come away hollow, realizing myself best in the image of one of those locust-shells which you find sticking to the bark of trees at the end of summer." Sometimes Clemens told the story of his early life, "the inexhaustible, the fairy, the Arabian Nights story, which I could never tire of even when it began to be told over again."

XCIV

Beginning “Tom Sawyer”

Page 293

The Clemens household went to Quarry Farm in April, leaving the new house once more in the hands of the architect and builders. It was costing a vast sum of money, and there was a financial stress upon land. Mrs. Clemens, always prudent, became a little uneasy at times, though without warrant in those days, for her business statement showed that her holdings were only a little less than a quarter of a million in her own right, while her husband's books and lectures had been highly remunerative, and would be more so. They were justified in living in ample, even luxurious comfort, and how free from financial worries they could have lived for the rest of their days!

Clemens, realizing his happiness, wrote Dr. Brown:

Indeed I am thankful for the wifey and the child, and if there is one individual creature on all this footstool who is more thoroughly and uniformly and, unceasingly happy than I am I defy the world to produce him and prove him. In my opinion he don't exist. I was a mighty rough, coarse, unpromising subject when Livy took charge of me, four years ago, and I may still be to the rest of the world, but not to her. She has made a very creditable job of me.

Truly fortune not only smiled, but laughed. Every mail brought great bundles of letters that sang his praises. Robert Watt, who had translated his books into Danish, wrote of their wide popularity among his people. Madame Blanc (Th. Bentzon), who as early as 1872 had translated *The Jumping Frog* into French, and published it, with extended comment on the author and his work, in the '*Revue des deux mondes*', was said to be preparing a review of '*The Gilded Age*'. All the world seemed ready to do him honor.

Of course, one must always pay the price, usually a vexatious one. Bores stopped him on the street to repeat ancient and witless stories. Invented anecdotes, some of them exasperating ones, went the rounds of the press. Impostors in distant localities personated him, or claimed to be near relatives, and obtained favors, sometimes money, in his name. Trivial letters, seeking benefactions of every kind, took the savor from his daily mail. Letters from literary aspirants were so numerous that he prepared a "form" letter of reply:

Dear sir or madam,—Experience has not taught me very much, still it has taught me that it is not wise to criticize a piece of literature, except to an enemy of the person who wrote it; then if you praise it that enemy admires—you for your honest manliness, and if you dispraise it he admires you for your sound judgment.

Yours truly, S. L. C.

Even Orion, now in Keokuk on a chicken farm, pursued him with manuscripts and proposals of schemes. Clemens had bought this farm for Orion, who had counted on large and quick returns, but was planning new enterprises before the first eggs were hatched. Orion Clemens was as delightful a character as was ever created in fiction,

but he must have been a trial now and then to Mark Twain. We may gather something of this from a letter written by the latter to his mother and sister at this period:

Page 294

I can't "encourage" Orion. Nobody can do that conscientiously, for the reason that before one's letter has time to reach him he is off on some new wild-goose chase. Would you encourage in literature a man who the older he grows the worse he writes?

I cannot encourage him to try the ministry, because he would change his religion so fast that he would have to keep a traveling agent under wages to go ahead of him to engage pulpits and board for him.

I cannot conscientiously encourage him to do anything but potter around his little farm and put in his odd hours contriving new and impossible projects at the rate of 365 a year which is his customary average. He says he did well in Hannibal! Now there is a man who ought to be entirely satisfied with the grandeurs, emoluments, and activities of a hen farm. If you ask me to pity Orion I can do that. I can do it every day and all day long. But one can't "encourage" quicksilver; because the instant you put your finger on it, it isn't there. No, I am saying too much. He does stick to his literary and legal aspirations, and he naturally would elect the very two things which he is wholly and preposterously unfitted for. If I ever become able, I mean to put Orion on a regular pension without revealing the fact that it is a pension.

He did presently allow the pension, a liberal one, which continued until neither Orion Clemens nor his wife had further earthly need of it.

Mark Twain for some time had contemplated one of the books that will longest preserve his memory, 'The Adventures of Tom Sawyer'. The success of 'Roughing It' naturally made him cast about for other autobiographical material, and he remembered those days along the river-front in Hannibal—his skylarking with Tom Blankenship, the Bowen boys, John Briggs, and the rest. He had recognized these things as material—inviting material it was—and now in the cool luxury of Quarry Farm he set himself to spin the fabric of youth.

He found summer-time always his best period for literary effort, and on a hillside just by the old quarry, Mrs. Crane had built for him that spring a study—a little room of windows, somewhat suggestive of a pilot-house—overlooking the long sweep of grass and the dreamlike city below. Vines were planted that in the course of time would cover and embower it; there was a tiny fireplace for chilly days. To Twichell, of his new retreat, Clemens wrote:

It is the loveliest study you ever saw. It is octagonal, with a peaked roof, each face filled with a spacious window, and it sits perched in complete isolation on the top of an elevation that commands leagues of valley and city and retreating ranges of distant blue hills. It is a cozy nest and just room in it for a sofa, table, and three or four chairs, and when the storms sweep down the remote valley and the lightning flashes behind the hills beyond, and the rain beats upon the roof over my head, imagine the luxury of it.

Page 295

He worked steadily there that summer. He would go up mornings, after breakfast, remaining until nearly dinner-time, say until five o'clock or after, for it was not his habit to eat luncheon. Other members of the family did not venture near the place, and if he was urgently wanted they blew a horn. Each evening he brought down his day's performance to read to the assembled family. He felt the need of audience and approval. Usually he earned the latter, but not always. Once, when for a day he put aside other matters to record a young undertaker's love-affair, and brought down the result in the evening, fairly bubbling with the joy of it, he met with a surprise. The tale was a ghastly burlesque, its humor of the most disheartening, unsavory sort. No one spoke during the reading, nobody laughed: The air was thick with disapproval. His voice lagged and faltered toward the end. When he finished there was heavy silence. Mrs. Clemens was the only one who could speak:

"Youth, let's walk a little," she said.

The "Undertaker's Love Story" is still among the manuscripts of that period, but it is unlikely that it will ever see the light of print. —[This tale bears no relation to "The Undertaker's Story" in *Sketches New and Old*.]

The Tom Sawyer tale progressed steadily and satisfactorily. Clemens wrote Dr. Brown:

I have been writing fifty pages of manuscript a day, on an average, for some time now, on a book (a story), and consequently have been so wrapped up in it, and dead to everything else, that I have fallen mighty short in letter-writing....

On hot days I spread the study wide open, anchor my papers down with brickbats, and write in the midst of the hurricane, clothed in the same thin linen we make shirts of.

He incloses some photographs in this letter.

The group [he says] represents the vine-clad carriageway in front of the farm-house. On the left is Megalopis sitting in the lap of her German nurse-maid. I am sitting behind them. Mrs. Crane is in the center. Mr. Crane next to her. Then Mrs. Clemens and the new baby. Her Irish nurse stands at her back. Then comes the table waitress, a young negro girl, born free. Next to her is Auntie Cord (a fragment of whose history I have just sent to a magazine). She is the cook; was in slavery more than forty years; and the self-satisfied wench, the last of the group, is the little baby's American nurse-maid. In the middle distance my mother-in-law's coachman (up on errand) has taken a position unsolicited to help out the picture. No, that is not true. He was waiting there a minute or two before the photographer came. In the extreme background, under the archway, you glimpse my study.

The “new baby,” “Bay,” as they came to call her, was another little daughter, born in June, a happy, healthy addition to the household. In a letter written to Twichell we get a sweet summer picture of this period, particularly of little sunny-haired, two-year-old Susy.

Page 296

There is nothing selfish about the Modoc. She is fascinated with the new baby. The Modoc rips and tears around outdoors most of the time, and consequently is as hard as a pineknot and as brown as an Indian. She is bosom friend to all the chickens, ducks, turkeys, and guinea-hens on the place. Yesterday, as she marched along the winding path that leads up the hill through the red-clover beds to the summer-house, there was a long procession of these fowls stringing contentedly after her, led by a stately rooster, who can look over the Modoc's head. The devotion of these vassals has been purchased with daily largess of Indian meal, and so the Modoc, attended by her body-guard, moves in state wherever she goes.

There were days, mainly Sundays, when he did not work at all; peaceful days of lying fallow, dreaming in shady places, drowsily watching little Susy, or reading with Mrs. Clemens. Howells's "Foregone Conclusion" was running in the Atlantic that year, and they delighted in it. Clemens wrote the author:

I should think that this must be the daintiest, truest, most admirable workmanship that was ever put on a story. The creatures of God do not act out their natures more unerringly than yours do. If your genuine stories can die I wonder by what right old Walter Scott's artificialities shall continue to live.

At other times he found comfort in the society of Theodore Crane. These two were always fond of each other, and often read together the books in which they were mutually interested. They had portable-hammock arrangements, which they placed side by side on the lawn, and read and discussed through summer afternoons. The 'Mutineers of the Bounty' was one of the books they liked best, and there was a story of an Iceland farmer, a human document, that had an unfading interest. Also there were certain articles in old numbers of the Atlantic that they read and reread. 'Pepys' Diary', 'Two Years Before the Mast', and a book on the Andes were reliable favorites. Mark Twain read not so many books, but read a few books often. Those named were among the literature he asked for each year of his return to Quarry Farm. Without them, the farm and the summer would not be the same.

Then there was 'Lecky's History of European Morals'; there were periods when they read Lecky avidly and discussed it in original and unorthodox ways. Mark Twain found an echo of his own philosophies in Lecky. He made frequent marginal notes along the pages of the world's moral history—notes not always quotable in the family circle. Mainly, however, they were short, crisp interjections of assent or disapproval. In one place Lecky refers to those who have undertaken to prove that all our morality is a product of experience, holding that a desire to obtain happiness and to avoid pain is the only possible motive to action; the reason, and the only reason, why we should perform virtuous actions being "that

Page 297

on the whole such a course will bring us the greatest amount of happiness.” Clemens has indorsed these philosophies by writing on the margin, “Sound and true.” It was the philosophy which he himself would always hold (though, apparently, never live by), and in the end would embody a volume of his own.—[What Is Man? Privately printed in 1906.] —In another place Lecky, himself speaking, says:

Fortunately we are all dependent for many of our pleasures on others. Co-operation and organization are essential to our happiness, and these are impossible without some restraint being placed upon our appetites. Laws are made to secure this restraint, and being sustained by rewards, and punishments they make it the interest of the individual to regard that of the community.

“Correct!” comments Clemens. “He has proceeded from unreasoned selfishness to reasoned selfishness. All our acts, reasoned and unreasoned, are selfish.” It was a conclusion he logically never departed from; not the happiest one, it would seem, at first glance, but one easier to deny than to disprove.

On the back of an old envelope Mark Twain set down his literary declaration of this period.

“I like history, biography, travels, curious facts and strange happenings, and science. And I detest novels, poetry, and theology.”

But of course the novels of Howells would be excepted; Lecky was not theology, but the history of it; his taste for poetry would develop later, though it would never become a fixed quantity, as was his devotion to history and science. His interest in these amounted to a passion.

XCV

AN “ATLANTIC” STORY AND A PLAY

The reference to “Auntie Cord” in the letter to Dr. Brown brings us to Mark Twain’s first contribution to the Atlantic Monthly. Howells in his Recollections of his Atlantic editorship, after referring to certain Western contributors, says:

Later came Mark Twain, originally of Missouri, but then provisionally of Hartford, and now ultimately of the solar system, not to say the universe. He came first with “A True Story,” one of those noble pieces of humanity with which the South has atoned chiefly, if not solely, through him for all its despite to the negro.

Clemens had long aspired to appear in the Atlantic, but such was his own rating of his literature that he hardly hoped to qualify for its pages. Twichell remembers his “mingled astonishment and triumph” when he was invited to send something to the magazine.

He was obliged to “send something” once or twice before the acceptance of “A True Story,” the narrative of Auntie Cord, and even this acceptance brought with it the return of a fable which had accompanied it, with the explanation that a fable like that would disqualify the magazine for every denominational reader, though Howells hastened to express his own joy in it, having been particularly touched by the author’s reference to Sisyphus and Atlas as ancestors of the tumble-bug. The “True Story,” he said, with its “realest king of black talk,” won him, and a few days later he wrote again: “This little story delights me more and more. I wish you had about forty of ’em.”

Page 298

And so, modestly enough, as became him, for the story was of the simplest, most unpretentious sort, Mark Twain entered into the school of the elect.

In his letter to Howells, accompanying the *Ms.*, the author said:

I inclose also "A True Story," which has no humor in it. You can pay as lightly as you choose for that if you want it, for it is rather out of my line. I have not altered the old colored woman's story, except to begin it at the beginning, instead of the middle, as she did—and traveled both ways.

Howells in his *Recollections* tells of the business anxiety in the Atlantic office in the effort to estimate the story's pecuniary value. Clemens and Harte had raised literary rates enormously; the latter was reputed to have received as much as five cents a word from affluent newspapers! But the Atlantic was poor, and when sixty dollars was finally decided upon for the three pages (about two and a half cents a word) the rate was regarded as handsome—without precedent in Atlantic history. Howells adds that as much as forty times this amount was sometimes offered to Mark Twain in later years. Even in '74 he had received a much higher rate than that offered by the Atlantic,—but no acceptance, then, or later, ever made him happier, or seemed more richly rewarded.

"A True Story, Repeated Word for Word as I Heard It" was precisely what it claimed to be.—[Atlantic Monthly for November, 1874; also included in *Sketches New and Old*.]—Auntie Cord, the Auntie Rachel of that tale, cook at Quarry Farm, was a Virginia negress who had been twice sold as a slave, and was proud of the fact; particularly proud that she had brought \$1,000 on the block. All her children had been sold away from her, but it was a long time ago, and now at sixty she was fat and seemingly without care. She had told her story to Mrs. Crane, who had more than once tried to persuade her to tell it to Clemens; but Auntie Cord was reluctant. One evening, however, when the family sat on the front veranda in the moonlight, looking down on the picture city, as was their habit, Auntie Cord came around to say good night, and Clemens engaged her in conversation. He led up to her story, and almost before she knew it she was seated at his feet telling the strange tale in almost the exact words in which it was set down by him next morning. It gave Mark Twain a chance to exercise two of his chief gifts—transcription and portrayal. He was always greater at these things than at invention. Auntie Cord's story is a little masterpiece.

He wished to do more with Auntie Cord and her associates of the farm, for they were extraordinarily interesting. Two other negroes on the place, John Lewis and his wife (we shall hear notably of Lewis later), were not always on terms of amity with Auntie Cord. They disagreed on religion, and there were frequent battles in the kitchen. These depressed the mistress of the house, but they gave only joy to Mark Twain.

Page 299

His Southern raising had given him an understanding of their humors, their native emotions which made these riots a spiritual gratification. He would slip around among the shrubbery and listen to the noise and strife of battle, and hug himself with delight. Sometimes they resorted to missiles—stones, tinware—even dressed poultry which Auntie Cord was preparing for the oven. Lewis was very black, Auntie Cord was a bright mulatto, Lewis's wife several shades lighter. Wherever the discussion began it promptly shaded off toward the color-line and insult. Auntie Cord was a Methodist; Lewis was a Dunkard. Auntie Cord was ignorant and dogmatic; Lewis could read and was intelligent. Theology invariably led to personality, and eventually to epithets, crockery, geology, and victuals. How the greatest joker of the age did enjoy that summer warfare!

The fun was not all one-sided. An incident of that summer probably furnished more enjoyment for the colored members of the household than it did for Mark Twain. Lewis had some fowls, and among them was a particularly pestiferous guinea-hen that used to get up at three in the morning and go around making the kind of a noise that a guinea-hen must like and is willing to get up early to hear. Mark Twain did not care for it. He stood it as long as he could one morning, then crept softly from the house to stop it.

It was a clear, bright night; locating the guinea-hen, he slipped up stealthily with a stout stick. The bird was pouring out its heart, tearing the moonlight to tatters. Stealing up close, Clemens made a vicious swing with his bludgeon, but just then the guinea stepped forward a little, and he missed. The stroke and his explosion frightened the fowl, and it started to run. Clemens, with his mind now on the single purpose of revenge, started after it. Around the trees, along the paths, up and down the lawn, through gates and across the garden, out over the fields, they raced, "pursuer and pursued." The guinea nor longer sang, and Clemens was presently too exhausted to swear. Hour after hour the silent, deadly hunt continued, both stopping to rest at intervals; then up again and away. It was like something in a dream. It was nearly breakfast-time when he dragged himself into the house at last, and the guinea was resting and panting under a currant-bush. Later in the day Clemens gave orders to Lewis to "kill and eat that guinea-hen," which Lewis did. Clemens himself had then never eaten a guinea, but some years later, in Paris, when the delicious breast of one of those fowls was served him, he remembered and said:

"And to think, after chasing that creature all night, John Lewis got to eat him instead of me."

Page 300

The interest in Tom and Huck, or the inspiration for their adventures, gave out at last, or was superseded by a more immediate demand. As early as May, Goodman, in San Francisco, had seen a play announced there, presenting the character of Colonel Sellers, dramatized by Gilbert S. Densmore and played by John T. Raymond. Goodman immediately wrote Clemens; also a letter came from Warner, in Hartford, who had noticed in San Francisco papers announcements of the play. Of course Clemens would take action immediately; he telegraphed, enjoining the performance. Then began a correspondence with the dramatist and actor. This in time resulted in an amicable arrangement, by which the dramatist agreed to dispose of his version to Clemens. Clemens did not wait for it to arrive, but began immediately a version of his own. Just how much or how little of Densmore's work found its way into the completed play, as presented by Raymond later, cannot be known now. Howells conveys the impression that Clemens had no hand in its authorship beyond the character of Sellers as taken from the book. But in a letter still extant, which Clemens wrote to Howells at the time, he says:

I worked a month on my play, and launched it in New York last Wednesday. I believe it will go. The newspapers have been complimentary. It is simply a setting for one character, Colonel Sellers. As a play I guess it will not bear critical assault in force.

The Warners are as charming as ever. They go shortly to the devil for a year—that is, to Egypt.

Raymond, in a letter which he wrote to the Sun, November 3, 1874, declared that “not one line” of Densmore's dramatization was used, “except that which was taken bodily from *The Gilded Age*.” During the newspaper discussion of the matter, Clemens himself prepared a letter for the Hartford Post. This letter was suppressed, but it still exists. In it he says:

I entirely rewrote the play three separate and distinct times. I had expected to use little of his [Densmore's] language and but little of his plot. I do not think there are now twenty sentences of Mr. Densmore's in the play, but I used so much of his plot that I wrote and told him that I should pay him about as much more as I had already paid him in case the play proved a success. I shall keep my word.

This letter, written while the matter was fresh in his mind, is undoubtedly in accordance with the facts. That Densmore was fully satisfied may be gathered from an acknowledgment, in which he says: “Your letter reached me on the ad, with check. In this place permit me to thank you for the very handsome manner in which you have acted in this matter.”

Page 301

Warner, meantime, realizing that the play was constructed almost entirely of the Mark Twain chapters of the book, agreed that his collaborator should undertake the work and financial responsibilities of the dramatic venture and reap such rewards as might result. Various stories have been told of this matter, most of them untrue. There was no bitterness between the friends, no semblance of an estrangement of any sort. Warner very generously and promptly admitted that he was not concerned with the play, its authorship, or its profits, whatever the latter might amount to. Moreover, Warner was going to Egypt very soon, and his labors and responsibilities were doubly sufficient as they stood.

Clemens's estimate of the play as a dramatic composition was correct enough, but the public liked it, and it was a financial success from the start. He employed a representative to travel with Raymond, to assist in the management and in the division of spoil. The agent had instructions to mail a card every day, stating the amount of his share in the profits. Howells once arrived in Hartford just when this postal tide of fortune was at its flood:

One hundred and fifty dollars—two hundred dollars—three hundred dollars were the gay figures which they bore, and which he flaunted in the air, before he sat down at the table, or rose from it to brandish, and then, flinging his napkin in the chair, walked up and down to exult in.

Once, in later years, referring to the matter, Howells said “He was never a man who cared anything about money except as a dream, and he wanted more and more of it to fill out the spaces of this dream.” Which was a true word. Mark Twain with money was like a child with a heap of bright pebbles, ready to pile up more and still more, then presently to throw them all away and begin gathering anew.

XCVI

THE NEW HOME

The Clemenses returned to Hartford to find their new house “ready,” though still full of workmen, decorators, plumbers, and such other minions of labor as make life miserable to those with ambitions for new or improved habitations. The carpenters were still on the lower floor, but the family moved in and camped about in rooms up-stairs that were more or less free from the invader. They had stopped in New York ten days to buy carpets and furnishings, and these began to arrive, with no particular place to put them; but the owners were excited and happy with it all, for it was the pleasant season of the year, and all the new features of the house were fascinating, while the daily progress of the decorators furnished a fresh surprise when they roamed through the rooms at evening. Mrs. Clemens wrote home:

We are perfectly delighted with everything here and do so want you all to see it.

Her husband, as he was likely to do, picked up the letter and finished it:

Page 302

Livy appoints me to finish this; but how can a headless man perform an intelligent function? I have been bully-ragged all day by the builder, by his foreman, by the architect, by the tapestry devil who is to upholster the furniture, by the idiot who is putting down the carpets, by the scoundrel who is setting up the billiard-table (and has left the balls in New York), by the wildcat who is sodding the ground and finishing the driveway (after the sun went down), by a book agent, whose body is in the back yard and the coroner notified. Just think of this thing going on the whole day long, and I a man who loathes details with all his heart! But I haven't lost my temper, and I've made Livy lie down most of the time; could anybody make her lie down all the time?

Warner wrote from Egypt expressing sympathy for their unfurnished state of affairs, but added, "I would rather fit out three houses and fill them with furniture than to fit out one 'dahabiyeh'." Warner was at that moment undertaking his charmingly remembered trip up the Nile.

The new home was not entirely done for a long time. One never knows when a big house like that—or a little house, for that matters done. But they were settled at last, with all their beautiful things in place; and perhaps there have been richer homes, possibly more artistic ones, but there has never been a more charming home, within or without, than that one.

So many frequenters have tried to express the charm of that household. None of them has quite succeeded, for it lay not so much in its arrangement of rooms or their decorations or their outlook, though these were all beautiful enough, but rather in the personality, the atmosphere; and these are elusive things to convey in words. We can only see and feel and recognize; we cannot translate them. Even Howells, with his subtle touch, can present only an aspect here and there; an essence, as it were, from a happy garden, rather than the fullness of its bloom.

As Mark Twain was unlike any other man that ever lived, so his house was unlike any other house ever built. People asked him why he built the kitchen toward the street, and he said:

"So the servants can see the circus go by without running out into the front yard."

But this was probably an after-thought. The kitchen end of the house extended toward Farmington Avenue, but it was by no means unbeautiful. It was a pleasing detail of the general scheme. The main entrance faced at right angles with the street and opened to a spacious hall. In turn, the hall opened to a parlor, where there was a grand piano, and to the dining-room and library, and the library opened to a little conservatory, semicircular in form, of a design invented by Harriet Beecher Stowe. Says Howells:

Page 303

The plants were set in the ground, and the flowering vines climbed up the sides and overhung the roof above the silent spray of the fountain accompanied by Callas and other waterloving lilies. There, while we breakfasted, Patrick came in from the barn and sprinkled the pretty bower, which poured out its responsive perfume in the delicate accents of its varied blossoms.

In the library was an old carved mantel which Clemens and his wife had bought in Scotland, salvage from a dismantled castle, and across the top of the fireplace a plate of brass with the motto, "The ornament of a house is the friends that frequent it," surely never more appropriately inscribed.

There was the mahogany room, a large bedroom on the ground floor, and upstairs were other spacious bedrooms and many baths, while everywhere were Oriental rugs and draperies, and statuary and paintings. There was a fireplace under a window, after the English pattern, so that in winter-time one could at the same moment watch the blaze and the falling snow. The library windows looked out over the valley with the little stream in it, and through and across the tree-tops. At the top of the house was what became Clemens's favorite retreat, the billiard-room, and here and there were unexpected little balconies, which one could step out upon for the view.

Below was a wide, covered veranda, the "ombra," as they called it, secluded from the public eye—a favorite family gathering-place on pleasant days.

But a house might easily have all these things without being more than usually attractive, and a house with a great deal less might have been as full of charm; only it seemed just the proper setting for that particular household, and undoubtedly it acquired the personality of its occupants.

Howells assures us that there never was another home like it, and we may accept his statement. It was unique. It was the home of one of the most unusual and unaccountable personalities in the world, yet was perfectly and serenely ordered. Mark Twain was not responsible for this blissful condition. He was its beacon-light; it was around Mrs. Clemens that its affairs steadily revolved.

If in the four years and more of marriage Clemens had made advancement in culture and capabilities, Olivia Clemens also had become something more than the half-timid, inexperienced girl he had first known. In a way her education had been no less notable than his. She had worked and studied, and her half-year of travel and entertainment abroad had given her opportunity for acquiring knowledge and confidence. Her vision of life had vastly enlarged; her intellect had flowered; her grasp of practicalities had become firm and sure.

Page 304

In spite of her delicate physical structure, her continued uncertainty of health, she capably undertook the management of their large new house, and supervised its economies. Any one of her undertakings was sufficient for one woman, but she compassed them all. No children had more careful direction than hers. No husband had more devoted attendance and companionship. No household was ever directed with a sweeter and gentler grace, or with greater perfection of detail. When the great ones of the world came to visit America's most picturesque literary figure she gave welcome to them all, and filled her place at his side with such sweet and capable dignity that those who came to pay their duties to him often returned to pay even greater devotion to his companion. Says Howells:

She was, in a way, the loveliest person I have ever seen—the gentlest, the kindest, without a touch of weakness; she united wonderful tact with wonderful truth; and Clemens not only accepted her rule implicitly, but he rejoiced, he gloried in it.

And once, in an interview with the writer of these chapters, Howells declared: "She was not only a beautiful soul, but a woman of singular intellectual power. I never knew any one quite like her." Then he added: "Words cannot express Mrs. Clemens—her fineness, her delicate, her wonderful tact with a man who was in some respects, and wished to be, the most outrageous creature that ever breathed."

Howells meant a good many things by that, no doubt: Clemens's violent methods, for one thing, his sudden, savage impulses, which sometimes worked injustice and hardship for others, though he was first to discover the wrong and to repair it only too fully. Then, too, Howells may have meant his boyish teasing tendency to disturb Mrs. Clemens's exquisite sense of decorum.

Once I remember seeing him come into his drawing-room at Hartford in a pair of white cowskin slippers with the hair out, and do a crippled colored uncle, to the joy of all beholders. I must not say all, for I remember also the dismay of Mrs. Clemens, and her low, despairing cry of "Oh, Youth!"

He was continually doing such things as the "crippled colored uncle,"; partly for the very joy of the performance, but partly, too, to disturb her serenity, to incur her reproof, to shiver her a little—"shock" would be too strong a word. And he liked to fancy her in a spirit and attitude of belligerence, to present that fancy to those who knew the measure of her gentle nature. Writing to Mrs. Howells of a picture of herself in a group, he said:

You look exactly as Mrs. Clemens does after she has said: "Indeed, I do not wonder that you can frame no reply; for you know only too well that your conduct admits of no excuse, palliation, or argument —none!"

Clemens would pretend to a visitor that she had been violently indignant over some offense of his; perhaps he would say:

Page 305

"Well I contradicted her just now, and the crockery will begin to fly pretty soon."

She could never quite get used to this pleasantry, and a faint glow would steal over her face. He liked to produce that glow. Yet always his manner toward her was tenderness itself. He regarded her as some dainty bit of porcelain, and it was said that he was always following her about with a chair. Their union has been regarded as ideal. That is Twichell's opinion and Howells's. The latter sums up:

Marriages are what the parties to them alone really know them to be,
but from the outside I should say that this marriage was one of the
most perfect.

XCVII

THE WALK TO BOSTON

The new home became more beautiful to them as things found their places, as the year deepened; and the wonder of autumn foliage lit up their landscape. Sitting on one of the little upper balconies Mrs. Clemens wrote:

The atmosphere is very hazy, and it makes the autumn tints even more soft and beautiful than usual. Mr. Twichell came for Mr. Clemens to go walking with him; they returned at dinner-time, heavily laden with autumn leaves.

And as usual Clemens, finding the letter unfinished, took up the story.

Twichell came up here with me to luncheon after services, and I went back home with him and took Susy along in her little carriage. We have just got home again, middle of afternoon, and Livy has gone to rest and left the west balcony to me. There is a shining and most marvelous miracle of cloud-effects mirrored in the brook; a picture which began with perfection, and has momentarily surpassed it ever since, until at last it is almost unendurably beautiful....There is a cloud-picture in the stream now whose hues are as manifold as those in an opal and as delicate as the tintings of a sea-shell. But now a muskrat is swimming through it and obliterating it with the turmoil of wavelets he casts abroad from his shoulders.

The customary Sunday assemblage of strangers is gathered together in the grounds discussing the house.

Twichell and Clemens took a good many walks these days; long walks, for Twichell was an athlete and Clemens had not then outgrown the Nevada habit of pedestrian wandering. Talcott's Tower, a wooden structure about five miles from Hartford, was one of their favorite objective points; and often they walked out and back, talking so continuously, and so absorbed in the themes of their discussions, that time and distance

slipped away almost unnoticed. How many things they talked of in those long walks! They discussed philosophies and religions and creeds, and all the range of human possibility and shortcoming, and all the phases of literature and history and politics. Unorthodox discussions they were, illuminating, marvelously

Page 306

enchanting, and vanished now forever. Sometimes they took the train as far as Bloomfield, a little station on the way, and walked the rest of the distance, or they took the train from Bloomfield home. It seems a strange association, perhaps, the fellowship of that violent dissenter with that fervent soul dedicated to church and creed, but the root of their friendship lay in the frankness with which each man delivered his dogmas and respected those of his companion.

It was during one of their walks to the tower that they planned a far more extraordinary undertaking—nothing less, in fact, than a walk from Hartford to Boston. This was early in November. They did not delay the matter, for the weather was getting too uncertain.

Clemens wrote Redpath:

Dear Redpath,—Rev. J. H. Twichell and I expect to start at 8 o'clock Thursday morning to walk to Boston in twenty four hours—or more. We shall telegraph Young's Hotel for rooms Saturday night, in order to allow for a low average of pedestrianism.

It was half past eight on Thursday morning, November 12, 1874, that they left Twichell's house in a carriage, drove to the East Hartford bridge, and there took to the road, Twichell carrying a little bag and Clemens a basket of lunch.

The papers had got hold of it by this time, and were watching the result. They did well enough that first day, following the old Boston stage road, arriving at Westford about seven o'clock in the evening, twenty-eight miles from the starting-point. There was no real hotel at Westford, only a sort of tavern, but it afforded the luxury of rest. "Also," says Twichell, in a memoranda of the trip, "a sublimely profane hostler whom you couldn't jostle with any sort of mild remark without bringing down upon yourself a perfect avalanche of oaths."

This was a joy to Clemens, who sat behind the stove, rubbing his lame knees and fairly reveling in Twichell's discomfiture in his efforts to divert the hostler's blasphemy. There was also a mellow inebriate there who recommended kerosene for Clemens's lameness, and offered as testimony the fact that he himself had frequently used it for stiffness in his joints after lying out all night in cold weather, drunk: altogether it was a notable evening.

Westford was about as far as they continued the journey afoot. Clemens was exceedingly lame next morning, and had had a rather bad night; but he swore and limped along six miles farther, to North Ashford, then gave it up. They drove from North Ashford to the railway, where Clemens telegraphed Redpath and Howells of their approach. To Redpath:

We have made thirty-five miles in less than five days. This demonstrates that the thing can be done. Shall now finish by rail. Did you have any bets on us?

To Howells:

Arrive by rail at seven o'clock, the first of a series of grand annual pedestrian tours from Hartford to Boston to be performed by us. The next will take place next year.

Page 307

Redpath read his despatch to a lecture audience, with effect. Howells made immediate preparation for receiving two way-worn, hungry men. He telegraphed to Young's Hotel: "You and Twichell come right up to 37 Concord Avenue, Cambridge, near observatory. Party waiting for you."

They got to Howells's about nine o'clock, and the refreshments were waiting. Miss Longfellow was there, Rose Hawthorne, John Fiske, Larkin G. Mead, the sculptor, and others of their kind. Howells tells in his book how Clemens, with Twichell, "suddenly stormed in," and immediately began to eat and drink:

I can see him now as he stood up in the midst of our friends, with his head thrown back, and in his hand a dish of those scalloped oysters without which no party in Cambridge was really a party, exulting in the tale of his adventure, which had abounded in the most original characters and amusing incidents at every mile of their progress.

Clemens gave a dinner, next night, to Howells, Aldrich, Osgood, and the rest. The papers were full of jokes concerning the Boston expedition; some even had illustrations, and it was all amusing enough at the time.

Next morning, sitting in the writing-room of Young's Hotel, he wrote a curious letter to Mrs. Clemens, though intended as much for Howells and Aldrich as for her. It was dated sixty-one years ahead, and was a sort of Looking Backwards, though that notable book had not yet been written. It presupposed a monarchy in which the name of Boston has been changed to "Limerick," and Hartford to "Dublin." In it, Twichell has become the "Archbishop of Dublin," Howells "Duke of Cambridge," Aldrich "Marquis of Ponkapog," Clemens the "Earl of Hartford." It was too whimsical and delightful a fancy to be forgotten.—[This remarkable and amusing document will be found under Appendix M, at the end of last volume.]

A long time afterward, thirty-four year, he came across this letter. He said:

"It seems curious now that I should have been dreaming dreams of a future monarchy and never suspect that the monarchy was already present and the Republic a thing of the past."

What he meant, was the political succession that had fostered those commercial trusts which, in turn, had established party dominion.

To Howells, on his return, Clemens wrote his acknowledgments, and added:

Mrs. Clemens gets upon the verge of swearing, and goes tearing around in an unseemly fury when I enlarge upon the delightful time we had in Boston, and she not there to have her share. I have tried hard to reproduce Mrs. Howells to her, and have probably not made a shining success of it.

XCVIII

"Old times on the Mississippi"

Howells had been urging Clemens to do something more for the Atlantic, specifically something for the January number. Clemens cudgeled his brains, but finally declared he must give it up:

Page 308

Mrs. Clemens has diligently persecuted me day by day with urgings to go to work and do that something, but it's no use. I find I can't. We are in such a state of worry and endless confusion that my head won't go.

Two hours later he sent another hasty line:

I take back the remark that I can't write for the January number, for Twichell and I have had a long walk in the woods, and I got to telling him about old Mississippi days of steam-boating glory and grandeur as I saw them (during four years) from the pilot-house. He said, "What a virgin subject to hurl into a magazine!" I hadn't thought of that before. Would you like a series of papers to run through three months or six or nine—or about four months, say?

Howells welcomed this offer as an echo of his own thought. He had come from a piloting family himself, and knew the interest that Mark Twain could put into such a series.

Acting promptly under the new inspiration, Clemens forthwith sent the first chapter of that monumental, that absolutely unique, series of papers on Mississippi River life, which to-day constitutes one of his chief claims to immortality.

His first number was in the nature of an experiment. Perhaps, after all, the idea would not suit the Atlantic readers.

"Cut it, scarify it, reject it, handle it with entire freedom," he wrote, and awaited the result.

The "result" was that Howells expressed his delight:

The piece about the Mississippi is capital. It almost made the water in our ice-pitcher muddy as I read it. I don't think I shall meddle much with it, even in the way of suggestion. The sketch of the low-lived little town was so good that I could have wished there was more of it. I want the sketches, if you can make them, every month.

Mark Twain was now really interested in this new literary venture. He was fairly saturated with memories. He was writing on the theme that lay nearest to his heart. Within ten days he reported that he had finished three of the papers, and had begun the fourth.

And yet I have spoken of nothing but piloting as a science so far, and I doubt if I ever get beyond that portion of my subject. And I don't care to. Any Muggins can write about old days on the Mississippi of five hundred different kinds, but I am the only man alive that can scribble about the piloting of that day, and no man has ever tried to scribble about it yet. Its newness pleases me all the time, and it is about the only new subject I know of.

He became so enthusiastic presently that he wanted to take Howells with him on a trip down the Mississippi, with their wives for company, to go over the old ground again and obtain added material enough for a book. Howells was willing enough—agreed to go, in fact—but found it hard to get away. He began to temporize and finally backed out. Clemens tried to inveigle Osgood into the trip, but without success; also John Hay, but Hay had a new baby at his house just then—“three days old, and with a voice beyond price,” he said, offering it as an excuse for non-acceptance. So the plan for revisiting the river and the conclusion of the book were held in abeyance for nearly seven years.

Page 309

Those early piloting chapters, as they appeared in the *Atlantic*, constituted Mark Twain's best literary exhibit up to that time. In some respects they are his best literature of any time. As pictures of an intensely interesting phase of life, they are so convincing, so real, and at the same time of such extraordinary charm and interest, that if the English language should survive a thousand years, or ten times as long, they would be as fresh and vivid at the end of that period as the day they were penned. In them the atmosphere of, the river and its environment—its pictures, its thousand aspects of life—are reproduced with what is no less than literary necromancy. Not only does he make you smell the river you can fairly hear it breathe. On the appearance of the first number John Hay wrote:

"It is perfect; no more nor less. I don't see how you do it," and added, "you know what my opinion is of time not spent with you."

Howells wrote:

You are doing the science of piloting splendidly. Every word interesting, and don't you drop the series till you've got every bit of anecdote and reminiscence into it.

He let Clemens write the articles to suit himself. Once he said:

If I might put in my jaw at this point I should say, stick to actual fact and character in the thing and give things in detail. All that belongs to the old river life is novel, and is now mostly historical. Don't write at any supposed *Atlantic* audience, but yarn it off as if into my sympathetic ear.

Clemens replied that he had no dread of the *Atlantic* audience; he declared it was the only audience that did not require a humorist to "paint himself striped and stand on his head to amuse it."

The "Old Times" papers ran through seven numbers of the *Atlantic*. They were reprinted everywhere by the newspapers, who in that day had little respect for magazine copyrights, and were promptly pirated in book form in Canada. They added vastly to Mark Twain's literary capital, though Howells informs us that the *Atlantic* circulation did not thrive proportionately, for the reason that the newspapers gave the articles to their readers from advanced sheets of the magazine, even before the latter could be placed on sale. It so happened that in the January *Atlantic*, which contained the first of the Mississippi papers, there appeared Robert Dale Owen's article on "Spiritualism," which brought such humility both to author and publisher because of the exposure of the medium Katie King, which came along while the magazine was in press. Clemens has written this marginal note on the opening page of the copy at Quarry Farm:

While this number of the Atlantic was being printed the Katie King manifestations were discovered to be the cheapest, wretchedest shams and frauds, and were exposed in the newspapers. The awful humiliation of it unseated Robert Dale Owen's reason, and he died in the madhouse.

Page 310

XCIX

A TYPEWRITER, AND A JOKE ON ALDRICH

It was during the trip to Boston with Twichell that Mark Twain saw for the first time what was then—a brand-new invention, a typewriter; or it may have been during a subsequent visit, a week or two later. At all events, he had the machine and was practising on it December 9, 1874, for he wrote two letters on it that day, one to Howells and the other to Orion Clemens. In the latter he says:

I am trying to get the hang of this new-fangled writing-machine, but am not making a shining success of it. However, this is the first attempt I ever have made, and yet I perceive that I shall soon easily acquire a fine facility in its use. I saw the thing in Boston the other day and was greatly taken with it.

He goes on to explain the new wonder, and on the whole his first attempt is a very creditable performance. With his usual enthusiasm over an innovation, he believes it is going to be a great help to him, and proclaims its advantages.

This is the letter to Howells, with the errors preserved:

You needn't answer this; I am only practicing to get three; anothe slip-up there; only practici?ng ti get the hang of the thing. I notice I miss fire & get in a good many unnecessary letters & punctuation marks. I am simply using you for a target to bang at. Blame my cats, but this thing requires genius in order to work it just right.

In an article written long after he tells how he was with Nasby when he first saw the machine in Boston through a window, and how they went in to see it perform. In the same article he states that he was the first person in the world to apply the type-machine to literature, and that he thinks the story of Tom Sawyer was the first type-copied manuscript. —[Tom Sawyer was not then complete, and had been laid aside. The first type-copied manuscript was probably early chapters of the Mississippi story, two discarded typewritten pages of which still exist.]

The new enthusiasm ran its course and died. Three months later, when the Remington makers wrote him for a recommendation of the machine, he replied that he had entirely stopped using it. The typewriter was not perfect in those days, and the keys did not always respond readily. He declared it was ruining his morals—that it made him “want to swear.” He offered it to Howells because, he said, Howells had no morals anyway. Howells hesitated, so Clemens traded the machine to Bliss for a side-saddle. But perhaps Bliss also became afraid of its influence, for in due time he brought it back. Howells, again tempted, hesitated, and this time was lost. What eventually became of the machine is not history.

One of those, happy Atlantic dinners which Howells tells of came about the end of that year. It was at the Parker House, and Emerson was there; and Aldrich, and the rest of that group.

Page 311

“Don’t you dare to refuse the invitation,” said Howells, and naturally Clemens didn’t, and wrote back:

I want you to ask Mrs. Howells to let you stay all night at the Parker House and tell lies and have an improving time, and take breakfast with me in the morning. I will have a good room for you and a fire. Can’t you tell her it always makes you sick to go home late at night or something like that? That sort of thing arouses Mrs. Clemens’s sympathies easily.

Two memories of that old dinner remain to-day. Aldrich and Howells were not satisfied with the kind of neckties that Mark Twain wore (the old-fashioned black “string” tie, a Western survival), so they made him a present of two cravats when he set out on his return for Hartford. Next day he wrote:

You and Aldrich have made one woman deeply and sincerely grateful —Mrs. Clemens. For months—I may even say years—she has shown an unaccountable animosity toward my necktie, even getting up in the night to take it with the tongs and blackguard it, sometimes also getting so far as to threaten it. When I said you and Aldrich had given me two new neckties, and that they were in a paper in my overcoat pocket, she was in a fever of happiness until she found I was going to frame them; then all the venom in her nature gathered itself together; insomuch that I, being near to a door, went without, perceiving danger.

It is recorded that eventually he wore the neckties, and returned no more to the earlier mode.

Another memory of that dinner is linked to a demand that Aldrich made of Clemens that night, for his photograph. Clemens, returning to Hartford, put up fifty-two different specimens in as many envelopes, with the idea of sending one a week for a year. Then he concluded that this was too slow a process, and for a week sent one every morning to “His Grace of Ponkapog.”

Aldrich stood it for a few days, then protested. “The police,” he said, “are in the habit of swooping down upon a publication of that sort.”

On New-Year’s no less than twenty pictures came at once—photographs and prints of Mark Twain, his house, his family, his various belongings. Aldrich sent a warning then that the perpetrator of this outrage was known to the police as Mark Twain, alias “The Jumping Frog,” a well-known California desperado, who would be speedily arrested and brought to Ponkapog to face his victim. This letter was signed “T. Bayleigh, Chief of Police,” and on the outside of the envelope there was a statement that it would be useless for that person to send any more mail-matter, as the post-office had been blown up. The jolly farce closed there. It was the sort of thing that both men enjoyed.

Aldrich was writing a story at this time which contained some Western mining incident and environment. He sent the manuscript to Clemens for “expert” consideration and advice. Clemens wrote him at great length and in careful detail. He was fond of Aldrich, regarding him as one of the most brilliant of men. Once, to Robert Louis Stevenson, he said:

Page 312

“Aldrich has never had his peer for prompt and pithy and witty and humorous sayings. None has equaled him, certainly none has surpassed him, in the felicity of phrasing with which he clothed these children of his fancy. Aldrich is always brilliant; he can’t help it; he is a fire-opal set round with rose diamonds; when he is not speaking you know that his dainty fancies are twinkling and glimmering around in him; when he speaks the diamonds flash. Yes, he is always brilliant, he will always be brilliant; he will be brilliant in hell-you will see.”

Stevenson, smiling a chuckly smile, said, “I hope not.”

“Well, you will, and he will dim even those ruddy fires and look like a transfigured Adonis backed against a pink sunset.”—[North American Review, September, 1906.]

C

Raymond, mental telegraphy, etc.

The Sellers play was given in Hartford, in January (1875), to as many people as could crowd into the Opera House. Raymond had reached the perfection of his art by that time, and the townsmen of Mark Twain saw the play and the actor at their best. Kate Field played the part of Laura Hawkins, and there was a Hartford girl in the company; also a Hartford young man, who would one day be about as well known to playgoers as any playwright or actor that America has produced. His name was William Gillette, and it was largely due to Mark Twain that the author of *Secret Service* and of the dramatic “*Sherlock Holmes*” got a fair public start. Clemens and his wife loaned Gillette the three thousand dollars which tided him through his period of dramatic education. Their faith in his ability was justified.

Hartford would naturally be enthusiastic on a first “Sellers-Raymond” night. At the end of the fourth act there was an urgent demand for the author of the play, who was supposed to be present. He was not there in person, but had sent a letter, which Raymond read:

My dear Raymond,—I am aware that you are going to be welcomed to our town by great audiences on both nights of your stay there, and I beg to add my hearty welcome also, through this note. I cannot come to the theater on either evening, Raymond, because there is something so touching about your acting that I can’t stand it.

(I do not mention a couple of colds in my head, because I hardly mind them as much as I would the erysipelas, but between you and me I would prefer it if they were rights and lefts.)

And then there is another thing. I have always taken a pride in earning my living in outside places and spending it in Hartford; I have said that no good citizen would live on



his own people, but go forth and make it sultry for other communities and fetch home the result; and now at this late day I find myself in the crushed and bleeding position of fattening myself upon the spoils of my brethren! Can I support such grief as this? (This is literary emotion, you understand. Take the money at the door just the same.)

Page 313

Once more I welcome you to Hartford, Raymond, but as for me let me stay at home and blush.

Yours truly, *mark*.

The play was equally successful wherever it went. It made what in that day was regarded as a fortune. One hundred thousand dollars is hardly too large an estimate of the amount divided between author and actor. Raymond was a great actor in that part, as he interpreted it, though he did not interpret it fully, or always in its best way. The finer side, the subtle, tender side of Colonel Sellers, he was likely to overlook. Yet, with a natural human self-estimate, Raymond believed he had created a much greater part than Mark Twain had written. Doubtless from the point of view of a number of people this was so, though the idea, was naturally obnoxious to Clemens. In course of time their personal relations ceased.

Clemens that winter gave another benefit for Father Hawley. In reply to an invitation to appear in behalf of the poor, he wrote that he had quit the lecture field, and would not return to the platform unless driven there by lack of bread. But he added:

By the spirit of that remark I am debarred from delivering this proposed lecture, and so I fall back upon the letter of it, and emerge upon the platform for this last and final time because I am confronted by a lack of bread-among Father Hawley's flock.

He made an introductory speech at an old-fashioned spelling-bee, given at the Asylum Hill Church; a breezy, charming talk of which the following is a sample:

I don't see any use in spelling a word right—and never did. I mean I don't see any use in having a uniform and arbitrary way of spelling words. We might as well make all clothes alike and cook all dishes alike. Sameness is tiresome; variety is pleasing. I have a correspondent whose letters are always a refreshment to me; there is such a breezy, unfettered originality about his orthography. He always spells "kow" with a large "K." Now that is just as good as to spell it with a small one. It is better. It gives the imagination a broader field, a wider scope. It suggests to the mind a grand, vague, impressive new kind of a cow. He took part in the contest, and in spite of his early reputation, was spelled down on the word "chaldron," which he spelled "cauldron," as he had been taught, while the dictionary used as authority gave that form as second choice.

Another time that winter, Clemens read before the Monday Evening Club a paper on "Universal Suffrage," which is still remembered by the surviving members of that time. A paragraph or two will convey its purport:

Page 314

Our marvelous latter-day statesmanship has invented universal suffrage. That is the finest feather in our cap. All that we require of a voter is that he shall be forked, wear pantaloons instead of petticoats, and bear a more or less humorous resemblance to the reported image of God. He need not know anything whatever; he may be wholly useless and a cumberer of the earth; he may even be known to be a consummate scoundrel. No matter. While he can steer clear of the penitentiary his vote is as weighty as the vote of a president, a bishop, a college professor, a merchant prince. We brag of our universal, unrestricted suffrage; but we are shams after all, for we restrict when we come to the women.

The Monday Evening Club was an organization which included the best minds of Hartford. Dr. Horace Bushnell, Prof. Calvin E. Stowe, and J. Hammond Trumbull founded it back in the sixties, and it included such men as Rev. Dr. Parker, Rev. Dr. Burton, Charles H. Clark, of the Courant, Warner, and Twichell, with others of their kind. Clemens had been elected after his first sojourn in England (February, 1873), and had then read a paper on the "License of the Press." The club met alternate Mondays, from October to May. There was one paper for each evening, and, after the usual fashion of such clubs, the reading was followed by discussion. Members of that time agree that Mark Twain's association with the club had a tendency to give it a life, or at least an exhilaration, which it had not previously known. His papers were serious in their purpose he always preferred to be serious—but they evidenced the magic gift which made whatever he touched turn to literary jewelry.

Psychic theories and phenomena always attracted Mark Twain. In thought-transference, especially, he had a frank interest—an interest awakened and kept alive by certain phenomena—psychic manifestations we call them now. In his association with Mrs. Clemens it not infrequently happened that one spoke the other's thought, or perhaps a long-procrastinated letter to a friend would bring an answer as quickly as mailed; but these are things familiar to us all. A more startling example of thought-communication developed at the time of which we are writing, an example which raised to a fever-point whatever interest he may have had in the subject before. (He was always having these vehement interests—rages we may call them, for it would be inadequate to speak of them as fads, inasmuch as they tended in the direction of human enlightenment, or progress, or reform.)

Clemens one morning was lying in bed when, as he says, "suddenly a red-hot new idea came whistling down into my camp." The idea was that the time was ripe for a book that would tell the story of the Comstock-of the Nevada silver mines. It seemed to him that the person best qualified for the work was his old friend William Wright—Dan de Quille. He had not heard from Dan, or of him,

Page 315

for a long time, but decided to write and urge him to take up the idea. He prepared the letter, going fully into the details of his plan, as was natural for him to do, then laid it aside until he could see Bliss and secure his approval of the scheme from a publishing standpoint. Just a week later, it was the 9th of March, a letter came—a thick letter bearing a Nevada postmark, and addressed in a handwriting which he presently recognized as De Quille's. To a visitor who was present he said:

“Now I will do a miracle. I will tell you everything this letter contains—date, signature, and all without breaking the seal.”

He stated what he believed was in the letter. Then he opened it and showed that he had correctly given its contents, which were the same in all essential details as those of his own letter, not yet mailed.

In an article on “Mental Telegraphy” (he invented the name) he relates this instance, with others, and in ‘Following the Equator’ and elsewhere he records other such happenings. It was one of the “mysteries” in which he never lost interest, though his concern in it in time became a passive one.

The result of the De Quille manifestation, however, he has not recorded. Clemens immediately wrote, urging Dan to come to Hartford for an extended visit. De Quille came, and put in a happy spring in his old comrade's luxurious home, writing ‘The Big Bonanza’, which Bliss successfully published a year later.

Mark Twain was continually inviting old friends to share his success with him. Any comrade of former days found welcome in his home as often as he would come, and for as long as he would stay. Clemens dropped his own affairs to advise in their undertakings; and if their undertakings were literary he found them a publisher. He did this for Joaquin Miller and for Bret Harte, and he was always urging Goodman to make his house a home.

The Beecher-Tilton trial was the sensation of the spring of 1875, and Clemens, in common with many others, was greatly worked up over it. The printed testimony had left him decidedly in doubt as to Beecher's innocence, though his blame would seem to have been less for the possible offense than because of the great leader's attitude in the matter. To Twichell he said:

“His quibbling was fatal. Innocent or guilty, he should have made an unqualified statement in the beginning.”

Together they attended one of the sessions, on a day when Beecher himself was on the witness-stand. The tension was very great; the excitement was painful. Twichell

thought that Beecher appeared well under the stress of examination and was deeply sorry for him; Clemens was far from convinced.

The feeling was especially strong in Hartford, where Henry Ward Beecher's relatives were prominent, and animosities grew out of it. They are all forgotten now; most of those who cherished bitterness are dead. Any feeling that Clemens had in the matter lasted but a little while. Howells tells us that when he met him some months after the trial ended, and was tempted to mention it, Clemens discouraged any discussion of the event. Says Howells:

Page 316

He would only say the man had suffered enough; as if the man had expiated his wrong, and he was not going to do anything to renew his penalty. I found that very curious, very delicate. His continued blame could not come to the sufferer's knowledge, but he felt it his duty to forbear it.

It was one hundred years, that 19th of April, since the battles of Lexington and Concord, and there was to be a great celebration. The Howellses had visited Hartford in March, and the Clemenses were invited to Cambridge for the celebration. Only Clemens could go, which in the event proved a good thing perhaps; for when Clemens and Howells set out for Concord they did not go over to Boston to take the train, but decided to wait for it at Cambridge. Apparently it did not occur to them that the train would be jammed the moment the doors were opened at the Boston station; but when it came along they saw how hopeless was their chance. They had special invitations and passage from Boston, but these were only mockeries now. It was cold and chilly, and they forlornly set out in search of some sort of a conveyance. They tramped around in the mud and raw wind, but vehicles were either filled or engaged, and drivers and occupants were inclined to jeer at them. Clemens was taken with an acute attack of indigestion, which made him rather dismal and savage. Their effort finally ended with his trying to run down a trolley which was empty inside and had a party of Harvard students riding atop. The students, who did not recognize their would-be fare, enjoyed the race. They encouraged their pursuer, and perhaps their driver, with merriment and cheers. Clemens was handicapped by having to run in the slippery mud, and soon "dropped by the wayside."

"I am glad," says Howells, "I cannot recall what he said when he came back to me."

They hung about a little longer, then dragged themselves home, slipped into the house, and built up a fine, cheerful fire on the hearth. They proposed to practise a deception on Mrs. Howells by pretending they had been to Concord and returned. But it was no use. Their statements were flimsy, and guilt was plainly written on their faces. Howells recalls this incident delightfully, and expresses the belief that the humor of the situation was finally a greater pleasure to Clemens than the actual visit to Concord would have been.

Twichell did not have any such trouble in attending the celebration. He had adventures (he was always having adventures), but they were of a more successful kind. Clemens heard the tale of them when he returned to Hartford. He wrote it to Howells:

Page 317

Joe Twichell preached morning and evening here last Sunday; took midnight train for Boston; got an early breakfast and started by rail at 7.30 A.M. for Concord; swelled around there until 1 P.M., seeing everything; then traveled on top of a train to Lexington; saw everything there; traveled on top of a train to Boston (with hundreds in company), deluged with dust, smoke, and cinders; yelled and hurrahed all the way like a school-boy; lay flat down, to dodge numerous bridges, and sailed into the depot howling with excitement and as black as a chimneysweep; got to Young's Hotel at 7 P.M.; sat down in the reading-room and immediately fell asleep; was promptly awakened by a porter, who supposed he was drunk; wandered around an hour and a half; then took 9 P.M. train, sat down in a smoking-car, and remembered nothing more until awakened by conductor as the train came into Hartford at 1.30 A.M. Thinks he had simply a glorious time, and wouldn't have missed the Centennial for the world. He would have run out to see us a moment at Cambridge but he was too dirty. I wouldn't have wanted him there; his appalling energy would have been an insufferable reproach to mild adventurers like you and me.

CI

Concluding "Tom Sawyer"—Mark TWAIN's "Editors"

Meantime the "inspiration tank," as Clemens sometimes called it, had filled up again. He had received from somewhere new afflatus for the story of Tom and Huck, and was working on it steadily. The family remained in Hartford, and early in July, under full head of steam, he brought the story to a close. On the 5th he wrote Howells:

I have finished the story and didn't take the chap beyond boyhood. I believe it would be fatal to do it in any shape but autobiographically, like Gil Blas. I perhaps made a mistake in not writing it in the first person. If I went on now, and took him into manhood, he would just lie, like all the one-horse men in literature, and the reader would conceive a hearty contempt for him. It is not a boy's book at all. It will only be read by adults. It is only written for adults.

He would like to see the story in the Atlantic, he said, but doubted the wisdom of serialization.

"By and by I shall take a boy of twelve and run him through life (in the first person), but not Tam Sawyer, he would not make a good character for it." From which we get the first glimpse of Huck's later adventures.

Of course he wanted Howells to look at the story. It was a tremendous favor to ask, he said, and added, "But I know of no other person whose judgment I could venture to take, fully and entirely. Don't hesitate to say no, for I know how your time is taxed, and I would have honest need to blush if you said yes."

“Send on your *Ms.*,” wrote Howells. “You’ve no idea what I may ask you to do for me some day.”

Page 318

But Clemens, conscience-stricken, “blushed and weakened,” as he said. When Howells insisted, he wrote:

But I will gladly send it to you if you will do as follows: dramatize it, if you perceive that you can, and take, for your remuneration, half of the first \$6,000 which I receive for its representation on the stage. You could alter the plot entirely if you chose. I could help in the work most cheerfully after you had arranged the plot. I have my eye upon two young girls who can play Tom and Huck.

Howells in his reply urged Clemens to do the playwriting himself. He could never find time, he said, and he doubted whether he could enter into the spirit of another man's story. Clemens did begin a dramatization then or a little later, but it was not completed. Mrs. Clemens, to whom he had read the story as it proceeded, was as anxious as her husband for Howells's opinion, for it was the first extended piece of fiction Mark Twain had undertaken alone. He carried the manuscript over to Boston himself, and whatever their doubts may have been, Howells's subsequent letter set them at rest. He wrote that he had sat up till one in the morning to get to the end of it, simply because it was impossible to leave off.

It is altogether the best boy story I ever read. It will be an immense success, but I think you ought to treat it explicitly as a boy's story; grown-ups will enjoy it just as much if you do, and if you should put it forth as a story of boys' character from the grown-up point of view you give the wrong key to it.

Viewed in the light of later events, there has never been any better literary opinion than that—none that has been more fully justified.

Clemens was delighted. He wrote concerning a point here and there, one inquiry referring to the use of a certain strong word. Howells's reply left no doubt:

I'd have that swearing out in an instant. I suppose I didn't notice it because the location was so familiar to my Western sense, and so exactly the thing Huck would say, but it won't do for children.

It was in the last chapter, where Huck relates to Tom the sorrows of reform and tells how they comb him “all to thunder.” In the original, “They comb me all to hell,” says Huck; which statement, one must agree, is more effective, more the thing Huck would be likely to say.

Clemens's acknowledgment of the correction was characteristic:

Mrs. Clemens received the mail this morning, and the next minute she lit into the study with danger in her eye and this demand on her tongue, “Where is the profanity Mr. Howells speaks of?” Then I had to miserably confess that I had left it out when reading

the *Ms.* to her. Nothing but almost inspired lying got me out of this scrape with my scalp. Does your wife give you rats, like that, when you go a little one-sided?

The Clemens family did not, go to Elmira that year.

Page 319

The children's health seemed to require the sea-shore, and in August they went to Bateman's Point, Rhode Island, where Clemens most of the time played tenpins in an alley that had gone to ruin. The balls would not stay on the track; the pins stood at inebrate angles. It reminded him of the old billiard-tables of Western mining-camps, and furnished the same uncertainty of play. It was his delight, after he had become accustomed to the eccentricities of the alley, to invite in a stranger and watch his suffering and his frantic effort to score.

CII

"Sketches new and old"

The long-delayed book of Sketches, contracted for five years before, was issued that autumn. "The Jumping Frog," which he had bought from Webb, was included in the volume, also the French translation which Madame Blanc (Th. Bentzon) had made for the *Revue des deux mondes*, with Mark Twain's retranslation back into English, a most astonishing performance in its literal rendition of the French idiom. One example will suffice here. It is where the stranger says to Smiley, "I don't see no p'int about that frog that's any better'n any other frog."

Says the French, retranslated:

"Eh bien! I no saw not that that frog had nothing of better than each frog" (*Je ne vois pas que cette grenouille ait mieux qu'aucune grenouille*). (If that isn't grammar gone to seed then I count myself no judge.—M. T.)

"Possible that you not it saw not," said Smiley; "possible that you you comprehend frogs; possible that you not you there comprehend nothing; possible that you had of the experience, and possible that you not be but an amateur. Of all manner (*de toute maniere*) I bet forty dollars that she batter in jumping, no matter which frog of the county of Calaveras."

He included a number of sketches originally published with the Frog, also a selection from the "Memoranda" and Buffalo Express contributions, and he put in the story of Auntie Cord, with some matter which had never hitherto appeared. True Williams illustrated the book, but either it furnished him no inspiration or he was allowed too much of another sort, for the pictures do not compare with his earlier work.

Among the new matter in the book were—"Some Fables for Good Old Boys and Girls," in which certain wood creatures are supposed to make a scientific excursion into a place at some time occupied by men. It is the most pretentious feature of the book, and in its

way about as good as any. Like *Gulliver's Travels*, its object was satire, but its result is also interest.

Page 320

Clemens was very anxious that Howells should be first to review this volume. He had a superstition that Howells's verdicts were echoed by the lesser reviewers, and that a book was made or damned accordingly; a belief hardly warranted, for the review has seldom been written that meant to any book the difference between success and failure. Howells's review of *Sketches* may be offered as a case in point. It was highly commendatory, much more so than the notice of the 'Innocents' had been, or even that of 'Roughing It', also more extensive than the latter. Yet after the initial sale of some twenty thousand copies, mainly on the strength of the author's reputation, the book made a comparatively poor showing, and soon lagged far behind its predecessors.

We cannot judge, of course, the taste of that day, but it appears now an unattractive, incoherent volume. The pictures were absurdly bad, the sketches were of unequal merit. Many of them are amusing, some of them delightful, but most of them seem ephemeral. If we except "The Jumping Frog," and possibly "A True Story" (and the latter was altogether out of place in the collection), there is no reason to suppose that any of its contents will escape oblivion. The greater number of the sketches, as Mark Twain himself presently realized and declared, would better have been allowed to die.

Howells did, however, take occasion to point out in his review, or at least to suggest, the more serious side of Mark Twain. He particularly called attention to "A True Story," which the reviewers, at the time of its publication in the *Atlantic*, had treated lightly, fearing a lurking joke in it; or it may be they had not read it, for reviewers are busy people. Howells spoke of it as the choicest piece of work in the volume, and of its "perfect fidelity to the tragic fact." He urged the reader to turn to it again, and to read it as a "simple dramatic report of reality," such as had been equaled by no other American writer.

It was in this volume of sketches that Mark Twain first spoke in print concerning copyright, showing the absurd injustice of discriminating against literary ownership by statute of limitation. He did this in the form of an open petition to Congress, asking that all property, real and personal, should be put on the copyright basis, its period of ownership limited to a "beneficent term of forty-two years." Generally this was regarded as a joke, as in a sense it was; but like most of Mark Twain's jokes it was founded on reason and justice.

The approval with which it was received by his literary associates led him to still further flights. He began a determined crusade for international copyright laws. It was a transcendental beginning, but it contained the germ of what, in the course of time, he would be largely instrumental in bringing to a ripe and magnificent conclusion. In this first effort he framed a petition to enact laws by which the United States would declare itself to be for right and justice, regardless of other nations, and become a good example to the world by refusing to pirate the books of any foreign author. He wrote to Howells, urging him to get Lowell, Longfellow, Holmes, Whittier, and others to sign this petition.

Page 321

I will then put a gentlemanly chap under wages, and send him personally to every author of distinction in the country and corral the rest of the signatures. Then I'll have the whole thing lithographed (about one thousand copies), and move upon the President and Congress in person, but in the subordinate capacity of the party who is merely the agent of better and wiser men, or men whom the country cannot venture to laugh at. I will ask the President to recommend the thing in his message (and if he should ask me to sit down and frame the paragraph for him I should blush, but still I would frame it). And then if Europe chooses to go on stealing from us we would say, with noble enthusiasm, "American lawmakers do steal, but not from foreign authors—not from foreign authors,".... If we only had some God in the country's laws, instead of being in such a sweat to get Him into the Constitution, it would be better all around.

The petition never reached Congress. Holmes agreed to sign it with a smile, and the comment that governments were not in the habit of setting themselves up as high moral examples, except for revenue. Longfellow also pledged himself, as did a few others; but if there was any general concurrence in the effort there is no memory of it now. Clemens abandoned the original idea, but remained one of the most persistent and influential advocates of copyright betterment, and lived to see most of his dream fulfilled.—[For the petition concerning copyright term in the United States, see Sketches New and Old. For the petition concerning international copyright and related matters, see Appendix N, at the end of last volume.]

CIII

"Atlantic" Days

It was about this period that Mark Twain began to exhibit openly his more serious side; that is to say his advocacy of public reforms. His paper on "Universal Suffrage" had sounded a first note, and his copyright petitions were of the same spirit. In later years he used to say that he had always felt it was his mission to teach, to carry the banner of moral reconstruction, and here at forty we find him furnishing evidences of this inclination. In the Atlantic for October, 1875, there was published an unsigned three-page article entitled, "The Curious Republic of Gondour." In this article was developed the idea that the voting privilege should be estimated not by the individuals, but by their intellectual qualifications. The republic of Gondour was a Utopia, where this plan had been established:

It was an odd idea and ingenious. You must understand the constitution gave every man a vote; therefore that vote was a vested right, and could not be taken away. But the constitution did not say that certain individuals might not be given two votes or ten. So an amendatory clause was inserted in a quiet way, a clause which authorized the enlargement of the suffrage in certain

Page 322

cases to be specified by statute....The victory was complete. The new law was framed and passed. Under it every citizen, howsoever poor or ignorant, possessed one vote, so universal suffrage still reigned; but if a man possessed a good common-school education and no money he had two votes, a high-school education gave him four; if he had property, likewise, to the value of three thousand sacos he wielded one more vote; for every fifty thousand sacos a man added to his property, he was entitled to another vote; a University education entitled a man to nine votes, even though he owned no property.

The author goes on to show the beneficent results of this enactment; how the country was benefited and glorified by this stimulus toward enlightenment and industry. No one ever suspected that Mark Twain was the author of this fable. It contained almost no trace of his usual literary manner. Nevertheless he wrote it, and only withheld his name, as he did in a few other instances, in the fear that the world might refuse to take him seriously over his own signature or nom de plume.

Howells urged him to follow up the "Gondour" paper; to send some more reports from that model land. But Clemens was engaged in other things by that time, and was not pledged altogether to national reforms.

He was writing a skit about a bit of doggerel which was then making nights and days unhappy for many undeserving persons who in an evil moment had fallen upon it in some stray newspaper corner. A certain car line had recently adopted the "punch system," and posted in its cars, for the information of passengers and conductor, this placard:

A Blue Trip Slip for an 8 Cents Fare, A Buff Trip Slip for a 6 Cents Fare, A Pink Trip Slip for a 3 Cents Fare, For Coupon And Transfer, Punch The Tickets.

Noah Brooks and Isaac Bromley were riding down-town one evening on the Fourth Avenue line, when Bromley said:

"Brooks, it's poetry. By George, it's poetry!"

Brooks followed the direction of Bromley's finger and read the card of instructions. They began perfecting the poetic character of the notice, giving it still more of a rhythmic twist and jingle; arrived at the Tribune office, W. C. Wyckoff, scientific editor, and Moses P. Handy lent intellectual and poetic assistance, with this result:

Conductor, when you receive a fare,

Punch in the presence of the passenjare!
A blue trip slip for an eight-cent fare,



A buff trip slip for a six-cent fare,
A pink trip slip for a three-cent fare.
Punch in the presence of the passenjare!

Chorus

Punch, brothers! Punch with care!
Punch in the presence of the passenjare!

Page 323

It was printed, and street-car poetry became popular. Different papers had a turn at it, and each usually preceded its own effort with all other examples, as far as perpetrated. Clemens discovered the lines, and on one of their walks recited them to Twichell. "A Literary Nightmare" was written a few days later. In it the author tells how the jingle took instant and entire possession of him and went waltzing through his brain; how, when he had finished his breakfast, he couldn't tell whether he had eaten anything or not; and how, when he went to finish the novel he was writing, and took up his pen, he could only get it to say:

Punch in the presence of the passenjare.

He found relief at last in telling it to his reverend friend, that is, Twichell, upon whom he unloaded it with sad results.

It was an amusing and timely skit, and is worth reading to-day. Its publication in the Atlantic had the effect of waking up horse-car poetry all over the world. Howells, going to dine at Ernest Longfellow's the day following its appearance, heard his host and Tom Appleton urging each other to "Punch with care." The Longfellow ladies had it by heart. Boston was devastated by it. At home, Howells's children recited it to him in chorus. The streets were full of it; in Harvard it became an epidemic.

It was transformed into other tongues. Even Swinburne, the musical, is said to have done a French version for the 'Revue des deux mondes'*. A St. Louis magazine, The Western, found relief in a Latin anthem with this chorus:

Pungite, fratres, pungite, Pungite cum amore, Pungite pro vectore, Diligentissime pungite.

* *Le chant du conducteur*

Ayant ete paye, le conducteur
Percera en pleine vue du voyageur,
Quand il regoit trois sous un coupon vert,
Un coupon jaune pour six sous c'est l'affaire,
Et pour huit sous c'est un coupon couleur
De rose, en pleine vue du voyageur.

CHOEUR

Donc, percez soigneusement, mes freres
Tout en pleine vue des voyageurs, etc.

CIV

MARK TWAIN AND HIS WIFE

Clemens and his wife traveled to Boston for one of those happy fore-gatherings with the Howellses, which continued, at one end of the journey or another, for so many years. There was a luncheon with Longfellow at Craigie House, and, on the return to Hartford, Clemens reported to Howells how Mrs. Clemens had thrived on the happiness of the visit. Also he confesses his punishment for the usual crimes:

Page 324

I “caught it” for letting Mrs. Howells bother and bother about her coffee, when it was a “good deal better than we get at home.” I “caught it” for interrupting Mrs. C. at the last moment and losing her the opportunity to urge you not to forget to send her that *Ms.* when the printers are done with it. I “caught it” once more for personating that drunken Colonel James. I “caught it” for mentioning that Mr. Longfellow’s picture was slightly damaged; and when, after a lull in the storm, I confessed, shamefacedly, that I had privately suggested to you that we hadn’t any frames, and that if you wouldn’t mind hinting to Mr. Houghton, *etc.*, *etc.*, *etc.*, the madam was simply speechless for the space of a minute. Then she said:

“How could you, Youth! The idea of sending Mr. Howells, with his sensitive nature, upon such a repulsive er—”

“Oh, Howells won’t mind it! You don’t know Howells. Howells is a man who—”

She was gone. But George was the first person she stumbled on in the hall, so she took it out of George. I am glad of that, because it saved the babies.

Clemens used to admit, at a later day, that his education did not advance by leaps and bounds, but gradually, very gradually; and it used to give him a pathetic relief in those after-years, when that sweet presence had gone out of his life, to tell the way of it, to confess over-fully, perhaps, what a responsibility he had been to her.

He used to tell how, for a long time, he concealed his profanity from her; how one morning, when he thought the door was shut between their bedroom and the bathroom, he was in there dressing and shaving, accompanying these trying things with language intended only for the strictest privacy; how presently, when he discovered a button off the shirt he intended to put on, he hurled it through the window into the yard with appropriate remarks, followed it with another shirt that was in the same condition, and added certain collars and neckties and bath-room requisites, decorating the shrubbery outside, where the people were going by to church; how in this extreme moment he heard a slight cough and turned to find that the door was open! There was only one door to the bath-room, and he knew he had to pass her. He felt pale and sick, and sat down for a few moments to consider. He decided to assume that she was asleep, and to walk out and through the room, head up, as if he had nothing on his conscience. He attempted it, but without success. Half-way across the room he heard a voice suddenly repeat his last terrific remark. He turned to see her sitting up in bed, regarding him with a look as withering as she could find in her gentle soul. The humor of it struck him.

“Livy,” he said, “did it sound like that?”

“Of course it did,” she said, “only worse. I wanted you to hear just how it sounded.”

Page 325

"Livy," he said, "it would pain me to think that when I swear it sounds like that. You got the words right, Livy, but you don't know the tune."

Yet he never willingly gave her pain, and he adored her and gloried in her dominion, his life long. Howells speaks of his beautiful and tender loyalty to her as the "most moving quality of his most faithful soul."

It was a greater part of him than the love of most men for their wives, and she merited all the worship he could give her, all the devotion, all the implicit obedience, by her surpassing force and beauty of character.

She guarded his work sacredly; and reviewing the manuscripts which he was induced to discard, and certain edited manuscripts, one gets a partial idea of what the reading world owes to Olivia Clemens. Of the discarded manuscripts (he seems seldom to have destroyed them) there are a multitude, and among them all scarcely one that is not a proof of her sanity and high regard for his literary honor. They are amusing—some of them; they are interesting—some of them; they are strong and virile—some of them; but they are unworthy—most of them, though a number remain unfinished because theme or interest failed.

Mark Twain was likely to write not wisely but too much, piling up hundreds of manuscript pages only because his brain was thronging as with a myriad of fireflies, a swarm of darting, flashing ideas demanding release. As often as not he began writing with only a nebulous idea of what he proposed to do. He would start with a few characters and situations, trusting in Providence to supply material as needed. So he was likely to run ashore any time. As for those other attempts—stories "unavailable" for one reason or another—he was just as apt to begin those as the better sort, for somehow he could never tell the difference. That is one of the hall-marks of genius—the thing which sharply differentiates genius from talent. Genius is likely to rate a literary disaster as its best work. Talent rarely makes that mistake.

Among the abandoned literary undertakings of these early years of authorship there is the beginning of what was doubtless intended to become a book, "The Second Advent," a story which opens with a very doubtful miraculous conception in Arkansas, and leads only to grotesquery and literary disorder. There is another, "The Autobiography of a Damn Fool," a burlesque on family history, hopelessly impossible; yet he began it with vast enthusiasm and, until he allowed her to see the manuscript, thought it especially good. "Livy wouldn't have it," he said, "so I gave it up." There is another, "The Mysterious Chamber," strong and fine in conception, vividly and intensely interesting; the story of a young lover who is accidentally locked behind a secret door in an old castle and cannot announce himself. He wanders at last down into subterranean passages beneath the castle, and he lives in this isolation

Page 326

for twenty years. The question of sustenance was the weak point in the story. Clemens could invent no way of providing it, except by means of a waste or conduit from the kitchen into which scraps of meat, bread, and other items of garbage were thrown. This he thought sufficient, but Mrs. Clemens did not highly regard such a literary device. Clemens could think of no good way to improve upon it, so this effort too was consigned to the penal colony, a set of pigeonholes kept in his study. To Howells and others, when they came along, he would read the discarded yarns, and they were delightful enough for such a purpose, as delightful as the sketches which every artist has, turned face to the wall.

“Captain Stormfield” lay under the ban for many a year, though never entirely abandoned. This manuscript was even recommended for publication by Howells, who has since admitted that it would not have done then; and indeed, in its original, primitive nakedness it would hardly have done even in this day of wider toleration.

It should be said here that there is not the least evidence (and the manuscripts are full of evidence) that Mrs. Clemens was ever super-sensitive, or narrow, or unliterary in her restraints. She became his public, as it were, and no man ever had a more open-minded, clear-headed public than that. For Mark Twain’s reputation it would have been better had she exercised her editorial prerogative even more actively—if, in her love for him and her jealousy of his reputation, she had been even more severe. She did all that lay in her strength, from the beginning to the end, and if we dwell upon this phase of their life together it is because it is so large a part of Mark Twain’s literary story. On her birthday in the year we are now closing (1875) he wrote her a letter which conveys an acknowledgment of his debt.

Livy darling,—Six years have gone by since I made my first great success in life and won you, and thirty years have passed since Providence made preparation for that happy success by sending you into the world. Every day we live together adds to the security of my confidence that we can never any more wish to be separated than we can imagine a regret that we were ever joined. You are dearer to me to-day, my child, than you were upon the last anniversary of this birthday; you were dearer then than you were a year before; you have grown more and more dear from the first of those anniversaries, and I do not doubt that this precious progression will continue on to the end.

Let us look forward to the coming anniversaries, with their age and their gray hairs, without fear and without depression, trusting and believing that the love we bear each other will be sufficient to make them blessed.

So, with abounding affection for you and our babies I hail this day that brings you the matronly grace and dignity of three decades!

MARK TWAIN, A BIOGRAPHY

Page 327

By Albert Bigelow Paine

VOLUME II, Part 1: 1875-1886

CV

MARK TWAIN AT FORTY

In conversation with John Hay, Hay said to Clemens:

"A man reaches the zenith at forty, the top of the hill. From that time forward he begins to descend. If you have any great undertaking ahead, begin it now. You will never be so capable again."

Of course this was only a theory of Hay's, a rule where rules do not apply, where in the end the problem resolves itself into a question of individualities. John Hay did as great work after forty as ever before, so did Mark Twain, and both of them gained in intellectual strength and public honor to the very end.

Yet it must have seemed to many who knew him, and to himself, like enough, that Mark Twain at forty had reached the pinnacle of his fame and achievement. His name was on every lip; in whatever environment observation and argument were likely to be pointed with some saying or anecdote attributed, rightly or otherwise, to Mark Twain. "As Mark Twain says," or, "You know that story of Mark Twain's," were universal and daily commonplaces. It was dazzling, towering fame, not of the best or most enduring kind as yet, but holding somewhere within it the structure of immortality.

He was in a constant state of siege, besought by all varieties and conditions of humanity for favors such as only human need and abnormal ingenuity can invent. His ever-increasing mail presented a marvelous exhibition of the human species on undress parade. True, there were hundreds of appreciative tributes from readers who spoke only out of a heart's gratitude; but there were nearly as great a number who came with a compliment, and added a petition, or a demand, or a suggestion, usually unwarranted, often impertinent. Politicians, public speakers, aspiring writers, actors, elocutionists, singers, inventors (most of them he had never seen or heard of) cheerfully asked him for a recommendation as to their abilities and projects.

Young men wrote requesting verses or sentiments to be inscribed in young ladies' autograph albums; young girls wrote asking him to write the story of his life, to be used as a school composition; men starting obscure papers coolly invited him to lend them his name as editor, assuring him that he would be put to no trouble, and that it would help advertise his books; a fruitful humorist wrote that he had invented some five

thousand puns, and invited Mark Twain to father this terrific progeny in book form for a share of the returns. But the list is endless. He said once:

“The symbol of the race ought to be a human being carrying an ax, for every human being has one concealed about him somewhere, and is always seeking the opportunity to grind it.”

Even P. T. Barnum had an ax, the large ax of advertising, and he was perpetually trying to grind it on Mark Twain’s reputation; in other words, trying to get him to write something that would help to popularize “The Greatest Show on Earth.”

Page 328

There were a good many curious letters—letters from humorists, would-be and genuine. A bright man in Duluth sent him an old Allen “pepper-box” revolver with the statement that it had been found among a pile of bones under a tree, from the limb of which was suspended a lasso and a buffalo skull; this as evidence that the weapon was the genuine Allen which Bemis had lost on that memorable Overland buffalo-hunt. Mark Twain enjoyed that, and kept the old pepper-box as long as he lived. There were letters from people with fads; letters from cranks of every description; curious letters even from friends. Reginald Cholmondeley, that lovely eccentric of Condover Hall, where Mr. and Mrs. Clemens had spent some halcyon days in 1873, wrote him invitations to be at his castle on a certain day, naming the hour, and adding that he had asked friends to meet him. Cholmondeley had a fancy for birds, and spared nothing to improve his collection. Once he wrote Clemens asking him to collect for him two hundred and five American specimens, naming the varieties and the amount which he was to pay for each. Clemens was to catch these birds and bring them over to England, arriving at Condover on a certain day, when there would be friends to meet him, of course.

Then there was a report which came now and then from another English castle—the minutes of a certain “Mark Twain Club,” all neatly and elaborately written out, with the speech of each member and the discussions which had followed—the work, he found out later, of another eccentric; for there was no Mark Twain Club, the reports being just the mental diversion of a rich young man, with nothing else to do.—[In Following the Equator Clemens combined these two pleasant characters in one story, with elaborations.]

Letters came queerly addressed. There is one envelope still in existence which bears Clemens’s name in elaborate design and a very good silhouette likeness, the work of some talented artist. “Mark Twain, United States,” was a common address; “Mark Twain, The World,” was also used; “Mark Twain, Somewhere,” mailed in a foreign country, reached him promptly, and “Mark Twain, Anywhere,” found its way to Hartford in due season. Then there was a letter (though this was later; he was abroad at the time), mailed by Brander Matthews and Francis Wilson, addressed, “Mark Twain, God Knows Where.” It found him after traveling half around the world on its errand, and in his answer he said, “He did.” Then some one sent a letter addressed, “The Devil Knows Where.” Which also reached him, and he answered, “He did, too.”

Surely this was the farthest horizon of fame.

Countless Mark Twain anecdotes are told of this period, of every period, and will be told and personally vouched for so long as the last soul of his generation remains alive. For seventy years longer, perhaps, there will be those who will relate “personal recollections” of Mark Twain. Many of them will be interesting; some of them will be true; most of them will become history at last. It is too soon to make history of much of this drift now. It is only safe to admit a few authenticated examples.

Page 329

It happens that one of the oftenest-told anecdotes has been the least elaborated. It is the one about his call on Mrs. Stowe. Twichell's journal entry, set down at the time, verifies it:

Mrs. Stowe was leaving for Florida one morning, and Clemens ran over early to say good-by. On his return Mrs. Clemens regarded him disapprovingly:

"Why, Youth," she said, "you haven't on any collar and tie."

He said nothing, but went up to his room, did up these items in a neat package, and sent it over by a servant, with a line:

"Herewith receive a call from the rest of me."

Mrs. Stowe returned a witty note, in which she said that he had discovered a new principle, the principle of making calls by instalments, and asked whether, in extreme cases, a man might not send his hat, coat, and boots and be otherwise excused.

Col. Henry Watterson tells the story of an after-theater supper at the Brevoort House, where Murat Halstead, Mark Twain, and himself were present. A reporter sent in a card for Colonel Watterson, who was about to deny himself when Clemens said:

"Give it to me; I'll fix it." And left the table. He came back in a moment and beckoned to Watterson.

"He is young and as innocent as a lamb," he said. "I represented myself as your secretary. I said that you were not here, but if Mr. Halstead would do as well I would fetch him out. I'll introduce you as Halstead, and we'll have some fun."

Now, while Watterson and Halstead were always good friends, they were political enemies. It was a political season and the reporter wanted that kind of an interview. Watterson gave it to him, repudiating every principle that Halstead stood for, reversing him in every expressed opinion. Halstead was for hard money and given to flying the "bloody shirt" of sectional prejudice; Watterson lowered the bloody shirt and declared for greenbacks in Halstead's name. Then he and Clemens returned to the table and told frankly what they had done. Of course, nobody believed it. The report passed the World night-editor, and appeared, next morning. Halstead woke up, then, and wrote a note to the World, denying the interview throughout. The World printed his note with the added line:

"When Mr. Halstead saw our reporter he had dined."

It required John Hay (then on the Tribune) to place the joke where it belonged.

There is a Lotos Club anecdote of Mark Twain that carries the internal evidence of truth. Saturday evening at the Lotos always brought a gathering of the “wits,” and on certain evenings—“Hens and chickens” nights—each man had to tell a story, make a speech, or sing a song. On one evening a young man, an invited guest, was called upon and recited a very long poem.

Page 330

One by one those who sat within easy reach of the various exits melted away, until no one remained but Mark Twain. Perhaps he saw the earnestness of the young man, and sympathized with it. He may have remembered a time when he would have been grateful for one such attentive auditor. At all events, he sat perfectly still, never taking his eyes from the reader, never showing the least inclination toward discomfort or impatience, but listening, as with rapt attention, to the very last line. Douglas Taylor, one of the faithful Saturday-night members, said to him later:

“Mark, how did you manage to sit through that dreary, interminable poem?”

“Well,” he said, “that young man thought he had a divine message to deliver, and I thought he was entitled to at least one auditor, so I stayed with him.”

We may believe that for that one auditor the young author was willing to sacrifice all the others.

One might continue these anecdotes for as long as the young man's poem lasted, and perhaps hold as large an audience. But anecdotes are not all of history. These are set down because they reflect a phase of the man and an aspect of his life at this period. For at the most we can only present an angle here and there, and tell a little of the story, letting each reader from his fancy construct the rest.

CVI

HIS FIRST STAGE APPEARANCE

Once that winter the Monday Evening Club met at Mark Twain's home, and instead of the usual essay he read them a story: “The Facts Concerning the Recent Carnival of Crime in Connecticut.” It was the story of a man's warfare with a personified conscience—a, sort of “William Wilson” idea, though less weird, less somber, and with more actuality, more verisimilitude. It was, in fact, autobiographical, a setting-down of the author's daily self-chidings. The climax, where conscience is slain, is a startling picture which appeals to most of humanity. So vivid is it all, that it is difficult in places not to believe in the reality of the tale, though the allegory is always present.

The club was deeply impressed by the little fictional sermon. One of its ministerial members offered his pulpit for the next Sunday if Mark Twain would deliver it to his congregation. Howells welcomed it for the Atlantic, and published it in June. It was immensely successful at the time, though for some reason it seems to be little known or remembered to-day. Now and then a reader mentions it, always with enthusiasm. Howells referred to it repeatedly in his letters, and finally persuaded Clemens to let Osgood bring it out, with “A True Story,” in dainty, booklet form. If the reader does not already know the tale, it will pay him to look it up and read it, and then to read it again.

Meantime Tom Sawyer remained unpublished.

“Get Bliss to hurry it up!” wrote Howells. “That boy is going to make a prodigious hit.”

Page 331

But Clemens delayed the book, to find some means to outwit the Canadian pirates, who thus far had laid hands on everything, and now were clamoring at the Atlantic because there was no more to steal.

Moncure D. Conway was in America, and agreed to take the manuscript of Sawyer to London and arrange for its publication and copyright. In Conway's Memoirs he speaks of Mark Twain's beautiful home, comparing it and its surroundings with the homes of Surrey, England. He tells of an entertainment given to Harriet Beecher Stowe, a sort of animated jarley wax-works. Clemens and Conway went over as if to pay a call, when presently the old lady was rather startled by an invasion of costumed figures. Clemens rose and began introducing them in his gay, fanciful fashion. He began with a knight in full armor, saying, as if in an aside, "Bring along that tinshop," and went on to tell the romance of the knight's achievements.

Conway read Tom Sawyer on the ship and was greatly excited over it. Later, in London, he lectured on it, arranging meantime for its publication with Chatto & Windus, thus establishing a friendly business relation with that firm which Mark Twain continued during his lifetime.

Clemens lent himself to a number of institutional amusements that year, and on the 26th of April, 1876, made his first public appearance on the dramatic stage.

It was an amateur performance, but not of the usual kind. There was genuine dramatic talent in Hartford, and the old play of the "Loan of the Lover," with Mark Twain as Peter Spuyk and Miss Helen Smith—[Now Mrs. William W. Ellsworth.]—as Gertrude, with a support sufficient for their needs, gave a performance that probably furnished as much entertainment as that pleasant old play is capable of providing. Mark Twain had in him the making of a great actor. Henry Irving once said to him:

"You made a mistake by not adopting the stage as a profession. You would have made even a greater actor than a writer."

Yet it is unlikely that he would ever have been satisfied with the stage. He had too many original literary ideas. He would never have been satisfied to repeat the same part over and over again, night after night from week to month, and from month to year. He could not stick to the author's lines even for one night. In his performance of the easy-going, thick-headed Peter Spuyk his impromptu additions to the lines made it hard on the company, who found their cues all at sixes and sevens, but it delighted the audience beyond measure. No such impersonation of that character was ever given before, or ever will be given again. It was repeated with new and astonishing variations on the part of Peter, and it could have been put on for a long run. Augustin Daly wrote immediately, offering the Fifth Avenue Theater for a "benefit" performance, and again, a few days later, urging acceptance. "Not for one night, but for many."

Page 332

Clemens was tempted, no doubt. Perhaps, if he had yielded, he would today have had one more claim on immortality.

CVII

Howells, Clemens, and "George"

Howells and Clemens were visiting back and forth rather oftener just then. Clemens was particularly fond of the Boston crowd—Aldrich, Fields, Osgood, and the rest—delighting in those luncheons or dinners which Osgood, that hospitable publisher, was always giving on one pretext or another. No man ever loved company more than Osgood, or to play the part of host and pay for the enjoyment of others. His dinners were elaborate affairs, where the sages and poets and wits of that day (and sometimes their wives) gathered. They were happy reunions, those fore-gatherings, though perhaps a more intimate enjoyment was found at the luncheons, where only two or three were invited, usually Aldrich, Howells, and Clemens, and the talk continued through the afternoon and into the deepening twilight, such company and such twilight as somehow one seems never to find any more.

On one of the visits which Howells made to Hartford that year he took his son John, then a small boy, with him. John was about six years old at the time, with his head full of stories of Aladdin, and of other Arabian fancies. On the way over his father said to him:

"Now, John, you will see a perfect palace."

They arrived, and John was awed into silence by the magnificence and splendors of his surroundings until they went to the bath-room to wash off the dust of travel. There he happened to notice a cake of pink soap.

"Why," he said, "they've even got their soap painted!" Next morning he woke early—they were occupying the mahogany room on the ground floor—and slipping out through the library, and to the door of the dining-room, he saw the colored butler, George—the immortal George—setting the breakfast-table. He hurriedly tiptoed back and whispered to his father:

"Come quick! The slave is setting the table!"

This being the second mention of George, it seems proper here that he should be formally presented. Clemens used to say that George came one day to wash windows and remained eighteen years. He was precisely the sort of character that Mark Twain loved. He had formerly been the body-servant of an army general and was typically racially Southern, with those delightful attributes of wit and policy and gentleness which go with the best type of negro character. The children loved him no less than did their

father. Mrs. Clemens likewise had a weakness for George, though she did not approve of him. George's morals were defective. He was an inveterate gambler. He would bet on anything, though prudently and with knowledge. He would investigate before he invested. If he placed his money on a horse, he knew the horse's pedigree and the pedigree of the horses against it,

Page 333

also of their riders. If he invested in an election, he knew all about the candidates. He had agents among his own race, and among the whites as well, to supply him with information. He kept them faithful to him by lending them money—at ruinous interest. He buttonholed Mark Twain’s callers while he was removing their coats concerning the political situation, much to the chagrin of Mrs. Clemens, who protested, though vainly, for the men liked George and his ways, and upheld him in his iniquities.

Mrs. Clemens’s disapproval of George reached the point, now and then, where she declared he could not remain.

She even discharged him once, but next morning George was at the breakfast-table, in attendance, as usual. Mrs. Clemens looked at him gravely:

“George,” she said, “didn’t I discharge you yesterday?”

“Yes, Mis’ Clemens, but I knew you couldn’t get along without me, so I thought I’d better stay a while.”

In one of the letters to Howells, Clemens wrote:

When George first came he was one of the most religious of men. He had but one fault—young George Washington’s. But I have trained him; and now it fairly breaks Mrs. Clemens’s heart to hear him stand at that front door and lie to an unwelcome visitor.

George was a fine diplomat. He would come up to the billiard-room with a card or message from some one waiting below, and Clemens would fling his soul into a sultry denial which became a soothing and balmy subterfuge before it reached the front door.

The “slave” must have been setting the table in good season, for the Clemens breakfasts were likely to be late. They usually came along about nine o’clock, by which time Howells and John were fairly clawing with hunger.

Clemens did not have an early appetite, but when it came it was a good one. Breakfast and dinner were his important meals. He seldom ate at all during the middle of the day, though if guests were present he would join them at luncheon-time and walk up and down while they were eating, talking and gesticulating in his fervent, fascinating way. Sometimes Mrs. Clemens would say:

“Oh, Youth, do come and sit down with us. We can listen so much better.”

But he seldom did. At dinner, too, it was his habit, between the courses, to rise from the table and walk up and down the room, waving his napkin and talking!—talking in a strain and with a charm that he could never quite equal with his pen. It’s the opinion of most

people who knew Mark Twain personally that his impromptu utterances, delivered with that ineffable quality of speech, manifested the culmination of his genius.

Page 334

When Clemens came to Boston the Howells household was regulated, or rather unregulated, without regard to former routine. Mark Twain's personality was of a sort that unconsciously compelled the general attendance of any household. The reader may recall Josh Billings's remark on the subject. Howells tells how they kept their guest to themselves when he visited their home in Cambridge, permitting him to indulge in as many unconventions as he chose; how Clemens would take a room at the Parker House, leaving the gas burning day and night, and perhaps arrive at Cambridge, after a dinner or a reading, in evening dress and slippers, and joyously remain with them for a day or more in that guise, slipping on an overcoat and a pair of rubbers when they went for a walk. Also, how he smoked continuously in every room of the house, smoked during every waking moment, and how Howells, mindful of his insurance, sometimes slipped in and removed the still-burning cigar after he was asleep.

Clemens had difficulty in getting to sleep in that earlier day, and for a time found it soothing to drink a little champagne on retiring. Once, when he arrived in Boston, Howells said:

"Clemens, we've laid in a bottle of champagne for you."

But he answered:

"Oh, that's no good any more. Beer's the thing."

So Howells provided the beer, and always afterward had a vision of his guest going upstairs that night with a pint bottle under each arm.

He invented other methods of inducing slumber as the years went by, and at one time found that this precious boon came more easily when he stretched himself on the bathroom floor.

He was a perpetual joy to the Howells family when he was there, even though the household required a general reorganization when he was gone.

Mildred Howells remembers how, as a very little girl, her mother cautioned her not to ask for anything she wanted at the table when company was present, but to speak privately of it to her. Miss Howells declares that while Mark Twain was their guest she nearly starved because it was impossible to get her mother's attention; and Mrs. Howells, after one of those visits of hilarity and disorder, said:

"Well, it 'most kills me, but it pays," a remark which Clemens vastly enjoyed. Howells himself once wrote:

Your visit was a perfect ovation for us; we never enjoy anything so much as those visits of yours. The smoke and the Scotch and the late hours almost kill us; but we look each

other in the eyes when you are gone, and say what a glorious time it was, and air the library, and begin sleeping and longing to have you back again....

CVIII

SUMMER LABORS AT QUARRY FARM

They went to Elmira, that summer of '76, to be "hermits and eschew caves and live in the sun," as Clemens wrote in a letter to Dr. Brown. They returned to the place as to Paradise: Clemens to his study and the books which he always called for, Mrs. Clemens to a blessed relief from social obligations, the children to the shady play-places, the green, sloping hill, where they could race and tumble, and to all their animal friends.

Page 335

Susy was really growing up. She had had several birthdays, quite grand affairs, when she had been brought down in the morning, decked, and with proper ceremonies, with subsequent celebration. She was a strange, thoughtful child, much given to reflecting on the power and presence of infinity, for she was religiously taught. Down in the city, one night, there was a grand display of fireworks, and the hilltop was a good place from which to enjoy it; but it grew late after a little, and Susy was ordered to bed. She said, thoughtfully:

“I wish I could sit up all night, as God does.”

The baby, whom they still called “Bay,” was a tiny, brown creature who liked to romp in the sun and be rocked to sleep at night with a song. Clemens often took them for extended walks, pushing Bay in her carriage. Once, in a preoccupied moment, he let go of the little vehicle and it started downhill, gaining speed rapidly.

He awoke then, and set off in wild pursuit. Before he could overtake the runaway carriage it had turned to the roadside and upset. Bay was lying among the stones and her head was bleeding. Hastily binding the wound with a handkerchief he started full speed with her up the hill toward the house, calling for restoratives as he came. It was no serious matter. The little girl was strong and did not readily give way to affliction.

The children were unlike: Susy was all contemplation and nerves; Bay serene and practical. It was said, when a pet cat died—this was some years later—that Susy deeply reflected as to its life here and hereafter, while Bay was concerned only as to the style of its funeral. Susy showed early her father’s quaintness of remark. Once they bought her a heavier pair of shoes than she approved of. She was not in the best of humors during the day, and that night, when at prayer-time her mother said, “Now, Susy, put your thoughts on God,” she answered, “Mama, I can’t with those shoes.”

Clemens worked steadily that summer and did a variety of things. He had given up a novel, begun with much enthusiasm, but he had undertaken another long manuscript. By the middle of August he had written several hundred pages of a story which was to be a continuation of Tam Sawyer —The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. Now, here is a curious phase of genius. The novel which for a time had filled him with enthusiasm and faith had no important literary value, whereas, concerning this new tale, he says:

“I like it only tolerably well, as far as I have gone, and may possibly pigeonhole or burn the manuscript when it is done”—this of the story which, of his books of pure fiction, will perhaps longest survive. He did, in fact, give the story up, and without much regret, when it was about half completed, and let it lie unfinished for years.

Page 336

He wrote one short tale, "The Canvasser's Story," a burlesque of no special distinction, and he projected for the Atlantic a scheme of "blindfold novelettes," a series of stories to be written by well-known authors and others, each to be constructed on the same plot. One can easily imagine Clemens's enthusiasm over a banal project like that; his impulses were always rainbow-hued, whether valuable or not; but it is curious that Howells should welcome and even encourage an enterprise so far removed from all the traditions of art. It fell to pieces, at last, of inherent misconstruction. The title was to be, "A Murder and a Marriage." Clemens could not arrive at a logical climax that did not bring the marriage and the hanging on the same day.

The Atlantic started its "Contributors' Club," and Howells wrote to Clemens for a paragraph or more of personal opinion on any subject, assuring him that he could "spit his spite" out at somebody or something as if it were a passage from a letter. That was a fairly large permission to give Mark Twain. The paragraph he sent was the sort of thing he would write with glee, and hug himself over in the thought of Howells's necessity of rejecting it. In the accompanying note he said:

Say, Boss, do you want this to lighten up your old freight-train with? I suppose you won't, but then it won't take long to say, so.

He was always sending impossible offerings to the magazines; innocently enough sometimes, but often out of pure mischievousness. Yet they were constantly after him, for they knew they were likely to get a first-water gem. Mary Mopes Dodge, of St. Nicholas, wrote time and again, and finally said:

"I know a man who was persecuted by an editor till he went distracted."

In his reading that year at the farm he gave more than customary attention to one of his favorite books, Pepys' Diary, that captivating old record which no one can follow continuously without catching the infection of its manner and the desire of imitation. He had been reading diligently one day, when he determined to try his hand on an imaginary record of conversation and court manners of a bygone day, written in the phrase of the period. The result was Fireside Conversation in the Time of Queen Elizabeth, or, as he later called it, 1601. The "conversation," recorded by a supposed Pepys of that period, was written with all the outspoken coarseness and nakedness of that rank day, when fireside sociabilities were limited only by the range of loosened fancy, vocabulary, and physical performance, and not by any bounds of convention. Howells has spoken of Mark Twain's "Elizabethan breadth of parlance," and how he, Howells, was always hiding away in discreet holes and corners the letters in which Clemens had "loosed his bold fancy to stoop on rank suggestion." "I could not bear to burn them," he declares, "and I could not, after the first reading, quite bear to look at them."

Page 337

In the 1601 Mark Twain outdid himself in the Elizabethan field. It was written as a letter to that robust divine, Rev. Joseph Twichell, who had no special scruples concerning Shakespearian parlance and customs. Before it was mailed it was shown to David Gray, who was spending a Sunday at Elmira. Gray said:

“Print it and put your name to it, Mark. You have never done a greater piece of work than that.”

John Hay, whom it also reached in due time, pronounce it a classic—a “most exquisite bit of old English morality.” Hay surreptitiously permitted some proofs to be made of it, and it has been circulated privately, though sparingly, ever since. At one time a special font of antique type was made for it and one hundred copies were taken on hand-made paper. They would easily bring a hundred dollars each to-day.

1601 is a genuine classic, as classics of that sort go. It is better than the gross obscenities of Rabelais, and perhaps, in some day to come, the taste that justified Gargantua and the Decameron will give this literary refugee shelter and setting among the more conventional writings of Mark Twain. Human taste is a curious thing; delicacy is purely a matter of environment and point of view.—[In a note-book of a later period Clemens himself wrote: “It depends on who writes a thing whether it is coarse or not. I once wrote a conversation between Elizabeth, Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Beaumont, Sir W. Raleigh, Lord Bacon, Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, and a stupid old nobleman—this latter being cup-bearer to the queen and ostensible reporter of the talk.

“There were four maids of honor present and a sweet young girl two years younger than the boy Beaumont. I built a conversation which could have happened—I used words such as were used at that time—1601. I sent it anonymously to a magazine, and how the editor abused it and the sender! But that man was a praiser of Rabelais, and had been saying, ‘O that we had a Rabelais!’ I judged that I could furnish him one.”]

Eighteen hundred and seventy-six was a Presidential year—the year of the Hayes-Tilden campaign. Clemens and Howells were both warm Republicans and actively interested in the outcome, Clemens, as he confessed, for the first time in his life. Before his return to Hartford he announced himself publicly as a Hayes man, made so by Governor Hayes’s letter of acceptance, which, he said, “expresses my own political convictions.” His politics had not been generally known up to that time, and a Tilden and Hendricks club in Jersey City had invited him to be present and give them some political counsel, at a flag-raising. He wrote, declining pleasantly enough, then added:

“You have asked me for some political counsel or advice: In view of Mr. Tilden’s Civil War record my advice is not to raise the flag.”

He wrote Howells: “If Tilden is elected I think the entire country will go pretty straight to—Mrs. Howells’s bad place.”

Page 338

Howells was writing a campaign biography of Hayes, which he hoped would have a large sale, and Clemens urged him to get it out quickly and save the country. Howells, working like a beaver, in turn urged Clemens to take the field in the cause. Returning to Hartford, Clemens presided at a political rally and made a speech, the most widely quoted of the campaign. All papers, without distinction as to party, quoted it, and all readers, regardless of politics, read it with joy.

Yet conditions did not improve. When Howells's book had been out a reasonable length of time he wrote that it had sold only two thousand copies.

"There's success for you," he said. "It makes me despair of the Republic, I can tell you."

Clemens, however, did not lose faith, and went on shouting for Hayes and damning Tilden till the final vote was cast. In later life he changed his mind about Tilden (as did many others) through sympathy. Sympathy could make—Mark Twain change his mind any time. He stood for the right, but, above all, for justice. He stood for the wronged, regardless of all other things.

CIX

The public appearance of "Tom Sawyer"

Clemens gave a few readings in Boston and Philadelphia, but when urged to go elsewhere made the excuse that he was having his portrait painted and could not leave home.

As a matter of fact, he was enjoying himself with Frank Millet, who had been invited to the house to do the portrait and had captured the fervent admiration of the whole family. Millet was young, handsome, and lively; Clemens couldn't see enough of him, the children adored him and added his name to the prayer which included each member of the household—the "Holy Family," Clemens called it.

Millet had brought with him but one piece of canvas for the portrait, and when the first sketch was finished Mrs. Clemens was so delighted with it that she did not wish him to touch it again. She was afraid of losing some particular feeling in it which she valued. Millet went to the city for another canvas and Clemens accompanied him. While Millet was doing his shopping it happened to occur to Clemens that it would be well to fill in the time by having his hair cut. He left word with a clerk to tell Millet that he had gone across the street. By and by the artist came over, and nearly wept with despair when he saw his subject sheared of the auburn, gray-sprinkled aureola that had made his first sketch a success. He tried it again, and the result was an excellent likeness, but it never satisfied Millet.

The 'Adventures of Tom Sawyer' appeared late in December (1876), and immediately took its place as foremost of American stories of boy life, a place which it unquestionably holds to this day. We have already considered the personal details of this story, for they were essentially nothing more than the various aspects of Mark Twain's own boyhood. It is only necessary to add a word concerning the elaboration of this period in literary form.

Page 339

From every point it is a masterpiece, this picture of boy life in a little lazy, drowsy town, with all the irresponsibility and general disreputability of boy character coupled with that indefinable, formless, elusive something we call boy conscience, which is more likely to be boy terror and a latent instinct of manliness. These things are so truly portrayed that every boy and man reader finds the tale fitting into his own remembered years, as if it had grown there. Every boy has played off sick to escape school; every boy has reflected in his heart Tom's picture of himself being brought home dead, and gloated over the stricken consciences of those who had blighted his young life; every boy—of that day, at least—every normal, respectable boy, grew up to “fear God and dread the Sunday-school,” as Howells puts it in his review.

As for the story itself, the narrative of it, it is pure delight. The pirate camp on the island is simply boy heaven. What boy, for instance, would not change any other glory or boon that the world holds for this:

They built a fire against the side of a great log twenty or thirty steps within the somber depths of the forest, and then cooked some bacon in the frying-pan for supper, and used up half of the corn “pone” stock they had brought. It seemed glorious sport to be feasting in that wild, free way in the virgin forest of an unexplored and uninhabited island, far from the haunts of men, and they said they never would return to civilization. The climbing fire lit up their faces and threw its ruddy glare upon the pillared tree-trunks of their forest-temple, and upon the varnished foliage and the festooning vines.

There is a magic in it. Mark Twain, when he wrote it, felt renewed in him all the old fascination of those days and nights with Tom Blankenship, John Briggs, and the Bowen boys on Glasscock's Island. Everywhere in Tom Sawyer there is a quality, entirely apart from the humor and the narrative, which the younger reader is likely to overlook. No one forgets the whitewashing scene, but not many of us, from our early reading, recall this delicious bit of description which introduces it:

The locust-trees were in bloom, and the fragrance of the blossoms filled the air. Cardiff Hill, beyond the village and above it, was green with vegetation, and it lay just far enough away to seem a delectable land, dreamy, reposeful, and inviting.

Tom's night visit home; the graveyard scene, with the murder of Dr. Robinson; the adventures of Tom and Becky in the cave—these are all marvelously invented. Literary thrill touches the ultimate in one incident of the cave episode. Brander Matthews has written:

Page 340

Nor is there any situation quite as thrilling as that awful moment in the cave when the boy and girl are lost in the darkness, and when Tom suddenly sees a human hand bearing a light, and then finds that the hand is the hand of Indian Joe, his one mortal enemy. I have always thought that the vision of the hand in the cave in Tom Sawyer was one of the very finest things in the literature of adventure since Robinson Crusoe first saw a single footprint in the sand of the sea-shore.

Mark Twain's invention was not always a reliable quantity, but with that eccentricity which goes with any attribute of genius, it was likely at any moment to rise supreme. If to the critical, hardened reader the tale seems a shade overdone here and there, a trifle extravagant in its delineations, let him go back to his first long-ago reading of it and see if he recalls anything but his pure delight in it then. As a boy's story it has not been equaled.

Tom Sawyer has ranked in popularity with *Roughing It*.

Its sales go steadily on from year to year, and are likely to continue so long as boys and girls do not change, and men and women remember.

—[Col. Henry Watterson, when he finished *Tom Sawyer*, wrote: "I have just laid down *Tom Sawyer*, and cannot resist the pressure. It is immense! I read every word of it, didn't skip a line, and nearly disgraced myself several times in the presence of a sleeping-car full of honorable and pious people. Once I had to get to one side and have a cry, and as for an internal compound of laughter and tears there was no end to it.... The 'funeral' of the boys, the cave business, and the hunt for the hidden treasure are as dramatic as anything I know of in fiction, while the pathos—particularly everything relating to Huck and Aunt Polly—makes a cross between Dickens's skill and Thackeray's nature, which, resembling neither, is thoroughly impressive and original."]

CX

MARK TWAIN AND BRET HARTE WRITE A PLAY

It was the fall and winter of '76 that Bret Harte came to Hartford and collaborated with Mark Twain on the play "Ah Sin," a comedy-drama, or melodrama, written for Charles T. Parsloe, the great impersonator of Chinese character. Harte had written a successful play which unfortunately he had sold outright for no great sum, and was eager for another venture. Harte had the dramatic sense and constructive invention. He also had humor, but he felt the need of the sort of humor that Mark Twain could furnish. Furthermore, he believed that a play backed by both their reputations must start with great advantages. Clemens also realized these things, and the arrangement was made. Speaking of their method of working, Clemens once said:

“Well, Bret came down to Hartford and we talked it over, and then Bret wrote it while I played billiards, but of course I had to go over it to get the dialect right. Bret never did know anything about dialect.” Which is hardly a fair statement of the case. They both worked on the play, and worked hard.

Page 341

During the, period of its construction Harte had an order for a story which he said he must finish at once, as he needed the money. It must be delivered by the following night, and he insisted that he must be getting at it without a moment's delay. Still he seemed in no haste to begin. The evening passed; bedtime came. Then he asked that an open fire might be made in his room and a bottle of whisky sent up, in case he needed something to keep him awake. George attended to these matters, and nothing more was heard of Harte until very early next morning, when he rang for George and asked for a fresh fire and an additional supply of whisky. At breakfast-time he appeared, fresh, rosy, and elate, with the announcement that his story was complete.

That forenoon the Saturday Morning Club met at the Clemens home. It was a young women's club, of which Mark Twain was a sort of honorary member—a club for the purpose of intellectual advancement, somewhat on the order of the Monday Evening Club of men, except that the papers read before it were not prepared by members, but by men and women prominent in some field of intellectual progress. Bret Harte had agreed to read to them on this particular occasion, and he gaily appeared and gave them the story just finished, "Thankful Blossom," a tale which Mark Twain always regarded as one of Harte's very best.

The new play, "Ah Sin," by Mark Twain and Bret Harte, was put on at Washington, at the National Theater, on the evening of May 7, 1877. It had been widely exploited in the newspapers, and the fame of the authors insured a crowded opening. Clemens was unable to go over on account of a sudden attack of bronchitis. Parsloe was nervous accordingly, and the presence of Harte does not seem to have added to his happiness.

"I am not very well myself," he wrote to Clemens. "The excitement of the first night is bad enough, but to have the annoyance with Harte that I have is too much for a new beginner."

Nevertheless, the play seems to have gone well, with Parsloe as Ah Sin—a Chinese laundryman who was also a great number of other diverting things—with a fair support and a happy-go-lucky presentation of frontier life, which included a supposed murder, a false accusation, and a general clearing-up of mystery by the pleasant and wily and useful and entertaining Ah Sin. It was not a great play. It was neither very coherent nor convincing, but it had a lot of good fun in it, with character parts which, if not faithful to life, were faithful enough to the public conception of it to be amusing and exciting. At the end of each act not only Parsloe, but also the principal members of the company, were called before the curtain for special acknowledgments. When it was over there was a general call for Ah Sin, who came before the curtain and read a telegram.

Charles T. Parsloe,—I am on the sick-list, and therefore cannot come to Washington; but I have prepared two speeches—one to deliver in event of failure of the play, and the other if successful. Please tell me which I shall send. May be better to put it to vote.

Page 342

Marktwain.

The house cheered the letter, and when it was put to vote decided unanimously that the play had been a success—a verdict more kindly than true.

J. I. Ford, of the theater management, wrote to Clemens, next morning after the first performance, urging him to come to Washington in person and “wet nurse” the play until “it could do for itself.”

Ford expressed satisfaction with the play and its prospects, and concludes:

I inclose notices. Come if you can. “Your presence will be worth ten thousand men. The king’s name is a tower of strength.” I have urged the President to come to-night.

The play made no money in Washington, but Augustin Daly decided to put it on in New York at the Fifth Avenue Theater, with a company which included, besides Parsloe, Edmund Collier, P. A. Anderson, Dora Goldthwaite, Henry Crisp, and Mrs. Wells, a very worthy group of players indeed. Clemens was present at the opening, dressed in white, which he affected only for warm-weather use in those days, and made a speech at the end of the third act.

“Ah Sin” did not excite much enthusiasm among New York dramatic critics. The houses were promising for a time, but for some reason the performance as a whole did not contain the elements of prosperity. It set out on its provincial travels with no particular prestige beyond the reputation of its authors; and it would seem that this was not enough, for it failed to pay, and all parties concerned presently abandoned it to its fate and it was heard of no more. Just why “Ah Sin” did not prosper it would not become us to decide at this far remove of time and taste. Poorer plays have succeeded and better plays have failed since then, and no one has ever been able to demonstrate the mystery. A touch somewhere, a pulling-about and a readjustment, might have saved “Ali Sin,” but the pullings and haulings which they gave it did not. Perhaps it still lies in some managerial vault, and some day may be dragged to light and reconstructed and recast, and come into its reward. Who knows? Or it may have drifted to that harbor of forgotten plays, whence there is no returning.

As between Harte and Clemens, the whole matter was unfortunate. In the course of their association there arose a friction and the long-time friendship disappeared.

CXI

A BERMUDA HOLIDAY

On the 16th of May, 1877, Mark Twain set out on what, in his note-book, he declared to be “the first actual pleasure-trip” he had ever taken, meaning that on every previous trip

he had started with a purpose other than that of mere enjoyment. He took with him his, friend and pastor, the Rev. Joseph H. Twichell, and they sailed for Bermuda, an island resort not so well known or so fashionable as to-day.

Page 343

They did not go to a hotel. Under assumed names they took up quarters in a boarding-house, with a Mrs. Kirkham, and were unmolested and altogether happy in their wanderings through four golden days. Mark Twain could not resist keeping a notebook, setting down bits of scenery and character and incident, just as he had always done. He was impressed with the cheapness of property and living in the Bermuda of that period. He makes special mention of some cottages constructed of coral blocks: "All as beautiful and as neat as a pin, at the cost of four hundred and eighty dollars each." To Twichell he remarked:

"Joe, this place is like Heaven, and I'm going to make the most of it."

"Mark," said Twichell, "that's right; make the most of a place that is like Heaven while you have a chance."

In one of the entries—the final one—Clemens says:

"Bermuda is free (at present) from the triple curse of railways, telegraphs, and newspapers, but this will not last the year. I propose to spend next year here and no more."

When they were ready to leave, and started for the steamer, Twichell made an excuse to go back, his purpose being to tell their landlady and her daughter that, without knowing it, they had been entertaining Mark Twain.

"Did you ever hear of Mark Twain?" asked Twichell.

The daughter answered.

"Yes," she said, "until I'm tired of the name. I know a young man who never talks of anything else."

"Well," said Twichell, "that gentleman with me is Mark Twain."

The Kirkhams declined to believe it at first, and then were in deep sorrow that they had not known it earlier. Twichell promised that he and Clemens would come back the next year; and they meant to go back—we always mean to go back to places—but it was thirty years before they returned at last, and then their pleasant landlady was dead.

On the home trip they sighted a wandering vessel, manned by blacks, trying to get to New York. She had no cargo and was pretty helpless. Later, when she was reported again, Clemens wrote about it in a Hartford paper, telling the story as he knew it. The vessel had shipped the crew, on a basis of passage to New York, in exchange for labor. So it was a "pleasure-excursion!" Clemens dwelt on this fancy:

I have heard of a good many pleasure-excursions, but this heads the list. It is monumental, and if ever the tired old tramp is found I should like to be there and see him in his sorrowful rags and his venerable head of grass and seaweed, and hear the ancient mariners tell the story of their mysterious wanderings through the solemn solitudes of the ocean.

Long afterward this vagrant craft was reported again, still drifting with the relentless Gulf Stream. Perhaps she reached New York in time; one would like to know, but there seems no good way to find out.

That first Bermuda voyage was always a happy memory to Mark Twain. To Twichell he wrote that it was the “joyousest trip” he had ever made:

Page 344

Not a heartache anywhere, not a twinge of conscience. I often come to myself out of a reverie and detect an undertone of thought that had been thinking itself without volition of mind—viz., that if we had only had ten days of those walks and talks instead of four.

There was but one regret: Howells had not been with them. Clemens denounced him for his absence:

If you had gone with us and let me pay the fifty dollars, which the trip and the board and the various knick-knacks and mementos would cost, I would have picked up enough droppings from your conversation to pay me five hundred per cent. profit in the way of the several magazine articles which I could have written; whereas I can now write only one or two, and am therefore largely out of pocket by your proud ways.

Clemens would not fail to write about his trip. He could not help doing that, and he began "Some Rambling Notes of an Idle Excursion" as soon as he landed in Hartford. They were quite what the name would signify —leisurely, pleasant commentaries on a loafing, peaceful vacation. They are not startling in their humor or description, but are gently amusing and summery, reflecting, bubble-like, evanescent fancies of Bermuda. Howells, shut up in a Boston editorial office, found them delightful enough, and very likely his Atlantic readers agreed with him. The story of "Isaac and the Prophets of Baal" was one that Capt. Ned Wakeman had told to Twichell during a voyage which the latter had made to Aspinwall with that vigorous old seafarer; so in the "Rambling Notes" Wakeman appears as Captain Hurricane Jones, probably a step in the evolution of the later name of Stormfield. The best feature of the series (there were four papers in all) is a story of a rescue in mid-ocean; but surely the brightest ripple of humor is the reference to Bermuda's mahogany-tree:

There was exactly one mahogany-tree on the island. I know this to be reliable because I saw a man who said he had counted it many a time and could not be mistaken. He was a man with a haze lip and a pure heart, and everybody said he was as true as steel. Such men are all too few.

Clemens cared less for these papers than did Howells. He had serious doubts about the first two and suggested their destruction, but with Howells's appreciation his own confidence in them returned and he let them all go in. They did not especially advance his reputation, but perhaps they did it no harm.

CXII

A NEW PLAY AND A NEW TALE

He wrote a short story that year which is notable mainly for the fact that in it the telephone becomes a literary property, probably for the first time. "The Loves of Alonzo

Fitz-Clarence and Rosannah Ethelton” employed in the consummation what was then a prospect, rather than a reality—long-distance communication.

Page 345

His work that summer consisted mainly of two extensive undertakings, one of which he completed without delay. He still had the dramatic ambition, and he believed that he was capable now of constructing a play entirely from his own resources.

To Howells, in June, he wrote:

To-day I am deep in a comedy which I began this morning—principal character an old detective. I skeletoned the first act and wrote the second to-day, and am dog-tired now. Fifty-four pages of *Ms.* in seven hours.

Seven days later, the Fourth of July, he said:

I have piled up one hundred and fifty-one pages on my comedy. The first, second and fourth acts are done, and done to my satisfaction, too. To-morrow and next day will finish the third act, and the play. Never had so much fun over anything in my life never such consuming interest and delight. And just think! I had Sol Smith Russell in my mind's eye for the old detective's part, and bang it! he has gone off pottering with Oliver Optic, or else the papers lie.

He was working with enthusiasm, you see, believing in it with a faith which, alas, was no warrant for its quality. Even Howells caught his enthusiasm and became eager to see the play, and to have the story it contained told for the Atlantic.

But in the end it proved a mistake. Dion Boucicault, when he read the manuscript, pronounced it better than "Ah Sin," but that was only qualified praise. Actors who considered the play, anxious enough to have Mark Twain's name on their posters and small bills, were obliged to admit that, while it contained marvelous lines, it wouldn't "go." John Brougham wrote:

There is an absolute "embarrassment of riches" in your "Detective" most assuredly, but the difficulty is to put it into profitable form. The quartz is there in abundance, only requiring the necessary manipulation to extract the gold. In narrative structure the story would be full of life, character, and the most exuberant fun, but it is altogether too diffuse in its present condition for dramatic representation, and I confess I do not feel sufficient confidence in my own experience (even if I had the time, which on reflection I find I have not) to undertake what, under different circumstances, would be a "labor of love."

Yours sincerely, *John Brougham.*

That was frank, manly, and to the point; it covered the ground exactly. "Simon Wheeler, the Amateur Detective," had plenty of good material in it—plenty of dialogue and situations; but the dialogue wouldn't play, and the situations wouldn't act. Clemens realized that perhaps the drama was not, after all, his forte; he dropped "Simon

Wheeler," lost his interest in "Ah Sin," even leased "Colonel Sellers" for the coming season, and so, in a sort of fury, put theatrical matters out of his mind.

Page 346

He had entered upon what, for him, was a truer domain. One day he picked up from among the books at the farm a little juvenile volume, an English story of the thirteenth century by Charlotte M. Yonge, entitled, *The Prince and the Page*. It was a story of Edward I. and his cousins, Richard and Henry de Montfort; in part it told of the submerged personality of the latter, picturing him as having dwelt in disguise as a blind beggar for a period of years. It was a story of a sort and with a setting that Mark Twain loved, and as he read there came a correlative idea. Not only would he disguise a prince as a beggar, but a beggar as a prince. He would have them change places in the world, and each learn the burdens of the other's life.—[There is no point of resemblance between the Prince and the Pauper and the tale that inspired it. No one would ever guess that the one had grown out of the readings of the other, and no comparison of any sort is possible between them.]

The plot presented physical difficulties. He still had some lurking thought of stage performance, and saw in his mind a spectacular presentation, with all the costumery of an early period as background for a young and beautiful creature who would play the part of prince. The old device of changelings in the cradle (later used in *Pudd'nhead Wilson*) presented itself to him, but it could not provide the situations he had in mind. Finally came the thought of a playful interchange of raiment and state (with startling and unlooked-for consequence)—the guise and personality of Tom Canty, of Offal Court, for those of the son of Henry VIII., little Edward Tudor, more lately sixth English king of that name. This little prince was not his first selection for the part. His original idea had been to use the late King Edward VII. (then Prince of Wales) at about fifteen, but he found that it would never answer to lose a prince among the slums of modern London, and have his proud estate denied and jeered at by a modern mob. He felt that he could not make it seem real; so he followed back through history, looking along for the proper time and prince, till he came to little Edward, who was too young—but no matter, he would do.

He decided to begin his new venture in story form. He could dramatize it later. The situation appealed to him immensely. The idea seemed a brand-new one; it was delightful, it was fascinating, and he was saturated with the atmosphere and literature and history—the data and detail of that delightful old time. He put away all thought of cheap, modern play-acting and writing, to begin one of the loveliest and most entertaining and instructive tales of old English life. He decided to be quite accurate in his picture of the period, and he posted himself on old London very carefully. He bought a pocket-map which he studied in the minutest detail.

He wrote about four hundred manuscript pages of the tale that summer; then, as the inspiration seemed to lag a little, put it aside, as was his habit, to wait until the ambition for it should be renewed. It was a long wait, as usual. He did not touch it again for more than three years.

Page 347

CXIII

TWO DOMESTIC DRAMAS

Some unusual happenings took place that summer of 1877. John T. Lewis (colored), already referred to as the religious antagonist of Auntie Cord, by great presence of mind and bravery saved the lives of Mrs. Clemens's sister-in-law, Mrs. Charles ("Charley") Langdon, her little daughter Julia, and her nurse-maid. They were in a buggy, and their runaway horse was flying down East Hill toward Elmira to certain destruction, when Lewis, laboring slowly homeward with a loaded wagon, saw them coming and turned his team across the road, after which he leaped out and with extraordinary strength and quickness grabbed the horse's bridle and brought him to a standstill. The Clemens and Crane families, who had seen the runaway start at the farm gate, arrived half wild with fear, only to find the supposed victims entirely safe.

Everybody contributed in rewarding Lewis. He received money (\$1,500) and various other presents, including inscribed books and trinkets, also, what he perhaps valued more than anything, a marvelous stem-winding gold watch. Clemens, writing a full account to Dr. Brown of the watch, says:

And if any scoffer shall say, "behold this thing is out of character," there is an inscription within which will silence him; for it will teach him that this wearer aggrandizes the watch, not the watch the wearer.

In another paragraph he says:

When Lewis arrived the other evening, after having saved those lives by a feat which I think is the most marvelous I can call to mind, when he arrived hunched up on his manure-wagon and as grotesquely picturesque as usual, everybody wanted to go and see how he looked. They came back and said he was beautiful. It was so, too, and yet he would have photographed exactly as he would have done any day these past seven years that he has occupied this farm.

Lewis acknowledged his gifts in a letter which closed with a paragraph of rare native loftiness:

But I beg to say, humbly, that inasmuch as divine Providence saw fit to use me as an instrument for the saving of those preshious lives, the honner conferd upon me was greater than the feat performed.

Lewis lived to enjoy his prosperity, and the honor of the Clemens and Langdon households, for twenty-nine years. When he was too old to work there was a pension, to which Clemens contributed; also Henry H. Rogers. So the simple-hearted, noble old negro closed his days in peace.

Mrs. Crane, in a letter, late in July, 1906, told of his death:

He was always cheerful, and seemed not to suffer much pain, told stories, and was able to eat almost everything.

Three days ago a new difficulty appeared, on account of which his doctor said he must go to the hospital for care such as it was quite impossible to give in his home.

Page 348

He died on his way there.

Thus it happened that he died on the road where he had performed his great deed.

A second unusual incident of that summer occurred in Hartford. There had been a report of a strange man seen about the Clemens place, thought to be a prospecting burglar, and Clemens went over to investigate. A little searching inquiry revealed that the man was not a burglar, but a mechanic out of employment, a lover of one of the house-maids, who had given him food and shelter on the premises, intending no real harm. When the girl found that her secret was discovered, she protested that he was her fiance, though she said he appeared lately to have changed his mind and no longer wished to marry her.

The girl seemed heartbroken, and sympathy for her was naturally the first and about the only feeling which Clemens developed, for the time being. He reasoned with the young man, but without making much headway. Finally his dramatic instinct prompted him to a plan of a sort which would have satisfied even Tom Sawyer. He asked Twichell to procure a license for the couple, and to conceal himself in a ground floor bath-room. He arranged with the chief of police to be on hand in another room; with the rest of the servants quietly to prepare a wedding-feast, and finally with Lizzie herself to be dressed for the ceremony. He had already made an appointment with the young man to come to, see him at a certain hour on a "matter of business," and the young man arrived in the belief, no doubt, that it was something which would lead to profitable employment. When he came in Clemens gently and quietly reviewed the situation, told him of the young girl's love for him; how he had been sheltered and fed by her; how through her kindness to him she had compromised her reputation for honesty and brought upon her all the suspicion of having sheltered a burglar; how she was ready and willing to marry him, and how he (Clemens) was ready to assist them to obtain work and a start in life.

But the young man was not enthusiastic. He was a Swede and slow of action. He resolutely declared that he was not ready to marry yet, and in the end refused to do so. Then came the dramatic moment. Clemens quietly but firmly informed him that the wedding ceremony must take place; that by infesting his premises he had broken the law, not only against trespass, but most likely against house-breaking. There was a brief discussion of this point. Finally Clemens gave him five minutes to make up his mind, with the statement that he had an officer in waiting, and unless he would consent to the wedding he would be taken in charge. The young man began to temporize, saying that it would be necessary for him to get a license and a preacher. But Clemens stepped to the door of the bath-room, opened it, and let out Twichell, who had been sweltering there in that fearful place for more than an hour, it being August. The delinquent lover found himself confronted with

Page 349

all the requisites of matrimony except the bride, and just then this detail appeared on the scene, dressed for the occasion. Behind her ranged the rest of the servants and a few invited guests. Before the young man knew it he had a wife, and on the whole did not seem displeased. It ended with a gay supper and festivities. Then Clemens started them handsomely by giving each of them a check for one hundred dollars; and in truth (which in this case, at least, is stranger than fiction) they lived happily and prosperously ever after.

Some years later Mark Twain based a story on this episode, but it was never entirely satisfactory and remains unpublished.

CXIV

THE WHITTIER BIRTHDAY SPEECH

It was the night of December 17, 1877, that Mark Twain made his unfortunate speech at the dinner given by the Atlantic staff to John G. Whittier on his seventieth birthday. Clemens had attended a number of the dinners which the Atlantic gave on one occasion or another, and had provided a part of the entertainment. It is only fair to say that his after-dinner speeches at such times had been regarded as very special events, genuine triumphs of humor and delivery. But on this particular occasion he determined to outdo himself, to prepare something unusual, startling, something altogether unheard of.

When Mark Twain had an impulse like that it was possible for it to result in something dangerous, especially in those earlier days. This time it produced a bombshell; not just an ordinary bombshell, or even a twelve-inch projectile, but a shell of planetary size. It was a sort of hoax—always a doubtful plaything—and in this case it brought even quicker and more terrible retribution than usual. It was an imaginary presentation of three disreputable frontier tramps who at some time had imposed themselves on a lonely miner as Longfellow, Emerson, and Holmes, quoting apposite selections from their verses to the accompaniment of cards and drink, and altogether conducting themselves in a most unsavory fashion. At the end came the enlightenment that these were not what they pretended to be, but only impostors—disgusting frauds. A feature like that would be a doubtful thing to try in any cultured atmosphere. The thought of associating, ever so remotely, those three old bummers which he had conjured up with the venerable and venerated Emerson, Longfellow, and Holmes, the Olympian trinity, seems ghastly enough to-day, and must have seemed even more so then. But Clemens, dazzled by the rainbow splendor of his conception, saw in it only a rare colossal humor, which would fairly lift and bear his hearers along on a tide of mirth. He did not show his effort to any one beforehand. He wanted its full beauty to burst upon the entire company as a surprise.

It did that. Howells was toastmaster, and when he came to present Clemens he took particular pains to introduce him as one of his foremost contributors and dearest friends. Here, he said, was “a humorist who never left you hanging you head for having enjoyed his joke.”

Page 350

Thirty years later Clemens himself wrote of his impressions as he rose to deliver his speech.

I vaguely remember some of the details of that gathering: dimly I can see a hundred people—no, perhaps fifty—shadowy figures, sitting at tables feeding, ghosts now to me, and nameless forevermore. I don't know who they were, but I can very distinctly see, seated at the grand table and facing the rest of us, Mr. Emerson, supernaturally grave, unsmiling; Mr. Whittier, grave, lovely, his beautiful spirit shining out of his face; Mr. Longfellow, with his silken-white hair and his benignant face; Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, flashing smiles and affection and all good-fellowship everywhere, like a rose-diamond whose facets are being turned toward the light, first one way and then another—a charming man, and always fascinating, whether he was talking or whether he was sitting still (what he would call still, but what would be more or less motion to other people). I can see those figures with entire distinctness across this abyss of time.

William Winter, the poet, had just preceded him, and it seemed a moment aptly chosen for his so-different theme. “And then,” to quote Howells, “the amazing mistake, the bewildering blunder, the cruel catastrophe was upon us.”

After the first two or three hundred words, when the general plan and purpose of the burlesque had developed, when the names of Longfellow, Emerson, and Holmes began to be flung about by those bleary outcasts, and their verses given that sorry association, those Atlantic diners became petrified with amazement and horror. Too late, then, the speaker realized his mistake. He could not stop, he must go on to the ghastly end. And somehow he did it, while “there fell a silence weighing many tons to the square inch, which deepened from moment to moment, and was broken only by the hysterical and blood-curdling laughter of a single guest, whose name shall not be handed down to infamy.”

Howells can remember little more than that, but Clemens recalls that one speaker made an effort to follow him—Bishop, the novelist, and that Bishop didn't last long.

It was not many sentences after his first before he began to hesitate and break, and lose his grip, and totter and wobble, and at last he slumped down in a limp and mushy pile.

The next man had not strength to rise, and somehow the company broke up.

Howells's next recollection is of being in a room of the hotel, and of hearing Charles Dudley Warner saying in the gloom:

“Well, Mark, you're a funny fellow.”

He remembers how, after a sleepless night, Clemens went out to buy some bric-a-brac, with a soul far from bric-a-brac, and returned to Hartford in a writhing agony of spirit. He believed that he was ruined forever, so far as his Boston associations were concerned; and when he confessed all the tragedy to Mrs. Clemens it seemed to her also that the mistake could never be wholly repaired. The fact that certain papers quoted the speech and spoke well of it, and certain readers who had not listened to it thought it enormously funny, gave very little comfort. But perhaps his chief concern was the ruin which he believed he had brought upon Howells. He put his heart into a brief letter:

Page 351

My dear Howells,—My sense of disgrace does not abate. It grows. I see that it is going to add itself to my list of permanencies, a list of humiliations that extends back to when I was seven years old, and which keep on persecuting me regardless of my repentances. I feel that my misfortune has injured me all over the country; therefore it will be best that I retire from before the public at present. It will hurt the Atlantic for me to appear in its pages now. So it is my opinion, and my wife's, that the telephone story had better be suppressed. Will you return those proofs or revises to me, so that I can use the same on some future occasion? It seems as if I must have been insane when I wrote that speech and saw no harm in it, no disrespect toward those men whom I revered so much. And what shame I brought upon you, after what you said in introducing me! It burns me like fire to think of it.

The whole matter is a dreadful subject. Let me drop it here—at least on paper.

Penitently yours, *mark*

So, all in a moment, his world had come to an end—as it seemed. But Howells's letter, which came rushing back by first mail, brought hope.

"It was a fatality," Howells said. "One of those sorrows into which a man walks with his eyes wide open, no one knows why."

Howells assured him that Longfellow, Emerson, and Holmes would so consider it, beyond doubt; that Charles Eliot Norton had already expressed himself exactly in the right spirit concerning it. Howells declared that there was no intention of dropping Mark Twain's work from the Atlantic.

You are not going to be floored by it; there is more justice than that even in this world. Especially as regards me, just call the sore spot well. I can say more, and with better heart, in praise of your good feeling (which was what I always liked in you), since this thing happened than I could before.

It was agreed that he should at once write a letter to Longfellow, Emerson, and Holmes, and he did write, laying his heart bare to them. Longfellow and Holmes answered in a fine spirit of kindliness, and Miss Emerson wrote for her father in the same tone. Emerson had not been offended, for he had not heard the speech, having arrived even then at that stage of semi-oblivion as to immediate things which eventually so completely shut him away. Longfellow's letter made light of the whole matter. The newspapers, he said, had caused all the mischief.

A bit of humor at a dinner-table talk is one thing; a report of it in the morning papers is another. One needs the lamplight and the scenery. These failing, what was meant in jest assumes a serious aspect.

I do not believe that anybody was much hurt. Certainly I was not, and Holmes tells me that he was not. So I think you may dismiss the matter from your mind, without further remorse.

Page 352

It was a very pleasant dinner, and I think Whittier enjoyed it very much.

Holmes likewise referred to it as a trifle.

It never occurred to me for a moment to take offense, or to feel wounded by your playful use of my name. I have heard some mild questioning as to whether, even in fun, it was good taste to associate the names of the authors with the absurdly unlike personalities attributed to them, but it seems to be an open question. Two of my friends, gentlemen of education and the highest social standing, were infinitely amused by your speech, and stoutly defended it against the charge of impropriety. More than this, one of the cleverest and best-known ladies we have among us was highly delighted with it.

Miss Emerson's letter was to Mrs. Clemens and its homelike New England fashion did much to lift the gloom.

*Dear Mrs. Clemens,—*At New Year's our family always meets, to spend two days together. To-day my father came last, and brought with him Mr. Clemens's letter, so that I read it to the assembled family, and I have come right up-stairs to write to you about it. My sister said, "Oh, let father write!" but my mother said, "No, don't wait for him. Go now; don't stop to pick that up. Go this minute and write. I think that is a noble letter. Tell them so." First let me say that no shadow of indignation has ever been in any of our minds. The night of the dinner, my father says, he did not hear Mr. Clemens's speech. He was too far off, and my mother says that when she read it to him the next day it amused him. But what you will want is to know, without any softening, how we did feel. We were disappointed. We have liked almost everything we have ever seen over Mark Twain's signature. It has made us like the man, and we have delighted in the fun. Father has often asked us to repeat certain passages of *The Innocents Abroad*, and of a speech at a London dinner in 1872, and we all expect both to approve and to enjoy when we see his name. Therefore, when we read this speech it was a real disappointment. I said to my brother that it didn't seem good or funny, and he said, "No, it was unfortunate. Still some of those quotations were very good"; and he gave them with relish and my father laughed, though never having seen a card in his life, he couldn't understand them like his children. My mother read it lightly and had hardly any second thoughts about it. To my father it is as if it had not been; he never quite heard, never quite understood it, and he forgets easily and entirely. I think it doubtful whether he writes to Mr. Clemens, for he is old and long ago gave up answering letters, I think you can see just how bad, and how little bad, it was as far as we are concerned, and this lovely heartbreaking letter makes up for our disappointment in our much-liked author, and restores our former feeling about him.

Ellen T. Emerson.

Page 353

The sorrow dulled a little as the days passed. Just after Christmas Clemens wrote to Howells:

I haven't done a stroke of work since the Atlantic dinner. But I'm going to try to-morrow. How could I ever——

Ah, well, I am a great and sublime fool. But then I am God's fool, and all his work must be contemplated with respect.

So long as that unfortunate speech is remembered there will be differences of opinion as to its merits and propriety. Clemens himself, reading it for the first time in nearly thirty years, said:

"I find it gross, coarse—well, I needn't go on with particulars. I don't like any part of it, from the beginning to the end. I find it always offensive and detestable. How do I account for this change of view? I don't know."

But almost immediately afterward he gave it another consideration and reversed his opinion completely. All the spirit and delight of his old first conception returned, and preparing it for publication, he wrote:

—[North American Review, December, 1907, now with comment included in the volume of "Speeches." (Also see Appendix O, at the end of last volume.)—I have read it twice, and unless I am an idiot it hasn't a single defect in it, from the first word to the last. It is just as good as good can be. It is smart; it is saturated with humor. There isn't a suggestion of coarseness or vulgarity in it anywhere.]

It was altogether like Mark Twain to have those two absolutely opposing opinions in that brief time; for, after all, it was only a question of the human point of view, and Mark Twain's points of view were likely to be as extremely human as they were varied.

Of course the first of these impressions, the verdict of the fresh mind uninfluenced by the old conception, was the more correct one. The speech was decidedly out of place in that company. The skit was harmless enough, but it was of the Comstock grain. It lacked refinement, and, what was still worse, it lacked humor, at least the humor of a kind suited to that long-ago company of listeners. It was another of those grievous mistakes which genius (and not talent) can make, for genius is a sort of possession. The individual is pervaded, dominated for a time by an angel or an imp, and he seldom, of himself, is able to discriminate between his controls. A literary imp was always lying in wait for Mark Twain; the imp of the burlesque, tempting him to do the 'outré', the outlandish, the shocking thing. It was this that Olivia Clemens had to labor hardest against: the cheapening of his own high purpose with an extravagant false note, at which sincerity, conviction, and artistic harmony took wings and fled away. Notably he

did a good burlesque now and then, but his fame would not have suffered if he had been delivered altogether from his besetting temptation.

CXV

Page 354

HARTFORD AND BILLIARDS

Clemens was never much inclined to work, away from his Elmira study. “Magnanimous Incident Literature” (for the Atlantic) was about his only completed work of the winter of 1877-78. He was always tinkering with the “Visit to Heaven,” and after one reconstruction Howells suggested that he bring it out as a book, in England, with Dean Stanley’s indorsement, though this may have been only semi-serious counsel. The story continued to lie in seclusion.

Clemens had one new book in the field—a small book, but profitable. Dan Slote’s firm issued for him the Mark Twain Scrap-book, and at the end of the first royalty period rendered a statement of twenty-five thousand copies sold, which was well enough for a book that did not contain a single word that critics could praise or condemn. Slote issued another little book for him soon after Punch, Brothers, Punch!—which, besides that lively sketch, contained the “Random Notes” and seven other selections.

Mark Twain was tempted to go into the lecture field that winter, not by any of the offers, though these were numerous enough, but by the idea of a combination which he thought might be not only profitable but pleasant. Thomas Nast had made a great success of his caricature lectures, and Clemens, recalling Nast’s long-ago proposal, found it newly attractive. He wrote characteristically:

My dear Nast,—I did not think I should ever stand on a platform again until the time was come for me to say, “I die innocent.” But the same old offers keep arriving. I have declined them all, just as usual, though sorely tempted, as usual.

Now, I do not decline because I mind talking to an audience, but because (1) traveling alone is so heartbreakingly dreary, and (2) shouldering the whole show is such a cheer-killing responsibility.

Therefore, I now propose to you what you proposed to me in 1867, ten years ago (when I was unknown)—viz., that you stand on the platform and make pictures, and I stand by you and blackguard the audience. I should enormously enjoy meandering around (to big towns—don’t want to go to the little ones), with you for company.

My idea is not to fatten the lecture agents and lyceums on the spoils, but to put all the ducats religiously into two equal piles, and say to the artist and lecturer, “absorb these.”

For instance, [here follows a plan and a possible list of the cities to be visited]. The letter continues:

Call the gross receipts \$100,00 for four months and a half, and the profit from \$60,000 to \$75,000 (I try to make the figures large enough, and leave it to the public to reduce them).

Page 355

I did not put in Philadelphia because Pugh owns that town, and last winter, when I made a little reading-trip, he only paid me \$300, and pretended his concert (I read fifteen minutes in the midst of a concert) cost him a vast sum, and so he couldn't afford any more. I could get up a better concert with a barrel of cats.

I have imagined two or three pictures and concocted the accompanying remarks, to see how the thing would go. I was charmed.

Well, you think it over, Nast, and drop me a line. We should have some fun.

Undoubtedly this would have been a profitable combination, but Nast had a distaste for platforming—had given it up, as he thought, for life. So Clemens settled down to the fireside days, that afforded him always the larger comfort. The children were at an age “to be entertaining, and to be entertained.” In either case they furnished him plenty of diversion when he did not care to write. They had learned his gift as a romancer, and with this audience he might be as extravagant as he liked. They sometimes assisted by furnishing subjects. They would bring him a picture, requiring him to invent a story for it without a moment's delay. Sometimes they suggested the names of certain animals or objects, and demanded that these be made into a fairy tale. If they heard the name of any new creature or occupation they were likely to offer them as impromptu inspiration. Once he was suddenly required to make a story out of a plumber and a “bawgunstricator,” but he was equal to it. On one side of the library, along the bookshelves that joined the mantelpiece, were numerous ornaments and pictures. At one end was the head of a girl, that they called “Emeline,” and at the other was an oil-painting of a cat. When other subjects failed, the romancer was obliged to build a story impromptu, and without preparation, beginning with the cat, working along through the bric-a-brac, and ending with “Emeline.” This was the unvarying program. He was not allowed to begin with “Emeline” and end with the cat, and he was not permitted to introduce an ornament from any other portion of the room. He could vary the story as much as he liked. In fact, he was required to do that. The trend of its chapters, from the cat to “Emeline,” was a well-trodden and ever-entertaining way.

He gave up his luxurious study to the children as a sort of nursery and playroom, and took up his writing-quarters, first in a room over the stables, then in the billiard-room, which, on the whole, he preferred to any other place, for it was a third-story remoteness, and he could knock the balls about for inspiration.

Page 356

The billiard-room became his headquarters. He received his callers there and impressed them into the game. If they could play, well and good; if they could not play, so much the better—he could beat them extravagantly, and he took a huge delight in such conquests. Every Friday evening, or oftener, a small party of billiard-lovers gathered, and played until a late hour, told stories, and smoked till the room was blue, comforting themselves with hot Scotch and general good-fellowship. Mark Twain always had a genuine passion for billiards. He was never tired of the game. He could play all night. He would stay till the last man gave out from sheer weariness; then he would go on knocking the balls about alone. He liked to invent new games and new rules for old games, often inventing a rule on the spur of the moment to fit some particular shot or position on the table. It amused him highly to do this, to make the rule advantage his own play, and to pretend a deep indignation when his opponents disqualified his rulings and rode him down. S. C. Dunham was among those who belonged to the “Friday Evening Club,” as they called it, and Henry C. Robinson, long dead, and rare Ned Bunce, and F. G. Whitmore; and the old room there at the top of the house, with its little outside balcony, rang with their voices and their laughter in that day when life and the world for them was young. Clemens quoted to them sometimes:

Come, fill the cup, and in the fire of spring
Your winter garment of repentance fling;
The bird of time has but a little way
To flutter, and the bird is on the wing.

Omar was new then on this side of the Atlantic, and to his serene “eat, drink, and be merry” philosophy, in Fitzgerald’s rhyme, these were early converts. Mark Twain had an impressive, musical delivery of verse; the players were willing at any moment to listen as he recited:

For some we loved, the loveliest and best
That from his vintage rolling time has prest,
Have drunk their cup a round or two before,
And one by one crept silently to rest.
Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the dust descend;
Dust unto dust, and under dust to lie,
Sans wine, sans song, sans singer, and—sans End.’

—[The ‘Rubaiyat’ had made its first appearance, in Hartford, a little before in a column of extracts published in the *Courant*.] Twichell immediately wrote Clemens a card:

“Read (if you haven’t) the extracts from Oman Khayyam, on the first page of this morning’s *Courant*. I think we’ll have to get the book. I never yet came across anything that uttered certain thoughts of mine so adequately. And it’s only a translation. Read it,

and we'll talk it over. There is something in it very like the passage of Emerson you read me last night, in fact identical with it in thought.

"Surely this Omar was a great poet. Anyhow, he has given me an immense revelation this morning.

Page 357

"Hoping that you are better,

J. H. T."

Twichell's "only a translation" has acquired a certain humor with time.

CXVI

OFF FOR GERMANY

The German language became one of the interests of the Clemens home during the early months of 1878. The Clemenses had long looked forward to a sojourn in Europe, and the demand for another Mark Twain book of travel furnished an added reason for their going. They planned for the spring sailing, and to spend a year or more on the Continent, making their headquarters in Germany. So they entered into the study of the language with an enthusiasm and perseverance that insured progress. There was a German nurse for the children, and the whole atmosphere of the household presently became linguistically Teutonic. It amused Mark Twain, as everything amused him, but he was a good student; he acquired a working knowledge of the language in an extraordinarily brief time, just as in an earlier day he had picked up piloting. He would never become a German scholar, but his vocabulary and use of picturesque phrases, particularly those that combined English and German words, were often really startling, not only for their humor, but for their expressiveness.

Necessarily the new study would infect his literature. He conceived a plan for making Captain Wakeman (Stormfield) come across a copy of Ollendorf in Heaven, and proceed to learn the language of a near-lying district.

They arranged to sail early in April, and, as on their former trip, persuaded Miss Clara Spaulding, of Elmira, to accompany them. They wrote to the Howellses, breaking the news of the journey, urging them to come to Hartford for a good-by visit. Howells and his wife came. The Twichells, Warners, and other Hartford friends paid repeated farewell calls. The furniture was packed, the rooms desolated, the beautiful home made ready for closing.

They were to have pleasant company on the ship. Bayard Taylor, then recently appointed Minister to Germany, wrote that he had planned to sail on the same vessel; Murat Halstead's wife and daughter were listed among the passengers. Clemens made a brief speech at Taylor's "farewell dinner."

The "Mark Twain" party, consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Clemens, Miss Spaulding, little Susy and Clara ("Bay"), and a nurse-maid, Rosa, sailed on the Holsatia, April 11, 1878. Bayard Taylor and the Halstead ladies also sailed, as per program; likewise Murat Halstead himself, for whom no program had been made. There was a storm outside,

and the Holsatia anchored down the bay to wait until the worst was over. As the weather began to moderate Halstead and others came down in a tug for a final word of good-by. When the tug left, Halstead somehow managed to get overlooked, and was presently on his way across the ocean with only such wardrobe as he had on, and what Bayard Taylor, a large man like himself, was willing to lend him. Halstead was accused of having intentionally allowed himself to be left behind, and his case did have a suspicious look; but in any event they were glad to have him along.

Page 358

In a written word of good-by to Howells, Clemens remembered a debt of gratitude, and paid it in the full measure that was his habit.

And that reminds me, ungrateful dog that I am, that I owe as much to your training as the rude country job-printer owes to the city boss who takes him in hand and teaches him the right way to handle his art. I was talking to Mrs. Clemens about this the other day, and grieving because I never mentioned it to you, thereby seeming to ignore it or to be unaware of it. Nothing that has passed under your eye needs any revision before going into a volume, while all my other stuff does need so much.

In that ancient day, before the wireless telegraph, the voyager, when the land fell away behind him, felt a mighty sense of relief and rest, which to some extent has gone now forever. He cannot entirely escape the world in this new day; but then he had a complete sense of dismissal from all encumbering cares of life. Among the first note-book entries Mark Twain wrote:

To go abroad has something of the same sense that death brings—"I am no longer of ye; what ye say of me is now of no consequence—but of how much consequence when I am with ye and of ye. I know you will refrain from saying harsh things because they cannot hurt me, since I am out of reach and cannot hear them. This is why we say no harsh things of the dead."

It was a rough voyage outside, but the company made it pleasant within. Halstead and Taylor were good smoking-room companions. Taylor had a large capacity for languages and a memory that was always a marvel. He would repeat for them Arabian, Hungarian, and Russian poetry, and show them the music and construction of it. He sang German folk-lore songs for them, and the "Lorelei," then comparatively unknown in America. Such was his knowledge of the language that even educated Germans on board submitted questions of construction to him and accepted his decisions. He was wisely chosen for the mission he had to fill, but unfortunately he did not fill it long. Both Halstead and Taylor were said to have heart trouble. Halstead, however, survived many years. Taylor died December 19, 1878.

CXVII

GERMANY AND GERMAN

From the note-book:

It is a marvel that never loses its surprise by repetition, this aiming a ship at a mark three thousand miles away and hitting the bull's-eye in a fog—as we did. When the fog fell on us the captain said we ought to be at such and such a spot (it had been eighteen hours since an observation was had), with the Scilly islands bearing so and so, and

about so many miles away. Hove the lead and got forty-eight fathoms; looked on the chart, and sure enough this depth of water showed that we were right where the captain said we were. Another idea. For ages man probably did not know why God carpeted the ocean bottom

Page 359

with sand in one place, shells in another, and so on. But we see now; the kind of bottom the lead brings up shows where a ship is when the soundings don't, and also it confirms the soundings.

They reached Hamburg after two weeks' stormy sailing. They rested a few days there, then went to Hanover and Frankfort, arriving at Heidelberg early in May.

They had no lodgings selected in Heidelberg, and leaving the others at an inn, Clemens set out immediately to find apartments. Chance or direction, or both, led him to the beautiful Schloss Hotel, on a hill overlooking the city, and as fair a view as one may find in all Germany. He did not go back after his party. He sent a message telling them to take carriage and drive at once to the Schloss, then he sat down to enjoy the view.

Coming up the hill they saw him standing on the veranda, waving his hat in welcome. He led them to their rooms—spacious apartments—and pointed to the view. They were looking down on beautiful Heidelberg Castle, densely wooded hills, the far-flowing Neckar, and the haze-empurpled valley of the Rhine. By and by, pointing to a small cottage on the hilltop, he said:

"I have been picking out my little house to work in; there it is over there; the one with the gable in the roof. Mine is the middle room on the third floor."

Mrs. Clemens thought the occupants of the house might be surprised if he should suddenly knock and tell them he had come to take possession of his room. Nevertheless, they often looked over in that direction and referred to it as his office. They amused themselves by watching his "people" and trying to make out what they were like. One day he went over there, and sure enough there was a sign out, "Moblirte Wohnung zu Vermiethen." A day or two later he was established in the very room he had selected, it being the only room but one vacant.

In *A Tramp Abroad* Mark Twain tells of the beauty of their Heidelberg environment. To Howells he wrote:

Our bedroom has two great glass bird-cages (inclosed balconies), one looking toward the Rhine Valley and sunset, the other looking up the Neckar cul-de-sac, and naturally we spend pearly all our time in these. We have tables and chairs in them; we do our reading, writing, studying, smoking, and suppering in them It must have been a noble genius who devised this hotel. Lord, how blessed is the repose, the tranquillity of this place! Only two sounds: the happy clamor of the birds in the groves and the muffled music of the Neckar tumbling over the opposing dikes. It is no hardship to lie awake awhile nights, for this subdued roar has exactly the sound of a steady rain beating upon a roof. It is so healing to the spirit; and it bears up the thread of one's

imaginings as the accompaniment bears up a song....I have waited for a “call” to go to work—I knew it would come. Well, it began to come a week ago; my note-book

Page 360

comes out more and more frequently every day since; three days ago I concluded to move my manuscripts over to my den. Now the call is loud and decided at last. So tomorrow I shall begin regular, steady work, and stick to it till the middle of July or August 1st, when I look for Twichell; we will then walk about Germany two or three weeks, and then I'll go to work again (perhaps in Munich).

The walking tour with Twichell had been contemplated in the scheme for gathering book material, but the plan for it had not been completed when he left Hartford. Now he was anxious that they should start as soon as possible. Twichell, receiving the news in Hartford, wrote that it was a great day for him: that his third son had been happily born early that morning, and now the arrival of this glorious gift of a tramp through Germany and Switzerland completed his blessings.

I am almost too joyful for pleasure [he wrote]. I labor with my felicities. How I shall get to sleep to-night I don't know, though I have had a good start, in not having slept much last night. Oh, my! do you realize, Mark, what a symposium it is to be? I do. To begin with, I am thoroughly tired and the rest will be worth everything. To walk with you and talk with you for weeks together —why, it's my dream of luxury. Harmony, who at sunrise this morning deemed herself the happiest woman on the Continent when I read your letter to her, widened her smile perceptibly, and revived another degree of strength in a minute. She refused to consider her being left alone; but: only the great chance opened to me.

Shoes—Mark, remember that ever so much of our pleasure depends upon your shoes. Don't fail to have adequate preparation made in that department.

Meantime, the struggle with the “awful German language” went on. It was a general hand-to-hand contest. From the head of the household down to little Clara not one was exempt. To Clemens it became a sort of nightmare. Once in his note-book he says:

“Dreamed all bad foreigners went to German heaven; couldn't talk, and wished they had gone to the other place”; and a little farther along, “I wish I could hear myself talk German.”

To Mrs. Crane, in Elmira, he reported their troubles:

Clara Spaulding is working herself to death with her German; never loses an instant while she is awake—or asleep, either, for that matter; dreams of enormous serpents, who poke their heads up under her arms and glare upon her with red-hot eyes, and inquire about the genitive case and the declensions of the definite article. Livy is bullying herself about as hard; pesters over her grammar and her reader and her dictionary all day; then in the evening these two students stretch themselves out on

sofas and sigh and say, "Oh, there's no use! We never can learn it in the world!" Then Livy takes a sentence to go to bed on: goes gaping and stretching to

Page 361

her pillow murmuring, "Ich bin Ihnen sehr verbunden—Ich bin Ihnen sehr verbunden—Ich bin Ihnen sehr verbunden—I wonder if I can get that packed away so it will stay till morning"—and about an hour after midnight she wakes me up and says, "I do so hate to disturb you, but is it 'Ich Ben Jonson sehr befinden'?"

And Mrs. Clemens wrote:

Oh, Sue dear, strive to enter in at the straight gate, for many shall seek to enter it and shall not be able. I am not striving these days. I am just interested in German.

Rosa, the maid, was required to speak to the children only in German, though Bay at first would have none of it. The nurse and governess tried to blandish her, in vain. She maintained a calm and persistent attitude of scorn. Little Susy tried, and really made progress; but one, day she said, pathetically:

"Mama, I wish Rosa was made in English."

Yet a little later Susy herself wrote her Aunt Sue:

I know a lot of German; everybody says I know a lot. I give you a million dollars to see you, and you would give two hundred dollars to see the lovely woods that we see.

Even Howells, in far-off America, caught the infection and began a letter in German, though he hastened to add, "Or do you prefer English by this time? Really I could imagine the German going hard with you, for you always seemed to me a man who liked to be understood with the least possible personal inconvenience."

Clemens declared more than once that he scorned the "outrageous and impossible German grammar," and abandoned it altogether. In his note-book he records how two Germans, strangers in Heidelberg, asked him a direction, and that when he gave it, in the most elaborate and correct German he could muster, one of them only lifted his eyes and murmured:

"Gott im Himmel!"

He was daily impressed with the lingual attainments of foreigners and his own lack of them. In the notes he comments:

Am addressed in German, and when I can't speak it immediately the person tackles me in French, and plainly shows astonishment when I stop him. They naturally despise such an ignoramus. Our doctor here speaks as pure English, as I.

On the Fourth of July he addressed the American students in Heidelberg in one of those mixtures of tongues for which he had a peculiar gift.

The room he had rented for a study was let by a typical German family, and he was a great delight to them. He practised his German on them, and interested himself in their daily affairs.

Howells wrote insistently for some assurance of contributions to the Atlantic.

"I must begin printing your private letters to satisfy the popular demand," he said. "People are constantly asking when you are going to begin."

Clemens replied that he would be only too glad to write for the Atlantic if his contributions could be copyrighted in Canada, where pirates were persistently enterprising.

Page 362

I do not know that I have any printable stuff just now—separatable stuff, that is—but I shall have by and by. It is very gratifying to hear that it is wanted by anybody. I stand always prepared to hear the reverse, and am constantly surprised that it is delayed so long. Consequently it is not going to astonish me when it comes.

The Clemens party enjoyed Heidelberg, though in different ways. The children romped and picnicked in the castle grounds, which adjoined the hotel; Mrs. Clemens and Miss Spaulding were devoted to bric-a-brac hunting, picture-galleries, and music. Clemens took long walks, or made excursions by rail and diligence to farther points. Art and opera did not appeal to him. The note-book says:

I have attended operas, whenever I could not help it, for fourteen years now; I am sure I know of no agony comparable to the listening to an unfamiliar opera. I am enchanted with the airs of “Trovatore” and other old operas which the hand-organ and the music-box have made entirely familiar to my ear. I am carried away with delighted enthusiasm when they are sung at the opera. But oh, how far between they are! And what long, arid, heartbreaking and headaching “between-times” of that sort of intense but incoherent noise which always so reminds me of the time the orphan asylum burned down. Sunday night, 11th. Huge crowd out to-night to hear the band play the “Fremersberg.” I suppose it is very low-grade music—I know it must be low-grade music—because it so delighted me, it so warmed me, moved me, stirred me, uplifted me, enraptured me, that at times I could have cried, and at others split my throat with shouting. The great crowd was another evidence that it was low-grade music, for only the few are educated up to a point where high-class music gives pleasure. I have never heard enough classic music to be able to enjoy it, and the simple truth is I detest it. Not mildly, but with all my heart. What a poor lot we human beings are anyway! If base music gives me wings, why should I want any other? But I do. I want to like the higher music because the higher and better like it. But you see I want to like it without taking the necessary trouble, and giving the thing the necessary amount of time and attention. The natural suggestion is, to get into that upper tier, that dress-circle, by a lie—we will pretend we like it. This lie, this pretense, gives to opera what support it has in America. And then there is painting. What a red rag is to a bull Turner’s “Slave Ship” is to me. Mr. Ruskin is educated in art up to a point where that picture throws him into as mad an ecstasy of pleasure as it throws me into one of rage. His cultivation enables him to see water in that yellow mud; his cultivation reconciles the floating of unfloatable things to him—chains *etc.*; it reconciles him to fishes swimming on top of the water. The

Page 363

most of the picture is a manifest impossibility, that is to say, a lie; and only rigid cultivation can enable a man to find truth in a lie. A Boston critic said the "Slave Ship" reminded him of a cat having a fit in a platter of tomatoes. That went home to my non-cultivation, and I thought, here is a man with an unobstructed eye.

Mark Twain has dwelt somewhat upon these matters in 'A Tramp Abroad'. He confesses in that book that later he became a great admirer of Turner, though perhaps never of the "Slave Ship" picture. In fact, Mark Twain was never artistic, in the common acceptance of that term; neither his art nor his tastes were of an "artistic" kind.

CXVIII

TRAMPING WITH TWICHELL

Twichell arrived on time, August 1st. Clemens met him at Baden-Baden, and they immediately set out on a tramp through the Black Forest, excursioning as pleased them, and having an idyllic good time. They did not always walk, but they often did. At least they did sometimes, when the weather was just right and Clemens's rheumatism did not trouble him. But they were likely to take a carriage, or a donkey-cart, or a train, or any convenient thing that happened along. They did not hurry, but idled and talked and gathered flowers, or gossiped with wayside natives and tourists, though always preferring to wander along together, beguiling the way with discussion and speculation and entertaining tales. They crossed on into Switzerland in due time and considered the conquest of the Alps. The family followed by rail or diligence, and greeted them here and there when they rested from their wanderings. Mark Twain found an immunity from attention in Switzerland, which for years he had not known elsewhere. His face was not so well known and his pen-name was carefully concealed.

It was a large relief to be no longer an object of public curiosity; but Twichell, as in the Bermuda trip, did not feel quite honest, perhaps, in altogether preserving the mask of unrecognition. In one of his letters home he tells how; when a young man at their table was especially delighted with Mark Twain's conversation, he could not resist taking the young man aside and divulging to him the speaker's identity.

"I could not forbear telling him who Mark was," he says, "and the mingled surprise and pleasure his face exhibited made me glad I had done so."

They climbed the Rigi, after which Clemens was not in good walking trim for some time; so Twichell went on a trip on his own account, to give his comrade a chance to rest. Then away again to Interlaken, where the Jungfrau rises, cold and white; on over the loneliness of Gemini Pass, with glaciers for neighbors and the unfading white peaks

against the blue; to Visp and to Zermatt, where the Matterhorn points like a finger that directs mankind to God. This was true Alpine wandering—sweet vagabondage.

Page 364

The association of the wanderers was a very intimate one. Their minds were closely attuned, and there were numerous instances of thought—echo-mind answering to mind—without the employment of words. Clemens records in his notes:

Sunday A.M., August 11th. Been reading *Romola* yesterday afternoon, last night, and this morning; at last I came upon the only passage which has thus far hit me with force—Tito compromising with his conscience, and resolving to do; not a bad thing, but not the best thing. Joe entered the room five minutes—no, three minutes later—and without prelude said, “I read that book you’ve got there six years ago, and got a mighty good text for a sermon out of it the passage where the young fellow compromises with his conscience, and resolves to do, not a bad thing, but not the best thing.” This is Joe’s first reference to this book since he saw me buy it twenty- four hours ago. So my mind operated on his in this instance. He said he was sitting yonder in the reading-room, three minutes ago (I have not got up yet), thinking of nothing in particular, and didn’t know what brought *Romola* into his head; but into his head it came and that particular passage. Now I, forty feet away, in another room, was reading that particular passage at that particular moment.

Couldn’t suggest *Romola* to him earlier, because nothing in the book had taken hold of me till I came to that one passage on page 112, Tauchnitz edition.

And again:

The instances of mind-telegraphing are simply innumerable. This evening Joe and I sat long at the edge of the village looking at the Matterhorn. Then Joe said, “We ought to go to the Cervin Hotel and inquire for Livy’s telegram.” If he had been but one instant later I should have said those words instead of him.

Such entries are frequent, and one day there came along a kind of object-lesson. They were toiling up a mountainside, when Twichell began telling a very interesting story which had happened in connection with a friend still living, though Twichell had no knowledge of his whereabouts at this time. The story finished just as they rounded a turn in, the cliff, and Twichell, looking up, ended his last sentence, “And there’s the man!” Which was true, for they were face to face with the very man of whom he had been telling.

Another subject that entered into their discussion was the law of accidents. Clemens held that there was no such thing an accident: that it was all forewritten in the day of the beginning; that every event, however slight, was embryonic in that first instant of created life, and immutably timed to its appearance in the web of destiny. Once on their travels, when they were on a high bank above a brawling stream, a little girl, who started to run toward them, slipped and rolled under the bottom rail of the protecting fence, her feet momentarily hanging out over the precipice and the tearing torrent

below. It seemed a miraculous escape from death, and furnished an illustration for their discussion. The condition of the ground, the force of her fall, the nearness of the fatal edge, all these had grown inevitably out of the first great projection of thought, and the child's fall and its escape had been invested in life's primal atom.

Page 365

The author of *A Tramp Abroad* tells us of the rushing stream that flows out of the Arcadian sky valley, the Gasterthal, and goes plunging down to Kandersteg, and how he took exercise by making “Harris” (Twichell) set stranded logs adrift while he lounged comfortably on a boulder, and watched them go tearing by; also how he made Harris run a race with one of those logs. But that is literature. Twichell, in a letter home, has preserved a likelier and lovelier story:

Mark is a queer fellow. There is nothing that he so delights in as a swift, strong stream. You can hardly get him to leave one when once he is within the influence of its fascinations. To throw in stones and sticks seems to afford him rapture. Tonight, as we were on our way back to the hotel, seeing a lot of driftwood caught by the torrent side below the path, I climbed down and threw it in. When I got back to the path Mark was running down-stream after it as hard as he could go, throwing up his hands and shouting in the wildest ecstasy, and when a piece went over a fall and emerged to view in the foam below he would jump up and down and yell. He said afterward that he hadn’t been so excited in three months. He acted just like a boy; another feature of his extreme sensitiveness in certain directions.

Then generalizing, Twichell adds:

He has coarse spots in him. But I never knew a person so finely regardful of the feelings of others in some ways. He hates to pass another person walking, and will practise some subterfuge to take off what he feels is the discourtesy of it. And he is exceedingly timid, tremblingly timid, about approaching strangers; hates to ask a question. His sensitive regard for others extends to animals. When we are driving his concern is all about the horse. He can’t bear to see the whip used, or to see a horse pull hard. To-day, when the driver clucked up his horse and quickened his pace a little, Mark said, “The fellow’s got the notion that we are in a hurry.” He is exceedingly considerate toward me in regard of everything—or most things.

The days were not all sunshine. Sometimes it rained and they took shelter by the wayside, or, if there was no shelter, they plodded along under their umbrellas, still talking away, and if something occurred that Clemens wanted to put down they would stand stock still in the rain, and Twichell would hold the umbrella while Clemens wrote—a good while sometimes—oblivious to storm and discomfort and the long way yet ahead.

After the day on Gemmi Pass Twichell wrote home:

Mark, to-day, was immensely absorbed in the flowers. He scrambled around and gathered a great variety, and manifested the intensest pleasure in them. He crowded a pocket of his note-book with his specimens and wanted more room. So I stopped the guide and got out my needle and thread, and out of a stiff paper, a hotel advertisement, I had about me made a paper bag, a cornucopia like,

Page 366

and tied it to his vest in front, and it answered the purpose admirably. He filled it full with a beautiful collection, and as soon as we got here to-night he transferred it to a cardboard box and sent it by mail to Livy. A strange Mark he is, full of contradictions. I spoke last night of his sensitive to others' feelings. To-day the guide got behind, and came up as if he would like to go by, yet hesitated to do so. Mark paused, went aside and busied himself a minute picking a flower. In the halt the guide got by and resumed his place in front. Mark threw the flower away, saying, "I didn't want that. I only wanted to give the old man a chance to go on without seeming to pass us." Mark is splendid to walk with amid such grand scenery, for he talks so well about it, has such a power of strong, picturesque expression. I wish you might have heard him to-day. His vigorous speech nearly did justice to the things we saw.

In an address which Twichell gave many years later he recalls another pretty incident of their travels. They had been toiling up the Gorner Grat.

As we paused for a rest, a lamb from a flock of sheep near by ventured inquisitively toward us, whereupon Mark seated himself on a rock, and with beckoning hand and soft words tried to get it to come to him.

On the lamb's part it was a struggle between curiosity and timidity, but in a succession of advances and retreats it gained confidence, though at a very gradual rate. It was a scene for a painter: the great American humorist on one side of the game and that silly little creature on the other, with the Matterhorn for a background. Mark was reminded that the time he was consuming was valuable—but to no purpose. The Gorner Grat could wait. He held on with undiscouraged perseverance till he carried his point: the lamb finally put its nose in his hand, and he was happy over it all the rest of the day.

The matter of religion came up now and again in the drift of their discussions. It was Twichell's habit to have prayers in their room every night at the hotels, and Clemens was willing to join in the observances. Once Twichell, finding him in a responsive mood—a remorseful mood—gave his sympathy, and spoke of the larger sympathy of divinity. Clemens listened and seemed soothed and impressed, but his philosophies were too wide and too deep for creeds and doctrines. A day or two later, as they were tramping along in the hot sun, his honesty had to speak out.

"Joe," he said, "I'm going to make a confession. I don't believe in your religion at all. I've been living a lie right straight along whenever I pretended to. For a moment, sometimes, I have been almost a believer, but it immediately drifts away from me again. I don't believe one word of your Bible was inspired by God any more than any other book. I believe it is entirely the work of man from beginning to end—atonement and all. The problem of life and death and eternity and the true conception of God is a bigger thing than is contained in that book."

Page 367

So the personal side of religious discussion closed between them, and was never afterward reopened.

They joined Mrs. Clemens and the others at Lausanne at last, and their Swiss holiday was over. Twichell set out for home by way of England, and Clemens gave himself up to reflection and rest after his wanderings. Then, as the days of their companionship passed in review, quickly and characteristically he sent a letter after his comrade:

Dear old Joe, It is actually all over! I was so low-spirited at the station yesterday, and this morning, when I woke, I couldn't seem to accept the dismal truth that you were really gone, and the pleasant tramping and talking at an end. Ah, my boy! it has been such a rich holiday to me, and I feel under such deep and honest obligations to you for coming. I am putting out of my mind all memory of the times when I misbehaved toward you and hurt you; I am resolved to consider it forgiven, and to store up and remember only the charming hours of the journeys and the times when I was not unworthy to be with you and share a companionship which to me stands first after Livy's. It is justifiable to do this; for why should I let my small infirmities of disposition live and grovel among my mental pictures of the eternal sublimities of the Alps?

Livy can't accept or endure the fact that you are gone. But you are, and we cannot get around it. So take our love with you, and bear it also over the sea to Harmony, and God bless you both.

Mark.

CXIX

ITALIAN DAYS

The Clemens party wandered down into Italy—to the lakes, Venice, Florence, Rome—loitering through the galleries, gathering here and there beautiful furnishings—pictures, marbles, and the like—for the Hartford home.

In Venice they bought an old careen bed, a massive regal affair with serpentine columns surmounted by singularly graceful cupids, and with other cupids sporting on the headboard: the work of some artist who had been dust three centuries maybe, for this bed had come out of an old Venetian palace, dismantled and abandoned. It was a furniture with a long story, and the years would add mightily to its memories. It would become a stately institution in the Clemens household. The cupids on the posts were removable, and one of the highest privileges of childhood would be to occupy that bed and have down one of the cupids to play with. It was necessary to be ill to acquire that privilege—not violently and dangerously ill, but interestingly so—ill enough to be propped up with pillows and have one's meals served on a tray, with dolls and picture-

books handy, and among them a beautiful rosewood cupid who had kept dimpled and dainty for so many, many years.

They spent three weeks in Venice: a dreamlike experience, especially for the children, who were on the water most of the time, and became fast friends with their gondolier, who taught them some Italian words; then a week in Florence and a fortnight in Rome.



Page 368

—[From the note-book:

“*Bay*—When the waiter brought my breakfast this morning I spoke to him in Italian.

“*Mama*—What did you say?

“*B.*—I said, ‘Polly-vo fransay.’

“*M.*—What does it mean?

“*B.*—I don’t know. What does it mean, Susy?

“*S.*—It means, ‘Polly wants a cracker.”]

Clemens discovered that in twelve years his attitude had changed somewhat concerning the old masters. He no longer found the bright, new copies an improvement on the originals, though the originals still failed to wake his enthusiasm. Mrs. Clemens and Miss Spaulding spent long hours wandering down avenues of art, accompanied by him on occasion, though not always willingly. He wrote his sorrow to Twichell:

I do wish you were in Rome to do my sight-seeing for me. Rome interests me as much as East Hartford could, and no more; that is, the Rome which the average tourist feels an interest in. There are other things here which stir me enough to make life worth living. Livy and Clara are having a royal time worshipping the old masters, and I as good a time gritting my ineffectual teeth over them.

Once when Sarah Orne Jewett was with the party he remarked that if the old masters had labeled their fruit one wouldn’t be so likely to mistake pears for turnips.

“Youth,” said Mrs. Clemens, gravely, “if you do not care for these masterpieces yourself, you might at least consider the feelings of others”; and Miss Jewett, regarding him severely, added, in her quaint Yankee fashion:

“Now, you’ve been spoke to!”

He felt duly reprimanded, but his taste did not materially reform. He realized that he was no longer in a proper frame of mind to write of general sight-seeing. One must be eager, verdant, to write happily the story of travel. Replying to a letter from Howells on the subject he said:

I wish I could give those sharp satires on European life which you mention, but of course a man can’t write successful satire except he be in a calm, judicial good-humor; whereas I hate travel, and I hate hotels, and I hate the opera, and I hate the old masters. In truth I don’t ever seem to be in a good enough humor with anything to satirize it. No, I want to stand up before it and curse it and foam at the mouth, or take a club and pound it to rags and pulp. I have got in two or three chapters about Wagner’s operas, and managed to do it without showing temper, but the strain of another such effort would burst me.

Clemens became his own courier for a time in Italy, and would seem to have made more of a success of it than he did a good many years afterward, if we may believe the story he has left us of his later attempt:

“Am a shining success as a courier,” he records, “by the use of francs. Have learned how to handle the railway guide intelligently and with confidence.”

Page 369

He declares that he will have no more couriers; but possibly he could have employed one to advantage on the trip out of Italy, for it was a desperately hard one, with bad connections and delayed telegrams. When, after thirty-six hours weary, continuous traveling, they arrived at last in Munich in a drizzle and fog, and were domiciled in their winter quarters, at No. 1a, Karlstrasse, they felt that they had reached the home of desolation itself, the very throne of human misery.

And the rooms were so small, the conveniences so meager, and the porcelain stove was grim, ghastly, dismal, intolerable! So Livy and Clara Spaulding sat down forlorn and cried, and I retired to a private place to pray. By and by we all retired to our narrow German beds, and when Livy and I had finished talking across the room it was all decided that we should rest twenty-four hours, then pay whatever damages were required and straightway fly to the south of France.

The rooms had been engaged by letter, months before, of their proprietress, Fraulein Dahlweiner, who had met them at the door with a lantern in her hand, full of joy in their arrival and faith in her ability to make them happy. It was a faith that was justified. Next morning, when they all woke, rested, the weather had cleared, there were bright fires in the rooms, the world had taken on a new aspect. Fraulein Dahlweiner, the pathetic, hard-working little figure, became almost beautiful in their eyes in her efforts for their comfort. She arranged larger rooms and better conveniences for them. Their location was central and there was a near-by park. They had no wish to change. Clemens, in his letter to Howells, boasts that he brought the party through from Rome himself, and that they never had so little trouble before; but in looking over this letter, thirty years later, he commented, "Probably a lie."

He secured a room some distance away for his work, but then could not find his Swiss note-book. He wrote Twichell that he had lost it, and that after all he might not be obliged to write a volume of travels. But the notebook turned up and the work on the new book proceeded. For a time it went badly. He wrote many chapters, only to throw them aside. He had the feeling that he had somehow lost the knack of descriptive narrative. He had become, as it seemed, too didactic. He thought his description was inclined to be too literal, his humor manufactured. These impressions passed, by and by; interest developed, and with it enthusiasm and confidence. In a letter to Twichell he reported his progress:

I was about to write to my publisher and propose some other book, when the confounded thing [the note-book] turned up, and down went my heart into my boots. But there was now no excuse, so I went solidly to work, tore up a great part of the *Ms.* written in Heidelberg—wrote and tore up, continued to write and tear up—and at last, reward of patient and noble persistence, my pen got the old swing again! Since then I'm glad that Providence knew better what to do with the Swiss notebook than I did.

Page 370

Further along in the same letter there breaks forth a true heart-answer to that voice of the Alps which, once heard, is never wholly silent:

O Switzerland! The further it recedes into the enriching haze of time, the more intolerably delicious the charm of it and the cheer of it and the glory and majesty, and solemnity and pathos of it grow. Those mountains had a soul: they thought, they spoke. And what a voice it was! And how real! Deep down in my memory it is sounding yet. Alp calleth unto Alp! That stately old Scriptural wording is the right one for God's Alps and God's ocean. How puny we were in that awful Presence, and how painless it was to be so! How fitting and right it seemed, and how stingless was the sense of our unspeakable insignificance! And Lord, how pervading were the repose and peace and blessedness that poured out of the heart of the invisible Great Spirit of the mountains! Now what is it? There are mountains and mountains and mountains in this world, but only these take you by the heartstrings. I wonder what the secret of it is. Well, time and time and again it has seemed to me that I must drop everything and flee to Switzerland once more. It is a longings deep, strong, tugging longing. That is the word. We must go again, Joe.

CXX

IN MUNICH

That winter in Munich was not recalled as an unpleasant one in after-years. His work went well enough—always a chief source of gratification. Mrs. Clemens and Miss Spaulding found interest in the galleries, in quaint shops, in the music and picturesque life of that beautiful old Bavarian town. The children also liked Munich. It was easy for them to adopt any new environment or custom. The German Christmas, with its lavish tree and toys and cakes, was an especial delight. The German language they seemed fairly to absorb. Writing to his mother Clemens said:

I cannot see but that the children speak German as well as they do English. Susy often translates Livy's orders to the servants. I cannot work and study German at the same time; so I have dropped the latter and do not even read the language, except in the morning paper to get the news.

In Munich—as was the case wherever they were known—there were many callers. Most Americans and many foreigners felt it proper to call on Mark Twain. It was complimentary, but it was wearying sometimes. Mrs. Clemens, in a letter written from Venice, where they had received even more than usual attention, declared there were moments when she almost wished she might never see a visitor again.

Originally there was a good deal about Munich in the new book, and some of the discarded chapters might have been retained with advantage. They were ruled out in

the final weeding as being too serious, along with the French chapters. Only a few Italian memories were left to follow the Switzerland wanderings.

Page 371

The book does record one Munich event, though transferring it to Heilsbronn. It is the incident of the finding of the lost sock in the vast bedroom. It may interest the reader to compare what really happened, as set down in a letter to Twichell, with the story as written for publication:

Last night I awoke at three this morning, and after raging to myself for two interminable hours I gave it up. I rose, assumed a catlike stealthiness, to keep from waking Livy, and proceeded to dress in the pitch-dark. Slowly but surely I got on garment after garment—all down to one sock; I had one slipper on and the other in my hand. Well, on my hands and knees I crept softly around, pawing and feeling and scooping along the carpet, and among chair-legs, for that missing sock, I kept that up, and still kept it up, and kept it up. At first I only said to myself, "Blame that sock," but that soon ceased to answer. My expletives grew steadily stronger and stronger, and at last, when I found I was lost, I had to sit flat down on the floor and take hold of something to keep from lifting the roof off with the profane explosion that was trying to get out of me. I could see the dim blur of the window, but of course it was in the wrong place and could give me no information as to where I was. But I had one comfort—I had not waked Livy; I believed I could find that sock in silence if the night lasted long enough. So I started again and softly pawed all over the place, and sure enough, at the end of half an hour I laid my hand on the missing article. I rose joyfully up and butted the washbowl and pitcher off the stand, and simply raised——so to speak. Livy screamed, then said, "Who is it? What is the matter?" I said, "There ain't anything the matter. I'm hunting for my sock." She said, "Are you hunting for it with a club?" I went in the parlor and lit the lamp, and gradually the fury subsided and the ridiculous features of the thing began to suggest themselves. So I lay on the sofa with note-book and pencil, and transferred the adventure to our big room in the hotel at Heilsbronn, and got it on paper a good deal to my satisfaction.

He wrote with frequency to Howells, and sent him something for the magazine now and then: the "Gambetta Duel" burlesque, which would make a chapter in the book later, and the story of "The Great Revolution in Pitcairn."—[Included in *The Stolen White Elephant* volume. The "Pitcairn" and "Elephant" tales were originally chapters in 'A Tramp Abroad'; also the unpleasant "Coffin-box" yarn, which Howells rejected for the Atlantic and generally condemned, though for a time it remained a favorite with its author.]

Howells's novel, 'The Lady of the Aroostook', was then running through the 'Atlantic', and in one of his letters Clemens expresses the general deep satisfaction of his household in that tale:

Page 372

If your literature has not struck perfection now we are not able to see what is lacking. It is all such truth—truth to the life; everywhere your pen falls it leaves a photograph Possibly you will not be a fully accepted classic until you have been dead one hundred years—it is the fate of the Shakespeares of all genuine professions—but then your books will be as common as Bibles, I believe. In that day I shall be in the encyclopedias too, thus: “Mark Twain, history and occupation unknown; but he was personally acquainted with Howells.”

Though in humorous form, this was a sincere tribute. Clemens always regarded with awe William Dean Howells’s ability to dissect and photograph with such delicacy the minutiae of human nature; just as Howells always stood in awe of Mark Twain’s ability to light, with a single flashing sentence, the whole human horizon.

CXXI

PARIS, ENGLAND, AND HOMEWARD BOUND

They decided to spend the spring months in Paris, so they gave up their pleasant quarters with Fraulein Dahlweiner, and journeyed across Europe, arriving at the French capital February 28, 1879. Here they met another discouraging prospect, for the weather was cold and damp, the cabmen seemed brutally ill-mannered, their first hotel was chilly, dingy, uninviting. Clemens, in his note-book, set down his impressions of their rooms. A paragraph will serve:

Ten squatty, ugly arm-chairs, upholstered in the ugliest and coarsest conceivable scarlet plush; two hideous sofas of the same —uncounted armless chairs ditto. Five ornamental chairs, seats covered with a coarse rag, embroidered in flat expanse with a confusion of leaves such as no tree ever bore, six or seven a dirty white and the rest a faded red. How those hideous chairs do swear at the hideous sofa near them! This is the very hatefulest room I have seen in Europe.

Oh, how cold and raw and unwarmable it is!

It was better than that when the sun came out, and they found happier quarters presently at the Hotel Normandy, rue de l’Echelle.

But, alas, the sun did not come out often enough. It was one of those French springs and summers when it rains nearly every day, and is distressingly foggy and chill between times. Clemens received a bad impression of France and the French during that Parisian-sojourn, from which he never entirely recovered. In his note-book he wrote: “France has neither winter, nor summer, nor morals. Apart from these drawbacks it is a fine country.”

The weather may not have been entirely accountable for his prejudice, but from whatever cause Mark Twain, to the day of his death, had no great love for the French as a nation. Conversely, the French as a nation did not care greatly for Mark Twain. There were many individual Frenchmen that Mark Twain admired, as there were many Frenchmen who admired the work and personality of Mark Twain; but on neither side was there the warm, fond, general affection which elsewhere throughout Europe he invited and returned.

Page 373

His book was not yet finished. In Paris he worked on it daily, but without enthusiasm. The city was too noisy, the weather too dismal. His note-book says:

May 7th. I wish this terrible winter would come to an end. Have had rain almost without intermission for two months and one week.

May 28th. This is one of the coldest days of this most damnable and interminable winter.

It was not all gloom and discomfort. There was congenial company in Paris, and dinner-parties, and a world of callers. Aldrich the scintillating—[Of Aldrich Clemens used to say: "When Aldrich speaks it seems to me he is the bright face of the moon, and I feel like the other side." Aldrich, unlike Clemens, was not given to swearing. The Parisian note-book has this memorandum: "Aldrich gives his seat in the horse-car to a crutched cripple, and discovers that what he took for a crutch is only a length of walnut beading and the man not lame; whereupon Aldrich uses the only profanity that ever escaped his lips: 'Damn a dam'd man who would carry a dam'd piece of beading under his dam'd arm!'"]—was there, also Gedney Bunce, of Hartford, Frank Millet and his wife, Hjalinar Hjorth Boyesen and his wife, and a Mr. and Mrs. Chamberlain, artist people whom the Clemenses had met pleasantly in Italy. Turgenieff, as in London, came to call; also Baron Tauchnitz, that nobly born philanthropist of German publishers, who devoted his life, often at his personal cost, to making the literature of other nations familiar to his own. Tauchnitz had early published the 'Innocents', following it with other Mark Twain volumes as they appeared, paying always, of his own will and accord, all that he could afford to pay for this privilege; which was not really a privilege, for the law did not require him to pay at all. He traveled down to Paris now to see the author, and to pay his respects to him. "A mighty nice old gentleman," Clemens found him. Richard Whiteing was in Paris that winter, and there were always plenty of young American painters whom it was good to know.

They had what they called the Stomach Club, a jolly organization, whose purpose was indicated by its name. Mark Twain occasionally attended its sessions, and on one memorable evening, when Edwin A. Abbey was there, speeches were made which never appeared in any printed proceedings. Mark Twain's address that night has obtained a wide celebrity among the clubs of the world, though no line of it, or even its title has ever found its way into published literature.

Clemens had a better time in Paris than the rest of his party. He could go and come, and mingle with the sociabilities when the abnormal weather kept the others housed in. He did a good deal of sight-seeing of his own kind, and once went up in a captive balloon. They were all studying French, more or less, and they read histories and other books relating to France. Clemens renewed his old interest in Joan of Arc, and for the first time appears to have conceived the notion of writing the story of that lovely character.

Page 374

The Reign of Terror interested him. He reread Carlyle's *Revolution*, a book which he was never long without reading, and they all read 'A Tale of Two Cities'. When the weather permitted they visited the scenes of that grim period.

In his note-book he comments:

"The Reign of Terror shows that, without distinction or rank, the people were savages. Marquises, dukes, lawyers, blacksmiths, they each figure in due proportion to their crafts."

And again:

"For 1,000 years this savage nation indulged itself in massacre; every now and then a big massacre or a little one. The spirit is peculiar to France—I mean in Christendom—no other state has had it. In this France has always walked abreast, kept her end up with her brethren, the Turks and the Burmese. Their chief traits—love of glory and massacre."

Yet it was his sense of fairness that made him write, as a sort of quittance:

"You perceive I generalize with intrepidity from single instances. It is the tourists' custom. When I see a man jump from the Vendome Column I say, 'They like to do that in Paris.'"

Following this implied atonement, he records a few conclusions, drawn doubtless from Parisian reading and observation:

"Childish race and great."

"I'm for cremation."

"I disfavor capital punishment."

"Samson was a Jew, therefore not a fool. The Jews have the best average brain of any people in the world. The Jews are the only race in the world who work wholly with their brains, and never with their hands. There are no Jew beggars, no Jew tramps, no Jew ditchers, hod-carriers, day-laborers, or followers of toilsome mechanical trade.

"They are peculiarly and conspicuously the world's intellectual aristocracy."

"Communism is idiocy. They want to divide up the property. Suppose they did it. It requires brains to keep money as well as to make it. In a precious little while the money would be back in the former owner's hands and the communist would be poor again.

The division would have to be remade every three years or it would do the communist no good."

A curious thing happened one day in Paris. Boyesen; in great excitement, came to the Normandy and was shown to the Clemens apartments. He was pale and could hardly speak, for his emotion. He asked immediately if his wife had come to their rooms. On learning that she had not, he declared that she was lost or had met with an accident. She had been gone several hours, he said, and had sent no word, a thing which she had never done before. He besought Clemens to aid him in his search for her, to do something to help him find her. Clemens, without showing the least emotion or special concentration of interest, said quietly:

"I will."

"Where will you go first," Boyesen demanded.

Page 375

Still in the same even voice Clemens said:

“To the elevator.”

He passed out of the room, with Boyesen behind him, into the hall. The elevator was just coming up, and as they reached it, it stopped at their landing, and Mrs. Boyesen stepped out. She had been delayed by a breakdown and a blockade. Clemens said afterward that he had a positive conviction that she would be on the elevator when they reached it. It was one of those curious psychic evidences which we find all along during his life; or, if the skeptics prefer to call them coincidences, they are privileged to do so.

Paris, June 1, 1879. Still this vindictive winter continues. Had a raw, cold rain to-day. To-night we sit around a rousing wood fire.

They stood it for another month, and then on the 10th of July, when it was still chilly and disagreeable, they gave it up and left for Brussels, which he calls “a dirty, beautiful (architecturally), interesting town.”

Two days in Brussels, then to Antwerp, where they dined on the Trenton with Admiral Roan, then to Rotterdam, Dresden, Amsterdam, and London, arriving there the 29th of July, which was rainy and cold, in keeping with all Europe that year.

Had to keep a rousing big cannel-coal fire blazing in the grate all day. A remarkable summer, truly!

London meant a throng of dinners, as always: brilliant, notable affairs, too far away to recall. A letter written by Mrs. Clemens at the time preserves one charming, fresh bit of that departed bloom.

Clara [Spaulding] went in to dinner with Mr. Henry James; she enjoyed him very much. I had a little chat with him before dinner, and he was exceedingly pleasant and easy to talk with. I had expected just the reverse, thinking one would feel looked over by him and criticized. Mr. Whistler, the artist, was at the dinner, but he did not attract me. Then there was a lady, over eighty years old, a Mrs. Stuart, who was Washington Irving's love, and she is said to have been his only love, and because of her he went unmarried to his grave. —[Mrs. Clemens was misinformed. Irving's only “love” was a Miss Hoffman.]—She was also an intimate friend of Madame Bonaparte. You would judge Mrs. Stuart to be about fifty, and she was the life of the drawing-room after dinner, while the ladies were alone, before the gentlemen came up. It was lovely to see such a sweet old age; every one was so fond of her, every one deferred to her, yet every one was joking her, making fun of her, but she was always equal to the occasion, giving back as bright replies as possible; you had not the least sense that she was aged. She quoted French in her stories with perfect ease and fluency, and had all the time such a kindly, lovely way. When she entered the room, before dinner, Mr. James, who was then



talking with me, shook hands with her and said, "Good evening, you wonderful lady." After she had passed . . . he said, "She is the youngest person in London. She has the youngest feelings and the youngest interests She is always interested."

It was a perfect delight to hear her and see her.



Page 376

For more than two years they had had an invitation from Reginald Cholmondeley to pay him another visit.

So they went for a week to Condover, where many friends were gathered, including Millais, the painter, and his wife (who had been the wife of Ruskin), numerous relatives, and other delightful company. It was one of the happiest chapters of their foreign sojourn.—[Moncure D. Conway, who was in London at the time, recalls, in his Autobiography, a visit which he made with Mr. and Mrs. Clemens to Stratford-on-Avon. “Mrs. Clemens was an ardent Shakespearian, and Mark Twain determined to give her a surprise. He told her that we were going on a journey to Epworth, and persuaded me to connive with the joke by writing to Charles Flower not to meet us himself, but send his carriage. On arrival at the station we directed the driver to take us straight to the church. When we entered, and Mrs. Clemens read on Shakespeare’s grave, ‘Good friend, for Jesus’ sake, forbear,’ she started back, exclaiming, ‘where am I?’ Mark received her reproaches with an affluence of guilt, but never did lady enjoy a visit more than that to Avonbank. Mrs. Charles Flower (nee Martineau) took Mrs. Clemens to her heart, and contrived that every social or other attraction of that region should surround her.”]

From the note-book:

Sunday, August 17,'79. Raw and cold, and a drenching rain. Went to hear Mr. Spurgeon. House three-quarters full-say three thousand people. First hour, lacking one minute, taken up with two prayers, two ugly hymns, and Scripture-reading. Sermon three-quarters of an hour long. A fluent talker, good, sonorous voice. Topic treated in the unpleasant, old fashion: Man a mighty bad child, God working at him in forty ways and having a world of trouble with him.

A wooden-faced congregation; just the sort to see no incongruity in the majesty of Heaven stooping to plead and sentimentalize over such, and see in their salvation an important matter.

Tuesday, August 19th. Went up Windermere Lake in the steamer. Talked with the great Darwin.

They had planned to visit Dr. Brown in Scotland. Mrs. Clemens, in particular, longed to go, for his health had not been of the best, and she felt that they would never have a chance to see him again. Clemens in after years blamed himself harshly for not making the trip, declaring that their whole reason for not going was an irritable reluctance on his part to take the troublesome journey and a perversity of spirit for which there was no real excuse. There is documentary evidence against this harsh conclusion. They were, in fact, delayed here and there by misconceptions and the continued terrific weather, barely reaching Liverpool in time for their sailing date, August 23d. Unquestionably he was weary of railway travel, far he always detested it. Time would magnify his

remembered reluctance, until, in the end, he would load his conscience with the entire burden of blame.

Page 377

Their ship was the Gallia, and one night, when they were nearing the opposite side of the Atlantic, Mark Twain, standing on deck, saw for the third time in his experience a magnificent lunar rainbow: a complete arch, the colors part of the time very brilliant, but little different from a day rainbow. It is not given to many persons in this world to see even one of these phenomena. After each previous vision there had come to him a period of good-fortune. Perhaps this also boded well for him.

CXXII

AN INTERLUDE

The Gallia reached New York September 3, 1879. A report of his arrival, in the New York Sun, stated that Mark Twain had changed in his absence; that only his drawl seemed natural.

His hat, as he stood on the deck of the incoming Cunarder, Gallia, was of the pattern that English officers wear in India, and his suit of clothes was such as a merchant might wear in his store. He looked older than when he went to Germany, and his hair has turned quite gray.

It was a late hour when they were finally up to the dock, and Clemens, anxious to get through the Custom House, urged the inspector to accept his carefully prepared list of dutiable articles, without opening the baggage. But the official was dubious. Clemens argued eloquently, and a higher authority was consulted. Again Clemens stated his case and presented his arguments. A still higher chief of inspection was summoned, evidently from his bed. He listened sleepily to the preamble, then suddenly said: "Oh, chalk his baggage, of course! Don't you know it's Mark Twain and that he'll talk all night?"

They went directly to the farm, for whose high sunlit loveliness they had been longing through all their days of absence. Mrs. Clemens, in her letters, had never failed to dwell on her hunger for that fair hilltop. From his accustomed study-table Clemens wrote to Twichell:

"You have run about a good deal, Joe, but you have never seen any place that was so divine as the farm. Why don't you come here and take a foretaste of Heaven?" Clemens declared he would roam no more forever, and settled down to the happy farm routine. He took up his work, which had not gone well in Paris, and found his interest in it renewed. In the letter to Twichell he said:

I am revising my *Ms.* I did not expect to like it, but I do. I have been knocking out early chapters for more than a year now, not because they had not merit, but merely because they hindered the flow of the narrative; it was a dredging process. Day before yesterday



my shovel fetched up three more chapters and laid them, reeking, on the festering shore-pile of their predecessors, and now I think the yarn swims right along, without hitch or halt. I believe it will be a readable book of travels. I cannot see that it lacks anything but information.

Mrs. Clemens was no less weary of travel than her husband. Yet she had enjoyed their roaming, and her gain from it had been greater than his. Her knowledge of art and literature, and of the personal geography of nations, had vastly increased; her philosophy of life had grown beyond all counting.

Page 378

She had lost something, too; she had outstripped her traditions. One day, when she and her sister had walked across the fields, and had stopped to rest in a little grove by a pretty pond, she confessed, timidly enough and not without sorrow, how she had drifted away from her orthodox views. She had ceased to believe, she said, in the orthodox Bible God, who exercised a personal supervision over every human soul. The hordes of people she had seen in many lands, the philosophies she had listened to from her husband and those wise ones about him, the life away from the restricted round of home, all had contributed to this change. Her God had become a larger God; the greater mind which exerts its care of the individual through immutable laws of time and change and environment—the Supreme Good which comprehends the individual flower, dumb creature, or human being only as a unit in the larger scheme of life and love. Her sister was not shocked or grieved; she too had grown with the years, and though perhaps less positively directed, had by a path of her own reached a wider prospect of conclusions. It was a sweet day there in the little grove by the water, and would linger in the memory of both so long as life lasted. Certainly it was the larger faith; though the moment must always come when the narrower, nearer, more humanly protecting arm of orthodoxy lends closer comfort. Long afterward, in the years that followed the sorrow of heavy bereavement, Clemens once said to his wife, “Livy, if it comforts you to lean on the Christian faith do so,” and she answered, “I can’t, Youth. I haven’t any.”

And the thought that he had destroyed her illusion, without affording a compensating solace, was one that would come back to him, now and then, all his days.

CXXIII

THE GRANT SPEECH OF 1879

If the lunar rainbow had any fortuitous significance, perhaps we may find it in the two speeches which Mark Twain made in November and December of that year. The first of these was delivered at Chicago, on the occasion of the reception of General Grant by the Army of the Tennessee, on the evening of November 73, 1879. Grant had just returned from his splendid tour of the world. His progress from San Francisco eastward had been such an ovation as is only accorded to sovereignty. Clemens received an invitation to the reunion, but, dreading the long railway journey, was at first moved to decline. He prepared a letter in which he made “business” his excuse, and expressed his regret that he would not be present to see and hear the veterans of the Army of the Tennessee at the moment when their old commander entered the room and rose in his place to speak.

“Besides,” he said, “I wanted to see the General again anyway and renew the acquaintance. He would remember me, because I was the person who did not ask him for an office.”

He did not send the letter. Reconsidering, it seemed to him that there was something strikingly picturesque in the idea of a Confederate soldier who had been chased for a fortnight in the rain through Ralls and Monroe counties, Missouri, now being invited to come and give welcome home to his old imaginary pursuer. It was in the nature of an imperative command, which he could not refuse to obey.

Page 379

He accepted and agreed to speak. They had asked him to respond to the toast of "The Ladies," but for him the subject was worn out. He had already responded to that toast at least twice. He telegraphed that there was one class of the community that had always been overlooked upon such occasions, and that if they would allow him to do so he would take that class for a toast: the babies. Necessarily they agreed, and he prepared himself accordingly.

He arrived in Chicago in time for the prodigious procession of welcome. Grant was to witness the march from a grand reviewing stand, which had been built out from the second story of the Palmer House. Clemens had not seen the General since the "embarrassing" introduction in Washington, twelve years before. Their meeting was characteristic enough. Carter Harrison, Mayor of Chicago, arriving with Grant, stepped over to Clemens, and asked him if he wouldn't like to be presented. Grant also came forward, and a moment later Harrison was saying:

"General, let me present Mr. Clemens, a man almost as great as yourself." They shook hands; there was a pause of a moment, then Grant said, looking at him gravely:

"Mr. Clemens, I am not embarrassed, are you?"

So he remembered that first, long-ago meeting. It was a conspicuous performance. The crowd could not hear the words, but they saw the greeting and the laugh, and cheered both men.

Following the procession, there were certain imposing ceremonies of welcome at Haverly's Theater where long, laudatory eloquence was poured out upon the returning hero, who sat unmoved while the storm of music and cheers and oratory swept about him. Clemens, writing of it that evening to Mrs. Clemens, said:

I never sat elbow to elbow with so many historic names before.
Grant, Sherman, Sheridan, Schofield, Pope, Logan, and so on.

What an iron man Grant is! He sat facing the house, with his right leg crossed over his left, his right boot sole tilted up at an angle, and his left hand and arm reposing on the arm of his chair. You note that position? Well, when glowing references were made to other grantees on the stage, those grantees always showed a trifle of nervous consciousness, and as these references came frequently the nervous changes of position and attitude were also frequent. But Grant! He was under a tremendous and ceaseless bombardment of praise and congratulation; but as true as I'm sitting here he never moved a muscle of his body for a single instant during thirty minutes! You could have played him on a stranger for an effigy. Perhaps he never would have moved, but at last a speaker made such a particularly ripping and blood-stirring remark about him that the audience rose and roared and yelled and stamped and clapped an entire



minute—Grant sitting as serene as ever-when General Sherman stepped up to him, laid his hand affectionately on his shoulder, bent

Page 380

respectfully down, and whispered in his ear. Then Grant got up and bowed, and the storm of applause swelled into a hurricane.

But it was the next evening that the celebration rose to a climax. This was at the grand banquet at the Palmer House, where six hundred guests sat down to dinner and Grant himself spoke, and Logan and Hurlbut, and Vilas and Woodford and Pope, fifteen in all, including Robert G. Ingersoll and Mark Twain. Chicago has never known a greater event than that dinner, for there has never been a time since when those great soldiers and citizens could have been gathered there.

To Howells Clemens wrote:

Imagine what it was like to see a bullet-shredded old battle-flag reverently unfolded to the gaze of a thousand middle-aged soldiers, most of whom hadn't seen it since they saw it advancing over victorious fields when they were in their prime. And imagine what it was like when Grant, their first commander, stepped into view while they were still going mad over the flag, and then right in the midst of it all somebody struck up "When we were marching through Georgia." Well, you should have heard the thousand voices lift that chorus and seen the tears stream down. If I live a hundred years I sha'n't ever forget these things, nor be able to talk about them. I sha'n't ever forget that I saw Phil Sheridan, with martial cloak and plumed chapeau, riding his big black horse in the midst of his own cannon; by all odds the superb figure of a soldier. I ever looked upon! Grand times, my boy, grand times!

Mark Twain declared afterward that he listened to four speeches that night which he would remember as long as he lived. One of them was by Emory Storrs, another by General Vilas, another by Logan, and the last and greatest by Robert Ingersoll, whose eloquence swept the house like a flame. The Howells letter continues:

I doubt if America has ever seen anything quite equal to it; I am well satisfied I shall not live to see its equal again. How pale those speeches are in print, but how radiant, how full of color, how blinding they were in the delivery! Bob Ingersoll's music will sing through my memory always as the divinest that ever enchanted my ears. And I shall always see him, as he stood that night on a dinner-table, under the flash of lights and banners, in the midst of seven hundred frantic shouters, the most beautiful human creature that ever lived. "They fought, that a mother might own her child." The words look like any other print, but, Lord bless me! he borrowed the very accent of the angel of mercy to say them in, and you should have seen that vast house rise to its feet; and you should have heard the hurricane that followed. That's the only test! People may shout, clap their hands, stamp, wave their napkins, but none but the master can make them get up on their feet.



Clemens's own speech came last. He had been placed at the end to hold the house. He was preceded by a dull speaker, and his heart sank, for it was two o'clock and the diners were weary and sleepy, and the dreary speech had made them unresponsive.

Page 381

They gave him a round of applause when he stepped up upon the table in front of him—a tribute to his name. Then he began the opening words of that memorable, delightful fancy.

“We haven’t all had the good-fortune to be ladies; we haven’t all been generals, or poets, or statesmen; but when the toast works down to the babies—we stand on common ground—”

The tired audience had listened in respectful silence through the first half of the sentence. He made one of his effective pauses on the word “babies,” and when he added, in that slow, rich measure of his, “we stand on common ground,” they let go a storm of applause. There was no weariness and inattention after that. At the end of each sentence, he had to stop to let the tornado roar itself out and sweep by. When he reached the beginning of the final paragraph, “Among the three or four million cradles now rocking in the land are some which this nation would preserve for ages as sacred things if we could know which ones they are,” the vast audience waited breathless for his conclusion. Step by step he led toward some unseen climax—some surprise, of course, for that would be his way. Then steadily, and almost without emphasis, he delivered the opening of his final sentence:

“And now in his cradle, somewhere under the flag, the future illustrious commander-in-chief of the American armies is so little burdened with his approaching grandeurs and responsibilities as to be giving his whole strategic mind, at this moment, to trying to find out some way to get his own big toe into his mouth, an achievement which (meaning no disrespect) the illustrious guest of this evening also turned his attention to some fifty-six years ago.”

He paused, and the vast crowd had a chill of fear. After all, he seemed likely to overdo it to spoil everything with a cheap joke at the end. No one ever knew better than Mark Twain the value of a pause. He waited now long enough to let the silence become absolute, until the tension was painful, then wheeling to Grant himself he said, with all the dramatic power of which he was master:

“And if the child is but the father of the man, there are mighty few who will doubt that he succeeded!”

The house came down with a crash. The linking of their hero’s great military triumphs with that earliest of all conquests seemed to them so grand a figure that they went mad with the joy of it. Even Grant’s iron serenity broke; he rocked and laughed while the tears streamed down his cheeks.

They swept around the speaker with their congratulations, in their efforts to seize his hand. He was borne up and down the great dining-hall. Grant himself pressed up to make acknowledgments.

“It tore me all to pieces,” he said; and Sherman exclaimed, “Lord bless you, my boy! I don’t know how you do it!”

The little speech has been in “cold type” so many years since then that the reader of it to-day may find it hard to understand the flame of response it kindled so long ago. But that was another day—and another nation—and Mark Twain, like Robert Ingersoll, knew always his period and his people.

Page 382

CXXIV

ANOTHER “ATLANTIC” SPEECH

The December good-fortune was an opportunity Clemens had to redeem himself with the Atlantic contingent, at a breakfast given to Dr. Holmes.

Howells had written concerning it as early as October, and the first impulse had been to decline. It would be something of an ordeal; for though two years had passed since the fatal Whittier dinner, Clemens had not been in that company since, and the lapse of time did not signify. Both Howells and Warner urged him to accept, and he agreed to do so on condition that he be allowed to speak.

If anybody talks there I shall claim the right to say a word myself, and be heard among the very earliest, else it would be confoundedly awkward for me—and for the rest, too. But you may read what I say beforehand, and strike out whatever you choose.

Howells advised against any sort of explanation. Clemens accepted this as wise counsel, and prepared an address relevant only to the guest of honor.

It was a noble gathering. Most of the guests of the Whittier dinner were present, and this time there were ladies. Emerson, Longfellow, and Whittier were there, Harriet Beecher Stowe and Julia Ward Howe; also the knightly Colonel Waring, and Stedman, and Parkman, and grand old John Bigelow, old even then.—[He died in 1911 in his 94th year.]

Howells was conservative in his introduction this time. It was better taste to be so. He said simply:

“We will now listen to a few words of truth and soberness from Mark Twain.”

Clemens is said to have risen diffidently, but that was his natural manner. It probably did not indicate anything of the inner tumult he really felt.

Outwardly he was calm enough, and what he said was delicate and beautiful, the kind of thing that he could say so well. It seems fitting that it should be included here, the more so that it tells a story not elsewhere recorded. This is the speech in full:

Mr. Chairman, ladies, and gentlemen,—I would have traveled a much greater distance than I have come to witness the paying of honors to Dr. Holmes, for my feeling toward him has always been one of peculiar warmth. When one receives a letter from a great man for the first time in his life it is a large event to him, as all of you know by your own experience. You never can receive letters enough from famous men afterward to obliterate that one or dim the memory of the pleasant surprise it was and the

gratification it gave you. Lapse of time cannot make it commonplace or cheap. Well, the first great man who ever wrote me a letter was our guest, Oliver Wendell Holmes. He was also the first great literary man I ever stole anything from, and that is how I came to write to him and he to me. When my first book was new a friend of mine said, "The dedication is very neat." Yes, I said,

Page 383

I thought it was. My friend said, "I always admired it, even before I saw it in *The Innocents Abroad*." I naturally said, "What do you mean? Where did you ever see it before?" "Well, I saw it first, some years ago, as Dr. Holmes's dedication to his *Songs in Many Keys*." Of course my first impulse was to prepare this man's remains for burial, but upon reflection I said I would reprieve him for a moment or two, and give him a chance to prove his assertion if he could. We stepped into a book-store. and he did prove it. I had stolen that dedication almost word for word. I could not imagine how this curious thing happened; for I knew one thing, for a dead certainty—that a certain amount of pride always goes along with a teaspoonful of brains, and that this pride protects a man from deliberately stealing other people's ideas. That is what a teaspoonful of brains will do for a man, and admirers had often told me I had nearly a basketful, though they were rather reserved as to the size of the basket. However, I thought the thing out and solved the mystery. Some years before I had been laid up a couple of weeks in the Sandwich Islands, and had read and reread Dr. Holmes's poems till my mental reservoir was filled with them to the brim. The dedication lay on top and handy, so by and by I unconsciously took it. Well, of course, I wrote to Dr. Holmes and told him I hadn't meant to steal, and he wrote back and said, in the kindest way, that it was all right, and no harm done, and added that he believed we all unconsciously worked over ideas gathered in reading and hearing, imagining they were original with ourselves. He stated a truth and did it in such a pleasant way, and salved over my sore spot so gently and so healingly, that I was rather glad I had committed the crime, for the sake of the letter. I afterward called on him and told him to make perfectly free with any ideas of mine that struck him as good protoplasm for poetry. He could see by that time that there wasn't anything mean about me; so we got along, right from the start.—[Holmes in his letter had said: "I rather think *The Innocents Abroad* will have many more readers than *Songs in Many Keys*. . . You will be stolen from a great deal oftener than you will borrow from other people."] I have met Dr. Holmes many times since; and lately he said—However, I am wandering wildly away from the one thing which I got on my feet to do; that is, to make my compliments to you, my fellow-teachers of the great public, and likewise to say I am right glad to see that Dr. Holmes is still in his prime and full of generous life, and as age is not determined by years but by trouble, and by infirmities of mind and body, I hope it may be a very long time yet before any can truthfully say, "He is growing old."

Whatever Mark Twain may have lost on that former occasion, came back to him multiplied when he had finished this happy tribute. So the year for him closed prosperously. The rainbow of promise was justified.

Page 384

CXXV

THE QUIETER THINGS OF HOME

Upset and disturbed as Mark Twain often was, he seldom permitted his distractions to interfere with the program of his fireside. His days and his nights might be fevered, but the evenings belonged to another world. The long European wandering left him more than ever enamoured of his home; to him it had never been so sweet before, so beautiful, so full of peace. Company came: distinguished guests and the old neighborhood circles. Dinner-parties were more frequent than ever, and they were likely to be brilliant affairs. The best minds, the brightest wits, gathered around Mark Twain's table. Booth, Barrett, Irving, Sheridan, Sherman, Howells, Aldrich: they all assembled, and many more. There was always some one on the way to Boston or New York who addressed himself for the day or the night, or for a brief call, to the Mark Twain fireside.

Certain visitors from foreign lands were surprised at his environment, possibly expecting to find him among less substantial, more bohemian surroundings. Henry Drummond, the author of *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*, in a letter of this time, said:

I had a delightful day at Hartford last Wednesday Called on Mark Twain, Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, and the widow of Horace Bushnell. I was wishing A——had been at the Mark Twain interview. He is funnier than any of his books, and to my surprise a most respected citizen, devoted to things esthetic, and the friend of the poor and struggling.—[Life of Henry Drummond, by George Adam Smith.]

The quieter evenings were no less delightful. Clemens did not often go out. He loved his own home best. The children were old enough now to take part in a form of entertainment that gave him and them especial pleasure—acting charades. These he invented for them, and costumed the little performers, and joined in the acting as enthusiastically and as unrestrainedly as if he were back in that frolicsome boyhood on John Quarles's farm. The Warner and Twichell children were often there and took part in the gay amusements. The children of that neighborhood played their impromptu parts well and naturally. They were in a dramatic atmosphere, and had been from infancy. There was never any preparation for the charades. A word was selected and the parts of it were whispered to the little actors. Then they withdrew to the hall, where all sorts of costumes had been laid out for the evening, dressed their parts, and each detachment marched into the library, performed its syllable and retired, leaving the audience, mainly composed of parents, to guess the answer. Often they invented their own words, did their own costuming, and conducted the entire performance independent of grown-up assistance or interference. Now and then, even at this early period, they conceived and produced little plays, and of course their father could not resist joining in these. At other times, evenings, after dinner, he would sit at the piano

and recall the old darky songs-spirituals and jubilee choruses-singing them with fine spirit, if not with perfect technic, the children joining in these moving melodies.

Page 385

He loved to read aloud to them. It was his habit to read his manuscript to Mrs. Clemens, and, now that the children were older, he was likely to include them in his critical audience.

It would seem to have been the winter after their return from Europe that this custom was inaugurated, for 'The Prince and the Pauper' manuscript was the first one so read, and it was just then he was resuming work on this tale. Each afternoon or evening, when he had finished his chapter, he assembled his little audience and read them the result. The children were old enough to delight in that half real, half fairy tale of the wandering prince and the royal pauper: and the charm and simplicity of the story are measurably due to those two small listeners, to whom it was adapted in that early day of its creation.

Clemens found the Prince a blessed relief from 'A Tramp Abroad', which had become a veritable nightmare. He had thought it finished when he left the farm, but discovered that he must add several hundred pages to complete its bulk. It seemed to him that he had been given a life-sentence. He wrote six hundred pages and tore up all but two hundred and eighty-eight. He was about to destroy these and begin again, when Mrs. Clemens's health became poor and he was advised to take her to Elmira, though it was then midwinter. To Howells he wrote:

I said, "if there is one death that is painfuler than another, may I get it if I don't do that thing."

So I took the 288 pages to Bliss and told him that was the very last line I should ever write on this book (a book which required 600 pages of *Ms.*, and I have written nearly four thousand, first and last).

I am as soary (and flighty) as a rocket to-day, with the unutterable joy of getting that Old Man of the Sea off my back, where he has been roosting more than a year and a half.

They remained a month at Elmira, and on their return Clemens renewed work on 'The Prince and the Pauper'. He reported to Howells that if he never sold a copy his jubilant delight in writing it would suffer no diminution. A week later his enthusiasm had still further increased:

I take so much pleasure in my story that I am loath to hurry, not wanting to get it done. Did I ever tell you the plot of it? It begins at 9 A.M., January 27, 1547.

He follows with a detailed synopsis of his plot, which in this instance he had worked out with unusual completeness—a fact which largely accounts for the unity of the tale. Then he adds:

Page 386

My idea is to afford a realizing sense of the exceeding severity of the laws of that day by inflicting some of their penalties upon the king himself, and allowing him a chance to see the rest of them applied to others; all of which is to account for certain mildnesses which distinguished Edward VI.'s reign from those that precede it and follow it. Imagine this fact: I have even fascinated Mrs. Clemens with this yarn for youth. My stuff generally gets considerable damning with faint praise out of her, but this time it is all the other way. She is become the horse-leech's daughter, and my mill doesn't grind fast enough to suit her. This is no mean triumph, my dear sir.

He forgot, perhaps, to mention his smaller auditors, but we may believe they were no less eager in their demands for the tale's continuance.

CXXVI

"A tramp abroad"

'A Tramp Abroad' came from the presses on the 13th of March, 1880. It had been widely heralded, and there was an advance sale of twenty-five thousand copies. It was of the same general size and outward character as the Innocents, numerous illustrations, and was regarded by its publishers as a satisfactory book.

It bore no very striking resemblance to the Innocents on close examination. Its pictures—drawn, for the most part, by a young art student named Brown, whom Clemens had met in Paris—were extraordinarily bad, while the crude engraving process by which they had been reproduced; tended to bring them still further into disrepute. A few drawings by True Williams were better, and those drawn by Clemens himself had a value of their own. The book would have profited had there been more of what the author calls his "works of art."

Mark Twain himself had dubious anticipations as to the book's reception.

But Howells wrote:

Well, you are a blessing. You ought to believe in God's goodness, since he has bestowed upon the world such a delightful genius as yours to lighten its troubles.

Clemens replied:

Your praises have been the greatest uplift I ever had. When a body is not even remotely expecting such things, how the surprise takes the breath away! We had been interpreting your stillness to melancholy and depression, caused by that book. This is honest. Why, everything looks brighter now. A check for untold cash could not have made our hearts sing as your letter has done.

A letter from Tauchnitz, proposing to issue an illustrated edition in Germany, besides putting it into his regular series, was an added satisfaction. To be in a Tauchnitz series was of itself a recognition of the book's merit.

To Twichell, Clemens presented a special copy of the Tramp with a personal inscription, which must not be omitted here:

Page 387

*My dear "Harris"—No, I mean my dear Joe,—*Just imagine it for a moment: I was collecting material in Europe during fourteen months for a book, and now that the thing is printed I find that you, who were with me only a month and a half of the fourteen, are in actual presence (not imaginary) in 440 of the 531 pages the book contains! Hang it, if you had stayed at home it would have taken me fourteen years to get the material. You have saved me an intolerable whole world of hated labor, and I'll not forget it, my boy. You'll find reminders of things, all along, that happened to us, and of others that didn't happen; but you'll remember the spot where they were invented. You will see how the imaginary perilous trip up the Riffelberg is preposterously expanded. That horse-student is on page 192. The "Fremersberg" is neighboring. The Black Forest novel is on page 211. I remember when and where we projected that: in the leafy glades with the mountain sublimities dozing in the blue haze beyond the gorge of Allerheiligen. There's the "new member," page 213; the dentist yarn, 223; the true Chamois, 242; at page 248 is a pretty long yarn, spun from a mighty brief text meeting, for a moment, that pretty girl who knew me and whom I had forgotten; at 281 is "Harris," and should have been so entitled, but Bliss has made a mistake and turned you into some other character; 305 brings back the whole Rigi tramp to me at a glance; at 185 and 186 are specimens of my art; and the frontispiece is the combination which I made by pasting one familiar picture over the lower half of an equally familiar one. This fine work being worthy of Titian, I have shed the credit of it upon him. Well, you'll find more reminders of things scattered through here than are printed, or could have been printed, in many books.

All the "legends of the Neckar," which I invented for that unstoried region, are here; one is in the Appendix. The steel portrait of me is just about perfect.

We had a mighty good time, Joe, and the six weeks I would dearly like to repeat any time; but the rest of the fourteen months—never.
With love,

Yours, *mark*.

Hartford, March 16, 1880.

Possibly Twichell had vague doubts concerning a book of which he was so large a part, and its favorable reception by the critics and the public generally was a great comfort. When the Howells letter was read to him he is reported as having sat with his hands on his knees, his head bent forward—a favorite attitude—repeating at intervals:

"Howells said that, did he? Old Howells said that!"

There have been many and varying opinions since then as to the literary merits of 'A Tramp Abroad'. Human tastes differ, and a "mixed" book of this kind invites as many

opinions as it has chapters. The word “uneven” pretty safely describes any book of size, but it has a special application to this one. Written under great stress and uncertainty of mind, it could hardly be uniform. It presents Mark Twain at his best, and at his worst. Almost any American writer was better than Mark Twain at his worst: Mark Twain at his best was unapproachable.

Page 388

It is inevitable that 'A Tramp Abroad' and 'The Innocents Abroad' should be compared, though with hardly the warrant of similarity. The books are as different as was their author at the periods when they were written. 'A Tramp Abroad' is the work of a man who was traveling and observing for the purpose of writing a book, and for no other reason. The Innocents Abroad was written by a man who was reveling in every scene and experience, every new phase and prospect; whose soul was alive to every historic association, and to every humor that a gay party of young sight-seers could find along the way. The note-books of that trip fairly glow with the inspiration of it; those of the later wanderings are mainly filled with brief, terse records, interspersed with satire and denunciation. In the 'Innocents' the writer is the enthusiast with a sense of humor. In the 'Tramp' he has still the sense of humor, but he has become a cynic; restrained, but a cynic none the less. In the 'Innocents' he laughs at delusions and fallacies—and enjoys them. In the 'Tramp' he laughs at human foibles and affectations—and wants to smash them. Very often he does not laugh heartily and sincerely at all, but finds his humor in extravagant burlesque. In later life his gentler laughter, his old, untroubled enjoyment of human weakness, would return, but just now he was in that middle period, when the "damned human race" amused him indeed, though less tenderly. (It seems proper to explain that in applying this term to mankind he did not mean that the race was foredoomed, but rather that it ought to be.)

Reading the 'Innocents', the conviction grows that, with all its faults, it is literature from beginning to end. Reading the 'Tramp', the suspicion arises that, regardless of technical improvement, its percentage of literature is not large. Yet, as noted in an earlier volume, so eminent a critic as Brander Matthews has pronounced in its favor, and he undoubtedly had a numerous following; Howells expressed his delight in the book at the time of its issue, though one wonders how far the personal element entered into his enjoyment, and what would be his final decision if he read the two books side by side to-day. He reviewed 'A Tramp Abroad' adequately and finely in the Atlantic, and justly; for on the whole it is a vastly entertaining book, and he did not overpraise it.

'A Tramp Abroad' had an "Introduction" in the manuscript, a pleasant word to the reader but not a necessary one, and eventually it was omitted. Fortunately the appendix remained. Beyond question it contains some of the very best things in the book. The descriptions of the German Portier and the German newspaper are happy enough, and the essay on the awful German language is one of Mark Twain's supreme bits of humor. It is Mark Twain at his best; Mark Twain in a field where he had no rival, the field of good-natured, sincere fun-making-ridicule of the manifest absurdities of some national custom or institution which the nation itself could enjoy, while the individual suffered no wound. The present Emperor of Germany is said to find comfort in this essay on his national speech when all other amusements fail. It is delicious beyond words to express; it is unique.

Page 389

In the body of the book there are also many delights. The description of the ant might rank next to the German language almost in its humor, and the meeting with the unrecognized girl at Lucerne has a lively charm.

Of the serious matter, some of the word-pictures are flawless in their beauty; this, for instance, suggested by the view of the Jungfrau from Interlaken:

There was something subduing in the influence of that silent and solemn and awful presence; one seemed to meet the immutable, the indestructible, the eternal, face to face, and to feel the trivial and fleeting nature of his own existence the more sharply by the contrast. One had the sense of being under the brooding contemplation of a spirit, not an inert mass of rocks and ice—a spirit which had looked down, through the slow drift of ages, upon a million vanished races of men and judged them; and would judge a million more—and still be there, watching unchanged and unchangeable, after all life should be gone and the earth have become a vacant desolation. While I was feeling these things, I was groping, without knowing it, toward an understanding of what the spell is which people find in the Alps, and in no other mountains; that strange, deep, nameless influence which, once felt, cannot be forgotten; once felt, leaves always behind it a restless longing to feel it again—a longing which is like homesickness; a grieving, haunting yearning, which will plead, implore, and persecute till it has its will. I met dozens of people, imaginative and unimaginative, cultivated and uncultivated, who had come from far countries and roamed through the Swiss Alps year after year—they could not explain why. They had come first, they said, out of idle curiosity, because everybody talked about it; they had come since because they could not help it, and they should keep on coming, while they lived, for the same reason; they had tried to break their chains and stay away, but it was futile; now they had no desire to break them. Others came nearer formulating what they felt; they said they could find perfect rest and peace nowhere else when they were troubled: all frets and worries and chafings sank to sleep in the presence of the benignant serenity of the Alps; the Great Spirit of the mountain breathed his own peace upon their hurt minds and sore hearts, and healed them; they could not think base thoughts or do mean and sordid things here, before the visible throne of God.

Indeed, all the serious matter in the book is good. The reader's chief regret is likely to be that there is not more of it. The main difficulty with the humor is that it seems overdone. It is likely to be carried too far, and continued too long. The ascent of Riffelberg is an example. Though spotted with delights it seems, to one reader at least, less admirable than other of the book's important features, striking, as it does, more emphatically the chief note of the book's humor—that is to say, exaggeration.

Page 390

Without doubt there must be many—very many—who agree in finding a fuller enjoyment in ‘A Tramp Abroad’ than in the ‘Innocents’; only, the burden of the world’s opinion lies the other way. The world has a weakness for its illusions: the splendor that falls on castle walls, the glory of the hills at evening, the pathos of the days that are no more. It answers to tenderness, even on the page of humor, and to genuine enthusiasm, sharply sensing the lack of these things; instinctively resenting, even when most amused by it, extravagance and burlesque. The Innocents Abroad is more soul-satisfying than its successor, more poetic; more sentimental, if you will. The Tramp contains better English usage, without doubt, but it is less full of happiness and bloom and the halo of romance. The heart of the world has felt this, and has demanded the book in fewer numbers.—[The sales of the Innocents during the earlier years more than doubled those of the Tramp during a similar period. The later ratio of popularity is more nearly three to one. It has been repeatedly stated that in England the Tramp has the greater popularity, an assertion not sustained by the publisher’s accountings.]

CXXVII

LETTERS, TALES, AND PLANS

The reader has not failed to remark the great number of letters which Samuel Clemens wrote to his friend William Dean Howells; yet comparatively few can even be mentioned. He was always writing to Howells, on every subject under the sun; whatever came into his mind—business, literature, personal affairs—he must write about it to Howells. Once, when nothing better occurred, he sent him a series of telegrams, each a stanza from an old hymn, possibly thinking they might carry comfort. —[“Clemens had then and for many years the habit of writing to me about what he was doing, and still more of what he was experiencing. Nothing struck his imagination, in or out of the daily routine, but he wished to write me of it, and he wrote with the greatest fullness and a lavish dramatization, sometimes to the length of twenty or forty pages.” (My Mark Twain, by W. D. Howells.)] Whatever of picturesque happened in the household he immediately set it down for Howells’s entertainment. Some of these domestic incidents carry the flavor of his best humor. Once he wrote:

Last night, when I went to bed, Mrs. Clemens said, “George didn’t take the cat down to the cellar; Rosa says he has left it shut up in the conservatory.” So I went down to attend to Abner (the cat). About three in the morning Mrs. C. woke me and said, “I do believe I hear that cat in the drawing-room. What did you do with him?” I answered with the confidence of a man who has managed to do the right thing for once, and said, “I opened the conservatory doors, took the library off the alarm, and spread everything open, so that there wasn’t any obstruction between him and the cellar.”

Page 391

Language wasn't capable of conveying this woman's disgust. But the sense of what she said was, "He couldn't have done any harm in the conservatory; so you must go and make the entire house free to him and the burglars, imagining that he will prefer the coal-bins to the drawing-room. If you had had Mr. Howells to help you I should have admired, but not have been astonished, because I should know that together you would be equal to it; but how you managed to contrive such a stately blunder all by yourself is what I cannot understand."

So, you see, even she knows how to appreciate our gifts....

I knocked off during these stirring hours, and don't intend to go to work again till we go away for the summer, four or six weeks hence. So I am writing to you, not because I have anything to say, but because you don't have to answer and I need something to do this afternoon.

The rightful earl has——
Friday, 7th.

Well, never mind about the rightful earl; he merely wanted to-borrow money. I never knew an American earl that didn't.

After a trip to Boston, during which Mrs. Clemens did some bric-a-brac shopping, he wrote:

Mrs. Clemens has two imperishable topics now: the museum of andirons which she collected and your dinner. It is hard to tell which she admires the most. Sometimes she leans one way and sometimes the other; but I lean pretty steadily toward the dinner because I can appreciate that, whereas I am no prophet in andirons. There has been a procession of Adams Express wagons filing before the door all day delivering andirons.

In a more serious vein he refers to the aged violinist Ole Bull and his wife, whom they had met during their visit, and their enjoyment of that gentle-hearted pair.

Clemens did some shorter work that spring, most of which found its way into the Atlantic. "Edward Mills and George Benton," one of the contributions of this time, is a moral sermon in its presentation of a pitiful human spectacle and misdirected human zeal.

It brought a pack of letters of approval, not only from laity, but the church, and in some measure may have helped to destroy the silly sentimentalism which manifested itself in making heroes of spectacular criminals. That fashion has gone out, largely. Mark Twain wrote frequently on the subject, though never more effectively than in this particular instance. "Mrs. McWilliams and the Lightning" was another Atlantic story, a

companion piece to “Mrs. McWilliams’s Experience with the Membranous Croup,” and in the same delightful vein—a vein in which Mark Twain was likely to be at his best—the transcription of a scene not so far removed in character from that in the “cat” letter just quoted: something which may or may not have happened, but might have happened, approximately as set down. Rose Terry Cooke wrote:

Page 392

Horrid man, how did you know the way I behave in a thunderstorm? Have you been secreted in the closet or lurking on the shed roof? I hope you got thoroughly rained on; and worst of all is that you made me laugh at myself; my real terrors turned round and grimaced at me: they were sublime, and you have made them ridiculous just come out here another year and have four houses within a few rods of you struck and then see if you write an article of such exasperating levity. I really hate you, but you are funny.

In addition to his own work, he conceived a plan for Orion. Clemens himself had been attempting, from time to time, an absolutely faithful autobiography; a document in which his deeds and misdeeds, even his moods and inmost thoughts, should be truly set down. He had found it an impossible task. He confessed freely that he lacked the courage, even the actual ability, to pen the words that would lay his soul bare, but he believed Orion equal to the task. He knew how rigidly honest he was, how ready to confess his shortcomings, how eager to be employed at some literary occupation. It was Mark Twain's belief that if Orion would record in detail his long, weary struggle, his succession of attempts and failures, his past dreams and disappointments, along with his sins of omission and commission, it would make one of those priceless human documents such as have been left by Benvenuto Cellini, Cazenova, and Rousseau.

"Simply tell your story to yourself," he wrote, "laying all hideousness utterly bare, reserving nothing. Banish the idea of the audience and all hampering things."

Orion, out in Keokuk, had long since abandoned the chicken farm and a variety of other enterprises. He had prospected insurance, mining, journalism, his old trade of printing, and had taken down and hung up his law shingle between each of these seizures. Aside from business, too, he had been having a rather spectacular experience. He had changed his politics three times (twice in one day), and his religion as many more. Once when he was delivering a political harangue in the street, at night, a parade of the opposition (he had but just abandoned them) marched by carrying certain flaming transparencies, which he himself had made for them the day before. Finally, after delivering a series of infidel lectures; he had been excommunicated and condemned to eternal flames by the Presbyterian Church. He was therefore ripe for any new diversion, and the Autobiography appealed to him. He set about it with splendid enthusiasm, wrote a hundred pages or so of his childhood with a startling minutia of detail and frankness, and mailed them to his brother for inspection.

They were all that Mark Twain had expected; more than he had expected. He forwarded them to Howells with great satisfaction, suggesting, with certain excisions, they be offered anonymously to the Atlantic readers.

But Howells's taste for realism had its limitations. He found the story interesting—indeed, torturingly, heart-wringingly so—and, advising strongly against its publication, returned it.

Page 393

Orion was steaming along at the rate of ten to twenty pages a day now, forwarding them as fast as written, while his courage was good and the fires warm. Clemens, receiving a package by every morning mail, soon lost interest, then developed a hunted feeling, becoming finally desperate. He wrote wildly to shut Orion off, urging him to let his manuscript accumulate, and to send it in one large consignment at the end. This Orion did, and it is fair to say that in this instance at least he stuck to his work faithfully to the bitter, disheartening end. And it would have been all that Mark Twain had dreamed it would be, had Orion maintained the simple narrative spirit of its early pages. But he drifted off into theological byways; into discussions of his excommunication and infidelities, which were frank enough, but lacked human interest.

In old age Mark Twain once referred to Orion's autobiography in print and his own disappointment in it, which he attributed to Orion's having departed from the idea of frank and unrestricted confession to exalt himself as a hero—a statement altogether unwarranted, and due to one of those curious confusions of memory and imagination that more than once resulted in a complete reversal of the facts. A quantity of Orion's manuscript has been lost and destroyed, but enough fragments of it remain to show its fidelity to the original plan. It is just one long record of fleeting hope, futile effort, and humiliation. It is the story of a life of disappointment; of a man who has been defeated and beaten down and crushed by the world until he has nothing but confession left to surrender.—[Howells, in his letter concerning the opening chapters, said that they would some day make good material. Fortunately the earliest of these chapters were preserved, and, as the reader may remember, furnished much of the childhood details for this biography.]

Whatever may have been Mark Twain's later impression of his brother's manuscript, its story of failure and disappointment moved him to definite action at the time.

Several years before, in Hartford, Orion had urged him to make his publishing contracts on a basis of half profits, instead of on the royalty plan. Clemens, remembering this, had insisted on such an arrangement for the publication of 'A Tramp Abroad', and when his first statement came in he realized that the new contract was very largely to his advantage. He remembered Orion's anxiety in the matter, and made it now a valid excuse for placing his brother on a firm financial footing.

Out of the suspicions which you bred in me years ago has grown this result, to wit: that I shall within the twelve months get \$40,000 out of this Tramp, instead of \$20,000. \$20,000, after taxes and other expenses are stripped away, is worth to the investor about \$75 a month, so I shall tell Mr. Perkins [his lawyer and financial agent] to make your check that amount per month hereafter.... This ends the loan business, and hereafter you can reflect that you are living not on borrowed money, but on money which you have squarely earned, and which has no taint or savor of charity about it, and you can also reflect that the money which you have been receiving of me is charged

against the heavy bill which the next publisher will have to stand who gets a book of mine.

Page 394

From that time forward Orion Clemens was worth substantially twenty thousand dollars—till the day of his death, and, after him, his widow. Far better was it for him that the endowment be conferred in the form of an income, than had the capital amount been placed in his hands. CXXVIII

Mark TWAIN's absent-mindedness

A number of amusing incidents have been more or less accurately reported concerning Mark Twain's dim perception of certain physical surroundings, and his vague resulting memories—his absent-mindedness, as we say.

It was not that he was inattentive—no man was ever less so if the subject interested him—but only that the casual, incidental thing seemed not to find a fixed place in his deeper consciousness.

By no means was Mark Twain's absent-mindedness a development of old age. On the two occasions following he was in the very heyday of his mental strength. Especially was it, when he was engaged upon some absorbing or difficult piece of literature, that his mind seemed to fold up and shut most of the world away. Soon after his return from Europe, when he was still struggling with 'A Tramp Abroad', he wearily put the manuscript aside, one day, and set out to invite F. G. Whitmore over for a game of billiards. Whitmore lived only a little way down the street, and Clemens had been there time and again. It was such a brief distance that he started out in his slippers and with no hat. But when he reached the corner where the house, a stone's-throw away, was in plain view he stopped. He did not recognize it. It was unchanged, but its outlines had left no impress upon his mind. He stood there uncertainly a little while, then returned and got the coachman, Patrick McAleer, to show him the way.

The second, and still more picturesque instance, belongs also to this period. One day, when he was playing billiards with Whitmore, George, the butler, came up with a card.

"Who is he, George?" Clemens asked, without looking at the card.

"I don't know, suh, but he's a gentleman, Mr. Clemens."

"Now, George, how many times have I told you I don't want to see strangers when I'm playing billiards! This is just some book agent, or insurance man, or somebody with something to sell. I don't want to see him, and I'm not going to."

"Oh, but this is a gentleman, I'm sure, Mr. Clemens. Just look at his card, suh."

"Yes, of course, I see—nice engraved card—but I don't know him, and if it was St. Peter himself I wouldn't buy the key of salvation! You tell him so—tell him—oh, well, I suppose I've got to go and get rid of him myself. I'll be back in a minute, Whitmore."

He ran down the stairs, and as he got near the parlor door, which stood open, he saw a man sitting on a couch with what seemed to be some framed water-color pictures on the floor near his feet.

“Ah, ha!” he thought, “I see. A picture agent. I’ll soon get rid of him.”

Page 395

He went in with his best, “Well, what can I do for you?” air, which he, as well as any man living, knew how to assume; a friendly air enough, but not encouraging. The gentleman rose and extended his hand.

“How are you, Mr. Clemens?” he said.

Of course this was the usual thing with men who had axes to grind or goods to sell. Clemens did not extend a very cordial hand. He merely raised a loose, indifferent hand—a discouraging hand.

“And how is Mrs. Clemens?” asked the uninvited guest.

So this was his game. He would show an interest in the family and ingratiate himself in that way; he would be asking after the children next.

“Well—Mrs. Clemens is about as usual—I believe.”

“And the children—Miss Susie and little Clara?”

This was a bit startling. He knew their names! Still, that was easy to find out. He was a smart agent, wonderfully smart. He must be got rid of.

“The children are well, quite well,” and (pointing down at the pictures) —“We’ve got plenty like these. We don’t want any more. No, we don’t care for any more,” skilfully working his visitor toward the door as he talked.

The man, looking non-plussed—a good deal puzzled—allowed himself to be talked into the hall and toward the front door. Here he paused a moment:

“Mr. Clemens, will you tell me where Mr. Charles Dudley Warner lives?”

This was the chance! He would work him off on Charlie Warner. Perhaps Warner needed pictures.

“Oh, certainly, certainly! Right across the yard. I’ll show you. There’s a walk right through. You don’t need to go around the front way at all. You’ll find him at home, too, I’m pretty sure”; all the time working his caller out and down the step and in the right direction.

The visitor again extended his hand.

“Please remember me to Mrs. Clemens and the children.”

“Oh, certainly, certainly, with pleasure. Good day. Yes, that’s the house Good-by.”



On the way back to the billiard-room Mrs. Clemens called to him. She was ill that day.

"Youth!"

"Yes, Livy." He went in for a word.

"George brought me Mr. B——'s card. I hope you were very nice to him; the B——s were so nice to us, once last year, when you were gone.",

"The B——s—Why, Livy——"

"Yes, of course, and I asked him to be sure to call when he came to Hartford."

He gazed at her helplessly.

"Well, he's been here."

"Oh, Youth, have you done anything?"

"Yes, of course I have. He seemed to have some pictures to sell, so I sent him over to Warner's. I noticed he didn't take them with him. Land sakes, Livy, what can I do?"

"Which way did he go, Youth?"

"Why, I sent him to Charlie Warner's. I thought——"

"Go right after him. Go quick! Tell him what you have done."

Page 396

He went without further delay, bareheaded and in his slippers, as usual. Warner and B——were in cheerful and friendly converse. They had met before. Clemens entered gaily:

“Oh Yes, I see! You found him all right. Charlie, we met Mr. B——and his wife in Europe last summer and they made things pleasant for us. I wanted to come over here with him, but was a good deal occupied just then. Livy isn’t very well, but she seems a good deal better, so I just followed along to have a good talk, all together.”

He stayed an hour, and whatever bad impression had formed in B——’s mind faded long before the hour ended. Returning home Clemens noticed the pictures still on the parlor floor.

“George,” he said, “what pictures are those that gentleman left?”

“Why, Mr. Clemens, those are our own pictures. I’ve been straightening up the room a little, and Mrs. Clemens had me set them around to see how they would look in new places. The gentleman was looking at them while he was waiting for you to come down.”

CXXIX

FURTHER AFFAIRS AT THE FARM

It was at Elmira, in July (1880), that the third little girl came—Jane Lampton, for her grandmother, but always called Jean. She was a large, lovely baby, robust and happy. When she had been with them a little more than a month Clemens, writing to Twichell, said:

Dear old Joe,—Concerning Jean Clemens, if anybody said he “didn’t see no pints about that frog that’s any better’n any other frog,” I should think he was convicting himself of being a pretty poor sort of observer. She is the comeliest and daintiest and perfectest little creature the continents and archipelagos have seen since the Bay and Susy were her size. I will not go into details; it is not necessary; you will soon be in Hartford, where I have already hired a hall; the admission fee will be but a trifle. It is curious to note the change in the stock-quotations of the Affection Board brought about by throwing this new security on the market. Four weeks ago the children still put Mama at the head of the list right along, where she had always been. But now: Jean

Mama

Motley |cats

Fraulein |

PapaThat is the way it stands now. Mama is become No. 2; I have dropped from No. 4, and am become No. 5. Some time ago it used to be nip and tuck between me and the



cats, but after the cats “developed” I didn’t stand any more show. Been reading Daniel Webster’s Private Correspondence. Have read a hundred of his diffuse, conceited, “eloquent,” bathotic (or bathostic) letters, written in that dim (no, vanished) past, when he was a student. And Lord! to think that this boy, who is so real to me now, and so booming with fresh young blood and bountiful life, and sappy cynicisms about girls,

Page 397

has since climbed the Alps of fame and stood against the sun one brief, tremendous moment with the world's eyes on him, and then——fzt! where is he? Why, the only long thing, the only real thing about the whole shadowy business, is the sense of the lagging dull and hoary lapse of time that has drifted by since then; a vast, empty level, it seems, with a formless specter glimpsed fitfully through the smoke and mist that lie along its remote verge. Well, we are all getting along here first-rate. Livy gains strength daily and sits up a deal; the baby is five weeks old and——But no more of this. Somebody may be reading this letter eighty years hence. And so, my friend (you pitying snob, I mean, who are holding this yellow paper in your hand in 1960), save yourself the trouble of looking further. I know how pathetically trivial our small concerns would seem to you, and I will not let your eye profane them. No, I keep my news; you keep your compassion. Suffice it you to know, scoffer and ribald, that the little child is old and blind now, and once more tooth less; and the rest of us are shadows these many, many years. Yes, and your time cometh!

Mark.

It is the ageless story. He too had written his youthful letters, and later had climbed the Alps of fame and was still outlined against the sun. Happily, the little child was to evade that harsher penalty—the unwarranted bitterness and affront of a lingering, palsied age.

Mrs. Clemens, in a letter somewhat later, set down a thought similar to his:

“We are all going so fast. Pretty soon we shall have been dead a hundred years.”

Clemens varied his work that summer, writing alternately on 'The Prince and the Pauper' and on the story about 'Huck Finn', which he had begun four years earlier.

He read the latter over and found in it a new interest. It did not fascinate him, as did the story of the wandering prince. He persevered only as the spirit moved him, piling up pages on both the tales.

He always took a boy's pride in the number of pages he could complete at a sitting, and if the day had gone well he would count them triumphantly, and, lighting a fresh cigar, would come tripping down the long stair that led to the level of the farm-house, and, gathering his audience, would read to them the result of his industry; that is to say, he proceeded with the story of the Prince. Apparently he had not yet acquired confidence or pride enough in poor Huck to exhibit him, even to friends.

The reference (in the letter to Twichell) to the cats at the farm introduces one of the most important features of that idyllic resort. There were always cats at the farm. Mark Twain himself dearly loved cats, and the children inherited this passion. Susy once said:

“The difference between papa and mama is, that mama loves morals and papa loves cats.”

Page 398

The cats did not always remain the same, but some of the same ones remained a good while, and were there from season to season, always welcomed and adored. They were commendable cats, with such names as Fraulein, Blatherskite, Sour Mash, Stray Kit, Sin, and Satan, and when, as happened now and then, a vacancy occurred in the cat census there followed deep sorrow and elaborate ceremonies.

Naturally, there would be stories about cats: impromptu bedtime stories, which began anywhere and ended nowhere, and continued indefinitely through a land inhabited only by cats and dreams. One of these stories, as remembered and set down later, began:

Once upon a time there was a noble, big cat whose christian name was Catasaqua, because she lived in that region; but she didn't have any surname, because she was a short-tailed cat, being a manx, and didn't need one. It is very just and becoming in a long-tailed cat to have a surname, but it would be very ostentatious, and even dishonorable, in a manx. Well, Catasaqua had a beautiful family of cattings; and they were of different colors, to harmonize with their characters. Cattaraugus, the eldest, was white, and he had high impulses and a pure heart; Catiline, the youngest, was black, and he had a self-seeking nature, his motives were nearly always base, he was truculent and insincere. He was vain and foolish, and often said that he would rather be what he was, and live like a bandit, yet have none above him, than be a cat-o'-nine-tails and eat with the king.

And so on without end, for the audience was asleep presently and the end could wait.

There was less enthusiasm over dogs at Quarry Farm.

Mark Twain himself had no great love for the canine breed. To a woman who wrote, asking for his opinion on dogs, he said, in part:

By what right has the dog come to be regarded as a "noble" animal? The more brutal and cruel and unjust you are to him the more your fawning and adoring slave he becomes; whereas, if you shamefully misuse a cat once she will always maintain a dignified reserve toward you afterward you can never get her full confidence again.

He was not harsh to dogs; occasionally he made friends with them. There was once at the farm a gentle hound, named Bones, that for some reason even won his way into his affections. Bones was always a welcome companion, and when the end of summer came, and Clemens, as was his habit, started down the drive ahead of the carriage, Bones, half-way to the entrance, was waiting for him. Clemens stooped down, put his arms around him, and bade him an affectionate good-by. He always recalled Bones tenderly, and mentioned him in letters to the farm.

CXXX

COPYRIGHT AND OTHER FANCIES

Page 399

The continued assault of Canadian pirates on his books kept Mark Twain's interest sharply alive on the subject of copyright reform. He invented one scheme after another, but the public-mind was hazy on the subject, and legislators were concerned with purposes that interested a larger number of voters. There were too few authors to be of much value at the polls, and even of those few only a small percentage were vitally concerned. For the others, foreign publishers rarely paid them the compliment of piracy, while at home the copyright limit of forty-two years was about forty-two times as long as they needed protection. Bliss suggested a law making the selling of pirated books a penal offense, a plan with a promising look, but which came to nothing.

Clemens wrote to his old friend Rollin M. Daggett, who by this time was a Congressman. Daggett replied that he would be glad to introduce any bill that the authors might agree upon, and Clemens made at least one trip to Washington to discuss the matter, but it came to nothing in the end. It was a Presidential year, and it would do just as well to keep the authors quiet by promising to do something next year. Any legislative stir is never a good thing for a campaign.

Clemens's idea for copyright betterment was not a fixed one. Somewhat later, when an international treaty which would include protection for authors was being discussed, his views had undergone a change. He wrote, asking Howells:

Will the proposed treaty protect us (and effectually) against Canadian piracy? Because, if it doesn't, there is not a single argument in favor of international copyright which a rational American Senate could entertain for a moment. My notions have mightily changed lately. I can buy Macaulay's History, three vols.; bound, for \$1.25; Chambers's Cyclopaedia, ten vols., cloth, for \$7.25 (we paid \$60), and other English copyrights in proportion; I can buy a lot of the great copyright classics, in paper, at from three cents to thirty cents apiece. These things must find their way into the very kitchens and hovels of the country. A generation of this sort of thing ought to make this the most intelligent and the best-read nation in the world. International copyright must becloud this sun and bring on the former darkness and dime novel reading. Morally this is all wrong; governmentally it is all right. For it is the duty of governments and families to be selfish, and look out simply for their own. International copyright would benefit a few English authors and a lot of American publishers, and be a profound detriment to twenty million Americans; it would benefit a dozen American authors a few dollars a year, and there an end. The real advantages all go to English authors and American publishers.

And even if the treaty will kill Canadian piracy, and thus save me an average of \$5,000 a year, I'm down on it anyway, and I'd like cussed well to write an article opposing the treaty.

Page 400

It is a characteristic expression. Mark Twain might be first to grab for the life-preserver, but he would also be first to hand it to a humanity in greater need. He could damn the human race competently, but in the final reckoning it was the interest of that race that lay closest to his heart.

Mention has been made in an earlier chapter of Clemens's enthusiasms or "rages" for this thing and that which should benefit humankind. He was seldom entirely without them. Whether it was copyright legislation, the latest invention, or a new empiric practice, he rarely failed to have a burning interest in some anodyne that would provide physical or mental easement for his species. Howells tells how once he was going to save the human race with accordion letter-files—the system of order which would grow out of this useful device being of such nerve and labor saving proportions as to insure long life and happiness to all. The fountain-pen, in its first imperfect form, must have come along about the same time, and Clemens was one of the very earliest authors to own one. For a while it seemed that the world had known no greater boon since the invention of printing; but when it clogged and balked, or suddenly deluged his paper and spilled in his pocket, he flung it to the outer darkness. After which, the stylo-graphic pen. He tried one, and wrote severally to Dr. Brown, to Howells, and to Twichell, urging its adoption. Even in a letter to Mrs. Howells he could not forget his new possession:

And speaking of Howells, he ought to use the stylographic pen, the best fountain-pen yet invented; he ought to, but of course he won't—a blamed old sodden-headed conservative—but you see yourself what a nice, clean, uniform *Ms.* it makes.

And at the same time to Twichell:

I am writing with a stylographic pen. It takes a royal amount of cussing to make the thing go the first few days or a week, but by that time the dullest ass gets the hang of the thing, and after that no enrichments of expression are required, and said ass finds the stylographic a genuine God's blessing. I carry one in each breeches pocket, and both loaded. I'd give you one of them if I had you where I could teach you how to use it—not otherwise. For the average ass flings the thing out of the window in disgust the second day, believing it hath no virtue, no merit of any sort; whereas the lack lieth in himself, God of his mercy damn him.

It was not easy to withstand Mark Twain's enthusiasm. Howells, Twichell, and Dr. Brown were all presently struggling and swearing (figuratively) over their stylographic pens, trying to believe that salvation lay in their conquest. But in the midst of one letter, at last, Howells broke down, seized his old steel weapon, and wrote savagely: "No white man ought to use a stylographic pen, anyhow!" Then, with the more ancient implement, continued in a calmer spirit.

Page 401

It was only a little later that Clemens himself wrote:

You see I am trying a new pen. I stood the stylograph as long as I could, and then retired to the pencil. The thing I am trying now is that fountain-pen which is advertised to employ and accommodate itself to any kind of pen. So I selected an ordinary gold pen—a limber one—and sent it to New York and had it cut and fitted to this thing. It goes very well indeed—thus far; but doubtless the devil will be in it by tomorrow.

Mark Twain's schemes were not all in the line of human advancement; some of them were projected, primarily at least, for diversion. He was likely at any moment to organize a club, a sort of private club, and at the time of which we are writing he proposed what was called the "Modest" Club. He wrote to Howells, about it:

At present I am the only member, and as the modesty required must be of a quite aggravated type the enterprise did seem for a time doomed to stop dead still with myself, for lack of further material; but on reflection I have come to the conclusion that you are eligible. Therefore, I have held a meeting and voted to offer you the distinction of membership. I do not know that we can find any others, though I have had some thought of Hay, Warner, Twichell, Aldrich, Osgood, Fields, Higginson, and a few more, together with Mrs. Howells, Mrs. Clemens, and certain others of the sex. I have long felt there ought to be an organized gang of our kind.

He appends the by-laws, the main ones being:

The object of the club shall be to eat and talk.

Qualification for membership shall be aggravated modesty, unobtrusiveness, native humility, learning, talent, intelligence, unassailable character.

There shall be no officers except a president, and any member who has anything to eat and talk about may constitute himself president for the time being.

Any brother or sister of the order finding a brother or a sister in imminently deadly peril shall forsake his own concerns, no matter at what cost, and call the police.

Any member knowing anything scandalous about himself shall immediately inform the club, so that they shall call a meeting and have the first chance to talk about it.

It was one of his whimsical fancies, and Howells replied that he would like to join it, only that he was too modest—that is, too modest to confess that he was modest enough for membership.



He added that he had sent a letter, with the rules, to Hay, but doubted his modesty. He said:

“He will think he has a right to belong as much as you or I.”

Howells agreed that his own name might be put down, but the idea seems never to have gone any further. Perhaps the requirements of membership were too severe.

CXXXI

Page 402

WORKING FOR GARFIELD

Eighteen hundred and eighty was a Presidential year. General Garfield was nominated on the Republican ticket (against General Hancock), and Clemens found him satisfactory.

Garfield suits me thoroughly and exactly [he wrote Howells]. I prefer him to Grant's friends. The Presidency can't add anything to Grant; he will shine on without it. It is ephemeral; he is eternal.

That was the year when the Republican party became panicky over the disaffection in its ranks, due to the defeat of Grant in the convention, and at last, by pleadings and promises, conciliated Platt and Conkling and brought them into the field. General Grant also was induced to save the party from defeat, and made a personal tour of oratory for that purpose. He arrived in Hartford with his family on the 16th of October, and while his reception was more or less partizan, it was a momentous event. A vast procession passed in review before him, and everywhere houses and grounds were decorated. To Mrs. Clemens, still in Elmira, Clemens wrote:

I found Mr. Beals hard at work in the rain with his decorations. With a ladder he had strung flags around our bedroom balcony, and thence around to the porte-cochere, which was elaborately flagged; thence the flags of all nations were suspended from a line which stretched past the greenhouse to the limit of our grounds. Against each of the two trees on the mound, half-way down to our gate, stands a knight in complete armor. Piles of still-bundled flags clutter up the ombra (to be put up), also gaudy shields of various shapes (arms of this and other countries), also some huge glittering arches and things done in gold and silver paper, containing mottoes in big letters. I broke Mr. Beals's heart by persistently and inflexibly annulling and forbidding the biggest and gorgeousest of the arches—it had on it, in all the fires of the rainbow, "The Home of Mark Twain," in letters as big as your head. Oh, we're going to be decorated sufficient, don't you worry about that, madam.

Clemens was one of those delegated to receive Grant and to make a speech of welcome. It was a short speech but an effective one, for it made Grant laugh. He began:

"I am among those deputed to welcome you to the sincere and cordial hospitalities of Hartford, the city of the historic and revered Charter Oak, of which most of the town is built." He seemed to be at loss what to say next, and, leaning over, pretended to whisper to Grant; then, as if he had obtained the information he wanted, he suddenly straightened up and poured out the old-fashioned eulogy on Grant's achievements, adding, in an aside, as he finished: "I nearly forgot that part of my speech," which evoked roars of laughter from the assembly and a grim smile from Grant. He spoke of

Grant as being out of public employment, with private opportunities closed against him, and added, "But your country will reward you, never fear."

Then he closed:

Page 403

When Wellington won Waterloo, a battle about on a level with any one of a dozen of your victories, sordid England tried to pay him for that service with wealth and grandeurs. She made him a duke and gave him \$4,000,000. If you had done and suffered for any other country what you have done and suffered for your own you would have been affronted in the same sordid way. But, thank God! this vast and rich and mighty republic is imbued to the core with a delicacy which will forever preserve her from so degrading you. Your country loves you—your country's proud of you—your country is grateful to you. Her applauses, which have been many, thundering in your ears all these weeks and months, will never cease while the flag you saved continues to wave. Your country stands ready from this day forth to testify her measureless love and pride and gratitude toward you in every conceivable—inexpensive way. Welcome to Hartford, great soldier, honored statesman, unselfish citizen.

Grant's grim smile showed itself more than once during the speech, and when Clemens reached the sentence that spoke of his country rewarding him in "every conceivable—inexpensive way" his composure broke up completely and he "nearly laughed his entire head off," according to later testimony, while the spectators shouted their approval.

Grant's son, Col. Fred Grant,—[Maj.-Gen'l, U. S. Army, 1906. Died April, 1912.]—dined at the Clemens home that night, and Rev. Joseph Twichell and Henry C. Robinson. Twichell's invitation was in the form of a telegram. It said:

I want you to dine with us Saturday half past five and meet Col.
Fred Grant. No ceremony. Wear the same shirt you always wear.

The campaign was at its height now, and on the evening of October 26th there was a grand Republican rally at the opera-house with addresses by Charles Dudley Warner, Henry C. Robinson, and Mark Twain. It was an unpleasant, drizzly evening, but the weather had no effect on their audience. The place was jammed and packed, the aisles, the windows, and the gallery railings full. Hundreds who came as late as the hour announced for the opening were obliged to turn back, for the building had been thronged long before. Mark Twain's speech that night is still remembered in Hartford as the greatest effort of his life. It was hardly that, except to those who were caught in the psychology of the moment, the tumult and the shouting of patriotism, the surge and sweep of the political tide. The roaring delight of the audience showed that to them at least it was convincing. Howells wrote that he had read it twice, and that he could not put it out of his mind. Whatever its general effect was need not now be considered. Garfield was elected, and perhaps Grant's visit to Hartford and the great mass-meeting that followed contributed their mite to that result.

Page 404

Clemens saw General Grant again that year, but not on political business. The Educational Mission, which China had established in Hartford—a thriving institution for eight years or more—was threatened now by certain Chinese authorities with abolishment. Yung Wing (a Yale graduate), the official by whom it had been projected and under whose management it had prospered, was deeply concerned, as was the Rev. Joseph Twichell, whose interest in the mission was a large and personal one. Yung Wing declared that if influence could be brought upon Li Hung Chang, then the most influential of Chinese counselors, the mission might be saved. Twichell, remembering the great honors which Li Hung Chang had paid to General Grant in China, also Grant's admiration of Mark Twain, went to the latter without delay. Necessarily Clemens would be enthusiastic, and act promptly. He wrote to Grant, and Grant replied by telegraph, naming a day when he would see them in New York.

They met at the Fifth Avenue Hotel. Grant was in fine spirits, and by no means the "silent man" of his repute.

He launched at once into as free and flowing talk as I have ever heard [says Twichell], marked by broad and intelligent views on the subject of China, her wants, disadvantages, *etc.* Now and then he asked a question, but kept the lead of the conversation. At last he proposed, of his own accord, to write a letter to Li Hung Chang, advising the continuance of the Mission, asking only that I would prepare him some notes, giving him points to go by. Thus we succeeded easily beyond our expectations, thanks, very largely, to Clemens's assistance.

Clemens wrote Howells of the interview, detailing at some length Twichell's comical mixture of delight and chagrin at not being given time to air the fund of prepared statistics with which he had come loaded. It was as if he had come to borrow a dollar and had been offered a thousand before he could unfold his case.

CXXXII

A NEW PUBLISHER

It was near the end of the year that Clemens wrote to his mother:

I have two stories, and by the verbal agreement they are both going into the same book; but Livy says they're not, and by George! she ought to know. She says they're going into separate books, and that one of them is going to be elegantly gotten up, even if the elegance of it eats up the publisher's profits and mine too. I anticipate that publisher's melancholy surprise when he calls here Tuesday. However, let him suffer; it is his own fault. People who fix up agreements with me without first finding out what Livy's plans are take their fate into their own hands. I said two stories, but one of them is only half

done; two or three months' work on it yet. I shall tackle it Wednesday or Thursday; that is, if Livy yields and allows both

Page 405

stories to go in one book, which I hope she won't.

The reader may surmise that the finished story—the highly regarded story—was 'The Prince and the Pauper'. The other tale—the unfinished and less considered one was 'The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn'. Nobody appears to have been especially concerned about Huck, except, possibly, the publisher.

The publisher was not the American Company. Elisha Bliss, after long ill health, had died that fall, and this fact, in connection with a growing dissatisfaction over the earlier contracts, had induced Clemens to listen to offers from other makers of books. The revelation made by the "half-profit" returns from *A Tramp Abroad* meant to him, simply that the profits had not been fairly apportioned, and he was accordingly hostile. To Orion he wrote that, had Bliss lived, he would have remained with the company and made it reimburse him for his losses, but that as matters stood he would sever the long connection. It seemed a pity, later, that he did this, but the break was bound to come. Clemens was not a business man, and Bliss was not a philanthropist. He was, in fact, a shrewd, capable publisher, who made as good a contract as he could; yet he was square in his dealings, and the contract which Clemens held most bitterly against him—that of 'Roughing It'—had been made in good faith and in accordance with the conditions, of that period. In most of the later contracts Clemens himself had named his royalties, and it was not in human nature—business human nature—for Bliss to encourage the size of these percentages. If one wished to draw a strictly moral conclusion from the situation, one might say that it would have been better for the American Publishing Company, knowing Mark Twain, voluntarily to have allowed him half profits, which was the spirit of his old understanding even if not the letter of it, rather than to have waited till he demanded it and then to lose him by the result. Perhaps that would be also a proper business deduction; only, as a rule, business morals are regulated by the contract, and the contract is regulated by the necessities and the urgency of demand.

Never mind. Mark Twain revised 'The Prince and the Pauper', sent it to Howells, who approved of it mightily (though with reservations as to certain chapters), and gave it to James R. Osgood, who was grateful and agreed to make it into a book upon which no expense for illustration or manufacture should be spared. It was to be a sort of partnership arrangement as between author and publisher, and large returns were anticipated.

Among the many letters which Clemens was just then writing to Howells one was dated "Xmas Eve." It closes with the customary pleasantries and the final line:

"But it is growing dark. Merry Christmas to all of you!"

Page 406

That last was a line of large significance. It meant that the air was filled with the whisper of hovering events and that he must mingle with the mystery of preparation. Christmas was an important season in the Clemens home. Almost the entire day before, Patrick was out with the sleigh, delivering food and other gifts in baskets to the poor, and the home preparations were no less busy. There was always a tree—a large one—and when all the gifts had been gathered in—when Elmira and Fredonia had delivered their contributions, and Orion and his wife in Keokuk had sent the annual sack of hickory-nuts (the big river-bottom nuts, big as a silver dollar almost, such nuts as few children of this later generation ever see) when all this happy revenue had been gathered, and the dusk of Christmas Eve had hurried the children off to bed, it was Mrs. Clemens who superintended the dressing of the tree, her husband assisting, with a willingness that was greater than his skill, and with a boy's anticipation in the surprise of it next morning.

Then followed the holidays, with parties and dances and charades, and little plays, with the Warner and Twichell children. To the Clemens home the Christmas season brought all the old round of juvenile happiness—the spirit of kindly giving, the brightness and the merrymaking, the gladness and tenderness and mystery that belong to no other season, and have been handed down through all the ages since shepherds watched on the plains of Bethlehem.

CXXXIII

THE THREE FIRES—SOME BENEFACTIONS

The tradition that fires occur in groups of three was justified in the Clemens household that winter. On each of three successive days flames started that might have led to ghastly results.

The children were croupy, and one morning an alcohol lamp near little Clara's bed, blown by the draught, set fire to the canopy. Rosa, the nurse, entered just as the blaze was well started. She did not lose her presence of mind,—[Rosa was not the kind to lose her head. Once, in Europe, when Bay had crept between the uprights of a high balustrade, and was hanging out over destruction, Rosa, discovering her, did not scream but spoke to her playfully and lifted her over into safety.]—but snatched the little girl out of danger, then opened the window and threw the burning bedding on the lawn. The child was only slightly scorched, but the escape was narrow enough.

Next day little Jean was lying asleep in her crib, in front of an open wood fire, carefully protected by a firescreen, when a spark, by some ingenuity, managed to get through the mesh of the screen and land on the crib's lace covering. Jean's nurse, Julia, arrived to find the lace a gust of flame and the fire spreading. She grabbed the sleeping Jean and screamed. Rosa, again at hand, heard the scream, and rushing in once more opened a

window and flung out the blazing bedclothes. Clemens himself also arrived, and together they stamped out the fire.

Page 407

On the third morning, just before breakfast-time, Susy was practising at the piano in the school-room, which adjoined the nursery. At one end of the room a fire of large logs was burning. Susy was at the other end of the room, her back to the fire. A log burned in two and fell, scattering coals around the woodwork which supported the mantel. Just as the blaze was getting fairly started a barber, waiting to trim Mr. Clemens's hair, chanced to look in and saw what was going on. He stepped into the nursery bath-room, brought a pitcher of water and extinguished the flames. This period was always referred to in the Clemens household as the "three days of fire."

Clemens would naturally make philosophical deductions from these coincidental dangers and the manner in which they had been averted. He said that all these things were comprehended in the first act of the first atom; that, but for some particular impulse given in that remote time, the alcohol flame would not have blown against the canopy, the spark would not have found its way through the screen, the log would not have broken apart in that dangerous way, and that Rosa and Julia and the barber would not have been at hand to save precious life and property. He did not go further and draw moral conclusions as to the purpose of these things: he never drew conclusions as to purpose. He was willing to rest with the event. Logically he did not believe in reasons for things, but only that things were.

Nevertheless, he was always trying to change them; to have a hand in their improvement. Had you asked him, he would have said that this, too, was all in the primal atom; that his nature, such as it was, had been minutely embodied there.

In that charming volume, 'My Mark Twain', Howells tells us of Clemens's consideration, and even tenderness, for the negro race and his effort to repair the wrong done by his nation. Mark Twain's writings are full of similar evidence, and in his daily life he never missed an opportunity to pay tribute to the humbler race. He would go across the street to speak to an old negro, and to take his hand. He would read for a negro church when he would have refused a cathedral. Howells mentions the colored student whose way through college Clemens paid as a partial reparation "due from every white man to every black man."—[Mark Twain paid two colored students through college. One of them, educated in a Southern institution, became a minister of the gospel. The other graduated from the Yale Law School.]—This incident belongs just to the period of which we are now writing, and there is another which, though different enough, indicates the same tendency.

Garfield was about to be inaugurated, and it was rumored that Frederick Douglass might lose his position as Marshal of the District of Columbia. Clemens was continually besought by one and another to use his influence with the Administration, and in every case had refused. Douglass had made no such application. Clemens, learning that the old negro's place was in danger, interceded for him of his own accord. He closed his letter to General Garfield:

Page 408

A simple citizen may express a desire, with all propriety, in the matter of recommendation to office, and so I beg permission to hope that you will retain Mr. Douglass in his present office of Marshal of the District of Columbia, if such a course will not clash with your own preferences or with the expedencies and interests of your Administration. I offer this petition with peculiar pleasure and strong desire, because I so honor this man's high and blemishless character, and so admire his brave, long crusade for the liberties and elevation of his race.

He is a personal friend of mine, but that is nothing to the point;
his history would move me to say these things without that, and I
feel them, too.

Douglass wrote to Clemens, thanking him for his interest; at the end he said:

I think if a man is mean enough to want an office he ought to be noble enough to ask for it, and use all honorable means of getting it. I mean to ask, and I will use your letter as a part of my petition. It will put the President-elect in a good humor, in any case, and that is very important.

With great respect,
Gratefully yours,
Frederick Douglass.

Mark Twain's benefactions were not all for the colored race. One morning in February of this same year, while the family were at late breakfast, George came in to announce "a lady waiting to see Mr. Clemens in the drawing-room." Clemens growled.

"George," he said, "it's a book agent. I won't see her. I'll die, in my tracks first."

He went, fuming and raging inwardly, and began at once to ask the nature of the intruder's business. Then he saw that she was very young and modest, with none of the assurance of a canvasser, so he gave her a chance to speak. She told him that a young man employed in Pratt & Whitney's machine-shops had made a statue in clay, and would like to have Mark Twain come and look at it and see if it showed any promise of future achievement. His name, she said, was Karl Gerhardt, and he was her husband. Clemens protested that he knew nothing about art, but the young woman's manner and appearance (she seemed scarcely more than a child) won him. He wavered, and finally promised that he would come the first chance he had; that in fact he would come some time during the next week. On her suggestion he agreed to come early in the week; he specified Monday, "without fail."

When she was gone, and the door shut behind her, his usual remorse came upon him. He said to himself:



“Why didn’t I go now? Why didn’t I go with her now?”

She went from Clemens’s over to Warner’s. Warner also resisted, but, tempted beyond his strength by her charm, laid down his work and went at once. When he returned he urged Clemens to go without fail, and, true to promise, Clemens took Patrick, the coachman, and hunted up the place. Clemens saw the statue, a seminude, for which the young wife had posed, and was struck by its evident merit. Mrs. Gerhardt told him the story of her husband’s struggles between his daily work and the effort to develop his talent. He had never had a lesson, she said; if he could only have lessons what might he not accomplish?

Page 409

Mrs. Clemens and Miss Spaulding called next day, and were equally carried away with Karl Gerhardt, his young wife, and his effort to win his way in art. Clemens and Warner made up their minds to interest themselves personally in the matter, and finally persuaded the painter J. Wells Champney to come over from New York and go with them to the Gerhardts' humble habitation, to see his work. Champney approved of it. He thought it well worth while, he said, for the people of Hartford to go to the expense of Gerhardt's art education. He added that it would be better to get the judgment of a sculptor. So they brought over John Quincy Adams Ward, who, like all the others, came away bewitched with these young people and their struggles for the sake of art. Ward said:

"If any stranger had told me that this 'prentice did not model that thing from plaster-casts I should not have believed it. It's full of crudities, but it's full of genius, too. Hartford must send him to Paris for two years; then, if the promise holds good, keep him there three more."

When he was gone Mrs. Clemens said:

"Youth, we won't wait for Hartford to do it. It would take too long. Let us send the Gerhardts to Paris ourselves, and say nothing about it to any one else."

So the Gerhardts, provided with funds and an arrangement that would enable them to live for five years in Paris if necessary, were started across the sea without further delay.

Clemens and his wife were often doing something of this sort. There was seldom a time that they were not paying the way of some young man or woman through college, or providing means and opportunity for development in some special field of industry.

CXXXIV

LITERARY PROJECTS AND A MONUMENT TO ADAM

Mark Twain's literary work languished during this period. He had a world of plans, as usual, and wrote plentifully, but without direction or conclusion. "A Curious Experience," which relates a circumstance told to him by an army officer, is about the most notable of the few completed manuscripts of this period.

Of the books projected (there were several), a burlesque manual of etiquette would seem to have been the most promising. Howells had faith in it, and of the still remaining fragments a few seem worth quoting:

At billiards



If your ball glides along in the intense and immediate vicinity of the object-ball, and a count seems exquisitely imminent, lift one leg; then one shoulder; then squirm your body around in sympathy with the direction of the moving ball; and at the instant when the ball seems on the point of colliding throw up both of your arms violently. Your cue will probably break a chandelier, but no matter; you have done what you could to help the count.

At the dog-fight



Page 410

If it occur in your block, courteously give way to strangers desiring a view, particularly ladies.

Avoid showing partiality toward the one dog, lest you hurt the feelings of the other one.

Let your secret sympathies and your compassion be always with the under dog in the fight—this is magnanimity; but bet on the other one—this is business.

At poker

If you draw to a flush and fail to fill, do not continue the conflict.

If you hold a pair of trays, and your opponent is blind, and it costs you fifty to see him, let him remain unperceived.

If you hold nothing but ace high, and by some means you know that the other man holds the rest of the aces, and he calls, excuse yourself; let him call again another time.

Wall street

If you live in the country, buy at 80, sell at 40. Avoid all forms of eccentricity.

In the restaurant

When you wish to get the waiter's attention, do not sing out "Say!" Simply say "Szt!"

His old abandoned notion of "Hamlet" with an added burlesque character came back to him and stirred his enthusiasm anew, until even Howells manifested deep interest in the matter. One reflects how young Howells must have been in those days; how full of the joy of existence; also how mournfully he would consider such a sacrilege now.

Clemens proposed almost as many things to Howells as his brother Orion proposed to him. There was scarcely a letter that didn't contain some new idea, with a request for advice or co-operation. Now it was some book that he meant to write some day, and again it would be a something that he wanted Howells to write.

Once he urged Howells to make a play, or at least a novel, out of Orion. At another time he suggested as material the "Rightful Earl of Durham."

He is a perfectly stunning literary bonanza, and must be dug up and put on the market. You must get his entire biography out of him and have it ready for Osgood's magazine. Even if it isn't worth printing, you must have it anyway, and use it one of these days in one of your stories or in a play.

It was this notion about 'The American Claimant' which somewhat later would lead to a collaboration with Howells on a drama, and eventually to a story of that title.

But Clemens's chief interest at this time lay in publishing, rather than in writing. His association with Osgood inspired him to devise new ventures of profit. He planned a 'Library of American Humor', which Howells (soon to leave the Atlantic) and "Charley" Clark—[Charles Hopkins Clark, managing editor of the Hartford Courant.]—were to edit, and which Osgood would publish, for subscription sale. Without realizing it, Clemens was taking his first step toward becoming his own publisher. His contract with Osgood for 'The Prince and

Page 411

the Pauper' made him essentially that, for by the terms of it he agreed to supply all the money for the making of the book, and to pay Osgood a royalty of seven and one-half per cent. for selling it, reversing the usual conditions. The contract for the Library of Humor was to be a similar one, though in this case Osgood was to have a larger royalty return, and to share proportionately in the expense and risk. Mark Twain was entering into a field where he did not belong; where in the end he would harvest only disaster and regret.

One curious project came to an end in 1881—the plan for a monument to Adam. In a sketch written a great many years later Mark Twain tells of the memorial which the Rev. Thomas K. Beecher and himself once proposed to erect to our great common ancestor. The story is based on a real incident. Clemens, in Elmira one day (it was October, 1879), heard of a jesting proposal made by F. G. Hall to erect a monument in Elmira to Adam. The idea promptly caught Mark Twain's fancy. He observed to Beecher that the human race really showed a pretty poor regard for its great progenitor, who was about to be deposed by Darwin's simian, not to pay him the tribute of a single monument. Mankind, he said, would probably accept the monkey ancestor, and in time the very name of Adam would be forgotten. He declared Mr. Hall's suggestion to be a sound idea.

Beecher agreed that there were many reasons why a monument should be erected to Adam, and suggested that a subscription be started for the purpose. Certain business men, seeing an opportunity for advertising the city, took the matter semi-seriously, and offered to contribute large sums in the interest of the enterprise. Then it was agreed that Congress should be petitioned to sanction the idea exclusively to Elmira, prohibiting the erection of any such memorial elsewhere. A document to this effect was prepared, headed by F. G. Hall, and signed by other leading citizens of Elmira, including Beecher himself. General Joe Hawley came along just then on a political speech-making tour. Clemens introduced him, and Hawley, in turn, agreed to father the petition in Congress. What had begun merely as pleasantries began to have a formidable look.

But alas! in the end Hawley's courage had failed him. He began to hate his undertaking. He was afraid of the national laugh it would arouse, the jeers of the newspapers. It was certain to leak out that Mark Twain was behind it, in spite of the fact that his name nowhere appeared; that it was one of his colossal jokes. Now and then, in the privacy of his own room at night, Hawley would hunt up the Adam petition and read it and feel the cold sweat breaking out. He postponed the matter from one session to another till the summer of 1881, when he was about to sail for Europe. Then he gave the document to his wife, to turn over to Clemens, and ignominiously fled.

[For text of the petition in full, *etc.*, see Appendix P, at the end of last volume.]

Page 412

Mark Twain's introduction of Hawley at Elmira contained this pleasantry: "General Hawley was president of the Centennial Commission. Was a gallant soldier in the war. He has been Governor of Connecticut, member of Congress, and was president of the convention that nominated Abraham Lincoln."

General Hawley: "That nominated Grant."

Twain: "He says it was Grant, but I know better. He is a member of my church at Hartford, and the author of 'Beautiful Snow.' Maybe he will deny that. But I am only here to give him a character from his last place. As a pure citizen, I respect him; as a personal friend of years, I have the warmest regard for him; as a neighbor whose vegetable garden joins mine, why—why, I watch him. That's nothing; we all do that with any neighbor. General Hawley keeps his promises, not only in private, but in public. He is an editor who believes what he writes in his own paper. As the author of 'Beautiful Snow' he added a new pang to winter. He is broad-souled, generous, noble, liberal, alive to his moral and religious responsibilities. Whenever the contribution-box was passed I never knew him to take out a cent."

CXXXV

A trip with Sherman and an interview with grant.

The Army of the Potomac gave a dinner in Hartford on the 8th of June, 1881. But little memory remains of it now beyond Mark Twain's speech and a bill of fare containing original comments, ascribed to various revered authors, such as Johnson, Milton, and Carlyle. A pleasant incident followed, however, which Clemens himself used to relate. General Sherman attended the banquet, and Secretary of War, Robert Lincoln. Next morning Clemens and Twichell were leaving for West Point, where they were to address the military students, guests on the same special train on which Lincoln and Sherman had their private car. This car was at the end of the train, and when the two passengers reached the station, Sherman and Lincoln were out on the rear platform addressing the multitude. Clemens and Twichell went in and, taking seats, waited for them.

As the speakers finished the train started, but they still remained outside, bowing and waving to the assembled citizens, so that it was under good headway before they came in. Sherman came up to Clemens, who sat smoking unconcernedly.

"Well," he said, "who told you you could go in this car?"

"Nobody," said Clemens.

"Do you expect to pay extra fare?" asked Sherman.

"No," said Clemens. "I don't expect to pay any fare."

“Oh, you don’t. Then you’ll work your way.”

Sherman took off his coat and military hat and made Clemens put them on.

“Now,” said he, “whenever the train stops you go out on the platform and represent me and make a speech.”

It was not long before the train stopped, and Clemens, according to orders, stepped out on the rear platform and bowed to the crowd. There was a cheer at the sight of his military uniform. Then the cheer waned, became a murmur of uncertainty, followed by an undertone of discussion. Presently somebody said:

Page 413

“Say, that ain’t Sherman, that’s Mark Twain,” which brought another cheer.

Then Sherman had to come out too, and the result was that both spoke. They kept this up at the different stations, and sometimes Lincoln came out with them. When there was time all three spoke, much to the satisfaction of their audiences.

President Garfield was shot that summer—July 2, 1881.—[On the day that President Garfield was shot Mrs. Clemens received from their friend Reginald Cholmondeley a letter of condolence on the death of her husband in Australia; startling enough, though in reality rather comforting than otherwise, for the reason that the “Mark Twain” who had died in Australia was a very persistent impostor. Clemens wrote Cholmondeley: “Being dead I might be excused from writing letters, but I am not that kind of a corpse. May I never be so dead as to neglect the hail of a friend from a far land.” Out of this incident grew a feature of an anecdote related in *Following the Equator* the joke played by the man from Bendigo.]—He died September 19th, and Arthur came into power. There was a great feeling of uncertainty as to what he would do. He was regarded as “an excellent gentleman with a weakness for his friends.” Incumbents holding appointive offices were in a state of dread.

Howells’s father was consul at Toronto, and, believing his place to be in danger, he appealed to his son. In his book Howells tells how, in turn, he appealed to Clemens, remembering his friendship with Grant and Grant’s friendship with Arthur. He asked Clemens to write to Grant, but Clemens would hear of nothing less than a call on the General, during which the matter would be presented to him in person. Howells relates how the three of them lunched together, in a little room just out of the office, on baked beans and coffee, brought in from some near-by restaurant:

The baked beans and coffee were of about the railroad-refreshment quality; but eating them with Grant was like sitting down to baked beans and coffee with Julius Caesar, or Alexander, or some other great Plutarchan captain.

Clemens, also recalling the interview, once added some interesting details:

“I asked Grant if he wouldn’t write a word on a card which Howells could carry to Washington and hand to the President. But, as usual, General Grant was his natural self—that is to say, ready and determined to do a great deal more for you than you could possibly ask him to do. He said he was going to Washington in a couple of days to dine with the President, and he would speak to him himself on the subject and make it a personal matter. Grant was in the humor to talk—he was always in a humor to talk when no strangers were present—he forced us to stay and take luncheon in a private room, and continued to talk all the time. It was baked beans, but how ‘he sits and towers,’ Howells said, quoting Dame. Grant remembered ‘Squibob’

Page 414

Derby (John Phoenix) at West Point very well. He said that Derby was always drawing caricatures of the professors and playing jokes on every body. He told a thing which I had heard before but had never seen in print. A professor questioning a class concerning certain particulars of a possible siege said, 'Suppose a thousand men are besieging a fortress whose equipment of provisions is so-and-so; it is a military axiom that at the end of forty-five days the fort will surrender. Now, young men, if any of you were in command of such a fortress, how would you proceed?'

"Derby held up his hand in token that he had an answer for that question. He said, 'I would march out, let the enemy in, and at the end of forty-five days I would change places with him.'

"I tried hard, during that interview, to get General Grant to agree to write his personal memoirs for publication, but he wouldn't listen to the suggestion. His inborn diffidence made him shrink from voluntarily coming before the public and placing himself under criticism as an author. He had no confidence in his ability to write well; whereas we all know now that he possessed an admirable literary gift and style. He was also sure that the book would have no sale, and of course that would be a humility too. I argued that the book would have an enormous sale, and that out of my experience I could save him from making unwise contracts with publishers, and would have the contract arranged in such a way that they could not swindle him, but he said he had no necessity for any addition to his income. Of course he could not foresee that he was camping on a volcano; that as Ward's partner he was a ruined man even then, and of course I had no suspicion that in four years from that time I would become his publisher. He would not agree to write his memoirs. He only said that some day he would make very full notes and leave them behind him, and then if his children chose to make them into a book they could do so. We came away then. He fulfilled his promise entirely concerning Howells's father, who held his office until he resigned of his own accord."

CXXXVI

"The prince and the pauper"

During the summer absence alterations were made in the Hartford home, with extensive decorations by Tiffany. The work was not completed when the family returned. Clemens wrote to Charles Warren Stoddard, then in the Sandwich Islands, that the place was full of carpenters and decorators, whereas what they really needed was "an incendiary."

If the house would only burn down we would pack up the cubs and fly to the isles of the blest, and shut ourselves up in the healing solitudes of the crater of Haleakala and get a



good rest, for the mails do not intrude there, nor yet the telephone and the telegraph; and after resting we would come down the mountain a piece and board with a godly, breech-clouted native, and eat poi and dirt, and give thanks to whom all thanks belong for these privileges, and never housekeep any more.

Page 415

They had acquired more ground. One morning in the spring Mark Twain had looked out of his window just in time to see a man lift an ax to cut down a tree on the lot which lay between his own and that of his neighbor. He had heard that a house was to be built there; altogether too close to him for comfort and privacy. Leaning out of the window he called sonorously, "Woodman, spare that tree!" Then he hurried down, obtained a stay of proceedings, and without delay purchased the lot from the next-door neighbor who owned it, acquiring thereby one hundred feet of extra ground and a greenhouse which occupied it. It was a costly purchase; the owner knew he could demand his own price; he asked and received twelve thousand dollars for the strip.

In November, Clemens found that he must make another trip to Canada. 'The Prince and the Pauper' was ready for issue, and to insure Canadian copyright the author must cross the line in person. He did not enjoy the prospect of a cold-weather trip to the north, and tried to tempt Howells to go with him, but only succeeded in persuading Osgood, who would do anything or go anywhere that offered the opportunity for pleasant company and junket.

It was by no means an unhappy fortnight. Clemens took a note-book, and there are plenty of items that give reality to that long-ago excursion. He found the Canadian girls so pretty that he records it as a relief now and then to see a plain one. On another page he tells how one night in the hotel a mouse gnawed and kept him awake, and how he got up and hunted for it, hoping to destroy it. He made a rebus picture for the children of this incident in a letter home.

We get a glimpse just here of how he was constantly viewing himself as literary material—human material—an example from which some literary aspect or lesson may be drawn. Following the mouse adventure we find it thus dramatized:

Trace Father Brebeuf all through this trip, and when I am in a rage
and can't endure the mouse be reading of Brebeuf's marvelous
endurances and be shamed.

And finally, after chasing the bright-eyed rascal several days, and throwing things and trying to jump on him when in my overshoes, he darts away with those same bright eyes, then straightway I read Brebeuf's magnificent martyrdom, and turn in, subdued and wondering. By and by the thought occurs to me, Brebeuf, with his good, great heart would spare even that poor humble mouse—and for his sake so will I—I will throw the trap in the fire—jump out of bed, reach under, fetch out the trap, and find him throttled there and not two minutes dead.

They gave him a dinner in Montreal. Louis Frechette, the Canadian poet, was there and Clemens addressed him handsomely in the response he made to the speech of welcome. From that moment Frechette never ceased to adore Mark Twain, and visited him soon after the return to Hartford.

Page 416

'The Prince and the Pauper' was published in England, Canada, Germany, and America early in December, 1881. There had been no stint of money, and it was an extremely handsome book. The pen-and-ink drawings were really charming, and they were lavish as to number. It was an attractive volume from every standpoint, and it was properly dedicated "To those good-mannered and agreeable children, Susy and Clara Clemens."

The story itself was totally unlike anything that Mark Twain had done before. Enough of its plan and purpose has been given in former chapters to make a synopsis of it unnecessary here. The story of the wandering prince and the pauper king—an impressive picture of ancient legal and regal cruelty—is as fine and consistent a tale as exists in the realm of pure romance. Unlike its great successor, the 'Yankee at King Arthur's Court', it never sacrifices the illusion to the burlesque, while through it all there runs a delicate vein of humor. Only here and there is there the slightest disillusion, and this mainly in the use of some ultra-modern phrase or word.

Mark Twain never did any better writing than some of the splendid scenes in 'The Prince and the Pauper'. The picture of Old London Bridge; the scene in the vagabond's retreat, with its presentation to the little king of the wrongs inflicted by the laws of his realm; the episode of the jail where his revelation reaches a climax—these are but a few of the splendid pictures which the chapters portray, while the spectacle of England acquiring mercy at the hands of two children, a king and a beggar, is one which only genius could create. One might quote here, but to do so without the context would be to sacrifice atmosphere, half the story's charm. How breathlessly interesting is the tale of it! We may imagine that first little audience at Mark Twain's fireside hanging expectant on every paragraph, hungry always for more. Of all Mark Twain's longer works of fiction it is perhaps the most coherent as to plot, the most carefully thought out, the most perfect as to workmanship. This is not to say that it is his greatest story. Probably time will not give it that rank, but it comes near to being a perfectly constructed story, and it has an imperishable charm.

It was well received, though not always understood by the public. The reviewer was so accustomed to looking for the joke in Mark Twain's work, that he found it hard to estimate this new product. Some even went so far as to refer to it as one of Mark Twain's big jokes, meaning probably that he had created a chapter in English history with no foundation beyond his fancy. Of course these things pained the author of the book. At one time, he had been inclined to publish it anonymously, to avert this sort of misunderstanding, and sometimes now he regretted not having done so.

Yet there were many gratifying notices. The New York Herald reviewer gave the new book two columns of finely intelligent appreciation. In part he said:

Page 417

To those who have followed the career of Mark Twain, his appearance as the author of a charming and noble romance is really no more of a surprise than to see a stately structure risen upon slightly ground owned by an architect of genius, with the resources of abundant building material and ample training at command. Of his capacity they have had no doubt, and they rejoice in his taking a step which they felt he was able to take. Through all his publications may be traced the marks of the path which half led up to this happy height. His humor has often been the cloak, but not the mask, of a sturdy purpose. His work has been characterized by a manly love of truth, a hatred of humbug, and a scorn for cant. A genial warmth and whole-souledness, a beautiful fancy, a fertile imagination, and a native feeling for the picturesque and a fine eye for color have afforded the basis of a style which has become more and more plastic and finished.

And in closing:

The characters of these two boys, twins in spirit, will rank with the purest and loveliest creations of child-life in the realm of fiction.

CXXXVII

CERTAIN ATTACKS AND REPRISALS

Beyond the publication of *The Prince and the Pauper* Clemens was sparingly represented in print in '81. A chapter originally intended for the book, the "Whipping Boy's Story," he gave to the *Bazaar Budget*, a little special-edition sheet printed in Hartford. It was the story of the 'Bull and the Bees' which he later adapted for use in *Joan of Arc*, the episode in which Joan's father rides a bull to a funeral. Howells found that it interfered with the action in the story of the Prince, and we might have spared it from the story of Joan, though hardly without regret.

The military story "A Curious Episode" was published in the *Century Magazine* for November. The fact that Clemens had heard, and not invented, the story was set forth quite definitely and fully in his opening paragraphs. Nevertheless, a "Captious Reader" thought it necessary to write to a New York publication concerning its origin:

I am an admirer of the writings of Mr. Mark Twain, and consequently, when I saw the table of contents of the November number of the *Century*, I bought it and turned at once to the article bearing his name, and entitled, "A Curious Episode." When I began to read it, it struck me as strangely familiar, and I soon recognized the story as a true one, told me in the summer of 1878 by an officer of the United States artillery. Query: Did Mr. Twain expect the public to credit this narrative to his clever brain?

The editor, seeing a chance for Mark Twain “copy,” forwarded a clipping to Clemens and asked him if he had anything to say in the matter. Clemens happened to know the editor very well, and he did have something to say, not for print, but for the editor’s private ear.

Page 418

The newspaper custom of shooting a man in the back and then calling upon him to come out in a card and prove that he was not engaged in any infamy at the time is a good enough custom for those who think it justifiable. Your correspondent is not stupid, I judge, but purely and simply malicious. He knew there was not the shadow of a suggestion, from the beginning to the end of "A Curious Episode," that the story was an invention; he knew he had no warrant for trying to persuade the public that I had stolen the narrative and was endeavoring to palm it off as a piece of literary invention; he also knew that he was asking his closing question with a base motive, else he would have asked it of me by letter, not spread it before the public. I have never wronged you in any way, and I think you had no right to print that communication; no right, neither any excuse. As to publicly answering that correspondent, I would as soon think of bandying words in public with any other prostitute.

The editor replied in a manly, frank acknowledgment of error. He had not looked up the article itself in the *Century* before printing the communication.

"Your letter has taught me a lesson," he said. "The blame belongs to me for not hunting up the proofs. Please accept my apology."

Mark Twain was likely to be peculiarly sensitive to printed innuendos. Not always. Sometimes he would only laugh at them or be wholly indifferent. Indeed, in his later years, he seldom cared to read anything about himself, one way or the other, but at the time of which we are now writing—the period of the early eighties—he was alive to any comment of the press. His strong sense of humor, and still stronger sense of human weakness, caused him to overlook many things which another might regard as an affront; but if the thing printed were merely an uncalled-for slur, an inexcusable imputation, he was inclined to rage and plan violence. Sometimes he conceived retribution in the form of libel suits with heavy damages. Sometimes he wrote blasting answers, which Mrs. Clemens would not let him print.

At one time he planned a biography of a certain editor who seemed to be making a deliberate personal campaign against his happiness. Clemens had heard that offending items were being printed in this man's paper; friends, reporting with customary exaggeration, declared that these sneers and brutalities appeared almost daily, so often as to cause general remark.

This was enough. He promptly began to collect data—damaging data—relating to that editor's past history. He even set a man to work in England collecting information concerning his victim. One of his notebooks contains the memoranda; a few items will show how terrific was to be the onslaught.

Page 419

When the naturalist finds a new kind of animal, he writes him up in the interest of science. No matter if it is an unpleasant animal. This is a new kind of animal, and in the cause of society must be written up. He is the polecat of our species He is purely and simply a Guiteau with the courage left out

Steel portraits of him as a sort of idiot, from infancy up—to a dozen scattered through the book—all should resemble him.

But never mind the rest. When he had got thoroughly interested in his project Mrs. Clemens, who had allowed the cyclone to wear itself out a little with its own vehemence, suggested that perhaps it would be well to have some one make an examination of the files of the paper and see just what had been said of him. So he subscribed for the paper himself and set a man to work on the back numbers. We will let him tell the conclusion of the matter himself, in his report of it to Howells:

The result arrived from my New York man this morning. Oh, what a pitiable wreck of high hopes! The “almost daily” assaults for two months consist of (1) adverse criticism of P. & P. from an enraged idiot in the London Athenaeum, (2) paragraphs from some indignant Englishman in the Pall Mall Gazette, who pays me the vast compliment of gravely rebuking some imaginary ass who has set me up in the neighborhood of Rabelais, (3) a remark about the Montreal dinner, touched with an almost invisible satire, and, (4) a remark about refusal of Canadian copyright, not complimentary, but not necessarily malicious; and of course adverse criticism which is not malicious is a thing which none but fools irritate themselves about. There, that is the prodigious bugaboo in its entirety! Can you conceive of a man’s getting himself into a sweat over so diminutive a provocation? I am sure I can’t. What the devil can those friends of mine have been thinking about to spread those three or four harmless things out into two months of daily sneers and affronts? Boiled down, this vast outpouring of malice amounts to simply this: one jest (one can make nothing more serious than that out of it). One jest, and that is all; for foreign criticisms do not count, they being matters of news, and proper for publication in anybody’s newspaper Well, my mountain has brought forth its mouse, and a sufficiently small mouse it is, God knows. And my three weeks’ hard work has got to go into the ignominious pigeonhole. Confound it, I could have earned ten thousand dollars with infinitely less trouble.

Howells refers to this episode, and concludes:

So the paper was acquitted and the editor’s life was spared. The wretch never, never knew how near he was to losing it, with incredible preliminaries of obloquy, and a subsequent devotion to lasting infamy.

CXXXVIII

Page 420

MANY UNDERTAKINGS

To write a detailed biography of Mark Twain at this period would be to defy perusal. Even to set down all the interesting matters, interesting to the public of his time, would mean not only to exhaust the subject, but the reader. He lived at the top of his bent, and almost anything relating to him was regarded as news. Daily and hourly he mingled with important matters or spoke concerning them. A bare list of the interesting events of Mark Twain's life would fill a large volume.

He was so busy, so deeply interested himself, so vitally alive to every human aspect. He read the papers through, and there was always enough to arouse his indignation—the doings of the human race at large could be relied upon to do that—and he would write, and write, to relieve himself. His mental Niagara was always pouring away, turning out articles, essays, communications on every conceivable subject, mainly with the idea of reform. There were many public and private abuses, and he wanted to correct them all. He covered reams of paper with lurid heresies—political, religious, civic—for most of which there was no hope of publication.

Now and then he was allowed to speak out: An order from the Post-office Department at Washington concerning the superscription of envelopes seemed to him unwarranted. He assailed it, and directly the nation was being entertained by a controversy between Mark Twain and the Postmaster-General's private secretary, who subsequently receded from the field. At another time, on the matter of postage rates he wrote a paper which began: "Reader, suppose you were an idiot. And suppose you were a member of Congress. But I repeat myself."

It is hardly necessary to add that the paper did not appear.

On the whole, Clemens wrote his strictures more for relief than to print, and such of these papers as are preserved to-day form a curious collection of human documents. Many of them could be printed to-day, without distress to any one. The conditions that invited them are changed; the heresies are not heresies any more. He may have had some thought of their publication in later years, for once he wrote:

Sometimes my feelings are so hot that I have to take the pen and put them out on paper to keep them from setting me afire inside; then all that ink and labor are wasted because I can't print the result. I have just finished an article of this kind, and it satisfies me entirely. It does my weather-beaten soul good to read it, and admire the trouble it would make for me and the family. I will leave it behind and utter it from the grave. There is a free speech there, and no harm to the family.

It is too late and too soon to print most of these things; too late to print them for their salutary influence, too soon to print them as literature.

Page 421

He was interested in everything: in music, as little as he knew of it. He had an ear for melody, a dramatic vision, and the poetic conception of sound. Reading some lilting lyric, he could fancy the words marching to melody, and would cast about among his friends for some one who could supply a tuneful setting. Once he wrote to his friend the Rev. Dr. Parker, who was a skilled musician, urging him to write a score for Tennyson's "Bugle Song," outlining an attractive scheme for it which the order of his fancy had formulated. Dr. Parker replied that the "Bugle Song," often attempted, had been the despair of many musicians.

He was interested in business affairs. Already, before the European trip, he had embarked in, and disembarked from, a number of pecuniary ventures. He had not been satisfied with a strictly literary income. The old tendency to speculative investment, acquired during those restless mining days, always possessed him. There were no silver mines in the East, no holes in the ground into which to empty money and effort; but there were plenty of equivalents—inventions, stock companies, and the like. He had begun by putting five thousand dollars into the American Publishing Company; but that was a sound and profitable venture, and deserves to be remembered for that reason.

Then a man came along with a patent steam generator which would save ninety per cent. of the fuel energy, or some such amount, and Mark Twain was early persuaded that it would revolutionize the steam manufactures of the world; so he put in whatever bank surplus he had and bade it a permanent good-by.

Following the steam generator came a steam pulley, a rather small contrivance, but it succeeded in extracting thirty-two thousand dollars from his bank account in a period of sixteen months.

By the time he had accumulated a fresh balance, a new method of marine telegraphy was shown him, so he used it up on that, twenty-five thousand dollars being the price of this adventure.

A watch company in western New York was ready to sell him a block of shares by the time he was prepared to experiment again, but it did not quite live to declare the first dividend on his investment.

Senator John P. Jones invited him to join in the organization of an accident insurance company, and such was Jones's confidence in the venture that he guaranteed Clemens against loss. Mark Twain's only profit from this source was in the delivery of a delicious speech, which he made at a dinner given to Cornelius Walford, of London, an insurance author of repute. Jones was paying back the money presently, and about that time came a young inventor named Graham Bell, offering stock in a contrivance for carrying the human voice on an electric wire. At almost any other time Clemens would eagerly have welcomed this opportunity; but he was so gratified at having got his money out of

the insurance venture that he refused to respond to the happy “hello” call of fortune. In some memoranda made thirty years later he said:

Page 422

I declined. I said I didn't want anything more to do with wildcat speculation. Then he [Bell] offered the stock to me at twenty-five. I said I didn't want it at any price. He became eager; insisted that I take five hundred dollars' worth. He said he would sell me as much as I wanted for five hundred dollars; offered to let me gather it up in my hands and measure it in a plug hat; said I could have a whole hatful for five hundred dollars. But I was the burnt child, and I resisted all these temptations—resisted them easily; went off with my check intact, and next day lent five thousand of it, on an unendorsed note, to a friend who was going to go bankrupt three days later.

About the end of the year I put up a telephone wire from my house down to the Courant office, the only telephone wire in town, and the first one that was ever used in a private house in the world.

That had been only a little while before he sailed for Europe. When he returned he would have been willing to accept a very trifling interest in the telephone industry for the amount of his insurance salvage.

He had a fresh interest in patents now, and when his old friend Dan Slote got hold of a new process for engraving—the kaolatype or “chalk-plate” process—which was going to revolutionize the world of illustration, he promptly acquired a third interest, and eventually was satisfied with nothing short of control. It was an ingenious process: a sheet of perfectly smooth steel was coated with a preparation of kaolin (or china clay), and a picture was engraved through the coating down to the steel surface. This formed the matrix into which the molten metal was poured to make the stereotype plate, or die, for printing. It was Clemens's notion that he could utilize this process for the casting of brass dies for stamping book covers—that, so applied, the fortunes to be made out of it would be larger and more numerous. Howells tells how, at one time, Clemens thought the “damned human race” was almost to be redeemed by a process of founding brass without air-bubbles in it. This was the time referred to and the race had to go unredeemed; for, after long, worried, costly experimenting, the brass refused to accommodate its nature to the new idea, while the chalk plate itself, with all its subsidiary and auxiliary possibilities, was infringed upon right and left, and the protecting patent failed to hold. The process was doomed, in any case. It was barely established before the photographic etching processes, superior in all ways, were developed and came quickly into use. The kaolatype enterprise struggled nobly for a considerable period. Clemens brought his niece's husband, young Charles L. Webster, from Fredonia to manage it for him, and backed it liberally. Webster was vigorous, hard-working, and capable; but the end of each month showed a deficit, until Clemens was from forty to fifty thousand dollars out of pocket in his effort to save the race with chalk and brass. The history of these several ventures (and there were others), dismissed here in a few paragraphs, would alone make a volume not without interest, certainly not without humor. Following came the type-setting machine, but we are not ready for that. Of necessity it is a longer, costlier story.

Page 423

Mrs. Clemens did not share his enthusiasm in these various enterprises. She did not oppose them, at least not strenuously, but she did not encourage them. She did not see their need. Their home was beautiful; they were happy; he could do his work in deliberation and comfort. She knew the value of money better than he, cared more for it in her own way; but she had not his desire to heap up vast and sudden sums, to revel in torrential golden showers. She was willing to let well enough alone. Clemens could not do this, and suffered accordingly. In the midst of fair home surroundings and honors we find him writing to his mother:

Life has come to be a very serious matter with me. I have a badgered, harassed feeling a good part of my time. It comes mainly from business responsibilities and annoyances.

He had no moral right to be connected with business at all. He had a large perception of business opportunity, but no vision of its requirements—its difficulties and details. He was the soul of honor, but in anything resembling practical direction he was but a child. During any period of business venture he was likely to be in hot water: eagerly excited, worried, impatient; alternately suspicious and over-trusting, rash, frenzied, and altogether upset.

Yet never, even to the end of his days, would he permanently lose faith in speculative ventures. Human traits are sometimes modified, but never eliminated. The man who is born to be a victim of misplaced confidence will continue to be one so long as he lives and there are men willing to victimize him. The man who believes in himself as an investor will uphold that faith against all disaster so long as he draws breath and has money to back his judgments.

CXXXIX

FINANCIAL AND LITERARY

By a statement made on the 1st of January, 1882, of Mark Twain's disbursements for the preceding year, it is shown that considerably more than one hundred thousand dollars had been expended during that twelve months. It is a large sum for an author to pay out in one year. It would cramp most authors to do it, and it was not the best financing, even for Mark Twain. It required all that the books could earn, all the income from the various securities, and a fair sum from their principal. There is a good deal of biography in the statement. Of the amount expended forty-six thousand dollars represented investments; but of this comfortable sum less than five thousand dollars would cover the legitimate purchases; the rest had gone in the "ventures" from whose bourne no dollar would ever return. Also, a large sum had been spent for the additional land and for improvements on the home—somewhat more than thirty thousand dollars altogether—while the home life had become more lavish, the establishment had grown

each year to a larger scale, the guests and entertainments had become more and, more numerous, until the actual household expenditure required about as much as the books and securities could earn.

Page 424

It was with the increased scale of living that Clemens had become especially eager for some source of commercial profit; something that would yield a return, not in paltry thousands, but hundreds of thousands. Like Colonel Sellers, he must have something with “millions in it.” Almost any proposition that seemed to offer these possible millions appealed to him, and in his imagination he saw the golden freshet pouring in.

His natural taste was for a simple, inexpensive life; yet in his large hospitality, and in a certain boyish love of grandeur, he gloried in the splendor of his entertainment, the admiration and delight of his guests. There were always guests; they were coming and going constantly. Clemens used to say that he proposed to establish a bus line between their house and the station for the accommodation of his company. He had the Southern hospitality. Much company appealed to a very large element in his strangely compounded nature. For the better portion of the year he was willing to pay the price of it, whether in money or in endurance, and Mrs. Clemens heroically did her part. She loved these things also, in her own way. She took pride in them, and realized that they were a part of his vast success. Yet in her heart she often longed for the simpler life—above all, for the farm life at Elmira. Her spirit cried out for the rest and comfort there. In one of her letters she says:

The house has been full of company, and I have been “whirled around.” How can a body help it? Oh, I cannot help sighing for the peace and quiet of the farm. This is my work, and I know that I do very wrong when I feel chafed by it, but how can I be right about it? Sometimes it seems as if the simple sight of people would drive me mad. I am all wrong; if I would simply accept the fact that this is my work and let other things go, I know I should not be so fretted; but I want so much to do other things, to study and do things with the children, and I cannot.

I have the best French teacher that I ever had, and if I could give any time to it I could not help learning French.

When we reflect on the conditions, we are inclined to say how much better it would have been to have remained there among the hills in that quiet, inexpensive environment, to have let the world go. But that was not possible. The game was of far larger proportions than any that could be restricted to the limits of retirement and the simpler round of life. Mark Twain’s realm had become too large for his court to be established in a cottage.

It is hard to understand that in spite of a towering fame Mark Twain was still not regarded by certain American arbiters of reputations as a literary fixture; his work was not yet recognized by them as being of important meaning and serious purport.

In Boston, at that time still the Athens of America, he was enjoyed, delighted in; but he was not honored as being quite one of the elect. Howells tells us that:

Page 425

In proportion as people thought themselves refined they questioned that quality which all recognize in him now, but which was then the inspired knowledge of the simple-hearted multitude.

Even at the Atlantic dinners his place was “below the salt”—a place of honor, but not of the greatest honor. He did not sit on the dais with Emerson, Longfellow, Holmes, Whittier, Howells, and Aldrich. We of a later period, who remember him always as the center of every board—the one supreme figure, his splendid head and crown of silver hair the target of every eye—find it hard to realize the Cambridge conservatism that clad him figuratively always in motley, and seated him lower than the throne itself.

Howells clearly resented this condition, and from random review corners had ventured heresy. Now in 1882 he seems to have determined to declare himself, in a large, free way, concerning his own personal estimate of Mark Twain. He prepared for the *Century Magazine* a biographical appreciation, in which he served notice to the world that Mark Twain’s work, considered even as literature, was of very considerable importance indeed. Whether or not Howells then realized the “inspired knowledge of the multitude,” and that most of the nation outside of the counties of Suffolk and Essex already recognized his claim, is not material. Very likely he did; but he also realized the mental dusk of the cultured uninspired and his prerogative to enlighten them. His *Century* article was a kind of manifesto, a declaration of independence, no longer confined to the obscurities of certain book notices, where of course one might be expected to stretch friendly favor a little for a popular Atlantic contributor. In the open field of the *Century Magazine* Howells ventured to declare:

Mark Twain’s humor is as simple in form and as direct as the statesmanship of Lincoln or the generalship of Grant.

When I think how purely and wholly American it is I am a little puzzled at its universal acceptance Why, in fine, should an English chief-justice keep Mark Twain’s books always at hand? Why should Darwin have gone to them for rest and refreshment at midnight, when spent with scientific research? I suppose that Mark Twain transcends all other American humorists in the universal qualities. He deals very little with the pathetic, which he nevertheless knows very well how to manage, as he has shown, notably in the true story of the old slave-mother; but there is a poetic lift in his work, even when he permits you to recognize it only as something satirized. There is always the touch of nature, the presence of a sincere and frank manliness in what he says, the companionship of a spirit which is at once delightfully open and deliciously shrewd. Elsewhere I have tried to persuade the reader that his humor is, at its best, the foamy break of the strong tide of earnestness

Page 426

in him. But it would be limiting him unjustly to describe him as a satirist, and it is hardly practicable to establish him in people's minds as a moralist; he has made them laugh too long; they will not believe him serious; they think some joke is always intended. This is the penalty, as Dr. Holmes has pointed out, of making one's first success as a humorist. There was a paper of Mark Twain's printed in the Atlantic Monthly some years ago and called, "The Facts Concerning the Late Carnival of Crime in Connecticut," which ought to have won popular recognition of the ethical intelligence underlying his humor. It was, of course, funny; but under the fun it was an impassioned study of the human conscience. Hawthorne or Bunyan might have been proud to imagine that powerful allegory, which had a grotesque force far beyond either of them.... Yet it quite failed of the response I had hoped for it, and I shall not insist here upon Mark Twain as a moralist; though I warn the reader that if he leaves out of the account an indignant sense of right and wrong, a scorn of all affectations and pretense, an ardent hate of meanness and injustice, he will come infinitely short of knowing Mark Twain.

Howells realized the unwisdom and weakness of dogmatic insistence, and the strength of understatement. To him Mark Twain was already the moralist, the philosopher, and the statesman; he was willing that the reader should take his time to realize these things. The article, with his subject's portrait as a frontispiece, appeared in the Century for September, 1882. If it carried no new message to many of its readers, it at least set the stamp of official approval upon what they had already established in their hearts.

CXL

DOWN THE RIVER

Osgood was doing no great things with *The Prince and the Pauper*, but Clemens gave him another book presently, a collection of sketches—*The Stolen White Elephant*. It was not an especially important volume, though some of the features, such as "Mrs. McWilliams and the Lightning" and the "Carnival of Crime," are among the best of their sort, while the "Elephant" story is an amazingly good take-off on what might be called the spectacular detective. The interview between Inspector Blunt and the owner of the elephant is typical. The inspector asks:

"Now what does this elephant eat, and how much?"

"Well, as to what he eats—he will eat anything. He will eat a man, he will eat a Bible; he will eat anything between a man and a Bible."



“Good-very good, indeed, but too general. Details are necessary; details are the only valuable thing in our trade. Very well, as to men. At one meal—or, if you prefer, during one day—how many men will he eat if fresh?”

“He would not care whether they were fresh or not; at a single meal he would eat five ordinary men.”

Page 427

"Very good; five men. We will put that down. What nationalities would he prefer?"

"He is indifferent about nationalities. He prefers acquaintances, but is not prejudiced against strangers."

"Very good. Now, as to Bibles. How many Bibles would he eat at a meal?"

"He would eat an entire edition."

Clemens and Osgood had a more important publishing enterprise on hand. The long-deferred completion of the Mississippi book was to be accomplished; the long-deferred trip down the river was to be taken. Howells was going abroad, but the charming Osgood was willing to make the excursion, and a young man named Roswell Phelps, of Hartford, was engaged as a stenographer to take the notes.

Clemens made a farewell trip to Boston to see Howells before his departure, and together they went to Concord to call on Emerson; a fortunate thing, for he lived but a few weeks longer. They went again in the evening, not to see him, but to stand reverently outside and look at his house. This was in April. Longfellow had died in March. The fact that Howells was going away indefinitely, made them reminiscent and sad.

Just what breach Clemens committed during this visit is not remembered now, and it does not matter; but his letter to Howells, after his return to Hartford, makes it pretty clear that it was memorable enough at the time. Half-way in it he breaks out:

But oh, hell, there is no hope for a person that is built like me,
because there is no cure, no cure.

If I could only know when I have committed a crime: then I could conceal it, and not go stupidly dribbling it out, circumstance by circumstance, into the ears of a person who will give no sign till the confession is complete; and then the sudden damnation drops on a body like the released pile-driver, and he finds himself in the earth down to his chin. When he merely supposed he was being entertaining.

Next day he was off with Osgood and the stenographer for St. Louis, where they took the steamer Gold Dust down the river. He intended to travel under an assumed name, but was promptly recognized, both at the Southern Hotel and on the boat. In 'Life on the Mississippi' he has given us the atmosphere of his trip, with his new impressions of old scenes; also his first interview with the pilot, whom he did not remember, but who easily remembered him.



"I did not write that story in the book quite as it happened," he reflected once, many years later. "We went on board at night. Next morning I was up bright and early and out on deck to see if I could recognize any of the old landmarks. I could not remember any. I did not know where we were at all. It was a new river to me entirely. I climbed up in the pilot-house and there was a fellow of about forty at the wheel. I said 'Good morning.' He answered pleasantly enough. His face was entirely strange to me. Then I sat down on the high seat back of the wheel and looked out at the river and began to ask a few questions, such as a landsman would ask. He began, in the old way, to fill me up with the old lies, and I enjoyed letting him do it. Then suddenly he turned round to me and said:

Page 428

"I want to get a cup of coffee. You hold her, will you, till I come back?' And before I could say a word he was out of the pilot-house door and down the steps. It all came so suddenly that I sprang to the wheel, of course, as I would have done twenty years before. Then in a moment I realized my position. Here I was with a great big steamboat in the middle of the Mississippi River, without any further knowledge than that fact, and the pilot out of sight. I settled my mind on three conclusions: first, that the pilot might be a lunatic; second, that he had recognized me and thought I knew the river; third, that we were in a perfectly safe place, where I could not possibly kill the steamboat. But that last conclusion, though the most comforting, was an extremely doubtful one. I knew perfectly well that no sane pilot would trust his steamboat for a single moment in the hands of a greenhorn unless he were standing by the greenhorn's side. Of course, by force of habit, when I grabbed the wheel, I had taken the steering marks ahead and astern, and I made up my mind to hold her on those marks to the hair; but I could feel myself getting old and gray. Then all at once I recognized where we were; we were in what is called the Grand Chain—a succession of hidden rocks, one of the most dangerous places on the river. There were two rocks there only about seventy feet apart, and you've got to go exactly between them or wreck the boat. There was a time when I could have done it without a tremor, but that time wasn't now. I would have given any reasonable sum to have been on the shore just at that moment. I think I was about ready to drop dead when I heard a step on the pilothouse stair; then the door opened and the pilot came in, quietly picking his teeth, and took the wheel, and I crawled weakly back to the seat. He said:

"You thought you were playing a nice joke on me, didn't you? You thought I didn't know who you were. Why, I recognized that drawl of yours as soon as you opened your mouth.'

"I said, 'Who the h—I are you? I don't remember you.'

"Well,' he said, 'perhaps you don't, but I was a cub pilot on the river before the war, when you were a licensed pilot, and I couldn't get a license when I was qualified for one, because the Pilots' Association was so strong at that time that they could keep new pilots out if they wanted to, and the law was that I had to be examined by two licensed pilots, and for a good while I could not get any one to make that examination. But one day you and another pilot offered to do it, and you put me through a good, healthy examination and indorsed my application for a license. I had never seen you before, and I have never seen you since until now, but I recognized you.'

"All right,' I said. 'But if I had gone half a mile farther with that steamboat we might have all been at the bottom of the river.'

Page 429

"We got to be good friends, of course, and I spent most of my time up there with him. When we got down below Cairo, and there was a big, full river—for it was highwater season and there was no danger of the boat hitting anything so long as she kept in the river—I had her most of the time on his watch. He would lie down and sleep, and leave me there to dream that the years had not slipped away; that there had been no war, no mining days, no literary adventures; that I was still a pilot, happy and care-free as I had been twenty years before."

From the book we gather that he could not keep out of the pilot-house. He was likely to get up at any hour of the night to stand his watch, and truly enough the years had slipped away. He was the young fellow in his twenties again, speculating on the problems of existence and reading his fortune in the stars. To heighten the illusion, he had himself called regularly with the four-o'clock watch, in order not to miss the mornings. —[It will repay the reader to turn to chap. xxx of *Life on the Mississippi*, and consider Mark Twain's word-picture of the river sunrise.]

The majesty and solitude of the river impressed him more than ever before, especially its solitude. It had been so full of life in his time; now it had returned once more to its primal loneliness—the loneliness of God.

At one place two steamboats were in sight at once an unusual spectacle. Once, in the mouth of a river, he noticed a small boat, which he made out to be the Mark Twain. There had been varied changes in twenty-one years; only the old fascination of piloting remained unchanged. To Bixby afterward he wrote:

"I'd rather be a pilot than anything else I've ever done in my life. How do you run Plum Point?"

He met Bixby at New Orleans. Bixby was captain now on a splendid new Anchor Line steamboat, the *City of Baton Rouge*. The Anchor Line steamers were the acme of Mississippi River steamboat-building, and they were about the end of it. They were imposingly magnificent, but they were only as gorgeous clouds that marked the sunset of Mississippi steamboat travel. Mark Twain made his trip down the river just in time.

In New Orleans he met George W. Cable and Joel Chandler Harris, and they had a fraternizing good time together, mousing about the old French Quarter or mingling with the social life of the modern city. He made a trip with Bixby in a tug to the Warmouth plantation, and they reviewed old days together, as friends parted for twenty-one years will. Altogether the New Orleans sojourn was a pleasant one, saddened only by a newspaper notice of the death, in Edinburgh, of the kindly and gentle and beloved Dr. Brown.

Clemens arranged to make the trip up the river on the *Baton Rouge*. Bixby had one pretty inefficient pilot, and stood most of the watches himself, so that with "Sam

Clemens” in the pilot-house with him, it was wonderfully like those old first days of learning the river, back in the fifties.

Page 430

"Sam was ever making notes in his memorandum-book, just as he always did," said Bixby to the writer, recalling the time. "I was sorry I had to stay at the wheel so much. I wanted to have more time with Sam without thinking of the river at all. Sam was sorry, too, from what he wrote after he got home."

Bixby produced a letter in the familiar handwriting. It was a tender, heart-spoken letter:

I didn't see half enough of you. It was a sore disappointment. Osgood could have told you, if he would—discreet old dog—I expected to have you with me all the time. Altogether, the most pleasant part of my visit with you was after we arrived in St. Louis, and you were your old natural self again. Twenty years have not added a month to your age or taken a fraction from your loveliness.

Said Bixby: "When we arrived in St. Louis we came to the Planters' Hotel; to this very table where you and I are sitting now, and we had a couple of hot Scotches between us, just as we have now, and we had a good last talk over old times and old acquaintances. After he returned to New York he sent for my picture. He wanted to use it in his book."

At St. Louis the travelers changed boats, and proceeded up the Mississippi toward St. Paul. Clemens laid off three days at Hannibal.

Delightful days [he wrote home]. Loitering around all day long, examining the old localities, and talking with the gray heads who were boys and girls with me thirty or forty years ago. I spent my nights with John and Helen Garth, three miles from town, in their spacious and beautiful house. They were children with me, and afterward schoolmates. That world which I knew in its blooming youth is old and bowed and melancholy now; its soft cheeks are leathery and withered, the fire has gone out of its eyes, the spring from its step. It will be dust and ashes when I come again.

He had never seen the far upper river, and he found it very satisfying. His note-book says:

The bluffs all along up above St. Paul are exquisitely beautiful where the rough and broken turreted rocks stand up against the sky above the steep, verdant slopes. They are inexpressibly rich and mellow in color; soft dark browns mingled with dull greens—the very tints to make an artist worship.

In a final entry he wrote:

The romance of boating is gone now. In Hannibal the steamboat man is no longer the god.

CXLI

LITERATURE AND PHILOSOPHY

Clemens took a further step toward becoming a publisher on his own account. Not only did he contract to supply funds for the Mississippi book, but, as kaolatype, the chalk-engraving process, which had been lingeringly and expensively dying, was now become merely something to swear at, he had his niece's husband, Webster, installed as Osgood's New York subscription manager, with charge of the general agencies. There was no delay in this move. Webster must get well familiarized with the work before the Mississippi book's publication.

Page 431

He had expected to have the manuscript finished pretty promptly, but the fact that he had promised it for a certain time paralyzed his effort. Even at the farm he worked without making much headway. At the end of October he wrote Howells:

The weather turned cold, and we had to rush home, while I still lacked thirty thousand words. I had been sick and got delayed. I am going to write all day and two-thirds of the night until the thing is done or break down at it. The spur and burden of the contract are intolerable to me. I can endure the irritation of it no longer. I went to work at nine o'clock yesterday morning and went to bed an hour after midnight. Result of the day (mainly stolen from books though credit given), 9,500 words, so I reduced my burden by one-third in one day. It was five days' work in one. I have nothing more to borrow or steal; the rest must all be written. It is ten days' work and unless something breaks it will be finished in five.

He had sworn once, when he had finally finished 'A Tramp Abroad', that he would never limit himself as to time again. But he had forgotten that vow, and was suffering accordingly.

Howells wrote from London urging him to drop everything and come over to Europe for refreshment.

We have seen lots of nice people, and have been most pleasantly made of; but I would rather have you smoke in my face and talk for half a day, just for pleasure, than to go to the best house or club in London.

Clemens answered:

Yes, it would be more profitable to me to do that because, with your society to help me, I should swiftly finish this now apparently interminable book. But I cannot come, because I am not boss here, and nothing but dynamite can move Mrs. Clemens away from home in the winter season.

This was in November, and he had broken all restrictions as to time. He declared that he had never had such a fight over any book before, and that he had told Osgood and everybody concerned that they must wait.

I have said with sufficient positiveness that I will finish the book at no particular date; that I will not hurry it; that I will not hurry myself; that I will take things easy and comfortably—write when I choose to write, leave it alone when I do so prefer . . . I have got everything at a dead standstill, and that is where it ought to be, and that is where it must remain; to follow any other policy would be to make the book worse than it already is. I ought to have finished it before showing it to anybody, and then sent it across the ocean to you to be edited, as usual; for you seem to be a great many shades happier

than you deserve to be, and if I had thought of this thing earlier I would have acted upon it and taken the tuck somewhat out of your joyousness.

It was a long, heartfelt letter. Near the end of it he said:

Page 432

Cable has been here, creating worshipers on all hands. He is a marvelous talker on a deep subject. I do not see how even Spencer could unwind a thought more smoothly or orderly, and do it in cleaner, clearer, crisper English. He astounded Twichell with his faculty. You know that when it comes down to moral honesty, limpid innocence, and utterly blemishless piety, the apostles were mere policemen to Cable; so with this in mind you must imagine him at a midnight dinner in Boston the other night, where we gathered around the board of the Somerset Club: Osgood full, Boyle O'Reilly full, Fairchild responsively loaded, and Aldrich and myself possessing the floor and properly fortified. Cable told Mrs. Clemens, when he returned here, that he seemed to have been entertaining himself with horses, and had a dreamy idea that he must have gone to Boston in a cattle-car. It was a very large time. He called it an orgy. And no doubt it was, viewed from his standpoint.

Osgood wanted Mark Twain to lecture that fall, as preliminary advertising for the book, with "Life on the Mississippi" as his subject. Osgood was careful to make this proposition by mail, and probably it was just as well; for if there was any single straw that could have broken the back of Clemens's endurance and made him violent at this particular time, it was a proposition to go back on the platform. His answer to Osgood has not been preserved.

Clemens spoke little that winter. In February he addressed the Monday Evening Club on "What is Happiness?" presenting a theory which in later years he developed as a part of his "gospel," and promulgated in a privately printed volume, "What is Man"? It is the postulate already mentioned in connection with his reading of Lecky, that every human action, bad or good, is the result of a selfish impulse; that is to say, the result of a desire for the greater content of spirit. It is not a new idea; philosophers in all ages have considered it, and accepted or rejected it, according to their temperament and teachings, but it was startling and apparently new to the Monday Evening Club. They scoffed and jeered at it; denounced it as a manifest falsity. They did not quite see then that there may be two sorts of selfishness—brutal and divine; that he who sacrifices others to himself exemplifies the first, whereas he who sacrifices himself for others personifies the second—the divine contenting of his soul by serving the happiness of his fellow-men. Mark Twain left this admonition in furtherance of that better sort:

"Diligently train your ideals upward, and still upward, toward a summit where you will find your chiefest pleasure, in conduct which, while contenting you, will be sure to confer benefits upon your neighbor and the community."

It is a divine admonition, even if, in its suggested moral freedom, it does seem to conflict with that other theory—the inevitable sequence of cause and effect, descending from the primal atom. There is seeming irrelevance in introducing this matter here; but it has a chronological relation, and it presents a mental aspect of the time. Clemens was forty-eight, and becoming more and more the philosopher; also, in logic at least, a good deal of a pessimist. He made a birthday aphorism on the subject:

Page 433

"The man who is a pessimist before he is forty-eight knows too much; the man who is an optimist after he is forty-eight knows too little."

He was never more than a pessimist in theory at any time. In practice he would be a visionary; a builder of dreams and fortunes, a veritable Colonel Sellers to the end of his days.

CXLII

"Life on the Mississippi"

The Mississippi book was completed at last and placed in Osgood's hands for publication. Clemens was immensely fond of Osgood. Osgood would come down to Hartford and spend days discussing plans and playing billiards, which to Mark Twain's mind was the proper way to conduct business. Besides, there was Webster, who by this time, or a very little later, had the word "publisher" printed in his letter-heads, and was truly that, so far as the new book was concerned. Osgood had become little more than its manufacturer, shipping-agent, and accountant. It should be added that he made the book well, though somewhat expensively. He was unaccustomed to getting out big subscription volumes. His taste ran to the artistic, expensive product.

"That book cost me fifty thousand dollars to make," Clemens once declared. "Bliss could have built a whole library, for that sum. But Osgood was a lovely fellow."

Life on the Mississippi was issued about the middle of May. It was a handsome book of its kind and a successful book, but not immediately a profitable one, because of the manner of its issue. It was experimental, and experiments are likely to be costly, even when successful in the final result.

Among other things, it pronounced the final doom of kaolatype. The artists who drew the pictures for it declined to draw them if they were to be reproduced by that process, or indeed unless some one of the lately discovered photographic processes was used. Furthermore, the latter were much cheaper, and it was to the advantage of Clemens himself to repudiate kaolatype, even for his own work.

Webster was ordered to wind up the last ends of the engraving business with as little sacrifice as possible, and attend entirely to more profitable affairs—viz., the distribution of books.

As literature, the Mississippi book will rank with Mark Twain's best—so far, at least, as the first twenty chapters of it are concerned. Earlier in this history these have been sufficiently commented upon. They constitute a literary memorial seemingly as enduring as the river itself.

Concerning the remaining chapters of the book, they are also literature, but of a different class. The difference is about the same as that between 'A Tramp Abroad' and the 'Innocents'. It is the difference between the labors of love and duty; between art and industry, literature and journalism.

Page 434

But the last is hardly fair. It is journalism, but it is literary journalism, and there are unquestionably areas that are purely literary, and not journalistic at all. There would always be those in any book of travel he might write. The story of the river revisited is an interesting theme; and if the revisiting had been done, let us say eight or ten years earlier, before he had become a theoretical pessimist, and before the river itself had become a background for pessimism, the tale might have had more of the literary glamour and illusion, even if less that is otherwise valuable.

'Life on the Mississippi' has been always popular in Germany. The Emperor William of Germany once assured Mark Twain that it was his favorite American book, and on the same evening the portier of the author's lodging in Berlin echoed the Emperor's opinion.

Paul Lindau, a distinguished German author and critic, in an interview at the time the Mississippi book appeared, spoke of the general delight of his countrymen in its author. When he was asked, "But have not the Germans been offended by Mark Twain's strictures on their customs and language in his 'Tramp Abroad'?" he replied, "We know what we are and how we look, and the fanciful picture presented to our eyes gives us only food for laughter, not cause for resentment. The jokes he made on our long words, our inverted sentences, and the position of the verb have really led to a reform in style which will end in making our language as compact and crisp as the French or English. I regard Mark Twain as the foremost humorist of the age."

Howells, traveling through Europe, found Lindau's final sentiment echoed elsewhere, and he found something more: in Europe Mark Twain was already highly regarded as a serious writer. Thomas Hardy said to Howells one night at dinner:

"Why don't people understand that Mark Twain is not merely a great humorist? He is a very remarkable fellow in a very different way."

The Rev. Dr. Parker, returning from England just then, declared that, wherever he went among literary people, the talk was about Mark Twain; also that on two occasions, when he had ventured diffidently to say that he knew that author personally, he was at once so evidently regarded as lying for effect that he felt guilty, and looked it, and did not venture to say it any more; thus, in a manner, practising untruth to save his reputation for veracity.

That the Mississippi book throughout did much to solidify this foreign opinion of Mark Twain's literary importance cannot be doubted, and it is one of his books that will live longest in the memory of men.

CXLIII

A GUEST OF ROYALTY

For purposes of copyright another trip to Canada was necessary, and when the newspapers announced (May, 1883) that Mark Twain was about to cross the border there came one morning the following telegram:

Page 435

Meeting of Literary and Scientific Society at Ottawa from 22d to 26th. It would give me much pleasure if you could come and be my guest during that time.

Lorne.

The Marquis of Lorne, then Governor-General of Canada, was the husband of Queen Victoria's daughter, the Princess Louise. The invitation was therefore in the nature of a command. Clemens obeyed it graciously enough, and with a feeling of exaltation no doubt. He had been honored by the noble and the great in many lands, but this was royalty—English royalty—paying a tribute to an American writer whom neither the Marquis nor the Princess, his wife, had ever seen. They had invited him because they had cared enough for his books to make them wish to see him, to have him as a guest in Rideau Hall, their home. Mark Twain was democratic. A king to him was no more than any other man; rather less if he were not a good king. But there was something national in this tribute; and, besides, Lord Lorne and the Princess Louise were the kind of sovereigns that honored their rank, instead of being honored by it.

It is a good deal like a fairy tale when you think of it; the barefooted boy of Hannibal, who had become a printer, a pilot, a rough-handed miner, being summoned, not so many years later, by royalty as one of America's foremost men of letters. The honor was no greater than many others he had received, certainly not greater than the calls of Canon Kingsley and Robert Browning and Turgenieff at his London hotel lodgings, but it was of a less usual kind.

Clemens enjoyed his visit. Princess Louise and the Marquis of Lorne kept him with them almost continually, and were loath to let him go. Once they took him tobogganing—an exciting experience.

It happened that during his stay with them the opening of the Canadian Parliament took place. Lord Lorne and the principal dignitaries of state entered one carriage, and in a carriage behind them followed Princess Louise with Mark Twain. As they approached the Parliament House the customary salute was fired. Clemens pretended to the Princess considerable gratification. The temptation was too strong to resist:

"Your Highness," he said, "I have had other compliments paid to me, but none equal to this one. I have never before had a salute fired in my honor."

Returning to Hartford, he sent copies of his books to Lord Lorne, and to the Princess a special copy of that absurd manual, *The New Guide of the Conversation in Portuguese and English*, for which he had written an introduction.—[A serious work, in Portugal, though issued by Osgood ('83) as a joke. Clemens in the introduction says: "Its delicious, unconscious ridiculousness and its enchanting naivety are as supreme and

unapproachable in their way as Shakespeare's sublimities." An extract, the closing paragraph from the book's preface, will illustrate his meaning:

Page 436

"We expect then, who the little book (for the care that we wrote him, and for her typographical correction), that maybe worth the acceptance of the studious persons, and especially of the Youth, at which we dedicate him particularly.]"

CXLIV

A SUMMER LITERARY HARVEST

Arriving at the farm in June, Clemens had a fresh crop of ideas for stories of many lengths and varieties. His note-book of that time is full of motifs and plots, most of them of that improbable and extravagant kind which tended to defeat any literary purpose, whether humorous or otherwise. It seems worth while setting down one or more of these here, for they are characteristic of the myriad conceptions that came and went, and beyond these written memoranda left no trace behind. Here is a fair example of many:

Two men starving on a raft. The pauper has a Boston cracker, resolves to keep it till the multimillionaire is beginning to starve, then make him pay \$50,000 for it. Millionaire agrees. Pauper's cupidity rises, resolves to wait and get more; twenty-four hours later asks him a million for the cracker. Millionaire agrees. Pauper has a wild dream of becoming enormously rich off his cracker; backs down; lies all night building castles in the air; next day raises his price higher and higher, till millionaire has offered \$100,000,000, every cent he has in the world. Pauper accepts. Millionaire: "Now give it to me."

Pauper: "No; it isn't a trade until you sign documental history of the transaction and make an oath to pay."

While pauper is finishing the document millionaire sees a ship. When pauper says, "Sign and take the cracker," millionaire smiles a smile, declines, and points to the ship.

Yet this is hardly more extravagant than another idea that is mentioned repeatedly among the notes—that of an otherwise penniless man wandering about London with a single million-pound bank-note in his possession, a motif which developed into a very good story indeed.

Idea for "Stormfield's visit to heaven"

In modern times the halls of heaven are warmed by registers connected with hell; and this is greatly applauded by Jonathan Edwards, Calvin, Baxter and Company, because it adds a new pang to the sinner's sufferings to know that the very fire which tortures him is the means of making the righteous comfortable.

Then there was to be another story, in which the various characters were to have a weird, pestilential nomenclature; such as “Lockjaw Harris,” “Influenza Smith,” “Sinapism Davis,” and a dozen or two more, a perfect outbreak of disorders.

Another—probably the inspiration of some very hot afternoon—was to present life in the interior of an iceberg, where a colony would live for a generation or two, drifting about in a vast circular current year after year, subsisting on polar bears and other Arctic game.

Page 437

An idea which he followed out and completed was the 1002d Arabian Night, in which Scheherazade continues her stories, until she finally talks the Sultan to death. That was a humorous idea, certainly; but when Howells came home and read it in the usual way he declared that, while the opening was killingly funny, when he got into the story itself it seemed to him that he was “made a fellow-sufferer with the Sultan from Scheherazade’s prolixity.”

“On the whole,” he said, “it is not your best, nor your second best; but all the way it skirts a certain kind of fun which you can’t afford to indulge in.”

And that was the truth. So the tale, neatly typewritten, retired to seclusion, and there remains to this day.

Clemens had one inspiration that summer which was not directly literary, but historical, due to his familiarity with English dates. He wrote Twichell:

Day before yesterday, feeling not in condition for writing, I left the study, but I couldn’t hold in—had to do something; so I spent eight hours in the sun with a yardstick, measuring off the reigns of the English kings on the roads in these grounds, from William the Conqueror to 1883, calculating to invent an open-air game which shall fill the children’s heads with dates without study. I give each king’s reign one foot of space to the year and drive one stake in the ground to mark the beginning of each reign, and I make the children call the stake by the king’s name. You can stand in the door and take a bird’s-eye view of English monarchy, from the Conqueror to Edward IV.; then you can turn and follow the road up the hill to the study and beyond with an opera-glass, and bird’s-eye view the rest of it to 1883. You can mark the sharp difference in the length of reigns by the varying distances of the stakes apart. You can see Richard II., two feet; Oliver Cromwell, two feet; James II., three feet, and so on—and then big skips; pegs standing forty-five, forty-six, fifty, fifty-six, and sixty feet apart (Elizabeth, Victoria, Edward III., Henry III., and George III.). By the way, third’s a lucky number for length of days, isn’t it? Yes, sir; by my scheme you get a realizing notion of the time occupied by reigns. The reason it took me eight hours was because, with little Jean’s interrupting assistance, I had to measure from the Conquest to the end of Henry VI. three times over, and besides I had to whittle out all those pegs. I did a full day’s work and a third over, yesterday, but was full of my game after I went to bed trying to fit it for indoors. So I didn’t get to sleep till pretty late; but when I did go off I had contrived a new way to play my history game with cards and a board.

We may be sure the idea of the game would possess him, once it got a fair start like that. He decided to save the human race that year with a history game.

Page 438

When he had got the children fairly going and interested in playing it, he adapted it to a cribbage-board, and spent his days and nights working it out and perfecting it to a degree where the world at large might learn all the facts of all the histories, not only without effort, but with an actual hunger for chronology. He would have a game not only of the English kings, but of the kings of every other nation; likewise of great statesmen, vice-chancellors, churchmen, of celebrities in every line. He would prepare a book to accompany these games. Each game would contain one thousand facts, while the book would contain eight thousand; it would be a veritable encyclopedia. He would organize clubs throughout the United States for playing the game; prizes were to be given. Experts would take it up. He foresaw a department in every newspaper devoted to the game and its problems, instead of to chess and whist and other useless diversions. He wrote to Orion, and set him to work gathering facts and dates by the bushel. He wrote to Webster, sent him a plan, and ordered him to apply for the patent without delay. Patents must also be applied for abroad. With all nations playing this great game, very likely it would produce millions in royalties; and so, in the true Sellers fashion, the iridescent bubble was blown larger and larger, until finally it blew up. The game on paper had become so large, so elaborate, so intricate, that no one could play it. Yet the first idea was a good one: the king stakes driven along the driveway and up the hillside of Quarry Farm. The children enjoyed it, and played it through many sweet summer afternoons. Once, in the days when he had grown old, he wrote, remembering:

Among the principal merits of the games which we played by help of the pegs were these: that they had to be played in the open air, and that they compelled brisk exercise. The peg of William the Conqueror stood in front of the house; one could stand near the Conqueror and have all English history skeletonized and landmarked and mile-posted under his eye The eye has a good memory. Many years have gone by and the pegs have disappeared, but I still see them and each in its place; and no king's name falls upon my ear without my seeing his pegs at once, and noticing just how many feet of space he takes up along the road.

It turned out an important literary year after all. In the Mississippi book he had used a chapter from the story he had been working at from time to time for a number of years, 'The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn'. Reading over the manuscript now he found his interest in it sharp and fresh, his inspiration renewed. The trip down the river had revived it. The interest in the game became quiescent, and he set to work to finish the story at a dead heat.

To Howells, August 22 (1883), he wrote:

Page 439

I have written eight or nine hundred manuscript pages in such a brief space of time that I mustn't name the number of days; I shouldn't believe it myself, and of course couldn't expect you to. I used to restrict myself to four and five hours a day and five days in the week, but this time I have wrought from breakfast till 5.15 P.M. six days in the week, and once or twice I smouched a Sunday when the boss wasn't looking. Nothing is half so good as literature hooked on Sunday, on the sly.

He refers to the game, though rather indifferently.

When I wrote you I thought I had it; whereas I was merely entering upon the initiatory difficulties of it. I might have known it wouldn't be an easy job or somebody would have invented a decent historical game long ago—a thing which nobody has done.

Notwithstanding the fact that he was working at Huck with enthusiasm, he seems to have been in no hurry to revise it for publication, either as a serial or as a book. But the fact that he persevered until Huck Finn at last found complete utterance was of itself a sufficient matter for congratulation.

CXLV

HOWELLS AND CLEMENS WRITE A PLAY

Before Howells went abroad Clemens had written:

Now I think that the play for you to write would be one entitled, "Colonel Mulberry Sellers in Age" (75), with Lafayette Hawkins (at 50) still sticking to him and believing in him and calling him "My lord." He [Sellers] is a specialist and a scientist in various ways. Your refined people and purity of speech would make the best possible background, and when you are done, I could take your manuscript and rewrite the Colonel's speeches, and make him properly extravagant, and I would let the play go to Raymond, and bind him up with a contract that would give him the bellyache every time he read it. Shall we think this over, or drop it as being nonsense?

Howells, returned and settled in Boston once more, had revived an interest in the play idea. He corresponded with Clemens concerning it and agreed that the American Claimant, Leathers, should furnish the initial impulse of the drama.

They decided to revive Colonel Sellers and make him the heir; Colonel Sellers in old age, more wildly extravagant than ever, with new schemes, new patents, new methods of ameliorating the ills of mankind.

Howells came down to Hartford from Boston full of enthusiasm. He found Clemens with some ideas of the plan jotted down: certain effects and situations which seemed to him amusing, but there was no general scheme of action. Howells, telling of it, says:

I felt authorized to make him observe that his scheme was as nearly nothing as chaos could be. He agreed hilariously with me, and was willing to let it stand in proof of his entire dramatic inability.

Page 440

Howells, in turn, proposed a plan which Clemens approved, and they set to work. Howells could imitate Clemens's literary manner, and they had a riotously jubilant fortnight working out their humors. Howells has told about it in his book, and he once related it to the writer of this memoir. He said:

"Clemens took one scene and I another. We had loads and loads of fun about it. We cracked our sides laughing over it as it went along. We thought it mighty good, and I think to this day that it was mighty good. We called the play 'Colonel Sellers.' We revived him. Clemens had a notion of Sellers as a spiritual medium—there was a good deal of excitement about spiritualism then; he also had a notion of Sellers leading a women's temperance crusade. We conceived the idea of Sellers wanting to try, in the presence of the audience, how a man felt who had fallen, through drink. Sellers was to end with a sort of corkscrew performance on the stage. He always wore a marvelous fire extinguisher, one of his inventions, strapped on his back, so in any sudden emergency, he could give proof of its effectiveness."

In connection with the extinguisher, Howells provided Sellers with a pair of wings, which Sellers declared would enable him to float around in any altitude where the flames might break out. The extinguisher, was not to be charged with water or any sort of liquid, but with Greek fire, on the principle that like cures like; in other words, the building was to be inoculated with Greek fire against the ordinary conflagration. Of course the whole thing was as absurd as possible, and, reading the old manuscript to-day, one is impressed with the roaring humor of some of the scenes, and with the wild extravagance of the farce motive, not wholly warranted by the previous character of Sellers, unless, indeed, he had gone stark mad. It is, in fact, Sellers caricatured. The gentle, tender side of Sellers—the best side—the side which Clemens and Howells themselves cared for most, is not there. Chapter III of Mark Twain's novel, *The American Claimant*, contains a scene between Colonel Sellers and Washington Hawkins which presents the extravagance of the Colonel's materialization scheme. It is a modified version of one of the scenes in the play, and is as amusing and unoffending as any.

The authors' rollicking joy in their work convinced them that they had produced a masterpiece for which the public in general, and the actors in particular, were waiting. Howells went back to Boston tired out, but elate in the prospect of imminent fortune.

CXLVI

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

Meantime, while Howells had been in Hartford working at the play with Clemens, Matthew Arnold had arrived in Boston. On inquiring for Howells, at his home, the visitor was told that he had gone to see Mark Twain. Arnold was perhaps the only literary

Englishman left who had not accepted Mark Twain at his larger value. He seemed surprised and said:

Page 441

"Oh, but he doesn't like that sort of thing, does he?"

To which Mrs. Howells replied:

"He likes Mr. Clemens very much, and he thinks him one of the greatest men he ever knew."

Arnold proceeded to Hartford to lecture, and one night Howells and Clemens went to meet him at a reception. Says Howells:

While his hand laxly held mine in greeting I saw his eyes fixed intensely on the other side of the room. "Who—who in the world is that?" I looked and said, "Oh, that is Mark Twain." I do not remember just how their instant encounter was contrived by Arnold's wish; but I have the impression that they were not parted for long during the evening, and the next night Arnold, as if still under the glamour of that potent presence, was at Clemens's house.

He came there to dine with the Twichells and the Rev. Dr. Edwin P. Parker. Dr. Parker and Arnold left together, and, walking quietly homeward, discussed the remarkable creature whose presence they had just left. Clemens had been at his best that night—at his humorous best. He had kept a perpetual gale of laughter going, with a string of comment and anecdote of a kind which Twichell once declared the world had never before seen and would never see again. Arnold seemed dazed by it, unable to come out from under its influence. He repeated some of the things Mark Twain had said; thoughtfully, as if trying to analyze their magic. Then he asked solemnly:

"And is he never serious?"

And Dr. Parker as solemnly answered:

"Mr. Arnold, he is the most serious man in the world." Dr. Parker, recalling this incident, remembered also that Protap Chunder Mazoomdar, a Hindoo Christian prelate of high rank, visited Hartford in 1883, and that his one desire was to meet Mark Twain. In some memoranda of this visit Dr. Parker has written:

I said that Mark Twain was a friend of mine, and we would immediately go to his house. He was all eagerness, and I perceived that I had risen greatly in this most refined and cultivated gentleman's estimation. Arriving at Mr. Clemens's residence, I promptly sought a brief private interview with my friend for his enlightenment concerning the distinguished visitor, after which they were introduced and spent a long while together. In due time Mazoomdar came forth with Mark's likeness and autograph, and as we walked away his whole air and manner seemed to say, with Simeon of old, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace!"

CXLVII

the fortunes of A play

Howells is of the impression that the "Claimant" play had been offered to other actors before Raymond was made aware of it; but there are letters (to Webster) which indicate that Raymond was to see the play first, though Clemens declares, in a letter of instruction, that he hopes Raymond will not take it. Then he says:

Page 442

Why do I offer him the play at all? For these reasons: he plays that character well; there are not thirty actors in the country who can do it better; and, too, he has a sort of sentimental right to be offered the piece, though no moral, or legal, or other kind of right.

Therefore we do offer it to him; but only once, not twice. Let us have no hemming and hawing; make short, sharp work of the business. I decline to have any correspondence with R. myself in any way.

This was at the end of November, 1883, while the play was still being revised. Negotiations with Raymond had already begun, though he does not appear to have actually seen the play during that theatrical season, and many and various were the attempts made to place it elsewhere; always with one result—that each actor or manager, in the end, declared it to be strictly a Raymond play. The thing was hanging fire for nearly a year, altogether, while they were waiting on Raymond, who had a profitable play, and was in no hurry for the recrudescence of Sellers. Howells tells how he eventually took the manuscript to Raymond, whom he found “in a mood of sweet reasonableness” at one of Osgood’s luncheons. Raymond said he could not do the play then, but was sure he would like it for the coming season, and in any case would be glad to read it.

In due time Raymond reported favorably on the play, at least so far as the first act was concerned, but he objected to the materialization feature and to Sellers as claimant for the English earldom. He asked that these features be eliminated, or at least much ameliorated; but as these constituted the backbone and purpose of the whole play, Clemens and Howells decided that what was left would be hardly worth while. Raymond finally agreed to try the play as it was in one of the larger towns —Howells thinks in Buffalo. A week later the manuscript came back to Webster, who had general charge of the business negotiations, as indeed he had of all Mark Twain’s affairs at this time, and with it a brief line:

Dear sir,—I have just finished rereading the play, and am convinced that in its present form it would not prove successful. I return the manuscript by express to your address.

Thanking you for your courtesy, I am,

Yours truly, *John T. Raymond.*

P.S.—If the play is altered and made longer I will be pleased to read it again.

In his former letter Raymond had declared that “Sellers, while a very sanguine man, was not a lunatic, and no one but a lunatic could for a moment imagine that he had done such a work” (meaning the materialization). Clearly Raymond wanted a more

serious presentation, something akin to his earlier success, and on the whole we can hardly blame him. But the authors had faith in their performance as it stood, and agreed they would make no change.

Page 443

Finally a well-known elocutionist, named Burbank, conceived the notion of impersonating Raymond as well as Sellers, making of it a sort of double burlesque, and agreed to take the play on those terms. Burbank came to Hartford and showed what he could do. Howells and Clemens agreed to give him the play, and they hired the old Lyceum Theater for a week, at seven hundred dollars, for its trial presentation. Daniel Frohman promoted it. Clemens and Howells went over the play and made some changes, but they were not as hilarious over it or as full of enthusiasm as they had been in the beginning. Howells put in a night of suffering—long, dark hours of hot and cold waves of fear—and rising next morning from a tossing bed, wrote: “Here’s a play which every manager has put out-of-doors and which every actor known to us has refused, and now we go and give it to an elocutioner. We are fools.”

Clemens hurried over to Boston to consult with Howells, and in the end they agreed to pay the seven hundred dollars for the theater, take the play off and give Burbank his freedom. But Clemens’s faith in it did not immediately die. Howells relinquished all right and title in it, and Clemens started it out with Burbank and a traveling company, doing one-night stands, and kept it going for a week or more at his own expense. It never reached New York.

“And yet,” says Howells, “I think now that if it had come it would have been successful. So hard does the faith of the unsuccessful dramatist die.”—[This was as late as the spring of 1886, at which time Howells’s faith in the play was exceedingly shaky. In one letter he wrote: “It is a lunatic that we have created, and while a lunatic in one act might amuse, I’m afraid that in three he would simply bore.”

And again:

“As it stands, I believe the thing will fail, and it would be a disgrace to have it succeed.”]

CXLVIII

CABLE AND HIS GREAT JOKE

Meanwhile, with the completion of the Sellers play Clemens had flung himself into dramatic writing once more with a new and more violent impetuosity than ever. Howells had hardly returned to Boston when he wrote:

Now let’s write a tragedy.

The inclosed is not fancy, it is history; except that the little girl was a passing stranger, and not kin to any of the parties. I read the incident in Carlyle’s *Cromwell* a year ago, and made a note in my note-book; stumbled on the note to-day, and wrote up the closing scene of a possible tragedy, to see how it might work.



If we made this colonel a grand fellow, and gave him a wife to suit—hey? It's right in the big historical times—war; Cromwell in big, picturesque power, and all that.

Come, let's do this tragedy, and do it well. Curious, but didn't Florence want a Cromwell? But Cromwell would not be the chief figure here.

It was the closing scene of that pathetic passage in history from which he would later make his story, "The Death Disc." Howells was too tired and too occupied to undertake immediately a new dramatic labor, so Clemens went steaming ahead alone.

Page 444

My billiard-table is stacked up with books relating to the Sandwich Islands; the walls are upholstered with scraps of paper penciled with notes drawn from them. I have saturated myself with knowledge of that unimaginably beautiful land and that most strange and fascinating people. And I have begun a story. Its hidden motive will illustrate a but-little considered fact in human nature: that the religious folly you are born in you will die in, no matter what apparently reasonabler religious folly may seem to have taken its place; meanwhile abolished and obliterated it. I start Bill Ragsdale at eleven years of age, and the heroine at four, in the midst of the ancient idolatrous system, with its picturesque and amazing customs and superstitions, three months before the arrival of the missionaries and—the erection of a shallow Christianity upon the ruins of the old paganism.

Then these two will become educated Christians and highly civilized.

And then I will jump fifteen years and do Ragsdale's leper business. When we come to dramatize, we can draw a deal of matter from the story, all ready to our hand.

He made elaborate preparations for the Sandwich Islands story, which he and Howells would dramatize later, and within the space of a few weeks he actually did dramatize 'The Prince and the Pauper' and 'Tom Sawyer', and was prodding Webster to find proper actors or managers; stipulating at first severe and arbitrary terms, which were gradually modified, as one after another of the prospective customers found these dramatic wares unsuited to their needs. Mark Twain was one of the most dramatic creatures that ever lived, but he lacked the faculty of stage arrangement of the dramatic idea. It is one of the commonest defects in the literary make-up; also one of the hardest to realize and to explain.

The winter of 1883-84 was a gay one in the Clemens home. Henry Irving was among those entertained, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, Aldrich and his wife, Howells of course, and George W. Cable. Cable had now permanently left the South for the promised land which all authors of the South and West seek eventually, and had in due course made his way to Hartford. Clemens took Cable's fortunes in hand, as he had done with many another, invited him to his home, and undertook to open negotiations with the American Publishing Company, of which Frank Bliss was now the manager, for the improvement of his fortunes.

Cable had been giving readings from his stories and had somewhere picked up the measles. He suddenly came down with the complaint during his visit to Clemens, and his case was a violent one. It required the constant attendance of a trained nurse and one or two members of the household to pull him through.

Page 445

In the course of time he was convalescent, and when contagion was no longer to be feared guests were invited in for his entertainment. At one of these gatherings, Cable produced a curious book, which he said had been lent to him by Prof. Francis Bacon, of New Haven, as a great rarity. It was a little privately printed pamphlet written by a Southern youth, named S. Watson Wolston, a Yale student of 1845, and was an absurd romance of the hyperflorid, grandiloquent sort, entitled, "Love Triumphant, or the Enemy Conquered." Its heroine's name was Ambulinia, and its flowery, half-meaningless periods and impossible situations delighted Clemens beyond measure. He begged Cable to lend it to him, to read at the Saturday Morning Club, declaring that he certainly must own the book, at whatever cost. Henry C. Robinson, who was present, remembered having seen a copy in his youth, and Twichell thought he recalled such a book on sale in New Haven during his college days. Twichell said nothing as to any purpose in the matter; but somewhat later, being in New Haven, he stepped into the old book-store and found the same proprietor, who remembered very well the book and its author. Twichell rather fearfully asked if by any chance a copy of it might still be obtained.

"Well," was the answer, "I undertook to put my cellar in order the other day, and found about a cord of them down there. I think I can supply you."

Twichell took home six of the books at ten cents each, and on their first spring walk to Talcott's Tower casually mentioned to Clemens the quest for the rare Ambulinia. But Clemens had given up the pursuit. New York dealers had reported no success in the matter. The book was no longer in existence.

"What would you give for a copy?" asked. Twichell.

Clemens became excited.

"It isn't a question of price," he said; "that would be for the owner to set if I could find him."

Twichell drew a little package from his pocket.

"Well, Mark," he said, "here are six copies of that book, to begin with. If that isn't enough, I can get you a wagon-load."

It was enough. But it did not deter Clemens in his purpose, which was to immortalize the little book by pointing out its peculiar charms. He did this later, and eventually included the entire story, with comments, in one of his own volumes.

Clemens and Twichell did not always walk that spring. The early form of bicycle, the prehistoric high-wheel, had come into vogue, and they each got one and attempted its conquest. They practised in the early morning hours on Farmington Avenue, which was

wide and smooth, and they had an instructor, a young German, who, after a morning or two, regarded Mark Twain helplessly and said:

“Mr. Clemens, it’s remarkable—you can fall off of a bicycle more different ways than the man that invented it.”

Page 446

They were curious things, those old high-wheel machines. You were perched away up in the air, with the feeling that you were likely at any moment to strike a pebble or something that would fling you forward with damaging results. Frequently that is what happened. The word “header” seems to have grown out of that early bicycling period. Perhaps Mark Twain invented it. He had enough experience to do it. He always declared afterward that he invented all the new bicycle profanity that has since come into general use. Once he wrote:

There was a row of low stepping-stones across one end of the street, a measured yard apart. Even after I got so I could steer pretty fairly I was so afraid of those stones that I always hit them. They gave me the worst falls I ever got in that street, except those which I got from dogs. I have seen it stated that no expert is quick enough to run over a dog; that a dog is always able to skip out of his way. I think that that may be true; but I think that the reason he couldn't run over the dog was because he was trying to. I did not try to run over any dog. But I ran over every dog that came along. I think it makes a great deal of difference. If you try to run over the dog he knows how to calculate, but if you are trying to miss him he does not know how to calculate, and is liable to jump the wrong way every time. It was always so in my experience. Even when I could not hit a wagon I could hit a dog that came to see me practise. They all liked to see me practise, and they all came, for there was very little going on in our neighborhood to entertain a dog.

He conquered, measurably, that old, discouraging thing, and he and Twichell would go on excursions, sometimes as far as Wethersfield or to the tower. It was a pleasant change, at least it was an interesting one; but bicycling on the high wheel was never a popular diversion with Mark Twain, and his enthusiasm in the sport had died before the “safety” came along.

He had his machine sent out to Elmira, but there were too many hills in Chemung County, and after one brief excursion he came in, limping and pushing his wheel, and did not try it again.

To return to Cable. When the 1st of April (1884) approached he concluded it would be a good time to pay off his debt of gratitude for his recent entertainment in the Clemens's home. He went to work at it systematically. He had a “private and confidential” circular letter printed, and he mailed it to one hundred and fifty of Mark Twain's literary friends in Boston, Hartford, Springfield, New York, Brooklyn, Washington, and elsewhere, suggesting that they write to him, so that their letters would reach him simultaneously April 1st, asking for his autograph. No stamps or cards were to be inclosed for reply, and it was requested that “no stranger to Mr. Clemens and no minor” should take part. Mrs. Clemens was let into the secret, so that she would see to it that her husband did not reject his mail or commit it to the flames unopened.

Page 447

It would seem that every one receiving the invitation must have responded to it, for on the morning of April 1st a stupefying mass of letters was unloaded on Mark Twain's table. He did not know what to make of it, and Mrs. Clemens stood off to watch the results. The first one he opened was from Dean Sage, a friend whom he valued highly. Sage wrote from Brooklyn:

Dear Clemens,—I have recently been asked by a young lady who unfortunately has a mania for autograph-collecting, but otherwise is a charming character, and comely enough to suit your fastidious taste, to secure for her the sign manual of the few distinguished persons fortunate enough to have my acquaintance. In enumerating them to her, after mentioning the names of Geo. Shepard Page, Joe Michell, Capt. Isaiah Ryndus, Mr. Willard, Dan Mace, and J. L. Sullivan, I came to yours. "Oh!" said she, "I have read all his works—Little Breeches, The Heathen Chinee, and the rest—and think them delightful. Do oblige me by asking him for his autograph, preceded by any little sentiment that may occur to him, provided it is not too short."

Of course I promised, and hope you will oblige me by sending some little thing addressed to Miss Oakes.

We are all pretty well at home just now, though indisposition has been among us for the past fortnight. With regards to Mrs. Clemens and the children, in which my wife joins,

Yours truly, *Dean sage*.

It amused and rather surprised him, and it fooled him completely; but when he picked up a letter from Brander Matthews, asking, in some absurd fashion, for his signature, and another from Ellen Terry, and from Irving, and from Stedman, and from Warner, and Waring, and H. C. Bunner, and Sarony, and Laurence Hutton, and John Hay, and R. U. Johnson, and Modjeska, the size and quality of the joke began to overawe him. He was delighted, of course; for really it was a fine compliment, in its way, and most of the letters were distinctly amusing. Some of them asked for autographs by the yard, some by the pound. Henry Irving said:

I have just got back from a very late rehearsal-five o'clock—very tired—but there will be no rest till I get your autograph.

Some requested him to sit down and copy a few chapters from *The Innocents Abroad* for them or to send an original manuscript. Others requested that his autograph be attached to a check of interesting size. John Hay suggested that he copy a hymn, a few hundred lines of Young's "Night Thoughts," and an equal amount of Pollak's "Course of Time."

I want my boy to form a taste for serious and elevated poetry, and it will add considerable commercial value to have them in your handwriting.

Altogether the reading of the letters gave him a delightful day, and his admiration for Cable grew accordingly. Cable, too, was pleased with the success of his joke, though he declared he would never risk such a thing again. A newspaper of the time reports him as saying:

Page 448

I never suffered so much agony as for a few days previous to the 1st of April. I was afraid the letters would reach Mark when he was in affliction, in which case all of us would never have ceased flying to make it up to him. When I visited Mark we used to open our budgets of letters together at breakfast. We used to sing out whenever we struck an autograph-hunter. I think the idea came from that. The first person I spoke to about it was Robert Underwood Johnson, of the Century. My most enthusiastic ally was the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher. We never thought it would get into the papers. I never played a practical joke before. I never will again, certainly.

Mark Twain in those days did not encourage the regular autograph-collectors, and seldom paid any attention to their requests for his signature. He changed all this in later years, and kept a supply always on hand to satisfy every request; but in those earlier days he had no patience with collecting fads, and it required a particularly pleasing application to obtain his signature.

CXLIX

MARK TWAIN IN BUSINESS

Samuel Clemens by this time was definitely engaged in the publishing business. Webster had a complete office with assistants at 658 Broadway, and had acquired a pretty thorough and practical knowledge of subscription publishing. He was a busy, industrious young man, tirelessly energetic, and with a good deal of confidence, by no means unnecessary to commercial success. He placed this mental and physical capital against Mark Twain's inspiration and financial backing, and the combination of Charles L. Webster & Co. seemed likely to be a strong one.

Already, in the spring of 1884., Webster had the new Mark Twain book, 'The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn', well in hand, and was on the watch for promising subscription books by other authors. Clemens, with his usual business vision and eye for results, with a generous disregard of detail, was supervising the larger preliminaries, and fulminating at the petty distractions and difficulties as they came along. Certain plays he was trying to place were enough to keep him pretty thoroughly upset during this period, and proof-reading never added to his happiness. To Howells he wrote:

My days are given up to cursings, both loud and deep, for I am reading the 'Huck Finn' proofs. They don't make a very great many mistakes, but those that do occur are of a nature that make a man swear his teeth loose.

Whereupon Howells promptly wrote him that he would help him out with the Huck Finn proofs for the pleasure of reading the story. Clemens, among other things, was trying to place a patent grape-scissors, invented by Howells's father, so that there was, in some

degree, an equivalent for the heavy obligation. That it was a heavy one we gather from his fervent acknowledgment:

Page 449

It took my breath away, and I haven't recovered it yet, entirely—I mean the generosity of your proposal to read the proofs of Huck Finn.

Now, if you mean it, old man—if you are in earnest-proceed, in God's name, and be by me forever blessed. I can't conceive of a rational man deliberately piling such an atrocious job upon himself. But if there be such a man, and you be that man, pile it on. The proof-reading of 'The Prince and the Pauper' cost me the last rags of my religion.

Clemens decided to have the Huckleberry Finn book illustrated after his own ideas. He looked through the various comic papers to see if he could find the work of some new man that appealed to his fancy. In the pages of *Life* he discovered some comic pictures illustrating the possibility of applying electrical burners to messenger boys, waiters, *etc.* The style and the spirit of these things amused him. He instructed Webster to look up the artist, who proved to be a young man, E. W. Kemble by name, later one of our foremost cartoonists. Webster engaged Kemble and put the manuscript in his hands. Through the publication of certain chapters of Huck Finn in the *Century Magazine*, Kemble was brought to the notice of its editors, who wrote Clemens that they were profoundly indebted to him for unearthing "such a gem of an illustrator."

Clemens, encouraged and full of enthusiasm, now endeavored to interest himself in the practical details of manufacture, but his stock of patience was light and the details were many. His early business period resembles, in some of its features, his mining experience in Esmeralda, his letters to Webster being not unlike those to Orion in that former day. They are much oftener gentle, considerate, even apologetic, but they are occasionally terse, arbitrary, and profane. It required effort for him to be entirely calm in his business correspondence. A criticism of one of Webster's assistants will serve as an example of his less quiet method:

Charley, your proof-reader, is an idiot; and not only an idiot, but blind; and not only blind, but partly dead.

Of course, one must regard many of Mark Twain's business aspects humorously. To consider them otherwise is to place him in a false light altogether. He wore himself out with his anxieties and irritations; but that even he, in the midst of his furies, saw the humor of it all is sufficiently evidenced by the form of his savage phrasing. There were few things that did not amuse him, and certainly nothing amused more, or oftener, than himself.

It is proper to add a detail in evidence of a business soundness which he sometimes manifested. He had observed the methods of Bliss and Osgood, and had drawn his conclusions. In the beginning of the Huck Finn canvass he wrote Webster:

Keep it diligently in mind that we don't issue till we have made a big sale.

Page 450

Get at your canvassing early and drive it with all your might, with an intent and purpose of issuing on the 10th or 15th of next December (the best time in the year to tumble a big pile into the trade); but if we haven't 40,000 subscriptions we simply postpone publication till we've got them. It is a plain, simple policy, and would have saved both of my last books if it had been followed. [That is to say, 'The Prince and the Pauper' and the Mississippi book, neither of which had sold up to his expectations on the, initial canvass.]

CL

FARM PICTURES

Gerhardt returned from Paris that summer, after three years of study, a qualified sculptor. He was prepared to take commissions, and came to Elmira to model a bust of his benefactor. The work was finished after four or five weeks of hard effort and pronounced admirable; but Gerhardt, attempting to make a cast one morning, ruined it completely. The family gathered round the disaster, which to them seemed final, but the sculptor went immediately to work, and in an amazingly brief time executed a new bust even better than the first, an excellent piece of modeling and a fine likeness. It was decided that a cut of it should be used as a frontispiece for the new book, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

Clemens was at this time giving the final readings to the *Huck Finn* pages, a labor in which Mrs. Clemens and the children materially assisted. In the childish biography which Susy began of her father, a year later, she says:

Ever since papa and mama were married papa has written his books and then taken them to mama in manuscript, and she has expurgated —[Susy's spelling is preserved] —them. Papa read *Huckleberry Finn* to us in manuscript,—[Probably meaning proof.] —just before it came out, and then he would leave parts of it with mama to expurgate, while he went off to the study to work, and sometimes Clara and I would be sitting with mama while she was looking the manuscript over, and I remember so well, with what pangs of regret we used to see her turn down the leaves of the pages, which meant that some delightfully terrible part must be scratched out. And I remember one part pertickularly which was perfectly fascinating it was so terrible, that Clara and I used to delight in and oh, with what despair we saw mama turn down the leaf on which it was written, we thought the book would almost be ruined without it. But we gradually came to think as mama did.

Commenting on this phase of Huck's evolution Mark Twain has since written:

Page 451

I remember the special case mentioned by Susy, and can see the group yet—two-thirds of it pleading for the life of the culprit sentence that was so fascinatingly dreadful, and the other third of it patiently explaining why the court could not grant the prayer of the pleaders; but I do not remember what the condemned phrase was. It had much company, and they all went to the gallows; but it is possible that that especially dreadful one which gave those little people so much delight was cunningly devised and put into the book for just that function, and not with any hope or expectation that it would get by the “expurgator” alive. It is possible, for I had that custom.

Little Jean was probably too youthful yet to take part in that literary arbitration. She was four, and had more interest in cows. In some memoranda which her father kept of that period—the “Children’s Book”—he says:

She goes out to the barn with one of us every evening toward six o’clock, to look at the cows—which she adores—no weaker word can express her feeling for them. She sits rapt and contented while David milks the three, making a remark now and then—always about the cows. The time passes slowly and drearily for her attendant, but not for her. She could stand a week of it. When the milking is finished, and “Blanche,” “Jean,” and “the cross cow” are turned into the adjoining little cow-lot, we have to set Jean on a shed in that lot, and stay by her half an hour, till Eliza, the German nurse, comes to take her to bed. The cows merely stand there, and do nothing; yet the mere sight of them is all-sufficient for Jean. She requires nothing more. The other evening, after contemplating them a long time, as they stood in the muddy muck chewing the cud, she said, with deep and reverent appreciation, “Ain’t this a sweet little garden?” Yesterday evening our cows (after being inspected and worshiped by Jean from the shed for an hour) wandered off down into the pasture and left her bereft. I thought I was going to get back home, now, but that was an error. Jean knew of some more cows in a field somewhere, and took my hand and led me thitherward. When we turned the corner and took the right-hand road, I saw that we should presently be out of range of call and sight; so I began to argue against continuing the expedition, and Jean began to argue in favor of it, she using English for light skirmishing and German for “business.” I kept up my end with vigor, and demolished her arguments in detail, one after the other, till I judged I had her about cornered. She hesitated a moment, then answered up, sharply:

“Wir werden nichts mehr daruber sprechen!” (We won’t talk any more about it.)

It nearly took my breath away, though I thought I might possibly have misunderstood. I said:

“Why, you little rascal! Was hast du gesagt?”

Page 452

But she said the same words over again, and in the same decided way. I suppose I ought to have been outraged, but I wasn't; I was charmed.

His own note-books of that summer are as full as usual, but there are fewer literary ideas and more philosophies. There was an excitement, just then, about the trichina germ in pork, and one of his memoranda says:

I think we are only the microscopic trichina concealed in the blood of some vast creature's veins, and that it is that vast creature whom God concerns himself about and not us.

And there is another which says:

People, in trying to justify eternity, say we can put it in by learning all the knowledge acquired by the inhabitants of the myriads of stars. We sha'n't need that. We could use up two eternities in learning all that is to be learned about our own world, and the thousands of nations that have risen, and flourished, and vanished from it. Mathematics alone would occupy me eight million years.

He records an incident which he related more fully in a letter to Howells:

Before I forget it I must tell you that Mrs. Clemens has said a bright thing. A drop-letter came to me asking me to lecture here for a church debt. I began to rage over the exceedingly cool wording of the request, when Mrs. Clemens said: "I think I know that church, and, if so, this preacher is a colored man; he doesn't know how to write a polished letter. How should he?"

My manner changed so suddenly and so radically that Mrs. C. said: "I will give you a motto, and it will be useful to you if you will adopt it: 'Consider every man colored till he is proved white.'"

It is dern good, I think.

One of the note-books contains these entries:

Talking last night about home matters, I said, "I wish I had said to George when we were leaving home, 'Now, George, I wish you would take advantage of these three or four months' idle time while I am away——'"

"To learn to let my matches alone," interrupted Livy. The very words I was going to use. Yet George had not been mentioned before, nor his peculiarities.

Several years ago I said:

“Suppose I should live to be ninety-two, and just as I was dying a messenger should enter and say——”

“You are become Earl of Durham,” interrupted Livy. The very words I was going to utter. Yet there had not been a word said about the earl, or any other person, nor had there been any conversation calculated to suggest any such subject.

CLI

MARK TWAIN MUGWUMPS

Page 453

The Republican Presidential nomination of James G. Blaine resulted in a political revolt such as the nation had not known. Blaine was immensely popular, but he had many enemies in his own party. There were strong suspicions of his being connected with doubtful financiering-enterprises, more or less sensitive to official influence, and while these scandals had become quieted a very large portion of the Republican constituency refused to believe them unjustified. What might be termed the intellectual element of Republicanism was against Blaine: George William Curtis, Charles Dudley Warner, James Russell Lowell, Henry Ward Beecher, Thomas Nast, the firm of Harper & Brothers, Joseph W. Hawley, Joseph Twichell, Mark Twain—in fact the majority of thinking men who held principle above party in their choice.

On the day of the Chicago nomination, Henry C. Robinson, Charles E. Perkins, Edward M. Bunce, F. G. Whitmore, and Samuel C. Dunham were collected with Mark Twain in his billiard-room, taking turns at the game and discussing the political situation, with George, the colored butler, at the telephone down-stairs to report the returns as they came in. As fast as the ballot was received at the political headquarters down-town, it was telephoned up to the house and George reported it through the speaking-tube.

The opposition to Blaine in the convention was so strong that no one of the assembled players seriously expected his nomination. What was their amazement, then, when about mid-afternoon George suddenly announced through the speaking-tube that Blaine was the nominee. The butts of the billiard cues came down on the floor with a bump, and for a moment the players were speechless. Then Henry Robinson said:

“It’s hard luck to have to vote for that man.”

Clemens looked at him under his heavy brows.

“But—we don’t—have to vote for him,” he said.

“Do you mean to say that you’re not going to vote for him?”

“Yes, that is what I mean to say. I am not going to vote for him.”

There was a general protest. Most of those assembled declared that when a party’s representatives chose a man one must stand by him. They might choose unwisely, but the party support must be maintained. Clemens said:

“No party holds the privilege of dictating to me how I shall vote. If loyalty to party is a form of patriotism, I am no patriot. If there is any valuable difference between a monarchist and an American, it lies in the theory that the American can decide for himself what is patriotic and what isn’t. I claim that difference. I am the only person in the sixty millions that is privileged to dictate my patriotism.”

There was a good deal of talk back and forth, and, in the end, most of those there present remained loyal to Blaine. General Hawley and his paper stood by Blaine. Warner withdrew from his editorship of the Courant and remained neutral. Twichell stood with Clemens and came near losing his pulpit by it. Open letters were published in the newspapers about him. It was a campaign when politics divided neighbors, families, and congregations. If we except the Civil War period, there never had been a more rancorous political warfare than that waged between the parties of James G. Blaine and Grover Cleveland in 1884.

Page 454

That Howells remained true to Blaine was a grief to Clemens. He had gone to the farm with Howells on his political conscience and had written fervent and imploring letters on the subject. As late as September 17th, he said:

Somehow I can't seem to rest quiet under the idea of your voting for Blaine. I believe you said something about the country and the party. Certainly allegiance to these is well, but certainly a man's first duty is to his own conscience and honor; the party and country come second to that, and never first. I don't ask you to vote at all. I only urge you not to soil yourself by voting for Blaine.... Don't be offended; I mean no offense. I am not concerned about the rest of the nation, but well, good-by.

Yours ever, *mark*.

Beyond his prayerful letters to Howells, Clemens did not greatly concern himself with politics on the farm, but, returning to Hartford, he went vigorously into the campaign, presided, as usual, at mass-meetings, and made political speeches which invited the laughter of both parties, and were universally quoted and printed without regard to the paper's convictions.

It was during one such speech as this that, in the course of his remarks, a band outside came marching by playing patriotic music so loudly as to drown his voice. He waited till the band got by, but by the time he was well under way again another band passed, and once more he was obliged to wait till the music died away in the distance. Then he said, quite serenely:

"You will find my speech, without the music, in the morning paper."

In introducing Carl Schurz at a great mugwump mass-meeting at Hartford, October 20, 1884., he remarked that he [Clemens] was the only legitimately elected officer, and was expected to read a long list of vice-presidents; but he had forgotten all about it, and he would ask all the gentlemen there, of whatever political complexion, to do him a great favor by acting as vice-presidents. Then he said:

As far as my own political change of heart is concerned, I have not been convinced by any Democratic means. The opinion I hold of Mr. Blaine is due to the comments of the Republican press before the nomination. Not that they have said bitter or scandalous things, because Republican papers are above that, but the things they said did not seem to be complimentary, and seemed to me to imply editorial disapproval of Mr. Blaine and the belief that he was not qualified to be President of the United States. It is just a little indelicate for me to be here on this occasion before an assemblage of voters, for the reason that the ablest newspaper in Colorado—the ablest newspaper in the world—has recently nominated me for President. It is hardly fit for me to preside at a discussion of the brother candidate, but the best

Page 455

among us will do the most repulsive things the moment we are smitten with a Presidential madness. If I had realized that this canvass was to turn on the candidate's private character I would have started that Colorado paper sooner. I know the crimes that can be imputed and proved against me can be told on the fingers of your hands. This cannot be said of any other Presidential candidate in the field.

Inasmuch as the Blaine-Cleveland campaign was essentially a campaign of scurrility, this touch was loudly applauded.

Mark Twain voted for Grover Cleveland, though up to the very eve of election he was ready to support a Republican nominee in whom he had faith, preferably Edmunds, and he tried to inaugurate a movement by which Edmunds might be nominated as a surprise candidate and sweep the country.

It was probably Dr. Burchard's ill-advised utterance concerning the three alleged R's of Democracy, "Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion," that defeated Blaine, and by some strange, occult means Mark Twain's butler George got wind of this damning speech before it became news on the streets of Hartford. George had gone with his party, and had a considerable sum of money wagered on Blaine's election; but he knew it was likely to be very close, and he had an instant and deep conviction that these three fatal words and Blaine's failure to repudiate them meant the candidate's downfall. He immediately abandoned everything in the shape of household duties, and within the briefest possible time had changed enough money to make him safe, and leave him a good margin of winnings besides, in the event of Blaine's defeat. This was evening. A very little later the news of Blaine's blunder, announced from the opera-house stage, was like the explosion of a bomb. But it was no news to George, who went home rejoicing with his enemies.

CLII

PLATFORMING WITH CABLE

The drain of many investments and the establishment of a publishing house had told heavily on Clemens's finances. It became desirable to earn a large sum of money with as much expedition as possible. Authors' readings had become popular, and Clemens had read in Philadelphia and Boston with satisfactory results. He now conceived the idea of a grand tour of authors as a commercial enterprise. He proposed to Aldrich, Howells, and Cable that he charter a private car for the purpose, and that with their own housekeeping arrangements, cooking, *etc.*, they could go swinging around the circuit, reaping, a golden harvest. He offered to be general manager of the expedition, the impresario as it were, and agreed to guarantee the others not less than seventy-five dollars a day apiece as their net return from the "circus," as he called it.

Howells and Aldrich liked well enough to consider it as an amusing prospect, but only Cable was willing to realize it. He had been scouring the country on his own account, and he was willing enough to join forces with Mark Twain.

Page 456

Clemens detested platforming, but the idea of reading from his books or manuscript for some reason seemed less objectionable, and, as already stated, the need of much money had become important.

He arranged with J. B. Pond for the business side of the expedition, though in reality he was its proprietor. The private-car idea was given up, but he employed Cable at a salary of four hundred and fifty dollars a week and expenses, and he paid Pond a commission. Perhaps, without going any further, we may say that the tour was a financial success, and yielded a large return of the needed funds.

Clemens and Cable had a pleasant enough time, and had it not been for the absence from home and the disagreeableness of railway travel, there would have been little to regret. They were a curiously associated pair. Cable was orthodox in his religion, devoted to Sunday-school, Bible reading, and church affairs in general. Clemens—well, Clemens was different. On the first evening of their tour, when the latter was comfortably settled in bed with an entertaining book, Cable appeared with his Bible, and proceeded to read a chapter aloud. Clemens made no comment, and this went on for an evening or two more. Then he said:

“See here, Cable, we’ll have to cut this part of the program out. You can read the Bible as much as you please so long as you don’t read it to me.”

Cable retired courteously. He had a keen sense of humor, and most things that Mark Twain did, whether he approved or not, amused him. Cable did not smoke, but he seemed always to prefer the smoking compartment when they traveled, to the more respectable portions of the car. One day Clemens said to him:

“Cable, why do you sit in here? You don’t smoke, and you know I always smoke, and sometimes swear.”

Cable said, “I know, Mark, I don’t do these things, but I can’t help admiring the way you do them.”

When Sunday came it was Mark Twain’s great happiness to stay in bed all day, resting after his week of labor; but Cable would rise, bright and chipper, dress himself in neat and suitable attire, and visit the various churches and Sunday-schools in town, usually making a brief address at each, being always invited to do so.

It seems worth while to include one of the Clemens-Cable programs here—a most satisfactory one. They varied it on occasion, and when they were two nights in a place changed it completely, but the program here given was the one they were likely to use after they had proved its worth:

Program



Richling's visit to Kate Riley
Geo. W. Cable

King Sollermun
mark twain

(a) Kate Riley and Ristofolo
(b) Narcisse in mourning for "Lady Byron"
(c) Mary's Night Ride
Geo. W. Cable
(a) Tragic Tale of the Fishwife
(b) A Trying Situation
(c) A Ghost Story
mark twain

Page 457

At a Mark Twain memorial meeting (November 30, 1910), where the few who were left of his old companions told over quaint and tender memories, George Cable recalled their reading days together and told of Mark Twain's conscientious effort to do his best, to be worthy of himself, regardless of all other concerns. He told how when they had been traveling for a while Clemens seemed to realize that he was only giving the audience nonsense; making them laugh at trivialities which they would forget before they had left the entertainment hall. Cable said that up to that time he had supposed Clemens's chief thought was the entertainment of the moment, and that if the audience laughed he was satisfied. He told how he had sat in the wings, waiting his turn, and heard the tides of laughter gather and roll forward and break against the footlights, time and time again, and how he had believed his colleague to be glorying in that triumph. What was his surprise, then, on the way to the hotel in the carriage, when Clemens groaned and seemed writhing in spirit and said:

"Oh, Cable, I am demeaning myself. I am allowing myself to be a mere buffoon. It's ghastly. I can't endure it any longer."

Cable added that all that night and the next day Mark Twain devoted himself to the study and rehearsal of selections which were justified not only as humor, but as literature and art.

A good many interesting and amusing things would happen on such a tour. Many of these are entirely forgotten, of course, but of others certain memoranda have been preserved. Grover Cleveland had been elected when they set out on their travels, but was still holding his position in Albany as Governor of New York. When they reached Albany Cable and Clemens decided to call on him. They drove to the Capitol and were shown into the Governor's private office. Cleveland made them welcome, and, after greetings, said to Clemens:

"Mr. Clemens, I was a fellow-citizen of yours in Buffalo a good many months some years ago, but you never called on me then. How do you explain this?"

Clemens said: "Oh, that is very simple to answer, your Excellency. In Buffalo you were a sheriff. I kept away from the sheriff as much as possible, but you're Governor now, and on the way to the Presidency. It's worth while coming to see you."

Clemens meantime had been resting, half sitting, on the corner of the Executive desk. He leaned back a little, and suddenly about a dozen young men opened various doors, filed in and stood at attention, as if waiting for orders.

No one spoke for a moment; then the Governor said to this collection of attendants:

"You are dismissed, young gentlemen. Your services are not required. Mr. Clemens is sitting on the bells."

In Buffalo, when Clemens appeared on the stage, he leisurely considered the audience for a moment; then he said:

“I miss a good many faces. They have gone—gone to the tomb, to the gallows, or to the White House. All of us are entitled to at least one of these distinctions, and it behooves us to be wise and prepare for all.”

Page 458

On Thanksgiving Eve the readers were in Morristown, New Jersey, where they were entertained by Thomas Nast. The cartoonist prepared a quiet supper for them and they remained overnight in the Nast home. They were to leave next morning by an early train, and Mrs. Nast had agreed to see that they were up in due season. When she woke next morning there seemed a strange silence in the house and she grew suspicious. Going to the servants' room, she found them sleeping soundly. The alarm-clock in the back hall had stopped at about the hour the guests retired. The studio clock was also found stopped; in fact, every timepiece on the premises had retired from business. Clemens had found that the clocks interfered with his getting to sleep, and he had quieted them regardless of early trains and reading engagements. On being accused of duplicity he said:

"Well, those clocks were all overworked, anyway. They will feel much better for a night's rest."

A few days later Nast sent him a caricature drawing—a picture which showed Mark Twain getting rid of the offending clocks.

At Christmas-time they took a fortnight's holiday and Clemens went home to Hartford. A surprise was awaiting him there. Mrs. Clemens had made an adaptation of 'The Prince and the Pauper' play, and the children of the neighborhood had prepared a presentation of it for his special delectation. He knew, on his arrival home, that something mysterious was in progress, for certain rooms were forbidden him; but he had no inkling of their plan until just before the performance—when he was led across the grounds to George Warner's home, into the large room there where it was to be given, and placed in a seat directly in front of the stage.

Gerhardt had painted the drop-curtain, and assisted in the general construction of scenery and effects. The result was really imposing; but presently, when the curtain rose and the guest of honor realized what it was all about, and what they had undertaken for his pleasure, he was deeply moved and supremely gratified.

There was but one hitch in the performance. There is a place where the Prince says, "Fathers be alike, mayhap; mine hath not a doll's temper."

This was Susy's part, and as she said it the audience did not fail to remember its literal appropriateness. There was a moment's silence, then a titter, followed by a roar of laughter, in which everybody but the little actors joined. They did not see the humor and were disturbed and grieved. Curiously enough, Mrs Clemens herself, in arranging and casting the play, had not considered the possibility of this effect. The parts were all daintily played. The children wore their assumed personalities as if native to them. Daisy Warner played the part of Tom Canty, Clara Clemens was Lady Jane Grey.

It was only the beginning of The Prince and the Pauper productions. The play was repeated, Clemens assisting, adding to the parts, and himself playing the role of Miles Hendon. In her childish biography Susy says:

Page 459

Papa had only three days to learn the part in, but still we were all sure that he could do it. The scene that he acted in was the scene between Miles Hendon and the Prince, the “Prithee, pour the water” scene. I was the Prince and papa and I rehearsed together two or three times a day for the three days before the appointed evening. Papa acted his part beautifully, and he added to the scene, making it a good deal longer. He was inexpressibly funny, with his great slouch hat and gait——oh such a gait! Papa made the Miles Hendon scene a splendid success and every one was delighted with the scene, and papa too. We had great fun with our “Prince and Pauper,” and I think we none of us shall forget how immensely funny papa was in it. He certainly could have been an actor as well as an author.

The holidays over, Cable and Clemens were off on the circuit again. At Rochester an incident happened which led to the writing of one of Mark Twain’s important books, ‘A Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur’s Court’. Clemens and Cable had wandered into a book-store for the purpose of finding something to read. Pulling over some volumes on one of the tables, Clemens happened to pick up a little green, cloth-bound book, and after looking at the title turned the pages rather curiously and with increasing interest.

“Cable,” he said, “do you know anything about this book, the Arthurian legends of Sir Thomas Malory, Morte Arthure?”

Cable answered: “Mark, that is one of the most beautiful books in the world. Let me buy it for you. You will love it more than any book you ever read.”

So Clemens came to know the old chronicler’s version of the rare Round Table legends, and from that first acquaintance with them to the last days of his life seldom let the book go far from him. He read and reread those quaint, stately tales and revered their beauty, while fairly reveling in the absurdities of that ancient day. Sir Ector’s lament he regarded as one of the most simply beautiful pieces of writing in the English tongue, and some of the combats and quests as the most ridiculous absurdities in romance. Presently he conceived the idea of linking that day, with its customs, costumes, and abuses, with the progress of the present, or carrying back into that age of magicians and armor and superstition and cruelties a brisk American of progressive ideas who would institute reforms. His note-book began to be filled with memoranda of situations and possibilities for the tale he had in mind. These were vague, unformed fancies as yet, and it would be a long time before the story would become a fact. This was the first entry:

Page 460

Dream of being a knight-errant in armor in the Middle Ages. Have the notions and habits, though, of the present day mixed with the necessities of that. No pockets in the armor. No way to manage certain requirements of nature. Can't scratch. Cold in the head and can't blow. Can't get a handkerchief; can't use iron sleeve; iron gets red-hot in the sun; leaks in the rain; gets white with frost and freezes me solid in winter; makes disagreeable clatter when I enter church. Can't dress or undress myself. Always getting struck by lightning. Fall down and can't get up.

Twenty-one years later, discussing the genesis of the story, he said:

"As I read those quaint and curious old legends I suppose I naturally contrasted those days with ours, and it made me curious to fancy what might be the picturesque result if we could dump the nineteenth century down into the sixth century and observe the consequences."

The reading tour continued during the first two months of the new year and carried them as far west as Chicago. They read in Hannibal and Keokuk, and Clemens spent a day in the latter place with his mother, now living with Orion, brisk and active for her years and with her old-time force of character. Mark Twain, arranging for her Keokuk residence, had written:

Ma wants to board with you, and pay her board. She will pay you \$20 a month (she wouldn't pay a cent more in heaven; she is obstinate on this point), and as long as she remains with you and is content I will add \$25 a month to the sum Perkins already sends you.

Jane Clemens attended the Keokuk reading, and later, at home, when her children asked her if she could still dance, she rose, and at eighty-one tripped as lightly as a girl. It was the last time that Mark Twain ever saw his mother in the health and vigor which had been always so much a part of her personality.

Clemens saw another relative on that trip; in St. Louis, James Lampton, the original of Colonel Sellers, called.

He was become old and white-headed, but he entered to me in the same old breezy way of his earlier life, and he was all there, yet—not a detail wanting: the happy light in his eye, the abounding hope in his heart, the persuasive tongue, the miracle-breeding imagination—they were all there; and before I could turn around he was polishing up his Aladdin's lamp and flashing the secret riches of the world before me. I said to myself: "I did not overdraw him by a shade, I set him down as he was; and he is the same man to-day. Cable will recognize him."

Clemens opened the door into Cable's room and allowed the golden dream-talk to float in. It was of a "small venture" which the caller had undertaken through his son.

“Only a little thing—a, mere trifle—a bagatelle. I suppose there’s a couple of millions in it, possibly three, but not more, I think; still, for a boy, you know——”

Page 461

It was the same old Cousin Jim. Later, when he had royally accepted some tickets for the reading and bowed his exit, Cable put his head in at the door.

“That was Colonel Sellers,” he said.

CLIII

HUCK FINN COMES INTO HIS OWN

In the December Century (1884) appeared a chapter from 'The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn', "The Grangerford-Shepherdson Feud," a piece of writing which Edmund Clarence Stedman, Brander Matthews, and others promptly ranked as among Mark Twain's very best; when this was followed, in the January number, by "King Sollermun," a chapter which in its way delighted quite as many readers, the success of the new book was accounted certain. —[Stedman, writing to Clemens of this instalment, said: "To my mind it is not only the most finished and condensed thing you have done but as dramatic and powerful an episode as I know in modern literature."]

'The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn' was officially published in England and America in December, 1884, but the book was not in the canvassers' hands for delivery until February. By this time the orders were approximately for forty thousand copies, a number which had increased to fifty thousand a few weeks later. Webster's first publication venture was in the nature of a triumph. Clemens wrote to him March 16th:

"Your news is splendid. Huck certainly is a success."

He felt that he had demonstrated his capacity as a general director and Webster had proved his efficiency as an executive. He had no further need of an outside publisher.

The story of Huck Finn will probably stand as the best of Mark Twain's purely fictional writings. A sequel to Tom Sawyer, it is greater than its predecessor; greater artistically, though perhaps with less immediate interest for the juvenile reader. In fact, the books are so different that they are not to be compared—wherein lies the success of the later one. Sequels are dangerous things when the story is continuous, but in Huckleberry Finn the story is a new one, wholly different in environment, atmosphere, purpose, character, everything. The tale of Huck and Nigger Jim drifting down the mighty river on a raft, cross-sectioning the various primitive aspects of human existence, constitutes one of the most impressive examples of picaresque fiction in any language. It has been ranked greater than Gil Blas, greater even than Don Quixote; certainly it is more convincing, more human, than either of these tales. Robert Louis Stevenson once wrote, "It is a book I have read four times, and am quite ready to begin again to-morrow."

It is by no means a flawless book, though its defects are trivial enough. The illusion of Huck as narrator fails the least bit here and there; the “four dialects” are not always maintained; the occasional touch of broad burlesque detracts from the tale’s reality. We are inclined to resent this. We never wish to feel that Huck is anything but a real character. We want him always the Huck who was willing to go to hell if necessary, rather than sacrifice Nigger Jim; the Huck who watched the river through long nights, and, without caring to explain why, felt his soul go out to the sunrise.

Page 462

Two or three days and nights went by; I reckon I might say they swum by, they slid along so quiet and smooth and lovely. Here is the way we put in the time. It was a monstrous big river down there —sometimes a mile and a half wide; we run nights and laid up and hid daytimes; soon as the night was most gone we stopped navigating and tied up—nearly always in the dead water under a towhead; and then cut young cottonwoods and willows and hid the raft with them. Then we set out the lines. Next we slid into the river and had a swim, so as to freshen up and cool off; then we set down on the sandy bottom where the water was about knee deep, and watched the daylight come. Not a sound anywheres—perfectly still—just like the whole world was asleep, only sometimes the bullfrogs a-cluttering, maybe. The first thing to see, looking away over the water, was a kind of dull line—that was the woods on t’other side, you couldn’t make nothing else out; then a pale place in the sky; then more paleness, spreading around; then the river softened up, away off, and warn’t black anymore, but gray; you could see little dark spots drifting along, ever so far away—trading scows, and such things; and long black streaks—rafts; sometimes you could hear a sweep screaming; or jumbled up voices, it was so still, and sounds come so far; and by- and-by you could see a streak on the water which you know by the look of the streak that there’s a snag there in a swift current which breaks on it and makes that streak look that way; and you see the mist curl up off the water, and the east reddens up, and the river, and you make out a log-cabin in the edge of the woods, away on the bank on t’other side of the river, being a wood-yard, likely, and piled by them cheats so you can throw a dog through it anywheres; then the nice breeze springs up, and comes fanning you over there, so cool and fresh, and sweet to smell, on account of the woods and the flowers.... And next you’ve got the full day, and everything smiling in the sun, and the song-birds just going it!

This is the Huck we want, and this is the Huck we usually have, and that the world has long been thankful for.

Take the story as a whole, it is a succession of startling and unique pictures. The cabin in the swamp which Huck and his father used together in their weird, ghastly relationship; the night adventure with Jim on the wrecked steamboat; Huck’s night among the towheads; the Grangerford-Shepherdson battle; the killing of Boggs—to name a few of the many vivid presentations—these are of no time or literary fashion and will never lose their flavor nor their freshness so long as humanity itself does not change. The terse, unadorned Grangerford-Shepherdson episode—built out of the Darnell—Watson feuds—[See *Life on the Mississippi*, chap. xxvi. Mark Twain himself, as a cub pilot, came near witnessing the battle he describes.]—is simply classic in its vivid casualness, and the same

Page 463

may be said of almost every incident on that long river-drift; but this is the strength, the very essence of picaresque narrative. It is the way things happen in reality; and the quiet, unexcited frame of mind in which Huck is prompted to set them down would seem to be the last word in literary art. To Huck, apparently, the killing of Boggs and Colonel Sherburn's defiance of the mob are of about the same historical importance as any other incidents of the day's travel. When Colonel Sherburn threw his shotgun across his arm and bade the crowd disperse Huck says:

The crowd washed back sudden, and then broke all apart and went tearing off every which way, and Buck Harkness he heeled it after them, looking tolerable cheap. I could a staid if I'd a wanted to, but I didn't want to.

I went to the circus, and loafed around the back side till the watchman went by, and then dived in under the tent.

That is all. No reflections, no hysterics; a murder and a mob dispersed, all without a single moral comment. And when the Shepherdsons had got done killing the Grangerfords, and Huck had tugged the two bodies ashore and covered Buck Grangerford's face with a handkerchief, crying a little because Buck had been good to him, he spent no time in sentimental reflection or sermonizing, but promptly hunted up Jim and the raft and sat down to a meal of corn-dodgers, buttermilk, pork and cabbage, and greens:

There ain't nothing in the world so good, when it is cooked right; and while I eat my supper we talked, and had a good time. I was powerful glad to get away from the feuds, and so was Jim to get away from the swamp. We said there warn't no home like a raft, after all. Other places do seem so cramped up and smothery, but a raft don't; you feel mighty free and easy and comfortable on a raft.

It was Huck Finn's morality that caused the book to be excluded from the Concord Library, and from other libraries here and there at a later day. The orthodox mental attitude of certain directors of juvenile literature could not condone Huck's looseness in the matter of statement and property rights, and in spite of New England traditions, Massachusetts librarians did not take any too kindly to his uttered principle that, after thinking it over and taking due thought on the deadly sin of abolition, he had decided that he'd go to hell rather than give Jim over to slavery. Poor vagrant Ben Blankenship, hiding his runaway negro in an Illinois swamp, could not dream that his humanity would one day supply the moral episode of an immortal book.

Page 464

Able critics have declared that the psychology of Huck Finn is the book's large feature: Huck's moral point of view—the struggle between his heart and his conscience concerning the sin of Jim's concealment, and his final decision of self-sacrifice. Time may show that as an epic of the river, the picture of a vanished day, it will rank even greater. The problems of conscience we have always with us, but periods once passed are gone forever. Certainly Huck's loyalty to that lovely soul Nigger Jim was beautiful, though after all it may not have been so hard for Huck, who could be loyal to anything. Huck was loyal to his father, loyal to Tom Sawyer of course, loyal even to those two river tramps and frauds, the King and the Duke, for whom he lied prodigiously, only weakening when a new and livelier loyalty came into view—loyalty to Mary Wilks.

The King and the Duke, by the way, are not elsewhere matched in fiction. The Duke was patterned after a journeyman-printer Clemens had known in Virginia City, but the King was created out of refuse from the whole human family—"all tears and flapdoodle," the very ultimate of disrepute and hypocrisy—so perfect a specimen that one must admire, almost love, him. "Hain't we all the fools in town on our side? and ain't that a big enough majority in any town?" he asks in a critical moment—a remark which stamps him as a philosopher of classic rank. We are full of pity at last when this pair of rascallions ride out of the history on a rail, and feel some of Huck's inclusive loyalty and all the sorrowful truth of his comment: "Human beings can be awful cruel to one another."

The "poor old king" Huck calls him, and confesses how he felt "ornery and humble and to blame, somehow," for the old scamp's misfortunes. "A person's conscience ain't got no sense," he says, and Huck is never more real to us, or more lovable, than in that moment. Huck is what he is because, being made so, he cannot well be otherwise. He is a boy throughout—such a boy as Mark Twain had known and in some degree had been. One may pettily pick a flaw here and there in the tale's construction if so minded, but the moral character of Huck himself is not open to criticism. And indeed any criticism of this the greatest of Mark Twain's tales of modern life would be as the mere scratching of the granite of an imperishable structure. Huck Finn is a monument that no puny pecking will destroy. It is built of indestructible blocks of human nature; and if the blocks do not always fit, and the ornaments do not always agree, we need not fear. Time will blur the incongruities and moss over the mistakes. The edifice will grow more beautiful with the years.

CLIV

THE MEMOIRS OF GENERAL GRANT

The success of Huck Finn, though sufficiently important in itself, prepared the way for a publishing venture by the side of which it dwindled to small proportions. One night (it was early in November, 1884), when Cable and Clemens had finished a reading at

Chickering Hall, Clemens, coming out into the wet blackness, happened to hear Richard Watson Gilder's voice say to some unseen companion:

Page 465

“Do you know General Grant has actually determined to write his memoirs and publish them. He has said so to-day, in so many words.”

Of course Clemens was immediately interested. It was the thing he had proposed to Grant some three years previously, during his call that day with Howells concerning the Toronto consulship.

With Mrs. Clemens, he promptly overtook Gilder and accompanied him to his house, where they discussed the matter in its various particulars. Gilder said that the Century Editors had endeavored to get Grant to contribute to their war series, but that not until his financial disaster, as a member of the firm of Grant & Ward, had he been willing to consider the matter. He said that Grant now welcomed the idea of contributing three papers to the series, and that the promised payment of five hundred dollars each for these articles had gladdened his heart and relieved him of immediate anxiety.—
[Somewhat later the Century Company, voluntarily, added liberally to this sum.]

Gilder added that General Grant seemed now determined to continue his work until he had completed a book, though this at present was only a prospect.

Clemens was in the habit of calling on Grant, now and then, to smoke a cigar with him, and he dropped in next morning to find out just how far the book idea had developed, and what were the plans of publication. He found the General and his son, Colonel Fred Grant, discussing some memoranda, which turned out to be a proposition from the Century Company for the book publication of his memoirs. Clemens asked to be allowed to look over the proposed terms, and when he had done so he said:

“General, it is clear that the Century people do not realize the importance—the commercial magnitude of your book. It is not strange that this is true, for they are comparatively new publishers and have had little or no experience with books of this class. The terms they propose indicate that they expect to sell five, possibly ten thousand copies. A book from your hand, telling the story of your life and battles, should sell not less than a quarter of a million, perhaps twice that sum. It should be sold only by subscription, and you are entitled to double the royalty here proposed. I do not believe it is to your interest to conclude this contract without careful thought and investigation. Write to the American Publishing Company at Hartford and see what they will do for you.”

But Grant demurred. He said that, while no arrangements had been made with the Century Company, he thought it only fair and right that they should have the book on reasonable terms; certainly on terms no greater than he could obtain elsewhere. He said that, all things being equal, the book ought to go to the man who had first suggested it to him.

Clemens spoke up: “General, if that is so, it belongs to me.”

Grant did not understand until Clemens recalled to him how he had urged him, in that former time, to write his memoirs; had pleaded with him, agreeing to superintend the book's publication. Then he said:

Page 466

“General, I am publishing my own book, and by the time yours is ready it is quite possible that I shall have the best equipped subscription establishment in the country. If you will place your book with my firm—and I feel that I have at least an equal right in the consideration—I will pay you twenty per cent. of the list price, or, if you prefer, I will give you seventy per cent. of the net returns and I will pay all office expenses out of my thirty per cent.”

General Grant was really grieved at this proposal. It seemed to him that here was a man who was offering to bankrupt himself out of pure philanthropy—a thing not to be permitted. He intimated that he had asked the Century Company president, Roswell Smith, a careful-headed business man, if he thought his book would pay as well as Sherman’s, which the Scribners had published at a profit to Sherman of twenty-five thousand dollars, and that Smith had been unwilling to guarantee that amount to the author.—[Mark Twain’s note-book, under date of March, 1885, contains this memorandum: “Roswell Smith said to me: ‘I’m glad you got the book, Mr. Clemens; glad there was somebody with courage enough to take it, under the circumstances. What do you think the General wanted to require of me?’”

“He wanted me to insure a sale of twenty-five thousand sets of his book. I wouldn’t risk such a guarantee on any book that was ever published.”

Yet Roswell Smith, not so many years later, had so far enlarged his views of subscription publishing that he fearlessly and successfully invested a million dollars or more in a dictionary, regardless of the fact that the market was already thought to be supplied.]

Clemens said:

“General, I have my check-book with me. I will draw you a check now for twenty-five thousand dollars for the first volume of your memoirs, and will add a like amount for each volume you may write as an advance royalty payment, and your royalties will continue right along when this amount has been reached.”

Colonel Fred Grant now joined in urging that matters be delayed, at least until more careful inquiry concerning the possibilities of publishing could be made.

Clemens left then, and set out on his trip with Cable, turning the whole matter over to Webster and Colonel Fred for settlement. Meantime, the word that General Grant was writing his memoirs got into the newspapers and various publishing propositions came to him. In the end the General sent over to Philadelphia for his old friend, George W. Childs, and laid the whole matter before him. Childs said later it was plain that General Grant, on the score of friendship, if for no other reason, distinctly wished to give the book to Mark Twain. It seemed not to be a question of how much money he would make, but of personal feeling entirely. Webster’s complete success with Huck Finn

being now demonstrated, Colonel Fred Grant agreed that he believed Clemens and Webster could handle the book as profitably as anybody; and after investigation Childs was of the same opinion. The decision was that the firm of Charles L. Webster & Co. should have the book, and arrangements for drawing the contract were made.

Page 467

General Grant, however, was still somewhat uneasy as to the terms. He thought he was taking an unfair advantage in receiving so large a proportion of the profits. He wrote to Clemens, asking him which of his two propositions—the twenty per cent. gross-royalty or the seventy per cent. of the net profit—would be the best all around. Clemens sent Webster to tell him that he believed the simplest, as well as the most profitable for the author, would be the twenty per cent. arrangement. Whereupon Grant replied that he would take the alternative; as in that case, if the book were a failure, and there were no profits, Clemens would not be obliged to pay him anything. He could not consent to the thought of receiving twenty per cent. on a book published at a loss.

Meantime, Grant had developed a serious illness. The humiliation of his business failure had undermined his health. The papers announced his malady as cancer of the tongue. In a memorandum which Clemens made, February 26, 1885, he states that on the 21st he called at the Grant home, 3 East 66th Street, and was astonished to see how thin and weak the General looked. He was astonished because the newspaper, in a second report, had said the threatening symptoms had disappeared, that the cancer alarm was a false one.

I took for granted the report, and said I had been glad to see that news. He smiled and said, "Yes—if it had only been true."

One of the physicians was present, and he startled me by saying the General's condition was the opposite of encouraging.

Then the talk drifted to business, and the General presently said: "I mean you shall have the book—I have about made up my mind to that—but I wish to write to Mr. Roswell Smith first, and tell him I have so decided. I think this is due him." From the beginning the General has shown a fine delicacy toward those people—a delicacy which was native to the character of the man who put into the Appomattox terms of surrender the words, "Officers may retain their side-arms," to save General Lee the humiliation of giving up his sword. [Note-book.]

The physician present was Dr. Douglas, and upon Clemens assuming that the General's trouble was probably due to smoking, also that it was a warning to those who smoked to excess, himself included, Dr. Douglas said that General Grant's affliction could not be attributed altogether to smoking, but far more to his distress of mind, his year-long depression of spirit, the grief of his financial disaster. Dr. Douglas's remark started General Grant upon the subject of his connection with Ward, which he discussed with great freedom and apparent relief of mind. Never at any time did he betray any resentment toward Ward, but characterized him as one might an offending child. He spoke as a man who has been deeply wronged and humiliated and betrayed, but without a venomous expression or one with revengeful nature. Clemens confessed in his notes that all the time he himself was "inwardly boiling—scalping Ward—flaying him alive—breaking him on the wheel—pounding him to a jelly."

Page 468

While he was talking Colonel Grant said:

“Father is letting you see that the Grant family are a pack of fools, Mr. Clemens.”

The General objected to this statement. He said that the facts could be produced which would show that when Ward laid siege to a man he was pretty certain to turn out to be a fool; as much of a fool as any of the Grant family. He said that nobody could call the president of the Erie Railroad a fool, yet Ward had beguiled him of eight hundred thousand dollars, robbed him of every cent of it.

He cited another man that no one could call a fool who had invested in Ward to the extent of half a million. He went on to recall many such cases. He told of one man who had come to the office on the eve of departure for Europe and handed Ward a check for fifty thousand dollars, saying:

“I have no use for it at present. See what you can do with it for me.” By and by this investor, returning from Europe, dropped in and said:

“Well, did anything happen?”

Ward indifferently turned to his private ledger, consulted it, then drew a check for two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and handed it over, with the casual remark:

“Well, yes, something happened; not much yet—a little too soon.”

The man stared at the check, then thrust it back into Ward’s hand. “That’s all right. It’s plenty good enough for me. Set that hen again,” and left the place.

Of course Ward made no investments. His was the first playing on a colossal scale of the now worn-out “get rich quick” confidence game. Such dividends as were made came out of the principal. Ward was the Napoleon of that game, whether he invented it or not. Clemens agreed that, as far as himself or any of his relatives were concerned, they would undoubtedly have trusted Ward.

Colonel Grant followed him to the door when he left, and told him that the physicians feared his father might not live more than a few weeks longer, but that meantime he had been writing steadily, and that the first volume was complete and fully half the second. Three days later the formal contract was closed, and Webster & Co. promptly advanced General Grant ten thousand dollars for imminent demands, a welcome arrangement, for Grant’s debts and expenses were many, and his available resources restricted to the Century payments for his articles.

Immediately the office of Webster & Co. was warm with affairs. Reporters were running hot-foot for news of the great contract by which Mark Twain was to publish the life of General Grant. No publishing enterprise of such vast moment had ever been

undertaken, and no publishing event, before or since, ever received the amount of newspaper comment. The names of General Grant and Mark Twain associated would command columns, whatever the event, and that Mark Twain was to become the publisher of Grant's own story of his battles was of unprecedented importance.

Page 469

The partners were sufficiently occupied. Estimates and prices for vast quantities of paper were considered, all available presses were contracted for, binderies were pledged exclusively for the Grant book. Clemens was boiling over with plans and suggestions for distribution. Webster was half wild with the tumult of the great campaign. Applications for agencies poured in.

In those days there were general subscription agencies which divided the country into districts, and the heads of these agencies Webster summoned to New York and laid down the law to them concerning the, new book. It was not a time for small dealings, and Webster rose to the occasion. By the time these men returned to their homes they had practically pledged themselves to a quarter of a million sets of the Grant Memoirs, and this estimate they believed to be conservative.

Webster now moved into larger and more pretentious quarters. He took a store-room at 42 East 14th Street, Union Square, and surrounded himself with a capable force of assistants. He had become, all at once, the most conspicuous publisher in the world.

CLV

DAYS WITH A DYING HERO

The contract for the publication of the Grant Life was officially closed February 27, 1885. Five days later, on the last day and at the last hour of President Arthur's administration, and of the Congress then sitting, a bill was passed placing Grant as full General, with full pay, on the retired army list. The bill providing for this somewhat tardy acknowledgment was rushed through at the last moment, and it is said that the Congressional clock was set back so that this enactment might become a law before the administration changed.

Clemens was with General Grant when the news of this action was read to him. Grant had greatly desired such recognition, and it meant more to him than to any one present, yet Clemens in his notes records:

Every face there betrayed strong excitement and emotion except one —General Grant's. He read the telegram, but not a shade or suggestion of a change exhibited itself in his iron countenance. The volume of his emotion was greater than all the other emotions there present combined, but he was able to suppress all expression of it and make no sign.

Grant's calmness, endurance, and consideration during these final days astonished even those most familiar with his noble character. One night Gerhardt came into the library at Hartford with the announcement that he wished to show his patron a small bust he had been making in clay of General Grant. Clemens did not show much

interest in the prospect, but when the work was uncovered he became enthusiastic. He declared it was the first likeness he had ever seen of General Grant that approached reality. He agreed that the Grant family ought to see it, and that he would take Gerhardt with him next day in order that he might be within reach in case they had any suggestions. They went to New York next morning, and called at the Grant home during the afternoon.

Page 470

From the note-book:

Friday, March 20, 1885. Gerhardt and I arrived at General Grant's about 2.30 P.m. and I asked if the family would look at a small clay bust of the General which Gerhardt had made from a photograph. Colonel Fred and Jesse were absent to receive their sister, Mrs. Sartoris, who would arrive from Europe about 4.30; but the three Mrs. Grants examined the work and expressed strong approval of it, and also great gratification that Mr. Gerhardt had undertaken it. Mrs. Jesse Grant had lately dreamed that she was inquiring where the maker of my bust could be found (she had seen a picture of it in *Huck Finn*, which was published four weeks ago), for she wanted the same artist to make one of General Grant. The ladies examined the bust critically and pointed out defects, while Gerhardt made the necessary corrections. Presently Mrs. General Grant suggested that Gerhardt step in and look at the General. I had been in there talking with the General, but had never thought of asking him to let a stranger come in. So Gerhardt went in with the ladies and me, and the inspection and cross-fire began: "There, I was sure his nose was so and so," and, "I was sure his forehead was so and so," and, "Don't you think his head is so and so?" And so everybody walked around and about the old hero, who lay half reclining in his easy chair, but well muffled up, and submitting to all this as serenely as if he were used to being served so. One marked feature of General Grant's character is his exceeding gentleness, goodness, sweetness. Every time I have been in his presence—lately and formerly—my mind was drawn to that feature. I wonder it has not been more spoken of. Presently he said, let Gerhardt bring in his clay and work there, if Gerhardt would not mind his reclining attitude. Of course we were glad. A table for the bust was moved up in front of him; the ladies left the room; I got a book; Gerhardt went to work; and for an hour there was perfect stillness, and for the first time during the day the General got a good, sound, peaceful nap. General Badeau came in, and probably interrupted that nap. He spoke out as strongly as the others concerning the great excellence of the likeness. He had some sheets of *Ms.* in his hand, and said, "I've been reading what you wrote this morning, General, and it is of the utmost value; it solves a riddle that has puzzled men's brains all these years and makes the thing clear and rational." I asked what the puzzle was, and he said, "It was why Grant did not immediately lay siege to Vicksburg after capturing Port Hudson" (at least that is my recollection, now toward midnight, of General Badeau's answer).

The little bust of Grant which Gerhardt worked on that day was widely reproduced in terra-cotta, and is still regarded by many as the most nearly correct likeness of Grant. The original is in possession of the family.

Page 471

General Grant worked industriously on his book. He had a superb memory and worked rapidly. Webster & Co. offered to supply him with a stenographer, and this proved a great relief. Sometimes he dictated ten thousand words at a sitting. It was reported at the time, and it has been stated since, that Grant did not write the Memoirs himself, but only made notes, which were expanded by others. But this is not true. General Grant wrote or dictated every word of the story himself, then had the manuscript read aloud to him and made his own revisions. He wrote against time, for he knew that his disease was fatal. Fortunately the lease of life granted him was longer than he had hoped for, though the last chapters were written when he could no longer speak, and when weakness and suffering made the labor a heavy one indeed; but he never flinched or faltered, never at any time suggested that the work be finished by another hand.

Early in April General Grant's condition became very alarming, and on the night of the 3d it was believed he could not live until morning. But he was not yet ready to surrender. He rallied and renewed his task; feebly at first, but more perseveringly as each day seemed to bring a little added strength, or perhaps it was only resolution. Now and then he appeared depressed as to the quality of his product. Once Colonel Fred Grant suggested to Clemens that if he could encourage the General a little it might be worth while. Clemens had felt always such a reverence and awe for the great soldier that he had never dreamed of complimenting his literature.

"I was as much surprised as Columbus's cook could have been to learn that Columbus wanted his opinion as to how Columbus was doing his navigating."

He did not hesitate to give it, however, and with a clear conscience. Grant wrote as he had fought; with a simple, straightforward dignity, with a style that is not a style at all but the very absence of it, and therefore the best of all literary methods. It happened that Clemens had been comparing some of Grant's chapters with Caesar's Commentaries, and was able to say, in all sincerity, that the same high merits distinguished both books: clarity of statement, directness, simplicity, manifest truthfulness, fairness and justice toward friend and foe alike, soldierly candor and frankness, and soldierly avoidance of flowery speech.

"I placed the two books side by side upon the same level," he said, "and I still think that they belong there. I learned afterward that General Grant was pleased with this verdict. It shows that he was just a man, just a human being, just an author."

Within two months after the agents had gone to work canvassing for the Grant Memoirs—which is to say by the 1st of May, 1885—orders for sixty thousand sets had been received, and on that day Mark Twain, in his note-book, made a memorandum estimate of the number of books that the country would require, figuring the grand total at three hundred thousand sets of two volumes each. Then he says:

Page 472

If these chickens should really hatch according to my account, General Grant's royalties will amount to \$420,000, and will make the largest single check ever paid an author in the world's history. Up to the present time the largest one ever paid was to Macaulay on his History of England, £20,000. If I pay the General in silver coin at \$12 per pound it will weigh seventeen tons.

Certainly this has a flavor in it of Colonel Sellers, but we shall see by and by in how far this calculation was justified.

Grant found the society of Mark Twain cheering and comforting, and Clemens held himself in readiness to go to the dying man at call. On the 26th of May he makes this memorandum:

It is curious and dreadful to sit up in this way and talk cheerful nonsense to General Grant, and he under sentence of death with that cancer. He says he has made the book too large by 200 pages—not a bad fault. A short time ago we were afraid we would lack 400 of being enough. To-day talked with General Grant about his and my first great Missouri campaign in 1861. He surprised an empty camp near Florida, Missouri, on Salt River, which I had been occupying a day or two before. How near he came to playing the devil with his future publisher.

Of course Clemens would amuse the old commander with the tale of his soldiering, how his company had been chased through the brush and mud by the very announcement that Grant was coming. Some word of this got to the Century editors, who immediately proposed that Mark Twain contribute to the magazine War Series the story of his share in the Rebellion, and particularly of his war relations with General Grant. So the "Private History of a Campaign that Failed" was prepared as Mark Twain's side-light on the history of the Rebellion; and if it was not important history it was at least amusing, and the telling of that tale in Mark Twain's inimitable fashion must have gone far toward making cheerful those last sad days of his ancient enemy.

During one of their talks General Grant spoke of the question as to whether he or Sherman had originated the idea of the march to the sea. Grant said:

"Neither of us originated the idea of that march. The enemy did it."

Reports were circulated of estrangements between General Grant and the Century Company, and between Mark Twain and the Century Company, as a result of the book decision. Certain newspapers exploited and magnified these rumors—some went so far as to accuse Mark Twain of duplicity, and to charge him with seeking to obtain a vast fortune for himself at the expense of General Grant and his family. All of which was the merest nonsense. The Century Company, Webster & Co., General Grant, and Mark Twain individually, were all working harmoniously, and nothing but the most cordial relations and understanding prevailed. As to the charge of unfair dealing on the part of

Mark Twain, this was too absurd, even then, to attract more than momentary attention. Webster & Co., somewhat later in the year, gave to the press a clear statement of their publishing arrangement, though more particularly denying the report that General Grant had been unable to complete his work.

Page 473

CLVI

THE CLOSE OF A GREAT CAREER

The Clemens household did not go to Elmira that year until the 27th of June. Meantime General Grant had been taken to Mount McGregor, near the Adirondacks. The day after Clemens reached Elmira there came a summons saying that the General had asked to see him. He went immediately, and remained several days. The resolute old commander was very feeble by this time. It was three months since he had been believed to be dying, yet he was still alive, still at work, though he could no longer speak. He was adding, here and there, a finishing touch to his manuscript, writing with effort on small slips of paper containing but a few words each. His conversation was carried on in the same way. Mark Twain brought back a little package of those precious slips, and some of them are still preserved. The writing is perfectly legible, and shows no indication of a trembling hand.

On one of these slips is written:

There is much more that I could do if I was a well man. I do not write quite as clearly as I could if well. If I could read it over myself many little matters of anecdote and incident would suggest themselves to me.

On another:

Have you seen any portion of the second volume? It is up to the end, or nearly so. As much more work as I have done to-day will finish it. I have worked faster than if I had been well. I have used my three boys and a stenographer.

And on still another:

If I could have two weeks of strength I could improve it very much. As I am, however, it will have to go about as it is, with verifications by the boys and by suggestions which will enable me to make a point clear here and there.

Certainly no campaign was ever conducted with a braver heart. As long as his fingers could hold a pencil he continued at his task. Once he asked if any estimate could now be made of what portion would accrue to his family from the publication. Clemens's prompt reply, that more than one hundred thousand sets had been sold, and that already the amount of his share, secured by safe bonds, exceeded one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, seemed to give him deep comfort. Clemens told him that the country was as yet not one-third canvassed, and that without doubt there turns would be twice as much more by the end of the year. Grant made no further inquiry, and probably never again mentioned the subject to any one.

When Clemens left, General Grant was sitting, fully dressed, with a shawl about his shoulders, pencil and paper beside him. It was a picture that would never fade from the memory. In a later memorandum he says:

Page 474

I then believed he would live several months. He was still adding little perfecting details to his book, and preface, among other things. He was entirely through a few days later. Since then the lack of any strong interest to employ his mind has enabled the tedious weariness to kill him. I think his book kept him alive several months. He was a very great man and superlatively good.

This note was made July 23, 1885, at 10 A.M., on receipt of the news that General Grant was dead. To Henry Ward Beecher, Clemens wrote:

One day he put his pencil aside and said there was nothing more to do. If I had been there I could have foretold the shock that struck the world three days later.

It can be truly said that all the nation mourned. General Grant had no enemies, political or sectional, in those last days. The old soldier battling with a deadly disease, yet bravely completing his task, was a figure at once so pathetic and so noble that no breath of animosity remained to utter a single word that was not kind.

Memorial services were held from one end of the country to the other. Those who had followed him in peace or war, those who had fought beside him or against him, alike paid tribute to his memory. Twichell, from the mountains of Vermont, wrote:

I suppose I have said to Harmony forty times since I got up here, "How I wish I could see Mark!" My notion is that between us we could get ourselves expressed. I have never known any one who could help me read my own thoughts in such a case as you can and have done many a time, dear old fellow.

I'd give more to sit on a log with you in the woods this afternoon, while we twined a wreath together for Launcelot's grave, than to hear any conceivable eulogy of him pronounced by mortal lips.

The death of Grant so largely and so suddenly augmented the orders for his Memoirs that it seemed impossible to get the first volume printed in time for the delivery, which had been promised for December 1st. J. J. Little had the contract of manufacture, and every available press and bindery was running double time to complete the vast contract.

In the end more than three hundred thousand sets of two volumes each were sold, and between four hundred and twenty and four hundred and fifty thousand dollars was paid to Mrs. Grant. The first check of two hundred thousand dollars, drawn February 27, 1886, remains the largest single royalty check in history. Mark Twain's prophecy had been almost exactly verified.

CLVII

MINOR MATTERS OF A GREAT YEAR

The Grant episode, so important in all its phases, naturally overshadowed other events of 1885. Mark Twain was so deeply absorbed in this great publishing enterprise that he wasted little thought or energy in other directions.

Page 475

Yet there are a few minor things that it seems worth while to remember. Howells has told something of the Authors' Reading given for the Longfellow Memorial, an entertainment managed by George Parsons Lathrop, though Howells justly claims the glory of having fixed the price of admission at five dollars. Then he recalls a pleasing anecdote of Charles Eliot Norton, who introduced the attractions.

Norton presided, and when it came Clemens's turn to read he introduced him with such exquisite praises as he best knew how to give, but before he closed he fell a prey to one of those lapses of tact which are the peculiar peril of people of the greatest tact. He was reminded of Darwin's delight in Mark Twain, and how when he came from his long day's exhausting study, and sank into bed at midnight, he took up a volume of Mark Twain, whose books he always kept on a table beside him, and whatever had been his tormenting problem, or excess of toil, he felt secure of a good night's rest from it. A sort of blank ensued which Clemens filled in the only possible way. He said he should always be glad he had contributed to the repose of that great man, to whom science owed so much, and then without waiting for the joy in every breast to burst forth, he began to read.

Howells tells of Mark Twain's triumph on this occasion, and in a letter at the time he wrote: "You simply straddled down to the footlights and took that house up in the hollow of your hand and tickled it."

Howells adds that the show netted seventeen hundred dollars. This was early in May.

Of literary work, beyond the war paper, the "Private History of a Campaign that Failed" (published December, 1885), Clemens appears to have done very little. His thoughts were far too busy with plans for furthering the sale of the great military Memoir to follow literary ventures of his own. At one time he was impelled to dictate an autobiography—Grant's difficulties in his dying hour suggesting this—and he arranged with Redpath, who was no longer a lecture agent and understood stenography, to co-operate with him in the work. He dictated a few chapters, but he was otherwise too much occupied to continue. Also, he was unused to dictation, and found it hard and the result unsatisfactory.

Two open communications from Mark Twain that year deserve to be remembered. One of these; unsigned, was published in the Century Magazine, and expressed the need for a "universal tinker," the man who can accept a job in a large household or in a community as master of all trades, with sufficient knowledge of each to be ready to undertake whatever repairs are likely to be required in the ordinary household, such as—"to put in windowpanes, mend gas leaks, jack-plane the edges of doors that won't shut, keep the waste-pipe and other water-pipe joints, glue and otherwise repair havoc done in furniture, etc." The letter was signed X. Y. Z., and it brought replies from various parts of the world. None of the applicants seemed universally qualified, but in Kansas

City a business was founded on the idea, adopting “The Universal Tinker” as its firm name.

Page 476

The other letter mentioned was written to the 'Christian Union', inspired by a tale entitled, "What Ought We to Have Done?" It was a tale concerning the government of children; especially concerning the government of one child—John Junior—a child who, as it would appear from the tale, had a habit of running things pretty much to his own notion. The performance of John junior, and of his parents in trying to manage him, stirred Mark Twain considerably—it being "enough to make a body's blood boil," as he confesses—and it impelled him to set down surreptitiously his impressions of what would have happened to John Junior as a member of the Clemens household. He did not dare to show the communication to Mrs. Clemens before he sent it, for he knew pretty well what its fate would be in that case. So he took chances and printed it without her knowledge. The letter was published July 16, 1885. It is too long to be included entire, but it is too illuminating to be altogether omitted. After relating, in considerable detail, Mrs. Clemens's method of dealing with an unruly child—the gentleness yet firmness of her discipline—he concludes:

The mother of my children adores them—there is no milder term for it—and they worship her; they even worship anything which the touch of her hand has made sacred. They know her for the best and truest friend they have ever had, or ever shall have; they know her for one who never did them a wrong, and cannot do them a wrong; who never told them a lie, nor the shadow of one; who never deceived them by even an ambiguous gesture; who never gave them an unreasonable command, nor ever contented herself with anything short of a perfect obedience; who has always treated them as politely and considerately as she would the best and oldest in the land, and has always required of them gentle speech and courteous conduct toward all, of whatsoever degree with whom they chanced to come in contact; they know her for one whose promise, whether of reward or punishment, is gold, and always worth its face, to the uttermost farthing. In a word, they know her, and I know her, for the best and dearest mother that lives—and by a long, long way the wisest....In all my life I have never made a single reference to my wife in print before, as far as I can remember, except once in the dedication of a book; and so, after these fifteen years of silence, perhaps I may unseal my lips this one time without impropriety or indelicacy. I will institute one other novelty: I will send this manuscript to the press without her knowledge and without asking her to edit it. This will save it from getting edited into the stove.

Susy's biography refers to this incident at considerable length. She states that her father had misgivings after he had sent it to the Christian Union, and that he tried to recall the manuscript, but found it too late. She sets down some comments of her own on her mother's government, then tells us of the appearance of the article:

Page 477

When the Christian Union reached the farm and papa's article in it, all ready and waiting to be read to mama, papa hadn't the courage to show it to her (for he knew she wouldn't like it at all) at first, and he didn't, but he might have let it go and never let her see it; but finally he gave his consent to her seeing it, and told Clara and I we could take it to her, which we did with tardiness, and we all stood around mama while she read it, all wondering what she would say and think about it.

She was too much surprised (and pleased privately too) to say much at first; but, as we all expected, publicly (or rather when she remembered that this article was to be read by every one that took the Christian Union) she was rather shocked and a little displeased.

Susy goes on to tell that the article provoked a number of letters, most of them pleasant ones, but some of them of quite another sort. One of the latter fell into her mother's hands, after which there was general regret that the article had been printed, and the subject was no longer discussed at Quarry Farm.

Susy's biography is a unique record. It was a sort of combined memoir and journal, charming in its innocent frankness and childish insight. She used to keep it under her pillow, and after she was asleep the parents would steal it out and find a tender amusement and pathos in its quaint entries. It is a faithful record so far as it goes, and the period it covers is an important one; for it presents a picture of Mark Twain in the fullness of his manhood, in the golden hour of his fortune. Susy's beginning has a special value here:—[Susy's' spelling and punctuation are preserved.]

We are a very happy family! We consist of papa, mama, Jean, Clara and me. It is papa I am writing about, and I shall have no trouble in not knowing what to say about him, as he is a very striking character. Papa's appearance has been described many times, but very incorrectly; he has beautiful curly grey hair, not any too thick, or any too long, just right; a Roman nose, which greatly improves the beauty of his features, kind blue eyes, and a small mustache, he has a wonderfully shaped head, and profile, he has a very good figure in short he is an extraordinarily fine looking man. All his features are perfect, except that he hasn't extraordinary teeth. His complexion is very fair, and he doesn't ware a beard:

He is a very good man, and a very funny one; he has got a temper but we all of us have in this family. He is the loveliest man I ever saw, or ever hope to see, and oh so absent-minded!

Page 478

That this is a fair statement of the Clemens home, and the truest picture of Mark Twain at fifty that has been preserved, cannot be doubted. His hair was iron-gray, not entirely white at this time, the auburn tints everywhere mingled with the shining white that later would mantle it like a silver crown. He did not look young for his years, but he was still young, always young—indestructibly young in spirit and bodily vigor. Susy tells how that summer he blew soap-bubbles for the children, filling the bubbles with tobacco smoke; how he would play with the cats, and come clear down from his study on the hill to see how “Sour Mash,” then a kitten, was getting along; also how he wrote a poem for Jean’s donkey, Cadichon (which they made Kiditchin): She quotes the poem:

Kiditchin

O du lieb’ Kiditchin
Du bist ganz bewitchin,
Waw- — — -he!

In summer days Kiditchin
Thou’rt dear from nose to britchin
Waw——he!

No doubt thoult get a switchin
When for mischief thou’rt itchin’
Waw- — — -he!

But when you’re good Kiditchin
You shall feast in James’s kitchin
Waw- — — -he!

O now lift up thy song
Thy noble note prolong
Thou living Chinese gong!
Waw——he! waw——he waw
Sweetest donkey man ever saw.

Clemens undertook to ride Kiditchin one day, to show the children how it should be done, but Kiditchin resented this interference and promptly flung him over her head. He thought she might have been listening to the poem he had written of her.

Susy’s discovery that the secret of her biography was known is shown by the next entry, and the touch of severity in it was probably not entirely unconscious:

Papa said the other day, “I am a mugwump and a mugwump is pure from the marrow out.” (Papa knows that I am writing this biography of him, and he said this for it.) He doesn’t like to go to church at all, why I never understood, until just now. He told us the

other day that he couldn't bear to hear anyone talk but himself, but that he could listen to himself talk for hours without getting tired, of course he said this in joke, but I've no doubt it was founded on truth.

Susy's picture of life at Quarry Farm at this period is realistic and valuable—too valuable to be spared from this biography:

There are eleven cats at the farm here now. Papa's favorite is a little tortoise-shell kitten he has named "Sour Mash," and a little spotted one "Fannie." It is very pretty to see what papa calls the cat procession; it was formed in this way. Old Minniecat headed, (the mother of all the cats) next to her came aunt Susie, then Clara on the donkey, accompanied by a pile of cats, then papa and Jean hand in hand and a pile of cats brought up in the rear, mama and I made up the audience. Our various occupations are as follows.

Page 479

Papa rises about 1/2 past 7 in the morning, breakfasts at eight, writes, plays tennis with Clara and me and tries to make the donkey go, in the morning; does various things in P.M., and in the evening plays tennis with Clara and me and amuses Jean and the donkey. Mama rises about 1/4 to eight, breakfasts at eight, teaches Jean German reading from 9-10; reads German with me from 10-11. Then she reads studdies or visits with aunt Susie for a while, and then she reads to Clara and I till lunch time things connected with English history (for we hope to go to England next summer) while we sew. Then we have lunch. She studdies for about half an hour or visits with aunt Susie, then reads to us an hour or more, then studdies writes reads and rests till supper time. After supper she sits out on the porch and works till eight o'clock, from eight o'clock to bedtime she plays whist with papa and after she has retired she reads and studdies German for a while.

Clara and I do most everything from practicing to donkey riding and playing tag. While Jean's time is spent in asking mama what she can have to eat.

It is impossible, at this distance, to convey all that the farm meant to the children during the summers of their infancy and childhood and girlhood which they spent there. It was the paradise, the dreamland they looked forward to during all the rest of the year. Through the long, happy months there they grew strong and brown, and drank deeply of the joy of life. Their cousins Julia, Jervis, and Ida Langdon ranged about their own ages and were almost their daily companions. Their games were mainly of the out-of-doors; the woods and meadows and hillside pastures were their playground. Susy was thirteen when she began her diary; a gentle, thoughtful, romantic child. One afternoon she discovered a wonderful tangle of vines and bushes between the study and the sunset—a rare hiding-place. She ran breathlessly to her aunt:

“Can I have it? Can Clara and I have it all for our own?”

The petition was granted, of course, and the place was named Helen's Bower, for they were reading Thaddeus of Warsaw and the name appealed to Susy's poetic fancy. Then Mrs. Clemens conceived the idea of building a house for the children just beyond the bower. It was a complete little cottage when finished, with a porch and with furnishings contributed by friends and members of the family. There was a stove—a tiny affair, but practical—dishes, table, chairs, shelves, and a broom. The little house was named Ellerslie, out of Grace Aguilar's Days of Robert Bruce, and became one of the children's most beloved possessions. But alas for Helen's Bower! A workman was sent to clear away the debris after the builders, and being a practical man, he cut away Helen's Bower—destroyed it utterly. Susy first discovered the vandalism, and came rushing to the house in a torrent of sorrow. For her the joy of life seemed ended, and it was long before she could be comforted. But Ellerslie in time satisfied her hunger for

retreat, became, in fact, the nucleus around which the children's summer happiness centered.

Page 480

To their elders the farm remained always the quiet haven. Once to Orion's wife Clemens wrote:

This is a superb Sunday

The city in the valley is purple with shade, as seen from up here at the study. The Cranes are reading and loafing in the canvas- curtained summer-house, fifty yards away, on a higher (the highest) point; the cats are loafing over at Ellerslie, which is the children's estate and dwelling house in their own private grounds (by deed from Susie Crane), a hundred yards from the study, among the clover and young oaks and willows. Livy is down at the house, but I shall now go and bring her up to the Cranes to help us occupy the lounges and hammocks, whence a great panorama of distant hills and valley and city is seeable. The children have gone on a lark through the neighboring hills and woods, Susie and Clara horseback and Jean, driving a buggy, with the coachman for comrade and assistant at need. It is a perfect day indeed.

The ending of each year's summer brought only regret. Clemens would never take away all his things. He had an old superstition that to leave some article insured return. Mrs. Clemens also left something—her heart's content. The children went around bidding various objects good-by and kissed the gates of Ellerslie too.

CLVIII

MARK TWAIN AT FIFTY

Mark Twain's fiftieth birthday was one of the pleasantly observed events of that year. There was no special celebration, but friends sent kindly messages, and *The Critic*, then conducted by Jeannette and Joseph Gilder, made a feature of it. Miss Gilder wrote to Oliver Wendell Holmes and invited some verses, which with his never-failing kindness he sent, though in his accompanying note he said:

"I had twenty-three letters spread out on my table for answering, all marked immediate, when your note came."

Dr. Holmes's stanzas are full of his gentle spirit:

To mark twain

(On his fiftieth birthday)

Ah, Clemens, when I saw thee last,
We both of us were younger;
How fondly mumbling o'er the past
Is Memory's toothless hunger! So fifty years have fled, they say,



Since first you took to drinking;
I mean in Nature's milky way
Of course no ill I'm thinking. But while on life's uneven road
Your track you've been pursuing,
What fountains from your wit have flowed
What drinks you have been brewing! I know whence all your magic came,
Your secret I've discovered,
The source that fed your inward flame,
The dreams that round you hovered. Before you learned to bite or munch,
Still kicking in your cradle,
The Muses mixed a bowl of punch
And Hebe seized the ladle.



Page 481

Dear babe, whose fiftieth year to-day
Your ripe half-century rounded,
Your books the precious draught betray
The laughing Nine compounded. So mixed the sweet, the sharp, the strong,
Each finds its faults amended,
The virtues that to each belong
In happiest union blended. And what the flavor can surpass
Of sugar, spirit, lemons?
So while one health fills every glass
Mark Twain for Baby Clemens!

Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Frank R. Stockton, Charles Dudley Warner, and Joel Chandler Harris sent pleasing letters. Warner said:

You may think it an easy thing to be fifty years old, but you will find it's not so easy to stay there, and your next fifty years will slip away much faster than those just accomplished.

Many wrote letters privately, of course, and Andrew Lang, like Holmes, sent a poem that has a special charm.

For mark twain

To brave Mark Twain, across the sea,
The years have brought his jubilee.
One hears it, half in pain,
That fifty years have passed and gone
Since danced the merry star that shone
Above the babe Mark Twain. We turn his pages and we see
The Mississippi flowing free;
We turn again and grin
O'er all Tom Sawyer did and planned
With him of the ensanguined hand,
With Huckleberry Finn! Spirit of Mirth, whose chime of bells
Shakes on his cap, and sweetly swells
Across the Atlantic main,
Grant that Mark's laughter never die,
That men through many a century
May chuckle o'er Mark Twain!

Assuredly Mark Twain was made happy by these attentions; to Dr. Holmes he wrote:



Dear Dr. Holmes,—I shall never be able to tell you the half of how proud you have made me. If I could you would say you were nearly paid for the trouble you took. And then the family: If I could convey the electrical surprise and gratitude and exaltation of the wife and the children last night, when they happened upon that Critic where I had, with artful artlessness, spread it open and retired out of view to see what would happen—well, it was great and fine and beautiful to see, and made me feel as the victor feels when the shouting hosts march by: and if you also could have seen it you would have said the account was squared. For I have brought them up in your company, as in the company of a warm and friendly and beneficent but far-distant sun; and so, for you to do this thing was for the sun to send down out of the skies the miracle of a special ray and transfigure me before their faces. I knew what that poem would be to them; I knew it would raise me up to remote and shining heights in their eyes, to very fellowship with the chambered Nautilus itself, and that from that fellowship they could never more dissociate me while they should live; and so I made sure to be by when the surprise should come.

Page 482

Charles Dudley Warner is charmed with the poem for its own felicitous sake; and so indeed am I, but more because it has drawn the sting of my fiftieth year; taken away the pain of it, the grief of it, the somehow shame of it, and made me glad and proud it happened.

With reverence and affection,
Sincerely yours,
S. L. Clemens.

So Samuel Clemens had reached the half-century mark; reached it in what seemed the fullness of success from every viewpoint. If he was not yet the foremost American man of letters, he was at least the most widely known he sat upon the highest mountain-top. Furthermore, it seemed to him that fortune was showering her gifts into his lap. His unfortunate investments were now only as the necessary experiments that had led him to larger successes. As a publisher, he was already the most conspicuous in the world, and he contemplated still larger ventures: a type-setting machine patent, in which he had invested, and now largely controlled, he regarded as the chief invention of the age, absolutely certain to yield incalculable wealth. His connection with the Grant family had associated him with an enterprise looking to the building of a railway from Constantinople to the Persian Gulf. Charles A. Dana, of the Sun, had put him in the way of obtaining for publication the life of the Pope, Leo XIII, officially authorized by the Pope himself, and this he regarded as a certain fortune.

Now that the tide had turned he felt no hesitancy in reckoning a fortune from almost any venture. The Grant book, even on the liberal terms allowed to the author, would yield a net profit of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars to its publishers. Huck Finn would yield fifty thousand dollars more. The sales of his other books had considerably increased. Certainly, at fifty, Mark Twain's fortunes were at flood-tide; buoyant and jubilant, he was floating on the topmost wave. If there were undercurrents and undertow they were down somewhere out of sight. If there were breakers ahead, they were too far distant to be heard. So sure was he of the triumphant consummation of every venture that to a friend at his home one night he said:

"I am frightened at the proportions of my prosperity. It seems to me that whatever I touch turns to gold."

CLIX

THE LIFE OF THE POPE

As Mark Twain in the earlier days of his marriage had temporarily put aside authorship to join in a newspaper venture, so now again literature had dropped into the background, had become an avocation, while financial interests prevailed. There were

two chief ventures—the business of Charles L. Webster & Co. and the promotion of the Paige type-setting machine. They were closely identified in fortunes, so closely that in time the very existence of each depended upon the success of the other; yet they were quite distinct, and must be so treated in this story.

Page 483

The success of the Grant Life had given the Webster business an immense prestige. It was no longer necessary to seek desirable features for publication. They came uninvited. Other war generals preparing their memoirs naturally hoped to appear with their great commander. McClellan's Own Story was arranged for without difficulty. A Genesis of the Civil War, by Gen. Samuel Wylie Crawford, was offered and accepted. General Sheridan's Memoirs were in preparation, and negotiations with Webster & Co. for their appearance were not delayed. Probably neither Webster nor Clemens believed that the sale of any of these books would approach those of the Grant Life, but they expected them to be large, for the Grant book had stimulated the public taste for war literature, and anything bearing the stamp of personal battle experience was considered literary legal-tender.

Moreover, these features, and even the Grant book itself, seemed likely to dwindle in importance by the side of The Life of Pope Leo XIII., who in his old and enfeebled age had consented to the preparation of a memoir, to be published with his sanction and blessing.—[By Bernard O'Reilly, D.D., LL.D. "Written with the Encouragement, Approbation, and Blessings of His Holiness the Pope."]—Clemens and Webster—every one, in fact, who heard of the project—united in the belief that no book, with the exception of the Holy Scripture itself or the Koran, would have a wider acceptance than the biography of the Pope. It was agreed by good judges—and they included Howells and Twichell and even the shrewd general agents throughout the country—that every good Catholic would regard such a book not only as desirable, but as absolutely necessary to his salvation. Howells, recalling Clemens's emotions of this time, writes:

He had no words in which to paint the magnificence of the project or to forecast its colossal success. It would have a currency bounded only by the number of Catholics in Christendom. It would be translated into every language which was anywhere written or printed; it would be circulated literally in every country of the globe.

The formal contract for this great undertaking was signed in Rome in April, 1886, and Webster immediately prepared to go over to consult with his Holiness in person as to certain details, also, no doubt, for the newspaper advertising which must result from such an interview.

It was decided to carry a handsome present to the Pope in the form of a specially made edition of the Grant Memoirs in a rich-casket, and it was Clemens's idea that the binding of the book should be solid gold—this to be done by Tiffany at an estimated cost of about three thousand dollars. In the end, however, the binding was not gold, but the handsomest that could be designed of less precious and more appropriate materials.

Page 484

Webster sailed toward the end of June, and was warmly received and highly honored in Rome. The great figures of the Grant success had astonished Europe even more than America, where spectacular achievements were more common. That any single publication should pay a profit to author and publisher of six hundred thousand dollars was a thing which belonged with the wonders of Aladdin's garden. It was natural, therefore, that Webster, who had rubbed the magic lamp with this result, who was Mark Twain's partner, and who had now traveled across the seas to confer with the Pope himself, should be received with royal honors. In letters written at the time, Webster relates how he found it necessary to have an imposing carriage and a footman to maintain the dignity of his mission, and how, after various impressive formalities, he was granted a private audience, a very special honor indeed. Webster's letter gives us a picture of his Holiness which is worth preserving.

We—[Mrs. Webster, who, the reader will remember, was Annie Moffett, a daughter of Pamela Clemens, was included in the invitation to the Presence Chamber.]—found ourselves in a room perhaps twenty-five by thirty-five feet; the furniture was gilt, upholstered in light-red silk, and the side-walls were hung with the same material. Against the wall by which we entered and in the middle space was a large gilt throne chair, upholstered in red plush, and upon it sat a man bowed with age; his hair was silvery white and as pure as the driven snow. His head was partly covered with a white skullcap; he was dressed in a long white cassock which reached to his feet, which rested upon a red-plush cushion and were inclosed in red embroidered slippers with a design of a cross. A golden chain was about his neck and suspended by it in his lap was a gold cross set in precious stones. Upon a finger of his right hand was a gold ring with an emerald setting nearly an inch in diameter. His countenance was smiling, and beamed with benevolence. His face at once impressed us as that of a noble, pure man who could not do otherwise than good. This was the Pope of Rome, and as we advanced, making the three genuflexions prescribed by etiquette, he smiled benignly upon us. We advanced and, kneeling at his feet, kissed the seal upon his ring. He took us each by the hand repeatedly during the audience and made us perfectly at our ease.

They remained as much as half an hour in the Presence; and the Pope conversed on a variety of subjects, including the business failure of General Grant, his last hours, and the great success of his book. The figures seemed to him hardly credible, and when Webster assured him that already a guaranteed sale of one hundred thousand copies of his own biography had been pledged by the agents he seemed even more astonished. "We in Italy cannot comprehend such things," he said. "I know you do great work in America; I know you have done a great and noble work in regard to General Grant's book, but that my Life should have such a sale seems impossible."

Page 485

He asked about their home, their children, and was in every way the kindly, gentle-hearted man that his pictured face has shown him. Then he gave them his final blessing and the audience closed.

We each again kissed the seal on his ring. As Annie was about to kiss it he suddenly withdrew his hand and said, "And will you, a little Protestant, kiss the Pope's ring?" As he said this, his face was all smiles, and mischief was clearly delineated upon it. He immediately put back his hand and she kissed the ring. We now withdrew, backing out and making three genuflections as before. Just as we reached the door he called to Dr. O'Reilly, "Now don't praise me too much; tell the truth, tell the truth."

CLX

A GREAT PUBLISHER AT HOME

Men are likely to be spoiled by prosperity, to be made arrogant, even harsh. Success made Samuel Clemens merely elate, more kindly, more humanly generous. Every day almost he wrote to Webster, suggesting some new book or venture, but always considerately, always deferring to suggestions from other points of view. Once, when it seemed to him that matters were not going as well as usual, a visit from Webster showed him that it was because of his own continued absence from the business that he did not understand. Whereupon he wrote:

Dear Charley,—Good—it's all good news. Everything is on the pleasantest possible basis now, and is going to stay so. I blame myself in not looking in on you oftener in the past—that would have prevented all trouble. I mean to stand to my duty better now.

At another time, realizing the press of responsibility, and that Webster was not entirely well, he sent a warning from Mrs. Clemens against overwork. He added:

Your letter shows that you need such a warning. So I warn you myself to look after that. Overwork killed Mr. Langdon and it can kill you.

Clemens found his own cares greatly multiplied. His connection with the firm was widely known, and many authors sent him their manuscripts or wrote him personal letters concerning them. Furthermore, he was beset by all the cranks and beggars in Christendom. His affairs became so numerous at length that he employed a business agent, F. G. Whitmore, to relieve him of a part of his burden. Whitmore lived close by, and was a good billiard-player. Almost anything from the morning mail served as an excuse to send for Whitmore.

Clemens was fond of affairs when they were going well; he liked the game of business, especially when it was pretentious and showily prosperous. It is probable that he was

never more satisfied with his share of fortune than just at this time. Certainly his home life was never happier. Katie Leary, for thirty years in the family service, has set down some impressions of that pleasant period.

Page 486

Mr. Clemens was a very affectionate father. He seldom left the house at night, but would read to the family, first to the children until bedtime, afterward to Mrs. Clemens. He usually read Browning to her. They were very fond of it. The children played charades a great deal, and he was wonderful at that game and always helped them. They were very fond of private theatricals. Every Saturday of their lives they had a temporary stage put up in the school-room and we all had to help. Gerhardt painted the scenery. They frequently played the balcony scene from "Romeo and Juliet" and several plays they wrote themselves. Now and then we had a big general performance of "The Prince and the Pauper." That would be in the library and the dining-room with the folding-doors open. The place just held eighty-four chairs, and the stage was placed back against the conservatory. The children were crazy about acting and we all enjoyed it as much as they did, especially Mr. Clemens, who was the best actor of all. I had a part, too, and George. I have never known a happier household than theirs was during those years. Mr. Clemens spent most of his time up in the billiard-room, writing or playing billiards. One day when I went in, and he was shooting the balls around the tables, I noticed smoke coming up from the hearth. I called Patrick, and John O'Neill, the gardener, and we began taking up the hearth to see what was the matter. Mr. Clemens kept on playing billiards right along and paid no attention to what we were doing. Finally, when we got the hearth up, a lot of flame and smoke came out into the room. The house was on fire. Mr. Clemens noticed then what we were about, and went over to the corner where there were some bottle fire-extinguishers. He took one down and threw it into the flames. This put them out a good deal, and he took up his cue, went back to the table, and began to shoot the balls around again as if nothing had happened. Mrs. Clemens came in just then and said, "Why, the house is afire!"

"Yes, I know it," he said, but went on playing.

We had a telephone and it didn't work very well. It annoyed him a good deal and sometimes he'd say:

"I'll tear it out."

One day he tried to call up Mrs. Dr. Tafft. He could not hear plainly and thought he was talking to central. "Send down and take this d—thing out of here," he said; "I'm tired of it." He was mad, and using a good deal of bad language. All at once he heard Mrs. Dr. Tafft say, "Oh, Mr. Clemens, good morning." He said, "Why, Mrs. Tafft, I have just come to the telephone. George, our butler, was here before me and I heard him swearing as I came up. I shall have to talk to him about it." Mrs. Tafft often told it on him.—[Mark Twain once wrote to the telephone management: "The time is coming very soon when the telephone will be a perfect instrument, when proximity will no

Page 487

longer be a hindrance to its performance, when, in fact, one will hear a man who is in the next block just as easily and comfortably as he would if that man were in San Francisco.”] Mrs. Clemens, before I went there, took care of his desk, but little by little I began to look after it when she was busy at other things. Finally I took care of it altogether, but he didn’t know it for a long time. One morning he caught me at it. “What are you doing here?” he asked.

“Dusting, Mr. Clemens,” I said.

“You have no business here,” he said, very mad.

“I’ve been doing it for a year, Mr. Clemens,” I said. “Mrs. Clemens told me to do it.”

After that, when he missed anything—and he missed things often—he would ring for me. “Katie,” he would say, “you have lost that manuscript.”

“Oh, Mr. Clemens,” I would say, “I am sure I didn’t touch it.”

“Yes, you did touch it, Katie. You put it in the fire. It is gone.”

He would scold then, and fume a great deal. Then he would go over and mark out with his toe on the carpet a line which I was never to cross. “Katie,” he would say, “you are never to go nearer to my desk than that line. That is the dead-line.” Often after he had scolded me in the morning he would come in in the evening where I was dressing Mrs. Clemens to go out and say, “Katie, I found that manuscript.” And I would say, “Mr. Clemens, I felt so bad this morning that I wanted to go away.” He had a pipe-cleaner which he kept on a high shelf. It was an awful old dirty one, and I didn’t know that he ever used it. I took it to the balcony which was built out into the woods and threw it away as far as I could throw it. Next day he asked, “Katie, did you see my pipe-cleaner? You did see it; I can tell by your looks.”

I said, “Yes, Mr. Clemens, I threw it away.”

“Well,” he said, “it was worth a thousand dollars,” and it seemed so to me, too, before he got done scolding about it.

It is hard not to dwell too long on the home life of this period. One would like to make a long chapter out of those play-acting evenings alone. They remained always fresh in Mark Twain’s memory. Once he wrote of them:

We dined as we could, probably with a neighbor, and by quarter to eight in the evening the hickory fire in the hall was pouring a sheet of flame up the chimney, the house was in a drench of gas- light from the ground floor up, the guests were arriving, and there was a babble of hearty greetings, with not a voice in it that was not old and familiar and affectionate; and when the curtain went up we looked out from the stage upon none but faces that were dear to us, none but faces that were lit up with welcome for us.

CLXI

HISTORY: MAINLY BY SUSY

Page 488

Suzy, in her biography, which she continued through this period, writes:

Mama and I have both been very much troubled of late because papa, since he had been publishing General Grant's books, has seemed to forget his own books and works entirely; and the other evening, as papa and I were promonading up and down the library, he told me that he didn't expect to write but one more book, and then he was ready to give up work altogether, die, or, do anything; he said that he had written more than he had ever expected to, and the only book that he had been pertickularly anxious to write was one locked up in the safe downstairs, not yet published.

The book locked in the safe was Captain Stormfield, and the one he expected to write was A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court. He had already worked at it in a desultory way during the early months of 1886, and once wrote of it to Webster:

I have begun a book whose scene is laid far back in the twilight of tradition; I have saturated myself with the atmosphere of the day and the subject and got myself into the swing of the work. If I peg away for some weeks without a break I am safe.

But he could not peg away. He had too many irons in the fire for that. Matthew Arnold had criticized General Grant's English, and Clemens immediately put down other things to rush to his hero's defense. He pointed out that in Arnold's criticism there were no less than "two grammatical crimes and more than several examples of very crude and slovenly English," and said:

There is that about the sun which makes us forget his spots, and when we think of General Grant our pulses quicken and his grammar vanishes; we only remember that this is the simple soldier, who, all untaught of the silken phrase-makers, linked words together with an art surpassing the art of the schools, and put into them a something which will still bring to American ears, as long as America shall last, the roll of his vanished drums and the tread of his marching hosts.—[Address to Army and Navy Club. For full text see Appendix]

Clemens worked at the Yankee now and then, and Howells, when some of the chapters were read to him, gave it warm approval and urged its continuance.

Howells was often in Hartford at this time. Webster & Co. were planning to publish The Library of Humor, which Howells and "Charley" Clark had edited several years before, and occasional conferences were desirable. Howells tells us that, after he and Clark had been at great trouble to get the matter logically and chronologically arranged, Clemens pulled it all to pieces and threw it together helter-skelter, declaring that there ought to be no sequence in a book of that sort, any more than in the average reader's mind; and Howells admits that this was probably the truer method in a book made for the diversion rather than the instruction of the reader.

Page 489

One of the literary diversions of this time was a commentary on a delicious little book by Caroline B. Le Row—English as She Is Taught—being a compilation of genuine answers given to examination questions by pupils in our public schools. Mark Twain was amused by such definitions as: “Aborigines, system of mountains”; “Alias—a good man in the Bible”; “Ammonia—the food of the gods,” and so on down the alphabet.

Susy, in her biography, mentions that her father at this is time read to them a little article which he had just written, entitled “Luck,” and that they thought it very good. It was a story which Twichell had heard and told to Clemens, who set it down about as it came to him. It was supposed to be true, yet Clemens seemed to think it too improbable for literature and laid it away for a number of years. We shall hear of it again by and by.

From Susy’s memoranda we gather that humanity at this time was to be healed of all evils and sorrows through “mind cure.”

Papa has been very much interested of late in the “mind-cure” theory. And, in fact, so have we all. A young lady in town has worked wonders by using the “mind cure” upon people; she is constantly busy now curing peoples’ diseases in this way—and curing her own, even, which to me seems the most remarkable of all. A little while past papa was delighted with the knowledge of what he thought the best way of curing a cold, which was by starving it. This starving did work beautifully, and freed him from a great many severe colds. Now he says it wasn’t the starving that helped his colds, but the trust in the starving, the “mind cure” connected with the starving. I shouldn’t wonder if we finally became firm believers in “mind cure.” The next time papa has a cold I haven’t a doubt he will send for Miss Holden, the young lady who is doctoring in the “mind-cure” theory, to cure him of it.

Again, a month later, she writes:

April 19, 1886. Yes, the “mind cure” does seem to be working wonderfully. Papa, who has been using glasses now for more than a year, has laid them off entirely. And my near-sightedness is really getting better. It seems marvelous. When Jean has stomach-ache Clara and I have tried to divert her by telling her to lie on her side and try “mind cure.” The novelty of it has made her willing to try it, and then Clara and I would exclaim about how wonderful it was she was getting better. And she would think it really was finally, and stop crying, to our delight. The other day mama went into the library and found her lying on the sofa with her back toward the door. She said, “Why, Jean, what’s the matter? Don’t you feel well?” Jean said that she had a little stomach-ache, and so thought she would lie down. Mama said, “Why don’t you try ‘mind cure’?” “I am,” Jean answered.

Howells and Twichell were invited to try the “mind

Page 490

cure," as were all other friends who happened along. To the end of his days Clemens would always have some panacea to offer to allay human distress. It was a good trait, when all is said, for it had its root in his humanity. The "mind cure" did not provide all the substance of things hoped for, though he always allowed for it a wide efficacy.

Once, in later years, commenting on Susy's record, he said:

The mind cannot heal broken bones, and doubtless there are many other physical ills which it cannot heal, but it can greatly help to modify the severities of all of them without exception, and there are mental and nervous ailments which it can wholly heal without the help of physician or surgeon.

Susy records another burning interest of this time:

Clara sprained her ankle a little while ago by running into a tree when coasting, and while she was unable to walk with it she played solitaire with cards a great deal. While Clara was sick and papa saw her play solitaire so much he got very much interested in the game, and finally began to play it himself a little; then Jean took it up, and at last mama even played it occasionally; Jean's and papa's love for it rapidly increased, and now Jean brings the cards every night to the table and papa and mama help her play, and before dinner is at an end papa has gotten a separate pack of cards and is playing alone, with great interest. Mama and Clara next are made subject to the contagious solitaire, and there are four solitaireans at the table, while you hear nothing but "Fill up the place," etc. It is dreadful!

But a little further along Susy presents her chief subject more seriously. He is not altogether absorbed with "mind cure" and solitaire, or even with making humorous tales.

Papa has done a great deal in his life I think that is good and very remarkable, but I think if he had had the advantages with which he could have developed the gifts which he has made no use of in writing his books, or in any other way, for peoples' pleasure and benefit outside of his own family and intimate friends, he could have done more than he has, and a great deal more, even. He is known to the public as a humorist, but he has much more in him that is earnest than that is humorous. He has a keen sense of the ludicrous, notices funny stories and incidents, knows how to tell them, to improve upon them, and does not forget them.

And again:

When we are all alone at home nine times out of ten he talks about some very earnest subject (with an occasional joke thrown in), and he a good deal more often talks upon such subjects than upon the other kind. He is as much of a philosopher as anything, I think. I think he could have done a great deal in this direction if he had studied while young, for he seems to enjoy reasoning out things, no matter what; in a great many such directions he has greater ability than in the gifts which have made him famous.

It was with the keen eyes and just mind of childhood that Susy estimated, and there is little to add to her valuation.

Page 491

Susy's biography came to an end that summer after starting to record a visit which they all made to Keokuk to see Grandma Clemens. They went by way of the Lakes and down the Mississippi from St. Paul. A pleasant incident happened that first evening on the river. Soon after nightfall they entered a shoal crossing. Clemens, standing alone on the hurricane-deck, heard the big bell forward boom out the call for leads. Then came the leadsmen's long-drawn chant, once so familiar, the monotonous repeating in river parlance of the depths of water. Presently the lead had found that depth of water signified by his nom de plume and the call of "Mark Twain, Mark Twain" floated up to him like a summons from the past. All at once a little figure came running down the deck, and Clara confronted him, reprovingly:

"Papa," she said, "I have hunted all over the boat for you. Don't you know they are calling for you?"

They remained in Keokuk a week, and Susy starts to tell something of their visit there. She begins:

"We have arrived in Keokuk after a very pleasant——"

The sentence remains unfinished. We cannot know what was the interruption or what new interest kept her from her task. We can only regret that the loving little hand did not continue its pleasant history. Years later, when Susy had passed from among the things we know, her father, commenting, said:

When I look at the arrested sentence that ends the little book it seems as if the hand that traced it cannot be far—it is gone for a moment only, and will come again and finish it. But that is a dream; a creature of the heart, not of the mind—a feeling, a longing, not a mental product; the same that lured Aaron Burr, old, gray, forlorn, forsaken, to the pier day after day, week after week, there to stand in the gloom and the chill of the dawn, gazing seaward through veiling mists and sleet and snow for the ship which he knew was gone down, the ship that bore all his treasure—his daughter.

MARK TWAIN, A BIOGRAPHY

By Albert Bigelow Paine

VOLUME II, Part 2: 1886-1900

CLXII

BROWNING, MEREDITH, AND MEISTERSCHAFT

The Browning readings must have begun about this time. Just what kindled Mark Twain's interest in the poetry of Robert Browning is not remembered, but very likely his earlier associations with the poet had something to do with it. Whatever the beginning, we find him, during the winter of 1886 and 1887, studiously, even violently, interested in Browning's verses, entertaining a sort of club or class who gathered to hear his rich, sympathetic, and luminous reading of the Payleyings—"With Bernard de Mandeville," "Daniel Bartoli," or "Christopher Smart." Members of the Saturday Morning

Page 492

Club were among his listeners and others-friends of the family. They were rather remarkable gatherings, and no one of that group but always vividly remembered the marvelously clear insight which Mark Twain's vocal personality gave to those somewhat obscure measures. They did not all of them realize that before reading a poem he studied it line by line, even word by word; dug out its last syllable of meaning, so far as lay within human possibility, and indicated with pencil every shade of emphasis which would help to reveal the poet's purpose. No student of Browning ever more devoutly persisted in trying to compass a master's intent—in such poems as "Sordello," for instance—than Mark Twain. Just what permanent benefit he received from this particular passion it is difficult to know. Once, at a class-meeting, after finishing "Easter Day," he made a remark which the class requested him to "write down." It is recorded on the fly-leaf of *Dramatis Personae* as follows:

One's glimpses & confusions, as one reads Browning, remind me of looking through a telescope (the small sort which you must move with your hand, not clock-work). You toil across dark spaces which are (to your lens) empty; but every now & then a splendor of stars & suns bursts upon you and fills the whole field with flame. Feb. 23, 1887.

In another note he speaks of the "vague dim flash of splendid hamming-birds through a fog." Whatever mental treasures he may or may not have laid up from Browning there was assuredly a deep gratification in the discovery of those splendors of "stars and suns" and the flashing "humming-birds," as there must also have been in pointing out those wonders to the little circle of devout listeners. It all seemed so worth while.

It was at a time when George Meredith was a reigning literary favorite. There was a Meredith cult as distinct as that of Browning. Possibly it exists to-day, but, if so, it is less militant. Mrs. Clemens and her associates were caught in the Meredith movement and read *Diana of the Crossways* and the *Egoist* with reverential appreciation.

The Meredith epidemic did not touch Mark Twain. He read but few novels at most, and, skilful as was the artistry of the English favorite, he found his characters artificialities—ingeniously contrived puppets rather than human beings, and, on the whole, overrated by their creator. *Diana of the Crossways* was read aloud, and, listening now and then, he was likely to say:

"It doesn't seem to me that Diana lives up to her reputation. The author keeps telling us how smart she is, how brilliant, but I never seem to hear her say anything smart or brilliant. Read me some of Diana's smart utterances."

He was relentless enough in his criticism of a literature he did not care for, and he never learned to care for Meredith.

He read his favorite books over and over with an ever-changing point of view. He re-read Carlyle's French Revolution during the summer at the farm, and to Howells he wrote:

Page 493

How stunning are the changes which age makes in man while he sleeps! When I finished Carlyle's French Revolution in 1871 I was a Girondin; every time I have read it since I have read it differently—being influenced & changed, little by little, by life & environment (& Taine & St. Simon); & now I lay the book down once more, & recognize that I am a Sansculotte!—And not a pale, characterless Sansculotte, but a Marat. Carlyle teaches no such gospel, so the change is in me—in my vision of the evidences. People pretend that the Bible means the same to them at 50 that it did at all former milestones in their journey. I wonder how they can lie so. It comes of practice, no doubt. They would not say that of Dickens's or Scott's books. Nothing remains the same. When a man goes back to look at the house of his childhood it has always shrunk; there is no instance of such house being as big as the picture in memory & imagination call for. Shrunk how? Why, to its correct dimensions; the house hasn't altered; this is the first time it has been in focus. Well, that's loss. To have house & Bible shrink so, under the disillusioning corrected angle, is loss—for a moment. But there are compensations. You tilt the tube skyward & bring planets & comets & corona flames a hundred & fifty thousand miles high into the field. Which I see you have done, & found Tolstoi. I haven't got him in focus yet, but I've got Browning.

In time the Browning passion would wane and pass, and the club was succeeded by, or perhaps it blended with, a German class which met at regular intervals at the Clemens home to study "der, die, and das" and the "gehabt habens" out of Meisterschaft and such other text-books as Professor Schleutter could provide. They had monthly conversation days, when they discussed in German all sorts of things, real and imaginary. Once Dr. Root, a prominent member, and Clemens had a long wrangle over painting a house, in which they impersonated two German neighbors.

Clemens finally wrote for the class a three-act play "Meisterschaft"—a literary achievement for which he was especially qualified, with its picturesque mixture of German and English and its unfailing humor. It seems unlike anything ever attempted before or since. No one but Mark Twain could have written it. It was given twice by the class with enormous success, and in modified form it was published in the Century Magazine (January, 1888). It is included to-day in his "Complete Works," but one must have a fair knowledge of German to capture the full delight of it.—[On the original manuscript Mark Twain wrote: "There is some tolerably rancid German here and there in this piece. It is attributable to the proof-reader." Perhaps the proof-reader resented this and cut it out, for it does not appear as published.]

Page 494

Mark Twain probably exaggerated his sentiments a good deal when in the Carlyle letter he claimed to be the most rabid of Sansculottes. It is unlikely that he was ever very bare-kneed and crimson in his anarchy. He believed always that cruelty should be swiftly punished, whether in king or commoner, and that tyrants should be destroyed. He was for the people as against kings, and for the union of labor as opposed to the union of capital, though he wrote of such matters judicially—not radically. The Knights of Labor organization, then very powerful, seemed to Clemens the salvation of oppressed humanity. He wrote a vehement and convincing paper on the subject, which he sent to Howells, to whom it appealed very strongly, for Howells was socialistic, in a sense, and Clemens made his appeal in the best and largest sense, dramatizing his conception in a picture that was to include, in one grand league, labor of whatever form, and, in the end, all mankind in a final millennium. Howells wrote that he had read the essay “with thrills amounting to yells of satisfaction,” and declared it to be the best thing yet said on the subject. The essay closed:

He [the unionized workman] is here and he will remain. He is the greatest birth of the greatest age the nations of the world have known. You cannot sneer at him—that time has gone by. He has before him the most righteous work that was ever given into the hand of man to do; and he will do it. Yes, he is here; and the question is not—as it has been heretofore during a thousand ages—What shall we do with him? For the first time in history we are relieved of the necessity of managing his affairs for him. He is not a broken dam this time—he is the Flood!

It must have been about this time that Clemens developed an intense, even if a less permanent, interest in another matter which was to benefit the species. He was one day walking up Fifth Avenue when he noticed the sign

Professor Loiset

school of memory

The Instantaneous Art of Never Forgetting

Clemens went inside. When he came out he had all of Professor Loiset’s literature on “predicating correlation,” and for the next several days was steeping himself in an infusion of meaningless words and figures and sentences and forms, which he must learn backward and forward and diagonally, so that he could repeat them awake and asleep in order to predicate his correlation to a point where remembering the ordinary facts of life, such as names, addresses, and telephone numbers, would be a mere diversion.

It was another case of learning the multitudinous details of the Mississippi River in order to do the apparently simple thing of steering a boat from New Orleans to St. Louis, and it is fair to say that, for the time he gave it, he achieved a like success. He was so enthusiastic over this new remedy for human distress that within a very brief time he

was sending out a printed letter recommending Loisetto to the public at large. Here is an extract:

Page 495

. . . I had no *system*—and some sort of rational order of procedure is, of course, necessary to success in any study. Well, Loisetette furnished me a system. I cannot undertake to say it is the best, or the worst, because I don't know what the other systems are. Loisetette, among other cruelties, requires you to memorize a great long string of words that, haven't any apparent connection or meaning—there are perhaps 500 of these words, arranged in maniacal lines of 6 to 8 or 9 words in each line—71 lines in all. Of course your first impulse is to resign, but at the end of three or four hours you find to your surprise that you've *got* them and can deliver them backward or forward without mistake or hesitation. Now, don't you see what a world of confidence that must necessarily breed? —confidence in a memory which before you wouldn't even venture to trust with the Latin motto of the U. S. lest it mislay it and the country suffer. Loisetette doesn't make memories, he furnishes confidence in memories that already exist. Isn't that valuable? Indeed it is to me. Whenever hereafter I shall choose to pack away a thing properly in that refrigerator I sha'n't be bothered with the aforesaid doubts; I shall know I'm going to find it sound and sweet when I go for it again.

Loisetette naturally made the most of this advertising and flooded the public with Mark Twain testimonials. But presently Clemens decided that after all the system was not sufficiently simple to benefit the race at large. He recalled his printed letters and prevailed upon Loisetette to suppress his circulars. Later he decided that the whole system was a humbug.

CLXIII

LETTER TO THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND

It was one day in 1887 that Clemens received evidence that his reputation as a successful author and publisher—a man of wealth and revenues—had penetrated even the dimness of the British Tax Offices. A formidable envelope came, inclosing a letter from his London publishers and a very large printed document all about the income tax which the Queen's officers had levied upon his English royalties as the result of a report that he had taken Buckenham Hall, Norwich, for a year, and was to become an English resident. The matter amused and interested him. To Chatto & Windus he wrote:

I will explain that all that about Buckenham Hall was an English newspaper's mistake. I was not in England, and if I had been I wouldn't have been at Buckenham Hall anyway, but Buckingham Palace, or I would have endeavored to have found out the reason why . . .

But we won't resist. We'll pay as if I were really a resident. The country that allows me copyright has a right to tax me.

Reflecting on the matter, Clemens decided to make literature of it. He conceived the notion of writing an open letter to the Queen in the character of a rambling, garrulous, but well-disposed countryman whose idea was that her Majesty conducted all the business of the empire herself. He began:

Page 496

Hartford, November 6, 2887.

Madam, You will remember that last May Mr. Edward Bright, the clerk of the Inland Revenue Office, wrote me about a tax which he said was due from me to the Government on books of mine published in London—that is to say, an income tax on the royalties. I do not know Mr. Bright, and it is embarrassing to me to correspond with strangers, for I was raised in the country and have always lived there, the early part in Marion County, Missouri, before the war, and this part in Hartford County, Connecticut, near Bloomfield and about 8 miles this side of Farmington, though some call it 9, which it is impossible to be, for I have walked it many and many a time in considerably under three hours, and General Hawley says he has done it in two and a quarter, which is not likely; so it has seemed best that I write your Majesty.

The letter proceeded to explain that he had never met her Majesty personally, but that he once met her son, the Prince of Wales, in Oxford Street, at the head of a procession, while he himself was on the top of an omnibus. He thought the Prince would probably remember him on account of a gray coat with flap pockets which he wore, he being the only person on the omnibus who had on that kind of a coat.

“I remember him,” he said, “as easily as I would a comet.”

He explained the difficulty he had in understanding under what heading he was taxed. There was a foot-note on the list which stated that he was taxed under “Schedule D, section 14.” He had turned to that place and found these three things: “Trades, Offices, Gas Works.” He did not regard authorship as a trade, and he had no office, so he did not consider that he was taxable under “Schedule D, section 14.” The letter concludes:

Having thus shown your Majesty that I am not taxable, but am the victim of the error of a clerk who mistakes the nature of my commerce, it only remains for me to beg that you will, of your justice, annul my letter that I spoke of, so that my publisher can keep back that tax money which, in the confusion and aberration caused by the Document, I ordered him to pay. You will not miss the sum, but this is a hard year for authors, and as for lectures I do not suppose your Majesty ever saw such a dull season.

With always great and ever-increasing respect, I beg to sign myself
your Majesty’s servant to command,

mark twain.

Her Majesty the Queen, London.

The letter, or “petition,” as it was called, was published in the Harper’s Magazine “Drawer” (December, 1889), and is now included in the “Complete Works.” Taken as a whole it is one of the most exquisite of Mark Twain’s minor humors. What other humorist could have refrained from hinting, at least, the inference suggested by the obvious “Gas Works”? Yet it was a subtler art to let his old, simple-minded countryman

ignore that detail. The little skit was widely copied and reached the Queen herself in due time, and her son, Prince Edward, who never forgot its humor.

Page 497

Clemens read a notable paper that year before the Monday Evening Club. Its subject was "Consistency"—political consistency—and in it he took occasion to express himself pretty vigorously regarding the virtue of loyalty to party before principle, as exemplified in the Blaine-Cleveland campaign. It was in effect a scathing reply to those who, three years, before, had denounced Twichell and himself for standing by their convictions.—[Characteristic paragraphs from this paper will be found under Appendix R, at the end of last volume.]

CLXIV

Some further account of Charles L. Webster & co.

Flood-tide is a temporary condition, and the ebb in the business of Charles L. Webster & Co., though very deliberate, was not delayed in its beginning. Most of the books published—the early ones at least—were profitable. McClellan's memoirs paid, as did others of the war series.

Even *The Life of Pope Leo XIII.* paid. What a statement to make, after all their magnificent dreams and preparations! It was published simultaneously in six languages. It was exploited in every conceivable fashion, and its aggregate sales fell far short of the number which the general agents had promised for their first orders. It was amazing, it was incredible, but, alas! it was true. The prospective Catholic purchaser had decided that the Pope's Life was not necessary to his salvation or even to his entertainment. Howells explains it, to his own satisfaction at least, when he says:

We did not consider how often Catholics could not read, how often, when they could, they might not wish to read. The event proved that, whether they could read or not, the immeasurable majority did not wish to read *The Life of the Pope*, though it was written by a dignitary of the Church and issued to the world with sanction from the Vatican.

Howells, of course, is referring to the laboring Catholic of that day. There are no Catholics of this day—no American Catholics, at least—who do not read, and money among them has become plentiful. Perhaps had the Pope's Life been issued in this new hour of enlightenment the tale of its success might have been less sadly told.

A variety of books followed. Henry Ward Beecher agreed to write an autobiography, but he died just when he was beginning the work, and the biography, which his family put together, brought only a moderate return. A book of Sandwich Islands tales and legends, by his Hawaiian Majesty King Kalakaua, edited by Clemens's old friend, Rollin M. Daggett, who had become United States minister to the islands, barely paid for the cost of manufacture, while a volume of reminiscences by General Hancock was still less fortunate. The running expenses of the business were heavy. On the strength of the Grant success Webster had moved into still larger quarters at No.

Page 498

3 East Fifteenth Street, and had a ground floor for a salesroom. The force had become numerous and costly. It was necessary that a book should pay largely to maintain this pretentious establishment. A number of books were published at a heavy loss. Never mind their titles; we may forget them, with the name of the bookkeeper who presently embezzled thirty thousand dollars of the firm's money and returned but a trifling sum.

By the end of 1887 there were three works in prospect on which great hopes were founded—'The Library of Humor', which Howells and Clark had edited; a personal memoir of General Sheridan's, and a Library of American Literature in ten volumes, compiled by Edmund Clarence Stedman and Ellen Mackay Hutchinson. It was believed these would restore the fortunes and the prestige of the firm. They were all excellent, attractive features. The Library of Humor was ably selected and contained two hundred choice drawings by Kemble. The Sheridan Memoir was finely written, and the public interest in it was bound to be general. The Library of American Literature was a collection of the best American writing, and seemed bound to appeal to every American reading-home. It was necessary to borrow most of the money required to build these books, for the profit made from the Grant Life and less fortunate ventures was pretty well exhausted. Clemens presently found a little drift of his notes accumulating at this bank and that—a disturbing condition, when he remembered it, for he was financing the typesetting machine by this time, and it was costing a pretty sum.

Meantime, Webster was no longer active in the management. In two years he had broken down from overwork, and was now desperately ill with an acute neuralgia that kept him away from the business most of the time. Its burdens had fallen upon his assistant, Fred J. Hall, a willing, capable young man, persevering and hopeful, lacking only years and experience. Hall worked like a beaver, and continually looked forward to success. He explained, with each month's report of affairs, just why the business had not prospered more during that particular month, and just why its profits would be greater during the next. Webster finally retired from the business altogether, and Hall was given a small partnership in the firm. He reduced expenses, worked desperately, pumping out the debts, and managed to keep the craft afloat.

The Library of Humor, the Life of Sheridan, and The Library of American Literature all sold very well; not so well as had been hoped, but the sales yielded a fair profit. It was thought that if Clemens himself would furnish a new book now and then the business might regain something of its original standing.

We may believe that Clemens had not been always patient, not always gentle, during this process of decline. He had differed with Webster, and occasionally had gone down and reconstructed things after his own notions. Once he wrote to Orion that he had suddenly awakened to find that there was no more system in the office than in a nursery without a nurse.

Page 499

“But,” he added, “I have spent a good deal of time there since, and reduced everything to exact order and system.”

Just what were the new features of order instituted it would be interesting to know. That the financial pressure was beginning to be felt even in the Clemens home is shown by a Christmas letter to Mrs. Moffett.

Hartford, December 18, 1887.

Dear Pamela,—Will you take this \$15 & buy some candy or other trifle for yourself & Sam & his wife to remind you that we remember you?

If we weren't a little crowded this year by the type-setter I'd send a check large enough to buy a family Bible or some other useful thing like that. However, we go on & on, but the type-setter goes on forever—at \$3,000 a month; which is much more satisfactory than was the case the first 17 months, when the bill only averaged \$2,000, & promised to take a thousand years. We'll be through now in 3 or 4 months, I reckon, & then the strain will let up and we can breathe freely once more, whether success ensues or failure.

Even with a type-setter on hand we ought not to be in the least scrimped-but it would take a long letter to explain why & who is to blame.

All the family send love to all of you, & best Christmas wishes for your prosperity.

Affectionately,
Sam.

CLXV

LETTERS, VISITS, AND VISITORS

There were many pleasanter things, to be sure. The farm life never failed with each returning summer; the winters brought gay company and fair occasions. Sir Henry and Lady Stanley, visiting. America, were entertained in the Clemens home, and Clemens went on to Boston to introduce Stanley to his lecture audience. Charles Dickens's son, with his wife and daughter, followed a little later. An incident of their visit seems rather amusing now. There is a custom in England which requires the host to give the guest notice of bedtime by handing him a lighted candle. Mrs. Clemens knew of this custom, but did not have the courage to follow it in her own home, and the guests knew of no other way to relieve the situation; as a result, all sat up much later than usual. Eventually Clemens himself suggested that possibly the guests would like to retire.

Robert Louis Stevenson came down from Saranac, and Clemens went in to visit him at his New York hotel, the St. Stevens, on East Eleventh Street. Stevenson had orders to sit in the sunshine as much as possible, and during the few days of their association he and Clemens would walk down to Washington Square and sit on one of the benches and talk. They discussed many things—philosophies, people, books; it seems a pity their talk could not have been preserved.

Stevenson was a great admirer of Mark Twain's work. He said that during a recent painting of his portrait he had insisted on reading *Huck Finn* aloud to the artist, a Frenchman, who had at first protested, and finally had fallen a complete victim to Huck's yarn. In one of Stevenson's letters to Clemens he wrote:

Page 500

My father, an old man, has been prevailed upon to read *Roughing It* (his usual amusement being found in theology), and after one evening spent with the book he declared: "I am frightened. It cannot be safe for a man at my time of life to laugh so much."

What heaps of letters, by the way, remain from this time, and how curious some of them are! Many of them are requests of one sort or another, chiefly for money—one woman asking for a single day's income, conservatively estimated at five thousand dollars. Clemens seldom answered an unwarranted letter; but at one time he began a series of unmailed answers—that is to say, answers in which he had let himself go merely to relieve his feelings and to restore his spiritual balance. He prepared an introduction for this series. In it he said:

. . . You receive a letter. You read it. It will be tolerably sure to produce one of three results: 1, pleasure; 2, displeasure; 3, indifference. I do not need to say anything about Nos. 1 & 3; everybody knows what to do with those breeds of letters; it is breed No. 2 that I am after. It is the one that is loaded up with trouble. When you get an exasperating letter what happens? If you are young you answer it promptly, instantly—and mail the thing you have written. At forty what do you do? By that time you have found out that a letter written in a passion is a mistake in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred; that it usually wrongs two persons, and always wrongs one—yourself. You have grown weary of wronging yourself and repenting; so you manacle, you fetter, you log-chain the frantic impulse to write a pulverizing answer. You will wait a day or die. But in the mean time what do you do? Why, if it is about dinner-time, you sit at table in a deep abstraction all through the meal; you try to throw it off and help do the talking; you get a start three or four times, but conversation dies on your lips every time—your mind isn't on it; your heart isn't in it. You give up, and subside into a bottomless deep of silence, permanently; people must speak to you two or three times to get your attention, and then say it over again to make you understand. This kind of thing goes on all the rest of the evening; nobody can interest you in anything; you are useless, a depressing influence, a burden. You go to bed at last; but at three in the morning you are as wide awake as you were in the beginning. Thus we see what you have been doing for nine hours—on the outside. But what were you doing on the inside? You were writing letters—in your mind. And enjoying it, that is quite true; that is not to be denied. You have been playing your correspondent alive with your incorporeal pen; you have been braining him, disemboweling him, carving him into little bits, and then—doing it all over again. For nine hours. It was wasted time, for you had no intention of putting any of this insanity on paper and mailing

Page 501

it. Yes, you know that, and confess it—but what were you to do? Where was your remedy? Will anybody contend that a man can say to such masterful anger as that, Go, and be obeyed? No, he cannot; that is certainly true. Well, then, what is he to do? I will explain by the suggestion contained in my opening paragraph. During the nine hours he has written as many as forty- seven furious letters—in his mind. If he had put just one of them on paper it would have brought him relief, saved him eight hours of trouble, and given him an hour's red-hot pleasure besides. He is not to mail this letter; he understands that, and so he can turn on the whole volume of his wrath; there is no harm. He is only writing it to get the bile out. So to speak, he is a volcano: imaging himself erupting does no good; he must open up his crater and pour out in reality his intolerable charge of lava if he would get relief.

Before he has filled his first sheet sometimes the relief is there.
He degenerates into good-nature from that point.

Sometimes the load is so hot and so great that one writes as many as three letters before he gets down to a mailable one; a very angry one, a less angry one, and an argumentative one with hot embers in it here and there. He pigeonholes these and then does one of two things—dismisses the whole matter from his mind or writes the proper sort of letter and mails it. To this day I lose my balance and send an overwarm letter—or more frequently telegram—two or three times a year. But that is better than doing it a hundred times a year, as I used to do years ago. Perhaps I write about as many as ever, but I pigeonhole them. They ought not to be thrown away. Such a letter a year or so old is as good as a sermon to the maw who wrote it. It makes him feel small and shabby, but—well, that wears off. Any sermon does; but the sermon does some little good, anyway. An old cold letter like that makes you wonder how you could ever have got into such a rage about nothing.

The unmailed answers that were to accompany this introduction were plentiful enough and generally of a fervent sort. One specimen will suffice. It was written to the chairman of a hospital committee.

Dear sir,—If I were Smithfield I would certainly go out and get behind something and blush. According to your report, “the politicians are afraid to tax the people for the support” of so humane and necessary a thing as a hospital. And do your “people” propose to stand that?—at the hands of vermin officials whom the breath of their votes could blow out of official existence in a moment if they had the pluck to band themselves together and blow. Oh, come, these are not “people”—they are cowed school-boys with backbones made of boiled macaroni. If you are not misreporting those “people” you are just in the right business

Page 502

passing the mendicant hat for them. Dear sir, communities where anything like citizenship exists are accustomed to hide their shames, but here we have one proposing to get up a great “exposition” of its dishonor and advertise it all it can.

It has been eleven years since I wrote anything for one of those graveyards called a “Fair paper,” and so I have doubtless lost the knack of it somewhat; still I have done the best I could for you.

This was from a burning heart and well deserved. One may almost regret that he did not send it.

Once he received a letter intended for one Samuel Clements, of Elma, New York, announcing that the said Clements’s pension had been allowed. But this was amusing. When Clemens had forwarded the notice to its proper destination he could not resist sending this comment to the commissioner at Washington:

Dear sir,—I have not applied for a pension. I have often wanted a pension—often—ever so often—I may say, but in as much as the only military service I performed during the war was in the Confederate army, I have always felt a delicacy about asking you for it. However, since you have suggested the thing yourself, I feel strengthened. I haven’t any very pensionable diseases myself, but I can furnish a substitute—a man who is just simply a chaos, a museum of all the different kinds of aches and pains, fractures, dislocations and malformations there are; a man who would regard “rheumatism and sore eyes” as mere recreation and refreshment after the serious occupations of his day. If you grant me the pension, dear sir, please hand it to General Jos. Hawley, United States Senator—I mean hand him the certificate, not the money, and he will forward it to me. You will observe by this postal-card which I inclose that he takes a friendly interest in the matter. He thinks I’ve already got the pension, whereas I’ve only got the rheumatism; but didn’t want that—I had that before. I wish it were catching. I know a man that I would load up with it pretty early. Lord, but we all feel that way sometimes. I’ve seen the day when but never mind that; you may be busy; just hand it to Hawley—the certificate, you understand, is not transferable.

Clemens was in good standing at Washington during the Cleveland administration, and many letters came, asking him to use his influence with the President to obtain this or that favor. He always declined, though once—a few years later, in Europe—when he learned that Frank Mason, consul-general at Frankfort, was about to be displaced, Clemens, of his own accord, wrote to Baby Ruth Cleveland about it.

Page 503

My dear Ruth, I belong to the Mugwumps, and one of the most sacred rules of our order prevents us from asking favors of officials or recommending men to office, but there is no harm in writing a friendly letter to you and telling you that an infernal outrage is about to be committed by your father in turning out of office the best Consul I know (and I know a great many) just because he is a Republican and a Democrat wants his place.

He went on to recall Mason's high and honorable record, suggesting that Miss Ruth take the matter into her own hands. Then he said:

I can't send any message to the President, but the next time you have a talk with him concerning such matters I wish you would tell him about Captain Mason and what I think of a Government that so treats its efficient officials.

Just what form of appeal the small agent made is not recorded, but by and by Mark Twain received a tiny envelope, postmarked Washington, inclosing this note in President Cleveland's handwriting:

Miss Ruth Cleveland begs to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Twain's letter and say that she took the liberty of reading it to the President, who desires her to thank Mr. Twain for her information, and to say to him that Captain Mason will not be disturbed in the Frankfort Consulate. The President also desires Miss Cleveland to say that if Mr. Twain knows of any other cases of this kind he will be greatly obliged if he will write him concerning them at his earliest convenience.

Clemens immensely admired Grover Cleveland, also his young wife, and his visits to Washington were not infrequent. Mrs. Clemens was not always able to accompany him, and he has told us how once (it was his first visit after the President's marriage) she put a little note in the pocket of his evening waistcoat, which he would be sure to find when dressing, warning him about his deportment. Being presented to Mrs. Cleveland, he handed her a card on which he had written "He didn't," and asked her to sign her name below those words. Mrs. Cleveland protested that she couldn't sign it unless she knew what it was he hadn't done; but he insisted, and she promised to sign if he would tell her immediately afterward all about it. She signed, and he handed her Mrs. Clemens's note, which was very brief. It said:

"Don't wear your arctics in the White House."

Mrs. Cleveland summoned a messenger and had the card she had signed mailed at once to Mrs. Clemens at Hartford.

He was not always so well provided against disaster. Once, without consulting his engagements, he agreed to assist Mrs. Cleveland at a dedication, only to find that he must write an apology later. In his letter he said:

I do not know how it is in the White House, but in this house of ours whenever the minor half of the administration tries to run itself without the help of the major half it gets aground.

Page 504

He explained his position, and added:

I suppose the President often acts just like that; goes and makes an impossible promise, and you never find it out until it is next to impossible to break it up and set things straight again. Well, that is just our way exactly—one-half the administration always busy getting the family into trouble and the other half busy getting it out.

CLVXI

A “PLAYER” AND A MASTER OF ARTS

One morning early in January Clemens received the following note:

DALY'S *theater, new York*, January 2, 1888.

Mr. Augustin Daly will be very much pleased to have Mr. S. L. Clemens meet Mr. Booth, Mr. Barrett, and Mr. Palmer and a few friends at lunch on Friday next, January 6th (at one o'clock in Delmonico's), to discuss the formation of a new club which it is thought will claim your (sic) interest.

R. S. V. P.

There were already in New York a variety of literary and artistic societies, such as The Kinsmen and Tile clubs, with which Clemens was more or less associated. It was proposed now to form a more comprehensive and pretentious organization—one that would include the various associated arts. The conception of this new club, which was to be called The Players, had grown out of a desire on the part of Edwin Booth to confer some enduring benefit upon the members of his profession. It had been discussed during a summer cruise on Mr. E. C. Benedict's steam-yacht by a little party which, besides the owner, consisted of Booth himself, Aldrich, Lawrence Barrett, William Bispham, and Laurence Hutton. Booth's original idea had been to endow some sort of an actors' home, but after due consideration this did not appear to be the best plan. Some one proposed a club, and Aldrich, with never-failing inspiration, suggested its name, The Players, which immediately impressed Booth and the others. It was then decided that members of all the kindred arts should be admitted, and this was the plan discussed and perfected at the Daly luncheon. The guests became charter members, and The Players became an incorporated fact early in January, 1888. —[Besides Mr. Booth himself, the charter members were: Lawrence Barrett, William Bispham, Samuel L. Clemens, Augustin Daly, Joseph F. Daly, John Drew, Henry Edwards, Laurence Hutton, Joseph Jefferson, John A. Lane, James Lewis, Brander Matthews, Stephen H. Olin, A. M. Palmer, and William T. Sherman.]—Booth purchased the fine old brownstone residence at 16 Gramercy Park, and had expensive alterations made under the directions of Stanford White to adapt it for club purposes. He bore the entire cost,

furnished it from garret to cellar, gave it his books and pictures, his rare collections of every sort. Laurence Hutton, writing of it afterward, said:

Page 505

And on the first Founder's Night, the 31st of December, 1888, he transferred it all to the association, a munificent gift; absolutely without parallel in its way. The pleasure it gave to Booth during the few remaining years of his life was very great. He made it his home. Next to his own immediate family it was his chief interest, care, and consolation. He nursed and petted it, as it nursed and petted and honored him. He died in it. And it is certainly his greatest monument.

There is no other club quite like The Players. The personality of Edwin Booth pervades it, and there is a spirit in its atmosphere not found in other large clubs—a spirit of unity, and ancient friendship, and mellowness which usually come only of small membership and long establishment. Mark Twain was always fond of The Players, and more than once made it his home. It is a true home, and its members are a genuine brotherhood.

It was in June, 1888, that Yale College conferred upon Samuel Clemens the degree of Master of Arts. It was his first honor of this kind, and he was proud of it. To Charles Hopkins ("Charley") Clark, who had been appointed to apprise him of the honor, he wrote:

I felt mighty proud of that degree; in fact I could squeeze the truth a little closer and say vain of it. And why shouldn't I be? I am the only literary animal of my particular subspecies who has ever been given a degree by any college in any age of the world as far as I know.

To which Clark answered:

My dear friend, You are "the only literary animal of your particular subspecies" in existence, and you've no cause for humility in the fact. Yale has done herself at least as much credit as she has done you, and "don't you forget it."

C. H. C.

Clemens could not attend the alumni dinner, being at Elmira and unable to get away, but in an address he made at Yale College later in the year he thus freely expressed himself:

I was sincerely proud and grateful to be made a Master of Arts by this great and venerable University, and I would have come last June to testify this feeling, as I do now testify it, but that the sudden and unexpected notice of the honor done me found me at a distance from home and unable to discharge that duty and enjoy that privilege. Along at first, say for the first month or so, I, did not quite know how to proceed because of my not knowing just what authorities and privileges belonged to the title which had been granted me, but after that I consulted some students of Trinity—in Hartford—and they made everything clear to me. It was through them that I found out that my title made

me head of the Governing Body of the University, and lodged in me very broad and severely responsible powers.I was told that it would be necessary

Page 506

to report to you at this time, and of course I comply, though I would have preferred to put it off till I could make a better showing; for indeed I have been so pertinaciously hindered and obstructed at every turn by the faculty that it would be difficult to prove that the University is really in any better shape now than it was when I first took charge. By advice, I turned my earliest attention to the Greek department. I told the Greek professor I had concluded to drop the use of Greek-written character because it is so hard to spell with, and so impossible to read after you get it spelt. Let us draw the curtain there. I saw by what followed that nothing but early neglect saved him from being a very profane man. I ordered the professor of mathematics to simplify the whole system, because the way it was I couldn't understand it, and I didn't want things going on in the college in what was practically a clandestine fashion. I told him to drop the conundrum system; it was not suited to the dignity of a college, which should deal in facts, not guesses and suppositions; we didn't want any more cases of if A and B stand at opposite poles of the earth's surface and C at the equator of Jupiter, at what variations of angle will the left limb of the moon appear to these different parties?—I said you just let that thing alone; it's plenty time to get in a sweat about it when it happens; as like as not it ain't going to do any harm, anyway. His reception of these instructions bordered on insubordination, insomuch that I felt obliged to take his number and report him. I found the astronomer of the University gadding around after comets and other such odds and ends—tramps and derelicts of the skies. I told him pretty plainly that we couldn't have that. I told him it was no economy to go on piling up and piling up raw material in the way of new stars and comets and asteroids that we couldn't ever have any use for till we had worked off the old stock. At bottom I don't really mind comets so much, but somehow I have always been down on asteroids. There is nothing mature about them; I wouldn't sit up nights the way that man does if I could get a basketful of them. He said it was the best line of goods he had; he said he could trade them to Rochester for comets, and trade the comets to Harvard for nebulae, and trade the nebula to the Smithsonian for flint hatchets. I felt obliged to stop this thing on the spot; I said we couldn't have the University turned into an astronomical junk shop. And while I was at it I thought I might as well make the reform complete; the astronomer is extraordinarily mutinous, and so, with your approval, I will transfer him to the law department and put one of the law students in his place. A boy will be more biddable, more tractable, also cheaper. It is true he cannot be intrusted with important work at first, but he can comb the skies for nebulae till he gets his hand in. I have other changes in mind, but as they are in the nature of surprises

Page 507

I judge it politic to leave them unspecified at this time.

Very likely it was in this new capacity, as the head of the governing body, that he wrote one morning to Clark advising him as to the misuse of a word in the *Courant*, though he thought it best to sign the communication with the names of certain learned friends, to give it weight with the public, as he afterward explained.

Sir,—The word “patricide” in your issue of this morning (telegrams) was an error. You meant it to describe the slayer of a father; you should have used “parricide” instead. Patricide merely means the killing of an Irishman—any Irishman, male or female.

Respectfully,
J. Hammond Trumbull.
N. J. Burton.
J. H. Twichell.

CLXVII

NOTES AND LITERARY MATTERS

Clemens' note-books of this time are full of the vexations of his business ventures, figures, suggestions, and a hundred imagined combinations for betterment—these things intermingled with the usual bits of philosophy and reflections, and amusing reminders.

Aldrich's man who painted the fat toads red, and naturalist chasing and trying to catch them.

Man who lost his false teeth over Brooklyn Bridge when he was on his way to propose to a widow.

One believes St. Simon and Benvenuto and partly believes the Margravine of Bayreuth. There are things in the confession of Rousseau which one must believe.

What is biography? Unadorned romance. What is romance? Adorned biography. Adorn it less and it will be better than it is.

If God is what people say there can be none in the universe so unhappy as he; for he sees unceasingly myriads of his creatures suffering unspeakable miseries, and, besides this, foresees all they are going to suffer during the remainder of their lives. One might well say “as unhappy as God.”

In spite of the financial complexities and the drain of the enterprises already in hand he did not fail to conceive others. He was deeply interested in Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress at the moment, and from photography and scenic effect he presaged a possibility to-day realized in the moving picture.

Dress up some good actors as Apollyon, Greatheart, *etc.*, & the other Bunyan characters, take them to a wild gorge and photograph them—Valley of the Shadow of Death; to other effective places & photo them along with the scenery; to Paris, in their curious costumes, place them near the Arc de l'Etoile & photo them with the crowd-Vanity Fair; to Cairo, Venice, Jerusalem, & other places (twenty interesting cities) & always make them conspicuous in the curious foreign crowds by their costume. Take them to Zululand. It would take two or three years to do the photographing & cost \$10,000; but this stereopticon panorama of Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress could be exhibited in all countries at the same time & would clear a fortune in a year. By & by I will do this.

Page 508

If in 1891 I find myself not rich enough to carry out my scheme of buying Christopher Columbus's bones & burying them under the Statue of Liberty Enlightening the World I will give the idea to somebody who is rich enough.

Incidentally he did an occasional piece of literary work. Early in the year, with Brander Matthews, he instructed and entertained the public with a copyright controversy in the Princeton Review. Matthews would appear to have criticized the English copyright protection, or rather the lack of it, comparing it unfavorably with American conditions. Clemens, who had been amply protected in Great Britain, replied that America was in no position to criticize England; that if American authors suffered in England they had themselves to blame for not taking the proper trouble and precautions required by the English law, that is to say, "previous publication" on English soil. He declared that his own books had been as safe in England as at home since he had undertaken to comply with English requirements, and that Professor Matthews was altogether mistaken, both as to premise and conclusion.

"You are the very wrong-headedest person in America," he said; "and you are injudicious." And of the article: "I read it to the cat—well, I never saw a cat carry on so before The American author can go to Canada, spend three days there and come home with an English and American copyright as strong as if it had been built out of railroad iron."

Matthews replied that not every one could go to Canada, any more than to Corinth. He said:

"It is not easy for a poor author who may chance to live in Florida or Texas, those noted homes of literature, to go to Canada."

Clemens did not reply again; that is to say, he did not publish his reply. It was a capable bomb which he prepared, well furnished with amusing instance, sarcasm, and ridicule, but he did not use it. Perhaps he was afraid it would destroy his opponent, which would not do. In his heart he loved Matthews. He laid the deadly thing away and maintained a dignified reserve.

Clemens often felt called upon to criticize American institutions, but he was first to come to their defense, especially when the critic was an alien. When Matthew Arnold offered some strictures on America. Clemens covered a good many quires of paper with caustic replies. He even defended American newspapers, which he had himself more than once violently assailed for misreporting him and for other journalistic shortcomings, and he bitterly denounced every shaky British institution, touched upon every weak spot in hereditary rule. He did not print—not then—[An article on the American press, probably the best of those prepared at this time, was used, in part, in The American Claimant, as the paper read before the Mechanics' Club, by "Parker," assistant editor of the 'Democrat'.]—he was writing mainly for relief—without success, however, for he only

kindled the fires of his indignation. He was at Quarry Farm and he plunged into his neglected story—A Yankee in King Arthur's Court—and made his astonishing hero the mouthpiece of his doctrines. He worked with an inspiration and energy born of his ferocity. To Whitmore, near the end of the summer, he wrote:

Page 509

I've got 16 working-days left yet, and in that time I will add another 120,000 words to my book if I have luck.

In his memoranda of this time he says:

There was never a throne which did not represent a crime. There is no throne to-day which does not represent a crime

Show me a lord and I will show you a man whom you couldn't tell from a journeyman shoemaker if he were stripped, and who, in all that is worth being, is the shoemaker's inferior; and in the shoemaker I will show you a dull animal, a poor-spirited insect; for there are enough of him to rise and chuck the lords and royalties into the sea where they belong, and he doesn't do it.

But his violence waned, maybe, for he did not finish the Yankee in the sixteen days as planned. He brought the manuscript back to Hartford, but found it hard work there, owing to many interruptions. He went over to Twichell's and asked for a room where he might work in seclusion. They gave him a big upper chamber, but some repairs were going on below. From a letter written to Theodore Crane we gather that it was not altogether quiet.

Friday, October 5, 1888.

Dear Theo, I am here in Twichell's house at work, with the noise of the children and an army of carpenters to help: Of course they don't help, but neither do they hinder. It's like a boiler factory for racket, and in nailing a wooden ceiling on to the room under me the hammering tickles my feet amazingly sometimes and jars my table a good deal, but I never am conscious of the racket at all, and I move my feet into positions of relief without knowing when I do it. I began here Monday morning, and have done eighty pages since. I was so tired last night that I thought I would lie abed and rest to-day; but I couldn't resist. I mean to try to knock off tomorrow, but it's doubtful if I do. I want to finish the day the machine finishes, and a week ago the closest calculations for that indicated Oct. 22—but experience teaches me that the calculations will miss fire as usual. The other day the children were projecting a purchase, Livy and I to furnish the money—a dollar and a half. Jean discouraged the idea. She said, "We haven't got any money. Children, if you would think, you would remember the machine isn't done."

It's billiards to-night. I wish you were here.

With love to you both, S. L. C.

P. S. I got it all wrong. It wasn't the children, it was Marie. She wanted a box of blacking for the children's shoes. Jean reproved her and said, "Why, Marie, you mustn't ask for things now. The machine isn't done."

Neither the Yankee nor the machine was completed that fall, though returns from both were beginning to be badly needed. The financial pinch was not yet severe, but it was noticeable, and it did not relax.

Page 510

A memorandum of this time tells of an anniversary given to Charles and Susan Warner in their own home. The guests assembled at the Clemens home, the Twichells among them, and slipped across to Warner's, entering through a window. Dinner was then announced to the Warners, who were sitting by their library fire. They came across the hall and opened the dining-room door, to be confronted by a table fully spread and lighted and an array of guests already seated.

CLXVIII

INTRODUCING NYE AND RILEY AND OTHERS

It was the winter (1888-89) that the Bill Nye and James Whitcomb Riley entertainment combination set out on its travels. Mark Twain introduced them to their first Boston audience. Major J. B. Pond was exploiting Nye and Riley, and Clemens went on to Boston especially to hear them. Pond happened upon him in the lobby of the Parker House and insisted that nothing would do but he must introduce them. In his book of memories which he published later Pond wrote:

He replied that he believed I was his mortal enemy, and determined that he should never have an evening's enjoyment in my presence. He consented, however, and conducted his brother-humorist and the Hoosier poet to the platform. Mark's presence was a surprise to the audience, and when they recognized him the demonstration was tremendous. The audience rose in a body, and men and women shouted at the very top of their voices. Handkerchiefs waved, the organist even opened every forte key and pedal in the great organ, and the noise went on unabated for minutes. It took some time for the crowd to get down to listening, but when they did subside, as Mark stepped to the front, the silence was as impressive as the noise had been.

He presented the Nye-Riley pair as the Siamese Twins. "I saw them first," he sand, "a great many years ago, when Mr. Barnum had them, and they were just fresh from Siam. The ligature was their best hold then, but literature became their best hold later, when one of them committed an indiscretion, and they had to cut the old bond to accommodate the sheriff."

He continued this comic fancy, and the audience was in a proper frame of mind, when he had finished, to welcome the "Twins of Genius" who were to entertain them:

Pond says:

It was a carnival of fun in every sense of the word. Bostonians will not have another such treat in this generation.

Pond proposed to Clemens a regular tour with Nye and Riley. He wrote:

I will go partners with you, and I will buy Nye and Riley's time and give an entertainment something like the one we gave in Boston. Let it be announced that you will introduce the "Twins of Genius." Ostensibly a pleasure trip for you. I will take one-third of the profits and you two-thirds. I can tell you it will be the biggest thing that can be brought before the

Page 511

American public.

But Clemens, badly as he was beginning to need the money, put this temptation behind him. His chief diversion these days was in gratuitous appearances. He had made up his mind not to read or lecture again for pay, but he seemed to take a peculiar enjoyment in doing these things as a benefaction. That he was beginning to need the money may have added a zest to the joy of his giving. He did not respond to all invitations; he could have been traveling constantly had he done so. He consulted with Mrs. Clemens and gave himself to the cause that seemed most worthy. In January Col. Richard Malcolm Johnston was billed to give a reading with Thomas Nelson Page in Baltimore. Page's wife fell ill and died, and Colonel Johnston, in extremity, wired Charles Dudley Warner to come in Page's place. Warner, unable to go, handed the invitation to Clemens, who promptly wired that he would come. They read to a packed house, and when the audience was gone and the returns had been counted an equal division of the profits was handed to each of the authors. Clemens pushed his share over to Johnston, saying:

"That's yours, Colonel. I'm not reading for money these days."

Colonel Johnston, to whom the sum was important, tried to thank him, but he only said:

"Never mind, Colonel, it only gave me pleasure to do you that little favor. You can pass it on some day."

As a matter of fact, hard put to it as he was for funds, Clemens at this time regarded himself as a potential multi-millionaire. The type-setting machine which for years had been sapping his financial strength was believed to be perfected, and ship-loads of money were waiting in the offing. However, we shall come to this later.

Clemens read for the cadets at West Point and for a variety of institutions and on many special occasions. He usually gave chapters from his *Yankee*, now soon to be finished, chapters generally beginning with the Yankee's impression of the curious country and its people, ending with the battle of the Sun-belt, when the Yankee and his fifty-four adherents were masters of England, with twenty-five thousand dead men lying about them. He gave this at West Point, including the chapter where the Yankee has organized a West Point of his own in King Arthur's reign.

In April, '89, he made an address at a dinner given to a victorious baseball team returning from a tour of the world by way of the Sandwich Islands. He was on familiar ground there. His heart was in his words. He began:

I have been in the Sandwich Islands—twenty-three years ago—that peaceful land, that beautiful land, that far-off home of solitude, and soft idleness, and repose, and dreams,

where life is one long slumberous Sabbath, the climate one long summer day, and the good that die experience no change, for they but fall asleep in one heaven and wake up in another. And these boys have played

Page 512

baseball there!—baseball, which is the very symbol, the outward and visible expression, of the drive and push and rush and struggle of the living, tearing, booming nineteenth, the mightiest of all the centuries!

He told of the curious island habits for his hearers' amusement, but at the close the poetry of his memories once more possessed him:

Ah, well, it is refreshment to the jaded, it is water to the thirsty, to look upon men who have so lately breathed the soft air of those Isles of the Blest and had before their eyes the inextinguishable vision of their beauty. No alien land in all the earth has any deep, strong charm for me but that one; no other land could so longingly and so beseechingly haunt me, sleeping and waking, through half a lifetime, as that one has done. Other things leave me, but it abides; other things change, but it remains the same. For me its balmy airs are always blowing, its summer seas flashing in the sun; the pulsing of its surf is in my ear; I can see its garlanded crags, its leaping cascades, its plummy palms drowsing by the shore, its remote summits floating like islands above the cloud-rack; I can feel the spirit of its woody solitudes, I hear the plashing of the brooks; in my nostrils still lives the breath of flowers that perished twenty years ago.

CLXIX

THE COMING OF KIPLING

It was the summer of 1889 that Mark Twain first met Rudyard Kipling. Kipling was making his tour around the world, a young man wholly unheard of outside of India. He was writing letters home to an Indian journal, *The Pioneer*, and he came to Elmira especially to see Mark Twain. It was night when he arrived, and next morning some one at the hotel directed him to Quarry Farm. In a hired hack he made his way out through the suburbs, among the buzzing planing-mills and sash factories, and toiled up the long, dusty, roasting east hill, only to find that Mark Twain was at General Langdon's, in the city he had just left behind. Mrs. Crane and Susy Clemens were the only ones left at the farm, and they gave him a seat on the veranda and brought him glasses of water or cool milk while he refreshed them with his talk-talk which Mark Twain once said might be likened to footprints, so strong and definite was the impression which it left behind. He gave them his card, on which the address was Allahabad, and Susy preserved it on that account, because to her India was a fairyland, made up of magic, airy architecture, and dark mysteries. Clemens once dictated a memory of Kipling's visit.

Kipling had written upon the card a compliment to me. This gave it an additional value in Susy's eyes, since, as a distinction, it was the next thing to being recognized by a denizen of the moon.

Page 513

Kipling came down that afternoon and spent a couple of hours with me, and at the end of that time I had surprised him as much as he had surprised me—and the honors were easy. I believed that he knew more than any person I had met before, and I knew that he knew that I knew less than any person he had met before—though he did not say it, and I was not expecting that he would. When he was gone Mrs. Langdon wanted to know about my visitor. I said:

“He is a stranger to me, but he is a most remarkable man—and I am the other one. Between us we cover all knowledge; he knows all that can be known, and I know the rest.”

He was a stranger to me and to all the world, and remained so for twelve months, then he became suddenly known, and universally known. From that day to this he has held this unique distinction—that of being the only living person, not head of a nation, whose voice is heard around the world the moment it drops a remark; the only such voice in existence that does not go by slow ship and rail, but always travels first-class—by cable.

About a year after Kipling's visit in Elmira George Warner came into our library one morning in Hartford with a small book in his hand and asked me if I had ever heard of Rudyard Kipling. I said, “No.”

He said I would hear of him very soon, and that the noise he was going to make would be loud and continuous. The little book was the *Plain Tales*, and he left it for me to read, saying it was charged with a new and inspiring fragrance, and would blow a refreshing breath around the world that would revive the nations. A day or two later he brought a copy of the *London World* which had a sketch of Kipling in it, and a mention of the fact that he had traveled in the United States. According to this sketch he had passed through Elmira. This remark, with the additional fact that he hailed from India, attracted my attention—also Susy's. She went to her room and brought his card from its place in the frame of her mirror, and the Quarry Farm visitor stood identified.

Kipling also has left an account of that visit. In his letter recording it he says:

You are a contemptible lot over yonder. Some of you are Commissioners and some are Lieutenant-Governors, and some have the V. C., and a few are privileged to walk about the Mall arm in arm with the Viceroy; but I have seen Mark Twain this golden morning, have shaken his hand and smoked a cigar—no, two cigars—with him, and talked with him for more than two hours! Understand clearly that I do not despise you; indeed, I don't. I am only very sorry for you, from the Viceroy downward. A big, darkened drawing-room; a huge chair; a man with eyes, a mane of grizzled hair, a brown mustache covering a mouth as delicate as a woman's, a strong, square hand shaking mine, and the slowest, calmest, levellest voice in all the world saying:

“Well, you think you owe me something, and you’ve come to tell me so. That’s what I call squaring a debt handsomely.”

Page 514

"Piff!" from a cob-pipe (I always said that a Missouri meerschaum was the best smoking in the world), and behold! Mark Twain had curled himself up in the big arm-chair, and I was smoking reverently, as befits one in the presence of his superior. The thing that struck me first was that he was an elderly man; yet, after a minute's thought, I perceived that it was otherwise, and in five minutes, the eyes looking at me, I saw that the gray hair was an accident of the most trivial. He was quite young. I was shaking his hand. I was smoking his cigar, and I was hearing him talk—this man I had learned to love and admire fourteen thousand miles away. Reading his books, I had striven to get an idea of his personality, and all my preconceived notions were wrong and beneath the reality. Blessed is the man who finds no disillusion when he is brought face to face with a revered writer.

The meeting of those two men made the summer of '89 memorable in later years. But it was recalled sadly, too. Theodore Crane, who had been taken suddenly and dangerously ill the previous autumn, had a recurring attack and died July 3d. It was the first death in the immediate families for more than seventeen years, Mrs. Clemens, remembering that earlier period of sorrow, was depressed with forebodings.

CLXX

"The prince and the pauper" On the stage

There was an unusual dramatic interest in the Clemens home that autumn. Abby Sage Richardson had dramatized 'The Prince and the Pauper', and Daniel Frohman had secured Elsie Leslie (Lyde) to take the double role of the Prince and Tom Canty. The rehearsals were going on, and the Clemens children were naturally a good deal excited over the outcome. Susy Clemens was inspired to write a play of her own—a pretty Greek fancy, called "The Triumph of Music," and when it was given on Thanksgiving night, by herself, with Clara and Jean and Margaret Warner, it was really a lovely performance, and carried one back to the days when emotions were personified, and nymphs haunted the seclusions of Arcady. Clemens was proud of Susy's achievement, and deeply moved by it. He insisted on having the play repeated, and it was given again later in the year.

Pretty Elsie Leslie became a favorite of the Clemens household. She was very young, and when she visited Hartford Jean and she were companions and romped together in the hay-loft. She was also a favorite of William Gillette. One day when Clemens and Gillette were together they decided to give the little girl a surprise—a unique one. They agreed to embroider a pair of slippers for her—to do the work themselves. Writing to her of it, Mark Twain said:

Page 515

Either one of us could have thought of a single slipper, but it took both of us to think of two slippers. In fact, one of us did think of one slipper, and then, quick as a flash, the other of the other one. It shows how wonderful the human mind is....Gillette embroidered his slipper with astonishing facility and splendor, but I have been a long time pulling through with mine. You see, it was my very first attempt at art, and I couldn't rightly get the hang of it along at first. And then I was so busy that I couldn't get a chance to work at it at home, and they wouldn't let me embroider on the cars; they said it made the other passengers afraid. They didn't like the light that flared into my eye when I had an inspiration. And even the most fair-minded people doubted me when I explained what it was I was making—especially brakemen. Brakemen always swore at it and carried on, the way ignorant people do about art. They wouldn't take my word that it was a slipper; they said they believed it was a snow-shoe that had some kind of disease.

He went on to explain and elucidate the pattern of the slipper, and how Dr. Root had come in and insisted on taking a hand in it, and how beautiful it was to see him sit there and tell Mrs. Clemens what had been happening while they were away during the summer, holding the slipper up toward the end of his nose, imagining the canvas was a "subject" with a scalp-wound, working with a "lovely surgical stitch," never hesitating a moment in his talk except to say "Ouch!" when he stuck himself with the needle.

Take the slippers and wear them next your heart, Elsie dear; for every stitch in them is a testimony of the affection which two of your loyalest friends bear you. Every single stitch cost us blood. I've got twice as many pores in me now as I used to have; and you would never believe how many places you can stick a needle in yourself until you go into the embroidery line and devote yourself to art.

Do not wear these slippers in public, dear; it would only excite envy; and, as like as not, somebody would try to shoot you.

Merely use them to assist you in remembering that among the many, many people who think all the world of you is your friend,

Marktwain.

The play of "The Prince and the Pauper," dramatized by Mrs. Richardson and arranged for the stage by David Belasco, was produced at the Park Theater, Philadelphia, on Christmas Eve. It was a success, but not a lavish one. The play was well written and staged, and Elsie Leslie was charming enough in her parts, but in the duality lay the difficulty. The strongest scenes in the story had to be omitted when one performer played both Tom Canty and the little Prince. The play came to New York—to the Broadway Theater—and was well received. On the opening night there Mark Twain made a speech, in which he said that the presentation of "The Prince and the Pauper" realized a dream which fifteen years before had possessed him all through a long down-



town tramp, amid the crowds and confusion of Broadway. In Elsie Leslie, he said, he had found the embodiment of his dream, and to her he offered homage as the only prince clothed in a divine right which was not rags and sham—the divine right of an inborn supremacy in art.

Page 516

It seems incredible to-day that, realizing the play's possibilities as Mark Twain did, and as Belasco and Daniel Frohman must have done, they did not complete their partial triumph by finding another child actress to take the part of Tom Canty. Clemens urged and pleaded with them, but perhaps the undertaking seemed too difficult—at all events they did not find the little beggar king. Then legal complications developed. Edward House, to whom Clemens had once given a permission to attempt a dramatization of the play, suddenly appeared with a demand for recognition, backed by a lawsuit against all those who had a proprietary interest in the production. House, with his adopted Japanese daughter Koto, during a period of rheumatism and financial depression, had made a prolonged visit in the Clemens home and originally undertook the dramatization as a sort of return for hospitality. He appears not to have completed it and to have made no arrangement for its production or to have taken any definite step until Mrs. Richardson's play was profitably put on; whereupon his suit and injunction.

By the time a settlement of this claim had been reached the play had run its course, and it was not revived in that form. It was brought out in England, where it was fairly prosperous, though it seems not to have been long continued. Various reconstructions, it has occasionally been played since, and always, when the parts of Tom Canty and the Prince were separate, with great success. Why this beautiful drama should ever be absent from the boards is one of the unexplainable things. It is a play for all times and seasons, the difficulty of obtaining suitable "twin" interpreters for the characters of the Prince and the Pauper being its only drawback.

CLXXI

"A Connecticut Yankee in king Arthur's court"

From every point of view it seemed necessary to make the 'Yankee in King Arthur's Court' an important and pretentious publication. It was Mark Twain's first book after a silence of five years; it was a book badly needed by his publishing business with which to maintain its prestige and profit; it was a book which was to come out of his maturity and present his deductions, as to humanity at large and kings in particular, to a waiting public. It was determined to spare no expense on the manufacture, also that its illustrations must be of a sort to illuminate and, indeed, to elaborate the text. Clemens had admired some pictures made by Daniel Carter ("Dan") Beard for a Chinese story in the *Cosmopolitan*, and made up his mind that Beard was the man for the Yankee. The manuscript was sent to Beard, who met Clemens a little later in the office of Webster & Co. to discuss the matter. Clemens said:

"Mr. Beard, I do not want to subject you to any undue suffering, but I wish you would read the book before you make the pictures."

Page 517

Beard replied that he had already read it twice.

“Very good,” Clemens said; “but I wasn’t led to suppose that that was the usual custom among illustrators, judging from some results I have seen. You know,” he went on, “this Yankee of mine has neither the refinement nor the weakness of a college education; he is a perfect ignoramus; he is boss of a machine shop; he can build a locomotive or a Colt’s revolver, he can put up and run a telegraph line, but he’s an ignoramus, nevertheless. I am not going to tell you what to draw. If a man comes to me and says, ‘Mr. Clemens, I want you to write me a story,’ I’ll write it for him; but if he undertakes to tell me what to write I’ll say, ‘Go hire a typewriter.’”

To Hall a few days later he wrote:

Tell Beard to obey his own inspirations, and when he sees a picture in his mind put that picture on paper, be it humorous or be it serious. I want his genius to be wholly unhampered. I sha’n’t have any fear as to results.

Without going further it is proper to say here that the pictures in the first edition of *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court* justified the author’s faith in the artist of his selection. They are far and away Dan Beard’s best work. The socialism of the text strongly appealed to him. Beard himself had socialistic tendencies, and the work inspired him to his highest flights of fancy and to the acme of his technic. Clemens examined the pictures from time to time, and once was moved to write:

My pleasure in them is as strong and as fresh as ever. I do not know of any quality they lack. Grace, dignity, poetry, spirit, imagination, these enrich them and make them charming and beautiful; and wherever humor appears it is high and fine—easy, unforced, kept under, masterly, and delicious.

He went on to describe his appreciation in detail, and when the drawings were complete he wrote again:

Hold me under permanent obligations. What luck it was to find you! There are hundreds of artists who could illustrate any other book of mine, but there was only one who could illustrate this one. Yes, it was a fortunate hour that I went netting for lightning-bugs and caught a meteor. Live forever!

This was not too much praise. Beard realized the last shade of the author’s allegorical intent and portrayed it with a hundred accents which the average reader would otherwise be likely to miss.

Clemens submitted his manuscript to Howells and to Stedman, and he read portions of it, at least, to Mrs. Clemens, whose eyes were troubling her so that she could not read for herself. Stedman suggested certain eliminations, but, on the whole, would seem to

have approved of the book. Howells was enthusiastic. It appealed to him as it had appealed to Beard. Its sociology and its socialism seemed to him the final word that could be said on those subjects. When he had partly finished it he wrote:

Page 518

It's a mighty great book and it makes my heart, burn with wrath. It seems that God didn't forget to put a soul in you. He shuts most literary men off with a brain, merely.

A few days later he wrote again:

The book is glorious—simply noble. What masses of virgin truth never touched in print before!

And when he had finished it:

Last night I read your last chapter. As Stedman says of the whole book, it's titanic.

Clemens declared, in one of his replies to Howells:

I'm not writing for those parties who miscall themselves critics, and I don't care to have them paw the book at all. It's my swan song, my retirement from literature permanently, and I wish to pass to the cemetery unclodded . . . Well, my book is written—let it go, but if it were only to write over again there wouldn't be so many things left out. They burn in me; they keep multiplying and multiplying, but now they can't ever be said; and besides they would require a library—and a pen warmed up in hell.

In another letter of this time to Sylvester Baxter, apropos of the tumbling Brazilian throne, he wrote:

When our great brethren, the disenslaved Brazilians, frame their declaration of independence I hope they will insert this missing link: "We hold these truths to be self-evident—that all monarchs are usurpers and descendants of usurpers, for the reason that no throne was ever set up in this world by the will, freely exercised, of the only body possessing the legitimate right to set it up—the numerical mass of the nation."

He was full of it, as he had been all along, and 'A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court' is nothing less than a brief for human rights and human privileges. That is what it is, and it is a pity that it should be more than that. It is a pity that he should have been beset by his old demon of the burlesque, and that no one should have had the wisdom or the strength to bring it under control.

There is nothing more charming in any of Mark Twain's work than his introductory chapter, nothing more delightful than the armoring of the Yankee and the outset and the wandering with Alisande. There is nothing more powerful or inspiring than his splendid panoramic picture—of the King learning mercy through his own degradation, his daily intercourse with a band of manacled slaves; nothing more fiercely moving than that fearful incident of the woman burned to warm those freezing chattels, or than the great gallows scene, where the priest speaks for the young mother about to pay the death



penalty for having stolen a halfpenny's worth, that her baby might have bread. Such things as these must save the book from oblivion; but alas! its greater appeal is marred almost to ruin by coarse and extravagant burlesque, which destroys illusion and antagonizes the reader often at the very moment when the tale should fill

Page 519

him with a holy fire of a righteous wrath against wrong. As an example of Mark Twain at his literary worst and best the Yankee ranks supreme. It is unnecessary to quote examples; one cannot pick up the volume and read ten pages of it, or five pages, without finding them. In the midst of some exalted passage, some towering sublimity, you are brought suddenly to earth with a phrase which wholly destroys the illusion and the diviner purpose. Howells must have observed these things, or was he so dazzled by the splendor of its intent, its righteous charge upon the ranks of oppression, that he regarded its offenses against art as unimportant. This is hard to explain, for the very thing that would sustain such a great message and make it permanent would be the care, the restraint, the artistic worthiness of its construction. One must believe in a story like that to be convinced of its logic. To lose faith in it—in its narrative—is absolutely fatal to its purpose. The Yankee in King Arthur's Court not only offended the English nation, but much of it offended the better taste of Mark Twain's own countrymen, and in time it must have offended even Mark Twain himself. Reading it, one can visualize the author as a careering charger, with a bit in his teeth, trampling the poetry and the tradition of the romantic days, the very things which he himself in his happier moods cared for most. Howells likened him to Cervantes, laughing Spain's chivalry away. The comparison was hardly justified. It was proper enough to laugh chivalry out of court when it was a reality; but Mark Twain, who loved Sir Thomas Malory to the end of his days, the beauty and poetry of his chronicles; who had written 'The Prince and the Pauper', and would one day write that divine tale of the 'Maid of Orleans'; who was himself no more nor less than a knight always ready to redress wrong, would seem to have been the last person to wish to laugh it out of romance.

And yet, when all is said, one may still agree with Howells in ranking the Yankee among Mark Twain's highest achievements in the way of "a greatly imagined and symmetrically developed tale." It is of that class, beyond doubt. Howells goes further:

Of all the fanciful schemes in fiction it pleases me most, and I give myself with absolute delight to its notion of a keen East Hartford Yankee finding himself, by a retroactionary spell, at the court of King Arthur of Britain, and becoming part of the sixth century with all the customs and ideas of the nineteenth in him and about him. The field for humanizing satire which this scheme opens is illimitable.

Colossal it certainly is, as Howells and Stedman agreed: colossal in its grotesqueness as in its sublimity. Howells, summarizing Mark Twain's gifts (1901), has written:

Page 520

He is apt to burlesque the lighter colloquiality, and it is only in the more serious and most tragical junctures that his people utter themselves with veracious simplicity and dignity. That great, burly fancy of his is always tempting him to the exaggeration which is the condition of so much of his personal humor, but which when it invades the drama spoils the illusion. The illusion renews itself in the great moments, but I wish it could be kept intact in the small, and I blame him that he does not rule his fancy better.

All of which applies precisely to the writing of the Yankee in King Arthur's Court. Intended as a fierce heart-cry against human injustice —man's inhumanity to man—as such it will live and find readers; but, more than any other of Mark Twain's pretentious works, it needs editing —trimming by a fond but relentless hand.

CLXXII

THE "YANKEE" IN ENGLAND

The London publishers of the Yankee were keenly anxious to revise the text for their English readers. Clemens wrote that he had already revised the Yankee twice, that Stedman had critically read it, and that Mrs. Clemens had made him strike out many passages and soften others. He added that he had read chapters of it in public several times where Englishmen were present and had profited by their suggestions. Then he said:

Now, mind you, I have taken all this pains because I wanted to say a Yankee mechanic's say against monarchy and its several natural props, and yet make a book which you would be willing to print exactly as it comes to you, without altering a word. We are spoken of (by Englishmen) as a thin-skinned people. It is you who are thin-skinned. An Englishman may write with the most brutal frankness about any man or institution among us and we republish him without dreaming of altering a line or a word. But England cannot stand that kind of a book written about herself. It is England that is thin-skinned. It causeth me to smile when I read the modifications of my language which have been made in my English editions to fit them for the sensitive English palate. Now, as I say, I have taken laborious pains to so trim this book of offense that you'll not lack the nerve to print it just as it stands. I am going to get the proofs to you just as early as I can. I want you to read it carefully. If you can publish it without altering a single word, go ahead. Otherwise, please hand it to J. R. Osgood in time for him to have it published at my expense. This is important, for the reason that the book was not written for America; it was written for England. So many Englishmen have done their sincerest best to teach us something for our betterment that it seems to me high time that some of us should substantially recognize the good intent by trying to pry up the English nation to a little

Page 521

higher level of manhood in turn.

So the *Yankee* was published in England just as he had written it,—[The preface was shortened and modified for both the American and English editions. The reader will find it as originally written under Appendix S, at the end of last volume.]—and the criticisms were as plentiful as they were frank. It was referred to as a “lamentable failure” and as an “audacious sacrilege” and in terms still less polite. Not all of the English critics were violent. The *Daily Telegraph* gave it something more than a column of careful review, which did not fail to point out the book’s sins with a good deal of justice and dignity; but the majority of English papers joined in a sort of oburgatory chorus which, for a time at least, spared neither the author nor his work. Strictures on the *Yankee* extended to his earlier books. After all, Mark Twain’s work was not for the cultivated class.

These things must have begun to gravel Clemens a good deal at last, for he wrote to Andrew Lang at considerable length, setting forth his case in general terms—that is to say, his position as an author—inviting Lang to stand as his advocate before the English public. In part he said:

The critic assumes every time that if a book doesn’t meet the cultivated-class standard it isn’t valuable . . . The critic has actually imposed upon the world the superstition that a painting by Raphael is more valuable to the civilizations of the earth than is a chromo; and the august opera more than the hurdy-gurdy and the villagers’ singing society; and the Latin classics than Kipling’s far-reaching bugle-note; and Jonathan Edwards than the Salvation Army . . . If a critic should start a religion it would not have any object but to convert angels, and they wouldn’t need it. It is not that little minority who are already saved that are best worth lifting up, I should think, but the mighty mass of the uncultivated who are underneath! That mass will never see the old masters—that sight is for the few; but the chromo-maker can lift them all one step upward toward appreciation of art; they cannot have the opera, but the hurdy-gurdy and the singing-class lift them a little way toward that far height; they will never know Homer, but the passing rhymester of their day leaves them higher than he found them; they may never even hear of the Latin classics, but they will strike step with Kipling’s drum-beat and they will march; for all Jonathan Edwards’s help they would die in their slums, but the Salvation Army will beguile some of them to a purer air and a cleaner life.. . . I have never tried, in even one single little instance, to help cultivate the cultivated classes. I was not equipped for it either by native gifts or training. And I never had any ambition in that direction, but always hunted for bigger game—the masses. I have seldom deliberately tried to instruct them, but I have done my best to entertain them, for

Page 522

they can get instruction elsewhere My audience is dumb; it has no voice in print, and so I cannot know whether I have won its approval or only got its censure.

He closed by asking that Lang urge the critics to adopt a rule recognizing the masses, and to formulate a standard whereby work done for them might be judged. “No voice can reach further than yours in a case of this kind,” he said, “or carry greater weight of authority.” There was no humor in this letter, and the writer of it was clearly in earnest.

Lang’s response was an article published in the Illustrated London News on the art of Mark Twain. He began by gently ridiculing hyperculture —the new culture—and ended with a eulogy on Huck Finn. It seems worth while, however, to let Andrew Lang speak for himself.

I have been educated till I nearly dropped; I have lived with the earliest apostles of culture, in the days when Chippendale was first a name to conjure with, and Japanese art came in like a raging lion, and Ronsard was the favorite poet, and Mr. William Morris was a poet, too, and blue and green were the only wear, and the name of Paradise was Camelot. To be sure, I cannot say that I took all this quite seriously, but “we, too, have played” at it, and know all about it. Generally speaking, I have kept up with culture. I can talk (if desired) about Sainte-Beuve, and Merimee, and Felicien Rops; I could rhyme “Ballades” when they were “in,” and knew what a “pantom” was And yet I have not culture. My works are but tinkling brass because I have not culture. For culture has got into new regions where I cannot enter, and, what is perhaps worse, I find myself delighting in a great many things which are under the ban of culture.

He confesses that this is a dreadful position; one that makes a man feel like one of those Liberal politicians who are always “sitting on the fence,” and who follow their party, if follow it they do, with the reluctant acquiescence of the prophet’s donkey. He further confesses that he has tried Hartmann and prefers Plato, that he is shaky about Blake, though stalwart concerning Rudyard Kipling.

This is not the worst of it. Culture has hardly a new idol but I long to hurl things at it. Culture can scarcely burn anything, but I am impelled to sacrifice to that same. I am coming to suspect that the majority of culture’s modern disciples are a mere crowd of very slimly educated people who have no natural taste or impulses; who do not really know the best things in literature; who have a feverish desire to admire the newest thing, to follow the latest artistic fashion; who prate about “style,” without the faintest acquaintance with the ancient examples of style in Greek, French, or English; who talk about the classics and—criticize the classical critics and poets, without being able to read a line of them in the original. Nothing of the natural man is left in these people; their intellectual equipment

Page 523

is made up of ignorant vanity and eager desire for novelty, and a yearning to be in the fashion. Take, for example—and we have been a long time in coming to him—Mark Twain. [Here follow some observations concerning the Yankee, which Lang confesses that he has not read, and has abstained from reading because——]. Here Mark Twain is not, and cannot be, at the proper point of view. He has not the knowledge which would enable him to be a sound critic of the ideals of the Middle Ages. An Arthurian Knight in New York or in Washington would find as much to blame, and justly, as a Yankee at Camelot.

Of Mark Twain's work in general he speaks with another conclusion:

Mark Twain is a benefactor beyond most modern writers, and the cultured who do not laugh are merely to be pitied. But his art is not only that of the maker of the scarce article—mirth. I have no hesitation in saying that Mark Twain is one among the greatest contemporary makers of fiction I can never forget or be ungrateful for the exquisite pleasure with which I read *Huckleberry Finn* for the first time years ago. I read it again last night, deserting *Kenilworth* for *Huck*. I never laid it down till I had finished it. I perused several passages more than once, and rose from it with a higher opinion of its merits than ever. What is it that we want in a novel? We want a vivid and original picture of life; we want character naturally displayed in action; and if we get the excitement of adventure into the bargain, and that adventure possible and plausible, I so far differ from the newest school of criticism as to think that we have additional cause for gratitude. If, moreover, there is an unstrained sense of humor in the narrator we have a masterpiece, and *Huckleberry Finn* is, nothing less.

He reviews *Huck* sympathetically in detail, and closes:

There are defects of taste, or passages that to us seem deficient in taste, but the book remains a nearly flawless gem of romance and of humor. The world appreciates it, no doubt, but “cultured critics” are probably unaware of its singular value. The great American novel has escaped the eyes of those who watch to see this new planet swim into their ken. And will Mark Twain never write such another? One is enough for him to live by, and for our gratitude, but not enough for our desire.

In the brief column and a half which it occupies, this comment of Andrew Lang's constitutes as thoughtful and fair an estimate of Mark Twain's work as was ever written.

W. T. Stead, of the *Review of Reviews*, was about the only prominent English editor to approve of the Yankee and to exploit its merits. Stead brought down obloquy upon himself by so doing, and his separation from his business partner would seem to have been at least remotely connected with this heresy.

The Yankee in King Arthur's Court was dramatized in America by Howard Taylor, one of the Enterprise composers, whom Clemens had known in the old Comstock days. Taylor had become a playwright of considerable success, with a number of well-known actors and actresses starring in his plays. The Yankee, however, did not find a manager, or at least it seems not to have reached the point of production.

Page 524

CLXXIII

A SUMMER AT ONTEORA

With the exception of one article—"A Majestic Literary Fossil" —[Harper's Magazine, February, 1890. Included in the "Complete Works."] —Clemens was writing nothing of importance at this time. This article grew out of a curious old medical work containing absurd prescriptions which, with Theodore Crane, he had often laughed over at the farm. A sequel to Huckleberry Finn—Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer Among the Indians —was begun, and a number of its chapters were set in type on the new Paige compositor, which had cost such a gallant sum, and was then thought to be complete. There seems to have been a plan to syndicate the story, but at the end of Chapter IX Huck and Tom had got themselves into a predicament from which it seemed impossible to extricate them, and the plot was suspended for further inspiration, which apparently never came.

Clemens, in fact, was troubled with rheumatism in his arm and shoulder, which made writing difficult. Mrs. Clemens, too, had twinges of the malady. They planned to go abroad for the summer of 1890, to take the waters of some of the German baths, but they were obliged to give up the idea. There were too many business complications; also the health of Clemens's mother had become very feeble. They went to Tannersville in the Catskills, instead—to the Onteora Club, where Mrs. Candace Wheeler had gathered a congenial colony in a number of picturesque cottages, with a comfortable hotel for the more transient visitor. The Clemenses secured a cottage for the season. Mrs. Mary Mapes Dodge, Laurence Hutton, Carroll Beckwith, the painter; Brander Matthews, Dr. Heber Newton, Mrs. Custer, and Dora Wheeler were among those who welcomed Mark Twain and his family at a generous home-made banquet.

It was the beginning of a happy summer. There was a constant visiting from one cottage to another, with frequent assemblings at the Bear and Fox Inn, their general headquarters. There were pantomimes and charades, in which Mark Twain and his daughters always had star parts. Susy Clemens, who was now eighteen, brilliant and charming, was beginning to rival her father as a leader of entertainment. Her sister Clara gave impersonations of Modjeska and Ada Rehan. When Fourth of July came there were burlesque races, of which Mark Twain was starter, and many of that lighthearted company took part. Sometimes, in the evening, they gathered in one of the cottages and told stories by the firelight, and once he told the story of the Golden Arm, so long remembered, and brought them up with the same old jump at the sudden climax. Brander Matthews remembers that Clemens was obliged frequently to go to New York on business connected with the machine and the publishing, and that during one of these absences a professional entertainer came along, and in the course of his program told a Mark Twain story, at which Mrs. Clemens and the girls laughed without recognizing its authorship. Matthews also remembers Jean, as a little girl of ten,

allowed to ride a pony and to go barefoot, to her great delight, full of health and happiness, a favorite of the colony.

Page 525

Clemens would seem to have forgiven Brander Matthews for his copyright articles, for he walked over to the Matthews cottage one morning and asked to be taught piquet, the card game most in vogue there that season. At odd times he sat to Carroll Beckwith for his portrait, and smoked a cob pipe meantime, so Beckwith painted him in that way.

It was a season that closed sadly. Clemens was called to Keokuk in August, to his mother's bedside, for it was believed that her end was near. She rallied, and he returned to Onteora. But on the 27th of October came the close of that long, active life, and the woman who two generations before had followed John Clemens into the wilderness, and along the path of vicissitude, was borne by her children to Hannibal and laid to rest at his side. She was in her eighty-eighth year.

The Clemens family were back in Hartford by this time, and it was only a little later that Mrs. Clemens was summoned to the death-bed of her own mother, in Elmira. Clemens accompanied her, but Jean being taken suddenly ill he returned to Hartford. Watching by the little girl's bedside on the night of the 27th of November, he wrote Mrs. Clemens a birthday letter, telling of Jean's improved condition and sending other good news and as many loving messages as he could devise. But it proved a sad birthday for Mrs. Clemens, for on that day her mother's gentle and beautiful soul went out from among them. The foreboding she had felt at the passing of Theodore Crane had been justified. She had a dread that the harvest of death was not yet ended. Matters in general were going badly with them, and an anxiety began to grow to get away from America, and so perhaps leave sorrow and ill-luck behind. Clemens, near the end of December, writing to his publishing manager, Hall, said:

Merry Christmas to you, and I wish to God I could have one myself before I die.

The house was emptier that winter than before, for Susy was at Bryn Mawr. Clemens planned some literary work, but the beginning, after his long idleness, was hard. A diversion was another portrait of himself, this time undertaken by Charles Noel Flagg. Clemens rather enjoyed portrait-sittings. He could talk and smoke, and he could incidentally acquire information. He liked to discuss any man's profession with him, and in his talks with Flagg he made a sincere effort to get that insight which would enable him to appreciate the old masters. Flagg found him a tractable sitter, and a most interesting one. Once he paid him a compliment, then apologized for having said the obvious thing.

"Never mind the apology," said Clemens. "The compliment that helps us on our way is not the one that is shut up in the mind, but the one that is spoken out."

When Flagg's portrait was about completed, Mrs. Clemens and Mrs. Crane came to the studio to look at it. Mrs. Clemens complained only that the necktie was crooked.

Page 526

"But it's always crooked," said Flagg, "and I have a great fancy for the line it makes."

She straightened it on Clemens himself, but it immediately became crooked again. Clemens said:

"If you were to make that necktie straight people would say; 'Good portrait, but there is something the matter with it. I don't know where it is.'"

The tie was left unchanged.

CLXXIV

THE MACHINE

The reader may have realized that by the beginning of 1891 Mark Twain's finances were in a critical condition. The publishing business had managed to weather along. It was still profitable, and could have been made much more so if the capital necessary to its growth had not been continuously and relentlessly absorbed by that gigantic vampire of inventions—that remorseless Frankenstein monster—the machine.

The beginning of this vast tragedy (for it was no less than that) dated as far back as 1880, when Clemens one day had taken a minor and purely speculative interest in patent rights, which was to do away with setting type by hand. In some memoranda which he made more than ten years later, when the catastrophe was still a little longer postponed, he gave some account of the matter.

This episode has now spread itself over more than one-fifth of my life, a considerable stretch of time, as I am now 55 years old.

Ten or eleven years ago Dwight Buell, a jeweler, called at our house and was shown up to the billiard-room—which was my study; and the game got more study than the other sciences. He wanted me to take some stock in a type-setting machine. He said it was at the Colt's Arms factory, and was about finished. I took \$2,000 of the stock. I was always taking little chances like that, and almost always losing by it, too. Some time afterward I was invited to go down to the factory and see the machine. I went, promising myself nothing, for I knew all about type-setting by practical experience, and held the settled and solidified opinion that a successful type-setting machine was an impossibility, for the reason that a machine cannot be made to think, and the thing that sets movable type must think or retire defeated. So, the performance I witnessed did most thoroughly amaze me. Here was a machine that was really setting type, and doing it with swiftness and accuracy, too. Moreover, it was distributing its case at the same time. The distribution was automatic; the machine fed itself from a galley of dead matter and without human help or suggestion, for it began its work of its own accord when the type channels needed filling, and stopped of its own accord when they were

full enough. The machine was almost a complete compositor; it lacked but one feature—it did not “justify” the lines. This was done by the operator’s assistant. I saw the operator set at the rate of

Page 527

3,000 ems an hour, which, counting distribution, was but little short of four casemen's work. William Hamersley was there. He said he was already a considerable owner, and was going to take as much more of the stock as he could afford. Wherefore, I set down my name for an additional \$3,000. It is here that the music begins.

It was the so-called Farnham machine that he saw, invented by James W. Paige, and if they had placed it on the market then, without waiting for the inventor to devise improvements, the story might have been a different one. But Paige was never content short of absolute perfection—a machine that was not only partly human, but entirely so. Clemens' used to say later that the Paige type-setter would do everything that a human being could do except drink and swear and go on a strike. He might properly have omitted the last item, but of that later. Paige was a small, bright-eyed, alert, smartly dressed man, with a crystal-clear mind, but a dreamer and a visionary. Clemens says of him: "He is a poet; a most great and genuine poet, whose sublime creations are written in steel."

It is easy to see now that Mark Twain and Paige did not make a good business combination. When Paige declared that, wonderful as the machine was, he could do vastly greater things with it, make it worth many more and much larger fortunes by adding this attachment and that, Clemens was just the man to enter into his dreams and to furnish the money to realize them. Paige did not require much money at first, and on the capital already invested he tinkered along with his improvements for something like four or five years; Hamersley and Clemens meantime capitalizing the company and getting ready to place the perfected invention on the market. By the time the Grant episode had ended Clemens had no reason to believe but that incalculable wealth lay just ahead, when the newspapers should be apprised of the fact that their types were no longer to be set by hand. Several contracts had been made with Paige, and several new attachments had been added to the machine. It seemed to require only one thing more, the justifier, which would save the labor of the extra man. Paige could be satisfied with nothing short of that, even though the extra man's wage was unimportant. He must have his machine do it all, and meantime five precious years had slipped away. Clemens, in his memoranda, says:

End of 1885. Paige arrives at my house unheralded. I had seen little or nothing of him for a year or two. He said:

"What will you complete the machine for?"

"What will it cost?"

"Twenty thousand dollars; certainly not over \$30,000."

"What will you give?"

“I’ll give you half.”

Clemens was “flush” at this time. His reading tour with Cable, the great sale of Huck Finn, the prospect of the Grant book, were rosy realities. He said:

Page 528

"I'll do it, but the limit must be \$30,000."

They agreed to allow Hamersley a tenth interest for the money he had already invested and for legal advice.

Hamersley consented readily enough, and when in February, 1886, the new contract was drawn they believed themselves heir to the millions of the Fourth Estate.

By this time F. G. Whitmore had come into Clemens's business affairs, and he did not altogether approve of the new contract. Among other things, it required that Clemens should not only complete the machine, but promote it, capitalize it commercially. Whitmore said:

"Mr. Clemens, that clause can bankrupt you."

Clemens answered: "Never mind that, Whitmore; I've considered that. I can get a thousand men worth a million apiece to go in with me if I can get a perfect machine."

He immediately began to calculate the number of millions he would be worth presently when the machine was completed and announced to the waiting world. He covered pages with figures that never ran short of millions, and frequently approached the billion mark. Colonel Sellers in his happiest moments never dreamed more lavishly. He obtained a list of all the newspapers in the United States and in Europe, and he counted up the machines that would be required by each. To his nephew, Sam Moffett, visiting him one day, he declared that it would take ten men to count the profits from the typesetter. He realized clearly enough that a machine which would set and distribute type and do the work of half a dozen men or more would revolutionize type composition. The fact that other inventors besides Paige were working quite as diligently and perhaps toward more simple conclusions did not disturb him. Rumors came of the Rogers machine and the Thorne machine and the Mergenthaler linotype, but Mark Twain only smiled. When the promoters of the Mergenthaler offered to exchange half their interests for a half interest in the Paige patent, to obtain thereby a wider insurance of success, it only confirmed his trust, and he let the golden opportunity go by.

Clemens thinks the thirty thousand dollars lasted about a year. Then Paige confessed that the machine was still incomplete, but he said that four thousand dollars more would finish it, and that with ten thousand dollars he could finish it and give a big exhibition in New York. He had discarded the old machine altogether, it seems, and at Pratt & Whitney's shops was building a new one from the ground up—a machine of twenty thousand minutely exact parts, each of which must be made by expert hand workmanship after elaborate drawings and patterns even more expensive. It was an undertaking for a millionaire.

Page 529

Paige offered to borrow from Clemens the amount needed, offering the machine as security. Clemens supplied the four thousand dollars, and continued to advance money from time to time at the rate of three to four thousand dollars a month, until he had something like eighty thousand dollars invested, with the machine still unfinished. This would be early in 1888, by which time other machines had reached a state of completion and were being placed on the market. The Mergenthaler, in particular, was attracting wide attention. Paige laughed at it, and Clemens, too, regarded it as a joke. The moment their machine was complete all other machines would disappear. Even the fact that the Tribune had ordered twenty-three of the linotypes, and other journals were only waiting to see the paper in its new dress before ordering, did not disturb them. Those linotypes would all go into the scrap-heap presently. It was too bad people would waste their money so. In January, 1888, Paige promised that the machine would be done by the 1st of April. On the 1st of April he promised it for September, but in October he acknowledged there were still eighty-five days' work to be done on it. In November Clemens wrote to Orion:

The machine is apparently almost done—but I take no privileges on that account; it must be done before I spend a cent that can be avoided. I have kept this family on very short commons for two years and they must go on scrimping until the machine is finished, no matter how long that may be.

By the end of '88 the income from the books and the business and Mrs. Clemens's Elmira investments no longer satisfied the demands of the type-setter, in addition to the household expense, reduced though the latter was; and Clemens began by selling and hypothecating his marketable securities. The whole household interest by this time centered in the machine. What the Tennessee land had been to John and Jane Clemens and their children, the machine had now become to Samuel Clemens and his family. "When the machine is finished everything will be all right again" afforded the comfort of that long-ago sentence, "When the Tennessee land is sold."

They would have everything they wanted then. Mrs. Clemens planned benefactions, as was her wont. Once she said to her sister:

"How strange it will seem to have unlimited means, to be able to do whatever you want to do, to give whatever you want to give without counting the cost."

Straight along through another year the three thousand dollars and more a month continued, and then on the 5th of January, 1889, there came what seemed the end—the machine and justifier were complete! In his notebook on that day Mark Twain set down this memorandum:

Eureka!



Saturday, January 5, 1889-12.20 P.M. At this moment I have seen a line of movable type spaced and justified by machinery! This is the first time in the history of the world that this amazing thing has ever been done. Present: J. W. Paige, the inventor; Charles Davis, | Mathematical assistants Earll | & mechanical Graham | experts Bates, foreman, and S. L. Clemens. This record is made immediately after the prodigious event.

Two days later he made another note:

Page 530

Monday, January 7—4.45 P.m. The first proper name ever set by this new keyboard was William Shakspeare. I set it at the above hour; & I perceive, now that I see the name written, that I either misspelled it then or I've misspelled it now.

The space-bar did its duty by the electric connections & steam & separated the two words preparatory to the reception of the space.

It seemed to him that his troubles were at an end. He wrote overflowing letters, such as long ago he had written about his first mining claims, to Orion and to other members of the family and to friends in America and Europe. One of these letters, written to George Standring, a London printer and publisher, also an author, will serve as an example.

The machine is finished! An hour and forty minutes ago a line of movable type was spaced and justified by machinery for the first time in the history of the world. And I was there to see.

That was the final function. I had before seen the machine set type, automatically, and distribute type, and automatically distribute its eleven different thicknesses of spaces. So now I have seen the machine, operated by one individual, do the whole thing, and do it a deal better than any man at the case can do it.

This is by far and away the most marvelous invention ever contrived by man. And it is not a thing of rags and patches; it is made of massive steel, and will last a century.

She will do the work of six men, and do it better than any six men that ever stood at a case.

The death-warrant of all other type-setting machines in this world was signed at 12.20 this afternoon, when that first line was shot through this machine and came out perfectly spaced and justified. And automatically, mind you. There was a speck of invisible dirt on one of those nonpareil types. Well, the machine allowed for that by inserting of its own accord a space which was the 5-1,000 of an inch thinner than it would have used if the dirt had been absent. But when I send you the details you will see that that's nothing for this machine to do; you'll see that it knows more and has got more brains than all the printers in the world put together.

His letter to Orion was more technical, also more jubilant. At the end he said:

All the witnesses made written record of the immense historical birth—the first justification of a line of movable type by machinery—& also set down the hour and the minute. Nobody had drank anything, & yet everybody seemed drunk. Well-dizzy, stupefied, stunned. All the other wonderful inventions of the human brain sink pretty nearly into commonplaces contrasted with this awful mechanical miracle. Telephones,

telegraphs, locomotives, cotton-gins, sewing- machines, Babbage calculators, jacquard looms,

Page 531

perfecting presses, all mere toys, simplicities! The Paige Compositor marches alone and far in the land of human inventions.

In one paragraph of Orion's letter he refers to the machine as a "cunning devil, knowing more than any man that ever lived." That was a profound truth, though not as he intended it. That creation of James Paige's brain reflected all the ingenuity and elusiveness of its creator, and added something on its own account. It was discovered presently that it had a habit of breaking the types. Paige said it was a trifling thing: he could fix it, but it meant taking down the machine, and that deadly expense of three thousand or four thousand dollars a month for the band of workmen and experts in Pratt & Whitney's machine shops did not cease. In February the machine was again setting and justifying type "to a hair," and Whitmore's son, Fred, was running it at a rate of six thousand ems an hour, a rate of composition hitherto unknown in the history of the world. His speed was increased to eight thousand ems an hour by the end of the year, and the machine was believed to have a capacity of eleven thousand. No type-setter invented to this day could match it for accuracy and precision when it was in perfect order, but its point of perfection was apparently a vanishing point. It would be just reached, when it would suddenly disappear, and Paige would discover other needed corrections. Once, when it was apparently complete as to every detail; and running like a human thing, with such important customers as the New York Herald and other great papers ready to place their orders, Paige suddenly discovered that it required some kind of an air-blast, and it was all taken down again and the air-blast, which required months to invent and perfect, was added.

But what is the use of remembering all these bitter details? The steady expense went on through another year, apparently increasing instead of diminishing, until, by the beginning of 1890, Clemens was finding it almost impossible to raise funds to continue the work. Still he struggled on. It was the old mining fascination—"a foot farther into the ledge and we shall strike the vein of gold."

He sent for Joe Goodman to come and help him organize a capital-stock company, in which Senator Jones and John Mackay, old Comstock friends, were to be represented. He never for a moment lost faith in the final outcome, and he believed that if they could build their own factory the delays and imperfections of construction would be avoided. Pratt & Whitney had been obliged to make all the parts by hand. With their own factory the new company would have vast and perfect machinery dedicated entirely to the production of type-setters.

Nothing short of two million dollars capitalization was considered, and Goodman made at least three trips from California to the East and labored with Jones and Mackay all that winter and at intervals during the following year, through which that "cunning devil," the machine, consumed its monthly four thousand dollars—money that was the final gleanings and sweepings of every nook and corner of the strong-box and bank-account

and savings of the Clemens family resources. With all of Mark Twain's fame and honors his life at this period was far from an enviable one. It was, in fact, a fevered delirium, often a veritable nightmare.

Page 532

Reporters who approached him for interviews, little guessing what he was passing through, reported that Mark Twain's success in life had made him crusty and sour.

Goodman remembers that when they were in Washington, conferring with Jones, and had rooms at the Arlington, opening together, often in the night he would awaken to see a light burning in the next room and to hear Mark Twain's voice calling:

"Joe, are you awake?"

"Yes, Mark, what is it?"

"Oh, nothing, only I can't sleep. Won't you talk awhile? I know it's wrong to disturb you, but I am so d—d miserable that I can't help it."

Whereupon he would get up and talk and talk, and pace the floor and curse the delays until he had refreshed himself, and then perhaps wallow in millions until breakfast-time.

Jones and Mackay, deeply interested, were willing to put up a reasonable amount of money, but they were unable to see a profit in investing so large a capital in a plant for constructing the machines.

Clemens prepared estimates showing that the American business alone would earn thirty-five million dollars a year, and the European business twenty million dollars more. These dazzled, but they did not convince the capitalists. Jones was sincerely anxious to see the machine succeed, and made an engagement to come out to see it work, but a day or two before he was to come Paige was seized with an inspiration. The type-setter was all in parts when the day came, and Jones's visit had to be postponed. Goodman wrote that the fatal delay had "sicklied over the bloom" of Jones's original enthusiasm.

Yet Clemens seems never to have been openly violent with Paige. In the memorandum which he completed about this time he wrote:

Paige and I always meet on effusively affectionate terms, and yet he knows perfectly well that if I had him in a steel trap I would shut out all human succor and watch that trap until he died.

He was grabbing at straws now. He offered a twentieth or a hundredth or a thousandth part of the enterprise for varying sums, ranging from one thousand to one hundred thousand dollars. He tried to capitalize his advance (machine) royalties, and did dispose of a few of these; but when the money came in for them he was beset by doubts as to the final outcome, and though at his wit's ends for further funds, he returned the checks to the friends who had sent them. One five-thousand-dollar check from a friend named Arnot, in Elmira, went back by the next mail. He was willing to sacrifice his own last penny, but he could not take money from those who were blindly

backing his judgment only and not their own. He still had faith in Jones, faith which lasted up to the 13th of February, 1891. Then came a final letter, in which Jones said that he had canvassed the situation thoroughly with such men as Mackay, Don Cameron, Whitney, and others, with the result that

Page 533

they would have nothing to do with the machine. Whitney and Cameron, he said, were large stockholders in the Mergenthaler. Jones put it more kindly and more politely than that, and closed by saying that there could be no doubt as to the machine's future an ambiguous statement. A letter from young Hall came about the same time, urging a heavy increase of capital in the business. The Library of American Literature, its leading feature, was handled on the instalment plan. The collections from this source were deferred dribbles, while the bills for manufacture and promotion must be paid down in cash. Clemens realized that for the present at least the dream was ended. The family securities were exhausted. The book trade was dull; his book royalties were insufficient even to the demands of the household. He signed further notes to keep business going, left the matter of the machine in abeyance, and turned once more to the trade of authorship. He had spent in the neighborhood of one hundred and ninety thousand dollars on the typesetter—money that would better have been thrown into the Connecticut River, for then the agony had been more quickly over. As it was, it had shadowed many precious years.

CLXXV

"The claimant"—Leaving Hartford

For the first time in twenty years Mark Twain was altogether dependent on literature. He did not feel mentally unequal to the new problem; in fact, with his added store of experience, he may have felt himself more fully equipped for authorship than ever before. It had been his habit to write within his knowledge and observation. To a correspondent of this time he reviewed his stock in trade—

. . . I confine myself to life with which I am familiar when pretending to portray life. But I confined myself to the boy-life out on the Mississippi because that had a peculiar charm for me, and not because I was not familiar with other phases of life. I was a soldier two weeks once in the beginning of the war, and was hunted like a rat the whole time. Familiar? My splendid Kipling himself hasn't a more burnt-in, hard-baked, and unforgettable familiarity with that death-on-the-pale-horse-with-hell-following-after, which is a raw soldier's first fortnight in the field—and which, without any doubt, is the most tremendous fortnight and the vividest he is ever going to see. Yes, and I have shoveled silver tailings in a quartz-mill a couple of weeks, and acquired the last possibilities of culture in that direction. And I've done "pocket-mining" during three months in the one little patch of ground in the whole globe where Nature conceals gold in pockets—or did before we robbed all of those pockets and exhausted, obliterated, annihilated the most curious freak Nature ever indulged in. There are not thirty men left alive who, being told there was a pocket hidden on the broad slope of a mountain,

Page 534

would know how to go and find it, or have even the faintest idea of how to set about it; but I am one of the possible 20 or 30 who possess the secret, and I could go and put my hand on that hidden treasure with a most deadly precision. And I've been a prospector, and know pay rock from poor when I find it—just with a touch of the tongue. And I've been a silver miner and know how to dig and shovel and drill and put in a blast. And so I know the mines and the miners interiorly as well as Bret Harte knows them exteriorly. And I was a newspaper reporter four years in cities, and so saw the inside of many things; and was reporter in a legislature two sessions and the same in Congress one session, and thus learned to know personally three sample bodies of the smallest minds and the selfishest souls and the cowardliest hearts that God makes.

And I was some years a Mississippi pilot, and familiarly knew all the different kinds of steamboatmen—a race apart, and not like other folk.

And I was for some years a traveling “jour” printer, and wandered from city to city—and so I know that sect familiarly.

And I was a lecturer on the public platform a number of seasons and was a responder to toasts at all the different kinds of banquets—and so I know a great many secrets about audiences—secrets not to be got out of books, but only acquirable by experience. And I watched over one dear project of mine for years, spent a fortune on it, and failed to make it go—and the history of that would make a large book in which a million men would see themselves as in a mirror; and they would testify and say, Verily, this is not imagination; this fellow has been there—and after would they cast dust upon their heads, cursing and blaspheming.

And I am a publisher, and did pay to one author's widow (General Grant's) the largest copyright checks this world has seen—aggregating more than £80,000 in the first year.

And I have been an author for 20 years and an ass for 55.

Now then: as the most valuable capital or culture or education usable in the building of novels is personal experience I ought to be well equipped for that trade.

I surely have the equipment, a wide culture, and all of it real, none of it artificial, for I don't know anything about books.

This generous bill of literary particulars was fully warranted. Mark Twain's equipment was equal to his occasions. It is true that he was no longer young, and that his health was not perfect, but his resolution and his energy had not waned.

His need was imminent and he lost no time. He dug out from his pigeonholes such materials as he had in stock, selecting a few completed manuscripts for immediate disposal—among them his old article entitled, “Mental Telegraphy,” written in 1878, when he had hesitated to offer it, in the fear that it would not be accepted by the public otherwise than as a joke. He added to it now a supplement and sent it to Mr. Alden, of Harper’s Magazine.

Page 535

Psychic interest had progressed in twelve years; also Mark Twain had come to be rather more seriously regarded. The article was accepted promptly! —[The publication of this article created a good deal of a stir and resulted in the first general recognition of what later became known as Telepathy. A good many readers insisted on regarding the whole matter as one of Mark Twain's jokes, but its serious acceptance was much wider.] —The old sketch, "Luck," also found its way to Harper's Magazine, and other manuscripts were looked over and furbished up with a view to their disposal. Even the history game was dragged from the dust of its retirement, and Hall was instructed to investigate its chance of profit.

Then Mark Twain went to work in earnest. Within a week after the collapse of the Jones bubble he was hard at work on a new book—the transmigration of the old "Claimant" play into a novel.

Ever since the appearance of the Yankee there had been what was evidently a concerted movement to induce him to write a novel with the theories of Henry George as the central idea. Letters from every direction had urged him to undertake such a story, and these had suggested a more serious purpose for the Claimant book. A motif in which there is a young lord who renounces his heritage and class to come to America and labor with his hands; who attends socialistic meetings at which men inspired by readings of 'Progress and Poverty' and 'Looking Backward' address their brothers of toil, could have in it something worth while. Clemens inserted portions of some of his discarded essays in these addresses, and had he developed this element further, and abandoned Colonel Sellers's materialization lunacies to the oblivion they had earned, the result might have been more fortunate.

But his faith in the new Sellers had never died, and the temptation to use scenes from the abandoned play proved to be too strong to be resisted. The result was incongruous enough. The author, however, admired it amazingly at the time. He sent Howells stirring reports of his progress. He wrote Hall that the book would be ready soon and that there must be seventy-five thousand orders by the date of issue, "not a single one short of that." Then suddenly, at the end of February, the rheumatism came back into his shoulder and right arm and he could hardly hold the pen. He conceived the idea of dictating into a phonograph, and wrote Howells to test this invention and find out as to terms for three months, with cylinders enough to carry one hundred and seventy-five thousand words.

I don't want to erase any of them. My right arm is nearly disabled by rheumatism, but I am bound to write this book (and sell 100,000 copies of it—no, I mean 1,000,000—next fall). I feel sure I can dictate the book into a phonograph if I don't have to yell. I write 2,000 words a day. I think I can dictate twice as many.

But mind, if this is going to be too much trouble to you—go ahead and do it all the same.

Page 536

Howells replied encouragingly. He had talked a letter into a phonograph and the phonograph man had talked his answer into it, after which the cylinder had been taken to a typewriter in the-next room and correctly written out. If a man had the “cheek” to dictate his story into a phonograph, Howells said, all the rest seemed perfectly easy.

Clemens ordered a phonograph and gave it a pretty fair trial. It was only a partial success. He said he couldn’t write literature with it because it hadn’t any ideas or gift for elaboration, but was just as matter-of-fact, compressive and unresponsive, grave and unsmiling as the devil—a poor audience.

I filled four dozen cylinders in two sittings, then I found I could have said it about as easy with the pen, and said it a deal better. Then I resigned.

He did not immediately give it up. To relieve his aching arm he alternated the phonograph with the pen, and the work progressed rapidly. Early in May he was arranging for its serial disposition, and it was eventually sold for twelve thousand dollars to the McClure Syndicate, who placed it with a number of papers in America and with the Idler Magazine in England. W. M. Laffan, of the Sun, an old and tried friend, combined with McClure in the arrangement. Laffan also proposed to join with McClure in paying Mark Twain a thousand dollars each for a series of six European letters. This was toward the end of May, 1891, when Clemens had already decided upon a long European sojourn.

There were several reasons why this was desirable. Neither Clemens nor his wife was in good health. Both of them were troubled with rheumatism, and a council of physicians had agreed that Mrs. Clemens had some disturbance of the heart. The death of Charles L. Webster in April—the fourth death among relatives in two years—had renewed her forebodings. Susy, who had been at Bryn Mawr, had returned far from well. The European baths and the change of travel it was believed would be beneficial to the family health. Furthermore, the maintenance of the Hartford home was far too costly for their present and prospective income. The house with its associations of seventeen incomparable years must be closed. A great period had ended.

They arranged to sail on the 6th of June by the French line.—[On the Gascogne.]—Mrs. Crane was to accompany them, and came over in April to help in breaking the news to the servants. John and Ellen O’Neill (the gardener and his wife) were to remain in charge; places were found for George and Patrick. Katie Leary was retained to accompany the family. It was a sad dissolution.

The day came for departure and the carriage was at the door. Mrs. Clemens did not come immediately. She was looking into the rooms, bidding a kind of silent good-by to the home she had made and to all its memories. Following the others she entered the carriage, and Patrick McAleer drove them together for the last time. They were going

on a long journey. They did not guess how long, or that the place would never be home to them again.

Page 537

CLXXVI A EUROPEAN SUMMER

They landed at Havre and went directly to Paris, where they remained about a week. From Paris Clemens wrote to Hall that a deal by which he had hoped to sell out his interest in the type-setter to the Mallorys, of the Churchman, had fallen through.

"Therefore," he said, "you will have to modify your instalment system to meet the emergency of a constipated purse; for if you should need to borrow any more money I would not know how or where to raise it."

The Clemens party went to Geneva, then rested for a time at the baths of Aix; from Aix to Bayreuth to attend the Wagner festival, and from Bayreuth to Marienbad for further additions of health. Clemens began writing his newspaper letters at Aix, the first of which consists of observations at that "paradise of rheumatics." This letter is really a careful and faithful description of Aix-les-Bains, with no particular drift of humor in it. He tells how in his own case the baths at first developed plenty of pain, but that the subsequent ones removed almost all of it.

"I've got back the use of my arm the last few days, and I am going away now," he says, and concludes by describing the beautiful drives and scenery about Aix—the pleasures to be found paddling on little Lake Bourget and the happy excursions to Annecy.

At the end of an hour you come to Annecy and rattle through its old crooked lanes, built solidly up with curious old houses that are a dream of the Middle Ages, and presently you come to the main object of your trip—Lake Annecy. It is a revelation. It is a miracle. It brings the tears to a body's eyes. It is so enchanting. That is to say, it affects you just as all other things that you instantly recognize as perfect affect you—perfect music, perfect eloquence, perfect art, perfect joy, perfect grief.

He was getting back into his old descriptive swing, but his dislike for travel was against him, and he found writing the letters hard. From Bayreuth he wrote "At the Shrine of St. Wagner," one of the best descriptions of that great musical festival that has been put into words. He paid full tribute to the performance, also to the Wagner devotion, confessing its genuineness.

This opera of "Tristan and Isolde" last night broke the hearts of all witnesses who were of the faith, and I know of some, and have heard of many, who could not sleep after it, but cried the night away. I feel strongly out of place here. Sometimes I feel like the one sane person in the community of the mad; sometimes I feel like the one blind man where all others see; the one groping savage in the college of the learned, and always during service I feel like a heretic in heaven.

He tells how he really enjoyed two of the operas, and rejoiced in supposing that his musical regeneration was accomplished and perfected; but alas! he was informed by experts that those particular events were not real music at all. Then he says:

Page 538

Well, I ought to have recognized the sign the old, sure sign that has never failed me in matters of art. Whenever I enjoy anything in art it means that it is mighty poor. The private knowledge of this fact has saved me from going to pieces with enthusiasm in front of many and many a chromo. However, my base instinct does bring me profit sometimes; I was the only man out of 3,200 who got his money back on those two operas.

His third letter was from Marienbad, in Bohemia, another "health-factory," as he calls it, and is of the same general character as those preceding. In his fourth letter he told how he himself took charge of the family fortunes and became courier from Aix to Bayreuth. It is a very delightful letter, most of it, and probably not greatly burlesqued or exaggerated in its details. It is included now in the "Complete Works," as fresh and delightful as ever. They returned to Germany at the end of August, to Nuremberg, which he notes as the "city of exquisite glimpses," and to Heidelberg, where they had their old apartment of thirteen years before, Room 40 at the Schloss Hotel, with its wonderful prospect of wood and hill, and the haze-haunted valley of the Rhine. They remained less than a week in that beautiful place, and then were off for Switzerland, Lucerne, Brienz, Interlaken, finally resting at the Hotel Beau Rivage, Ouchy, Lausanne, on beautiful Lake Lemman.

Clemens had agreed to write six of the newspaper letters, and he had by this time finished five of them, the fifth being dated from Interlaken, its subject, "Switzerland, the Cradle of Liberty." He wrote to Hall that it was his intention to write another book of travel and to take a year or two to collect the material. The Century editors were after him for a series after the style of *Innocents Abroad*. He considered this suggestion, but declined by cable, explaining to Hall that he intended to write for serial publication no more than the six newspaper letters. He said:

To write a book of travel would be less trouble than to write six detached chapters. Each of these letters requires the same variety of treatment and subject that one puts into a book; but in the book each chapter doesn't have to be rounded and complete in itself.

He suggested that the six letters be gathered into a small volume which would contain about thirty-five or forty thousand words, to be sold as low as twenty-five cents, but this idea appears to have been dropped.

At Ouchy Clemens conceived the idea of taking a little trip on his own account, an excursion that would be a rest after the strenuous three months' travel and sightseeing—one that he could turn into literature. He engaged Joseph Very, a courier used during their earlier European travels, and highly recommended in the *Tramp Abroad*. He sent Joseph over to Lake Bourget to engage a boat and a boatman for a ten days' trip down the river Rhone.

Page 539

For five dollars Joseph bought a safe, flat-bottom craft; also he engaged the owner as pilot. A few days later—September 19—Clemens followed. They stopped overnight on an island in Lake Bourget, and in his notes Clemens tells how he slept in the old castle of Chatillon, in the room where a pope was born. They started on their drift next morning. To Mrs. Clemens, in some good-by memoranda, he said:

The lake is as smooth as glass; a brilliant sun is shining.

Our boat is so comfortable and shady with its awning.

11.20. We have crossed the lake and are entering the canal. Shall presently be in the Rhone.

Noon. Nearly down to the Rhone, passing the village of Chanaz.

Sunday, 3.15 P.M. We have been in the Rhone three hours. It is unimaginably still & reposeful & cool & soft & breezy. No rowing or work of any kind to do—we merely float with the current we glide noiseless and swift—as fast as a London cab-horse rips along—8 miles an hour—the swiftest current I’ve ever boated in. We have the entire river to ourselves nowhere a boat of any kind.

Pleasant it must have been in the warm September days to go swinging down that swift, gray stream which comes racing out of Switzerland into France, fed from a thousand glaciers. He sent almost daily memoranda of his progress. Half-way to Arles he wrote:

It’s too delicious, floating with the swift current under the awning these superb, sunshiny days in deep peace and quietness.

Some of these curious old historical towns strangely persuade me, but it is so lovely afloat that I don’t stop, but view them from the outside and sail on. We get abundance of grapes and peaches for next to nothing. My, but that inn was suffocating with garlic where we stayed last night! I had to hold my nose as we went up-stairs or I believe I should have fainted.

Little bit of a room, rude board floor unswept, 2 chairs, unpainted white pine table—void the furniture! Had a good firm bed, solid as a rock, & you could have brained an ox with the bolster.

These six hours have been entirely delightful. I want to do all the rivers of Europe in an open boat in summer weather.

Still further along he described one of their shore accommodations.



Night caught us yesterday where we had to take quarters in a peasant's house which was occupied by the family and a lot of cows & calves, also several rabbits.—[His word for fleas. Neither fleas nor mosquitoes ever bit him—probably because of his steady use of tobacco.]—The latter had a ball & I was the ballroom; but they were very friendly and didn't bite. The peasants were mighty kind and hearty & flew around & did their best to make us comfortable. This morning I breakfasted on the shore in the open air with two sociable dogs & a cat. Clean

Page 540

cloth, napkins & table furniture, white sugar, a vast hunk of excellent butter, good bread, first-class coffee with pure milk, fried fish just caught. Wonderful that so much cleanliness should come out of such a phenomenally dirty house. An hour ago we saw the Falls of the Rhone, a prodigiously rough and dangerous-looking place; shipped a little water, but came to no harm. It was one of the most beautiful pieces of piloting & boat management I ever saw. Our admiral knew his business. We have had to run ashore for shelter every time it has rained heretofore, but Joseph has been putting in his odd time making a waterproof sun-bonnet for the boat, & now we sail along dry, although we have had many heavy showers this morning.

Here follows a pencil-drawing of the boat and its new awning, and he adds: "I'm on the stern, under the shelter, and out of sight."

The trip down the Rhone proved more valuable as an outing than as literary material. Clemens covered one hundred and seventy-four pages with his notes of it, then gave it up. Traveling alone with no one but Joseph and the Admiral (former owner of the craft) was reposeful and satisfactory, but it did not inspire literary flights. He tried to rectify the lack of companionship by introducing fictitious characters, such as Uncle Abner, Fargo, and Stavely, a young artist; also Harris, from the Tramp Abroad; but Harris was not really there this time, and Mark Twain's genius, given rather to elaboration than to construction, found it too severe a task to imagine a string of adventures without at least the customary ten per cent. of fact to build upon.

It was a day above Avignon that he had an experience worth while. They were abreast of an old castle, nearing a village, one of the huddled jumble of houses of that locality, when, glancing over his left shoulder toward the distant mountain range, he received what he referred to later as a soul-stirring shock. Pointing to the outline of the distant range he said to the courier:

"Name it. Who is it?"

The courier said, "Napoleon."

Clemens assented. The Admiral, when questioned, also promptly agreed that the mountain outlined was none other than the reclining figure of the great commander himself. They watched and discussed the phenomenon until they reached the village. Next morning Clemens was up for a first daybreak glimpse of his discovery. Later he reported it to Mrs. Clemens:

I did so long for you and Sue yesterday morning—the most superb sunrise—the most marvelous sunrise—& I saw it all, from the very faintest suspicion of the coming dawn, all the way through to the final explosion of glory. But it had an interest private to itself & not to be found elsewhere in the world; for between me & it, in the far-distant eastward,

was a silhouetted mountain range, in which I had discovered, the previous afternoon, a most noble face upturned to

Page 541

the sky, & mighty form outstretched, which I had named Napoleon Dreaming of Universal Empire—and now this prodigious face, soft, rich, blue, spirituelle, asleep, tranquil, reposeful, lay against that giant conflagration of ruddy and golden splendors, all rayed like a wheel with the up-streaming & far-reaching lances of the sun. It made one want to cry for delight, it was so supreme in its unimaginable majesty & beauty.

He made a pencil-sketch of the Napoleon head in his note-book, and stated that the apparition could be seen opposite the castle of Beauchastel; but in later years his treacherous memory betrayed him, and, forgetting these identifying marks, he told of it as lying a few hours above Arles, and named it the “Lost Napoleon,” because those who set out to find it did not succeed. He even wrote an article upon the subject, in which he urged tourists to take steamer from Arles and make a short trip upstream, keeping watch on the right-hand bank, with the purpose of rediscovering the natural wonder. Fortunately this sketch was not published. It would have been set down as a practical joke by disappointed travelers. One of Mark Twain’s friends, Mr. Theodore Stanton, made a persistent effort to find the Napoleon, but with the wrong directions naturally failed.

It required ten days to float to Arles. Then the current gave out and Clemens ended the excursion and returned to Lausanne by rail. He said:

“It was twenty-eight miles to Marseilles, and somebody would have to row. That would not have been pleasure; it would have meant work for the sailor, and I do not like work even when another person does it.”

To Twichell in America he wrote:

You ought to have been along—I could have made room for you easily, & you would have found that a pedestrian tour in Europe doesn’t begin with a raft voyage for hilarity & mild adventure & intimate contact with the unvisited native of the back settlements & extinction from the world and newspapers & a conscience in a state of coma & lazy comfort & solid happiness. In fact, there’s nothing that’s so lovely.

But it’s all over. I gave the raft away yesterday at Arles & am loafing along back by short stages on the rail to Ouchy, Lausanne, where the tribe are staying at the Beau Rivage and are well and prosperous.

CLXXVII

KORNERSTRASSE,7

They had decided to spend the winter in Berlin, and in October Mrs. Clemens and Mrs. Crane, after some previous correspondence with an agent, went up to that city to

engage an apartment. The elevator had not reached the European apartment in those days, and it was necessary, on Mrs. Clemens's account, to have a ground floor. The sisters searched a good while without success, and at last reached Kornerstrasse, a short, secluded street, highly recommended by the agent. The apartment they examined in Kornerstrasse was Number 7, and they were so much pleased with the conveniences and comfort of it and so tired that they did not notice closely its, general social environment. The agent supplied an assortment of furniture for a consideration, and they were soon settled in the attractive, roomy place. Clemens and the children, arriving somewhat later, expressed themselves as satisfied.

Page 542

Their contentment was somewhat premature. When they began to go out socially, which was very soon, and friends inquired as to their location, they noticed that the address produced a curious effect. Semi-acquaintances said, "Ah, yes, Kornerstrasse"; acquaintances said, "Dear me, do you like it?" An old friend exclaimed, "Good gracious! How in the world did you ever come to locate there?" Then they began to notice what they had not at first seen. Kornerstrasse was not disreputable, but it certainly was not elegant. There were rag warehouses across the street and women who leaned out the windows to gossip. The street itself was thronged with children. They played on a sand pile and were often noisy and seldom clean. It was eminently not the place for a distinguished man of letters. The family began to be sensitive on the subject of their address.

Clemens, of course, made humor out of it. He wrote a newspaper letter on the subject, a burlesque, naturally, which the family prevailed upon him not to print. But the humiliation is out of it now, and a bit of its humor may be preserved. He takes upon himself the renting of the place, and pictures the tour of inspection with the agent's assistant.

He was greatly moved when they came to the street and said, softly and lovingly:

"Ah, Korner Street, Korner Street, why did I not think of you before! A place fit for the gods, dear sir. Quiet?—notice how still it is; and remember this is noonday—noonday. It is but one block long, you see, just a sweet, dear little nest hid away here in the heart of the great metropolis, its presence and its sacred quiet unsuspected by the restless crowds that swarm along the stately thoroughfares yonder at its two extremities. And _____"

"This building is handsome, but I don't think much of the others. They look pretty commonplace, compared with the rest of Berlin."

"Dear! dear! have you noticed that? It is just an affectation of the nobility. What they want——"

"The nobility? Do they live in——"

"In this street? That is good! very good, indeed! I wish the Duke of Sassafras-Hagenstein could hear you say that. When the Duke first moved in here he——"

"Does he live in this street?"

"Him! Well, I should say so! Do you see the big, plain house over there with the placard in the third floor window? That's his house."

“The placard that says ‘Furnished rooms to let’? Does he keep boarders?”

“What an idea! Him! With a rent-roll of twelve hundred thousand marks a year? Oh, positively this is too good.”

“Well, what does he have that sign up for?”

The assistant took me by the buttonhole & said, with a merry light beaming in his eye:

Page 543

"Why, my dear sir, a person would know you are new to Berlin just by your innocent questions. Our aristocracy, our old, real, genuine aristocracy, are full of the quaintest eccentricities, eccentricities inherited for centuries, eccentricities which they are prouder of than they are of their titles, and that sign-board there is one of them. They all hang them out. And it's regulated by an unwritten law. A baron is entitled to hang out two, a count five, a duke fifteen——"

"Then they are all dukes over on that side, I sup——"

"Every one of them. Now the old Duke of Backofenhofenschwartz not the present Duke, but the last but one, he——"

"Does he live over the sausage-shop in the cellar?"

"No, the one farther along, where the eighteenth yellow cat is chewing the door-mat——"

"But all the yellow cats are chewing the door-mats."

"Yes, but I mean the eighteenth one. Count. No, never mind; there's a lot more come. I'll get you another mark. Let me see——"

They could not remain permanently in Komerstrasse, but they stuck it out till the end of December—about two months. Then they made such settlement with the agent as they could—that is to say, they paid the rest of their year's rent—and established themselves in a handsome apartment at the Hotel Royal, Unter den Linden. There was no need to be ashamed of this address, for it was one of the best in Berlin.

As for Komerstrasse, it is cleaner now. It is still not aristocratic, but it is eminently respectable. There is a new post-office that takes in Number 7, where one may post mail and send telegrams and use the Fernsprecher—which is to say the telephone—and be politely treated by uniformed officials, who have all heard of Mark Twain, but have no knowledge of his former occupation of their premises.

CLXXVIII

A WINTER IN BERLIN

Clemens, meantime, had been trying to establish himself in his work, but his rheumatism racked him occasionally and was always a menace. Closing a letter to Hall, he said:

"I must stop-my arm is howling."

He put in a good deal of time devising publishing schemes, principal among them being a plan for various cheap editions of his books, pamphlets, and such like, to sell for a few cents. These projects appear never to have been really undertaken, Hall very likely fearing that a flood of cheap issues would interfere with the more important trade. It seemed dangerous to trifle with an apparently increasing prosperity, and Clemens was willing enough to agree with this view.

Clemens had still another letter to write for Laffan and McClure, and he made a pretty careful study of Berlin with that end in view. But his arm kept him from any regular work. He made notes, however. Once he wrote:

Page 544

The first gospel of all monarchies should be Rebellion; the second should be Rebellion; and the third and all gospels, and the only gospel of any monarchy, should be Rebellion—against Church and State.

And again:

I wrote a chapter on this language 13 years ago and tried my level best to improve it and simplify it for these people, and this is the result—a, word of thirty-nine letters. It merely concentrates the alphabet with a shovel. It hurts me to know that that chapter is not in any of their text-books and they don't use it in the university.

Socially, that winter in Berlin was eventful enough. William Walter Phelps, of New Jersey (Clemens had known him in America), was United States minister at the German capital, while at the Emperor's court there was a cousin, Frau von Versen, nee Clemens, one of the St. Louis family. She had married a young German officer who had risen to the rank of a full general. Mark Twain and his family were welcome guests at all the diplomatic events—often brilliant levees, gatherings of distinguished men and women from every circle of achievement. Labouchere of 'Truth' was there, De Blowitz of the 'Times', and authors, ambassadors, and scientists of rank. Clemens became immediately a distinguished figure at these assemblies. His popularity in Germany was openly manifested. At any gathering he was surrounded by a brilliant company, eager to do him honor. He was recognized whenever he appeared on the street, and saluted, though in his notes he says he was sometimes mistaken for the historian Mommsen, whom he resembled in hair and features. His books were displayed for sale everywhere, and a special cheap edition of them was issued at a few cents per copy.

Captain Bingham (later General Bingham, Commissioner of Police in New York City) and John Jackson were attaches of the legation, both of them popular with the public in general, and especially so with the Clemens family. Susy Clemens, writing to her father during a temporary absence, tells of a party at Mrs. Jackson's, and especially refers to Captain Bingham in the most complimentary terms.

"He never left me sitting alone, nor in an awkward situation of any kind, but always came cordially to the rescue. My gratitude toward him was absolutely limitless."

She adds that Mrs. Bingham was very handsome and decidedly the most attractive lady present. Berlin was Susy's first real taste of society, and she was reveling in it. In her letter she refers to Minister Phelps by the rather disrespectful nickname of "Yaas," a term conferred because of his pronunciation of that affirmative. The Clemens children were not entirely happy in the company of the minister. They were fond of him, but he was a great tease. They were quite young enough, but it seemed always to give him delight to make them appear much younger. In the letter above quoted Susy says:

Page 545

When I saw Mr. Phelps I put out my hand enthusiastically and said, "Oh, Mr. Phelps, good evening," whereat he drew back and said, so all could hear, "What, you here! why, you're too young. Do you think you know how to behave?" As there were two or three young gentlemen near by to whom I hadn't been introduced I wasn't exactly overjoyed at this greeting.

We may imagine that the nickname "Yaas" had been invented by Susy in secret retaliation, though she was ready enough to forgive him, for he was kindness itself at heart.

In one of his later dictations Clemens related an anecdote concerning a dinner with Phelps, when he (Clemens) had been invited to meet Count S——, a cabinet minister of long and illustrious descent. Clemens, and Phelps too, it seems, felt overshadowed by this ancestry.

Of course I wanted to let out the fact that I had some ancestors, too; but I did not want to pull them out of their graves by the ears, and I never could seem to get the chance to work them in, in a way that would look sufficiently casual. I suppose Phelps was in the same difficulty. In fact he looked distraught now and then just as a person looks who wants to uncover an ancestor purely by accident and cannot think of a way that will seem accidental enough. But at last, after dinner, he made a try. He took us about his drawing-room, showing us the pictures, and finally stopped before a rude and ancient engraving. It was a picture of the court that tried Charles I. There was a pyramid of judges in Puritan slouch hats, and below them three bareheaded secretaries seated at a table. Mr. Phelps put his finger upon one of the three and said, with exulting indifference:

"An ancestor of mine."

I put a finger on a judge and retorted with scathing languidness:

"Ancestor of mine. But it is a small matter. I have others."

Clemens was sincerely fond of Phelps and spent a good deal of time at the legation headquarters. Sometimes he wrote there. An American journalist, Henry W. Fischer, remembers seeing him there several times scribbling on such scraps of paper as came handy, and recalls that on one occasion he delivered an address to a German and English audience on the "Awful German Tongue." This was probably the lecture that brought Clemens to bed with pneumonia. With Mrs. Clemens he had been down to Ilsenburg, in the Hartz Mountains, for a week of change. It was pleasant there, and they would have remained longer but for the Berlin lecture engagement. As it was, they found Berlin very cold and the lecture-room crowded and hot. When the lecture was over they stopped at General von Versen's for a ball, arriving at home about two in the morning. Clemens awoke with a heavy cold and lung congestion. He remained in bed,

a very sick man indeed, for the better part of a month. It was unpleasant enough at first, though he rather enjoyed the convalescent period.

Page 546

He could sit up in bed and read and receive occasional callers. Fischer brought him *Memoirs of the Margravine of Bayreuth*, always a favorite. —[Clemens was deeply interested in the Margravine, and at one time began a novel with her absorbing history as its theme. He gave it up, probably feeling that the romantic form could add nothing to the Margravine's own story.]—The Emperor sent Frau von Versen with an invitation for him to attend the consecration of some flags in the palace. When she returned, conveying thanks and excuses, his Majesty commanded her to prepare a dinner at her home for Mark Twain and himself and a few special guests, the date to be arranged when Clemens's physician should pronounce him well enough to attend.

Members of the Clemens household were impressed by this royal attention. Little Jean was especially awed. She said:

"I wish I could be in papa's clothes"; then, after reflection, "but that wouldn't be any use. I reckon the Emperor wouldn't recognize me." And a little later, when she had been considering all the notables and nobilities of her father's recent association, she added:

"Why, papa, if it keeps on like this, pretty soon there won't be anybody for you to get acquainted with but God," which Mark Twain decided was not quite as much of a compliment as it had at first seemed.

It was during the period of his convalescence that Clemens prepared his sixth letter for the *New York Sun* and McClure's syndicate, "The German Chicago," a finely descriptive article on Berlin, and German customs and institutions generally. Perhaps the best part of it is where he describes the grand and prolonged celebration which had been given in honor of Professor Virchow's seventieth birthday.—[Rudolph Virchow, an eminent German pathologist and anthropologist and scholar; then one of the most prominent figures of the German Reichstag. He died in 1902.] —He tells how the demonstrations had continued in one form or another day after day, and merged at last into the seventieth birthday of Professor Helmholtz—[Herman von Helmholtz, an eminent German physicist, one of the most distinguished scientists of the nineteenth century. He died in 1894.]—also how these great affairs finally culminated in a mighty 'commerz', or beer-fest, given in their honor by a thousand German students. This letter has been published in Mark Twain's "Complete Works," and is well worth reading to-day. His place had been at the table of the two heroes of the occasion, Virchow and Helmholtz, a place where he could see and hear all that went on; and he was immensely impressed at the honor which Germany paid to her men of science. The climax came when Mommsen unexpectedly entered the room.—[Theodor Mommsen (1817-1903), an eminent German historian and archeologist, a powerful factor in all liberal movements. From 1874-1895 permanent secretary of the Berlin Royal Academy of Sciences.]

Page 547

There seemed to be some signal whereby the students on the platform were made aware that a professor had arrived at the remote door of entrance, for you would see them suddenly rise to their feet, strike an erect military attitude, then draw their swords; the swords of all their brethren standing guard at the innumerable tables would flash from the scabbard and be held aloft—a handsome spectacle. Three clear bugle-notes would ring out, then all these swords would come down with a crash, twice repeated, on the tables and be uplifted and held aloft again; then in the distance you would see the gay uniforms and uplifted swords of a guard of honor clearing the way and conducting the guest down to his place. The songs were stirring, and the immense outpour from young life and young lungs, the crash of swords, and the thunder of the beer-mugs gradually worked a body up to what seemed the last possible summit of excitement. It surely seemed to me that I had reached that summit, that I had reached my limit, and that there was no higher lift devisable for me. When apparently the last eminent guest had long ago taken his place, again those three bugle-blasts rang out, and once more the swords leaped from their scabbards. Who might this late comer be? Nobody was interested to inquire. Still, indolent eyes were turned toward the distant entrance, and we saw the silken gleam and the lifted sword of a guard of honor plowing through the remote crowds. Then we saw that end of the house rising to its feet; saw it rise abreast the advancing guard all along like a wave. This supreme honor had been offered to no one before. There was an excited whisper at our table—“Mommсен!”—and the whole house rose—rose and shouted and stamped and clapped and banged the beer-mugs. Just simply a storm! Then the little man with his long hair and Emersonian face edged his way past us and took his seat. I could have touched him with my hand—Mommсен!—think of it! This was one of those immense surprises that can happen only a few times in one’s life. I was not dreaming of him; he was to me only a giant myth, a world-shadowing specter, not a reality. The surprise of it all can be only comparable to a man’s suddenly coming upon Mont Blanc, with its awful form towering into the sky, when he didn’t suspect he was in its neighborhood. I would have walked a great many miles to get a sight of him, and here he was, without trouble, or tramp, or cost of any kind. Here he was, clothed in a titanic deceptive modesty which made him look like other men. Here he was, carrying the Roman world and all the Caesars in his hospitable skull, and doing it as easily as that other luminous vault, the skull of the universe, carries the Milky Way and the constellations.

During his convalescent days, Clemens had plenty of time to reflect and to look out of the window. His notebook preserves some of his reflections. In one place he says:

Page 548

The Emperor passes in a modest open carriage. Next that happy 12-year-old butcher-boy, all in white apron and turban, standing up & so proud!

How fast they drive—nothing like it but in London. And the horses seem to be of very fine breed, though I am not an expert in horses & do not speak with assurance. I can always tell which is the front end of a horse, but beyond that my art is not above the ordinary. The “Court Gazette” of a German paper can be covered with a playing-card. In an English paper the movements of titled people take up about three times that room. In the papers of Republican France from six to sixteen times as much. There, if a Duke’s dog should catch cold in the head they would stop the press to announce it and cry about it. In Germany they respect titles, in England they revere them, in France they adore them. That is, the French newspapers do.

Been taken for Mommsen twice. We have the same hair, but on examination it was found the brains were different.

On February 14th he records that Professor Helmholtz called, but unfortunately leaves no further memorandum of that visit. He was quite recovered by this time, but was still cautioned about going out in the severe weather. In the final entry he says:

Thirty days sick abed—full of interest—read the debates and get excited over them, though don’t ‘versteh’. By reading keep in a state of excited ignorance, like a blind man in a house afire; flounder around, immensely but unintelligently interested; don’t know how I got in and can’t find the way out, but I’m having a booming time all to myself.

Don’t know what a ‘Schelgesetzentwurf’ is, but I keep as excited over it and as worried about it as if it was my own child. I simply live on the Sch.; it is my daily bread. I wouldn’t have the question settled for anything in the world. Especially now that I’ve lost the ‘öffentliche Militargericht circus’. I read all the debates on that question with a never-failing interest, but all at once they sprung a vote on me a couple of days ago & did something by a vote of 100 to 143, but I couldn’t find out what it was.

CLXXIX

A dinner with William II.

The dinner with Emperor William II. at General von Versen’s was set for the 20th of February. A few days before, Mark Twain entered in his note-book:

In that day the Imperial lion and the Democratic lamb shall sit down together, and a little General shall feed them.

Mark Twain was the guest of honor on this occasion, and was seated at the Emperor's right hand. The Emperor's brother, Prince Heinrich, sat opposite; Prince Radolin farther along. Rudolf Lindau, of the Foreign Office, was also present. There were fourteen at the table, all told. In his memorandum made at the time, Clemens gave no account of the dinner beyond the above details, only adding:

Page 549

After dinner 6 or 8 officers came in, & all hands adjourned to the big room out of the smoking-room and held a “smoking parliament” after the style of the ancient Potsdam one, till midnight, when the Emperor shook hands and left.

It was not until fourteen years later that Mark Twain related some special matters pertaining to that evening. He may have expanded then somewhat to fill out spaces of his memory, and embroidered them, as was his wont; but that something happened, either in reality or in his imagination, which justified his version of it we may believe. He told it as here given, premising: “This may appear in print after I am dead, but not before.

“From 1891 until day before yesterday I had never mentioned the matter, nor set it down with a pen, nor ever referred to it in any way—not even to my wife, to whom I was accustomed to tell everything that happened to me.” At the dinner his Majesty chatted briskly and entertainingly along in easy and flowing English, and now and then he interrupted himself to address a remark to me or to some other individual of the guests. When the reply had been delivered he resumed his talk. I noticed that the table etiquette tallied with that which was the law of my house at home when we had guests; that is to say, the guests answered when the host favored them with a remark, and then quieted down and behaved themselves until they got another chance. If I had been in the Emperor’s chair and he in mine I should have felt infinitely comfortable and at home, but I was guest now, and consequently felt less at home. From old experience I was familiar with the rules of the game and familiar with their exercise from the high place of host; but I was not familiar with the trammelled and less satisfactory position of guest, therefore I felt a little strange and out of place. But there was no animosity—no, the Emperor was host, therefore, according to my own rule, he had a right to do the talking, and it was my honorable duty to intrude no interruptions or other improvements except upon invitation; and of course it could be my turn some day—some day, on some friendly visit of inspection to America, it might be my pleasure and distinction to have him as guest at my table; then I would give him a rest and a quiet time.” In one way there was a difference between his table and mine—for instance, atmosphere; the guests stood in awe of him, and naturally they conferred that feeling upon me, for, after all, I am only human, although I regret it. When a guest answered a question he did it with a deferential voice and manner; he did not put any emotion into it, and he did not spin it out, but got it out of his system as quickly as he could, and then looked relieved. The Emperor was used to this atmosphere, and it did not chill his blood; maybe it was an inspiration to him, for he was alert, brilliant, and full of animation; also he was most gracefully

Page 550

and felicitously complimentary to my books—and I will remark here that the happy phrasing of a compliment is one of the rarest of human gifts and the happy delivery of it another. I once mentioned the high compliment which he paid to the book 'Old Times on the Mississippi'; but there were others, among them some high praise of my description in 'A Tramp Abroad' of certain striking phases of German student life. "Fifteen or twenty minutes before the dinner ended the Emperor made a remark to me in praise of our generous soldier pensions; then, without pausing, he continued the remark, not speaking to me, but across the table to his brother, Prince Heinrich. The Prince replied, endorsing the Emperor's view of the matter. Then I followed with my own view of it. I said that in the beginning our government's generosity to the soldier was clear in its intent and praiseworthy, since the pensions were conferred upon soldiers who had earned them, soldiers who had been disabled in the war and could no longer earn a livelihood for themselves and their families, but that the pensions decreed and added later lacked the virtue of a clean motive, and had, little by little, degenerated into a wider and wider and more and more offensive system of vote-purchasing, and was now become a source of corruption, which was an unpleasant thing to contemplate and was a danger besides. I think that that was about the substance of my remark; but in any case the remark had a quite definite result, and that is the memorable thing about it — manifestly it made everybody uncomfortable. I seemed to perceive this quite plainly. I had committed an indiscretion. Possibly it was in violating etiquette by intruding a remark when I had not been invited to make one; possibly it was in taking issue with an opinion promulgated by his Majesty. I do not know which it was, but I quite clearly remember the effect which my act produced—to wit, the Emperor refrained from addressing any remarks to me afterward, and not merely during the brief remainder of the dinner, but afterward in the kneip-room, where beer and cigars and hilarious anecdoting prevailed until about midnight. I am sure that the Emperor's good night was the only thing he said to me in all that time. "Was this rebuke studied and intentional? I don't know, but I regarded it in that way. I can't be absolutely sure of it because of modifying doubts created afterward by one or two circumstances. For example: the Empress Dowager invited me to her palace, and the reigning Empress invited me to breakfast, and also sent for General von Versen to come to her palace and read to her and her ladies from my books."

It was a personal message from the Emperor that fourteen years later recalled to him this curious circumstance. A gentleman whom Clemens knew went on a diplomatic mission to Germany. Upon being presented to Emperor William, the latter had immediately begun to talk of Mark Twain and his work. He spoke of the description of German student life as the greatest thing of its kind ever written, and of the sketch on the German language as wonderful; then he said:

Page 551

“Convey to Mr. Clemens my kindest regards, ask him if he remembers that dinner at Von Versen’s, and ask him why he didn’t do any more talking at that dinner.”

It seemed a mysterious message. Clemens thought it might have been meant to convey some sort of an imperial apology; but again it might have meant that Mark Twain’s breach and the Emperor’s coolness on that occasion were purely imaginary, and that the Emperor had really expected him to talk far more than he did.

Returning to the Royal Hotel after the Von Versen dinner, Mark Twain received his second high compliment that day on the Mississippi book. The portier, a tow-headed young German, must have been comparatively new at the hotel; for apparently he had just that day learned that his favorite author, whose books he had long been collecting, was actually present in the flesh. Clemens, all ready to apologize for asking so late an admission, was greeted by the portier’s round face all sunshine and smiles. The young German then poured out a stream of welcome and compliments and dragged the author to a small bedroom near the front door, where he excitedly pointed out a row of books, German translations of Mark Twain.

“There,” he said; “you wrote them. I’ve found it out. Lieber Gott! I did not know it before, and I ask a million pardons. That one there, *Old Times on the Mississippi*, is the best you ever wrote.”

The note-book records only one social event following the Emperor’s dinner—a dinner with the secretary of the legation. The note says:

At the Emperor’s dinner black cravats were ordered. Tonight I went in a black cravat and everybody else wore white ones. Just my luck.

The Berlin activities came to an end then. He was still physically far from robust, and his doctors peremptorily ordered him to stay indoors or to go to a warmer climate. This was March 1st. Clemens and his wife took Joseph Very, and, leaving the others for the time in Berlin, set out for Mentone, in the south of France.

CLXXX

MANY WANDERINGS

Mentone was warm and quiet, and Clemens worked when his arm permitted. He was alone there with Mrs. Clemens, and they wandered about a good deal, idling and picture-making, enjoying a sort of belated honeymoon. Clemens wrote to Susy:

Joseph is gone to Nice to educate himself in kodaking—and to get the pictures mounted which mama thinks she took here; but I noticed she didn’t take the plug out, as a rule. When she did she took nine pictures on top of each other—composites.



They remained a month in Mentone, then went over to Pisa, and sent Joseph to bring the rest of the party to Rome. In Rome they spent another month—a period of sight-seeing, enjoyable, but to Clemens pretty profitless.

“I do not expect to be able to write any literature this year,” he said in a letter to Hall near the end of April. “The moment I take up my pen my rheumatism returns.”

Page 552

Still he struggled along and managed to pile up a good deal of copy in the course of weeks. From Rome to Florence, at the end of April, and so pleasing was the prospect, and so salubrious the air of that ancient city, that they resolved to engage residence there for the next winter. They inspected accommodations of various kinds, and finally, through Prof. Willard Fiske, were directed to the Villa Viviani, near Settignano, on a hill to the eastward of Florence, with vineyard and olive-grove sloping away to the city lying in a haze—a vision of beauty and peace. They closed the arrangement for Viviani, and about the middle of May went up to Venice for a fortnight of sight-seeing—a break in the travel back to Germany. William Gedney Bunce, the Hartford artist, was in Venice, and Sarah Orne Jewett and other home friends.

From Venice, by way of Lake Como and “a tangled route” (his note-book says) to Lucerne, and so northward to Berlin and on to Bad Nauheim, where they had planned to spend the summer. Clemens for some weeks had contemplated a trip to America, for matters there seemed to demand his personal attention. Summer arrangements for the family being now concluded, he left within the week and set sail on the Havel for New York. To Jean he wrote a cheerful good-by letter, more cheerful, we may believe, than he felt.

Bremen, 7.45 A.M., June 14, 1892.

*Dear Jean Clemens,—*I am up & shaved & got my clean shirt on & feel mighty fine, & am going down to show off before I put on the rest of my clothes.

Perhaps mama & Mrs. Hague can persuade the Hauswirth to do right; but if he don't you go down & kill his dog.

I wish you would invite the Consul-General and his ladies down to take one of those slim dinners with mama, then he would complain to the Government.

Clemens felt that his presence in America, was demanded by two things. Hall's reports continued, as ever, optimistic; but the semi-annual statements were less encouraging. The Library of Literature and some of the other books were selling well enough; but the continuous increase of capital required by a business conducted on the instalment plan had steadily added to the firm's liabilities, while the prospect of a general tightening in the money-market made the outlook not a particularly happy one. Clemens thought he might be able to dispose of the Library or an interest in it, or even of his share of the business itself, to some one with means sufficient to put it on an easier financial footing. The uncertainties of trade and the burden of increased debt had become a nightmare which interfered with his sleep. It seemed hard enough to earn a living with a crippled arm, without this heavy business care.

Page 553

The second interest requiring attention was that other old one—the machine. Clemens had left the matter in Paige's hands, and Paige, with persuasive eloquence, had interested Chicago capital to a point where a company had been formed to manufacture the type-setter in that city. Paige reported that he had got several million dollars subscribed for the construction of a factory, and that he had been placed on a salary as a sort of general "consulting omniscient" at five thousand dollars a month. Clemens, who had been negotiating again with the Mallorys for the disposal of his machine royalties, thought it proper to find out just what was going on. He remained in America less than two weeks, during which he made a flying trip to Chicago and found that Paige's company really had a factory started, and proposed to manufacture fifty machines. It was not easy to find out the exact status of this new company, but Clemens at least was hopeful enough of its prospects to call off the negotiations with the Mallorys which had promised considerable cash in hand. He had been able to accomplish nothing material in the publishing situation, but his heart-to-heart talk with Hall for some reason had seemed comforting. The business had been expanding; they would now "concentrate." He returned on the Lahn, and he must have been in better health and spirits, for it is said he kept the ship very merry during the passage. He told many extravagantly amusing yarns; so many that a court was convened to try him on the charge of "inordinate and unscientific lying." Many witnesses testified, and his own testimony was so unconvincing that the jury convicted him without leaving the bench. He was sentenced to read aloud from his own works for a considerable period every day until the steamer should reach port. It is said that he faithfully carried out this part of the program, and that the proceeds from the trial and the various readings amounted to something more than six hundred dollars, which was turned over to the Seamen's Fund.

Clemens's arm was really much better, and he put in a good deal of spare time during the trip writing an article on "All Sorts and Conditions of Ships," from Noah's Ark down to the fine new Havel, then the latest word in ship-construction. It was an article written in a happy vein and is profitable reading to-day. The description of Columbus as he appeared on the deck of his flag-ship is particularly rich and flowing:

If the weather was chilly he came up clad from plumed helmet to spurred heel in magnificent plate-armor inlaid with arabesques of gold, having previously warmed it at the galley fire. If the weather was warm he came up in the ordinary sailor toggery of the time—great slouch hat of blue velvet, with a flowing brush of snowy ostrich-plumes, fastened on with a flashing cluster of diamonds and emeralds; gold-embroidered doublet of green velvet, with slashed sleeves exposing undersleeves of

Page 554

crimson satin; deep collar and cuff ruffles of rich, limp lace; trunk hose of pink velvet, with big knee-knots of brocaded yellow ribbon; pearl-tinted silk stockings, clocked and daintily embroidered; lemon-colored buskins of unborn kid, funnel-topped, and drooping low to expose the pretty stockings; deep gauntlets of finest white heretic skin, from the factory of the Holy Inquisition, formerly part of the person of a lady of rank; rapier with sheath crusted with jewels and hanging from a broad baldric upholstered with rubies and sapphires.

CLXXXI

NAUHEIM AND THE PRINCE OF WALES

Clemens was able to write pretty steadily that summer in Nauheim and turned off a quantity of copy. He completed several short articles and stories, and began, or at least continued work on, two books—'Tom Sawyer Abroad' and 'Those Extraordinary Twins'—the latter being the original form of 'Pudd'nhead Wilson'. As early as August 4th he wrote to Hall that he had finished forty thousand words of the "Tom Sawyer" story, and that it was to be offered to some young people's magazine, Harper's Young People or St. Nicholas; but then he suddenly decided that his narrative method was altogether wrong. To Hall on the 10th he wrote:

I have dropped that novel I wrote you about because I saw a more effective way of using the main episode—to wit, by telling it through the lips of Huck Finn. So I have started Huck Finn & Tom Sawyer (still 15 years old) & their friend the freed slave Jim around the world in a stray balloon, with Huck as narrator, & somewhere after the end of that great voyage he will work in that original episode & then nobody will suspect that a whole book has been written & the globe circumnavigated merely to get that episode in in an effective (& at the same time apparently unintentional) way. I have written 12,000 words of this new narrative, & find that the humor flows as easily as the adventures & surprises—so I shall go along and make a book of from 50,000 to 100,000 words.

It is a story for boys, of course, & I think it will interest any boy between 8 years & 80.

When I was in New York the other day Mrs. Dodge, editor of St. Nicholas, wrote and offered me \$5,000 for (serial right) a story for boys 50,000 words long. I wrote back and declined, for I had other matter in my mind then. I conceive that the right way to write a story for boys is to write so that it will not only interest boys, but will also strongly interest any man who has ever been a boy. That immensely enlarges the audience.

Now, this story doesn't need to be restricted to a child's magazine—it is proper enough for any magazine, I should think, or for a syndicate. I don't swear it, but I think so.

Proposed title—New Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.

Page 555

He was full of his usual enthusiasm in any new undertaking, and writes of the Extraordinary Twins:

By and by I shall have to offer (for grown folks' magazine) a novel entitled, 'Those Extraordinary Twins'. It's the howling farce I told you I had begun awhile back. I laid it aside to ferment while I wrote Tom Sawyer Abroad, but I took it up again on a little different plan lately, and it is swimming along satisfactorily now. I think all sorts of folks will read it. It is clear out of the common order—it is a fresh idea—I don't think it resembles anything in literature.

He was quite right; it did not resemble anything in literature, nor did it greatly resemble literature, though something at least related to literature would eventually grow out of it.

In a letter written many years afterward by Frank Mason, then consul-general at Frankfort, he refers to "that happy summer at Nauheim." Mason was often a visitor there, and we may believe that his memory of the summer was justified. For one thing, Clemens himself was in better health and spirits and able to continue his work. But an even greater happiness lay in the fact that two eminent physicians had pronounced Mrs. Clemens free from any organic ills. To Orion, Clemens wrote:

We are in the clouds because the bath physicians say positively that Livy has no heart disease but has only weakness of the heart muscles and will soon be well again. That was worth going to Europe to find out.

It was enough to change the whole atmosphere of the household, and financial worries were less considered. Another letter to Orion relates history:

The Twichells have been here four days & we have had good times with them. Joe & I ran over to Homburg, the great pleasure-resort, Saturday, to dine with friends, & in the morning I went walking in the promenade & met the British ambassador to the Court of Berlin and he introduced me to the Prince of Wales. I found him a most unusually comfortable and unembarrassing Englishman.

Twichell has reported Mark Twain's meeting with the Prince (later Edward VII) as having come about by special request of the latter, made through the British ambassador. "The meeting," he says, "was a most cordial one on both sides, and presently the Prince took Mark Twain's arm and the two marched up and down, talking earnestly together, the Prince, solid, erect, and soldierlike, Clemens weaving along in his curious, swinging gait in a full tide of talk, and brandishing a sun-umbrella of the most scandalous description."

When they parted Clemens said:

"It has been, indeed, a great pleasure to meet your Royal Highness."

The Prince answered:

“And it is a pleasure, Mr. Clemens, to have met you—again.”

Clemens was puzzled to reply.

“Why,” he said, “have we met before?”

The Prince smiled happily.

Page 556

“Oh yes,” he said; “don’t you remember that day on the Strand when you were on the top of a bus and I was heading a procession and you had on your new overcoat with flap-pockets?”—[See chap. clxiii, “A Letter to the Queen of England.”]

It was the highest compliment he could have paid, for it showed that he had read, and had remembered all those years. Clemens expressed to Twichell regret that he had forgotten to mention his visit to the Prince’s sister, Louise, in Ottawa, but he had his opportunity at a dinner next day. Later the Prince had him to supper and they passed an entire evening together.

There was a certain uneasiness in the Nauheim atmosphere that year, for the cholera had broken out at Hamburg, and its victims were dying at a terrific rate. It was almost impossible to get authentic news as to the spread of the epidemic, for the German papers were curiously conservative in their reports. Clemens wrote an article on the subject but concluded not to print it. A paragraph will convey its tenor.

What I am trying to make the reader understand is the strangeness of the situation here—a mighty tragedy being played upon a stage that is close to us, & yet we are as ignorant of its details as we should be if the stage were in China. We sit “in front,” & the audience is in fact the world; but the curtain is down, & from behind it we hear only an inarticulate murmur. The Hamburg disaster must go into history as the disaster without a history.

He closes with an item from a physician’s letter—an item which he says “gives you a sudden and terrific sense of the situation there.”

For in a line it flashes before you—this ghastly picture—a thing seen by the physician: a wagon going along the street with five sick people in it, and with them four dead ones.

CLXXXII

THE VILLA VIVIANI

‘The American Claimant’, published in May I (1892), did not bring a very satisfactory return. For one thing, the book-trade was light, and then the Claimant was not up to his usual standard. It had been written under hard circumstances and by a pen long out of practice; it had not paid, and its author must work all the harder on the new undertakings. The conditions at Nauheim seemed favorable, and they lingered there until well into September. To Mrs. Crane, who had returned to America, Clemens wrote on the 18th, from Lucerne, in the midst of their travel to Italy:

We remained in Nauheim a little too long. If we had left four or five days earlier we should have made Florence in three days. Hard trip because it was one of those trains

that gets tired every 7 minutes and stops to rest three-quarters of an hour. It took us 3 1/2 hours to get there instead of the regulation 2 hours. We shall pull through to Milan to-morrow if possible. Next day we shall start at 10 *am* and try to make

Page 557

Bologna, 5 hours. Next day, Florence, D. V. Next year we will walk. Phelps came to Frankfort and we had some great times—dinner at his hotel; & the Masons, supper at our inn—Livy not in it. She was merely allowed a glimpse, no more. Of course Phelps said she was merely pretending to be ill; was never looking so well & fine. A Paris journal has created a happy interest by inoculating one of its correspondents with cholera. A man said yesterday he wished to God they would inoculate all of them. Yes, the interest is quite general and strong & much hope is felt.

Livy says I have said enough bad things, and better send all our loves & shut up. Which I do—and shut up.

They lingered at Lucerne until Mrs. Clemens was rested and better able to continue the journey, arriving at last in Florence, September 26th. They drove out to the Villa Viviani in the afternoon and found everything in readiness for their reception, even to the dinner, which was prepared and on the table. Clemens, in his notes, speaks of this and adds:

It takes but a sentence to state that, but it makes an indolent person tired to think of the planning & work and trouble that lie concealed in it.

Some further memoranda made at this time have that intimate interest which gives reality and charm. The 'contadino' brought up their trunks from the station, and Clemens wrote:

The 'contadino' is middle-aged & like the rest of the peasants—that is to say, brown, handsome, good-natured, courteous, & entirely independent without making any offensive show of it. He charged too much for the trunks, I was told. My informer explained that this was customary. September 27. The rest of the trunks brought up this morning. He charged too much again, but I was told that this was also customary. It's all right, then. I do not wish to violate the customs. Hired landau, horses, & coachman. Terms, 480 francs a month & a pourboire to the coachman, I to furnish lodging for the man & the horses, but nothing else. The landau has seen better days & weighs 30 tons. The horses are feeble & object to the landau; they stop & turn around every now & then & examine it with surprise & suspicion. This causes delay. But it entertains the people along the road. They came out & stood around with their hands in their pockets & discussed the matter with each other. I was told that they said that a 30-ton landau was not the thing for horses like those—what they needed was a wheelbarrow.

His description of the house pictures it as exactly today as it did then, for it has not changed in these twenty years, nor greatly, perhaps, in the centuries since it was built.

It is a plain, square building, like a box, & is painted light

yellow & has green window-shutters. It stands in a commanding position on the artificial terrace of liberal dimensions, which is

Page 558

walled around with masonry. From the walls the vineyards & olive orchards of the estate slant away toward the valley. There are several tall trees, stately stone-pines, also fig-trees & trees of breeds not familiar to me. Roses overflow the retaining-walls, & the battered & mossy stone urn on the gate-posts, in pink & yellow cataracts exactly as they do on the drop-curtains in the theaters. The house is a very fortress for strength. The main walls—all brick covered with plaster—are about 3 feet thick. I have several times tried to count the rooms of the house, but the irregularities baffle me. There seem to be 28. There are plenty of windows & worlds of sunlight. The floors are sleek & shiny & full of reflections, for each is a mirror in its way, softly imaging all objects after the subdued fashion of forest lakes. The curious feature of the house is the salon. This is a spacious & lofty vacuum which occupies the center of the house. All the rest of the house is built around it; it extends up through both stories & its roof projects some feet above the rest of the building. The sense of its vastness strikes you the moment you step into it & cast your eyes around it & aloft. There are divans distributed along its walls. They make little or no show, though their aggregate length is 57 feet. A piano in it is a lost object. We have tried to reduce the sense of desert space & emptiness with tables & things, but they have a defeated look, & do not do any good. Whatever stands or moves under that soaring painted vault is belittled.

He describes the interior of this vast room (they grew to love it), dwelling upon the plaster-relief portraits above its six doors, Florentine senators and judges, ancient dwellers there and former owners of the estate.

The date of one of them is 1305—middle-aged, then, & a judge—he could have known, as a youth, the very greatest Italian artists, & he could have walked & talked with Dante, & probably did. The date of another is 1343—he could have known Boccaccio & spent his afternoons wandering in Fiesole, gazing down on plague-reeking Florence & listening to that man's improper tales, & he probably did. The date of another is 1463—he could have met Columbus & he knew the magnificent Lorenzo, of course. These are all Cerretanis—or Cerretani-Twains, as I may say, for I have adopted myself into their family on account of its antiquity—my origin having been heretofore too recent to suit me.

We are considering the details of Viviani at some length, for it was in this setting that he began and largely completed what was to be his most important work of this later time—in some respects his most important of any time—the ‘Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc’. If the reader loves this book, and he must love it if he has read it, he will not begrudge the space here given to the scene of its inspiration. The outdoor picture of Viviani is of even more importance, for he wrote oftener out-of-doors than elsewhere. Clemens added it to his notes several months later, but it belongs here.

Page 559

The situation of this villa is perfect. It is three miles from Florence, on the side of a hill. Beyond some hill-spurs is Fiesole perched upon its steep terraces; in the immediate foreground is the imposing mass of the Ross castle, its walls and turrets rich with the mellow weather-stains of forgotten centuries; in the distant plain lies Florence, pink & gray & brown, with the ruddy, huge dome of the cathedral dominating its center like a captive balloon, & flanked on the right by the smaller bulb of the Medici chapel & on the left by the airy tower of the Palazzo Vecchio; all around the horizon is a billowy rim of lofty blue hills, snowed white with innumerable villas. After nine months of familiarity with this panorama I still think, as I thought in the beginning, that this is the fairest picture on our planet, the most enchanting to look upon, the most satisfying to the eye & the spirit. To see the sun sink down, drowned in his pink & purple & golden floods, & overwhelm Florence with tides of color that make all the sharp lines dim & faint & turn the solid city into a city of dreams, is a sight to stir the coldest nature & make a sympathetic one drunk with ecstasy.

The Clemens household at Florence consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Clemens, Susy, and Jean. Clara had soon returned to Berlin to attend Mrs. Willard's school and for piano instruction. Mrs. Clemens improved in the balmy autumn air of Florence and in the peaceful life of their well-ordered villa. In a memorandum of October 27th Clemens wrote:

The first month is finished. We are wonted now. This carefree life at a Florentine villa is an ideal existence. The weather is divine, the outside aspects lovely, the days and nights tranquil and reposeful, the seclusion from the world and its worries as satisfactory as a dream. Late in the afternoons friends come out from the city & drink tea in the open air & tell what is happening in the world; & when the great sun sinks down upon Florence & the daily miracle begins they hold their breath & look. It is not a time for talk.

No wonder he could work in that environment. He finished 'Tom Sawyer Abroad', also a short story, 'The L 1,000,000 Bank-Note' (planned many years before), discovered the literary mistake of the 'Extraordinary Twins' and began converting it into the worthier tale, 'Pudd'nhead Wilson', soon completed and on its way to America.

With this work out of his hands, Clemens was ready for his great new undertaking. A seed sown by the wind more than forty years before was ready to bloom. He would write the story of Joan of Arc.

CLXXXIII

THE SIEUR DE CONTE AND JOAN

In a note which he made many years later Mark Twain declared that he was fourteen years at work on Joan of Arc; that he had been twelve years preparing for it, and that he was two years in writing it.

Page 560

There is nothing in any of his earlier notes or letters to indicate that he contemplated the story of Joan as early as the eighties; but there is a bibliographical list of various works on the subject, probably compiled for him not much later than 1880, for the latest published work of the list bears that date. He was then too busy with his inventions and publishing schemes to really undertake a work requiring such vast preparation; but without doubt he procured a number of books and renewed that old interest begun so long ago when a stray wind had blown a leaf from that tragic life into his own. Joan of Arc, by Janet Tuckey, was apparently the first book he read with the definite idea of study, for this little volume had been recently issued, and his copy, which still exists, is filled with his marginal notes. He did not speak of this volume in discussing the matter in after-years. He may have forgotten it. He dwelt mainly on the old records of the trial which had been dug out and put into modern French by Quicherat; the 'Jeanne d'Arc' of J. Michelet, and the splendid 'Life of the Maid' of Lord Ronald Gower, these being remembered as his chief sources of information.—[The book of Janet Tuckey, however, and ten others, including those mentioned, are credited as "authorities examined in verification" on a front page of his published book. In a letter written at the conclusion of "Joan" in 1895, the author states that in the first two-thirds of the story he used one French and one English authority, while in the last third he had constantly drawn from five French and five English sources.]

"I could not get the Quicherat and some of the other books in English," he said, "and I had to dig them out of the French. I began the story five times."

None of these discarded beginnings exists to-day, but we may believe they were wisely put aside, for no story of the Maid could begin more charmingly, more rarely, than the one supposedly told in his old age by Sieur Louis de Conte, secretary of Joan of Arc, and translated by Jean Francois Alden for the world to read. The impulse which had once prompted Mark Twain to offer *The Prince and the Pauper* anonymously now prevailed. He felt that the Prince had missed a certain appreciation by being connected with his signature, and he resolved that its companion piece (he so regarded Joan) should be accepted on its merits and without prejudice. Walking the floor one day at Viviani, smoking vigorously, he said to Mrs. Clemens and Susy:

"I shall never be accepted seriously over my own signature. People always want to laugh over what I write and are disappointed if they don't find a joke in it. This is to be a serious book. It means more to me than anything I have ever undertaken. I shall write it anonymously."

So it was that that gentle, quaint Sieur de Conte took up the pen, and the tale of Joan was begun in that beautiful spot which of all others seems now the proper environment for its lovely telling.

Page 561

He wrote rapidly once he got his plan perfected and his material arranged. The reading of his youth and manhood, with the vivid impressions of that earlier time, became now something remembered, not merely as reading, but as fact.

Others of the family went down into the city almost daily, but he remained in that still garden with Joan as his companion—the old *Sieur de Conte*, saturated with memories, pouring out that marvelous and tragic tale. At the end of each day he would read to the others what he had written, to their enjoyment and wonder.

How rapidly he worked may be judged from a letter which he wrote to Hall in February, in which he said:

I am writing a companion piece to ‘*The Prince and the Pauper*’, which is half done & will make 200,000 words.

That is to say, he had written one hundred thousand words in a period of perhaps six weeks, marvelous work when one remembers that after all he was writing history, some of which he must dig laboriously from a foreign source. He had always, more or less, kept up his study of the French, begun so long ago on the river and it stood him in good stead now. Still, it was never easy for him, and the multitude of notes along the margin of his French authorities bears evidence of his faithfulness and the magnitude of his toil. No previous work had ever required so much of him, such thorough knowledge; none had ever so completely commanded his interest. He would have been willing to remain shut away from visitors, to have been released altogether from social obligations; and he did avoid most of them. Not all, for he could not always escape, and perhaps did not always really wish to. Florence and its suburbs were full of delightful people—some of them his old friends. There were luncheons, dinners, teas, dances, concerts, operas always in progress somewhere, and not all of these were to be resisted even by an absorbed author who was no longer himself, but sad old *Sieur de Conte*, following again the banner of the Maid of Orleans, marshaling her twilight armies across his illumined page.

CLXXXIV

NEW HOPE IN THE MACHINE

If all human events had not been ordered in the first act of the primal atom, and so become inevitable, it would seem a pity now that he must abandon his work half-way, and make another hard, distracting trip to America.

But it was necessary for him to go. Even Hall was no longer optimistic. His letters provided only the barest shreds of hope. Times were hard and there was every reason to believe they would be worse. The World’s Fair year promised to be what it speedily

became—one of the hardest financial periods this country has ever seen. Chicago could hardly have selected a more profitless time for her great exposition. Clemens wrote urging Hall to sell out all, or a portion, of the business—to do anything, indeed, that would avoid the necessity of further liability and increased dread. Every payment that could be spared from the sales of his manuscript was left in Hall's hands, and such moneys as still came to Mrs. Clemens from her Elmira interests were flung into the general fund. The latter were no longer large, for Langdon & Co. were suffering heavily in the general depression, barely hoping to weather the financial storm.

Page 562

It is interesting to note that age and misfortune and illness had a tempering influence on Mark Twain's nature. Instead of becoming harsh and severe and bitter, he had become more gentle, more kindly. He wrote often to Hall, always considerately, even tenderly. Once, when something in Hall's letter suggested that he had perhaps been severe, he wrote:

Mrs. Clemens is deeply distressed, for she thinks I have been blaming you or finding fault with you about something. But most assuredly that cannot be. I tell her that although I am prone to write hasty and regrettable things to other people I am not a bit likely to write such things to you. I can't believe I have done anything so ungrateful. If I have, pile coals of fire upon my head for I deserve it. You have done magnificently with the business, & we must raise the money somehow to enable you to reap a reward for all that labor.

He was fond of Hall. He realized how honest and resolute and industrious he had been. In another letter he wrote him that it was wonderful he had been able to "keep the ship afloat in the storm that has seen fleets and fleets go down"; and he added: "Mrs. Clemens says I must tell you not to send us any money for a month or two, so that you may be afforded what little relief is in our power."

The type-setter situation seemed to promise something. In fact, the machine once more had become the principal hope of financial salvation. The new company seemed really to be getting ahead in spite of the money stringency, and was said to have fifty machines well under way: About the middle of March Clemens packed up two of his shorter manuscripts which he had written at odd times and forwarded them to Hall, in the hope that they would be disposed of and the money waiting him on his arrival; and a week later, March 22, 1893, he sailed from Genoa on the Kaiser Wilhelm II, a fine, new boat. One of the manuscripts was 'The Californian's Tale' and the other was 'Adam's Diary'. —[It seems curious that neither of these tales should have found welcome with the magazines. "The Californian's Tale" was published in the *Liber Scriptorum*, an Authors' Club book, edited by Arthur Stedman. The 'Diary' was disposed of to the Niagara Book, a souvenir of Niagara Falls, which contained sketches by Howells, Clemens, and others. Harper's Magazine republished both these stories in later years—the Diary especially with great success.]

Some joke was likely to be played on Mark Twain during these ocean journeys, and for this particular voyage an original one was planned. They knew how he would fume and swear if he should be discovered with dutiable goods and held up in the Custom House, and they planned for this effect. A few days before arriving in New York one passenger after another came to him, each with a box of expensive cigars, and some pleasant speech expressing friendship and appreciation and a hope that they would be remembered in absence,

Page 563

etc., until he had perhaps ten or a dozen very choice boxes of smoking material. He took them all with gratitude and innocence. He had never declared any dutiable baggage, entering New York alone, and it never occurred to him that he would need to do so now. His trunk and bags were full; he had the cigars made into a nice package, to be carried handily, and on his arrival at the North German Lloyd docks stood waiting among his things for the formality of Customs examination, his friends assembled for the explosion.

They had not calculated well; the Custom-House official came along presently with the usual "Open your baggage, please," then suddenly recognizing the owner of it he said:

"Oh, Mr. Clemens, excuse me. We have orders to extend to you the courtesies of the port. No examination of your effects is necessary."

It was the evening of Monday, April 3d, when he landed in New York and went to the Hotel Glenham. In his notes he tells of having a two-hour talk with Howells on the following night. They had not seen each other for two years, and their correspondence had been broken off. It was a happy, even if somewhat sad, reunion, for they were no longer young, and when they called the roll of friends there were many vacancies. They had reached an age where some one they loved died every year. Writing to Mrs. Crane, Clemens speaks of the ghosts of memory; then he says:

I dreamed I was born & grew up & was a pilot on the Mississippi & a miner & a journalist in Nevada & a pilgrim in the Quaker City & had a wife & children & went to live in a villa at Florence—& this dream goes on & on & sometimes seems so real that I almost believe it is real. I wonder if it is? But there is no way to tell, for if one applies tests they would be part of the dream, too, & so would simply aid the deceit. I wish I knew whether it is a dream or real.

He was made handsomely welcome in New York. His note-book says:

Wednesday. Dined with Mary Mapes Dodge, Howells, Rudyard Kipling & wife, Clarke,—[William Fayal Clarke, now editor of St. Nicholas Magazine.]—Jamie Dodge & wife.

Thursday, 6th. Dined with Andrew Carnegie, Prof. Goldwin Smith, John Cameron, Mr. Glenn. Creation of league for absorbing Canada into our Union. Carnegie also wants to add Great Britain & Ireland.

It was on this occasion that Carnegie made his celebrated maxim about the basket and the eggs. Clemens was suggesting that Carnegie take an interest in the typesetter, and quoted the old adage that one should not put all of his eggs into one basket. Carnegie regarded him through half-closed lids, as was his custom, and answered:

“That’s a mistake; put all your eggs into one basket—and watch that basket.”

Page 564

He had not come to America merely for entertainment. He was at the New York office of the type-setter company, acquiring there what seemed to be good news, for he was assured that his interests were being taken care of, and that within a year at most his royalty returns would place him far beyond the fear of want. He forwarded this good news to Italy, where it was sorely needed, for Mrs. Clemens found her courage not easy to sustain in his absence. That he had made his letter glowing enough, we may gather from her answer.

It does not seem credible that we are really again to have money to spend. I think I will jump around and spend money just for fun, and give a little away, if we really get some. What should we do and how should we feel if we had no bright prospects before us, and yet how many people are situated in that way?

He decided to make another trip to Chicago to verify, with his own eyes, the manufacturing reports, and to see Paige, who would appear to have become more elusive than ever as to contracts, written and implied. He took Hall with him, and wrote Orion to meet him at the Great Northern Hotel. This would give him a chance to see Orion and would give Orion a chance to see the great Fair. He was in Chicago eleven days, and in bed with a heavy cold almost the whole of that time. Paige came to see him at his rooms, and, as always, was rich in prospects and promises; full of protestations that, whatever came, when the tide of millions rolled in, they would share and share alike. The note-book says:

Paige shed even more tears than usual. What a talker he is! He could persuade a fish to come out and take a walk with him. When he is present I always believe him; I can't help it.

Clemens returned to New York as soon as he was able to travel. Going down in the elevator a man stepped in from one of the floors swearing violently. Clemens, leaning over to Hall, with his hand to his mouth, and in a whisper audible to every one, said:

"Bishop of Chicago."

The man, with a quick glance, recognized his fellow-passenger and subsided.

On May 13th Clemens took the Kaiser Wilhelm II. for Genoa. He had accomplished little, but he was in better spirits as to the machine. If only the strain of his publishing business had slackened even for a moment! Night and day it was always with him. Hall presently wrote that the condition of the money-market was "something beyond description. You cannot get money on anything short of government bonds." The Mount Morris Bank would no longer handle their paper. The Clemens household resorted to economies hitherto undreamed of. Mrs. Clemens wrote to her sister that she really did not see sometimes where their next money would come from. She reported that her husband got up in the night and walked the floor in his distress.

He wrote again to Hall, urging him to sell and get rid of the debts and responsibilities at whatever sacrifice:

Page 565

I am terribly tired of business. I am by nature and disposition unfit for it, & I want to get out of it. I am standing on the Mount Morris volcano with help from the machine a long, long way off—& doubtless a long way further off than the Connecticut company imagine.

Get me out of business!

He knew something of the delays of completing a typesetting machine, and he had little faith in any near relief from that source. He wrote again go Hall, urging him to sell some of his type-setter royalties. They should be worth something now since the manufacturing company was actually in operation; but with the terrible state of the money-market there was no sale for anything. Clemens attempted to work, but put in most of his time footing up on the margin of his manuscript the amount of his indebtedness, the expenses of his household, and the possibilities of his income. It was weary, hard, nerve-racking employment. About the muddle of June they closed Viviani. Susy Clemens went to Paris to cultivate her voice, a rare soprano, with a view to preparing for the operatic stage. Clemens took Mrs. Clemens, with little Jean, to Germany for the baths. Clara, who had graduated from Mrs. Willard's school in Berlin, joined them in Munich, and somewhat later Susy also joined them, for Madame Marchesi, the great master of voice-culture, had told her that she must acquire physique to carry that voice of hers before she would undertake to teach her.

In spite of his disturbed state of mind Clemens must have completed some literary work during this period, for we find first mention, in a letter to Hall, of his immortal defense of Harriet Shelley, a piece of writing all the more marvelous when we consider the conditions of its performance. Characteristically, in the same letter, he suddenly develops a plan for a new enterprise—this time for a magazine which Arthur Stedman or his father will edit, and the Webster company will publish as soon as their present burdens are unloaded. But we hear no more of this project.

But by August he was half beside himself with anxiety. On the 6th he wrote Hall:

Here we never see a newspaper, but even if we did I could not come anywhere near appreciating or correctly estimating the tempest you have been buffeting your way through—only the man who is in it can do that—but I have tried not to burden you thoughtlessly or wantonly. I have been overwrought & unsettled in mind by apprehensions, & that is a thing that is not helpable when one is in a strange land & sees his resources melt down to a two months' supply & can't see any sure daylight beyond. The bloody machine offers but a doubtful outlook—& will still offer nothing much better for a long time to come; for when the "three weeks" are up, there will be three months' tinkering to follow, I guess. That is unquestionably the boss machine of the world, but is the toughest one on prophets when it is in an incomplete state that has ever seen the light.

And three days later:

Page 566

Great Scott, but it's a long year—for you & me! I never knew the almanac to drag so. At least not since I was finishing that other machine.

I watch for your letters hungrily—just as I used to watch for the telegram saying the machine's finished—but when “next week certainly” suddenly swelled into “three weeks sure” I recognized the old familiar tune I used to hear so much. W——don't know what sick-heartedness is—but he is in a way to find out.

And finally, on the 4th:

I am very glad indeed if you and Mr. Langdon are able to see any daylight ahead. To me none is visible. I strongly advise that every penny that comes in shall be applied to paying off debts. I may be in error about this, but it seems to me that we have no other course open. We can pay a part of the debts owing to outsiders —none to Clemenses. In very prosperous times we might regard our stock & copyrights as assets sufficient, with the money owing to us, to square up & quit even, but I suppose we may not hope for such luck in the present condition of things.

What I am mainly hoping for is to save my book royalties. If they come into danger I hope you will cable me so that I can come over & try to save them, for if they go I am a beggar.

I would sail to-day if I had anybody to take charge of my family & help them through the difficult journeys commanded by the doctors.

A few days later he could stand it no longer, and on August 29 (1893) sailed, the second time that year, for New York.

CLXXXV

AN INTRODUCTION TO H. H. ROGERS

Clemens took a room at The Players—“a cheap room,” he wrote, “at \$1.50 per day.” It was now the end of September, the beginning of a long half-year, during which Mark Twain's fortunes were at a lower ebb than ever before; lower, even, than during those mining days among the bleak Esmeralda hills. Then he had no one but him self and was young. Now, at fifty-eight, he had precious lives dependent upon him, and he was weighed down with a vast burden of debt. The liabilities of Charles L. Webster & Co. were fully two hundred thousand dollars. Something like sixty thousand dollars of this was money supplied by Mrs. Clemens, but the vast remaining sum was due to banks, to printers, to binders, and to dealers in various publishing materials. Somehow it must be paid. As for their assets, they looked ample enough on paper, but in reality, at a time like this, they were problematical. In fact, their value was very doubtful indeed. What

he was to do Clemens did not know. He could not even send cheerful reports to Europe. There was no longer anything to promise concerning the type-setter. The fifty machines which the company had started to build had dwindled to ten machines; there was a prospect that the ten would dwindle to one, and that one a reconstruction of the original Hartford product, which had cost so much money and so many weary years. Clemens spent a good part of his days at The Players, reading or trying to write or seeking to divert his mind in the company of the congenial souls there, waiting for-he knew not what.

Page 567

Yet at this very moment a factor was coming into his life, a human element, a man to whom in his old age Mark Twain owed more than to any other of his myriad of friends. One night, when he was with Dr. Clarence C. Rice at the Murray Hill Hotel, Rice said:

“Clemens, I want you to know my friend, Mr. H. H. Rogers. He is an admirer of your books.”

Clemens turned and was looking into the handsome, clean-cut features of the great financier, whose name was hardly so familiar then as it became at a later period, but whose power was already widely known and felt among his kind.

“Mr. Clemens,” said Mr. Rogers, “I was one of your early admirers. I heard you lecture a long time ago on the Sandwich Islands. I was interested in the subject in those days, and I heard that Mark Twain was a man who had been there. I didn’t suppose I’d have any difficulty getting a seat, but I did; the house was jammed. When I came away I realized that Mark Twain was a great man, and I have read everything of yours since that I could get hold of.”

They sat down at a table, and Clemens told some of his amusing stories. Rogers was in a perpetual gale of laughter. When at last he rose to go the author and the financier were as old friends. Mr. Rogers urged him to visit him at his home. He must introduce him to Mrs. Rogers, he said, who was also his warm admirer. It was only a little while after this that Dr. Rice said to the millionaire:

“Mr. Rogers, I wish you would look into Clemens’s finances a little: I am afraid they are a good deal confused.”

This would be near the end of September, 1893. On October 18 Clemens wrote home concerning a possible combination of Webster & Co. with John Brisben Walker, of the ‘Cosmopolitan’, and added:

I have got the best and wisest man of the whole Standard Oil group—a multi-millionaire—a good deal interested in looking into the type-setter. He has been searching into that thing for three weeks and yesterday he said to me: “I find the machine to be all you represent it. I have here exhaustive reports from my own experts, and I know every detail of its capacity, its immense construction, its cost, its history, and all about its inventor’s character. I know that the New York company and the Chicago company are both stupid, and that they are unbusinesslike people, destitute of money and in a hopeless boggle.”

Then he told me the scheme he had planned and said:

“If I can arrange with these people on this basis—it will take several weeks to find out—I will see to it that they get the money they need. In the mean time you 'stop walking the floor'.”

Page 568

Of course, with this encouragement, Clemens was in the clouds again. Furthermore, Rogers had suggested to his son-in-law, William Evarts Benjamin, also a subscription publisher, that he buy from the Webster company The Library of American Literature for fifty thousand dollars, a sum which provided for the more insistent creditors. There was hope that the worst was over. Clemens did in reality give up walking the floor, and for the time, at least, found happier diversions. He must not return to Europe as yet, for the type-setter matter was still far from conclusion. On the 11th of November he was gorgeously entertained by the Lotos Club in its new building. Introducing him, President Frank Lawrence said:

“What name is there in literature that can be likened to his? Perhaps some of the distinguished gentlemen about this table can tell us, but I know of none. Himself his only parallel, it seems to me. He is all our own—a ripe and perfect product of the American soil.”

CLXXXVI

“The belle of new York”

Those were feverish weeks of waiting, with days of alternate depression and exaltation as the pendulum swung to and fro between hope and despair. By daylight Clemens tried to keep himself strenuously busy; evenings and nights he plunged into social activities—dinners, amusements, suppers, balls, and the like. He was besieged with invitations, sought for by the gayest and the greatest; “Jamie” Dodge conferred upon him the appropriate title: of “The Belle of New York.” In his letters home he describes in detail many of the festivities and the wildness with which he has flung himself into them, dilating on his splendid renewal of health, his absolute immunity from fatigue. He attributes this to his indifference to diet and regularities of meals and sleep; but we may guess that it was due to a reaction from having shifted his burden to stronger financial shoulders. Henry Rogers had taken his load upon him.

“It rests me,” Rogers said, “to experiment with the affairs of a friend when I am tired of my own. You enjoy yourself. Let me work at the puzzle a little.”

And Clemens, though his conscience pricked him, obeyed, as was his habit at such times. To Mrs. Clemens (in Paris now, at the Hotel Brighton) he wrote:

He is not common clay, but fine-fine & delicate. I did hate to burden his good heart & overworked head, but he took hold with avidity & said it was no burden to work for his friends, but a pleasure. When I arrived in September, Lord! how black the prospect was & how desperate, how incurably desperate! Webster & Co. had to have a small sum of money or go under at once. I flew to Hartford—to my friends—but they were not

moved, not strongly interested, & I was ashamed that I went. It was from Mr. Rogers, a stranger, that I got the money and was by it saved. And then—while still a stranger—he

Page 569

set himself the task of saving my financial life without putting upon me (in his native delicacy) any sense that I was the recipient of a charity, a benevolence. He gave time to me —time, which could not be bought by any man at \$100,000 a month—no, nor for three times the money.

He adds that a friend has just offered to Webster & Co. a book that arraigns the Standard Oil magnates individual by individual.

I wanted to say the only man I care for in the world, the only man I would give a d—n for, the only man who is lavishing his sweat & blood to save me & mine from starvation is a Standard Oil magnate. If you know me, you know whether I want the book or not.

But I didn't say that. I said I didn't want any book; I wanted to get out of this publishing business & out of all business & was here for that purpose & would accomplish it if I could.

He tells how he played billiards with Rogers, tirelessly as always, until the millionaire had looked at him helplessly and asked:

"Don't you ever get tired?"

And he answered:

"I don't know what it is to get tired. I wish I did."

He wrote of going with Mr. Rogers to the Madison Square Garden to see an exhibition of boxing given by the then splendid star of pugilism, James J. Corbett. Dr. Rice accompanied him, and painters Robert Reid and Edward Simmons, from *The Players*. They had five seats in a box, and Stanford White came along presently and took Clemens into the champion's dressing-room.

Corbett has a fine face and is modest and diffident, besides being the most perfectly & beautifully constructed human animal in the world. I said:

"You have whipped Mitchell & maybe you will whip Jackson in June—but you are not done then. You will have to tackle me."

He answered, so gravely that one might easily have thought him in earnest:

"No, I am not going to meet you in the ring. It is not fair or right to require it. You might chance to knock me out, by no merit of your own, but by a purely accidental blow, &

then my reputation would be gone & you would have a double one. You have got fame enough & you ought not to want to take mine away from me.”

Corbett was for a long time a clerk in the Nevada Bank, in San Francisco.

There were lots of little boxing-matches to entertain the crowd; then at last Corbett appeared in the ring & the 8,000 people present went mad with enthusiasm. My two artists went mad about his form. They said they had never seen anything that came reasonably near equalling its perfection except Greek statues, & they didn't surpass it. Corbett boxed 3 rounds with the middle-weight Australian champion —oh, beautiful to see!—then the show was over and we struggled out through a perfect mash of humanity. When

Page 570

we reached the street I found I had left my arctics in the box. I had to have them, so Simmons said he would go back & get them, & I didn't dissuade him. I wouldn't see how he was going to make his way a single yard into that solid incoming wave of people—yet he must plow through it full 50 yards. He was back with the shoes in 3 minutes!

How do you reckon he accomplished that miracle? By saying:

“Way, gentlemen, please—coming to fetch Mr. Corbett’s overshoes.”

The word flew from mouth to mouth, the Red Sea divided, & Simmons walked comfortably through & back, dry-shod. This is Fire-escape Simmons, the inveterate talker, you know: Exit—in case of Simmons.

I had an engagement at a beautiful dwelling close to The Players for 10.30; I was there by 10.45. Thirty cultivated & very musical ladies & gentlemen present—all of them acquaintances & many of them personal friends of mine. That wonderful Hungarian band was there (they charge \$500 for an evening). Conversation and band until midnight; then a bite of supper; then the company was compactly grouped before me & I told them about Dr. B. E. Martin & the etchings, & followed it with the Scotch-Irish christening. My, but the Martin is a darling story! Next, the head tenor from the Opera sang half a dozen great songs that set the company wild, yes, mad with delight, that nobly handsome young Damrosch accompanying on the piano. Just a little pause, then the band burst out into an explosion of weird and tremendous dance-music, a Hungarian celebrity & his wife took the floor; I followed—I couldn't help it; the others drifted in, one by one, & it was Onteora over again. By half past 4. I had danced all those people down—& yet was not tired; merely breathless. I was in bed at 5 & asleep in ten minutes. Up at 9 & presently at work on this letter to you. I think I wrote until 2 or half past. Then I walked leisurely out to Mr. Rogers's (it is called 3 miles, but is short of it), arriving at 3.30, but he was out—to return at 5.30—so I didn't stay, but dropped over and chatted with Howells until five.

—[Two Mark Twain anecdotes are remembered of that winter at The Players:

Just before Christmas a member named Scott said one day:

“Mr. Clemens, you have an extra overcoat hanging in the coatroom. I've got to attend my uncle's funeral and it's raining very hard. I'd like to wear it.”

The coat was an old one, in the pockets of which Clemens kept a melancholy assortment of pipes, soiled handkerchiefs, neckties, letters, and what not.

“Scott,” he said, “if you won't lose anything out of the pockets of that coat you may wear it.”

An hour or two later Clemens found a notice in his mail-box that a package for him was in the office. He called for it and found a neat bundle, which somehow had a Christmas look. He carried it up to the reading-room with a showy, air.

Page 571

"Now, boys," he said, "you may make all the fun of Christmas you like, but it's pretty nice, after all, to be remembered."

They gathered around and he undid the package. It was filled with the pipes, soiled handkerchiefs, and other articles from the old overcoat. Scott had taken special precautions against losing them.

Mark Twain regarded them a moment in silence, then he drawled:

"Well—, d—n Scott. I hope his uncle's funeral will be a failure!"

The second anecdote concerns The Player egg-cups. They easily hold two eggs, but not three. One morning a new waiter came to take the breakfast order. Clemens said:

"Boy, put three soft eggs in that cup for me."

By and by the waiter returned, bringing the breakfast. Clemens looked at the egg portion and asked:

"Boy, what was my order?"

"Three soft eggs broken in the cup, Mr. Clemens."

"And you've filled that order, have you?"

"Yes, Mr. Clemens."

"Boy, you are trifling with the truth; I've been trying all winter to get three eggs into that cup."]

In one letter he tells of a dinner with his old Comstock friend, John Mackay—a dinner without any frills, just soup and raw oysters and corned beef and cabbage, such as they had reveled in sometimes, in prosperous moments, thirty years before.

"The guests were old gray Pacific coasters," he said, "whom I knew when they were young and not gray. The talk was of the days when we went gipsying-along time ago—thirty years."

Indeed, it was a talk of the dead. Mainly that. And of how they looked & the harum-scarum things they did & said. For there were no cares in that life, no aches & pains, & not time enough in the day (& three-fourths of the night) to work off one's surplus vigor & energy. Of the midnight highway-robbery joke played upon me with revolvers at my head on the windswept & desolate Gold Hill Divide no witness was left but me, the victim. Those old fools last night laughed till they cried over the particulars of that old forgotten crime.

In still another letter he told of a very wonderful entertainment at Robert Reid's studio. There were present, he says:

Coquelin; Richard Harding Davis; Harrison, the great outdoor painter; Wm. H. Chase, the artist; Bettini, inventor of the new phonograph; Nikola Tesla, the world-wide illustrious electrician; see article about him in Jan. or Feb. Century. John Drew, actor; James Barnes, a marvelous mimic; my, you should see him! Smedley, the artist; Zorn, " " Zogbaum, " " Reinhart, " " Metcalf, " " Ancona, head tenor at the Opera;

Oh, & a great lot of others. Everybody there had done something & was in his way famous.

Page 572

Somebody welcomed Coquelin in a nice little French speech, John Drew did the like for me in English, & then the fun began. Coquelin did some excellent French monologues—one of them an ungrammatical Englishman telling a colorless historiette in French. It nearly killed the fifteen or twenty people who understood it. I told a yarn, Ancona sang half a dozen songs, Barnes did his darling imitations, Harding Davis sang the hanging of Danny Deever, which was of course good, but he followed it with that mast fascinating (for what reason I don't know) of all Kipling's poems, "On the Road to Mandalay," sang it tenderly, & it searched me deeper & charmed me more than the Deever. Young Gerrit Smith played some ravishing dance-music, & we all danced about an hour. There couldn't be a pleasanter night than that one was. Some of those people complained of fatigue, but I don't seem to know what the sense of fatigue is.

In his reprieve he was like some wild thing that had regained liberty.

He refers to Susy's recent illness and to Mrs. Clemens's own poor state of health.

Dear, dear Susy! My strength reproaches me when I think of her and you.

It is an unspeakable pity that you should be without any one to go about with the girls, & it troubles me, & grieves me, & makes me curse & swear; but you see, dear heart, I've got to stick right where I am till I find out whether we are rich or whether the poorest person we are acquainted with in anybody's kitchen is better off than we are. . I stand on the land-end of a springboard, with the family clustered on the other end; if I take my foot——

He realized his hopes to her as a vessel trying to make port; once he wrote:

The ship is in sight now

When the anchor is down then I shall say:

"Farewell—a long farewell—to business! I will never touch it again!"

I will live in literature, I will wallow in it, revel in it; I will swim in ink! 'Joan of Arc'—but all this is premature; the anchor is not down yet.

Sometimes he sent her impulsive cables calculating to sustain hope. Mrs. Clemens, writing to her sister in January, said:

Mr. Clemens now for ten days has been hourly expecting to send me word that Paige had signed the (new) contract, but as yet no despatch comes On the 5th of this

month I received a cable, "Expect good news in ten days." On the 15th I receive a cable, "Look out for good news." On the 19th a cable, "Nearing success."

It appealed to her sense of humor even in these dark days. She added:

They make me laugh, for they are so like my beloved "Colonel."

Mr. Rogers had agreed that he would bring Paige to rational terms, and with Clemens made a trip to Chicago. All agreed now that the machine promised a certain fortune as soon as a contract acceptable to everybody could be concluded—Paige and his lawyer being the last to dally and dicker as to terms. Finally a telegram came from Chicago saying that Paige had agreed to terms. On that day Clemens wrote in his note-book:

Page 573

This is a great date in my history. Yesterday we were paupers with but 3 months' rations of cash left and \$160,000 in debt, my wife & I, but this telegram makes us wealthy.

But it was not until a fortnight later that Paige did actually sign. This was on the 1st of February, '94, and Clemens that night cabled to Paris, so that Mrs. Clemens would have it on her breakfast-plate the morning of their anniversary:

"Wedding news. Our ship is safe in port. I sail the moment Rogers can spare me."

So this painted bubble, this thing of emptiness, had become as substance again—the grand hope. He was as concerned with it as if it had been an actual gold-mine with ore and bullion piled in heaps—that shadow, that farce, that nightmare. One longs to go back through the years and face him to the light and arouse him to the vast sham of it all.

CLXXXVII

SOME LITERARY MATTERS

Clemens might have lectured that winter with profit, and Major Pond did his best to persuade him; but Rogers agreed that his presence in New York was likely to be too important to warrant any schedule of absence. He went once to Boston to lecture for charity, though his pleasure in the experience was a sufficient reward. On the evening before the lecture Mrs. James T. Fields had him to her house to dine with Dr. Holmes, then not far from the end of his long, beautiful life.—[He died that same year, October, 1894.]

Clemens wrote to Paris of their evening together:

Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes never goes out (he is in his 84th year), but he came out this time—said he wanted to "have a time" once more with me.

Mrs. Fields said Aldrich begged to come, & went away crying because she wouldn't let him. She allowed only her family (Sarah Orne Jewett & sister) to be present, because much company would overtax Dr. Holmes.

Well, he was just delightful! He did as brilliant and beautiful talking (& listening) as he ever did in his life, I guess. Fields and Jewett said he hadn't been in such splendid form for years. He had ordered his carriage for 9. The coachman sent in for him at 9, but he said, "Oh, nonsense!—leave glories & grandeurs like these? Tell him to go away & come in an hour!"



At 10 he was called for again, & Mrs. Fields, getting uneasy, rose, but he wouldn't go—& so we rattled ahead the same as ever. Twice more Mrs. Fields rose, but he wouldn't go—& he didn't go till half past 10—an unwarrantable dissipation for him in these days. He was prodigiously complimentary about some of my books, & is having Pudd'nhead read to him. I told him you & I used the Autocrat as a courting book & marked it all through, & that you keep it in the sacred green box with the loveletters, & it pleased him.

One other address Clemens delivered that winter, at Fair Haven, on the opening of the Millicent Library, a present to the town from Mrs. Rogers. Mrs. Rogers had suggested to her husband that perhaps Mr. Clemens would be willing to say a few words there. Mr. Rogers had replied, "Oh, Clemens is in trouble. I don't like to ask him," but a day or two later told him of Mrs. Rogers's wish, adding:

Page 574

"Don't feel at all that you need to do it. I know just how you are feeling, how worried you are."

Clemens answered, "Mr. Rogers, do you think there is anything I could do for you that I wouldn't do?"

It was on this occasion that he told for the first time the "stolen watermelon" story, so often reprinted since; how once he had stolen a watermelon, and when he found it to be a green one, had returned it to the farmer, with a lecture on honesty, and received a ripe one in its place.

In spite of his cares and diversions Clemens's literary activities of this time were considerable. He wrote an article for the Youth's Companion—"How to Tell a Story"—and another for the North American Review on Fenimore Cooper's "Literary Offenses." Mark Twain had not much respect for Cooper as a literary artist. Cooper's stilted artificialities and slipshod English exasperated him and made it hard for him to see that in spite of these things the author of the Deerslayer was a mighty story-teller. Clemens had also promised some stories to Walker, of the Cosmopolitan, and gave him one for his Christmas number, "Traveling with a Reformer," which had grown out of some incidents of that long-ago journey with Osgood to Chicago, supplemented by others that had happened on the more recent visit to that city with Hall. This story had already appeared when Clemens and Rogers had made their Chicago trip. Rogers had written for passes over the Pennsylvania road, and the president, replying, said:

"No, I won't give Mark Twain a pass over our road. I've been reading his 'Traveling with a Reformer,' in which he abuses our road. I wouldn't let him ride over it again if I could help it. The only way I'll agree to let him go over it at all is in my private car. I have stocked it with everything he can possibly want, and have given orders that if there is anything else he wants the train is to be stopped until they can get it."

"Pudd'nhead Wilson" was appearing in the Century during this period, and "Tom Sawyer Abroad" in the St. Nicholas. The Century had issued a tiny calendar of the Pudd'nhead maxims, and these quaint bits of philosophy, the very gems of Mark Twain mental riches, were in everybody's mouth. With all this going on, and with his appearance at various social events, he was rather a more spectacular figure that winter than ever before.

From the note-book:

The Haunted Looking-glass. The guest (at midnight a dim light burning) wakes up & sees appear & disappear the faces that have looked into the glass during 3 centuries.

Love seems the swiftest but is the slowest of all growths. No man and woman really know what perfect love is until they have been married a quarter of a century.

It is more trouble to make a maxim than it is to do right.

Of all God's creatures, there is only one that cannot be made the slave of the lash—that one is the cat.

Page 575

Truth is stranger than fiction—to some people, but I am measurably familiar with it.

CLXXXVIII

FAILURE

It was the first week in March before it was thought to be safe for Clemens to return to France, even for a brief visit to his family. He hurried across and remained with them what seemed an infinitesimal time, a bare three weeks, and was back again in New York by the middle of April. The Webster company difficulties had now reached an acute stage. Mr. Rogers had kept a close watch on its financial affairs, hoping to be able to pull it through or to close it without failure, paying all the creditors in full; but on the afternoon of the 16th of April, 1894, Hall arrived at Clemens's room at The Players in a panic. The Mount Morris Bank had elected a new president and board of directors, and had straightway served notice on him that he must pay his notes—two notes of five thousand dollars each in a few days when due. Mr. Rogers was immediately notified, of course, and said he would sleep on it and advise them next day. He did not believe that the bank would really push them to the wall. The next day was spent in seeing what could be done, and by evening it was clear that unless a considerable sum of money was raised a voluntary assignment was the proper course. The end of the long struggle had come. Clemens hesitated less on his own than on his wife's account. He knew that to her the word failure would be associated with disgrace. She had pinched herself with a hundred economies to keep the business afloat, and was willing to go on economizing to avert this final disaster. Mr. Rogers said:

“Mr. Clemens, assure her from me that there is not even a tinge of disgrace in making this assignment. By doing it you will relieve yourself of a fearful load of dread, and in time will be able to pay everything and stand clear before the world. If you don't do it you will probably never be free from debt, and it will kill you and Mrs. Clemens both. If there is any disgrace it would be in not taking the course that will give you and her your freedom and your creditors a better chance for their claims. Most of them will be glad enough to help you.”

It was on the afternoon of the next day, April 18, 1894, that the firm of Charles L. Webster & Co. executed assignment papers and closed its doors. A meeting of the creditors was called, at which H. H. Rogers was present, representing Clemens. For the most part the creditors were liberal and willing to agree to any equitable arrangement. But there were a few who were grumpy and fussy. They declared that Mark Twain should turn over his copyrights, his Hartford home, and whatever other odds and ends could be discovered. Mr. Rogers, discussing the matter in 1908, said:

Page 576

"They were bent on devouring every pound of flesh in sight and picking the bones afterward, as Clemens and his wife were perfectly willing they should do. I was getting a little warm all the time at the highhanded way in which these few men were conducting the thing, and presently I got on my feet and said, 'Gentlemen, you are not going to have this thing all your way. I have something to say about Mr. Clemens's affairs. Mrs. Clemens is the chief creditor of this firm. Out of her own personal fortune she has lent it more than sixty thousand dollars. She will be a preferred creditor, and those copyrights will be assigned to her until her claim is paid in full. As for the home in Hartford, it is hers already.'

"There was a good deal of complaint, but I refused to budge. I insisted that Mrs. Clemens had the first claims on the copyrights, though, to tell the truth, these did not promise much then, for in that hard year the sale of books was small enough. Besides Mrs. Clemens's claim the debts amounted to one hundred thousand dollars, and of course there must be a definite basis of settlement, so it was agreed that Clemens should pay fifty cents on the dollar, when the assets were finally realized upon, and receive a quittance. Clemens himself declared that sooner or later he would pay the other fifty cents, dollar for dollar, though I believe there was no one besides himself and his wife and me who believed he would ever be able to do it. Clemens himself got discouraged sometimes, and was about ready to give it up, for he was getting on in years—nearly sixty—and he was in poor health. Once when we found the debt, after the Webster salvage, was going to be at least seventy thousand dollars, he said, 'I need not dream of paying it. I never could manage it.' But he stuck to it. He was at my house a good deal at first. We gave him a room there and he came and went as he chose. The worry told upon him. He became frail during those weeks, almost ethereal, yet it was strange how brilliant he was, how cheerful."

The business that had begun so promisingly and prosperously a decade before had dwindled to its end. The last book it had in hand was 'Tom Sawyer Abroad', just ready for issue. It curiously happened that on the day of the failure copies of it were filed in Washington for copyright. Frank Bliss came over from Hartford, and Clemens arranged with him for the publication of 'Pudd'nhead Wilson', thereby renewing the old relationship with the American Publishing Company after a break of a dozen years.

Naturally, the failure of Mark Twain's publishing firm made a public stir, and it showed how many and sincere were his friends, how ready they were with sympathy and help of a more material kind. Those who understood best, congratulated him on being out of the entanglement.

Poultney Bigelow, Douglas Taylor, Andrew Carnegie, Charles Dudley Warner, and others extended financial help, Bigelow and Taylor each inclosing him a check of one thousand dollars for immediate necessities. He was touched by these things, but the checks were returned. Many of his creditors sent him personal letters assuring him that

he was to forget his obligation to them completely until such time as the remembering would cost him no uneasiness.

Page 577

Clemens, in fact, felt relieved, now that the worst had come, and wrote bright letters home. In one he said:

Mr. Rogers is perfectly satisfied that our course was right, absolutely right and wise—cheer up, the best is yet to come.

And again:

Now & then a good and dear Joe Twichell or Susy Warner condoles with me & says, "Cheer up—don't be downhearted," and some other friend says, "I'm glad and surprised to see how cheerful you are & how bravely you stand it," & none of them suspect what a burden has been lifted from me & how blithe I am inside. Except when I think of you, dear heart—then I am not blithe; for I seem to see you grieving and ashamed, & dreading to look people in the face. For in the thick of the fight there is cheer, but you are far away & cannot hear the drum nor see the wheeling squadrons. You only seem to see rout, retreat, & dishonored colors dragging in the dirt—whereas none of these things exist. There is temporary defeat, but no dishonor—& we will march again. Charley Warner said to-day, "Sho, Livy isn't worrying. So long as she's got you and the children she doesn't care what happens. She knows it isn't her affair." Which didn't convince me.

Olivia Clemens wrote bravely and encouragingly to him, and more cheerfully than she felt, for in a letter to her sister she said:

The hideous news of Webster & Co.'s failure reached me by cable on Thursday, and Friday morning Galignani's Messenger had a squib about it. Of course I knew it was likely to come, but I had great hope that it would be in some way averted. Mr. Rogers was so sure there was no way out but failure that I suppose it was true. But I have a perfect horror and heart-sickness over it. I cannot get away from the feeling that business failure means disgrace. I suppose it always will mean that to me. We have put a great deal of money into the concern, and perhaps there would have been nothing but to keep putting it in and losing it. We certainly now have not much to lose. We might have mortgaged the house; that was the only thing I could think of to do. Mr. Clemens felt that there would never be any end, and perhaps he was right. At any rate, I know that he was convinced that it was the only thing, because when he went back he promised me that if it was possible to save the thing he would do so if only on account of my sentiment in the matter.

Sue, if you were to see me you would see that I have grown old very fast during this last year. I have wrinkled.

Most of the time I want to lie down and cry. Everything seems to me so impossible. I do not make things go very well, and I feel that my life is an absolute and irretrievable failure. Perhaps I am thankless, but I so often feel that I should like to give it up and

die. However, I presume that if I could have the opportunity I should at once desire to live.

Page 578

Clemens now hurried back to Paris, arriving about the middle of May, his second trip in two months. Scarcely had he got the family settled at La Bourboule-les-Bains, a quiet watering-place in the southern part of France, when a cable from Mr. Rogers, stating that the typesetter was perfected, made him decide to hurry back to America to assist in securing the new fortune. He did not go, however. Rogers wrote that the machine had been installed in the Times-Herald office, Chicago, for a long and thorough trial. There would be plenty of time, and Clemens concluded to rest with his family at La Bourboule-les-Bains. Later in the summer they went to Etretat, where he settled down to work.

CLXXXIX

AN EVENTFUL YEAR ENDS

That summer (July, '94.) the 'North American Review' published "In Defense of Harriet Shelley," a rare piece of literary criticism and probably the most human and convincing plea ever made for that injured, ill-fated woman. An admirer of Shelley's works, Clemens could not resist taking up the defense of Shelley's abandoned wife. It had become the fashion to refer to her slightlying, and to suggest that she had not been without blame for Shelley's behavior. A Shelley biography by Professor Dowden, Clemens had found particularly irritating. In the midst of his tangle of the previous year he had paused to give it attention. There were times when Mark Twain wrote without much sequence, digressing this way and that, as his fancy led him, charmingly and entertainingly enough, with no large, logical idea. He pursued no such method in this instance. The paper on Harriet Shelley is as brief as direct and compact and cumulative as could have been prepared by a trained legal mind of the highest order, and it has the added advantage of being the utterance of a human soul voicing an indignation inspired by human suffering and human wrong. By no means does it lack humor, searching and biting sarcasm. The characterization of Professor Dowden's Life of Shelley as a "literary cake-walk" is a touch which only Mark Twain could have laid on. Indeed, the "Defense of Harriet Shelly," with those early chapters of Joan at Florence, maybe counted as the beginning for Mark Twain of a genuine literary renaissance. It was to prove a remarkable period less voluminous than the first, but even more choice, containing, as it would, besides Joan and the Shelley article, the rest of that remarkable series collected now as Literary Essays; the Hadleyburg story; "Was it Heaven or Hell?"; those masterly articles on our national policies; closing at last with those exquisite memories, in his final days.

Page 579

The summer of 1894 found Mark Twain in the proper frame of mind for literary work. He was no longer in a state of dread. At Etretat, a watering-place on the French coast, he returned eagerly to the long-neglected tale of Joan—"a book which writes itself," he wrote Mr. Rogers—a tale which tells itself; I merely have to hold the pen." Etretat, originally a fishing-village, was less pretentious than to-day, and the family had taken a small furnished cottage a little way back from the coast—a charming place, and a cheap one—as became their means. Clemens worked steadily at Etretat for more than a month, finishing the second part of his story, then went over to Rouen to visit the hallowed precincts where Joan dragged out those weary months that brought her to the stake. Susy Clemens was taken ill at Rouen, and they lingered in that ancient city, wandering about its venerable streets, which have been changed but slowly by the centuries, and are still full of memories.

They returned to Paris at length—to the Brighton; their quarters of the previous winter—but presently engaged for the winter the studio home of the artist Pomroy at 169 rue de l'Universite, beyond the Seine. Mark Twain wrote of it once:

It was a lovely house; large, rambling, quaint, charmingly furnished and decorated, built upon no particular plan, delightfully uncertain and full of surprises. You were always getting lost in it, and finding nooks and corners which you did not know were there and whose presence you had not suspected before. It was built by a rich French artist, and he had also furnished it and decorated it himself. The studio was coziness itself. With us it served as a drawing-room, sitting-room, living-room, dancing-room—we used it for everything. We couldn't get enough of it. It is odd that it should have been so cozy, for it was 40 feet long, 40 feet high, and 30 feet wide, with a vast fireplace on, each side, in the middle, and a musicians' gallery at one end.

Mrs. Clemens had hoped to return to America, to their Hartford home. That was her heart's desire—to go back once more to their old life and fireside, to forget all this period of exile and wandering. Her letters were full of her home-longing; her three years of absence seemed like an eternity.

In its way, the Pomroy house was the best substitute for home they had found. Its belongings were of the kind she loved. Susy had better health, and her husband was happy in his work. They had much delightful and distinguished company. Her letters tell of these attractive things, and of their economies to make their income reach.

It was near the end of the year that the other great interest—the machine—came finally to a conclusion. Reports from the test had been hopeful during the summer. Early in October Clemens, receiving a copy of the Times-Herald, partly set by the machine, wrote: "The Herald has just arrived, and that column is healing for sore eyes. It affects me like Columbus sighting land." And again on the 28th:

Page 580

It seems to me that things couldn't well be going better at Chicago than they are. There's no other machine that can set type eight hours with only seventeen minutes' stoppage through cussedness. The others do rather more stopping than working. By and by our machines will be perfect; then they won't stop at all.

But that was about the end of the good news. The stoppages became worse and worse. The type began to break—the machine had its old trouble: it was too delicately adjusted—too complicated.

"Great guns, what is the matter with it?" wrote Clemens in November when he received a detailed account of its misconduct.

Mr. Rogers and his son-in-law, Mr. Broughton, went out to Chicago to investigate. They went to the Times-Herald office to watch the type-setter in action. Mr. Rogers once told of this visit to the writer of these chapters. He said:

"Certainly it was a marvelous invention. It was the nearest approach to a human being in the wonderful things it could do of any machine I have ever known. But that was just the trouble; it was too much of a human being and not enough of a machine. It had all the complications of the human mechanism, all the liability of getting out of repair, and it could not be replaced with the ease and immediateness of the human being. It was too costly; too difficult of construction; too hard to set up. I took out my watch and timed its work and counted its mistakes. We watched it a long time, for it was most interesting, most fascinating, but it was not practical—that to me was clear."

It had failed to stand the test. The Times-Herald would have no more of it. Mr. Rogers himself could see the uselessness of the endeavor. He instructed Mr. Broughton to close up the matter as best he could and himself undertook the harder task of breaking the news to Mark Twain. His letters seem not to have been preserved, but the replies to them tell the story.

169 rue de l'Universite,

Paris, December 22, 1894.

Dear Mr. Rogers,—I seemed to be entirely expecting your letter, and also prepared and resigned; but Lord, it shows how little we know ourselves and how easily we can deceive ourselves. It hit me like a thunder-clap. It knocked every rag of sense out of my head, and I went flying here and there and yonder, not knowing what I was doing, and only one clearly defined thought standing up visible and substantial out of the crazy storm-drift—that my dream of ten years was in desperate peril and out of the 60,000 or 70,000 projects for its rescue that came flocking through my skull not one would hold still long enough for me to examine it and size it up. Have you ever been like that? Not

so much, I reckon. There was another clearly defined idea—I must be there and see it die. That is, if it must die; and maybe if I were there we might hatch

Page 581

up some next-to-impossible way to make it take up its bed and take a walk. So, at the end of four hours I started, still whirling, and walked over to the rue Scribe—4 p.m.—and asked a question or two and was told I should be running a big risk if I took the 9 p.m. train for London and Southampton; “better come right along at 6.52 per Havre special and step aboard the New York all easy and comfortable.” Very! and I about two miles from home and no packing done. Then it occurred to me that none of these salvation notions that were whirlwinding through my head could be examined or made available unless at least a month’s time could be secured. So I cabled you, and said to myself that I would take the French steamer to-morrow (which will be Sunday). By bedtime Mrs. Clemens had reasoned me into a fairly rational and contented state of mind; but of course it didn’t last long. So I went on thinking—mixing it with a smoke in the dressing-room once an hour—until dawn this morning. Result—a sane resolution; no matter what your answer to my cable might be I would hold still and not sail until I should get an answer to this present letter which I am now writing or a cable answer from you saying “Come” or “Remain.”

I have slept 6 hours, my pond has clarified, and I find the sediment of my 70,000 projects to be of this character:

He follows with a detailed plan for reconstructing the machine, using brass type, etc., and concludes:

Don’t say I’m wild. For really I’m sane again this morning.

I am going right along with Joan now, and wait untroubled till I hear from you. If you think I can be of the least use cable me “Come.” I can write Joan on board ship and lose no time. Also I could discuss my plan with the publisher for a de luxe Joan, time being an object, for some of the pictures could be made over here, cheaply and quickly, that would cost much more time and money in America.

The second letter followed five days later:

169 rue de l’Universite,
Paris, December 27, 1894.

Dear Mr. Rogers,—Notwithstanding your heart is “old and hard” you make a body choke up. I know you “mean every word you say” and I do take it “in the same spirit in which you tender it.” I shall keep your regard while we two live—that I know; for I shall always remember what you have done for me, and that will insure me against ever doing anything that could forfeit it or impair it. It is six days or seven days ago that I lived through that despairing day, and then through a night without sleep; then settled down next day into my right mind (or thereabouts) and wrote you. I put in the rest of that day

till 7 P.m. plenty comfortably enough writing a long chapter of my book; then went to a masked ball blacked

Page 582

up as Uncle Remus, taking Clara along, and we had a good time. I have lost no day since, and suffered no discomfort to speak of, but drove my troubles out of my mind and had good success in keeping them out—through watchfulness. I have done a good week's work and put the book a good way ahead in the Great Trial [of Joan], which is the difficult part: the part which requires the most thought and carefulness. I cannot see the end of the Trial yet, but I am on the road. I am creeping surely toward it.

"Why not leave them all to me?" My business brothers? I take you by the hand! I jump at the chance!

I ought to be ashamed and I am trying my best to be ashamed—and yet I do jump at the chance in spite of it. I don't want to write Irving and I don't want to write Stoker. It doesn't seem as if I could. But I can suggest something for you to write them; and then if you see that I am unwise you can write them something quite different. Now this is my idea:

1. To return Stoker's \$100 to him and keep his stock.
2. And tell Irving that when luck turns with me I will make good to him what the salvage from the dead Co. fails to pay him of his \$500.

[P. S. Madam says No, I must face the music. So I inclose my effort—to be used if you approve, but not otherwise.]

We shall try to find a tenant for our Hartford house; not an easy matter, for it costs heavily to live in. We can never live in it again; though it would break the family's hearts if they could believe it.

Nothing daunts Mrs. Clemens or makes the world look black to her—which is the reason I haven't drowned myself.

I got the Xmas journals which you sent and I thank you for that Xmas remembrance.

We all send our deepest and warmest greetings to you and all of yours and a Happy New Year!

S. L. Clemens.

—[Brain Stoker and Sir Henry Irving had each taken a small interest in the machine. The inclosure for Stoker ran as follows:]

My dear Stoker,—I am not dating this, because it is not to be mailed at present.

When it reaches you it will mean that there is a hitch in my machine enterprise—a, hitch so serious as to make it take to itself the aspect of a dissolved dream. This letter, then, will contain cheque for the \$100 which you have paid. And will you tell Irving for me —I can't get up courage enough to talk about this misfortune myself, except to you, whom by good luck I haven't damaged yet—that when the wreckage presently floats ashore he will get a good deal of his \$500 back; and a dab at a time I will make up to him the rest. I'm not feeling as fine as I was when I saw you there in your home. Please remember me kindly to Mrs. Stoker. I gave up that London lecture-project entirely. Had to—there's never been a chance since to find the time.

Sincerely yours,
S. L. *Clemens*.

Page 583

A week later he added what was about his final word on the subject:

Yours of December 21 has arrived, containing the circular to stockholders, and I guess the Co. will really quit—there doesn't seem to be any other wise course.

There's one thing which makes it difficult for me to soberly realize that my ten-year dream is actually dissolved; and that is that it reverses my horoscope. The proverb says, "Born lucky, always lucky."

It was usual for one or two of our lads (per annum) to get drowned in the Mississippi or in Bear Creek, but I was pulled out in a drowned condition 9 times before I learned to swim, and was considered to be a cat in disguise. When the Pennsylvania blew up and the telegraph reported my brother as fatally injured (with 60 others) but made no mention of me, my uncle said to my mother "it means that Sam was somewhere else, after being on that boat a year and a half—he was born lucky." Yes, I was somewhere else. I am so superstitious that I have always been afraid to have business dealings with certain relatives and friends of mine because they were unlucky people. All my life I have stumbled upon lucky chances of large size, and whenever they were wasted it was because of my own stupidity and carelessness. And so I have felt entirely certain that the machine would turn up trumps eventually. It disappointed me lots of times, but I couldn't shake off the confidence of a lifetime in my luck.

Well, whatever I get out of the wreckage will be due to good luck—the good luck of getting you into the scheme—for, but for that there wouldn't be any wreckage; it would be total loss.

I wish you had been in at the beginning. Then we should have had the good luck to step promptly ashore.

So it was that the other great interest died and was put away forever. Clemens scarcely ever mentioned it again, even to members of his family. It was a dead issue; it was only a pity that it had ever seemed a live one. A combination known as the Regius Company took over Paige's interest, but accomplished nothing. Eventually—irony of fate—the Mergenthaler Company, so long scorned and derided, for twenty thousand dollars bought out the rights and assets and presented that marvelous work of genius, the mechanical wonder of the age, to the Sibley College of Engineering, where it is shown as the costliest piece of machinery, for its size, ever constructed. Mark Twain once received a letter from an author who had written a book calculated to assist inventors and patentees, asking for his indorsement. He replied:



Dear sir,—I have, as you say, been interested in patents and patentees. If your books tell how to exterminate inventors send me nine editions. Send them by express.

Very truly yours,
S. L. *Clemens*.

Page 584

The collapse of the “great hope” meant to the Clemens household that their struggle with debt was to continue, that their economies were to become more rigid. In a letter on her wedding anniversary, February a (1895), Mrs. Clemens wrote to her sister:

As I was starting down the stairs for my breakfast this morning Mr. Clemens called me back and took out a five-franc piece and gave it to me, saying: “It is our silver-wedding day, and so I give you a present.”

It was a symbol of their reduced circumstances—of the change that twenty-five years had brought.

Literary matters, however, prospered. The new book progressed amazingly. The worst had happened; other and distracting interests were dead. He was deep in the third part—the story of Joan’s trial and condemnation, and he forgot most other things in his determination to make that one a reality.

As at Viviani, Clemens read his chapters to the family circle. The story was drawing near the end now; tragedy was closing in on the frail martyr; the farce of her trial was wringing their hearts. Susy would say, “Wait, wait till I get a handkerchief,” and one night when the last pages had been written and read, and Joan had made the supreme expiation for devotion to a paltry king, Susy wrote in her diary, “To-night Joan of Arc was burned at the stake,” meaning that the book was finished.

Susy herself had literary taste and might have written had it not been that she desired to sing. There are fragments of her writing that show the true literary touch. Her father, in an unpublished article which he once wrote of her, quoted a paragraph, doubtless intended some day to take its place at the end of a story:

And now at last when they lie at rest they must go hence. It is always so. Completion; perfection, satisfaction attained—a human life has fulfilled its earthly destiny. Poor human life! It may not pause and rest, for it must hasten on to other realms and greater consummations.

She was a deep reader, and she had that wonderful gift of brilliant, flowing, scintillating speech. From her father she had inherited a rare faculty of oral expression, born of a superior depth of mind, swiftness and clearness of comprehension, combined with rapid, brilliant, and forceful phrasing. Her father wrote of her gift:

Sometimes in those days of swift development her speech was rocket- like for vividness and for the sense it carried of visibility. I seem to see it stream into the sky and burst full in a shower of colored fire.

We are dwelling here a moment on Susy, for she was at her best that winter.

Page 585

She was more at home than the others. Her health did not permit her to go out so freely and her father had more of her companionship. They discussed many things—the problems of life and of those beyond life, philosophies of many kinds, and the subtleties of literary art. He recalled long after how once they lost themselves in trying to solve the mystery of the emotional effect of certain word-combinations—certain phrases and lines of verse—as, for instance, the wild, free breath of the open that one feels in “the days when we went gipsying a long time ago” and the tender, sunlit, grassy slope and mossy headstones suggested by the simple words, “departed this life.” Both Susy and her father cared more for Joan than any of the former books. To Mr. Rogers, Clemens wrote:

“Possibly the book may not sell, but that is nothing—it was written for love.” A memorandum which he made at the time, apparently for no one but himself, brings us very close to the personality behind it.

Do you know that shock? I mean when you come at your regular hour into the sick-room where you have watched for months and find the medicine-bottles all gone, the night-table removed, the bed stripped, the furniture set stiffly to rights, the windows up, the room cold, stark, vacant—& you catch your breath & realize what has happened.

Do you know that shock?

The man who has written a long book has that experience the morning after he has revised it for the last time & sent it away to the printer. He steps into his study at the hour established by the habit of months—& he gets that little shock. All the litter & confusion are gone. The piles of dusty reference-books are gone from the chairs, the maps from the floor; the chaos of letters, manuscripts, note-books, paper-knives, pipes, matches, photographs, tobacco-jars, & cigar-boxes is gone from the writing-table, the furniture is back where it used to be in the long-ago. The housemaid, forbidden the place for five months, has been there & tidied it up & scoured it clean & made it repellent & awful. I stand here this morning contemplating this desolation, & I realize that if I would bring back the spirit that made this hospital home- like & pleasant to me I must restore the aids to lingering dissolution to their wonted places & nurse another patient through & send it forth for the last rites, With many or few to assist there, as may happen; & that I will do.

CXC

STARTING ON THE LONG TRAIL

Page 586

The tragedy of 'Pudd'nhead Wilson', with its splendid illustrations by Louis Loeb, having finished its course in the Century Magazine, had been issued by the American Publishing Company. It proved not one of Mark Twain's great books, but only one of his good books. From first to last it is interesting, and there are strong situations and chapters finely written. The character of Roxy is thoroughly alive, and her weird relationship with her half-breed son is startling enough. There are not many situations in fiction stronger than that where half-breed Tom sells his mother down the river into slavery. The negro character is well drawn, of course—Mark Twain could not write it less than well, but its realism is hardly to be compared with similar matter in his other books—in Tom Sawyer, for instance, or Huck Finn. With the exceptions of Tom, Roxy, and Pudd'nhead the characters are slight. The Twins are mere bodiless names that might have been eliminated altogether. The character of Pudd'nhead Wilson is lovable and fine, and his final triumph at the murder trial is thrilling in the extreme. Identification by thumb-marks was a new feature in fiction then—in law, too, for that matter. But it is chiefly Pudd'nhead Wilson's maxims, run at the head of each chapter, that will stick in the memory of men. Perhaps the book would live without these, but with them it is certainly immortal.

Such aphorisms as: "Nothing so needs reforming as other people's habits"; "Few things are harder to put up with than the annoyance of a good example"; "When angry count four, and when very angry swear," cannot perish; these, with the forty or so others in this volume and the added collection of rare philosophies that head the chapters of *Following the Equator*, have insured to Philosopher Pudd'nhead a respectful hearing for all time.—[The story of Pudd'nhead Wilson was dramatized by Frank Mayo, who played it successfully as long as he lived. It is by no means dead, and still pays a royalty to the Mayo and Clemens estates.]

Clemens had meant to begin another book, but he decided first to make a trip to America, to give some personal attention to publishing matters there. They were a good deal confused. The Harpers had arranged for the serial and book publication of *Joan*, and were negotiating for the Webster contracts. Mr. Rogers was devoting priceless time in an effort to establish amicable relations between the Harpers and the American Company at Hartford so that they could work on some general basis that would be satisfactory and profitable to all concerned. It was time that Clemens was on the scene of action. He sailed on the *New York* on the end of February, and a little more than a month later returned by the *Paris*—that is, at the end of March. By this time he had altogether a new thought. It was necessary to earn a large sum of money as promptly as possible, and he adopted the plan which twice before in his life in 1872 and in 1884—had supplied him with needed funds. Loathing the platform as he did, he was going back to it. Major Pond had proposed a lecture tour soon after his failure.

Page 587

"The loss of a fortune is tough," wrote Pond, "but there are other resources for another fortune. You and I will make the tour together."

Now he had resolved to make a tour—one that even Pond himself had not contemplated. He would go platforming around the world! He would take Pond with him as far as the Pacific coast, arranging with some one equally familiar with the lecture circuit on the other side of the Pacific. He had heard of R. S. Smythe, who had personally conducted Henry M. Stanley and other great lecturers through Australia and the East, and he wrote immediately, asking information and advice concerning such a tour. Clemens himself has told us in one of his chapters how his mental message found its way to Smythe long before his written one, and how Smythe's letter, proposing just such a trip, crossed his own.

He sailed for America, with the family on the 11th of May, and a little more than a week later, after four years of exile, they found themselves once more at beautiful Quarry Farm. We may imagine how happy they were to reach that peaceful haven. Mrs. Clemens had written:

"It is, in a way, hard to go home and feel that we are not able to open our house. But it is an immense delight to me to think of seeing our friends."

Little at the farm was changed. There were more vines on the home—the study was overgrown—that was all. Even Ellerslie remained as the children had left it, with all the small comforts and utensils in place. Most of the old friends were there; only Mrs. Langdon and Theodore Crane were missing. The Beechers drove up to see them, as formerly, and the old discussions on life and immortality were taken up in the old places.

Mrs. Beecher once came with some curious thin layers of leaves of stone which she had found, knowing Mark Twain's interest in geology. Later, when they had been discussing the usual problems, he said he would write an agreement on those imperishable leaves, to be laid away until the ages should solve their problems. He wrote it in verse:

If you prove right and I prove wrong,
A million years from now,
In language plain and frank and strong
My error I'll avow
To your dear waking face. If I prove right, by God His grace,
Full sorry I shall be,
For in that solitude no trace
There'll be of you and me. A million years, O patient stone,
You've waited for this message.
Deliver it a million hence;
(Survivor pays expressage.)

Mark twain

Contract with Mrs. T. K. Beecher, July 2, 1895.

Page 588

Pond came to Elmira and the route westward was arranged. Clemens decided to give selections from his books, as he had done with Cable, and to start without much delay. He dreaded the prospect of setting out on that long journey alone, nor could Mrs. Clemens find it in her heart to consent to such a plan. It was bitterly hard to know what to do, but it was decided at last that she and one of the elder daughters should accompany him, the others remaining with their aunt at Quarry Farm. Susy, who had the choice, dreaded ocean travel, and felt that she would be happier and healthier to rest in the quiet of that peaceful hilltop. She elected to remain with her aunt and Jean; and it fell to Clara to go. Major Pond and his wife would accompany them as far as Vancouver. They left Elmira on the night of the 14th of July. When the train pulled away their last glimpse was of Susy, standing with the others under the electric light of the railway platform, waving them good-by.

CXCI

Clemens had been ill in Elmira with a distressing carbuncle, and was still in no condition to undertake steady travel and entertainment in that fierce summer heat. He was fearful of failure. "I sha'n't be able to stand on a platform," he wrote Mr. Rogers; but they pushed along steadily with few delays. They began in Cleveland, thence by the Great Lakes, traveling by steamer from one point to another, going constantly, with readings at every important point—Duluth, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Winnipeg, Butte, and through the great Northwest, arriving at Vancouver at last on August 16th, but one day behind schedule time.

It had been a hot, blistering journey, but of immense interest, for none of them had traveled through the Northwest, and the wonder and grandeur of it all, its scenery, its bigness, its mighty agriculture, impressed them. Clemens in his notes refers more than once to the "seas" and "ocean" of wheat.

There is the peace of the ocean about it and a deep contentment, a heaven-wide sense of ampleness, spaciousness, where pettiness and all small thoughts and tempers must be out of place, not suited to it, and so not intruding. The scattering, far-off homesteads, with trees about them, were so homelike and remote from the warring world, so reposeful and enticing. The most distant and faintest under the horizon suggested fading ships at sea.

The Lake travel impressed him; the beauties and cleanliness of the Lake steamers, which he compares with those of Europe, to the disadvantage of the latter. Entering Port Huron he wrote:



Page 589

The long approach through narrow ways with flat grass and wooded land on both sides, and on the left a continuous row of summer cottages, with small-boat accommodations for visiting across the little canals from family to family, the groups of summer-dressed young people all along waving flags and handkerchiefs and firing cannon, our boat replying with toots of the hoarse whistle and now and then a cannon, and meeting steamers in the narrow way, and once the stately sister-ship of the line crowded with summer-dressed people waving the rich browns and greens of the rush-grown, far-reaching flat-lands, with little glimpses of water away on their farther edges, the sinking sun throwing a crinkled broad carpet of gold on the water-well, it is the perfection of voyaging.

It had seemed a doubtful experiment to start with Mrs. Clemens on that journey in the summer heat; but, strange to say, her health improved, and she reached Vancouver by no means unfit for the long voyage ahead. No doubt the change and continuous interest and their splendid welcome everywhere and their prosperity were accountable. Everywhere they were entertained; flowers filled their rooms; carriages and committees were always waiting. It was known that Mark Twain had set out for the purpose of paying his debts, and no cause would make a deeper appeal to his countrymen than that, or, for that matter, to the world at large.

From Winnipeg he wrote to Mr. Rogers:

At the end of an hour and a half I offered to let the audience go,
but they said "go on," and I did.

He had five thousand dollars to forward to Rogers to place against his debt account by the time he reached the Coast, a fine return for a month's travel in that deadly season. At no more than two places were the houses less than crowded. One of these was Anaconda, then a small place, which they visited only because the manager of the entertainment hall there had known Clemens somewhere back in the sixties and was eager to have him. He failed to secure the amount of the guarantee required by Pond, and when Pond reported to Clemens that he had taken "all he had" Clemens said:

"And you took the last cent that poor fellow had. Send him one hundred dollars, and if you can't afford to stand your share charge it all to me. I'm not going around robbing my friends who are disappointed in my commercial value. I don't want to get money that way."

"I sent the money," said Pond afterward, "and was glad of the privilege of standing my share."

Clemens himself had not been in the best of health during the trip. He had contracted a heavy cold and did not seem to gain strength. But in a presentation copy of 'Roughing It', given to Pond as a souvenir, he wrote:

“Here ends one of the smoothest and pleasantest trips across the continent that any group of five has ever made.”

There were heavy forest fires in the Northwest that year, and smoke everywhere. The steamer Waryimoo, which was to have sailed on the 16th, went aground in the smoke, and was delayed a week. While they were waiting, Clemens lectured in Victoria, with the Governor-General and Lady Aberdeen and their little son in the audience. His notebook says:

Page 590

They came in at 8.45, 15 minutes late; wish they would always be present, for it isn't permissible to begin until they come; by that time the late-comers are all in.

Clemens wrote a number of final letters from Vancouver. In one of them to Mr. J. Henry Harper, of Harper & Brothers, he expressed the wish that his name might now be printed as the author of "Joan," which had begun serially in the April Magazine. He thought it might, help his lecturing tour and keep his name alive. But a few days later, with Mrs. Clemens's help, he had reconsidered, and wrote:

My wife is a little troubled by my wanting my nom de plume put to the "Joan of Arc" so soon. She thinks it might go counter to your plans, and that you ought to be left free and unhampered in the matter.

All right-so be it. I wasn't strenuous about it, and wasn't meaning to insist; I only thought my reasons were good, and I really think so yet, though I do confess the weight and fairness of hers.

As a matter of fact the authorship of "Joan" had been pretty generally guessed by the second or third issue. Certain of its phrasing and humor could hardly have come from another pen than Mark Twain's. The authorship was not openly acknowledged, however, until the publication of the book, the following May.

Among the letters from Vancouver was this one to Rudyard Kipling

Dear Kipling,—It is reported that you are about to visit India. This has moved me to journey to that far country in order that I may unload from my conscience a debt long due to you. Years ago you came from India to Elmira to visit me, as you said at the time. It has always been my purpose to return that visit & that great compliment some day. I shall arrive next January & you must be ready. I shall come riding my ayah with his tusks adorned with silver bells & ribbons & escorted by a troop of native howdahs richly clad & mounted upon a herd of wild bungalows; & you must be on hand with a few bottles of ghee, for I shall be thirsty.

To the press he gave this parting statement:

It has been reported that I sacrificed for the benefit of the creditors the property of the publishing firm whose financial backer I was and that I am now lecturing for my own benefit. This is an error. I intend the lectures as well as the property for the creditors. The law recognizes no mortgage on a man's brain, and a merchant who has given up all he has may take advantage of the laws of insolvency and start free again for himself. But I am not a business man, and honor is a harder master than the law. It cannot compromise for less than 100 cents on the dollar and its debts never outlaw. From my reception thus far on my lecturing tour I am confident that if I live I can pay off

the last debt within four years, after which, at the age of sixty-four, I can make a fresh and unincumbered start in life.

Page 591

I am going to Australia, India, and South Africa, and next year I hope to make a tour of the great cities of the United States. I meant, when I began, to give my creditors all the benefit of this, but I am beginning to feel that I am gaining something from it, too, and that my dividends, if not available for banking purposes, may be even more satisfactory than theirs.

There was one creditor, whose name need not be “handed down to infamy,” who had refused to consent to any settlement except immediate payment in full, and had pursued with threatened attachment of earnings and belongings, until Clemens, exasperated, had been disposed to turn over to his creditors all remaining properties and let that suffice, once and for all. But this was momentary. He had presently instructed Mr. Rogers to “pay Shylock in full,” and to assure any others that he would pay them, too, in the end. But none of the others annoyed him.

It was on the afternoon of August 23, 1895, that they were off at last. Major Pond and his wife lunched with them on board and waved them good-by as long as they could see the vessel. The far voyage which was to carry them for the better part of the year to the under side of the world had begun.

CXCII

“Following the equator”

Mark Twain himself has written with great fulness the story of that traveling—setting down what happened, and mainly as it happened, with all the wonderful description, charm, and color of which he was so great a master. We need do little more than summarize then—adding a touch here and there, perhaps, from another point of view.

They had expected to stop at the Sandwich Islands, but when they arrived in the roadstead of Honolulu, word came that cholera had broken out and many were dying daily. They could not land. It was a double disappointment; not only were the lectures lost, but Clemens had long looked forward to revisiting the islands he had so loved in the days of his youth. There was nothing for them to do but to sit on the decks in the shade of the awnings and look at the distant shore. In his book he says:

We lay in luminous blue water; shoreward the water was green-green and brilliant; at the shore itself it broke in a long, white ruffle, and with no crash, no sound that we could hear. The town was buried under a mat of foliage that looked like a cushion of moss. The silky mountains were clothed in soft, rich splendors of melting color, and some of the cliffs were veiled in slanting mists. I recognized it all. It was just as I had seen it long before, with nothing of its beauty lost, nothing of its charm wanting.

In his note-book he wrote: "If I might, I would go ashore and never leave."

Page 592

This was the 31st of August. Two days later they were off again, sailing over the serene Pacific, bearing to the southwest for Australia. They crossed the equator, which he says was wisely put where it is, because if it had been run through Europe all the kings would have tried to grab it. They crossed it September 6th, and he notes that Clara kodaked it. A day or two later the north star disappeared behind them and the constellation of the Cross came into view above the southern horizon. Then presently they were among the islands of the southern Pacific, and landed for a little time on one of the Fiji group. They had twenty-four days of halcyon voyaging between Vancouver and Sydney with only one rough day. A ship's passengers get closely acquainted on a trip of that length and character. They mingle in all sorts of diversions to while away the time; and at the end have become like friends of many years.

On the night of September 15th—a night so dark that from the ship's deck one could not see the water—schools of porpoises surrounded the ship, setting the water alive with phosphorescent splendors: "Like glorified serpents thirty to fifty feet long. Every curve of the tapering long body perfect. The whole snake dazzlingly illumined. It was a weird sight to see this sparkling ghost come suddenly flashing along out of the solid gloom and stream past like a meteor."

They were in Sydney next morning, September 16, 1895, and landed in a pouring rain, the breaking up of a fierce drought. Clemens announced that he had brought Australia good-fortune, and should expect something in return.

Mr. Smythe was ready for them and there was no time lost in getting to work. All Australia was ready for them, in fact, and nowhere in their own country were they more lavishly and royally received than in that faraway Pacific continent. Crowded houses, ovations, and gorgeous entertainment—public and private—were the fashion, and a little more than two weeks after arrival Clemens was able to send back another two thousand dollars to apply on his debts. But he had hard luck, too, for another carbuncle developed at Melbourne and kept him laid up for nearly a week. When he was able to go before an audience again he said:

"The doctor says I am on the verge of being a sick man. Well, that may be true enough while I am lying abed all day trying to persuade his cantankerous, rebellious medicines to agree with each other; but when I come out at night and get a welcome like this I feel as young and healthy as anybody, and as to being on the verge of being a sick man I don't take any stock in that. I have been on the verge of being an angel all my life, but it's never happened yet."

In his book Clemens has told us his joy in Australia, his interest in the perishing native tribes, in the wonderfully governed cities, in the gold-mines, and in the advanced industries. The climate he thought superb; "a darling climate," he says in a note-book entry.

Page 593

Perhaps one ought to give a little idea of the character of his entertainment. His readings were mainly from his earlier books, 'Roughing It' and 'Innocents Abroad'. The story of the dead man which, as a boy, he had discovered in his father's office was one that he often told, and the "Mexican Plug" and his "Meeting with Artemus Ward" and the story of Jim Blaine's old ram; now and again he gave chapters from 'Huck Finn' and 'Tom Sawyer'. He was likely to finish with that old fireside tale of his early childhood, the "Golden Arm." But he sometimes told the watermelon story, written for Mrs. Rogers, or gave extracts from Adam's Diary, varying his program a good deal as he went along, and changing it entirely where he appeared twice in one city.

Mrs. Clemens and Clara, as often as they had heard him, generally went when the hour of entertainment came: They enjoyed seeing his triumph with the different audiences, watching the effect of his subtle art.

One story, the "Golden Arm," had in it a pause, an effective, delicate pause which must be timed to the fraction of a second in order to realize its full value. Somewhere before we have stated that no one better than Mark Twain knew the value of a pause. Mrs. Clemens and Clara were willing to go night after night and hear that tale time and again, for its effect on each new, audience.

From Australia to New Zealand—where Clemens had his third persistent carbuncle,—[In Following the Equator the author says: "The dictionary says a carbuncle is a kind of jewel. Humor is out of place in a dictionary."]¹—and again lost time in consequence. It was while he was in bed with this distressing ailment that he wrote Twichell:

I think it was a good stroke of luck that knocked me on my back here at Napier instead of in some hotel in the center of a noisy city. Here we have the smooth & placidly complaining sea at our door, with nothing between us & it but 20 yards of shingle—& hardly a suggestion of life in that space to mar it or to make a noise. Away down here fifty-five degrees south of the equator this sea seems to murmur in an unfamiliar tongue—a foreign tongue—a tongue bred among the ice-fields of the antarctic—a murmur with a note of melancholy in it proper to the vast unvisited solitudes it has come from. It was very delicious and solacing to wake in the night & find it still pulsing there. I wish you were here—land, but it would be fine!

Mrs. Clemens and himself both had birthdays in New Zealand; Clemens turned sixty, and his wife passed the half-century mark.

"I do not like it one single bit," she wrote to her sister. "Fifty years old—think of it; that seems very far on."

And Clemens wrote:

Day before yesterday was Livy's birthday (underworld time) & tomorrow will be mine. I shall be 60—no thanks for it!

Page 594

From New Zealand back to Australia, and then with the new year away to Ceylon. Here they were in the Orient at last, the land of color, enchantment, and gentle races. Clemens was ill with a heavy cold when they arrived; and in fact, at no time during this long journeying was his health as good as that of his companions. The papers usually spoke of him as looking frail, and he was continually warned that he must not remain in India until the time of the great heat. He was so determined to work, however, and working was so profitable, that he seldom spared himself.

He traveled up and down and back and forth the length and breadth of India—from Bombay to Allahabad, to Benares, to Calcutta and Darjeeling, to Lahore, to Lucknow, to Delhi—old cities of romance—and to Jeypore —through the heat and dust on poor, comfortless railways, fighting his battle and enjoying it too, for he reveled in that amazing land—its gorgeous, swarming life, the patience and gentleness of its servitude, its splendid pageantry, the magic of its architecture, the maze and mystery of its religions, the wonder of its ageless story.

One railway trip he enjoyed—a thirty-five-mile flight down the steep mountain of Darjeeling in a little canopied hand-car. In his book he says:

That was the most enjoyable time I have spent in the earth. For rousing, tingling, rapturous pleasure there is no holiday trip that approaches the bird-flight down the Himalayas in a handcar. It has no fault, no blemish, no lack, except that there are only thirty- five miles of it, instead of five hundred.

Mark Twain found India all that Rudyard Kipling had painted it and more. “*India the marvelous*” he printed in his note-book in large capitals, as an effort to picture his thought, and in his book he wrote:

So far as I am able to judge nothing has been left undone, either by man or Nature, to make India the most extraordinary country that the sun visits on his rounds. “Where every prospect pleases, and only man is vile.”

Marvelous India is, certainly; and he saw it all to the best advantage, for government official and native grandee spared no effort to do honor to his party—to make their visit something to be remembered for a lifetime. It was all very gratifying, and most of it of extraordinary interest. There are not many visitors who get to see the inner household of a native prince of India, and the letter which Mark Twain wrote to Kumar Shri Samatsinhji, a prince of the Palitana state, at Bombay, gives us a notion of how his unostentatious, even if lavish, hospitality was appreciated.



Page 595

Dear Kumar sahib,—It would be hard for me to put into words how much my family & I enjoyed our visit to your hospitable house. It was our first glimpse of the home of an Eastern Prince, & the charm of it, the grace & beauty & dignity of it realized to us the pictures which we had long ago gathered from books of travel & Oriental tales. We shall not forget that happy experience, nor your kind courtesies to us, nor those of her Highness to my wife & daughter. We shall keep always the portrait & the beautiful things you gave us; & as long as we live a glance at them will bring your house and its life & its sumptuous belongings & rich harmonies of color instantly across the years & the oceans, & we shall see them again, & how welcome they will be!

We make our salutation to your Highness & to all members of your family—including, with affectionate regard, that littlest little sprite of a Princess—& I beg to sign myself

Sincerely yours,
S. L. Clemens.

Benares, February 5, 1896.

They had been entertained in truly royal fashion by Prince Kumar, who, after refreshments, had ordered in “bales of rich stuffs” in the true Arabian Nights fashion, and commanded his servants to open them and allow his guests to select for themselves.

With the possible exception of General Grant’s long trip in ’78 and ’79 there has hardly been a more royal progress than Mark Twain’s trip around the world. Everywhere they were overwhelmed with honors and invitations, and their gifts became so many that Mrs. Clemens wrote she did not see how they were going to carry them all. In a sense, it was like the Grant trip, for it was a tribute which the nations paid not only to a beloved personality, but to the American character and people.

The story of that East Indian sojourn alone would fill a large book, and Mark Twain, in his own way, has written that book, in the second volume of *Following the Equator*, an informing, absorbing, and enchanting story of Indian travel.

Clemens lectured everywhere to jammed houses, which were rather less profitable than in Australia, because in India the houses were not built for such audiences as he could command. He had to lecture three times in Calcutta, and then many people were turned away. At one place, however, his hall was large enough. This was in the great Hall of the Palace, where durbars are held, at Bombay.

Altogether they were two months in India, and then about the middle of March an English physician at Jeypore warned them to fly for Calcutta and get out of the country immediately before the real heat set in.

They sailed toward the end of March, touched at Madras and again at Ceylon, remaining a day or two at Colombo, and then away to sea again, across the Indian Ocean on one of those long, peaceful, eventless, tropic voyages, where at night one steeps on deck and in daytime wears the whitest and lightest garments and cares to do little more than sit drowsily in a steamer-chair and read and doze and dream.



Page 596

From the note-book:

Here in the wastes of the Indian Ocean just under the equator the sea is blue, the motion gentle, the sunshine brilliant, the broad decks with their grouped companies of talking, reading, or game- playing folk suggestive of a big summer hotel—but outside of the ship is no life visible but the occasional flash of a flying-fish. I would like the voyage, under these conditions, to continue forever. The Indian Ocean sits and smiles
So sof', so bright, so bloomin' blue,
There aren't a wave for miles an' miles
Excep' the jiggle of the screw.

—Kip.

How curiously unanecdotal the colonials and the ship-going English are—I believe I haven't told an anecdote or heard one since I left America, but Americans when grouped drop into anecdotes as soon as they get a little acquainted.

Preserve your illusions. When they are gone you may still exist, but not live.

Swore off from profanity early this morning—I was on deck in the peaceful dawn, the calm of holy dawn. Went down, dressed, bathed, put on white linen, shaved—a long, hot, troublesome job and no profanity. Then started to breakfast. Remembered my tonic—first time in 3 months without being told—poured it into measuring-glass, held bottle in one hand, it in the other, the cork in my teeth —reached up & got a tumbler—measuring-glass slipped out of my fingers—caught it, poured out another dose, first setting the tumbler on wash-stand—just got it poured, ship lurched, heard a crash behind me—it was the tumbler, broken into millions of fragments, but the bottom hunk whole. Picked it up to throw out of the open port, threw out the measuring-glass instead—then I released my voice. Mrs. Clemens behind me in the door.

“Don't reform any more. It is not an improvement.”

This is a good time to read up on scientific matters and improve the mind, for about us is the peace of the great deep. It invites to dreams, to study, to reflection. Seventeen days ago this ship sailed out of Calcutta, and ever since, barring a day or two in Ceylon, there has been nothing in sight but the tranquil blue sea & a cloudless blue sky. All down the Bay of Bengal it was so. It is still so in the vast solitudes of the Indian Ocean—17 days of heaven. In 11 more it will end. There will be one passenger who will be sorry. One reads all day long in this delicious air. Today I have been storing up knowledge from Sir John Lubbock about the ant. The thing which has struck me most and most astonished me is the ant's extraordinary powers of identification—memory of his friend's person. I will quote something which he says about *Formica fusca*. *Formica fusca* is not something to eat; it's the name of a breed of ants.

He does quote at great length and he transferred most of it later to his book. In another note he says:

Page 597

In the past year have read *Vicar of Wakefield* and some of Jane Austen—thoroughly artificial. Have begun *Children of the Abbey*. It begins with this “Impromptu” from the sentimental heroine:

“Hail, sweet asylum of my infancy! Content and innocence reside beneath your humble roof and charity unboastful of the good it renders . . . Here unmolested may I wait till the rude storm of sorrow is overblown and my father’s arms are again extended to receive me.”

Has the ear-marks of preparation.

They were at the island of Mauritius by the middle of April, that curious bit of land mainly known to the world in the romance of Paul and Virginia, a story supposed by some in Mauritius to be “a part of the Bible.” They rested there for a fortnight and then set sail for South Africa on the ship *Arundel Castle*, which he tells us is the finest boat he has seen in those waters.

It was the end of the first week in May when they reached Durban and felt that they were nearing home.

One more voyage and they would be in England, where they had planned for Susy and Jean to join them.

Mrs. Clemens, eager for letters, writes of her disappointment in not finding one from Susy. The reports from Quarry Farm had been cheerful, and there had been small snap-shot photographs which were comforting, but her mother heart could not be entirely satisfied that Susy did not send letters. She had a vague fear that some trouble, some illness, had come to Susy which made her loath to write. Susy was, in fact, far from well, though no one, not even Susy herself, suspected how serious was her condition.

Mrs. Clemens writes of her own hopefulness, but adds that her husband is often depressed.

Mr. Clemens has not as much courage as I wish he had, but, poor old darling, he has been pursued with colds and inabilities of various sorts. Then he is so impressed with the fact that he is sixty years old. Naturally I combat that thought all I can, trying to make him rejoice that he is not seventy . . . He does not believe that any good thing will come, but that we must all our lives live in poverty. He says he never wants to go back to America. I cannot think that things are as black as he paints them, and I trust that if I get him settled down for work in some quiet English village he will get back much of his cheerfulness; in fact, I believe he will because that is what he wants to do, and that is the work that he loves: The platform he likes for the two hours that he is on it, but all the rest of the time it grinds him, and he says he is ashamed of what he is doing. Still, in



spite of this sad undercurrent, we are having a delightful trip. People are so nice, and with people Mr. Clemens seems cheerful. Then the ocean trips are a great rest to him.

Mrs. Clemens and Clara remained at the hotel in Durban

Page 598

while Clemens made his platform trip to the South African cities. It was just at the time when the Transvaal invasion had been put down—when the Jameson raid had come to grief and John Hares Hammond, chief of the reformers, and fifty or more supporters were lying in the jail at Pretoria under various sentences, ranging from one to fifteen years, Hammond himself having received the latter award. Mrs. Hammond was a fellow-Missourian; Clemens had known her in America. He went with her now to see the prisoners, who seemed to be having a pretty good time, expecting to be pardoned presently; pretending to regard their confinement mainly as a joke. Clemens, writing of it to Twichell, said:

A Boer guard was at my elbow all the time, but was courteous & polite, only he barred the way in the compound (quadrangle or big open court) & wouldn't let me cross a white mark that was on the ground—the "deathline," one of the prisoners called it. Not in earnest, though, I think. I found that I had met Hammond once when he was a Yale senior & a guest of General Franklin's. I also found that I had known Captain Mein intimately 32 years ago. One of the English prisoners had heard me lecture in London 23 years ago.... These prisoners are strong men, prominent men, & I believe they are all educated men. They are well off; some of them are wealthy. They have a lot of books to read, they play games & smoke, & for a while they will be able to bear up in their captivity; but not for long, not for very long, I take it. I am told they have times of deadly brooding and depression. I made them a speech—sitting down. It just happened so. I don't prefer that attitude. Still, it has one advantage—it is only a talk, it doesn't take the form of a speech I advised them at considerable length to stay where they were—they would get used to it & like it presently; if they got out they would only get in again somewhere else, by the look of their countenances; & I promised to go and see the President & do what I could to get him to double their jail terms.... We had a very good sociable time till the permitted time was up & a little over & we outsiders had to go. I went again to-day, but the Rev. Mr. Gray had just arrived, & the warden, a genial, elderly Boer named Du Plessis, explained that his orders wouldn't allow him to admit saint & sinner at the same time, particularly on a Sunday. Du Plessis descended from the Huguenot fugitives, you see, of 200 years ago—but he hasn't any French left in him now—all Dutch.

Clemens did visit President Kruger a few days later, but not for the purpose explained. John Hayes Hammond, in a speech not long ago (1911), told how Mark Twain was interviewed by a reporter after he left the jail, and when the reporter asked if the prisoners were badly treated Clemens had replied that he didn't think so, adding:

"As a matter of fact, a great many of these gentlemen have fared far worse in the hotels and mining-camps of the West."

Page 599

Said Hammond in his speech: "The result of this was that the interview was reported literally and a leader appeared in the next morning's issue protesting against such lenience. The privations, already severe enough, were considerably augmented by that remark, and it required some three or four days' search on the part of some of our friends who were already outside of jail to get hold of Mark Twain and have him go and explain to Kruger that it was all a joke."

Clemens made as good a plea to "Oom Paul" as he could, and in some degree may have been responsible for the improved treatment and the shortened terms of the unlucky reformers.

They did not hurry away from South Africa. Clemens gave many readings and paid a visit to the Kimberley mines. His note-book recalls how poor Riley twenty-five years before had made his fatal journey.

It was the 14th of July, 1896, a year to a day since they left Elmira, that they sailed by the steamer Norman for England, arriving at Southampton the 31st. It was from Southampton that they had sailed for America fourteen months before. They had completed the circuit of the globe.

CXCII

THE PASSING OF SUSY

It had been arranged that Katie Leary should bring Jean and Susy to England. It was expected that they would arrive soon, not later than the 12th, by which time the others would be established. The travelers proceeded immediately to London and engaged for the summer a house in Guildford, modest quarters, for they were still economizing, though Mark Twain had reason to hope that with the money already earned and the profits of the book he would write of his travels he could pay himself free. Altogether, the trip had been prosperous. Now that it was behind him, his health and spirits had improved. The outlook was brighter.

August 12th came, but it did not bring Katie and the children. A letter came instead. Clemens long afterward wrote:

It explained that Susy was slightly ill—nothing of consequence. But we were disquieted and began to cable for later news. This was Friday. All day no answer—and the ship to leave Southampton next day at noon. Clara and her mother began packing, to be ready in case the news should be bad. Finally came a cablegram saying, "Wait for cablegram in the morning." This was not satisfactory—not reassuring. I cabled again, asking that the answer be sent to Southampton, for the day was now closing. I waited in the post-office that night till the doors were closed, toward midnight, in the hope that good news

might still come, but there was no message. We sat silent at home till one in the morning waiting—waiting for we knew not what. Then we took the earlier morning train, and when we reached Southampton the message was there. It said the recovery would be long but certain. This was a great relief to me, but not to my wife. She was frightened.

Page 600

She and Clara went aboard the steamer at once and sailed for America, to nurse Susy. I remained behind to search for another and larger house in Guildford. That was the 15th of August, 1896. Three days later, when my wife and Clara were about half-way across the ocean, I was standing in our dining-room, thinking of nothing in particular, when a cablegram was put into my hand. It said, "Susy was peacefully released to-day."

Some of those who in later years wondered at Mark Twain's occasional attitude of pessimism and bitterness toward all creation, when his natural instinct lay all the other way, may find here some reasons in his logic of gloom. For years he and his had been fighting various impending disasters. In the end he had torn his family apart and set out on a weary pilgrimage to pay, for long financial unwisdom, a heavy price—a penance in which all, without complaint, had joined. Now, just when it seemed about ended, when they were ready to unite and be happy once more, when he could hold up his head among his fellows—in this moment of supreme triumph had come the message that Susy's lovely and blameless life was ended. There are not many greater dramas in fiction or in history than this. The wonder is not that Mark Twain so often preached the doctrine of despair during his later life, but that he did not exemplify it—that he did not become a misanthrope in fact.

Mark Twain's life had contained other tragedies, but no other that equaled this one. This time none of the elements were lacking—not the smallest detail. The dead girl had been his heart's pride; it was a year since he had seen her face, and now by this word he knew that he would never see it again. The blow had found him alone absolutely alone among strangers—those others—half-way across the ocean, drawing nearer and nearer to it, and he with no way to warn them, to prepare them, to comfort them.

Clemens sought no comfort for himself. Just as nearly forty years before he had writhed in self-accusation for the death of his younger brother, and as later he held himself to blame for the death of his infant son, so now he crucified himself as the slayer of Susy. To Mrs. Clemens he poured himself out in a letter in which he charged himself categorically as being wholly and solely responsible for the tragedy, detailing step by step with fearful reality his mistakes and weaknesses which had led to their downfall, the separation from Susy, and this final incredible disaster. Only a human being, he said, could have done these things.

Susy Clemens had died in the old Hartford home. She had been well for a time at Quarry Farm, well and happy, but during the summer of '96 she had become restless, nervous, and unlike herself in many ways. Her health seemed to be gradually failing, and she renewed the old interest in mental science, always with the approval of her parents. Clemens had great faith in mind over matter, and Mrs. Clemens also believed that Susy's high-strung nature was especially calculated to receive benefit from a serene and confident mental attitude. From Bombay, in January, she wrote Mrs. Crane:

Page 601

I am very glad indeed that Susy has taken up Mental Science, and I do hope it may do her as much good as she hopes. Last winter we were so very anxious to have her get hold of it, and even felt at one time that we must go to America on purpose to have her have the treatment, so it all seems very fortunate that it should have come about as it has this winter.

Just how much or how little Susy was helped by this treatment cannot be known. Like Stevenson, she had “a soul of flame in a body of gauze,” a body to be guarded through the spirit. She worked continuously at her singing and undoubtedly overdid herself. Early in the year she went over to Hartford to pay some good-by visit, remaining most of the time in the home of Charles Dudley Warner, working hard at her singing. Her health did not improve, and when Katie Leary went to Hartford to arrange for their departure she was startled at the change in her.

“Miss Susy; you are sick,” she said. “You must have the doctor come.”

Susy refused at first, but she grew worse and the doctor was sent for. He thought her case not very serious—the result, he said, of overwork. He prescribed some soothing remedies, and advised that she be kept very quiet, away from company, and that she be taken to her own home, which was but a step away. It was then that the letter was written and the first cable sent to England. Mrs. Crane was summoned from Elmira, also Charles Langdon. Mr. Twichell was notified and came down from his summer place in the Adirondacks.

Susy did not improve. She became rapidly worse, and a few days later the doctor pronounced her ailment meningitis. This was on the 15th of August—that hot, terrible August of 1896. Susy’s fever increased and she wandered through the burning rooms in delirium and pain; then her sight left her, an effect of the disease. She lay down at last, and once, when Katie Leary was near her, she put her hands on Katie’s face and said, “mama.” She did not speak after that, but sank into unconsciousness, and on the evening of Tuesday, August 18th, the flame went out forever.

To Twichell Clemens wrote of it:

Ah, well, Susy died at home. She had that privilege. Her dying eyes rested upon no thing that was strange to them, but only upon things which they had known & loved always & which had made her young years glad; & she had you & Sue & Katie & John & Ellen. This was happy fortune—I am thankful that it was vouchsafed to her. If she had died in another house—well, I think I could not have borne that. To us our house was not unsentient matter—it had a heart & a soul & eyes to see us with, & approvals & solitudes & deep sympathies; it was of us, & we were in its confidence, & lived in its grace & in the peace of its benediction. We never came home from an absence that its face did not light up & speak out its eloquent welcome—and we could not enter it unmoved. And could we now?

Page 602

oh, now, in spirit we should enter it unshod.

A tugboat with Dr. Rice, Mr. Twichell, and other friends of the family went down the bay to meet the arriving vessel with Mrs. Clemens and Clara on board. It was night when the ship arrived, and they did not show themselves until morning; then at first to Clara. There had been little need to formulate a message—their presence there was enough—and when a moment later Clara returned to the stateroom her mother looked into her face and she also knew. Susy already had been taken to Elmira, and at half past ten that night Mrs. Clemens and Clara arrived there by the through train—the same train and in the same coach which they had taken one year and one month before on their journey westward around the world.

And again Susy was there, not waving her welcome in the glare of the lights as she had waved her farewell to us thirteen months before, but lying white and fair in her coffin in the house where she was born.

They buried her with the Langdon relatives and the little brother, and ordered a headstone with some lines which they had found in Australia:

Warm summer sun shine kindly here;
Warm southern wind blow softly here;
Green sod above lie light, lie light
Good night, dear heart, good night, good night.

—[These lines at first were generally attributed to Clemens himself. When this was reported to him he ordered the name of the Australian poet, Robert Richardson, cut beneath them. The word “southern” in the original read “northern,” as in Australia. the warm wind is from the north. Richardson died in England in 1901.]

CXCIV

WINTER IN TEDWORTH SQUARE

Mrs. Clemens, Clara, and Jean, with Katie Leary, sailed for England without delay. Arriving there, they gave up the house in Guildford, and in a secluded corner of Chelsea, on the tiny and then almost unknown Tedworth Square (No. 23), they hid themselves away for the winter. They did not wish to be visited; they did not wish their whereabouts known except to a few of their closest friends. They wanted to be alone with their sorrow, and not a target for curious attention. Perhaps not a dozen people in London knew their address and the outside world was ignorant of it altogether. It was through this that a wild report started that Mark Twain’s family had deserted him—that ill

and in poverty he was laboring alone to pay his debts. This report—exploited in five-column head-lines by a hyper-hysterical paper of that period received wide attention.

Page 603

James Ross Clemens, of the St. Louis branch, a nephew of Frau von Versen, was in London just then, and wrote at once, through Chatto & Windus, begging Mark Twain to command his relative's purse. The reply to this kind offer was an invitation to tea, and "Young Doctor Jim," as he was called, found his famous relative by no means abandoned or in want, but in pleasant quarters, with his family still loyal. The general impression survived, however, that Mark Twain was sorely pressed, and the New York Herald headed a public benefit fund for the payment of his debts. The Herald subscribed one thousand dollars on its own account, and Andrew Carnegie followed with another thousand, but the enterprise was barely under way when Clemens wrote a characteristic letter, in which he declared that while he would have welcomed the help offered, being weary of debt, his family did not wish him to accept and so long as he was able to take care of them through his own efforts.

Meantime he was back into literary harness; a notebook entry for October 24, 1896, says:

"Wrote the first chapter of the book to-day-'Around the World'."

He worked at it uninterruptedly, for in work; there was respite, though his note-books show something of his mental torture, also his spiritual heresies. His series of mistakes and misfortunes, ending with the death of Susy, had tended to solidify his attitude of criticism toward things in general and the human race in particular.

"Man is the only animal that blushes, or that needs to," was one of his maxims of this period, and in another place he sets down the myriad diseases which human flesh is heir to and his contempt for a creature subject to such afflictions and for a Providence that could invent them. Even Mrs. Clemens felt the general sorrow of the race. "Poor, poor human nature," she wrote once during that long, gloomy winter.

Many of Mark Twain's notes refer to Susy. In one he says:

"I did not hear her glorious voice at its supremest—that was in Hartford a month or two before the end."

Notes of heavy regret most of them are, and self-reproach and the hopelessness of it all. In one place he records her accomplishment of speech, adding:

"And I felt like saying 'you marvelous child,' but never said it; to my sorrow I remember it now. But I come of an undemonstrative race."

He wrote to Twichell:

But I have this consolation: that dull as I was I always knew enough to be proud when she commended me or my work—as proud as if Livy had done it herself—& I took it as

the accolade from the hand of genius. I see now—as Livy always saw—that she had greatness in her, & that she herself was dimly conscious of it.

And now she is dead—and I can never tell her.

And closing a letter to Howells:

Good-by. Will healing ever come, or life have value again?

Page 604

And shall we see Susy? Without doubt! without a shadow of doubt if it can furnish opportunity to break our hearts again.

On November 26th, Thanksgiving, occurs this note:

“We did not celebrate it. Seven years ago Susy gave her play for the first time.”

And on Christmas:

London, 11.30 Xmas morning. The Square & adjacent streets are not merely quiet, they are dead. There is not a sound. At intervals a Sunday-looking person passes along. The family have been to breakfast. We three sat & talked as usual, but the name of the day was not mentioned. It was in our minds, but we said nothing.

And a little later:

Since bad luck struck us it is risky for people to have to do with us. Our cook's sweetheart was healthy. He is rushing for the grave now. Emily, one of the maids, has lost the sight of one eye and the other is in danger. Wallace carried up coal & blacked the boots two months—has suddenly gone to the hospital—pleurisy and a bad case. We began to allow ourselves to see a good deal of our friends, the Bigelows—straightway their baby sickened & died. Next Wilson got his skull fractured. January 23, 1897. I wish the Lord would disguise Himself in citizen's clothing & make a personal examination of the sufferings of the poor in London. He would be moved & would do something for them Himself.

CXCV

“Personal recollections of Joan of arc”

Meantime certain publishing events had occurred. During his long voyage a number of Mark Twain's articles had appeared in the magazines, among them “Mental Telegraphy Again,” in Harpers, and in the North American Review that scorching reply to Paul Bourget's reflections upon America. Clemens could criticize his own nation freely enough, but he would hardly be patient under the strictures of a Frenchman, especially upon American women.

There had been book publication also during this period. The Harpers had issued an edition of ‘Tom Sawyer Abroad’, which included another Tom and Huck story ‘Tom Sawyer, Detective’, written in Paris, and the contents of the old White Elephant book.

But there had been a much more important book event. The chapters of his story of Joan having run their course in Harper's Magazine had been issued as a volume.

As already mentioned, Joan had been early recognized as Mark Twain's work, and it was now formally acknowledged as such on the title-page. It is not certain now that the anonymous beginning had been a good thing. Those who began reading it for its lofty charm, with the first hint of Mark Twain as the author became fearful of some joke or burlesque. Some who now promptly hastened to read it as Mark Twain's, were inclined to be disappointed at the very lack of these features. When the book itself appeared the general public, still doubtful as to its merits, gave it a somewhat dubious reception. The early sales were disappointing.

Page 605

Nor were the reviewers enthusiastic, as a rule. Perhaps they did not read it over-carefully, or perhaps they were swayed a good deal by a sort of general verdict that, in attempting 'Joan of Arc', Mark Twain had gone out of his proper field. Furthermore, there were a number of Joan books published just then, mainly sober, somber books, in which Joan was pictured properly enough as a saint, and never as anything else—never being permitted to smile or enjoy the lighter side of life, to be a human being, in fact, at all.

But this is just the very wonder of Mark Twain's Joan. She is a saint; she is rare, she is exquisite, she is all that is lovely, and she is a human being besides. Considered from every point of view, Joan of Arc is Mark Twain's supreme literary expression, the loftiest, the most delicate, the most luminous example of his work. It is so from the first word of its beginning, that wonderful "Translator's Preface," to the last word of the last chapter, where he declares that the figure of Joan with the martyr's crown upon her head shall stand for patriotism through all time.

The idyllic picture of Joan's childhood with her playmates around the fairy tree is so rare in its delicacy and reality that any attempt to recall it here would disturb its bloom. The little poem, "L'Arbre fee de Bourlemont," Mark Twain's own composition, is a perfect note, and that curiously enough, for in versification he was not likely to be strong. Joan's girlhood, the picture of her father's humble cottage, the singing there by the wandering soldier of the great song of Roland which stirred her deepest soul with the love of France, Joan's heroism among her playmates, her wisdom, her spiritual ideals—are not these all reverently and nobly told, and with that touch of tenderness which only Mark Twain could give? And the story of her voices, and her march, and of her first appearance before the wavering king. And then the great coronation scene at Rheims, and the dramatic moment when Joan commands the march on Paris—the dragging of the hopeless trial, and that last, fearful day of execution, what can surpass these? Nor must we forget those charming, brighter moments where Joan is shown just as a human being, laughing until the tears run at the absurdities of the paladin or the simple home prattle of her aged father and uncle. Only here and there does one find a touch—and it is never more than that—of the forbidden thing, the burlesque note which was so likely to be Mark Twain's undoing.

It seems incredible to-day that any reader, whatever his preconceived notions of the writer might have been, could have followed these chapters without realizing their majesty, and that this tale of Joan was a book such as had not before been written. Let any one who read it then and doubted, go back and consider it now. A surprise will await him, and it will be worth while. He will know the true personality of Joan of Arc more truly than ever before, and he will love her as the author loved her, for "the most innocent, the most lovely, the most adorable child the ages have produced."

Page 606

The tale is matchless in its workmanship. The quaint phrasing of the old *Sieur de Conte* is perfectly adapted to the subject-matter, and the lovely character of the old narrator himself is so perfectly maintained that we find ourselves all the time as in an atmosphere of consecration, and feel that somehow we are helping him to weave a garland to lay on Joan's tomb. Whatever the tale he tells, he is never more than a step away. We are within sound of his voice, we can touch his presence; we ride with him into battle; we laugh with him in the by-play and humors of warfare; we sit hushed at his side through the long, fearful days of the deadly trial, and when it is all ended it is to him that we turn to weep for Joan—with him only would we mingle our tears. It is all bathed in the atmosphere of romance, but it is the ultimate of realism, too; not hard, sordid, ugly realism, but noble, spiritual, divine realism, belonging to no particular class or school—a creation apart. Not all of Mark Twain's tales have been convincing, but there is no chapter of his *Joan* that we doubt. We believe it all happened—we know that it must have happened, for our faith in the *Sieur de Conte* never for an instant wavers.

Aside from the personality of the book—though, in truth, one never is aside from it—the tale is a marvel in its pageantry, its splendid panorama and succession of stirring and stately scenes. The fight before Orleans, the taking of the *Tourelles* and of *Jargeau*, all the movement of that splendid march to *Rheims*, there are few better battle-pictures than these. Howells, always interested mainly in the realism of to-day, in his review hints at staginess in the action and setting and even in *Joan* herself. But Howells himself did not accept his earlier judgment as final. Five years later he wrote:

"She is indeed realized to the modern sense as few figures of the past have been realized in fiction."

As for the action, suppose we consider a brief bit of *Joan's* warfare. It is from the attack on the *Tourelles*:

Joan mounted her horse now with her staff about her, and when our people saw us coming they raised a great shout, and were at once eager for another assault on the boulevard. *Joan* rode straight to the foss where she had received her wound, and, standing there in the rain of bolts and arrows, she ordered the paladin to let her long standard blow free, and to note when its fringes should touch the fortress. Presently he said:

"It touches."

"Now, then," said *Joan* to the waiting battalions, "the place is yours—enter in! Bugles, sound the assault! Now, then—all together—go!"

Page 607

And go it was. You never saw anything like it. We swarmed up the ladders and over the battlements like a wave—and the place was our property. Why, one might live a thousand years and never see so gorgeous a thing as that again....We were busy and never heard the five cannon-shots fired, but they were fired a moment after Joan had ordered the assault; and so, while we were hammering and being hammered in the smaller fortress, the reserve on the Orleans side poured across the bridge and attacked the Tourelles from that side. A fireboat was brought down and moored under the drawbridge which connected the Tourelles with our boulevard; wherefore, when at last we drove our English ahead of us, and they tried to cross that drawbridge and join their friends in the Tourelles, the burning timbers gave way under them and emptied them in a mass into the river in their heavy armor—and a pitiful sight it was to see brave men die such a death as that. “God pity them!” said Joan, and wept to see that sorrowful spectacle. She said those gentle words and wept those compassionate tears, although one of those perishing men had grossly insulted her with a coarse name three days before when she had sent him a message asking him to surrender. That was their leader, Sir William Glasdale, a most valorous knight. He was clothed all in steel; so he plunged under the water like a lance, and of course came up no more. We soon patched a sort of bridge together and threw ourselves against the last stronghold of the English power that barred Orleans from friends and supplies. Before the sun was quite down Joan’s forever memorable day’s work was finished, her banner floated from the fortress of the Tourelles, her promise was fulfilled, she had raised the siege of Orleans!

England had resented the Yankee, but it welcomed Joan. Andrew Lang adored it, and some years later contemplated dedicating his own book, ‘The Maid of France’, to Mark Twain.’—[His letter proposing this dedication, received in 1909, appears to have been put aside and forgotten by Mr. Clemens, whose memory had not improved with failing health.]

Brander Matthews ranks Huck Finn before Joan of Arc, but that is understandable. His literary culture and research enable him, in some measure, to comprehend the production of Joan; whereas to him Huck is pure magic. Huck is not altogether magic to those who know the West—the character of that section and the Mississippi River, especially of an older time—it is rather inspiration resulting from these existing things. Joan is a truer literary magic—the reconstruction of a far-vanished life and time. To incarnate, as in a living body of the present, that marvelous child whose life was all that was pure and exalted and holy, is veritable necromancy and something more. It is the apotheosis of history.



Page 608

Throughout his life Joan of Arc had been Mark Twain's favorite character in the world's history. His love for her was a beautiful and a sacred thing. He adored young maidenhood always and nobility of character, and he was always the champion of the weak and the oppressed. The combination of these characteristics made him the ideal historian of an individuality and of a career like hers. It is fitting that in his old age (he was nearing sixty when it was finished) he should have written this marvelously beautiful thing. He could not have written it at an earlier time. It had taken him all these years to prepare for it; to become softened, to acquire the delicacy of expression, the refinement of feeling, necessary to the achievement.

It was the only book of all he had written that Mark Twain considered worthy of this dedication:

1870 To my wife 1895
Olivia Langdon Clemens
this book

is tendered on our wedding anniversary in grateful recognition
of her twenty-five years of valued service as my literary
adviser and editor.

The author

The Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc was a book not understood in the beginning, but to-day the public, that always renders justice in the end, has reversed its earlier verdict. The demand for Joan has multiplied many fold and it continues to multiply with every year. Its author lived long enough to see this change and to be comforted by it, for though the creative enthusiasm in his other books soon passed, his glory in the tale of Joan never died. On his seventy-third birthday, when all of his important books were far behind him, and he could judge them without prejudice, he wrote as his final verdict:

Nov. 30, 1908

I like the Joan of Arc best of all my books; & it is the best; I know it perfectly well. And besides, it furnished me seven times the pleasure afforded me by any of the others: 12 years of preparation & a years of writing. The others needed no preparation, & got none.

Marktwain.

CXCVI

MR. ROGERS AND HELEN KELLER

It was during the winter of '96, in London, that Clemens took an active interest in the education of Helen Keller and enlisted the most valuable adherent in that cause, that is to say, Henry H. Rogers. It was to Mrs. Rogers that he wrote, heading his letter:

For & in behalf
of Helen Keller,
Stone blind & deaf,
& formerly dumb.

Page 609

Dear Mrs. Rogers,—Experience has convinced me that when one wished to set a hard-worked man at something which he mightn't prefer to be bothered with it is best to move upon him behind his wife. If she can't convince him it isn't worth while for other people to try. Mr. Rogers will remember our visit with that astonishing girl at Lawrence Hutton's house when she was fourteen years old. Last July, in Boston, when she was 16 she underwent the Harvard examination for admission to Radcliffe College. She passed without a single condition. She was allowed only the same amount of time that is granted to other applicants, & this was shortened in her case by the fact that the question-papers had to be read to her. Yet she scored an average of 90, as against an average of 78 on the part of the other applicants. It won't do for America to allow this marvelous child to retire from her studies because of poverty. If she can go on with them she will make a fame that will endure in history for centuries. Along her special lines she is the most extraordinary product of all the ages. There is danger that she must retire from the struggle for a college degree for lack of support for herself & for Miss Sullivan (the teacher who has been with her from the start—Mr. Rogers will remember her). Mrs. Hutton writes to ask me to interest rich Englishmen in her case, & I would gladly try, but my secluded life will not permit it. I see nobody. Nobody knows my address. Nothing but the strictest hiding can enable me to write my book in time. So I thought of this scheme: Beg you to lay siege to your husband & get him to interest himself and Messrs. John D. & William Rockefeller & the other Standard Oil chiefs in Helen's case; get them to subscribe an annual aggregate of six or seven hundred or a thousand dollars—& agree to continue this for three or four years, until she has completed her college course. I'm not trying to limit their generosity—indeed no; they may pile that Standard Oil Helen Keller College Fund as high as they please; they have my consent. Mrs. Hutton's idea is to raise a permanent fund, the interest upon which shall support Helen & her teacher & put them out of the fear of want. I sha'n't say a word against it, but she will find it a difficult & disheartening job, & meanwhile what is to become of that miraculous girl? No, for immediate and sound effectiveness, the thing is for you to plead with Mr. Rogers for this hampered wonder of your sex, & send him clothed with plenary powers to plead with the other chiefs—they have spent mountains of money upon the worthiest benevolences, & I think that the same spirit which moved them to put their hands down through their hearts into their pockets in those cases will answer. "Here!" when its name is called in this one.

There—I don't need to apologize to you or to H. H. for this appeal that I am making; I know you too well for that:



Page 610

Good-by, with love to all of you,
S. L. Clemens.

The result of this letter was that Mr. Rogers personally took charge of Helen Keller's fortunes, and out of his own means made it possible for her to continue her education and to achieve for herself the enduring fame which Mark Twain had foreseen.

Mr. Rogers wrote that, by a curious coincidence, a letter had come to him from Mrs. Hutton on the same morning that Mrs. Rogers had received hers from Tedworth Square. Clemens sent grateful acknowledgments to Mrs. Rogers.

Dear Mrs. Rogers,—It is superb! And I am beyond measure grateful to you both. I knew you would be interested in that wonderful girl, & that Mr. Rogers was already interested in her & touched by her; & I was sure that if nobody else helped her you two would; but you have gone far & away beyond the sum I expected—may your lines fall in pleasant places here, & Hereafter for it!

The Huttons are as glad & grateful as they can be, & I am glad for their sakes as well as for Helen's.

I want to thank Mr. Rogers for crucifying himself on the same old cross between Bliss & Harper; & goodness knows I hope he will come to enjoy it above all other dissipations yet, seeing that it has about it the elements of stability & permanency. However, at any time that he says sign we're going to do it.

Ever sincerely yours,
S. L. Clemens.

CXCVII

FINISHING THE BOOK OF TRAVEL

One reading the Equator book to-day, and knowing the circumstances under which it was written, might be puzzled to reconcile the secluded household and its atmosphere of sorrow with certain gaieties of the subject matter. The author himself wondered at it, and to Howells wrote:

I don't mean that I am miserable; no-worse than that—indifferent. Indifferent to nearly everything but work. I like that; I enjoy it, & stick to it. I do it without purpose & without ambition; merely for the love of it. Indeed, I am a mud-image; & it puzzles me to know what it is in me that writes & has comedy fancies & finds pleasure in phrasing them. It is the law of our nature, of course, or it wouldn't happen; the thing in me forgets the presence of the

mud-image, goes its own way wholly unconscious of it & apparently of no kinship with it.

He saw little company. Now and, then a good friend, J.Y.W. MacAlister, came in for a smoke with him. Once Clemens sent this line:

Page 611

You speak a language which I understand. I would like to see you. Could you come and smoke some manilas; I would, of course, say dine, but my family are hermits & cannot see any one, but I would have a fire in my study, & if you came at any time after your dinner that might be most convenient for you you would find me & a welcome.

Clemens occasionally went out to dinner, but very privately. He dined with Bram Stoker, who invited Anthony Hope and one or two others, and with the Chattos and Mr. Percy Spalding; also with Andrew Lang, who wrote, "Your old friend, Lord Lome, wants to see you again"; with the Henry M. Stanleys and Poultney Bigelow, and with Francis H. Skrine, a government official he had met in India. But in all such affairs he was protected from strangers and his address was kept a secret from the public. Finally, the new-found cousin, Dr. Jim Clemens, fell ill, and the newspapers had it presently that Mark Twain was lying at the point of death. A reporter ferreted him out and appeared at Tedworth Square with cabled instructions from his paper. He was a young man, and innocently enough exhibited his credentials. His orders read:

"If Mark Twain very ill, five hundred words. If dead, send one thousand."

Clemens smiled grimly as he handed back the cable.

"You don't need as much as that," he said. "Just say the report of my death has been grossly exaggerated."

The young man went away quite seriously, and it was not until he was nearly to his office that he saw the joke. Then, of course, it was flashed all over the world.

Clemens kept grinding steadily at the book, for it was to be a very large volume—larger than he had ever written before. To MacAlister, April 6, 1897, he wrote, replying to some invitation:

Ah, but I mustn't stir from my desk before night now when the publisher is hurrying me & I am almost through. I am up at work now—4 o'clock in the morning-and a few more spurts will pull me through. You come down here & smoke; that is better than tempting a working-man to strike & go to tea.

And it would move me too deeply to see Miss Corelli. When I saw her last it was on the street in Homburg, & Susy was walking with me.

On April 13th he makes a note-book entry: "I finished my book to-day," and on the 15th he wrote MacAlister, inclosing some bits of manuscript:

I finished my book yesterday, and the madam edited this stuff out of it—on the ground that the first part is not delicate & the last part is indelicate. Now, there's a nice distinction for you—& correctly stated, too, & perfectly true.

It may interest the reader to consider briefly the manner in which Mark Twain's "editor" dealt with his manuscript, and a few pages of this particular book remain as examples. That he was not always entirely tractable, or at least submissive, but that he did yield, and graciously, is clearly shown.

Page 612

In one of her comments Mrs. Clemens wrote:

Page 597. I hate to say it, but it seems to me that you go too minutely into particulars in describing the feats of the aborigines. I felt it in the boomerang-throwing.

And Clemens just below has written:

Boomerang has been furnished with a special train—that is, I've turned it into "Appendix." Will that answer?

Page 1002. I don't like the "shady-principled cat that has a family in every port."

Then I'll modify him just a little.

Page 1020. 9th line from the top. I think some other word would be better than "stench." You have used that pretty often.

But can't I get it in anywhere? You've knocked it out every time. Out it goes again. And yet "stench" is a noble, good word.

Page 1038. I hate to have your father pictured as lashing a slave boy.

It's out, and my father is whitewashed.

Page 1050. 2d line from the bottom. Change breech-clout. It's a word that you love and I abominate. I would take that and "offal" out of the language.

You are steadily weakening the English tongue, Livy.

Page 1095. Perhaps you don't care, but whoever told you that the Prince's green stones were rubies told an untruth. They were superb emeralds. Those strings of pearls and emeralds were famous all over Bombay.

All right, I'll make them emeralds, but it loses force. Green rubies is a fresh thing. And besides it was one of the Prince's own staff liars that told me.

That the book was not quite done, even after the triumphant entry of April 13th, is shown by another note which followed something more than a month later:

May 18, 1897. Finished the book again—addition of 30,000 words.

And to MacAlister he wrote:

I have finished the book at last—and finished it for good this time. Now I am ready for dissipation with a good conscience. What night will you come down & smoke?

His book finished, Clemens went out rather more freely, and one evening allowed MacAlister to take him around to the Savage Club. There happened to be a majority of the club committee present, and on motion Mark Twain was elected an honorary life member. There were but three others on whom this distinction had been conferred—Stanley, Nansen, and the Prince of Wales. When they told Mark Twain this he said:

“Well, it must make the Prince feel mighty fine.”—[In a volume of Savage Club anecdotes the date of Mark Twain’s election to honorary membership is given as 1899. Clemens’s notebook gives it in 1897.]

He did not intend to rest; in another entry we find:

May 23, 1897. Wrote first chapter of above story to-day.

Page 613

The “above story” is a synopsis of a tale which he tried then and later in various forms—a tale based on a scientific idea that one may dream an episode covering a period of years in minute detail in what, by our reckoning, may be no more than a few brief seconds. In this particular form of the story a man sits down to write some memories and falls into a doze. The smell of his cigarette smoke causes him to dream of the burning of his home, the destruction of his family, and of a long period of years following. Awakening a few seconds later, and confronted by his wife and children, he refuses to believe in their reality, maintaining that this condition, and not the other, is the dream. Clemens tried the psychological literary experiment in as many as three different ways during the next two or three years, and each at considerable length; but he developed none of them to his satisfaction, or at least he brought none of them to conclusion. Perhaps the most weird of these attempts, and the most intensely interesting, so long as the verisimilitude is maintained, is a dream adventure in a drop of water which, through an incredible human reduction to microbic, even atomic, proportions, has become a vast tempestuous sea. Mark Twain had the imagination for these undertakings and the literary workmanship, lacking only a definite plan for development of his tale—a lack which had brought so many of his literary ventures to the rocks.

CXCVIII

A SUMMER IN SWITZERLAND

The Queen’s Jubilee came along—June 22, 1897, being the day chosen to celebrate the sixty-year reign. Clemens had been asked to write about it for the American papers, and he did so after his own ideas, illustrating some of his material with pictures of his own selection. The selections were made from various fashion-plates, which gave him a chance to pick the kind of a prince or princess or other royal figure that he thought fitted his description without any handicap upon his imagination. Under his portrait of Henry V. (a very correctly dressed person in top hat and overcoat) he wrote:

In the original the King has a crown on. That is no kind of a thing for the King to wear when he has come home on business. He ought to wear something he can collect taxes in. You will find this representation of Henry V. active, full of feeling, full of sublimity. I have pictured him looking out over the battle of Agincourt and studying up where to begin.

Mark Twain’s account of the Jubilee probably satisfied most readers; but James Tufts, then managing editor of the San Francisco Examiner, had a rather matter-of-fact Englishman on the staff, who, after reading the report, said:

“Well, Jim Tufts, I hope you are satisfied with that Mark Twain cable.”

“Why, yes,” said Tufts; “aren’t you?”

“I should say not. Just look what he says about the number of soldiers. He says, ‘I never saw so many soldiers anywhere except on the stage of a theater.’ Why, Tufts, don’t you know that the soldiers in the theater are the same old soldiers marching around and around? There aren’t more than a hundred soldiers in the biggest army ever put on the stage.”

Page 614

It was decided to vacate the house in Tedworth Square and go to Switzerland for the summer. Mrs. Crane and Charles Langdon's daughter, Julia, joined them early in July, and they set out for Switzerland a few days later. Just before leaving, Clemens received an offer from Pond of fifty thousand dollars for one hundred and twenty-five nights on the platform in America. It was too great a temptation to resist at once, and they took it under advisement. Clemens was willing to accept, but Mrs. Clemens opposed the plan. She thought his health no longer equal to steady travel. She believed that with continued economy they would be able to manage their problem without this sum. In the end the offer was declined.

They journeyed to Switzerland by way of Holland and Germany, the general destination being Lucerne. They did not remain there, however. They found a pretty little village farther up the lake—Weggis, at the foot of the Rigi—where, in the Villa Buhlegg, they arranged for the summer at very moderate rates indeed. Weggis is a beautiful spot, looking across the blue water to Mount Pilatus, the lake shore dotted with white villages. Down by the water, but a few yards from the cottage—for it was scarcely a villa except by courtesy—there was a little inclosure, and a bench under a large tree, a quiet spot where Clemens often sat to rest and smoke. The fact is remembered there to-day, and recorded. A small tablet has engraved upon it "Mark Twain Ruhe." Farther along the shore he discovered a neat, white cottage where some kindly working-people agreed to rent him an upper room for a study. It was a sunny room with windows looking out upon the lake, and he worked there steadily. To Twichell he wrote:

This is the charmingest place we have ever lived in for repose and restfulness, superb scenery whose beauty undergoes a perpetual change from one miracle to another, yet never runs short of fresh surprises and new inventions. We shall always come here for the summers if we can.

The others have climbed the Rigi, he says, and he expects to some day if Twichell will come and climb it with him. They had climbed it together during that summer vagabondage, nineteen years before.

He was full of enthusiasm over his work. To F. H. Skrine, in London, he wrote that he had four or five books all going at once, and his note-book contains two or three pages merely of titles of the stories he proposed to write.

But of the books begun that summer at Weggis none appears to have been completed. There still exists a bulky, half-finished manuscript about Tom and Huck, most of which was doubtless written at this time, and there is the tale already mentioned, the "dream" story; and another tale with a plot of intricate psychology and crime; still another with the burning title of "Hell-Fire Hotchkiss"—a, story of Hannibal life—and some short stories. Clemens appeared to be at this time out of tune with fiction. Perhaps his long book of travel had disqualified his invention. He realized that these various literary projects

were leading nowhere, and one after another he dropped them. The fact that proofs of the big book were coming steadily may also have interfered with his creative faculty.

Page 615

As was his habit, Clemens formed the acquaintance of a number of the native residents, and enjoyed talking to them about their business and daily affairs. They were usually proud and glad of these attentions, quick to see the humor of his remarks.

But there was an old watchmaker—an ‘Uhrmacher’ who remained indifferent. He would answer only in somber monosyllables, and he never smiled. Clemens at last brought the cheapest kind of a watch for repairs.

“Be very careful of this watch,” he said. “It is a fine one.”

The old man merely glared at him.

“It is not a valuable watch. It is a worthless watch.”

“But I gave six francs for it in Paris.”

“Still, it is a cheap watch,” was the unsmiling answer. Defeat waits somewhere for every conqueror.

Which recalls another instance, though of a different sort. On one of his many voyages to America, he was sitting on deck in a steamer-chair when two little girls stopped before him. One of them said, hesitatingly:

“Are you Mr. Mark Twain?”

“Why, yes, dear, they call me that.”

“Won’t you please say something funny?”

And for the life of him he couldn’t make the required remark.

In one of his letters to Twichell of that summer, Clemens wrote of the arrival there of the colored jubilee singers, always favorites of his, and of his great delight in them.

We went down to the village hotel & bought our tickets & entered the beer-hall, where a crowd of German & Swiss men & women sat grouped around tables with their beer-mugs in front of them—self-contained & unimpressible-looking people—an indifferent & unposted & disheartening audience—and up at the far end of the room sat the jubilees in a row. The singers got up & stood—the talking & glass-jingling went on. Then rose & swelled out above those common earthly sounds one of those rich chords, the secret of whose make only the jubilees possess, & a spell fell upon that house. It was fine to see the faces light up with the pleased wonder & surprise of it. No one was indifferent any more; & when the singers finished the camp was theirs. It was a triumph. It reminded me of Lancelot riding in Sir Kay’s armor, astonishing complacent knights who thought they had struck a soft thing. The jubilees sang a lot of pieces.

Arduous & painstaking cultivation has not diminished or artificialized their music, but on the contrary—to my surprise—has mightily reinforced its eloquence and beauty. Away back in the beginning—to my mind—their music made all other vocal music cheap; & that early notion is emphasized now. It is entirely beautiful to me; & it moves me infinitely more than any other music can. I think that in the jubilees & their songs America has produced the perfectest flower of the ages; & I wish it were a foreign product, so that she would worship it & lavish money on it & go properly crazy over

Page 616

it. Now, these countries are different: they would do all that if it were native. It is true they praise God, but that is merely a formality, & nothing in it; they open out their whole hearts to no foreigner.

As the first anniversary of Susy's death drew near the tension became very great. A gloom settled on the household, a shadow of restraint. On the morning of the 18th Clemens went early to his study. Somewhat later Mrs. Clemens put on her hat and wrap, and taking a small bag left the house. The others saw her go toward the steamer-landing, but made no inquiries as to her destination. They guessed that she would take the little boat that touched at the various points along the lake shore. This she did, in fact, with no particular plan as to where she would leave it. One of the landing-places seemed quiet and inviting, and there she went ashore, and taking a quiet room at a small inn spent the day in reading Susy's letters. It was evening when she returned, and her husband, lonely and anxious, was waiting for her at the landing. He had put in the day writing the beautiful poem, "In Memoriam," a strain lofty, tender, and dirge-like—liquidly musical, though irregular in form.—[Now included in the Uniform Edition.]

CXCIX

WINTER IN VIENNA

They remained two months in Weggis—until toward the end of September; thence to Vienna, by way of Innsbruck, in the Tyrol, "where the mountains seem more approachable than in Switzerland." Clara Clemens wished to study the piano under Leschetizky, and this would take them to Austria for the winter. Arriving at Vienna, they settled in the Hotel Metropole, on the banks of the Danube. Their rooms, a corner suite, looked out on a pretty green square, the Merzimplatz, and down on the Franz Josef quay. A little bridge crosses the river there, over which all kinds of life are continually passing. On pleasant days Clemens liked to stand on this bridge and watch the interesting phases of the Austrian capital. The Vienna humorist, Poetzl, quickly formed his acquaintance, and they sometimes stood there together. Once while Clemens was making some notes, Poetzl interested the various passers by asking each one—the errand-boy, the boot-black, the chestnut-vender, cabmen, and others—to guess who the stranger was and what he wanted. Most of them recognized him when their attention was called, for the newspapers had proudly heralded his arrival and his picture was widely circulated.

Clemens had scarcely arrived in Vienna, in fact, before he was pursued by photographers, journalists, and autograph-hunters. The Viennese were his fond admirers, and knowing how the world elsewhere had honored him they were determined not to be outdone. The 'Neues Wiener Tageblatt', a fortnight after his arrival, said:

Page 617

It is seldom that a foreign author has found such a hearty reception in Vienna as that accorded to Mark Twain, who not only has the reputation of being the foremost humorist in the whole civilized world, but one whose personality arouses everywhere a peculiar interest on account of the genuine American character which sways it.

He was the guest of honor at the Concordia Club soon after his arrival, and the great ones of Vienna assembled to do him honor. Charlemagne Tower, then American minister, was also one of the guests. Writers, diplomats, financiers, municipal officials, everybody in Vienna that was worth while, was there. Clemens gave them a surprise, for when Ferdinand Gross, Concordia president, introduced him first in English, then in German, Mark Twain made his reply wholly in the latter language.

The paper just quoted gives us a hint of the frolic and wassail of that old 'Festkneipe' when it says:

At 9 o'clock Mark Twain appeared in the salon, and amid a storm of applause took his seat at the head of the table. His characteristic shaggy and flowing mane of hair adorning a youthful countenance attracted the attention at once of all present. After a few formal convivial commonplaces the president of the Concordia, Mr. Ferdinand Gross, delivered an excellent address in English, which he wound up with a few German sentences. Then Mr. Tower was heard in praise of his august countryman. In the course of his remarks he said he could hardly find words enough to express his delight at the presence of the popular American. Then followed the greatest attraction of the evening, an impromptu speech by Mark Twain in the German language, which it is true he has not fully mastered, but which he nevertheless controls sufficiently well to make it difficult to detect any harsh foreign accent. He had entitled his speech, "Die Schrecken der Deutschen Sprache" (the terrors of the German language). At times he would interrupt himself in English and ask, with a stuttering smile, "How do you call this word in German" or "I only know that in mother-tongue." The Festkneipe lasted far into the morning hours.

It was not long after their arrival in Vienna that the friction among the unamalgamated Austrian states flamed into a general outbreak in the Austrian Reichsrath, or Imperial Parliament. We need not consider just what the trouble was. Any one wishing to know can learn from Mark Twain's article on the subject, for it is more clearly pictured there than elsewhere. It is enough to say here that the difficulty lay mainly between the Hungarian and German wings of the house; and in the midst of it Dr. Otto Lecher made his famous speech, which lasted twelve hours without a break, in order to hold the floor against the opposing forces. Clemens was in the gallery most of the time while that speech, with its riotous accompaniment, was in progress.—["When that house is legislating you can't tell it

Page 618

from artillery practice.” From Mark Twain’s report, “Stirring Times in Austria,” in Literary Essays,]—He was intensely interested. Nothing would appeal to him more than that, unless it should be some great astronomic or geologic change. He was also present somewhat later when a resolution was railroaded through which gave the chair the right to invoke the aid of the military, and he was there when the military arrived and took the insurgents in charge. It was a very great occasion, a “tremendous episode,” he says. The memory of it will outlast all the others that exist to-day. In the whole history of free parliament the like of it had been seen but three times before. It takes imposing place among the world’s unforgettable things. I think that in my lifetime I have not twice seen abiding history made before my eyes, but I know that I have seen it once.

Wild reports were sent to the American press; among them one that Mark Twain had been hustled out with the others, and that, having waved his handkerchief and shouted “Hoch die Deutschen!” he had been struck by an officer of the law. Of course nothing of the kind happened. The sergeant-at-arms, who came to the gallery where he sat, said to a friend who suggested that Clemens be allowed to remain:

“Oh, I know him very well. I recognize him by his pictures, and I should be very glad to let him stay, but I haven’t any choice because of the strictness of the order.”

Clemens, however, immediately ran across a London Times correspondent, who showed him the way into the first gallery, which it seems was not emptied, so he lost none of the exhibit.

Mark Twain’s report of the Austrian troubles, published in Harper’s Magazine the following March and now included with the Literary Essays, will keep that episode alive and important as literature when otherwise it would have been merely embalmed, and dimly remembered, as history.

It was during these exciting political times in Vienna that a representative of a New York paper wrote, asking for a Mark Twain interview. Clemens replied, giving him permission to call. When the reporter arrived Clemens was at work writing in bed, as was so much his habit. At the doorway the reporter paused, waiting for a summons to enter. The door was ajar and he heard Mrs. Clemens say:

“Youth, don’t you think it will be a little embarrassing for him, your being in bed?”

And he heard Mark Twain’s easy, gentle, deliberate voice reply:

“Why, Livy, if you think so, we might have the other bed made up for him.”

Clemens became a privileged character in Vienna. Official rules were modified for his benefit. Everything was made easy for him. Once, on a certain grand occasion, when

nobody was permitted to pass beyond a prescribed line, he was stopped by a guard, when the officer in charge suddenly rode up:

“Let him pass,” he commanded. “Lieber Gott! Don’t you see it’s Herr Mark Twain?”

Page 619

The Clemens apartments at the Metropole were like a court, where with those of social rank assembled the foremost authors, journalists, diplomats, painters, philosophers, scientists, of Europe, and therefore of the world. A sister of the Emperor of Germany lived at the Metropole that winter and was especially cordial. Mark Twain's daily movements were chronicled as if he had been some visiting potentate, and, as usual, invitations and various special permissions poured in. A Vienna paper announced:

He has been feted and dined from morn till eve. The homes of the aristocracy are thrown open to him, counts and princes delight to do him honor, and foreign audiences hang upon the words that fall from his lips, ready to burst out any instant into roars of laughter.

Deaths never came singly in the Clemens family. It was on the 11th of December, 1897, something more than a year after the death of Susy, that Orion Clemens died, at the age of seventy-two. Orion had remained the same to the end, sensitively concerned as to all his brother's doings, his fortunes and misfortunes: soaring into the clouds when any good news came; indignant, eager to lend help and advice in the hour of defeat; loyal, upright, and generally beloved by those who knew and understood his gentle nature. He had not been ill, and, in fact, only a few days before he died had written a fine congratulatory letter on his brother's success in accumulating means for the payment of his debts, entering enthusiastically into some literary plans which Mark Twain then had in prospect, offering himself for caricature if needed.

I would fit in as a fool character, believing, what the Tennessee mountaineers predicted, that I would grow up to be a great man and go to Congress. I did not think it worth the trouble to be a common great man like Andy Johnson. I wouldn't give a pinch of snuff, little as I needed it, to be anybody, less than Napoleon. So when a farmer took my father's offer for some chickens under advisement till the next day I said to myself, "Would Napoleon Bonaparte have taken under advisement till the next day an offer to sell him some chickens?"

To his last day and hour Orion was the dreamer, always with a new plan. It was one morning early that he died. He had seated himself at a table with pencil and paper and was setting down the details of his latest project when death came to him, kindly enough, in the moment of new hope.

There came also, just then, news of the death of their old Hartford butler, George. It saddened them as if it had been a member of the household. Jean, especially, wept bitterly.

CC

MARK TWAIN PAYS HIS DEBTS

'Following the Equator'—[In England, *More Tramps Abroad*.]—had come from the press in November and had been well received. It was a large, elaborate subscription volume, more elaborate than artistic in appearance. Clemens, wishing to make some acknowledgment to his benefactor, tactfully dedicated it to young Harry Rogers:

Page 620

“With recognition of what he is, and an apprehension of what he may become unless he form himself a little more closely upon the model of the author.”

Following the *Equator* was Mark Twain’s last book of travel, and it did not greatly resemble its predecessors. It was graver than the *Innocents Abroad*; it was less inclined to cynicism and burlesque than the *Tramp*. It was the thoughtful, contemplative observation and philosophizing of the soul-weary, world-weary pilgrim who has by no means lost interest, but only his eager, first enthusiasm. It is a gentler book than the *Tramp Abroad*, and for the most part a pleasanter one. It is better history and more informing. Its humor, too, is of a worthier sort, less likely to be forced and overdone. The holy Hindoo pilgrim’s “itinerary of salvation” is one of the richest of all Mark Twain’s fancies, and is about the best thing in the book. The revised philosophies of Pudd’nhead Wilson, that begin each chapter, have many of them passed into our daily speech. That some of Mark Twain’s admirers were disappointed with the new book is very likely, but there were others who could not praise it enough. James Whitcomb Riley wrote:

Dear Mr. Clemens,—For a solid week-night sessions—I have been glorying in your last book-and if you’ve ever done anything better, stronger, or of wholesomer uplift I can’t recall it. So here’s my heart and here’s my hand with all the augmented faith and applause of your proudest countryman! It’s just a hail I’m sending you across the spaces—not to call you from your blessed work an instant, but simply to join my voice in the universal cheer that is steadfastly going up for you.

As gratefully as delightedly,
Your abiding friend,
James Whitcomb Riley.

Notwithstanding the belief that the sale of single subscription volumes had about ended, Bliss did well with the new book. Thirty or forty thousand copies were placed without much delay, and the accumulated royalties paid into Mr. Rogers’s hands. The burden of debt had become a nightmare. Clemens wrote:

Let us begin on those debts. I cannot bear the weight any longer. It totally unfits me for work.

This was November 10, 1897. December 29th he wrote:

Land, we are glad to see those debts diminishing. For the first time in my life I am getting more pleasure from paying money out than pulling it in.

To Howells, January 3d, Clemens wrote that they had “turned the corner,” and a month later:



We've lived close to the bone and saved every cent we could, & there's no undisputed claim now that we can't cash. There are only two claims which I dispute & which I mean to look into personally before I pay them. But they are small. Both together they amount to only \$12,500. I hope you will never get the like of the load saddled onto you that was saddled onto me 3 years ago. And yet there is such a solid pleasure in paying the things that I reckon maybe it is worth while to get into that kind of a hobble after all. Mrs. Clemens gets millions of delight out of it; & the children have never uttered one complaint about the scrimping from the beginning.

Page 621

By the end of January, 1898, Mark Twain had accumulated enough money to make the final payment to his creditors and stand clear of debt. At the time of his failure he said he had given himself five years in which to clear himself of the heavy obligation. He had achieved that result in less than three. The world heralded it as a splendid triumph.

Miss Katharine I. Harrison, Henry Rogers's secretary, who had been in charge of the details, wrote in her letter announcing his freedom:

"I wish I could shout it across the water to you so that you would get it ten days ahead of this letter."

Miss Harrison's letter shows that something like thirteen thousand dollars would remain to his credit after the last accounts were wiped away.

Clemens had kept his financial progress from the press, but the payment of the final claims was distinctly a matter of news and the papers made the most of it. Head-lines shouted it, there were long editorials in which Mark Twain was heralded as a second Walter Scott, though it was hardly necessary that he should be compared with anybody; he had been in that—as in those peculiarities which had invited his disaster—just himself.

One might suppose now that he had had enough of inventions and commercial enterprises of every sort that is, one who did not know Mark Twain might suppose this; but it would not be true. Within a month after the debts were paid he had negotiated with the great Austrian inventor, Szczepanik, and his business manager for the American rights of a wonderful carpet-pattern machine, obtained an option for these rights at fifteen hundred thousand dollars, and, Sellers-like, was planning to organize a company with a capital of fifteen hundred million dollars to control carpet-weaving industries of the world. He records in his note-book that a certain Mr. Wood, representing the American carpet interests, called upon him and, in the course of their conversation, asked him at what price he would sell his option.

I declined, and got away from the subject. I was afraid he would offer me \$500,000 for it. I should have been obliged to take it, but I was born with a speculative instinct & I did not want that temptation put in my way.

He wrote to Mr. Rogers about the great scheme, inviting the Standard Oil to furnish the capital for it—but it appears not to have borne the test of Mr. Rogers's scrutiny, and is heard of no more.

Szczepanik had invented the 'Fernseher', or Teleelectroscope, the machine by which one sees at a distance. Clemens would have invested heavily in this, too, for he had implicit faith in its future, but the 'Fernseher' was already controlled for the Paris Exposition; so he could only employ Szczepanik as literary material, which he did in two instances:

“The Austrian Edison Keeping School Again” and “From the London Times of 1904”—magazine articles published in the Century later in the year. He was fond of Szczepanik and Szczepanik’s backer, Mr. Kleinburg. In one of his note-book entries he says:

Page 622

Szczepanik is not a Paige. He is a gentleman; his backer, Mr. Kleinburg, is a gentleman, too, yet is not a Clemens—that is to say, he is not an ass.

Clemens did not always consult his financial adviser, Rogers, any more than he always consulted his spiritual adviser, Twichell, or his literary adviser, Howells, when he intended to commit heresies in their respective provinces. Somewhat later an opportunity came along to buy an interest in a preparation of skimmed milk, an invalid food by which the human race was going to be healed of most of its ills. When Clemens heard that Virchow had recommended this new restorative, the name of which was plasmon, he promptly provided MacAlister with five thousand pounds to invest in a company then organizing in London. It should be added that this particular investment was not an entire loss, for it paid very good dividends for several years. We shall hear of it again.

For the most part Clemens was content to let Henry Rogers do his financiering, and as the market was low with an upward incline, Rogers put the various accumulations into this thing and that, and presently had some fifty thousand dollars to Mark Twain's credit, a very comfortable balance for a man who had been twice that amount in debt only a few years before. It has been asserted most strenuously, by those in a position to know least about the matter, that Henry Rogers lent, and even gave, Mark Twain large sums, and pointed out opportunities whereby he could make heavily by speculation. No one of these statements is true. Mr. Rogers neither lent nor gave Mark Twain money for investment, and he never allowed him to speculate when he could prevent it. He invested for him wisely, but he never bought for him a share of stock that he did not have the money in hand to pay for in full—money belonging to and earned by Clemens himself. What he did give to Mark Twain was his priceless counsel and time—gifts more precious than any mere sum of money—boons that Mark Twain could accept without humiliation. He did accept them and was unceasingly grateful.—[Mark Twain never lost an opportunity for showing his gratitude to Henry Rogers. The reader is referred to Appendix T, at the end of the last volume, for a brief tribute which Clemens prepared in 1902. Mr. Rogers would not consent to its publication.]

CCI

SOCIAL LIFE IN VIENNA

Clemens, no longer worried about finances and full of ideas and prospects, was writing now at a great rate, mingling with all sorts of social events, lecturing for charities, and always in the lime-light.

I have abundant peace of mind again—no sense of burden. Work is become a pleasure—it is not labor any longer.

He was the lion of the Austrian capital, and it was natural that he should revel in his new freedom and in the universal tribute. Mrs. Clemens wrote that they were besieged with callers of every description:

Page 623

Such funny combinations are here sometimes: one duke, several counts, several writers, several barons, two princes, newspaper women, *etc.* I find so far, without exception, that the high-up aristocracy are simple and cordial and agreeable.

When Clemens appeared as a public entertainer all society turned out to hear him and introductions were sought by persons of the most exclusive rank. Once a royal introduction led to an adventure. He had been giving a charity reading in Vienna, and at the end of it was introduced, with Mrs. Clemens, to her Highness, Countess Bardi, a princess of the Portuguese royal house by marriage and sister to the Austrian Archduchess Maria Theresa. They realized that something was required after such an introduction; that, in fact, they must go within a day or two and pay their respects by writing their names in the visitors' book, kept in a sort of anteroom of the royal establishment. A few days later, about noon, they drove to the archducal palace, inquired their way to the royal anteroom, and informed the grandly uniformed portier that they wished to write their names in the visitors' book. The portier did not produce the book, but summoned a man in livery and gold lace and directed him to take them up-stairs, remarking that her Royal Highness was out, but would be in presently. They protested that her Royal Highness was not looking for them, that they were not calling, but had merely come to sign the visitors' book, but he said:

"You are Americans, are you not?"

"Yes, we are Americans."

"Then you are expected. Please go up-stairs."

Mrs. Clemens said:

"Oh no, we are not expected; there is some mistake. Please let us sign the book and we will go away."

But it was no use. He insisted that her Royal Highness would be back in a very little while; that she had commanded him to say so and that they must wait. They were shown up-stairs, Clemens going willingly enough, for he scented an adventure; but Mrs. Clemens was far from happy. They were taken to a splendid drawing-room, and at the doorway she made her last stand, refusing to enter. She declared that there was certainly some mistake, and begged them to let her sign her name in the book and go, without parleying. It was no use. Their conductor insisted that they remove their wraps and sit down, which they finally did—Mrs. Clemens miserable, her husband in a delightful state of anticipation. Writing of it to Twichell that night he said:

I was hoping and praying that the Princess would come and catch us up there, & that those other Americans who were expected would arrive and be taken as impostors by the portier & be shot by the sentinels & then it would all go into the papers & be cabled

all over the world & make an immense stir and be perfectly lovely. Livy was in a state of mind; she said it was too theatrically ridiculous & that I would never be able to keep my mouth shut; that I would be sure to let it out & it would get into the papers, & she tried to make me promise.

“Promise what?” I said.

Page 624

"To be quiet about this."

"Indeed I won't; it's the best thing ever happened. I'll tell it and add to it & I wish Joe & Howells were here to make it perfect; I can't make all the rightful blunders by myself—it takes all three of us to do justice to an opportunity like this. I would just like to see Howells get down to his work & explain & lie & work his futile & inventionless subterfuges when that Princess comes raging in here & wanting to know." But Livy could not hear fun—it was not a time to be trying to be funny. We were in a most miserable & shameful situation, & it —Just then the door spread wide & our Princess & 4 more & 3 little Princes flowed in! Our Princess & her sister, the Archduchess Maria Theresa (mother to the imperial heir & to the a young girl Archduchesses present, & aunt to the 3 little Princes), & we shook hands all around & sat down & had a most sociable time for half an hour, & by & by it turned out that we were the right ones & had been sent for by a messenger who started too late to catch us at the hotel. We were invited for a o'clock, but we beat that arrangement by an hour & a half. Wasn't it a rattling good comedy situation? Seems a kind of pity we were the right ones. It would have been such nuts to see the right ones come and get fired out, & we chatting along comfortably & nobody suspecting us for impostors.

Mrs. Clemens to Mrs. Crane:

Of course I know that I should have courtesied to her Imperial Majesty & not quite so deep to her Royal Highness, and that Mr. Clemens should have kissed their hands; but it was all so unexpected that I had no time to prepare, and if I had had I should not have been there; I only went in to help Mr. C. with my bad German. When our minister's wife is going to be presented to the Archduchess she practises her courtesying beforehand.

They had met royalty in simple American fashion and no disaster had followed.

We have already made mention of the distinguished visitors who gathered in the Clemens apartments at the Hotel Metropole. They were of many nations and ranks. It was the winter in London of twenty-five years before over again. Only Mark Twain was not the same. Then he had been unsophisticated, new, not always at his ease; now he was the polished familiar of courts and embassies—at home equally with poets and princes, authors and ambassadors and kings. Such famous ones were there as Vereshchagin, Leschetizky, Mark Hambourg, Dvorak, Lenbach, and Jokai, with diplomats of many nations. A list of foreign names may mean little to the American reader, but among them were Neigra, of Italy; Paraty, of Portugal; Lowenhaupt, of Sweden; and Ghiki, of Rumania. The Queen of Rumania, Carmen Sylva, a poetess in her own right, was a friend and warm admirer of Mark Twain. The Princess Metternich, and Madame de Laschowska, of Poland, were among those who came, and there were Nansen and his wife, and Campbell-Bannerman, who was afterward British Premier. Also there was Spiridon, the painter, who made portraits of Clara Clemens and her father, and other artists and potentates—the list is too long.

Page 625

Those were brilliant, notable gatherings and are remembered in Vienna today. They were not always entirely harmonious, for politics was in the air and differences of opinion were likely to be pretty freely expressed.

Clemens and his family, as Americans, did not always have a happy time of it. It was the eve of the Spanish American War and most of continental Europe sided with Spain. Austria, in particular, was friendly to its related nation; and from every side the Clemenses heard how America was about to take a brutal and unfair advantage of a weaker nation for the sole purpose of annexing Cuba.

Charles Langdon and his son Jervis happened to arrive in Vienna about this time, bringing straight from America the comforting assurance that the war was not one of conquest or annexation, but a righteous defense of the weak. Mrs. Clemens gave a dinner for them, at which, besides some American students, were Mark Hambourg, Gabrilowitsch, and the great Leschetizky himself. Leschetizky, an impetuous and eloquent talker, took this occasion to inform the American visitors that their country was only shamming, that Cuba would soon be an American dependency. No one not born to the language could argue with Leschetizky. Clemens once wrote of him:

He is a most capable and felicitous talker—was born for an orator, I think. What life, energy, fire in a man past 70! & how he does play! He is easily the greatest pianist in the world. He is just as great & just as capable today as ever he was.

Last Sunday night, at dinner with us, he did all the talking for 3 hours, and everybody was glad to let him. He told his experiences as a revolutionist 50 years ago in '48, & his battle-pictures were magnificently worded. Poetzi had never met him before. He is a talker himself & a good one—but he merely sat silent & gazed across the table at this inspired man, & drank in his words, & let his eyes fill & the blood come & go in his face & never said a word.

Whatever may have been his doubts in the beginning concerning the Cuban War, Mark Twain, by the end of May, had made up his mind as to its justice. When Theodore Stanton invited him to the Decoration Day banquet to be held in Paris, he replied:

I thank you very much for your invitation and I would accept if I were foot-free. For I should value the privilege of helping you do honor to the men who rewelded our broken Union and consecrated their great work with their lives; and also I should like to be there to do, homage to our soldiers and sailors of today who are enlisted for another most righteous war, and utter the hope that they may make short and decisive work of it and leave Cuba free and fed when they face for home again. And finally I should like to be present and see you interweave those two flags which, more than any others, stand for freedom and progress in the earth—flags which represent two kindred nations, each great and strong by itself, competent sureties for the peace of the world when they stand together.

Page 626

That is to say, the flags of England and America. To an Austrian friend he emphasized this thought:

The war has brought England and America close together—and to my mind that is the biggest dividend that any war in this world has ever paid. If this feeling is ever to grow cold again I do not wish to live to see it.

And to Twichell, whose son David had enlisted:

You are living your war-days over again in Dave & it must be strong pleasure mixed with a sauce of apprehension

I have never enjoyed a war, even in history, as I am enjoying this one, for this is the worthiest one that was ever fought, so far as my knowledge goes. It is a worthy thing to fight for one's own country. It is another sight finer to fight for another man's. And I think this is the first time it has been done.

But it was a sad day for him when he found that the United States really meant to annex the Philippines, and his indignation flamed up. He said:

"When the United States sent word to Spain that the Cuban atrocities must end she occupied the highest moral position ever taken by a nation since the Almighty made the earth. But when she snatched the Philippines she stained the flag."

CCII

LITERARY WORK IN VIENNA

One must wonder, with all the social demands upon him, how Clemens could find time to write as much as he did during those Vienna days. He piled up a great heap of manuscript of every sort. He wrote Twichell:

There may be idle people in the world, but I am not one of them.

And to Howells:

I couldn't get along without work now. I bury myself in it up to the ears. Long hours—8 & 9 on a stretch sometimes. It isn't all for print, by any means, for much of it fails to suit me; 50,000 words of it in the past year. It was because of the deadness which invaded me when Susy died.

He projected articles, stories, critiques, essays, novels, autobiography, even plays; he covered the whole literary round. Among these activities are some that represent Mark Twain's choicest work. "Concerning the Jews," which followed the publication of his

“Stirring Times in Austria” (grew out of it, in fact), still remains the best presentation of the Jewish character and racial situation. Mark Twain was always an ardent admirer of the Jewish race, and its oppression naturally invited his sympathy. Once he wrote to Twichell:

The difference between the brain of the average Christian and that of the average Jew—certainly in Europe—is about the difference between a tadpole’s brain & an archbishop’s. It is a marvelous race; by long odds the most marvelous race the world has produced, I suppose.

Yet he did not fail to see its faults and to set them down in his summary of Hebrew character. It was a reply to a letter written to him by a lawyer, and he replied as a lawyer might, compactly, logically, categorically, conclusively. The result pleased him. To Mr. Rogers he wrote:

Page 627

The Jew article is my “gem of the ocean.” I have taken a world of pleasure in writing it & doctoring it & fussing at it. Neither Jew nor Christian will approve of it, but people who are neither Jews nor Christian will, for they are in a condition to know the truth when they see it.

Clemens was not given to race distinctions. In his article he says:

I am quite sure that (bar one) I have no race prejudices, and I think I have no color prejudices nor caste prejudices nor creed prejudices. Indeed I know it. I can stand any society. All that I care to know is that a man is a human being, that is enough for me; he can't be any worse.

We gather from something that follows that the one race which he bars is the French, and this, just then, mainly because of the Dreyfus agitations.

He also states in this article:

I have no special regard for Satan, but I can at least claim that I have no prejudice against him. It may even be that I lean a little his way on account of his not having a fair show.

Clemens indeed always had a friendly feeling toward Satan (at least, as he conceived him), and just at this time addressed a number of letters to him concerning affairs in general—cordial, sympathetic, informing letters enough, though apparently not suited for publication. A good deal of the work done at this period did not find its way into print. An interview with Satan; a dream-story concerning a platonic sweetheart, and some further comment on Austrian politics, are among the condemned manuscripts.

Mark Twain's interest in Satan would seem later to have extended to his relatives, for there are at least three bulky manuscripts in which he has attempted to set down some episodes in the life of one “Young Satan,” a nephew, who appears to have visited among the planets and promoted some astonishing adventures in Austria several centuries ago. The idea of a mysterious, young, and beautiful stranger who would visit the earth and perform mighty wonders, was always one which Mark Twain loved to play with, and a nephew of Satan's seemed to him properly qualified to carry out his intention. His idea was that this celestial visitant was not wicked, but only indifferent to good and evil and suffering, having no personal knowledge of any of these things. Clemens tried the experiment in various ways, and portions of the manuscript are absorbingly interesting, lofty in conception, and rarely worked out—other portions being merely grotesque, in which the illusion of reality vanishes.

Among the published work of the Vienna period is an article about a morality play, the “Master of Palmyra,”—[About play-acting, Forum, October, 1898.]—by Adolf Wilbrandt, an impressive play presenting Death, the all-powerful, as the principal part.

The Cosmopolitan Magazine for August published “At the Appetite-Cure,” in which Mark Twain, in the guise of humor, set forth a very sound and sensible idea concerning dietetics, and in October the same magazine published his first article on “Christian Science and the Book of Mrs. Eddy.” As we have seen, Clemens had been always deeply interested in mental healing, and in closing this humorous skit he made due acknowledgments to the unseen forces which, properly employed, through the imagination work physical benefits:

Page 628

“Within the last quarter of a century,” he says, “in America, several sects of curers have appeared under various names and have done notable things in the way of healing ailments without the use of medicines.”

Clemens was willing to admit that Mrs. Eddy and her book had benefited humanity, but he could not resist the fun-making which certain of her formulas and her phrasing invited. The delightful humor of the *Cosmopolitan* article awoke a general laugh, in which even devout Christian Scientists were inclined to join.—[It was so popular that John Brisben Walker voluntarily added a check for two hundred dollars to the eight hundred dollars already paid.]—Nothing that he ever did exhibits more happily that peculiar literary gift upon which his fame rests.

But there is another story of this period that will live when most of those others mentioned are but little remembered. It is the story of “The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg.” This is a tale that in its own way takes its place with the half-dozen great English short stories of the world—with such stories as “The Fall of the House of Usher,” by Poe; “The Luck of Roaring Camp,” by Harte; “The Man Who Would be King,” by Kipling; and “The Man Without a Country,” by Hale. As a study of the human soul, its flimsy pretensions and its pitiful frailties, it outranks all the rest. In it Mark Twain’s pessimistic philosophy concerning the “human animal” found a free and moral vent. Whatever his contempt for a thing, he was always amused at it; and in this tale we can imagine him a gigantic Pantagruel dangling a ridiculous manikin, throwing himself back and roaring out his great bursting guffaws at its pitiful antics. The temptation and the downfall of a whole town was a colossal idea, a sardonic idea, and it is colossally and sardonically worked out.

Human weakness and rotten moral force were never stripped so bare or so mercilessly jeered at in the marketplace. For once Mark Twain could hug himself with glee in derision of self-righteousness, knowing that the world would laugh with him, and that none would be so bold as to gainsay his mockery. Probably no one but Mark Twain ever conceived the idea of demoralizing a whole community—of making its “nineteen leading citizens” ridiculous by leading them into a cheap, glittering temptation, and having them yield and openly perjure themselves at the very moment when their boasted incorruptibility was to amaze the world. And it is all wonderfully done. The mechanism of the story is perfect, the drama of it is complete. The exposure of the nineteen citizens in the very sanctity of the church itself, and by the man they have discredited, completing the carefully prepared revenge of the injured stranger, is supreme in its artistic triumph. “The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg” is one of the mightiest sermons against self-righteousness ever preached. Its philosophy, that every man is strong until his price is named; the futility of the prayer not to be led into temptation, when it is only by resisting temptation that men grow strong—these things blaze out in a way that makes us fairly blink with the truth of them.

Page 629

It is Mark Twain's greatest short story. It is fine that it should be that, as well as much more than that; for he was no longer essentially a story-teller. He had become more than ever a moralist and a sage. Having seen all of the world, and richly enjoyed and deeply suffered at its hands, he sat now as in a seat of judgment, regarding the passing show and recording his philosophies.

CCIII

AN IMPERIAL TRAGEDY

For the summer they went to Kaltenleutgeben, just out of Vienna, where they had the Villa Paulhof, and it was while they were there, September 10, 1898, that the Empress Elizabeth of Austria was assassinated at Geneva by an Italian vagabond, whose motive seemed to have been to gain notoriety. The news was brought to them one evening, just at supper-time, by Countess Wydenbouck-Esterhazy.

Clemens wrote to Twichell:

That good & unoffending lady, the Empress, is killed by a madman, & I am living in the midst of world-history again. The Queen's Jubilee last year, the invasion of the Reichsrath by the police, & now this murder, which will still be talked of & described & painted a thousand years from now. To have a personal friend of the wearer of two crowns burst in at the gate in the deep dusk of the evening & say, in a voice broken with tears, "My God! the Empress is murdered," & fly toward her home before we can utter a question—why, it brings the giant event home to you, makes you a part of it & personally interested; it is as if your neighbor Antony should come flying & say, "Caesar is butchered—the head of the world is fallen!"

Of course there is no talk but of this. The mourning is universal and genuine, the consternation is stupefying. The Austrian Empire is being draped with black. Vienna will be a spectacle to see by next Saturday, when the funeral cortege marches.

Clemens and the others went into Vienna for the funeral ceremonies and witnessed them from the windows of the new Krantz Hotel, which faces the Capuchin church where the royal dead lie buried. It was a grandly impressive occasion, a pageant of uniforms of the allied nations that made up the Empire of Austria. Clemens wrote of it at considerable length, and sent the article to Mr. Rogers to offer to the magazines. Later, however, he recalled it just why is not clear. In one place he wrote:

Twice the Empress entered Vienna in state; the first time was in 1854, when she was a bride of seventeen, & when she rode in measureless pomp through a world of gay flags & decorations down the streets, walled on both hands with the press of shouting & welcoming subjects; & the second time was last Wednesday, when she entered the city



in her coffin, & moved down the same streets in the dead of night under waving black flags, between human walls again, but everywhere was a deep stillness now & a stillness emphasized rather

Page 630

than broken by the muffled hoofbeats of the long cavalcade over pavements cushioned with sand, & the low sobbing of gray-headed women who had witnessed the first entrance, forty-four years before, when she & they were young & unaware.... She was so blameless—the Empress; & so beautiful in mind & heart, in person & spirit; & whether with the crown upon her head, or without it & nameless, a grace to the human race, almost a justification of its creation; would be, indeed, but that the animal that struck her down re-establishes the doubt.

They passed a quiet summer at Kaltenleutgeben. Clemens wrote some articles, did some translating of German plays, and worked on his “Gospel,” an elaboration of his old essay on contenting one’s soul through selfishness, later to be published as ‘What is Man?’ A. C. Dunham and Rev. Dr. Parker, of Hartford, came to Vienna, and Clemens found them and brought them out to Kaltenleutgeben and read them chapters of his doctrines, which, he said, Mrs. Clemens would not let him print. Dr. Parker and Dunham returned to Hartford and reported Mark Twain more than ever a philosopher; also that he was the “center of notability and his house a court.”

CCIV

THE SECOND WINTER IN VIENNA

The Clemens family did not return to the Metropole for the winter, but went to the new Krantz, already mentioned, where they had a handsome and commodious suite looking down on the Neuer Markt and on the beautiful facade of the Capuchin church, with the great cathedral only a step away. There they passed another brilliant and busy winter. Never in Europe had they been more comfortably situated; attention had been never more lavishly paid to them. Their drawing-room was a salon which acquired the name of the “Second Embassy.” Clemens in his note-book wrote:

During 8 years now I have filled the position—with some credit, I trust, of self-appointed ambassador-at-large of the United States of America —without salary.

Which was a joke; but there was a large grain of truth in it, for Mark Twain, more than any other American in Europe, was regarded as typically representing his nation and received more lavish honors.

It had become the fashion to consult him on every question of public interest, for he was certain to say something worth printing, whether seriously or otherwise. When the Tsar of Russia proposed the disarmament of the nations William T. Stead, editor of the Review of Reviews, wrote for Mark Twain’s opinion. He replied:



Dear Mr. Steady,—The Tsar is ready to disarm. I am ready to disarm. Collect the others; it should not be much of a task now.

Marktwain.

Page 631

He was on a tide of prosperity once more, one that was to continue now until the end. He no longer had any serious financial qualms. He could afford to be independent. He refused ten thousand dollars for a tobacco indorsement, though he liked the tobacco well enough; and he was aware that even royalty was willing to put a value on its opinions. He declined ten thousand dollars a year for five years to lend his name as editor of a humorous periodical, though there was no reason to suppose that the paper would be otherwise than creditably conducted. He declined lecture propositions from Pond at the rate of about one a month. He could get along without these things, he said, and still preserve some remnants of self-respect. In a letter to Rogers he said:

Pond offers me \$10,000 for 10 nights, but I do not feel strongly tempted. Mrs. Clemens ditto.

Early in 1899 he wrote to Howells that Mrs. Clemens had proved to him that they owned a house and furniture in Hartford, that his English and American copyrights paid an income on the equivalent of two hundred thousand dollars, and that they had one hundred and seven thousand dollars' accumulation in the bank.

"I have been out and bought a box of 6c. cigars," he says; "I was smoking 4 1/2c. before."

The things that men are most likely to desire had come to Mark Twain, and no man was better qualified to rejoice in them. That supreme, elusive thing which we call happiness might have been his now but for the tragedy of human bereavement and the torture of human ills. That he did rejoice—reveled indeed like a boy in his new fortunes, the honors paid him, and in all that gay Viennese life—there is no doubt. He could wave aside care and grief and remorse, forget their very existence, it seemed; but in the end he had only driven them ahead a little way and they waited by his path. Once, after reciting his occupations and successes, he wrote:

All these things might move and interest one. But how, desperately more I have been moved to-night by the thought of a little old copy in the nursery of 'At the Back of the North Wind'. Oh, what happy days they were when that book was read, and how Susy loved it!... Death is so kind, benignant, to whom he loves, but he goes by us others & will not look our way.

And to Twichell a few days later:

A Hartford with no Susy in it—& no Ned Bunce!—It is not the city of Hartford, it is the city of Heartbreak.... It seems only a few weeks since I saw Susy last—yet that was 1895 & this is 1899....

My work does not go well to-day. It failed yesterday—& the day before & the day before that. And so I have concluded to put the *Ms.* in the waste-basket & meddle with some

other subject. I was trying to write an article advocating the quadrupling of the salaries of our ministers & ambassadors, & the devising of an official dress for them to wear.

Page 632

It seems an easy theme, yet I couldn't do the thing to my satisfaction. All I got out of it was an article on Monaco & Monte Carlo—matters not connected with the subject at all. Still, that was something—it's better than a total loss.

He finished the article—"Diplomatic Pay and Clothes"—in which he shows how absurd it is for America to expect proper representation on the trifling salaries paid to her foreign ministers, as compared with those allowed by other nations.

He prepared also a reminiscent article—the old tale of the shipwrecked Hornet and the magazine article intended as his literary debut a generation ago. Now and again he worked on some one of the several unfinished longer tales, but brought none of them to completion. The German drama interested him. Once he wrote to Mr. Rogers that he had translated "In Purgatory" and sent it to Charles Frohman, who pronounced it "all jabber and no play."

Curious, too, for it tears these Austrians to pieces with laughter. When I read it, now, it seems entirely silly; but when I see it on the stage it is exceedingly funny.

He undertook a play for the Burg Theater, a collaboration with a Vienna journalist, Siegmund Schlesinger. Schlesinger had been successful with several dramas, and agreed with Clemens to do some plays dealing with American themes. One of them was to be called "Die Goldgräberin," that is, "The Woman Gold-Miner." Another, "The Rival Candidates," was to present the humors of female suffrage. Schlesinger spoke very little English, and Clemens always had difficulty in comprehending rapid-fire German. So the work did not progress very well. By the time they had completed a few scenes of mining-drama the interest died, and they good-naturedly agreed that it would be necessary to wait until they understood each other's language more perfectly before they could go on with the project. Frau Kati Schratt, latermorganatic wife of Emperor Franz Josef, but then leading comedienne of the Burg Theater, is said to have been cast for the leading part in the mining-play; and Director-General Herr Schlenther, head of the Burg Theater management, was deeply disappointed. He had never doubted that a play built by Schlesinger and Mark Twain, with Frau Schratt in the leading role, would have been a great success.

Clemens continued the subject of Christian Science that winter. He wrote a number of articles, mainly criticizing Mrs. Eddy and her financial methods, and for the first time conceived the notion of a book on the subject. The new hierarchy not only amused but impressed him. He realized that it was no ephemeral propaganda, that its appeal to human need was strong, and that its system of organization was masterful and complete. To Twichell he wrote:

Somehow I continue to feel sure of that cult's colossal future.... I am selling my Lourdes stock already & buying Christian Science trust. I regard it as the Standard Oil of the future.

Page 633

He laid the article away for the time and, as was his custom, put the play quite out of his mind and invented a postal-check which would be far more simple than post-office orders, because one could buy them in any quantity and denomination and keep them on hand for immediate use, making them individually payable merely by writing in the name of the payee. It seems a fine, simple scheme, one that might have been adopted by the government long ago; but the idea has been advanced in one form or another several times since then, and still remains at this writing unadopted. He wrote John Hay about it, remarking at the close that the government officials would probably not care to buy it as soon as they found they couldn't kill Christians with it.

He prepared a lengthy article on the subject, in dialogue form, making it all very clear and convincing, but for some reason none of the magazines would take it. Perhaps it seemed too easy, too simple, too obvious. Great ideas, once developed, are often like that.

CCV

SPEECHES THAT WERE NOT MADE

In a volume of Mark Twain's collected speeches there is one entitled "German for the Hungarians—Address at the jubilee Celebration of the Emancipation of the Hungarian Press, March 26, 1899." An introductory paragraph states that the ministers and members of Parliament were present, and that the subject was the "Ausgleich"—i.e., the arrangement for the apportionment of the taxes between Hungary and Austria. The speech as there set down begins:

Now that we are all here together I think that it will be a good idea to arrange the Ausgleich. If you will act for Hungary I shall be quite willing to act for Austria, and this is the very time for it.

It is an excellent speech, full of good-feeling and good-humor, but it was never delivered. It is only a speech that Mark Twain intended to deliver, and permitted to be copied by a representative of the press before he started for Budapest.

It was a grand dinner, brilliant and inspiring, and when, Mark Twain was presented to that distinguished company he took a text from something the introducer had said and became so interested in it that his prepared speech wholly disappeared from his memory.

I think I will never embarrass myself with a set speech again [he wrote Twichell]. My memory is old and rickety and cannot stand the strain. But I had this luck. What I did was to furnish a text for a part of the splendid speech which was made by the greatest living orator of the European world—a speech which it was a great delight to listen to,

although I did not understand any word of it, it being in Hungarian. I was glad I came, it was a great night, & I heard all the great men in the German tongue.

The family accompanied Clemens to Budapest, and while there met Franz, son of Louis Kossuth, and dined with him.

Page 634

I assure you [wrote Mrs. Clemens] that I felt stirred, and I kept saying to myself “This is Louis Kossuth’s son.” He came to our room one day, and we had quite a long and a very pleasant talk together. He is a man one likes immensely. He has a quiet dignity about him that is very winning. He seems to be a man highly esteemed in Hungary. If I am not mistaken, the last time I saw the old picture of his father it was hanging in a room that we turned into a music-room for Susy at the farm.

They were most handsomely treated in Budapest. A large delegation greeted them on arrival, and a carriage and attendants were placed continually at their disposal. They remained several days, and Clemens showed his appreciation by giving a reading for charity.

It was hinted to Mark Twain that spring, that before leaving Vienna, it would be proper for him to pay his respects to Emperor Franz Josef, who had expressed a wish to meet him. Clemens promptly complied with the formalities and the meeting was arranged. He had a warm admiration for the Austrian Emperor, and naturally prepared himself a little for what he wanted to say to him. He claimed afterward that he had compacted a sort of speech into a single German sentence of eighteen words. He did not make use of it, however. When he arrived at the royal palace and was presented, the Emperor himself began in such an entirely informal way that it did no occur to his visitor to deliver his prepared German sentence. When he returned from the audience he said:

“We got along very well. I proposed to him a plan to exterminate the human race by withdrawing the oxygen from the air for a period of two minutes. I said Szczepanik would invent it for him. I think it impressed him. After a while, in the course of our talk I remembered and told the Emperor I had prepared and memorized a very good speech but had forgotten it. He was very agreeable about it. He said a speech wasn’t necessary. He seemed to be a most kind-hearted emperor, with a great deal of plain, good, attractive human nature about him. Necessarily he must have or he couldn’t have unbent to me as he did. I couldn’t unbend if I were an emperor. I should feel the stiffness of the position. Franz Josef doesn’t feel it. He is just a natural man, although an emperor. I was greatly impressed by him, and I liked him exceedingly. His face is always the face of a pleasant man and he has a fine sense of humor. It is the Emperor’s personality and the confidence all ranks have in him that preserve the real political serenity in what has an outside appearance of being the opposite. He is a man as well as an emperor—an emperor and a man.”

Clemens and Howells were corresponding with something of the old-time frequency. The work that Mark Twain was doing—thoughtful work with serious intent—appealed strongly to Howells. He wrote:

Page 635

You are the greatest man of your sort that ever lived, and there is no use saying anything else You have pervaded your century almost more than any other man of letters, if not more; and it is astonishing how you keep spreading You are my “shadow of a great rock in a weary land” more than any other writer.

Clemens, who was reading Howells’s serial, “Their Silver-Wedding journey,” then running in Harper’s Magazine, responded:

You are old enough to be a weary man with paling interests, but you do not show it; you do your work in the same old, delicate & delicious & forceful & searching & perfect way. I don’t know how you can—but I suspect. I suspect that to you there is still dignity in human life, & that man is not a joke—a poor joke—the poorest that was ever contrived. Since I wrote my Bible—[The “Gospel,” What is Man?](last year), which Mrs. Clemens loathes & shudders over & will not listen to the last half nor allow me to print any part of it, man is not to me the respect-worthy person he was before, & so I have lost my pride in him & can’t write gaily nor praisefully about him any moreNext morning. I have been reading the morning paper. I do it every morning—well knowing that I shall find in it the usual depravities & basenesses & hypocrisies and cruelties that make up civilization & cause me to put in the rest of the day pleading for the damnation of the human race. I cannot seem to get my prayers answered, yet I do not despair.

He was not greatly changed. Perhaps he had fewer illusions and less iridescent ones, and certainly he had more sorrow; but the letters to Howells do not vary greatly from those written twenty-five years before. There is even in them a touch of the old pretense as to Mrs. Clemens’s violence.

I mustn’t stop to play now or I shall never get those helfiard letters answered. (That is not my spelling. It is Mrs. Clemens’s, I have told her the right way a thousand times, but it does no good, she never remembers.)

All through this Vienna period (as during several years before and after) Henry Rogers was in full charge of Mark Twain’s American affairs. Clemens wrote him almost daily, and upon every matter, small or large, that developed, or seemed likely to develop, in his undertakings. The complications growing out of the type machine and Webster failures were endless.—[“I hope to goodness I sha’n’t get you into any more jobs such as the type-setter and Webster business and the Bliss-Harper campaigns have been. Oh, they were sickeners.” (Clemens to Rogers, November 15, 1898.)]—The disposal of the manuscripts alone was work for a literary agent. The consideration of proposed literary, dramatic, and financial schemes must have required not only thought, but time. Yet Mr. Rogers comfortably and genially took care of all these things and his own tremendous affairs besides, and apologized sometimes when he felt, perhaps, that he had wavered a little in his attention. Clemens once wrote him:

Page 636

Oh, dear me, you don't have to excuse yourself for neglecting me; you are entitled to the highest praise for being so limitlessly patient and good in bothering with my confused affairs, and pulling me out of a hole every little while. It makes me lazy, the way that Steel stock is rising. If I were lazier—like Rice—nothing could keep me from retiring. But I work right along, like a poor person. I shall figure up the rise, as the figures come in, and push up my literary prices accordingly, till I get my literature up to where nobody can afford it but the family. (N. B.—Look here, are you charging storage? I am not going to stand that, you know.) Meantime, I note those encouraging illogical words of yours about my not worrying because I am to be rich when I am 68; why didn't you have Cheiro make it 90, so that I could have plenty of room? It would be jolly good if some one should succeed in making a play out of "Is He Dead?"—[Clemens himself had attempted to make a play out of his story "Is He Dead?" and had forwarded the *Ms.* to Rogers. Later he wrote: "Put 'Is He Dead?' in the fire. God will bless you. I too. I started to convince myself that I could write a play, or couldn't. I'm convinced. Nothing can disturb that conviction."] —From what I gather from dramatists, he will have his hands something more than full—but let him struggle, let him struggle. Is there some way, honest or otherwise, by which you can get a copy of Mayo's play, "Pudd'nhead Wilson," for me? There is a capable young Austrian here who saw it in New York and wants to translate it and see if he can stage it here. I don't think these people here would understand it or take to it, but he thinks it will pay us to try.

A couple of London dramatists want to bargain with me for the right to make a high comedy out of the "Million-Pound Note." Barkis is willing.

This is but one of the briefer letters. Most of them were much longer and of more elaborate requirements. Also they overflowed with the gaiety of good-fortune and with gratitude. From Vienna in 1899 Clemens wrote:

Why, it is just splendid! I have nothing to do but sit around and watch you set the hen and hatch out those big broods and make my living for me. Don't you wish you had somebody to do the same for you?—a magician who can turn steel add copper and Brooklyn gas into gold. I mean to raise your wages again—I begin to feel that I can afford it. I think the hen ought to have a name; she must be called Unberufen. That is a German word which is equivalent to it "sh! hush' don't let the spirits hear you!" The superstition is that if you happen to let fall any grateful jubilation over good luck that you've had or are hoping to have you must shut square off and say "Unberufen!" and knock wood. The word drives the evil spirits away; otherwise

Page 637

they would divine your joy or your hopes and go to work and spoil your game. Set her again—do! Oh, look here! You are just like everybody; merely because I am literary you think I'm a commercial somnambulist, and am not watching you with all that money in your hands. Bless you, I've got a description of you and a photograph in every police-office in Christendom, with the remark appended: "Look out for a handsome, tall, slender young man with a gray mustache and courtly manners and an address well calculated to deceive, calling himself by the name of Smith." Don't you try to get away—it won't work.

From the note-book:

Midnight. At Miss Bailie's home for English governesses. Two comedies & some songs and ballads. Was asked to speak & did it. (And rung in the "Mexican Plug.")

A Voice. "The Princess Hohenlohe wishes you to write on her fan."

"With pleasure—where is she?"

"At your elbow."

I turned & took the fan & said, "Your Highness's place is in a fairy tale; & by & by I mean to write that tale," whereat she laughed a happy girlish laugh, & we moved through the crowd to get to a writing-table—& to get in a strong light so that I could see her better. Beautiful little creature, with the dearest friendly ways & sincerities & simplicities & sweetnesses—the ideal princess of the fairy tales. She is 16 or 17, I judge.

Mental Telegraphy. Mrs. Clemens was pouring out the coffee this morning; I unfolded the Neue Freie Presse, began to read a paragraph & said:

"They've found a new way to tell genuine gems from false——"

"By the Roentgen ray!" she exclaimed.

That is what I was going to say. She had not seen the paper, & there had been no talk about the ray or gems by herself or by me. It was a plain case of telegraphy.

No man that ever lived has ever done a thing to please God—primarily. It was done to please himself, then God next.

The Being who to me is the real God is the one who created this majestic universe & rules it. He is the only originator, the only originator of thoughts; thoughts suggested

from within, not from without; the originator of colors & of all their possible combinations; of forces & the laws that govern them; of forms & shapes of all forms—man has never invented a new one. He is the only originator. He made the materials of all things; He made the laws by which, & by which only, man may combine them into the machines & other things which outside influences suggest to him. He made character—man can portray it but not “create” it, for He is the only creator.

He, is the perfect artisan, the perfect artist.

CCVI

A SUMMER IN SWEDEN

Page 638

A part of the tragedy of their trip around the world had been the development in Jean Clemens of a malady which time had identified as epilepsy. The loss of one daughter and the invalidism of another was the burden which this household had now to bear. Of course they did not for a moment despair of a cure for the beautiful girl who had been so cruelly stricken, and they employed any agent that promised relief.

They decided now to go to London, in the hope of obtaining beneficial treatment. They left Vienna at the end of May, followed to the station by a great crowd, who loaded their compartment with flowers and lingered on the platform waving and cheering, some of them in tears, while the train pulled away. Leschetizky himself was among them, and Wilbrandt, the author of the Master of Palmyra, and many artists and other notables, "most of whom," writes Mrs. Clemens, "we shall probably never see again in this world."

Their Vienna sojourn had been one of the most brilliant periods of their life, as well as one of the saddest. The memory of Susy had been never absent, and the failing health of Jean was a gathering cloud.

They stopped a day or two at Prague, where they were invited by the Prince of Thurn and Taxis to visit his castle. It gave them a glimpse of the country life of the Bohemian nobility which was most interesting. The Prince's children were entirely familiar with Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn, which they had read both in English and in the translation.

They journeyed to London by way of Cologne, arriving by the end of May. Poultney Bigelow was there, and had recently been treated with great benefit by osteopathy (then known as the Swedish movements), as practised by Heinrick Kellgren at Sanna, Sweden. Clemens was all interest concerning Kellgren's method and eager to try it for his daughter's malady. He believed she could be benefited, and they made preparation to spend some months at least in Sanna. They remained several weeks in London, where they were welcomed with hospitality extraordinary. They had hardly arrived when they were invited by Lord Salisbury to Hatfield House, and by James Bryce to Portland Place, and by Canon Wilberforce to Dean's Yard. A rather amusing incident happened at one of the luncheon-parties. Canon Wilberforce was there and left rather early. When Clemens was ready to go there was just one hat remaining. It was not his, and he suspected, by the initials on the inside, that it belonged to Canon Wilberforce. However, it fitted him exactly and he wore it away. That evening he wrote:

*Princeof Wales hotel, de Vere gardens,
July,3, 1899.*

Page 639

Dear canon Wilberforce,—It is 8 P.M. During the past four hours I have not been able to take anything that did not belong to me; during all that time I have not been able to stretch a fact beyond the frontiers of truth try as I might, & meantime, not only my morals have moved the astonishment of all who have come in contact with me, but my manners have gained more compliments than they have been accustomed to. This mystery is causing my family much alarm. It is difficult to account for it. I find I haven't my own hat. Have you developed any novelties of conduct since you left Mr. Murray's, & have they been of a character to move the concern of your friends? I think it must be this that has put me under this happy charm; but, oh dear! I tremble for the other man!

Sincerely yours,
S. L. Clemens.

Scarcely was this note on its way to Wilberforce when the following one arrived, having crossed it in transit:

July 3, 1899.

Dear Mr. Clemens,—I have been conscious of a vivacity and facility of expression this afternoon beyond the normal and I have just discovered the reason!! I have seen the historic signature "Mark Twain" in my hat!! Doubtless you have been suffering from a corresponding dullness & have wondered why. I departed precipitately, the hat stood on my umbrella and was a new Lincoln & Bennett—it fitted me exactly and I did not discover the mistake till I got in this afternoon. Please forgive me. If you should be passing this way to-morrow will you look in and change hats? or shall I send it to the hotel?

I am, very sincerely yrs.,
20 Dean's Yard. *Basil Wilberforce*.

Clemens was demanded by all the bohemian clubs, the White Friars, the Vagabonds, the Savage, the Beefsteak, and the Authors. He spoke to them, and those "Mark Twain Evenings" have become historic occasions in each of the several institutions that gave him welcome. At the Vagabonds he told them the watermelon story, and at the White Friars he reviewed the old days when he had been elected to that society; "days," he said, "when all Londoners were talking about nothing else than that they had discovered Livingstone, and that the lost Sir Roger Tichborne had been found and they were trying him for it."

At the Savage Club, too, he recalled old times and old friends, and particularly that first London visit, his days in the club twenty-seven years before.

"I was 6 feet 4 in those days," he said. "Now I am 5 feet 8 1/2 and daily diminishing in altitude, and the shrinkage of my principles goes on . . . Irving was here then, is here

now. Stanley is here, and Joe Hatton, but Charles Reade is gone and Tom Hood and Harry Lee and Canon Kingsley. In those days you could have carried Kipling around in a lunch-basket; now he fills the world. I was young and foolish then; now I am old and foolisher."

Page 640

At the Authors Club he paid a special tribute to Rudyard Kipling, whose dangerous illness in New York City and whose daughter's death had aroused the anxiety and sympathy of the entire American nation. It had done much to bring England and America closer together, Clemens said. Then he added that he had been engaged the past eight days compiling a pun and had brought it there to lay at their feet, not to ask for their indulgence, but for their applause. It was this:

"Since England and America have been joined in Kipling, may they not be severed in Twain."

Hundreds of puns had been made on his pen-name, but this was probably his first and only attempt, and it still remains the best.

They arrived in Sweden early in July and remained until October. Jean was certainly benefited by the Kellgren treatment, and they had for a time the greatest hopes of her complete recovery. Clemens became enthusiastic over osteopathy, and wrote eloquently to every one, urging each to try the great new curative which was certain to restore universal health. He wrote long articles on Kellgren and his science, largely justified, no doubt, for certainly miraculous benefits were recorded; though Clemens was not likely to underestimate a thing which appealed to both his imagination and his reason. Writing to Twichell he concluded, with his customary optimism over any new benefit:

Ten years hence no sane man will call a doctor except when the knife must be used—and such cases will be rare. The educated physician will himself be an osteopath. Dave will become one after he has finished his medical training. Young Harmony ought to become one now. I do not believe there is any difference between Kellgren's science and osteopathy; but I am sending to America to find out. I want osteopathy to prosper; it is common sense & scientific, & cures a wider range of ailments than the doctor's methods can reach.

Twichell was traveling in Europe that summer, and wrote from Switzerland:

I seemed ever and anon to see you and me swinging along those glorious Alpine woods, staring at the new unfoldings of splendor that every turn brought into view—talking, talking, endlessly talking the days through-days forever memorable to me. That was twenty-one years ago; think of it! We were youngsters then, Mark, and how keen our relish of everything was! Well, I can enjoy myself now; but not with that zest and rapture. Oh, a lot of items of our tramp travel in 1878 that I had long forgotten came back to me as we sped through that enchanted region, and if I wasn't on duty with Venice I'd stop and set down some of them, but Venice must be attended to. For one thing, there is Howells's book to be read at such intervals as can be snatched from the quick-time march on which our rustling leader keeps us. However, in Venice so far we

want to be gazing pretty steadily from morning till night, and by the grace of the gondola we can do it without exhaustion. Really I am drunk with Venice.

But Clemens was full of Sweden. The skies there and the sunsets be thought surpassed any he had ever known. On an evening in September he wrote:

Page 641

Dear Joe,—I've no business in here—I ought to be outside. I shall never see another sunset to begin with it this side of heaven. Venice? land, what a poor interest that is! This is the place to be. I have seen about 60 sunsets here; & a good 40 of them were away & beyond anything I had ever imagined before for dainty & exquisite & marvelous beauty & infinite change & variety. America? Italy? the tropics? They have no notion of what a sunset ought to be. And this one—this unspeakable wonder! It discounts all the rest. It brings the tears, it is so unutterably beautiful.

Clemens read a book during his stay in Sweden which interested him deeply. It was the *Open Question*, by Elizabeth Robbins—a fine study of life's sterner aspects. When he had finished he was moved to write the author this encouraging word:

Dear miss Robbins,—A relative of Matthew Arnold lent us your 'Open Question' the other day, and Mrs. Clemens and I are in your debt. I am not able to put in words my feeling about the book—my admiration of its depth and truth and wisdom and courage, and the fine and great literary art and grace of the setting. At your age you cannot have lived the half of the things that are in the book, nor personally penetrated to the deeps it deals in, nor covered its wide horizons with your very own vision—and so, what is your secret? how have you written this miracle? Perhaps one must concede that genius has no youth, but starts with the ripeness of age and old experience.

Well, in any case, I am grateful to you. I have not been so enriched by a book for many years, nor so enchanted by one. I seem to be using strong language; still, I have weighed it.

Sincerely yours,
S. L. Clemens.

CCVII

30, *Wellington court*

Clemens himself took the Kellgren treatment and received a good deal of benefit.

"I have come back in sound condition and braced for work," he wrote MacAlister, upon his return to London. "A long, steady, faithful siege of it, and I begin now in five minutes."

They had settled in a small apartment at 30, Wellington Court, Albert Gate, where they could be near the London branch of the Kellgren institution, and he had a workroom with Chatto & Windus, his publishers. His work, however, was mainly writing speeches, for he was entertained constantly, and it seemed impossible for him to escape. His note-book became a mere jumble of engagements. He did write an article or a story now and then, one of which, "My First Lie, and How I Got Out of It," was made the

important Christmas feature of the 'New York Sunday World.' —[Now included in the Hadleyburg volume; "Complete Works."]

Page 642

Another article of this time was the “St. Joan of Arc,” which several years later appeared in Harper’s Magazine. This article was originally written as the Introduction of the English translation of the official record of the trials and rehabilitation of Joan, then about to be elaborately issued. Clemens was greatly pleased at being invited to prepare the Introduction of this important volume, but a smug person with pedagogic proclivities was in charge of the copy and proceeded to edit Mark Twain’s manuscript; to alter its phrasing to conform to his own ideas of the Queen’s English. Then he had it all nicely typewritten, and returned it to show how much he had improved it, and to receive thanks and compliments. He did not receive any thanks. Clemens recorded a few of the remarks that he made when he saw his edited manuscript:

I will not deny that my feelings rose to 104 in the shade. “The idea! That this long-eared animal this literary kangaroo this illiterate hostler with his skull full of axle-grease--this.....” But I stopped there, for this was not the Christian spirit.

His would-be editor received a prompt order to return the manuscript, after which Clemens wrote a letter, some of which will go very well here.

*Dear Mr. X.,—*I have examined the first page of my amended Introduction,—& will begin now & jot down some notes upon your corrections. If I find any changes which shall not seem to me to be improvements I will point out my reasons for thinking so. In this way I may chance to be helpful to you, & thus profit you perhaps as much as you have desired to profit me.
First Paragraph. “Jeanne d’Arc.” This is rather cheaply pedantic, & is not in very good taste. Joan is not known by that name among plain people of our race & tongue. I notice that the name of the Deity occurs several times in the brief instalment of the Trials which you have favored me with. To be consistent, it will be necessary that you strike out “God” & put in “Dieu.” Do not neglect this.
Second Paragraph. Now you have begun on my punctuation. Don’t you realize that you ought not to intrude your help in a delicate art like that with your limitations? And do you think that you have added just the right smear of polish to the closing clause of the sentence?

Third Paragraph. Ditto.

Fourth Paragraph. Your word “directly” is misleading; it could be construed to mean “at once.” Plain clarity is better than ornate obscurity. I note your sensitive marginal remark: “Rather unkind to French feelings—referring to Moscow.” Indeed I have not been concerning myself about French feelings, but only about stating the facts. I have said several uncourteous things about the French—calling them a “nation of ingrates” in one place—but you have been so busy editing commas & semicolons that you overlooked them & failed to get scared

Page 643

at them. The next paragraph ends with a slur at the French, but I have reasons for thinking you mistook it for a compliment. It is discouraging to try to penetrate a mind like yours. You ought to get it out & dance on it.

That would take some of the rigidity out of it. And you ought to use it sometimes; that would help. If you had done this every now & then along through life it would not have petrified.

Fifth Paragraph. Thus far I regard this as your masterpiece! You are really perfect in the great art of reducing simple & dignified speech to clumsy & vapid commonplace.

Sixth Paragraph. You have a singularly fine & aristocratic disrespect for homely & unpretending English. Every time I use "go back" you get out your polisher & slick it up to "return." "Return" is suited only to the drawing-room—it is ducal, & says itself with a simper & a smirk. Seventh Paragraph. "Permission" is ducal. Ducal and affected. "Her" great days were not "over," they were only half over. Didn't you know that? Haven't you read anything at all about Joan of Arc? The truth is you do not pay any attention; I told you on my very first page that the public part of her career lasted two years, & you have forgotten it already. You really must get your mind out and have it repaired; you see yourself that it is all caked together. Eighth Paragraph. She "rode away to assault & capture a stronghold." Very well; but you do not tell us whether she succeeded or not. You should not worry the reader with uncertainties like that. I will remind you once more that clarity is a good thing in literature. An apprentice cannot do better than keep this useful rule in mind.

Ninth Paragraph. "Known" history. That word has a polish which is too indelicate for me; there doesn't seem to be any sense in it. This would have surprised me last week.

. . . "Breaking a lance" is a knightly & sumptuous phrase, & I honor it for its hoary age & for the faithful service it has done in the prize-composition of the school-girl, but I have ceased from employing it since I got my puberty, & must solemnly object to fathering it here. And, besides, it makes me hint that I have broken one of those things before in honor of the Maid, an intimation not justified by the facts. I did not break any lances or other furniture; I only wrote a book about her.

Truly yours,
mark twain.

It cost me something to restrain myself and say these smooth & half-flattering things of this immeasurable idiot, but I did it, & have never regretted it. For it is higher & nobler to

be kind to even a shad like him than just I could have said hundreds of unpleasant things about this tadpole, but I did not even feel them.

Yet, in the end, he seems not to have sent the letter. Writing it had served every purpose.

Page 644

An important publishing event of 1899 was the issue by the American Publishing Company of Mark Twain's "Complete Works in Uniform Edition." Clemens had looked forward to the day when this should be done, perhaps feeling that an assembling of his literary family in symmetrical dress constituted a sort of official recognition of his authorship. Brander Matthews was selected to write the Introduction and prepared a fine "Biographical Criticism," which pleased Clemens, though perhaps he did not entirely agree with its views. Himself of a different cast of mind, he nevertheless admired Matthews.

Writing to Twichell he said:

When you say, "I like Brander Matthews, he impresses me as a man of parts & power," I back you, right up to the hub—I feel the same way. And when you say he has earned your gratitude for cuffing me for my crimes against the Leather-stockings & the Vicar I ain't making any objection. Dern your gratitude! His article is as sound as a nut. Brander knows literature & loves it; he can talk about it & keep his temper; he can state his case so lucidly & so fairly & so forcibly that you have to agree with him even when you don't agree with him; & he can discover & praise such merits as a book has even when they are merely half a dozen diamonds scattered through an acre of mud. And so he has a right to be a critic. To detail just the opposite of the above invoice is to describe me. I haven't any right to criticize books, & I don't do it except when I hate them. I often want to criticize Jane Austen, but her books madden me so that I can't conceal my frenzy from the reader; & therefore I have to stop every time I begin.'—[Once at a dinner given to Matthews, Mark Twain made a speech which consisted almost entirely of intonations of the name "Brander Matthews" to express various shades of human emotion. It would be hopeless, of course, to attempt to convey in print any idea of this effort, which, by those who heard it, is said to have been a masterpiece of vocalization.]

Clemens also introduced the "Uniform Edition" with an Author's Preface, the jurisdiction of which, he said, was "restricted to furnishing reasons for the publication of the collection as a whole."

This is not easy to do. Aside from the ordinary commercial reasons I find none that I can offer with dignity: I cannot say without immodesty that the books have merit; I cannot say without immodesty that the public want a "Uniform Edition"; I cannot say without immodesty that a "Uniform Edition" will turn the nation toward high ideals & elevated thought; I cannot say without immodesty that a "Uniform Edition" will eradicate crime, though I think it will. I find no reason that I can offer without immodesty except the rather poor one that I should like to see a "Uniform Edition" myself. It is nothing; a cat could say it about her kittens. Still, I believe I will stand upon that. I have to have a Preface & a reason, by law of custom, & the reason which I am putting forward is at least without offense.

CCVIII

Page 645

MARK TWAIN AND THE WARS

English troubles in South Africa came to a head that autumn. On the day when England's ultimatum to the Boers expired Clemens wrote:

London, 3.07 P.m., Wednesday, October 11, 1899. The time is up! Without a doubt the first shot in the war is being fired to-day in South Africa at this moment. Some man had to be the first to fall; he has fallen. Whose heart is broken by this murder? For, be he Boer or be he Briton, it is murder, & England committed it by the hand of Chamberlain & the Cabinet, the lackeys of Cecil Rhodes & his Forty Thieves, the South Africa Company.

Mark Twain would naturally sympathize with the Boer—the weaker side, the man defending his home. He knew that for the sake of human progress England must conquer and must be upheld, but his heart was all the other way. In January, 1900, he wrote a characteristic letter to Twichell, which conveys pretty conclusively his sentiments concerning the two wars then in progress.

Dear Joe,—Apparently we are not proposing to set the Filipinos free & give their islands to them; & apparently we are not proposing to hang the priests & confiscate their property. If these things are so the war out there has no interest for me.

I have just been examining Chapter /xx of *Following the Equator* to see if the Boer's old military effectiveness is holding out. It reads curiously as if it had been written about the present war.

I believe that in the next chapter my notion of the Boer was rightly conceived. He is popularly called uncivilized; I do not know why. Happiness, food, shelter, clothing, wholesome labor, modest & rational ambitions, honesty, kindness, hospitality, love of freedom & limitless courage to fight for it, composure & fortitude in time of disaster, patience in time of hardship & privation, absence of noise & brag in time of victory, contentment with humble & peaceful life void of insane excitements—if there is a higher & better form of civilization than this I am not aware of it & do not know where to look for it. I suppose that we have the habit of imagining that a lot of artistic & intellectual & other artificialities must be added or it isn't complete. We & the English have these latter; but as we lack the great bulk of those others I think the Boer civilization is the best of the two. My idea of our civilization is that it is a shoddy, poor thing & full of cruelties, vanities, arrogancies, meannesses, & hypocrisies. Provided we could get something better in the place of it. But that is not possible perhaps. Poor as it is, it is better than real savagery, therefore we must stand by it, extend it, & (in public) praise it. And so we must not utter any hurtful word about England in these days, nor fail to hope that she will win in this war, for her defeat & fall would be an irremediable

Page 646

disaster for the mangy human race. Naturally, then, I am for England; but she is profoundly in the wrong, Joe, & no (instructed) Englishman doubts it. At least that is my belief.

Writing to Howells somewhat later, he calls the conflict in South Africa, a “sordid and criminal war,” and says that every day he is writing (in his head) bitter magazine articles against it.

But I have to stop with that. Even if wrong—& she is wrong England must be upheld. He is an enemy of the human race who shall speak against her now. Why was the human race created? Or at least why wasn’t something creditable created in place of it? . . . I talk the war with both sides—always waiting until the other man introduces the topic. Then I say, “My head is with the Briton, but my heart & such rags of morals as I have are with the Boer—now we will talk, unembarrassed and without prejudice.” And so we discuss & have no trouble. I notice that God is on both sides in this war; thus history repeats itself. But I am the only person who has noticed this; everybody here thinks He is playing the game for this side, & for this side only.

Clemens wrote one article for anonymous publication in the Times. But when the manuscript was ready to mail in an envelope stamped and addressed to Moberly Bell—he reconsidered and withheld it. It still lies in the envelope with the accompanying letter, which says:

Don’t give me away, whether you print it or not. But I think you ought to print it and get up a squabble, for the weather is just suitable.

CCIX

PLASMON, AND A NEW MAGAZINE

Clemens was not wholly wedded to osteopathy. The financial interest which he had taken in the new milk albumen, “a food for invalids,” tended to divide his faith and make him uncertain as to which was to be the chief panacea for all ills—osteopathy or plasmon.

MacAlister, who was deeply interested in the plasmon fortunes, was anxious to get the product adopted by the army. He believed, if he could get an interview with the Medical Director-General, he could convince him of its merits. Discussing the matter with Clemens, the latter said:

“MacAlister, you are going at it from the wrong end. You can’t go direct to that man, a perfect stranger, and convince him of anything. Who is his nearest friend?”

MacAlister knew a man on terms of social intimacy with the official.

Clemens said, "That is the man to speak to the Director-General."

"But I don't know him, either," said MacAlister.

"Very good. Do you know any one who does know him?"

"Yes, I know his most intimate friend."

"Then he is the man for you to approach. Convince him that plasmon is what the army needs, that the military hospitals are suffering for it. Let him understand that what you want is to get this to the Director-General, and in due time it will get to him in the proper way. You'll see."

Page 647

This proved to be a true prophecy. It was only a little while until the British army had experimented with plasmon and adopted it. MacAlister reported the success of the scheme to Clemens, and out of it grew the story entitled, "Two Little Tales," published in November of the following year (1901) in the Century Magazine. Perhaps the reader will remember that in the "Two Little Tales" the Emperor is very ill and the lowest of all his subjects knows a certain remedy, but he cannot seek the Emperor direct, so he wisely approaches him through a series of progressive stages—finally reaching and curing his stricken Majesty.

Clemens had the courage of his investments. He adopted plasmon as his own daily food, and induced various members of the family to take it in its more palatable forms, one of these being a preparation of chocolate. He kept the reading-table by his bed well stocked with a variety of the products and invited various callers to try a complimentary sample lot. It was really an excellent and harmless diet, and both the company and its patients would seem to have prospered—perhaps are prospering still.

There was another business opportunity came along just at this time. S. S. McClure was in England with a proposition for starting a new magazine whose complexion was to be peculiarly American, with Mark Twain as its editor. The magazine was to be called 'The Universal', and by the proposition Clemens was to receive a tenth interest in it for his first year's work, and an added twentieth interest for each of the two succeeding years, with a guarantee that his shares should not earn him less than five thousand dollars the first year, with a proportionate increase as his holdings grew.

The scheme appealed to Clemens, it being understood in the beginning that he was to give very little time to the work, with the privilege of doing it at his home, wherever that might happen to be. He wrote of the matter to Mr. Rogers, explaining in detail, and Rogers replied, approving the plan. Mr. Rogers said he knew that he [Rogers] would have to do most of the work in editing the magazine, and further added:

One thing I shall insist upon, however, if I have anything to do with the matter, and it is this: that when you have made up your mind on the subject you will stick to it. I have not found in your composition that element of stubbornness which is a constant source of embarrassment to me in all friendly and social ways, but which, when applied to certain lines of business, brings in the dollar and fifty-cent pieces. If you accept the position, of course that means that you have to come to this country. If you do, the yachting will be a success.

There was considerable correspondence with McClure over the new periodical. In one letter Clemens set forth his general views of the matter quite clearly:

Page 648

Let us not deceive any one, nor allow any one to deceive himself, if it can be prevented. This is not to be comic magazine. It is to be simply a good, clean, wholesome collection of well-written & enticing literary products, like the other magazines of its class; not setting itself to please but one of man's moods, but all of them. It will not play but one kind of music, but all kinds. I should not be able to edit a comic periodical satisfactorily, for lack of interest in the work. I value humor highly, & am constitutionally fond of it, but I should not like it as a steady diet. For its own best interests, humor should take its outings in grave company; its cheerful dress gets heightened color from the proximity of sober hues. For me to edit a comic magazine would be an incongruity & out of character, for of the twenty-three books which I have written eighteen do not deal in humor as their chiefs feature, but are half & half admixtures of fun & seriousness. I think I have seldom deliberately set out to be humorous, but have nearly always allowed the humor to drop in or stay out, according to its fancy. Although I have many times been asked to write something humorous for an editor or a publisher I have had wisdom enough to decline; a person could hardly be humorous with the other man watching him like that. I have never tried to write a humorous lecture; I have only tried to write serious ones—it is the only way not to succeed. I shall write for this magazine every time the spirit moves me; but I look for my largest entertainment in editing. I have been edited by all kinds of people for more than thirty-eight years; there has always been somebody in authority over my manuscript & privileged to improve it; this has fatigued me a good deal, & I have often longed to move up from the dock to the bench & rest myself and fatigue others. My opportunity is come, but I hope I shall not abuse it overmuch. I mean to do my best to make a good magazine; I mean to do my whole duty, & not shirk any part of it. There are plenty of distinguished artists, novelists, poets, story-tellers, philosophers, scientists, explorers, fighters, hunters, followers of the sea, & seekers of adventure; & with these to do the hard & the valuable part of the work with the pen & the pencil it will be comfort & joy to me to walk the quarter-deck & superintend.

Meanwhile McClure's enthusiasm had had time to adjust itself to certain existing facts. Something more than a month later he wrote from America at considerable length, setting forth the various editorial duties and laying stress upon the feature of intimate physical contact with the magazine. He went into the matter of the printing schedule, the various kinds of paper used, the advertising pages, illustrations—into all the detail, indeed, which a practical managing editor must compass in his daily rounds. It was pretty evident that Clemens would not be able to go sailing about on Mr. Rogers's yacht or live at will in London or New York or Vienna or Elmira, but that he would be more or less harnessed to a revolving chair at an editorial desk, the thing which of all fates he would be most likely to dread. The scheme appears to have died there—the correspondence to have closed.

Page 649

Somewhat of the inducement in the McClure scheme had been the thought in Clemens's mind that it would bring him back to America. In a letter to Mr. Rogers (January 8, 1900) he said, "I am tired to death of this everlasting exile." Mrs. Clemens often wrote that he was restlessly impatient to return. They were, in fact, constantly discussing the practicability of returning to their own country now and opening the Hartford home. Clemens was ready to do that or to fall in with any plan that would bring him across the water and settle him somewhere permanently. He was tired of the wandering life they had been leading. Besides the long trip of '95 and '96 they had moved two or three times a year regularly since leaving Hartford, nine years before. It seemed to him that they were always packing and unpacking.

"The poor man is willing to live anywhere if we will only let him 'stay put,'" wrote Mrs. Clemens, but he did want to settle in his own land. Mrs. Clemens, too, was weary with wandering, but the Hartford home no longer held any attraction for her. There had been a time when her every letter dwelt on their hope of returning to it. Now the thought filled her with dread. To her sister she wrote:

Do you think we can live through the first going into the house in Hartford? I feel if we had gotten through the first three months all might be well, but consider the first night.

The thought of the responsibility of that great house—the taking up again of the old life—disheartened her, too. She had added years and she had not gained in health or strength.

When I was comparatively young I found the burden of that house very great. I don't think I was ever fitted for housekeeping. I dislike the practical part of it so much. I hate it when the servants don't do well, and I hate the correcting them. Yet no one ever had better discipline in her domestic affairs or ever commanded more devoted service. Her strength of character and the proportions of her achievement show large when we consider this confession.

They planned to return in the spring, but postponed the date for sailing. Jean was still under Kellgren's treatment, and, though a cure had been promised her, progress was discouragingly slow. They began to look about for summer quarters in or near London.

CCX

LONDON SOCIAL AFFAIRS

All this time Clemens had been tossing on the London social tide. There was a call for him everywhere. No distinguished visitor of whatever profession or rank but must meet Mark Twain. The King of Sweden was among his royal conquests of that season.

He was more happy with men of his own kind. He was often with Moberly Bell, editor of the Times; E. A. Abbey, the painter; Sir Henry Lucy, of Punch (Toby, M.P.); James Bryce, and Herbert Gladstone; and there were a number of brilliant Irishmen who were his special delight. Once with Mrs. Clemens he dined with the author of his old favorite, 'European Morals', William E. H. Lecky. Lady Gregory was there and Sir Dennis Fitz-Patrick; who had been Governor-General at Lahore when they were in India, and a number of other Irish ladies and gentlemen. It was a memorable evening. To Twichell Clemens wrote:

Page 650

Joe, do you know the Irish gentleman & the Irish lady, the Scotch gentleman & the Scotch lady? These are darlings, every one. Night before last it was all Irish—24. One would have to travel far to match their ease & sociability & animation & sparkle & absence of shyness & self-consciousness. It was American in these fine qualities. This was at Mr. Lecky's. He is Irish, you know. Last night it was Irish again, at Lady Gregory's. Lord Roberts is Irish, & Sir William Butler, & Kitchener, I think, & a disproportion of the other prominent generals are of Irish & Scotch breed keeping up the traditions of Wellington & Sir Colin Campbell, of the Mutiny. You will have noticed that in S. A., as in the Mutiny, it is usually the Irish & Scotch that are placed in the forefront of the battle.... Sir William Butler said, "the Celt is the spearhead of the British lance."

He mentions the news from the African war, which had been favorable to England, and what a change had come over everything in consequence. The dinner-parties had been lodges of sorrow and depressing. Now everybody was smiling again. In a note-book entry of this time he wrote:

Relief of Mafeking (May 18, 1900). The news came at 9.17 P.M.
Before 10 all London was in the streets, gone mad with joy. By then the news was all over the American continent.

Clemens had been talking copyright a good deal in London, and introducing it into his speeches. Finally, one day he was summoned before a committee of the House of Lords to explain his views. His old idea that the product of a man's brain is his property in perpetuity and not for any term of years had not changed, and they permitted him to dilate on this (to them) curious doctrine. The committee consisted of Lords Monkswell, Knutsford, Avebury, Farrar, and Thwing. When they asked for his views he said:

"In my opinion the copyright laws of England and America need only the removal of the forty-two-year limit and the return to perpetual copyright to be perfect. I consider that at least one of the reasons advanced in justification of limited copyright is fallacious—namely, the one which makes a distinction between an author's property and real estate, and pretends that the two are not created, produced, or acquired in the same way, thus warranting a different treatment of the two by law."

Continuing, he dwelt on the ancient doctrine that there was no property in an idea, showing how the far greater proportion of all property consisted of nothing more than elaborated ideas—the steamship, locomotive, telephone, the vast buildings in the world, how all of these had been constructed upon a basic idea precisely as a book is constructed, and were property only as a book is property, and therefore rightly subject to the same laws. He was carefully and searchingly examined by that shrewd committee. He kept them entertained and interested and left them in good-nature, even if not entirely converted. The papers printed his remarks, and London found them amusing.

Page 651

A few days after the copyright session, Clemens, responding to the toast, "Literature," at the Royal Literary Fund Banquet, made London laugh again, and early in June he was at the Savoy Hotel welcoming Sir Henry Irving back to England after one of his successful American tours.

On the Fourth of July (1900) Clemens dined with the Lord Chief-Justice, and later attended an American banquet at the Hotel Cecil. He arrived late, when a number of the guests were already going. They insisted, however, that he make a speech, which he did, and considered the evening ended. It was not quite over. A sequel to his "Luck" story, published nine years before, suddenly developed.

To go back a little, the reader may recall that "Luck" was a story which Twichell had told him as being supposedly true. The hero of it was a military officer who had risen to the highest rank through what at least seemed to be sheer luck, including a number of fortunate blunders. Clemens thought the story improbable, but wrote it and laid it away for several years, offering it at last in the general house-cleaning which took place after the first collapse of the machine. It was published in Harper's Magazine for August, 1891, and something less than a year later, in Rome, an English gentleman—a new acquaintance—said to him:

"Mr. Clemens, shall you go to England?"

"Very likely."

"Shall you take your tomahawk with you?"

"Why—yes, if it shall seem best."

"Well, it will. Be advised. Take it with you."

"Why?"

"Because of that sketch of yours entitled 'Luck.' That sketch is current in England, and you will surely need your tomahawk."

"What makes you think so?"

"I think so because the hero of the sketch will naturally want your scalp, and will probably apply for it. Be advised. Take your tomahawk along."

"Why, even with it I sha'n't stand any chance, because I sha'n't know him when he applies, and he will have my scalp before I know what his errand is."

"Come, do you mean to say that you don't know who the hero of that sketch is?"

“Indeed I haven’t any idea who the hero of the sketch is. Who is it?”

His informant hesitated a moment, then named a name of world-wide military significance.

As Mark Twain finished his Fourth of July speech at the Cecil and started to sit down a splendidly uniformed and decorated personage at his side said:

“Mr. Clemens, I have been wanting to know you a long time,” and he was looking down into the face of the hero of “Luck.”

“I was caught unprepared,” he said in his notes of it. “I didn’t sit down—I fell down. I didn’t have my tomahawk, and I didn’t know what would happen. But he was, composed, and pretty soon I got composed and we had a good, friendly time. If he had ever heard of that sketch of mine he did not manifest it in any way, and at twelve, midnight, I took my scalp home intact.”



Page 652

CCXI

DOLLIS HILL AND HOME

It was early in July, 1900, that they removed to Dollis Hill House, a beautiful old residence surrounded by trees on a peaceful hilltop, just outside of London. It was literally within a stone's-throw of the city limits, yet it was quite rural, for the city had not overgrown it then, and it retained all its pastoral features—a pond with lily-pads, the spreading oaks, the wide spaces of grassy lawn. Gladstone, an intimate friend of the owner, had made it a favorite retreat at one period of his life, and the place to-day is converted into a public garden called Gladstone Park. The old English diplomat used to drive out and sit in the shade of the trees and read and talk and translate Homer, and pace the lawn as he planned diplomacy, and, in effect, govern the English empire from that retired spot.

Clemens, in some memoranda made at the moment, doubts if Gladstone was always at peace in his mind in this retirement.

“Was he always really tranquil within,” he says, “or was he only externally so—for effect? We cannot know; we only know that his rustic bench under his favorite oak has no bark on its arms. Facts like this speak louder than words.”

The red-brick residential wave of London was still some distance away in 1900. Clemens says:

The rolling sea of green grass still stretches away on every hand, splotches with shadows of spreading oaks in whose black coolness flocks of sheep lie peacefully dreaming. Dreaming of what? That they are in London, the metropolis of the world, Post-office District, N. W.? Indeed no. They are not aware of it. I am aware of it, but that is all. It is not possible to realize it. For there is no suggestion of city here; it is country, pure & simple, & as still & reposeful as is the bottom of the sea.

They all loved Dollis Hill. Mrs. Clemens wrote as if she would like to remain forever in that secluded spot.

It is simply divinely beautiful & peaceful; . . . the great old trees are beyond everything. I believe nowhere in the world do you find such trees as in England Jean has a hammock swung between two such great trees, & on the other side of a little pond, which is full of white & yellow pond-lilies, there is tall grass & trees & Clara & Jean go there in the afternoons, spread down a rug on the grass in the shade & read & sleep.

They all spent most of their time outdoors at Dollis Hill under those spreading trees.

Clemens to Twichell in midsummer wrote:

I am the only person who is ever in the house in the daytime, but I am working & deep in the luxury of it. But there is one tremendous defect. Livy is all so enchanted with the place & so in love with it that she doesn't know how she is going to tear herself away from it.

Much company came to them at Dollis Hill. Friends drove out from London, and friends from America came often, among them—the Sages, Prof. Willard Fiske, and Brander Matthews with his family. Such callers were served with tea and refreshment on the lawn, and lingered, talking and talking, while the sun got lower and the shadows lengthened, reluctant to leave that idyllic spot.

Page 653

“Dollis Hill comes nearer to being a paradise than any other home I ever occupied,” he wrote when the summer was about over.

But there was still a greater attraction than Dollis Hill. Toward the end of summer they willingly left that paradise, for they had decided at last to make that home-returning voyage which had invited them so long. They were all eager enough to go—Clemens more eager than the rest, though he felt a certain sadness, too, in leaving the tranquil spot which in a brief summer they had so learned to love.

Writing to W. H. Helm, a London newspaper man who had spent pleasant hours with him chatting in the shade, he said:

. . . The packing & fussing & arranging have begun, for the removal to America &, by consequence, the peace of life is marred & its contents & satisfactions are departing. There is not much choice between a removal & a funeral; in fact, a removal is a funeral, substantially, & I am tired of attending them.

They closed Dollis Hill, spent a few days at Brown’s Hotel, and sailed for America, on the Minnehaha, October 6, 1900, bidding, as Clemens believed, and hoped, a permanent good-bye to foreign travel. They reached New York on the 15th, triumphantly welcomed after their long nine years of wandering. How glad Mark Twain was to get home may be judged from his remark to one of the many reporters who greeted him.

“If I ever get ashore I am going to break both of my legs so I can’t, get away again.”

MARK TWAIN, A BIOGRAPHY

By Albert Bigelow Paine

VOLUME III, Part 1: 1900-1907

CCXII

THE RETURN OF THE CONQUEROR

It would be hard to exaggerate the stir which the newspapers and the public generally made over the homecoming of Mark Twain. He had left America, staggering under heavy obligation and set out on a pilgrimage of redemption. At the moment when this Mecca, was in view a great sorrow had befallen him and, stirred a world-wide and soul-deep tide of human sympathy. Then there had followed such ovation as has seldom been conferred upon a private citizen, and now approaching old age, still in the fullness

of his mental vigor, he had returned to his native soil with the prestige of these honors upon him and the vast added glory of having made his financial fight single-handed-and won.

He was heralded literally as a conquering hero. Every paper in the land had an editorial telling the story of his debts, his sorrow, and his triumphs.

“He had behaved like Walter Scott,” says Howells, “as millions rejoiced to know who had not known how Walter Scott had behaved till they knew it was like Clemens.”

Howells acknowledges that he had some doubts as to the permanency of the vast acclaim of the American public, remembering, or perhaps assuming, a national fickleness. Says Howells:

Page 654

He had hitherto been more intelligently accepted or more largely imagined in Europe, and I suppose it was my sense of this that inspired the stupidity of my saying to him when we came to consider “the state of polite learning” among us, “You mustn’t expect people to keep it up here as they do in England.” But it appeared that his countrymen were only wanting the chance, and they kept it up in honor of him past all precedent.

Clemens went to the Earlington Hotel and began search for a furnished house in New York. They would not return to Hartford—at least not yet. The associations there were still too sad, and they immediately became more so. Five days after Mark Twain’s return to America, his old friend and co-worker, Charles Dudley Warner, died. Clemens went to Hartford to act as a pall-bearer and while there looked into the old home. To Sylvester Baxter, of Boston, who had been present, he wrote a few days later:

It was a great pleasure to me to renew the other days with you, & there was a pathetic pleasure in seeing Hartford & the house again; but I realized that if we ever enter the house again to live our hearts will break. I am not sure that we shall ever be strong enough to endure that strain.

Even if the surroundings had been less sorrowful it is not likely that Clemens would have returned to Hartford at this time. He had become a world-character, a dweller in capitals. Everywhere he moved a world revolved about him. Such a figure in Germany would live naturally in Berlin; in England London; in France, Paris; in Austria, Vienna; in America his headquarters could only be New York.

Clemens empowered certain of his friends to find a home for him, and Mr. Frank N. Doubleday discovered an attractive and handsomely furnished residence at 14 West Tenth Street, which was promptly approved. Doubleday, who was going to Boston, left orders with the agent to draw the lease and take it up to the new tenant for signature. To Clemens he said:

“The house is as good as yours. All you’ve got to do is to sign the lease. You can consider it all settled.”

When Doubleday returned from Boston a few days later the agent called on him and complained that he couldn’t find Mark Twain anywhere. It was reported at his hotel that he had gone and left no address. Doubleday was mystified; then, reflecting, he had an inspiration. He walked over to 14 West Tenth Street and found what he had suspected—Mark Twain had moved in. He had convinced the caretaker that everything was all right and he was quite at home. Doubleday said:

“Why, you haven’t executed the lease yet.”

“No,” said Clemens, “but you said the house was as good as mine,” to which Doubleday agreed, but suggested that they go up to the real-estate office and give the agent notice that he was in possession of the premises.

Doubleday’s troubles were not quite over, however. Clemens began to find defects in his new home and assumed to hold Doubleday responsible for them. He sent a daily postal card complaining of the windows, furnace, the range, the water-whatever he thought might lend interest to Doubleday’s life. As a matter of fact, he was pleased with the place. To MacAlister he wrote:

Page 655

We were very lucky to get this big house furnished. There was not another one in town procurable that would answer us, but this one is all right-space enough in it for several families, the rooms all old-fashioned, great size.

The house at 14 West Tenth Street became suddenly one of the most conspicuous residences in New York. The papers immediately made its appearance familiar. Many people passed down that usually quiet street, stopping to observe or point out where Mark Twain lived. There was a constant procession of callers of every kind. Many were friends, old and new, but there was a multitude of strangers. Hundreds came merely to express their appreciation of his work, hoping for a personal word or a hand-shake or an autograph; but there were other hundreds who came with this thing and that thing—axes to grind—and there were newspaper reporters to ask his opinion on politics, or polygamy, or woman's suffrage; on heaven and hell and happiness; on the latest novel; on the war in Africa, the troubles in China; on anything under the sun, important or unimportant, interesting or inane, concerning which one might possibly hold an opinion. He was unfailing "copy" if they could but get a word with him. Anything that he might choose to say upon any subject whatever was seized upon and magnified and printed with head-lines. Sometimes opinions were invented for him. If he let fall a few words they were multiplied into a column interview.

"That reporter worked a miracle equal to the loaves and fishes," he said of one such performance.

Many men would have become annoyed and irritable as these things continued; but Mark Twain was greater than that. Eventually he employed a secretary to stand between him and the wash of the tide, as a sort of breakwater; but he seldom lost his temper no matter what was the request which was laid before him, for he recognized underneath it the great tribute of a great nation.

Of course his literary valuation would be affected by the noise of the general applause. Magazines and syndicates besought him for manuscripts. He was offered fifty cents and even a dollar a word for whatever he might give them. He felt a child-like gratification in these evidences of his market advancement, but he was not demoralized by them. He confined his work to a few magazines, and in November concluded an arrangement with the new management of Harper & Brothers, by which that firm was to have the exclusive serial privilege of whatever he might write at a fixed rate of twenty cents per word—a rate increased to thirty cents by a later contract, which also provided an increased royalty for the publication of his books.

The United States, as a nation, does not confer any special honors upon private citizens. We do not have decorations and titles, even though there are times when it seems that such things might be not inappropriately conferred. Certain of the newspapers, more lavish in their enthusiasm than others, were inclined to propose, as one paper phrased it, "Some peculiar recognition—something that should appeal to

Samuel L. Clemens, the man, rather than to Mark Twain, the literate. Just what form this recognition should take is doubtful, for the case has no exact precedent.”

Page 656

Perhaps the paper thought that Mark Twain was entitled—as he himself once humorously suggested—to the “thanks of Congress” for having come home alive and out of debt, but it is just as well that nothing of the sort was ever seriously considered. The thanks of the public at large contained more substance, and was a tribute much more to his mind. The paper above quoted ended by suggesting a very large dinner and memorial of welcome as being more in keeping with the republican idea and the American expression of good-will.

But this was an unneeded suggestion. If he had eaten all the dinners proposed he would not have lived to enjoy his public honors a month. As it was, he accepted many more dinners than he could eat, and presently fell into the habit of arriving when the banqueting was about over and the after-dinner speaking about to begin. Even so the strain told on him.

“His friends saw that he was wearing himself out,” says Howells, and perhaps this was true, for he grew thin and pale and contracted a hacking cough. He did not spare himself as often as he should have done. Once to Richard Watson Gilder he sent this line of regrets:

In bed with a chest cold and other company—Wednesday. *Dear Gilder*,—I can't. If I were a well man I could explain with this pencil, but in the cir—ces I will leave it all to your imagination.

Was it Grady who killed himself trying to do all the dining and speeching?

No, old man, no, no! Ever yours, *mark*.

He became again the guest of honor at the Lotos Club, which had dined him so lavishly seven years before, just previous to his financial collapse. That former dinner had been a distinguished occasion, but never before had the Lotos Club been so brimming with eager hospitality as on the second great occasion. In closing his introductory speech President Frank Lawrence said, “We hail him as one who has borne great burdens with manliness and courage, who has emerged from great struggles victorious,” and the assembled diners roared out their applause. Clemens in his reply said:

Your president has referred to certain burdens which I was weighted with. I am glad he did, as it gives me an opportunity which I wanted—to speak of those debts. You all knew what he meant when he referred to it, & of the poor bankrupt firm of C. L. Webster & Co. No one has said a word about those creditors. There were ninety-six creditors in all, & not by a finger's weight did ninety-five out of the ninety-six add to the burden of that time. They treated me well; they treated me handsomely. I never knew I owed them anything; not a sign came from them.

It was like him to make that public acknowledgment. He could not let an unfair impression remain that any man or any set of men had laid an unnecessary burden upon him-his sense of justice would not consent to it. He also spoke on that occasion of certain national changes.

Page 657

How many things have happened in the seven years I have been away from home! We have fought a righteous war, and a righteous war is a rare thing in history. We have turned aside from our own comfort and seen to it that freedom should exist, not only within our own gates, but in our own neighborhood. We have set Cuba free and placed her among the galaxy of free nations of the world. We started out to set those poor Filipinos free, but why that righteous plan miscarried perhaps I shall never know. We have also been making a creditable showing in China, and that is more than all the other powers can say. The "Yellow Terror" is threatening the world, but no matter what happens the United States says that it has had no part in it. Since I have been away we have been nursing free silver. We have watched by its cradle, we have done our best to raise that child, but every time it seemed to be getting along nicely along came some pestiferous Republican and gave it the measles or something. I fear we will never raise that child. We've done more than that. We elected a President four years ago. We've found fault and criticized him, and here a day or two ago we go and elect him for another four years, with votes enough to spare to do it over again.

One club followed another in honoring Mark Twain—the Aldine, the St. Nicholas, the Press clubs, and other associations and societies. His old friends were at these dinners—Howells, Aldrich, Depew, Rogers, ex-Speaker Reed—and they praised him and gibed him to his and their hearts' content.

It was a political year, and he generally had something to say on matters municipal, national, or international; and he spoke out more and more freely, as with each opportunity he warmed more righteously to his subject.

At the dinner given to him by the St. Nicholas Club he said, with deep irony:

Gentlemen, you have here the best municipal government in the world, and the most fragrant and the purest. The very angels of heaven envy you and wish they had a government like it up there. You got it by your noble fidelity to civic duty; by the stern and ever watchful exercise of the great powers lodged in you as lovers and guardians of your city; by your manly refusal to sit inert when base men would have invaded her high places and possessed them; by your instant retaliation when any insult was offered you in her person, or any assault was made upon her fair fame. It is you who have made this government what it is, it is you who have made it the envy and despair of the other capitals of the world—and God bless you for it, gentlemen, God bless you! And when you get to heaven at last they'll say with joy, "Oh, there they come, the representatives of the perfectest citizenship in the universe show them the archangel's box and turn on the limelight!"

Those hearers who in former years had been indifferent

Page 658

to Mark Twain's more serious purpose began to realize that, whatever he may have been formerly, he was by no means now a mere fun-maker, but a man of deep and grave convictions, able to give them the fullest and most forcible expression. He still might make them laugh, but he also made them think, and he stirred them to a truer gospel of patriotism. He did not preach a patriotism that meant a boisterous cheering of the Stars and Stripes right or wrong, but a patriotism that proposed to keep the Stars and Stripes clean and worth shouting for. In an article, perhaps it was a speech, begun at this time he wrote:

We teach the boys to atrophy their independence. We teach them to take their patriotism at second-hand; to shout with the largest crowd without examining into the right or wrong of the matter —exactly as boys under monarchies are taught and have always been taught. We teach them to regard as traitors, and hold in aversion and contempt, such as do not shout with the crowd, & so here in our democracy we are cheering a thing which of all things is most foreign to it & out of place—the delivery of our political conscience into somebody else's keeping. This is patriotism on the Russian plan.

Howells tells of discussing these vital matters with him in “an upper room, looking south over a quiet, open space of back yards where,” he says, “we fought our battles in behalf of the Filipinos and Boers, and he carried on his campaign against the missionaries in China.”

Howells at the time expressed an amused fear that Mark Twain's countrymen, who in former years had expected him to be merely a humorist, should now, in the light of his wider acceptance abroad, demand that he be mainly serious.

But the American people were quite ready to accept him in any of his phases, fully realizing that whatever his philosophy or doctrine it would have somewhat of the humorous form, and whatever his humor, there would somewhere be wisdom in it. He had in reality changed little; for a generation he had thought the sort of things which he now, with advanced years and a different audience, felt warranted in uttering openly. The man who in '64 had written against corruption in San Francisco, who a few years later had defended the emigrant Chinese against persecution, who at the meetings of the Monday Evening Club had denounced hypocrisy in politics, morals, and national issues, did not need to change to be able to speak out against similar abuses now. And a newer generation as willing to herald Mark Twain as a sage as well as a humorist, and on occasion to quite overlook the absence of the cap and bells.

CCXIII

MARK TWAIN—GENERAL SPOKESMAN

Clemens did not confine his speeches altogether to matters of reform. At a dinner given by the Nineteenth Century Club in November, 1900, he spoke on the "Disappearance of Literature," and at the close of the discussion of that subject, referring to Milton and Scott, he said:

Page 659

Professor Winchester also said something about there being no modern epics like “Paradise Lost.” I guess he’s right. He talked as if he was pretty familiar with that piece of literary work, and nobody would suppose that he never had read it. I don’t believe any of you have ever read “Paradise Lost,” and you don’t want to. That’s something that you just want to take on trust. It’s a classic, just as Professor Winchester says, and it meets his definition of a classic—something that everybody wants to have read and nobody wants to read. Professor Trent also had a good deal to say about the disappearance of literature. He said that Scott would outlive all his critics. I guess that’s true. That fact of the business is you’ve got to be one of two ages to appreciate Scott. When you’re eighteen you can read *Ivanhoe*, and you want to wait until you’re ninety to read some of the rest. It takes a pretty well-regulated abstemious critic to live ninety years.

But a few days later he was back again in the forefront of reform, preaching at the Berkeley Lyceum against foreign occupation in China. It was there that he declared himself a Boxer.

Why should not China be free from the foreigners, who are only making trouble on her soil? If they would only all go home what a pleasant place China would be for the Chinese! We do not allow Chinamen to come here, and I say, in all seriousness, that it would be a graceful thing to let China decide who shall go there. China never wanted foreigners any more than foreigners wanted Chinamen, and on this question I am with the Boxers every time. The Boxer is a patriot. He loves his country better than he does the countries of other people. I wish him success. We drive the Chinaman out of our country; the Boxer believes in driving us out of his country. I am a Boxer, too, on those terms.

Introducing Winston Churchill, of England, at a dinner some weeks later, he explained how generous England and America had been in not requiring fancy rates for “extinguished missionaries” in China as Germany had done. Germany had required territory and cash, he said, in payment for her missionaries, while the United States and England had been willing to settle for produce—firecrackers and tea.

The Churchill introduction would seem to have been his last speech for the year 1900, and he expected it, with one exception, to be the last for a long time. He realized that he was tired and that the strain upon him made any other sort of work out of the question. Writing to MacAlister at the end of the year, he said, “I seem to have made many speeches, but it is not so. It is not more than ten, I think.” Still, a respectable number in the space of two months, considering that each was carefully written and committed to memory, and all amid crushing social pressure. Again to MacAlister:

Page 660

I declined 7 banquets yesterday (which is double the daily average) & answered 29 letters. I have slaved at my mail every day since we arrived in mid-October, but Jean is learning to typewrite & presently I'll dictate & thereby save some scraps of time.

He added that after January 4th he did not intend to speak again for a year—that he would not speak then only that the matter concerned the reform of city government.

The occasion of January 4, 1901, was a rather important one. It was a meeting of the City Club, then engaged in the crusade for municipal reform. Wheeler H. Peckham presided, and Bishop Potter made the opening address. It all seems like ancient history now, and perhaps is not very vital any more; but the movement was making a great stir then, and Mark Twain's declaration that he believed forty-nine men out of fifty were honest, and that the forty-nine only needed to organize to disqualify the fiftieth man (always organized for crime), was quoted as a sort of slogan for reform.

Clemens was not permitted to keep his resolution that he wouldn't speak again that year. He had become a sort of general spokesman on public matters, and demands were made upon him which could not be denied. He declined a Yale alumni dinner, but he could not refuse to preside at the Lincoln Birthday celebration at Carnegie Hall, February 11th, where he must introduce Watterson as the speaker of the evening.

"Think of it!" he wrote Twichell. "Two old rebels functioning there: I as president and Watterson as orator of the day! Things have changed somewhat in these forty years, thank God!"

The Watterson introduction is one of the choicest of Mark Twain's speeches—a pure and perfect example of simple eloquence, worthy of the occasion which gave it utterance, worthy in spite of its playful paragraphs (or even because of them, for Lincoln would have loved them), to become the matrix of that imperishable Gettysburg phrase with which he makes his climax. He opened by dwelling for a moment on Colonel Watterson as a soldier, journalist, orator, statesman, and patriot; then he said:

It is a curious circumstance that without collusion of any kind, but merely in obedience to a strange and pleasant and dramatic freak of destiny, he and I, kinsmen by blood—[Colonel Watterson's forebears had intermarried with the Lamptons.]—for we are that—and one-time rebels—for we were that—should be chosen out of a million surviving quondam rebels to come here and bare our heads in reverence and love of that noble soul whom 40 years ago we tried with all our hearts and all our strength to defeat and dispossess —Abraham Lincoln! Is the Rebellion ended and forgotten? Are the Blue and the Gray one to-day? By authority of this sign we may answer yes; there was a Rebellion—that incident is closed. I was born and reared in a slave State, my father was a slaveowner; and in the Civil War

Page 661

I was a second lieutenant in the Confederate service. For a while. This second cousin of mine, Colonel Watterson, the orator of this present occasion, was born and reared in a slave State, was a colonel in the Confederate service, and rendered me such assistance as he could in my self-appointed great task of annihilating the Federal armies and breaking up the Union. I laid my plans with wisdom and foresight, and if Colonel Watterson had obeyed my orders I should have succeeded in my giant undertaking. It was my intention to drive General Grant into the Pacific—if I could get transportation—and I told Colonel Watterson to surround the Eastern armies and wait till I came. But he was insubordinate, and stood upon a punctilio of military etiquette; he refused to take orders from a second lieutenant—and the Union was saved. This is the first time that this secret has been revealed. Until now no one outside the family has known the facts. But there they stand: Watterson saved the Union. Yet to this day that man gets no pension. Those were great days, splendid days. What an uprising it was! For the hearts of the whole nation, North and South, were in the war. We of the South were not ashamed; for, like the men of the North, we were fighting for 'flags we loved; and when men fight for these things, and under these convictions, with nothing sordid to tarnish their cause, that cause is holy, the blood spilt for it is sacred, the life that is laid down for it is consecrated. To-day we no longer regret the result, to-day we are glad it came out as it did, but we are not ashamed that we did our endeavor; we did our bravest best, against despairing odds, for the cause which was precious to us and which our consciences approved; and we are proud—and you are proud—the kindred blood in your veins answers when I say it—you are proud of the record we made in those mighty collisions in the fields. What an uprising it was! We did not have to supplicate for soldiers on either side. "We are coming, Father Abraham, three hundred thousand strong!" That was the music North and South. The very choicest young blood and brawn and brain rose up from Maine to the Gulf and flocked to the standards—just as men always do when in their eyes their cause is great and fine and their hearts are in it; just as men flocked to the Crusades, sacrificing all they possessed to the cause, and entering cheerfully upon hardships which we cannot even imagine in this age, and upon toilsome and wasting journeys which in our time would be the equivalent of circumnavigating the globe five times over. North and South we put our hearts into that colossal struggle, and out of it came the blessed fulfilment of the prophecy of the immortal Gettysburg speech which said: "We here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that a government of the

Page 662

people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”We are here to honor the birthday of the greatest citizen, and the noblest and the best, after Washington, that this land or any other has yet produced. The old wounds are healed, you and we are brothers again; you testify it by honoring two of us, once soldiers of the Lost Cause, and foes of your great and good leader—with the privilege of assisting here; and we testify it by laying our honest homage at the feet of Abraham Lincoln, and in forgetting that you of the North and we of the South were ever enemies, and remembering only that we are now indistinguishably fused together and nameable by one common great name—Americans!

CCXIV

MARK TWAIN AND THE MISSIONARIES

Mark Twain had really begun his crusade for reform soon after his arrival in America in a practical hand-to-hand manner. His housekeeper, Katie Leary, one night employed a cabman to drive her from the Grand Central Station to the house at 14 West Tenth Street. No contract had been made as to price, and when she arrived there the cabman’s extortionate charge was refused. He persisted in it, and she sent into the house for her employer. Of all men, Mark Twain was the last one to countenance an extortion. He reasoned with the man kindly enough at first; when the driver at last became abusive Clemens demanded his number, which was at first refused. In the end he paid the legal fare, and in the morning entered a formal complaint, something altogether unexpected, for the American public is accustomed to suffering almost any sort of imposition to avoid trouble and publicity.

In some notes which Clemens had made in London four years earlier he wrote:

If you call a policeman to settle the dispute you can depend on one thing—he will decide it against you every time. And so will the New York policeman. In London if you carry your case into court the man that is entitled to win it will win it. In New York—but no one carries a cab case into court there. It is my impression that it is now more than thirty years since any one has carried a cab case into court there.

Nevertheless, he was promptly on hand when the case was called to sustain the charge and to read the cabdrivers’ union and the public in general a lesson in good-citizenship. At the end of the hearing, to a representative of the union he said:

“This is not a matter of sentiment, my dear sir. It is simply practical business. You cannot imagine that I am making money wasting an hour or two of my time prosecuting a case in which I can have no personal interest whatever. I am doing this just as any citizen should do. He has no choice. He has a distinct duty. He is a non-classified

policeman. Every citizen is, a policeman, and it is his duty to assist the police and the magistracy

Page 663

in every way he can, and give his time, if necessary, to do so. Here is a man who is a perfectly natural product of an infamous system in this city—a charge upon the lax patriotism in this city of New York that this thing can exist. You have encouraged him, in every way you know how to overcharge. He is not the criminal here at all. The criminal is the citizen of New York and the absence of patriotism. I am not here to avenge myself on him. I have no quarrel with him. My quarrel is with the citizens of New York, who have encouraged him, and who created him by encouraging him to overcharge in this way.”

The driver’s license was suspended. The case made a stir in the newspapers, and it is not likely that any one incident ever contributed more to cab-driving morals in New York City.

But Clemens had larger matters than this in prospect. His many speeches on municipal and national abuses he felt were more or less ephemeral. He proposed now to write himself down more substantially and for a wider hearing. The human race was behaving very badly: unspeakable corruption was rampant in the city; the Boers were being oppressed in South Africa; the natives were being murdered in the Philippines; Leopold of Belgium was massacring and mutilating the blacks in the Congo, and the allied powers, in the cause of Christ, were slaughtering the Chinese. In his letters he had more than once boiled over touching these matters, and for New-Year’s Eve, 1900, had written:

A greeting from the nineteenth to the twentieth century

I bring you the stately nation named Christendom, returning, bedraggled, besmirched, and dishonored, from pirate raids in Kiao- Chou, Manchuria, South Africa, and the Philippines, with her soul full of meanness, her pocket full of boodle, and her mouth full of pious hypocrisies. Give her soap and towel, but hide the looking- glass.—[Prepared for Red Cross Society watch-meeting, which was postponed until March. Clemens recalled his “Greeting” for that reason and for one other, which he expressed thus: “The list of greeters thus far issued by you contains only vague generalities and one definite name—mine: ‘Some kings and queens and Mark Twain.’ Now I am not enjoying this sparkling solitude and distinction. It makes me feel like a circus-poster in a graveyard.”]

This was a sort of preliminary. Then, restraining himself no longer, he embodied his sentiments in an article for the North American Review entitled, “To the Person Sitting in Darkness.” There was crying need for some one to speak the right word. He was about the only one who could do it and be certain of a universal audience. He took as his text some Christmas Eve clippings from the New York Tribune and Sun which he had been saving for this purpose. The Tribune clipping said:

Page 664

Christmas will dawn in the United States over a people full of hope and aspiration and good cheer. Such a condition means contentment and happiness. The carping grumbler who may here and there go forth will find few to listen to him. The majority will wonder what is the matter with him, and pass on.

A Sun clipping depicted the “terrible offenses against humanity committed in the name of politics in some of the most notorious East Side districts”—the unmissionaried, unpoliced darker New York. The Sun declared that they could not be pictured even verbally. But it suggested enough to make the reader shudder at the hideous depths of vice in the sections named. Another clipping from the same paper reported the “Rev. Mr. Ament, of the American Board of Foreign Missions,” as having collected indemnities for Boxer damages in China at the rate of three hundred taels for each murder, “full payment for all destroyed property belonging to Christians, and national fines amounting to thirteen times the indemnity.” It quoted Mr. Ament as saying that the money so obtained was used for the propagation of the Gospel, and that the amount so collected was moderate when compared with the amount secured by the Catholics, who had demanded, in addition to money, life for life, that is to say, “head for head”—in one district six hundred and eighty heads having been so collected.

The despatch made Mr. Ament say a great deal more than this, but the gist here is enough. Mark Twain, of course, was fiercely stirred. The missionary idea had seldom appealed to him, and coupled with this business of bloodshed, it was less attractive than usual. He printed the clippings in full, one following the other; then he said:

By happy luck we get all these glad tidings on Christmas Eve—just the time to enable us to celebrate the day with proper gaiety and enthusiasm. Our spirits soar and we find we can even make jokes; taels I win, heads you lose.

He went on to score Ament, to compare the missionary policy in China to that of the Pawnee Indians, and to propose for him a monument—subscriptions to be sent to the American Board. He denounced the national policies in Africa, China, and the Philippines, and showed by the reports and by the private letters of soldiers home, how cruel and barbarous and fiendish had been the warfare made by those whose avowed purpose was to carry the blessed light of civilization and Gospel “to the benighted native”—how in very truth these priceless blessings had been handed on the point of a bayonet to the “Person Sitting in Darkness.”

Mark Twain never wrote anything more scorching, more penetrating in its sarcasm, more fearful in its revelation of injustice and hypocrisy, than his article “To the Person Sitting in Darkness.” He put aquafortis on all the raw places, and when it was finished he himself doubted the wisdom of printing it. Howells, however, agreed that it should be published, and “it ought to be illustrated by Dan Beard,” he added, “with such pictures as he made for the Yankee in King Arthur’s Court, but you’d better hang yourself afterward.”

Page 665

Meeting Beard a few days later, Clemens mentioned the matter and said:

“So if you make the pictures, you hang with me.”

But pictures were not required. It was published in the *North American Review* for February, 1901, as the opening article; after which the cyclone. Two storms moving in opposite directions produce a cyclone, and the storms immediately developed; one all for Mark Twain and his principles, the other all against him. Every paper in England and America commented on it editorially, with bitter denunciations or with eager praise, according to their lights and convictions.

At 14 West Tenth Street letters, newspaper clippings, documents poured in by the bushel—laudations, vituperations, denunciations, vindications; no such tumult ever occurred in a peaceful literary home. It was really as if he had thrown a great missile into the human hive, one-half of which regarded it as a ball of honey and the remainder as a cobblestone. Whatever other effect it may have had, it left no thinking person unawakened.

Clemens reveled in it. W. A. Rogers, in *Harper's Weekly*, caricatured him as Tom Sawyer in a snow fort, assailed by the shower of snowballs, “having the time of his life.” Another artist, Fred Lewis, pictured him as Huck Finn with a gun.

The American Board was naturally disturbed. The Ament clipping which Clemens had used had been public property for more than a month—its authenticity never denied; but it was immediately denied now, and the cable kept hot with inquiries.

The Rev. Judson Smith, one of the board, took up the defense of Dr. Ament, declaring him to be one who had suffered for the cause, and asked Mark Twain, whose “brilliant article,” he said, “would produce an effect quite beyond the reach of plain argument,” not to do an innocent man an injustice. Clemens in the same paper replied that such was not his intent, that Mr. Ament in his report had simply arraigned himself.

Then it suddenly developed that the cable report had “grossly exaggerated” the amount of Mr. Ament's collections. Instead of thirteen times the indemnity it should have read “one and a third times” the indemnity; whereupon, in another open letter, the board demanded retraction and apology. Clemens would not fail to make the apology—at least he would explain. It was precisely the kind of thing that would appeal to him—the delicate moral difference between a demand thirteen times as great as it should be and a demand that was only one and a third times the correct amount. “To My Missionary Critics,” in the *North American Review* for April (1901), was his formal and somewhat lengthy reply.

“I have no prejudice against apologies,” he wrote. “I trust I shall never withhold one when it is due.”

He then proceeded to make out his case categorically. Touching the exaggerated indemnity, he said:

To Dr. Smith the “thirteen-fold-extra” clearly stood for “theft and extortion,” and he was right, distinctly right, indisputably right. He manifestly thinks that when it got scaled away down to a mere “one-third” a little thing like that was some other than “theft and extortion.” Why, only the board knows!

Page 666

I will try to explain this difficult problem so that the board can get an idea of it. If a pauper owes me a dollar and I catch him unprotected and make him pay me fourteen dollars thirteen of it is “theft and extortion.” If I make him pay only one dollar thirty-three and a third cents the thirty-three and a third cents are “theft and extortion,” just the same.

I will put it in another way still simpler. If a man owes me one dog —any kind of a dog, the breed is of no consequence—and I—but let it go; the board would never understand it. It can’t understand these involved and difficult things.

He offered some further illustrations, including the “Tale of a King and His Treasure” and another tale entitled “The Watermelons.”

I have it now. Many years ago, when I was studying for the gallows, I had a dear comrade, a youth who was not in my line, but still a scrupulously good fellow though devious. He was preparing to qualify for a place on the board, for there was going to be a vacancy by superannuation in about five years. This was down South, in the slavery days. It was the nature of the negro then, as now, to steal watermelons. They stole three of the melons of an adoptive brother of mine, the only good ones he had. I suspected three of a neighbor’s negroes, but there was no proof, and, besides, the watermelons in those negroes’ private patches were all green and small and not up to indemnity standard. But in the private patches of three other negroes there was a number of competent melons. I consulted with my comrade, the understudy of the board. He said that if I would approve his arrangements he would arrange. I said, “Consider me the board; I approve; arrange.” So he took a gun and went and collected three large melons for my brother-on-the- halfshell, and one over. I was greatly pleased and asked:

“Who gets the extra one?”

“Widows and orphans.”

“A good idea, too. Why didn’t you take thirteen?”

“It would have been wrong; a crime, in fact-theft and extortion.”

“What is the one-third extra—the odd melon—the same?”

It caused him to reflect. But there was no result.

The justice of the peace was a stern man. On the trial he found fault with the scheme and required us to explain upon what we based our strange conduct—as he called it. The understudy said:

“On the custom of the niggers. They all do it.”—[The point had been made by the board that it was the Chinese custom to make the inhabitants of a village responsible for

individual crimes; and custom, likewise, to collect a third in excess of the damage, such surplus having been applied to the support of widows and orphans of the slain converts.]

The justice forgot his dignity and descended to sarcasm.

“Custom of the niggers! Are our morals so inadequate that we have to borrow of niggers?”

Page 667

Then he said to the jury: "Three melons were owing; they were collected from persons not proven to owe them: this is theft; they were collected by compulsion: this is extortion. A melon was added for the widows and orphans. It was owed by no one. It is another theft, another extortion. Return it whence it came, with the others. It is not permissible here to apply to any purpose goods dishonestly obtained; not even to the feeding of widows and orphans, for this would be to put a shame upon charity and dishonor it."

He said it in open court, before everybody, and to me it did not seem very kind.

It was in the midst of the tumult that Clemens, perhaps feeling the need of sacred melody, wrote to Andrew Carnegie:

Dear sir & friend,—You seem to be in prosperity. Could you lend an admirer \$1.50 to buy a hymn-book with? God will bless you. I feel it; I know it.

N. B.—If there should be other applications, this one not to count.
Yours, *mark*.

P. S.—Don't send the hymn-book; send the money; I want to make the selection myself.

Carnegie answered:

Nothing less than a two-dollar & a half hymn-book gilt will do for you. Your place in the choir (celestial) demands that & you shall have it.

There's a new Gospel of Saint Mark in the North American which I like better than anything I've read for many a day.

I am willing to borrow a thousand dollars to distribute that sacred message in proper form, & if the author don't object may I send that sum, when I can raise it, to the Anti-Imperialist League, Boston, to which I am a contributor, the only missionary work I am responsible for. Just tell me you are willing & many thousands of the holy little missals will go forth. This inimitable satire is to become a classic. I count among my privileges in life that I know you, the author.

Perhaps a few more of the letters invited by Mark Twain's criticism of missionary work in China may still be of interest to the reader: Frederick T. Cook, of the Hospital Saturday and Sunday Association, wrote: "I hail you as the Voltaire of America. It is a noble distinction. God bless you and see that you weary not in well-doing in this noblest, sublimest of crusades."

Ministers were by no means all against him. The associate pastor of the Every-day Church, in Boston, sent this line: "I want to thank you for your matchless article in the current North American. It must make converts of well-nigh all who read it."

But a Boston school-teacher was angry. "I have been reading the North American," she wrote, "and I am filled with shame and remorse that I have dreamed of asking you to come to Boston to talk to the teachers."

On the outside of the envelope Clemens made this pencil note:

Page 668

"Now, I suppose I offended that young lady by having an opinion of my own, instead of waiting and copying hers. I never thought. I suppose she must be as much as twenty-five, and probably the only patriot in the country."

A critic with a sense of humor asked: "Please excuse seeming impertinence, but were you ever adjudged insane? Be honest. How much money does the devil give you for arraigning Christianity and missionary causes?"

But there were more of the better sort. Edward S. Martin, in a grateful letter, said: "How gratifying it is to feel that we have a man among us who understands the rarity of the plain truth, and who delights to utter it, and has the gift of doing so without cant and with not too much seriousness."

Sir Hiram Maxim wrote: "I give you my candid opinion that what you have done is of very great value to the civilization of the world. There is no man living whose words carry greater weight than your own, as no one's writings are so eagerly sought after by all classes."

Clemens himself in his note-book set down this aphorism:

"Do right and you will be conspicuous."

CCXV

Summer at "The Lair"

In June Clemens took the family to Saranac Lake, to Ampersand. They occupied a log cabin which he called "The Lair," on the south shore, near the water's edge, a remote and beautiful place where, as had happened before, they were so comfortable and satisfied that they hoped to return another summer. There were swimming and boating and long walks in the woods; the worry and noise of the world were far away. They gave little enough attention to the mails. They took only a weekly paper, and were likely to allow it to lie in the postoffice uncalled for. Clemens, especially, loved the place, and wrote to Twichell:

I am on the front porch (lower one-main deck) of our little bijou of a dwelling-house. The lake edge (Lower Saranac) is so nearly under me that I can't see the shore, but only the water, small-poxed with rain splashes—for there is a heavy down pour. It is charmingly like sitting snuggled up on a ship's deck with the stretching sea all around but very much more satisfactory, for at sea a rainstorm is depressing, while here of course the effect engendered is just a deep sense of comfort & contentment. The heavy forest shuts us solidly in on three sides—there are no neighbors. There are beautiful little tan-colored impudent squirrels about. They take tea 5 P.M. (not invited) at the table in the woods where Jean does my typewriting, & one of them has been brave enough to sit

upon Jean's knee with his tail curved over his back & munch his food. They come to dinner 7 P.M. on the front porch (not invited), but Clara drives them away. It is an occupation which requires some industry & attention to business. They all have the one

Page 669

name —Blennerhasset, from Burr's friend—and none of them answers to it except when hungry.

Clemens could work at "The Lair," often writing in shady seclusions along the shore, and he finished there the two-part serial,—[Published in Harper's Magazine for January and February, 1902.]—"The Double-Barrelled Detective Story," intended originally as a burlesque on Sherlock Holmes. It did not altogether fulfil its purpose, and is hardly to be ranked as one of Mark Twain's successes. It contains, however, one paragraph at least by which it is likely to be remembered, a hoax—his last one—on the reader. It runs as follows:

It was a crisp and spicy morning in early October. The lilacs and laburnums, lit with the glory-fires of autumn, hung burning and flashing in the upper air, a fairy bridge provided by kind nature for the wingless wild things that have their home in the tree-tops and would visit together; the larch and the pomegranate flung their purple and yellow flames in brilliant broad splashes along the slanting sweep of woodland, the sensuous fragrance of innumerable deciduous flowers rose upon the swooning atmosphere, far in the empty sky a solitary oesophagus slept upon motionless wing; everywhere brooded stillness, serenity, and the peace of God.

The warm light and luxury of this paragraph are factitious. The careful reader will, note that its various accessories are ridiculously associated, and only the most careless reader will accept the oesophagus as a bird. But it disturbed a great many admirers, and numerous letters of inquiry came wanting to know what it was all about. Some suspected the joke and taunted him with it; one such correspondent wrote:

My dear mark twain,—Reading your "Double-Barrelled Detective Story" in the January Harper's late one night I came to the paragraph where you so beautifully describe "a crisp and spicy morning in early October." I read along down the paragraph, conscious only of its woozy sound, until I brought up with a start against your oesophagus in the empty sky. Then I read the paragraph again. Oh, Mark Twain! Mark Twain! How could you do it? Put a trap like that into the midst of a tragical story? Do serenity and peace brood over you after you have done such a thing? Who lit the lilacs, and which end up do they hang? When did larches begin to flame, and who set out the pomegranates in that canyon? What are deciduous flowers, and do they always "bloom in the fall, tra la"? I have been making myself obnoxious to various people by demanding their opinion of that paragraph without telling them the name of the author. They say, "Very well done." "The alliteration is so pretty." "What's an oesophagus, a bird?" "What's it all mean, anyway?" I tell them it means Mark Twain, and that an oesophagus is a kind of swallow. Am I right? Or is it a gull? Or a gullet?

Hereafter if you must write such things won't you please be so kind as to label them?



Very sincerely yours,
ALLETTA F. *Dean*.

Page 670

Mark Twain to Miss Dean:

Don't you give that oesophagus away again or I'll never trust you with another privacy!

So many wrote, that Clemens finally felt called upon to make public confession, and as one searching letter had been mailed from Springfield, Massachusetts, he made his reply through the Republican of that city. After some opening comment he said:

I published a short story lately & it was in that that I put the oesophagus. I will say privately that I expected it to bother some people—in fact, that was the intention—but the harvest has been larger than I was calculating upon. The oesophagus has gathered in the guilty and the innocent alike, whereas I was only fishing for the innocent—the innocent and confiding.

He quoted a letter from a schoolmaster in the Philippines who thought the passage beautiful with the exception of the curious creature which “slept upon motionless wings.” Said Clemens:

Do you notice? Nothing in the paragraph disturbed him but that one word. It shows that that paragraph was most ably constructed for the deception it was intended to put upon the reader. It was my intention that it should read plausibly, and it is now plain that it does; it was my intention that it should be emotional and touching, and you see yourself that it fetched this public instructor. Alas! if I had but left that one treacherous word out I should have scored, scored everywhere, and the paragraph would have slidden through every reader's sensibilities like oil and left not a suspicion behind. The other sample inquiry is from a professor in a New England university. It contains one naughty word (which I cannot bear to suppress), but he is not in the theological department, so it is no harm:

“Dear Mr. Clemens,—‘Far in the empty sky a solitary oesophagus slept upon motionless wing.’

“It is not often I get a chance to read much periodical literature, but I have just gone through at this belated period, with much gratification and edification, your ‘Double-Barrelled Detective Story.’” But what in hell is an oesophagus? I keep one myself, but it never sleeps in the air or anywhere else. My profession is to deal with words, and oesophagus interested me the moment I lighted upon it. But, as a companion of my youth used to say, ‘I’ll be eternally, co-eternally cussed’ if I can make it out. Is it a joke or am I an ignoramus?” Between you and me, I was almost ashamed of having fooled that man, but for pride’s sake I was not going to say so. I wrote and told him it was a joke—and that is what I am now saying to my Springfield inquirer. And I told him to carefully read the whole paragraph and he would find not a vestige of sense in any detail of it. This also I recommend to my Springfield inquirer.

I have confessed. I am sorry—partially. I will not do so any more—for the present. Don't ask me any more questions; let the oesophagus have a rest—on his same old motionless wing.

Page 671

He wrote Twichell that the story had been a six-day 'tour de force', twenty-five thousand words, and he adds:

How long it takes a literary seed to sprout sometimes! This seed was planted in your house many years ago when you sent me to bed with a book not heard of by me until then—Sherlock Holmes I've done a grist of writing here this summer, but not for publication soon, if ever. I did write two satisfactory articles for early print, but I've burned one of them & have buried the other in my large box of posthumous stuff. I've got stacks of literary remains piled up there.

Early in August Clemens went with H. H. Rogers in his yacht Kanawha on a cruise to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Rogers had made up a party, including ex-Speaker Reed, Dr. Rice, and Col. A. G. Paine. Young Harry Rogers also made one of the party. Clemens kept a log of the cruise, certain entries of which convey something of its spirit. On the 11th, at Yarmouth, he wrote:

Fog-bound. The garrison went ashore. Officers visited the yacht in the evening & said an anvil had been missed. Mr. Rogers paid for the anvil.

August 13th. There is a fine picture-gallery here; the sheriff photographed the garrison, with the exception of Harry (Rogers) and Mr. Clemens.

August 14th. Upon complaint of Mr. Reed another dog was procured. He said he had been a sailor all his life, and considered it dangerous to trust a ship to a dog-watch with only one dog in it.

Poker, for a change.

August 15th. To Rockland, Maine, in the afternoon, arriving about 6 P.M. In the night Dr. Rice baited the anchor with his winnings & caught a whale 90 feet long. He said so himself. It is thought that if there had been another witness like Dr. Rice the whale would have been longer.

August 16th. We could have had a happy time in Bath but for the interruptions caused by people who wanted Mr. Reed to explain votes of the olden time or give back the money. Mr. Rogers recouped them.

Another anvil missed. The descendant of Captain Kidd is the only person who does not blush for these incidents. Harry and Mr. Clemens blush continually. It is believed that if the rest of the garrison were like these two the yacht would be welcome everywhere instead of being quarantined by the police in all the ports. Mr. Clemens & Harry have attracted a great deal of attention, & men have expressed a resolve to turn over a new



leaf & copy after them from this out.Evening. Judge Cohen came over from another yacht to pay his respects to Harry and Mr. Clemens, he having heard of their reputation from the clergy of these coasts. He was invited by the gang to play poker apparently as a courtesy & in a spirit of seeming hospitality, he not knowing them & taking it all at par. Mr. Rogers lent

Page 672

him clothes to go home in. August 17th. The Reformed Statesman growling and complaining again—not in a frank, straightforward way, but talking at the Commodore, while letting on to be talking to himself. This time he was dissatisfied about the anchor watch; said it was out of date, untrustworthy, & for real efficiency didn't begin with the Waterbury, & was going on to reiterate, as usual, that he had been a pilot all his life & blamed if he ever saw, *etc.*, *etc.*, *etc.*

But he was not allowed to finish. We put him ashore at Portland.

That is to say, Reed landed at Portland, the rest of the party returning with the yacht.

"We had a noble good time in the yacht," Clemens wrote Twichell on their return. "We caught a Chineese missionary and drowned him."

Twichell had been invited to make one of the party, and this letter was to make him feel sorry he had not accepted.

CCXVI

RIVERDALE—A YALE DEGREE

The Clemens household did not return to 14 West Tenth Street. They spent a week in Elmira at the end of September, and after a brief stop in New York took up their residence on the northern metropolitan boundary, at Riverdale-on-the-Hudson, in the old Appleton home. They had permanently concluded not to return to Hartford. They had put the property there into an agent's hands for sale. Mrs. Clemens never felt that she had the strength to enter the house again.

They had selected the Riverdale place with due consideration. They decided that they must have easy access to the New York center, but they wished also to have the advantage of space and spreading lawn and trees, large rooms, and light. The Appleton homestead provided these things. It was a house built in the first third of the last century by one of the Morris family, so long prominent in New York history. On passing into the Appleton ownership it had been enlarged and beautified and named "Holbrook Hall." It overlooked the Hudson and the Palisades. It had associations: the Roosevelt family had once lived there, Huxley, Darwin, Tyndall, and others of their intellectual rank had been entertained there during its occupation by the first Appleton, the founder of the publishing firm. The great hall of the added wing was its chief feature. Clemens once remembered:

"We drifted from room to room on our tour of inspection, always with a growing doubt as to whether we wanted that house or not; but at last, when we arrived in a dining-room that was 60 feet long, 30 feet wide, and had two great fireplaces in it, that settled it."

There were pleasant neighbors at Riverdale, and had it not been for the illnesses that seemed always ready to seize upon that household the home there might have been ideal. They loved the place presently, so much so that they contemplated buying it, but decided that it was too costly. They began to prospect for other places along the Hudson shore. They were anxious to have a home again—one that they could call their own.

Page 673

Among the many pleasant neighbors at Riverdale were the Dodges, the Quincy Adamses, and the Rev. Mr. Carstensen, a liberal-minded minister with whom Clemens easily affiliated. Clemens and Carstensen visited back and forth and exchanged views. Once Mr. Carstensen told him that he was going to town to dine with a party which included the Reverend Gottheil, a Catholic bishop, an Indian Buddhist, and a Chinese scholar of the Confucian faith, after which they were all going to a Yiddish theater. Clemens said:

“Well, there’s only one more thing you need to make the party complete —that is, either Satan or me.”

Howells often came to Riverdale. He was living in a New York apartment, and it was handy and made an easy and pleasant outing for him. He says:

“I began to see them again on something like the sweet old terms. They lived far more unpretentiously than they used, and I think with a notion of economy, which they had never very successfully practised. I recall that at the end of a certain year in Hartford, when they had been saving and paying cash for everything, Clemens wrote, reminding me of their avowed experiment, and asking me to guess how many bills they had at New-Year’s; he hastened to say that a horse-car would not have held them. At Riverdale they kept no carriage, and there was a snowy night when I drove up to their handsome old mansion in the station carryall, which was crusted with mud, as from the going down of the Deluge after transporting Noah and his family from the Ark to whatever point they decided to settle provisionally. But the good talk, the rich talk, the talk that could never suffer poverty of mind or soul was there, and we jubilantly found ourselves again in our middle youth.”

Both Howells and Clemens were made doctors of letters by Yale that year and went over in October to receive their degrees. It was Mark Twain’s second Yale degree, and it was the highest rank that an American institution of learning could confer.

Twitchell wrote:

I want you to understand, old fellow, that it will be in its intention the highest public compliment, and emphatically so in your case, for it will be tendered you by a corporation of gentlemen, the majority of whom do not at all agree with the views on important questions which you have lately promulgated in speech and in writing, and with which you are identified to the public mind. They grant, of course, your right to hold and express those views, though for themselves they don’t like ’em; but in awarding you the proposed laurel they will make no count of that whatever. Their action will appropriately signify simply and solely their estimate of your merit and rank as a man of letters, and so, as I say, the compliment of it will be of the pure, unadulterated quality.

Howells was not especially eager to go, and tried to conspire with Clemens to arrange some excuse which would keep them at home.

Page 674

I remember with satisfaction [he wrote] our joint success in keeping away from the Concord Centennial in 1875, and I have been thinking we might help each other in this matter of the Yale Anniversary. What are your plans for getting left, or shall you trust to inspiration?

Their plans did not avail. Both Howells and Clemens went to New Haven to receive their honors.

When they had returned, Howells wrote formally, as became the new rank:

Dear sir,—I have long been an admirer of your complete works, several of which I have read, and I am with you shoulder to shoulder in the cause of foreign missions. I would respectfully request a personal interview, and if you will appoint some day and hour most inconvenient to you I will call at your baronial hall. I cannot doubt, from the account of your courtesy given me by the Twelve Apostles, who once visited you in your Hartford home and were mistaken for a syndicate of lightning-rod men, that our meeting will be mutually agreeable.

Yours truly,
W. D. Howells.
Dr. Clemens.

CCXVII

MARK TWAIN IN POLITICS

There was a campaign for the mayoralty of New York City that fall, with Seth Low on the Fusion ticket against Edward M. Shepard as the Tammany candidate. Mark Twain entered the arena to try to defeat Tammany Hall. He wrote and he spoke in favor of clean city government and police reform. He was savagely in earnest and openly denounced the clan of Croker, individually and collectively. He joined a society called 'The Acorns'; and on the 17th of October, at a dinner given by the order at the Waldorf-Astoria, delivered a fierce arraignment, in which he characterized Croker as the Warren Hastings of New York. His speech was really a set of extracts from Edmund Burke's great impeachment of Hastings, substituting always the name of Croker, and paralleling his career with that of the ancient boss of the East India Company.

It was not a humorous speech. It was too denunciatory for that. It probably contained less comic phrasing than any former effort. There is hardly even a suggestion of humor from beginning to end. It concluded with this paraphrase of Burke's impeachment:

I impeach Richard Croker of high crimes and misdemeanors. I impeach him in the name of the people, whose trust he has betrayed.

I impeach him in the name of all the people of America, whose national character he has dishonored.

I impeach him in the name and by virtue of those eternal laws of justice which he has violated.

I impeach him in the name of human nature itself, which he has cruelly outraged, injured, and oppressed, in both sexes, in every age, rank, situation, and condition of life.

The Acorn speech was greatly relied upon for damage to the Tammany ranks, and hundreds of thousands of copies of it were printed and circulated. —[The “Edmund Burke on Croker and Tammany” speech had originally been written as an article for the North American Review.]

Page 675

Clemens was really heart and soul in the campaign. He even joined a procession that marched up Broadway, and he made a speech to a great assemblage at Broadway and Leonard Street, when, as he said, he had been sick abed two days and, according to the doctor, should be in bed then.

But I would not stay at home for a nursery disease, and that's what I've got. Now, don't let this leak out all over town, but I've been doing some indiscreet eating—that's all. It wasn't drinking. If it had been I shouldn't have said anything about it. I ate a banana. I bought it just to clinch the Italian vote for fusion, but I got hold of a Tammany banana by mistake. Just one little nub of it on the end was nice and white. That was the Shepard end. The other nine-tenths were rotten. Now that little white end won't make the rest of the banana good. The nine-tenths will make that little nub rotten, too. We must get rid of the whole banana, and our Acorn Society is going to do its share, for it is pledged to nothing but the support of good government all over the United States. We will elect the President next time.

It won't be I, for I have ruined my chances by joining the Acorns,
and there can be no office-holders among us.

There was a movement which Clemens early nipped in the bud—to name a political party after him.

"I should be far from willing to have a political party named after me," he wrote, "and I would not be willing to belong to a party which allowed its members to have political aspirations or push friends forward for political preferment."

In other words, he was a knight-errant; his sole purpose for being in politics at all—something he always detested—was to do what he could for the betterment of his people.

He had his reward, for when Election Day came, and the returns were in, the Fusion ticket had triumphed and Tammany had fallen. Clemens received his share of the credit. One paper celebrated him in verse:

Who killed Croker?
I, said Mark Twain,
I killed Croker,
I, the jolly joker!

Among Samuel Clemens's literary remains there is an outline plan for a "Casting-Vote party," whose main object was "to compel the two great parties to nominate their best man always." It was to be an organization of an infinite number of clubs throughout the nation, no member of which should seek or accept a nomination for office in any political appointment, but in each case should cast its vote as a unit for the candidate of one of

the two great political parties, requiring that the man be of clean record and honest purpose.

Page 676

From constable up to President [runs his final clause] there is no office for which the two great parties cannot furnish able, clean, and acceptable men. Whenever the balance of power shall be lodged in a permanent third party, with no candidate of its own and no function but to cast its whole vote for the best man put forward by the Republicans and Democrats, these two parties will select the best man they have in their ranks. Good and clean government will follow, let its party complexion be what it may, and the country will be quite content.

It was a Utopian idea, very likely, as human nature is made; full of that native optimism which was always overflowing and drowning his gloomier logic. Clearly he forgot his despair of humanity when he formulated that document, and there is a world of unselfish hope in these closing lines:

If in the hands of men who regard their citizenship as a high trust this scheme shall fail upon trial a better must be sought, a better must be invented; for it cannot be well or safe to let the present political conditions continue indefinitely. They can be improved, and American citizenship should arouse up from its disheartenment and see that it is done.

Had this document been put into type and circulated it might have founded a true Mark Twain party.

Clemens made not many more speeches that autumn, closing the year at last with the "Founder's Night" speech at The Players, the short address which, ending on the stroke of midnight, dedicates each passing year to the memory of Edwin Booth, and pledges each new year in a loving-cup passed in his honor.

CCXVIII

NEW INTERESTS AND INVESTMENTS

The spirit which a year earlier had prompted Mark Twain to prepare his "Salutation from the Nineteenth to the Twentieth Century" inspired him now to conceive the "Stupendous International Procession," a gruesome pageant described in a document (unpublished) of twenty-two typewritten pages which begin:

The stupendous procession

At the appointed hour it moved across the world in following order:

The Twentieth Century

A fair young creature, drunk and disorderly, borne in the arms of Satan. Banner with motto, "Get What You Can, Keep What You Get."

Guard of Honor—Monarchs, Presidents, Tammany Bosses, Burglars, Land Thieves, Convicts, *etc.*, appropriately clothed and bearing the symbols of their several trades.

Christendom

Page 677

A majestic matron in flowing robes drenched with blood. On her head a golden crown of thorns; impaled on its spines the bleeding heads of patriots who died for their countries Boers, Boxers, Filipinos; in one hand a slung-shot, in the other a Bible, open at the text "Do unto others," etc. Protruding from pocket bottle labeled "We bring you the blessings of civilization." Necklace-handcuffs and a burglar's jimmy. Supporters—At one elbow Slaughter, at the other Hypocrisy. Banner with motto—"Love Your Neighbor's Goods as Yourself." Ensign—The Black Flag. Guard of Honor—Missionaries and German, French, Russian, and British soldiers laden with loot.

And so on, with a section for each nation of the earth, headed each by the black flag, each bearing horrid emblems, instruments of torture, mutilated prisoners, broken hearts, floats piled with bloody corpses. At the end of all, banners inscribed:

"All White Men are Born Free and Equal."

"Christ died to make men holy,
Christ died to make men free."

with the American flag furled and draped in crepe, and the shade of Lincoln towering vast and dim toward the sky, brooding with sorrowful aspect over the far-reaching pageant. With much more of the same sort. It is a fearful document, too fearful, we may believe, for Mrs. Clemens ever to consent to its publication.

Advancing years did little toward destroying Mark Twain's interest in human affairs. At no time in his life was he more variously concerned and employed than in his sixty-seventh year—matters social, literary, political, religious, financial, scientific. He was always alive, young, actively cultivating or devising interests—valuable and otherwise, though never less than important to him.

He had plenty of money again, for one thing, and he liked to find dazzlingly new ways for investing it. As in the old days, he was always putting "twenty-five or forty thousand dollars," as he said, into something that promised multiplied returns. Howells tells how he found him looking wonderfully well, and when he asked the name of his elixir he learned that it was plasmon.

I did not immediately understand that plasmon was one of the investments which he had made from "the substance of things hoped for," and in the destiny of a disastrous disappointment. But after paying off the creditors of his late publishing firm he had to do something with his money, and it was not his fault if he did not make a fortune out of plasmon.

It was just at this period (the beginning of 1902) that he was promoting with his capital and enthusiasm the plasmon interests in America, investing in it one of the "usual

amounts,” promising to make Howells over again body and soul with the life-giving albuminate. Once he wrote him explicit instructions:

Yes—take it as a medicine—there is nothing better, nothing surer of desired results. If you wish to be elaborate—which isn’t necessary—put a couple of heaping teaspoonfuls of the powder in an inch of milk & stir until it is a paste; put in some more milk and stir the paste to a thin gruel; then fill up the glass and drink.

Or, stir it into your soup.

Page 678

Or, into your oatmeal.

Or, use any method you like, so's you get it down—that is the only essential.

He put another “usual sum” about this time in a patent cash register which was acknowledged to be “a promise rather than a performance,” and remains so until this day.

He capitalized a patent spiral hat-pin, warranted to hold the hat on in any weather, and he had a number of the pins handsomely made to present to visitors of the sex naturally requiring that sort of adornment and protection. It was a pretty and ingenious device and apparently effective enough, though it failed to secure his invested thousands.

He invested a lesser sum in shares of the Booklover's Library, which was going to revolutionize the reading world, and which at least paid a few dividends. Even the old Tennessee land will-o'-the-wisp-long since repudiated and forgotten—when it appeared again in the form of a possible equity in some overlooked fragment, kindled a gentle interest, and was added to his list of ventures.

He made one substantial investment at this period. They became more and more in love with the Hudson environment, its beauty and its easy access to New York. Their house was what they liked it to be—a gathering —place for friends and the world's notables, who could reach it easily and quickly from New York. They had a steady procession of company when Mrs. Clemens's health would permit, and during a single week in the early part of this year entertained guests at no less than seventeen out of their twenty-one meals, and for three out of the seven nights—not an unusual week. Their plan for buying a home on the Hudson ended with the purchase of what was known as Hillcrest, or the Casey place, at Tarrytown, overlooking that beautiful stretch of river, the Tappan Zee, close to the Washington Irving home. The beauty of its outlook and surroundings appealed to them all. The house was handsome and finely placed, and they planned to make certain changes that would adapt it to their needs. The price, which was less than fifty thousand dollars, made it an attractive purchase; and without doubt it would have made them a suitable and happy home had it been written in the future that they should so inherit it.

Clemens was writing pretty steadily these days. The human race was furnishing him with ever so many inspiring subjects, and he found time to touch more or less on most of them. He wreaked his indignation upon the things which exasperated him often—even usually—without the expectation of print; and he delivered himself even more inclusively at such times as he walked the floor between the luncheon or dinner courses, amplifying on the poverty of an invention that had produced mankind as a supreme handiwork. In a letter to Howells he wrote:

Your comments on that idiot's "Ideals" letter reminds me that I preached a good sermon to my family yesterday on his particular layer of the human race, that grotesquest of all the inventions of the Creator. It was a good sermon, but coldly received, & it seemed best not to try to take up a collection.

Page 679

He once told Howells, with the wild joy of his boyish heart, how Mrs. Clemens found some compensation, when kept to her room by illness, in the reflection that now she would not hear so much about the “damned human race.”

Yet he was always the first man to champion that race, and the more unpromising the specimen the surer it was of his protection, and he never invited, never expected gratitude.

One wonders how he found time to do all the things that he did. Besides his legitimate literary labors and his preachments, he was always writing letters to this one and that, long letters on a variety of subjects, carefully and picturesquely phrased, and to people of every sort. He even formed a curious society, whose members were young girls—one in each country of the earth. They were supposed to write to him at intervals on some subject likely to be of mutual interest, to which letters he agreed to reply. He furnished each member with a typewritten copy of the constitution and by-laws of the juggernaut Club, as he called it, and he apprised each of her election, usually after this fashion:

I have a club—a private club, which is all my own. I appoint the members myself, & they can't help themselves, because I don't allow them to vote on their own appointment & I don't allow them to resign! They are all friends whom I have never seen (save one), but who have written friendly letters to me. By the laws of my club there can be only one member in each country, & there can be no male member but myself. Some day I may admit males, but I don't know—they are capricious & inharmonious, & their ways provoke me a good deal. It is a matter, which the club shall decide. I have made four appointments in the past three or four months: You as a member for Scotland—oh, this good while! a young citizeness of Joan of Arc's home region as a member for France; a Mohammedan girl as member for Bengal; & a dear & bright young niece of mine as member for the United States—for I do not represent a country myself, but am merely member-at-large for the human race. You must not try to resign, for the laws of the club do not allow that. You must console yourself by remembering that you are in the best company; that nobody knows of your membership except yourself; that no member knows another's name, but only her country; that no taxes are levied and no meetings held (but how dearly I should like to attend one!). One of my members is a princess of a royal house, another is the daughter of a village bookseller on the continent of Europe, for the only qualification for membership is intellect & the spirit of good-will; other distinctions, hereditary or acquired, do not count. May I send you the constitution & laws of the club? I shall be so glad if I may.

It was just one of his many fancies, and most of the active memberships would not long be maintained; though some continued faithful in their reports, as he did in his replies, to the end.

Page 680

One of the more fantastic of his conceptions was a plan to advertise for ante-mortem obituaries of himself—in order, as he said, that he might look them over and enjoy them and make certain corrections in the matter of detail. Some of them he thought might be appropriate to read from the platform.

I will correct them—not the facts, but the verdicts—striking out such clauses as could have a deleterious influence on the other side, and replacing them with clauses of a more judicious character.

He was much taken with the new idea, and his request for such obituaries, with an offer of a prize for the best—a portrait of himself drawn by his own hand—really appeared in Harper's Weekly later in the year. Naturally he got a shower of responses—serious, playful, burlesque. Some of them were quite worth while.

The obvious "Death loves a shining Mark" was of course numerous duplicated, and some varied it "Death loves an Easy Mark," and there was "Mark, the perfect man."

The two that follow gave him especial pleasure.

Obituary for "Mark twain"

Worthy of his portrait, a place on his monument, as well as a place among his "perennial-consolation heirlooms":

"Got up; washed; went to bed."

The subject's own words (see *Innocents Abroad*). Can't go back on your own words, Mark Twain. There's nothing "to strike out"; nothing "to replace." What more could be said of any one?

"Got up!"—Think of the fullness of meaning! The possibilities of life, its achievements—physical, intellectual, spiritual. Got up to the top!—the climax of human aspiration on earth!

"Washed"—Every whit clean; purified—body, soul, thoughts, purposes.

"Went to bed"—Work all done—to rest, to sleep. The culmination of the day well spent!

God looks after the awakening.

Mrs. S. A. Oren-Haynes.

Mark Twain was the only man who ever lived, so far as we know, whose lies were so innocent, and withal so helpful, as to make them worth more than a whole lot of fossilized priests' eternal truths.

D. H. *Kenner*.

CCXIX

YACHTING AND THEOLOGY

Clemens made fewer speeches during the Riverdale period. He was as frequently demanded, but he had a better excuse for refusing, especially the evening functions. He attended a good many luncheons with friendly spirits like Howells, Matthews, James L. Ford, and Hamlin Garland. At the end of February he came down to the Mayor's dinner given to Prince Henry of Prussia, but he did not speak. Clemens used to say afterward that he had not been asked to speak, and that it was probably because of his supposed breach of etiquette at the Kaiser's dinner in Berlin; but the fact that Prince Henry sought him out, and was most cordially and humanly attentive during a considerable portion of the evening, is against the supposition.

Page 681

Clemens attended a Yale alumni dinner that winter and incidentally visited Twichell in Hartford. The old question of moral responsibility came up and Twichell lent his visitor a copy of Jonathan Edwards's 'Freedom of the Will' for train perusal. Clemens found it absorbing. Later he wrote Twichell his views.

Dear Joe,—(After compliments.)—[Meaning "What a good time you gave me; what a happiness it was to be under your roof again," etc. See opening sentence of all translations of letters passing between Lord Roberts and Indian princes and rulers.]—From Bridgeport to New York, thence to home, & continuously until near midnight I wallowed & reeked with Jonathan in his insane debauch; rose immensely refreshed & fine at ten this morning, but with a strange & haunting sense of having been on a three days' tear with a drunken lunatic. It is years since I have known these sensations. All through the book is the glare of a resplendent intellect gone mad—a marvelous spectacle. No, not all through the book—the drunk does not come on till the last third, where what I take to be Calvinism & its God begins to show up & shine red & hideous in the glow from the fires of hell, their only right and proper adornment.

Jonathan seems to hold (as against the Armenian position) that the man (or his soul or his will) never creates an impulse itself, but is moved to action by an impulse back of it. That's sound!

Also, that of two or more things offered it, it infallibly chooses the one which for the moment is most pleasing to *itself*. Perfectly correct! An immense admission for a man not otherwise sane.

Up to that point he could have written Chapters III & IV of my suppressed Gospel. But there we seem to separate. He seems to concede the indisputable & unshaken dominion of Motive & Necessity (call them what he may, these are exterior forces & not under the man's authority, guidance, or even suggestion); then he suddenly flies the logical track & (to all seeming) makes the man & not those exterior forces responsible to God for the man's thoughts, words, & acts. It is frank insanity. I think that when he concedes the autocratic dominion of Motive and Necessity he grants a third position of mine—that a man's mind is a mere machine—an automatic machine—which is handled entirely from the outside, the man himself furnishing it absolutely nothing; not an ounce of its fuel, & not so much as a bare suggestion to that exterior engineer as to what the machine shall do nor how it shall do it nor when.

After that concession it was time for him to get alarmed & shirk—for he was pointed straight for the only rational & possible next station on that piece of road—the irresponsibility of man to God.

And so he shirked. Shirked, and arrived at this handsome result:



Page 682

Man is commanded to do so & so.

It has been ordained from the beginning of time that some men sha'n't & others can't.

These are to blame: let them be damned.

I enjoy the Colonel very much, & shall enjoy the rest of him with an obscene delight.

Joe, the whole tribe shout love to you & yours!
Mark.

Clemens was moved to set down some theology of his own, and did so in a manuscript which he entitled, "If I Could Be There." It is in the dialogue form he often adopted for polemic writing. It is a colloquy between the Master of the Universe and a Stranger. It begins: I

If I could be there, hidden under the steps of the throne, I should hear conversations like this:

A stranger. Lord, there is one who needs to be punished, and has been overlooked. It is in the record. I have found it.

Lord. By searching?

S. Yes, Lord.

L. Who is it? What is it?

S. A man.

L. Proceed.

S. He died in sin. Sin committed by his great-grandfather.

L. When was this?

S. Eleven million years ago.

L. Do you know what a microbe is?

S. Yes, Lord. It is a creature too small to be detected by my eye.

L. He commits depredations upon your blood?



S. Yes, Lord.

L. I give you leave to subject him to a billion years of misery for this offense. Go! Work your will upon him.

S. But, Lord, I have nothing against him; I am indifferent to him.

L. Why?

S. He is so infinitely small and contemptible. I am to him as is a mountain-range to a grain of sand.

L. What am I to man?

S. (Silent.)

L. Am I not, to a man, as is a billion solar systems to a grain of sand?

S. It is true, Lord.

L. Some microbes are larger than others. Does man regard the difference?

S. No, Lord. To him there is no difference of consequence. To him they are all microbes, all infinitely little and equally inconsequential.

L. To me there is no difference of consequence between a man & a microbe. Man looks down upon the speck at his feet called a microbe from an altitude of a thousand miles, so to speak, and regards him with indifference; I look down upon the specks called a man and a microbe from an altitude of a billion leagues, so to speak, and to me they are of a size. To me both are inconsequential. Man kills the microbes when he can?

S. Yes, Lord.

L. Then what? Does he keep him in mind years and years and go on contriving miseries for him?

S. No, Lord.

L. Does he forget him?

S. Yes, Lord.

L. Why?

S. He cares nothing more about him.

L. Employs himself with more important matters?

S. Yes, Lord.



L. Apparently man is quite a rational and dignified person, and can divorce his mind from uninteresting trivialities. Why does he affront me with the fancy that I interest Myself in trivialities—like men and microbes? II

Page 683

L. Is it true the human race thinks the universe was created for its convenience?

S. Yes, Lord.

L. The human race is modest. Speaking as a member of it, what do you think the other animals are for?

S. To furnish food and labor for man.

L. What is the sea for?

S. To furnish food for man. Fishes.

L. And the air?

S. To furnish sustenance for man. Birds and breath.

L. How many men are there?

S. Fifteen hundred millions.

L. (Referring to notes.) Take your pencil and set down some statistics. In a healthy man's lower intestine 28,000,000 microbes are born daily and die daily. In the rest of a man's body 122,000,000 microbes are born daily and die daily. The two sums aggregate-what?

S. About 150,000,000.

L. In ten days the aggregate reaches what?

S. Fifteen hundred millions.

L. It is for one person. What would it be for the whole human population?

S. Alas, Lord, it is beyond the power of figures to set down that multitude. It is billions of billions multiplied by billions of billions, and these multiplied again and again by billions of billions. The figures would stretch across the universe and hang over into space on both sides.

L. To what intent are these uncountable microbes introduced into the human race?

S. That they may eat.

L. Now then, according to man's own reasoning, what is man for?

S. Alas-alas!

L. What is he for?

S. To-to-furnish food for microbes.

L. Manifestly. A child could see it. Now then, with this common-sense light to aid your perceptions, what are the air, the land, and the ocean for?

S. To furnish food for man so that he may nourish, support, and multiply and replenish the microbes.

L. Manifestly. Does one build a boarding-house for the sake of the boarding-house itself or for the sake of the boarders?

S. Certainly for the sake of the boarders.

L. Man's a boarding-house.

S. I perceive it, Lord.

L. He is a boarding-house. He was never intended for anything else. If he had had less vanity and a clearer insight into the great truths that lie embedded in statistics he would have found it out early. As concerns the man who has gone unpunished eleven million years, is it your belief that in life he did his duty by his microbes?

S. Undoubtedly, Lord. He could not help it.

L. Then why punish him? He had no other duty to perform.

Whatever else may be said of this kind of doctrine, it is at least original and has a conclusive sound. Mark Twain had very little use for orthodoxy and conservatism. When it was announced that Dr. Jacques Loeb, of the University of California, had demonstrated the creation of life by chemical agencies he was deeply interested. When a newspaper writer commented that a "consensus of opinion among biologists" would probably rate Dr. Loeb as a man of lively imagination rather than an inerrant investigator of natural phenomena, he felt called to chaff the consensus idea.

Page 684

I wish I could be as young as that again. Although I seem so old now I was once as young as that. I remember, as if it were but thirty or forty years ago, how a paralyzing consensus of opinion accumulated from experts a-setting around about brother experts who had patiently and laboriously cold-chiseled their way into one or another of nature's safe-deposit vaults and were reporting that they had found something valuable was plenty for me. It settled it.

But it isn't so now-no. Because in the drift of the years I by and by found out that a Consensus examines a new thing with its feelings rather oftener than with its mind.

There was that primitive steam-engine-ages back, in Greek times: a Consensus made fun of it. There was the Marquis of Worcester's steam-engine 250 years ago: a Consensus made fun of it. There was Fulton's steamboat of a century ago: a French Consensus, including the great Napoleon, made fun of it. There was Priestley, with his oxygen: a Consensus scoffed at him, mobbed him, burned him out, banished him. While a Consensus was proving, by statistics and things, that a steamship could not cross the Atlantic, a steamship did it.

And so on through a dozen pages or more of lively satire, ending with an extract from Adam's Diary.

Then there was a Consensus about it. It was the very first one. It sat six days and nights. It was then delivered of the verdict that a world could not be made out of nothing; that such small things as sun and moon and stars might, maybe, but it would take years and years if there was considerable many of them. Then the Consensus got up and looked out of the window, and there was the whole outfit, spinning and sparkling in space! You never saw such a disappointed lot.

Adam.

He was writing much at this time, mainly for his own amusement, though now and then he offered one of his reflections for print. That beautiful fairy tale, "The Five Boons of Life," of which the most precious is "Death," was written at this period. Maeterlinck's lovely story of the bee interested him; he wrote about that. Somebody proposed a Martyrs' Day; he wrote a paper ridiculing the suggestion. In his note-book, too, there is a memorandum for a love-story of the Quarternary Epoch which would begin, "On a soft October afternoon 2,000,000 years ago." John Fiske's *Discovery of America*, Volume I, he said, was to furnish the animals and scenery, civilization and conversation to be the same as to-day; but apparently this idea was carried no further. He ranged through every subject from protoplasm to infinity, exalting, condemning, ridiculing, explaining; his brain was always busy—a dynamo that rested neither night nor day.

In April Clemens received notice of another yachting trip on the Kanawha, which this time would sail for the Bahama and West India islands. The guests were to be about the same.—[The invited ones of the party were Hon. T. B. Reed, A. G. Paine, Laurence Hutton, Dr. C. C. Rice, W. T. Foote, and S. L. Clemens. “Owners of the yacht,” Mr. Rogers called them, signing himself as “Their Guest.”]

Page 685

He sent this telegram:

H. H. Rogers, Fairhaven, Mass.

Can't get away this week. I have company here from tonight till middle of next week. Will Kanawha be sailing after that & can I go as Sunday-school superintendent at half rate? Answer and prepay.

Dr. Clemens.

The sailing date was conveniently arranged and there followed a happy cruise among those balmy islands. Mark Twain was particularly fond of "Tom" Reed, who had been known as "Czar" Reed in Congress, but was delightfully human in his personal life. They argued politics a good deal, and Reed, with all his training and intimate practical knowledge of the subject, confessed that he "couldn't argue with a man like that."

"Do you believe the things you say?" he asked once, in his thin, falsetto voice.

"Yes," said Clemens. "Some of them."

"Well, you want to look out. If you go on this way, by and by you'll get to believing nearly everything you say."

Draw poker appears to have been their favorite diversion. Clemens in his notes reports that off the coast of Florida Reed won twenty-three pots in succession. It was said afterward that they made no stops at any harbor; that when the chief officer approached the poker-table and told them they were about to enter some important port he received peremptory orders to "sail on and not interrupt the game." This, however, may be regarded as more or less founded on fiction.

CCXX

MARK TWAIN AND THE PHILIPPINES

Among the completed manuscripts of the early part of 1902 was a North American Review article (published in April)—"Does the Race of Man Love a Lord?"—a most interesting treatise on snobbery as a universal weakness. There were also some papers on the Philippine situation. In one of these Clemens wrote:

We have bought some islands from a party who did not own them; with real smartness and a good counterfeit of disinterested friendliness we coaxed a confiding weak nation into a trap and closed it upon them; we went back on an honored guest of the Stars and Stripes when we had no further use for him and chased him to the mountains; we are as indisputably in possession of a wide-spreading archipelago as if it were our property; we have pacified some thousands of the islanders and buried them; destroyed their fields;

burned their villages, and turned their widows and orphans out-of-doors; furnished heartbreak by exile to some dozens of disagreeable patriots; subjugated the remaining ten millions by Benevolent Assimilation, which is the pious new name of the musket; we have acquired property in the three hundred concubines and other slaves of our business partner, the Sultan of Sulu, and hoisted our protecting flag over that swag. And so, by these Providences of God—the

Page 686

phrase is the government's, not mine—we are a World Power; and are glad and proud, and have a back seat in the family. With tacks in it. At least we are letting on to be glad and proud; it is the best way. Indeed, it is the only way. We must maintain our dignity, for people are looking. We are a World Power; we cannot get out of it now, and we must make the best of it.

And again he wrote:

I am not finding fault with this use of our flag, for in order not to seem eccentric I have swung around now and joined the nation in the conviction that nothing can sully a flag. I was not properly reared, and had the illusion that a flag was a thing which must be sacredly guarded against shameful uses and unclean contacts lest it suffer pollution; and so when it was sent out to the Philippines to float over a wanton war and a robbing expedition I supposed it was polluted, and in an ignorant moment I said so. But I stand corrected. I concede and acknowledge that it was only the government that sent it on such an errand that was polluted. Let us compromise on that. I am glad to have it that way. For our flag could not well stand pollution, never having been used to it, but it is different with the administration.

But a much more conspicuous comment on the Philippine policy was the so-called “Defense of General Funston” for what Funston himself referred to as a “dirty Irish trick”; that is to say, deception in the capture of Aguinaldo. Clemens, who found it hard enough to reconcile himself to any form of warfare, was especially bitter concerning this particular campaign. The article appeared in the *North American Review* for May, 1902, and stirred up a good deal of a storm. He wrote much more on the subject—very much more—but it is still unpublished.

CCXXI

THE RETURN OF THE NATIVE

One day in April, 1902, Samuel Clemens received the following letter from the president of the University of Missouri:

My dear Mr. Clemens, Although you received the degree of doctor of literature last fall from Yale, and have had other honors conferred upon you by other great universities, we want to adopt you here as a son of the University of Missouri. In asking your permission to confer upon you the degree of LL.D. the University of Missouri does not aim to confer an honor upon you so much as to show her appreciation of you. The rules of the University forbid us to confer the degree upon any one in absentia. I hope very much that you can so arrange your plans as to be with us on the fourth day of next June, when we shall hold our Annual Commencement.

Very truly yours,
R. H. Jesse.

Clemens had not expected to make another trip to the West, but a proffered honor such as this from one's native State was not a thing to be declined.

It was at the end of May when he arrived in St. Louis, and he was met at the train there by his old river instructor and friend, Horace Bixby—as fresh, wiry, and capable as he had been forty-five years before.

Page 687

"I have become an old man. You are still thirty-five," Clemens said.

They went to the Planters Hotel, and the news presently got around that Mark Twain was there. There followed a sort of reception in the hotel lobby, after which Bixby took him across to the rooms of the Pilots Association, where the rivermen gathered in force to celebrate his return. A few of his old comrades were still alive, among them Beck Jolly. The same afternoon he took the train for Hannibal.

It was a busy five days that he had in Hannibal. High-school commencement day came first. He attended, and willingly, or at least patiently, sat through the various recitals and orations and orchestrations, dreaming and remembering, no doubt, other high-school commencements of more than half a century before, seeing in some of those young people the boys and girls he had known in that vanished time. A few friends of his youth were still there, but they were among the audience now, and no longer fresh and looking into the future. Their heads were white, and, like him, they were looking down the recorded years. Laura Hawkins was there and Helen Kercheval (Mrs. Frazer and Mrs. Garth now), and there were others, but they were few and scattering.

He was added to the program, and he made himself as one of the graduates, and told them some things of the young people of that earlier time that brought their laughter and their tears.

He was asked to distribute the diplomas, and he undertook the work in his own way. He took an armful of them and said to the graduates:

"Take one. Pick out a good one. Don't take two, but be sure you get a good one."

So each took one "unsight and unseen" aid made the more exact distributions among themselves later.

Next morning it was Saturday—he visited the old home on Hill Street, and stood in the doorway all dressed in white while a battalion of photographers made pictures of "this return of the native" to the threshold of his youth.

"It all seems so small to me," he said, as he looked through the house; "a boy's home is a big place to him. I suppose if I should come back again ten years from now it would be the size of a birdhouse."

He went through the rooms and up-stairs where he had slept and looked out the window down in the back yard where, nearly sixty years before, Tom Sawyer, Huck Finn, Joe Harper, and the rest—that is to say, Tom Blankenship, John Briggs, Will Pitts, and the Bowen boys—set out on their nightly escapades. Of that lightsome band Will Pitts and John Briggs still remained, with half a dozen others—schoolmates of the less adventurous sort. Buck Brown, who had been his rival in the spelling contests, was still

there, and John Robards, who had worn golden curls and the medal for good conduct, and Ed Pierce. And while these were assembled in a little group on the pavement outside the home a small old man came up and put out his hand, and it was Jimmy MacDaniel, to whom so long before, sitting on the river-bank and eating gingerbread, he had first told the story of Jim Wolfe and the cats.

Page 688

They put him into a carriage, drove him far and wide, and showed the hills and resorts and rendezvous of Tom Sawyer and his marauding band.

He was entertained that evening by the Labinnah Club (whose name was achieved by a backward spelling of Hannibal), where he found most of the survivors of his youth. The news report of that occasion states that he was introduced by Father McLoughlin, and that he “responded in a very humorous and touchingly pathetic way, breaking down in tears at the conclusion. Commenting on his boyhood days and referring to his mother was too much for the great humorist. Before him as he spoke were sitting seven of his boyhood friends.”

On Sunday morning Col. John Robards escorted him to the various churches and Sunday-schools. They were all new churches to Samuel Clemens, but he pretended not to recognize this fact. In each one he was asked to speak a few words, and he began by saying how good it was to be back in the old home Sunday-school again, which as a boy he had always so loved, and he would go on and point out the very place he had sat, and his escort hardly knew whether or not to enjoy the proceedings. At one place he told a moral story. He said:

Little boys and girls, I want to tell you a story which illustrates the value of perseverance—of sticking to your work, as it were. It is a story very proper for a Sunday-school. When I was a little boy in Hannibal I used to play a good deal up here on Holliday's Hill, which of course you all know. John Briggs and I played up there. I don't suppose there are any little boys as good as we were then, but of course that is not to be expected. Little boys in those days were 'most always good little boys, because those were the good old times when everything was better than it is now, but never mind that. Well, once upon a time, on Holliday's Hill, they were blasting out rock, and a man was drilling for a blast. He sat there and drilled and drilled and drilled perseveringly until he had a hole down deep enough for the blast. Then he put in the powder and tamped and tamped it down, but maybe he tamped it a little too hard, for the blast went off and he went up into the air, and we watched him. He went up higher and higher and got smaller and smaller. First he looked as big as a child, then as big as a dog, then as big as a kitten, then as big as a bird, and finally he went out of sight. John Briggs was with me, and we watched the place where he went out of sight, and by and by we saw him coming down first as big as a bird, then as big as a kitten, then as big as a dog, then as big as a child, and then he was a man again, and landed right in his seat and went to drilling just persevering, you see, and sticking to his work. Little boys and girls, that's the secret of success, just like that poor but honest workman on Holliday's Hill. Of course you won't always be appreciated. He wasn't. His employer was a hard man, and on Saturday night when he paid him he docked him fifteen minutes for the time he was up in the air—but never mind, he had his reward.

Page 689

He told all this in his solemn, grave way, though the Sunday-school was in a storm of enjoyment when he finished. There still remains a doubt in Hannibal as to its perfect suitability, but there is no doubt as to its acceptability.

That Sunday afternoon, with John Briggs, he walked over Holliday's Hill —the Cardiff Hill of Tom Sawyer. It was just such a Sunday as that one when they had so nearly demolished the negro driver and had damaged a cooper-shop. They calculated that nearly three thousand Sundays had passed since then, and now here they were once more, two old men with the hills still fresh and green, the river still sweeping by and rippling in the sun. Standing there together and looking across to the low-lying Illinois shore, and to the green islands where they had played, and to Lover's Leap on the south, the man who had been Sam Clemens said:

"John, that is one of the loveliest sights I ever saw. Down there by the island is the place we used to swim, and yonder is where a man was drowned, and there's where the steamboat sank. Down there on Lover's Leap is where the Millerites put on their robes one night to go to heaven. None of them went that night, but I suppose most of them have gone now."

John Briggs said:

"Sam, do you remember the day we stole the peaches from old man Price and one of his bow-legged niggers came after us with the dogs, and how we made up our minds that we'd catch that nigger and drown him?"

They came to the place where they had pried out the great rock that had so nearly brought them to grief. Sam Clemens said:

"John, if we had killed that man we'd have had a dead nigger on our hands without a cent to pay for him."

And so they talked on of this thing and that, and by and by they drove along the river, and Sam Clemens pointed out the place where he swam it and was taken with a cramp on the return swim, and believed for a while that his career was about to close.

"Once, near the shore, I thought I would let down," he said, "but was afraid to, knowing that if the water was deep I was a goner, but finally my knees struck the sand and I crawled out. That was the closest call I ever had."

They drove by the place where the haunted house had stood. They drank from a well they had always known, and from the bucket as they had always drunk, talking and always talking, fondling lovingly and lingeringly that most beautiful of all our possessions, the past.

“Sam,” said John, when they parted, “this is probably the last time we shall meet on this earth. God bless you. Perhaps somewhere we shall renew our friendship.”

“John,” was the answer, “this day has been worth thousands of dollars to me. We were like brothers once, and I feel that we are the same now. Good-by, John. I’ll try to meet you—somewhere.”

CCXXII

Page 690

A PROPHET HONORED IN HIS COUNTRY

Clemens left next day for Columbia. Committees met him at Rensselaer, Monroe City, Clapper, Stoutsville, Paris, Madison, Moberly—at every station along the line of his travel. At each place crowds were gathered when the train pulled in, to cheer and wave and to present him with flowers. Sometimes he spoke a few words; but oftener his eyes were full of tears—his voice would not come.

There is something essentially dramatic in official recognition by one's native State—the return of the lad who has set out unknown to battle with life, and who, having conquered, is invited back to be crowned. No other honor, however great and spectacular, is quite like that, for there is in it a pathos and a completeness that are elemental and stir emotions as old as life itself.

It was on the 4th of June, 1902, that Mark Twain received his doctor of laws degree from the State University at Columbia, Missouri. James Wilson, Secretary of Agriculture, and Ethan Allen Hitchcock, Secretary of the Interior, were among those similarly honored. Mark Twain was naturally the chief attraction. Dressed in his Yale scholastic gown he led the procession of graduating students, and, as in Hannibal, awarded them their diplomas. The regular exercises were made purposely brief in order that some time might be allowed for the conferring of the degrees. This ceremony was a peculiarly impressive one. Gardner Lathrop read a brief statement introducing "America's foremost author and best-loved citizen, Samuel Langhorne Clemens—Mark Twain."

Clemens rose, stepped out to the center of the stage, and paused. He seemed to be in doubt as to whether he should make a speech or simply express his thanks and retire. Suddenly, and without a signal, the great audience rose as one man and stood in silence at his feet. He bowed, but he could not speak. Then that vast assembly began a peculiar chant, spelling out slowly the word Missouri, with a pause between each letter. It was dramatic; it was tremendous in its impressiveness. He had recovered himself when they finished. He said he didn't know whether he was expected to make a speech or not. They did not leave him in doubt. They cheered and demanded a speech, a speech, and he made them one—one of the speeches he could make best, full of quaint phrasing, happy humor, gentle and dramatic pathos. He closed by telling the watermelon story for its "moral effect."

He was the guest of E. W. Stevens in Columbia, and a dinner was given in his honor. They would have liked to keep him longer, but he was due in St. Louis again to join in the dedication of the grounds, where was to be held a World's Fair, to celebrate the Louisiana Purchase. Another ceremony he attended was the christening of the St. Louis harbor-boat, or rather the rechristening, for it had been decided to change its name from the St. Louis—[Originally the *Elon G. Smith*, built in 1873.]—to the Mark Twain. A short trip was made on it for the ceremony. Governor Francis and Mayor

Wells were of the party, and Count and Countess Rochambeau and Marquis de Lafayette, with the rest of the French group that had come over for the dedication of the World's Fair grounds.

Page 691

Mark Twain himself was invited to pilot the harbor boat, and so returned for the last time to his old place at the wheel. They all collected in the pilot-house behind him, feeling that it was a memorable occasion. They were going along well enough when he saw a little ripple running out from the shore across the bow. In the old days he could have told whether it indicated a bar there or was only caused by the wind, but he could not be sure any more. Turning to the pilot languidly, he said: "I feel a little tired. I guess you had better take the wheel."

Luncheon was served aboard, and Mayor Wells made the christening speech; then the Countess Rochambeau took a bottle of champagne from the hand of Governor Francis and smashed it on the deck, saying, "I christen thee, good boat, Mark Twain." So it was, the Mississippi joined in according him honors. In his speech of reply he paid tribute to those illustrious visitors from France and recounted something of the story of French exploration along that great river.

"The name of La Salle will last as long as the river itself," he said; "will last until commerce is dead. We have allowed the commerce of the river to die, but it was to accommodate the railroads, and we must be grateful."

Carriages were waiting for them when the boat landed in the afternoon, and the party got in and were driven to a house which had been identified as Eugene Field's birthplace. A bronze tablet recording this fact had been installed, and this was to be the unveiling. The place was not in an inviting quarter of the town. It stood in what is known as Walsh's Row—was fashionable enough once, perhaps, but long since fallen into disrepute. Ragged children played in the doorways, and thirsty lodgers were making trips with tin pails to convenient bar-rooms. A curious nondescript audience assembled around the little group of dedicators, wondering what it was all about. The tablet was concealed by the American flag, which could be easily pulled away by an attached cord. Governor Francis spoke a few words, to the effect that they had gathered here to unveil a tablet to an American poet, and that it was fitting that Mark Twain should do this. They removed their hats, and Clemens, his white hair blowing in the wind, said:

"My friends; we are here with reverence and respect to commemorate and enshrine in memory the house where was born a man who, by his life, made bright the lives of all who knew him, and by his literary efforts cheered the thoughts of thousands who never knew him. I take pleasure in unveiling the tablet of Eugene Field."

The flag fell and the bronze inscription was revealed. By this time the crowd, generally, had recognized who it was that was speaking. A working-man proposed three cheers for Mark Twain, and they were heartily given. Then the little party drove away, while the neighborhood collected to regard the old house with a new interest.

Page 692

It was reported to Clemens later that there was some dispute as to the identity of the Field birthplace. He said:

“Never mind. It is of no real consequence whether it is his birthplace or not. A rose in any other garden will bloom as sweet.”

CCXXIII

AT YORK HARBOR

They decided to spend the summer at York Harbor, Maine. They engaged a cottage, there, and about the end of June Mr. Rogers brought his yacht *Kanawha* to their waterfront at Riverdale, and in perfect weather took them to Maine by sea. They landed at York Harbor and took possession of their cottage, *The Pines*, one of their many attractive summer lodges. Howells, at Kittery Point, was not far away, and everything promised a happy summer.

Mrs. Clemens wrote to Mrs. Crane:

We are in the midst of pines. They come up right about us, and the house is so high and the roots of the trees are so far below the veranda that we are right in the branches. We drove over to call on Mr. and Mrs. Howells. The drive was most beautiful, and never in my life have I seen such a variety of wild flowers in so short a space.

Howells tells us of the wide, low cottage in a pine grove overlooking York River, and how he used to sit with Clemens that summer at a corner of the veranda farthest away from Mrs. Clemens's window, where they could read their manuscripts to each other, and tell their stories and laugh their hearts out without disturbing her.

Clemens, as was his habit, had taken a work-room in a separate cottage “in the house of a friend and neighbor, a fisherman and a boatman”:

There was a table where he could write, and a bed where he could lie down and read; and there, unless my memory has played me one of those constructive tricks that people's memories indulge in, he read me the first chapters of an admirable story. The scene was laid in a Missouri town, and the characters such as he had known in boyhood; but often as I tried to make him own it, he denied having written any such story; it is possible that I dreamed it, but I hope the *Ms.* will yet be found.

Howells did not dream it; but in one way his memory misled him. The story was one which Clemens had heard in Hannibal, and he doubtless related it in his vivid way. Howells, writing at a later time, quite naturally included it among the several manuscripts which Clemens read aloud to him. Clemens may have intended to write

the tale, may even have begun it, though this is unlikely. The incidents were too well known and too notorious in his old home for fiction.

Page 693

Among the stories that Clemens did show, or read, to Howells that summer was "The Belated Passport," a strong, intensely interesting story with what Howells in a letter calls a "goat's tail ending," perhaps meaning that it stopped with a brief and sudden shake—with a joke, in fact, altogether unimportant, and on the whole disappointing to the reader. A far more notable literary work of that summer grew out of a true incident which Howells related to Clemens as they sat chatting together on the veranda overlooking the river one summer afternoon. It was a pathetic episode in the life of some former occupants of The Pines—the tale of a double illness in the household, where a righteous deception was carried on during several weeks for the benefit of a life that was about to slip away. Out of this grew the story, "Was it Heaven? or Hell?" a heartbreaking history which probes the very depths of the human soul. Next to "Hadleyburg," it is Mark Twain's greatest fictional sermon.

Clemens that summer wrote, or rather finished, his most pretentious poem. One day at Riverdale, when Mrs. Clemens had been with him on the lawn, they had remembered together the time when their family of little folks had filled their lives so full, conjuring up dream-like glimpses of them in the years of play and short frocks and hair-plaits down their backs. It was pathetic, heart-wringing fancying; and later in the day Clemens conceived and began the poem which now he brought to conclusion. It was built on the idea of a mother who imagines her dead child still living, and describes to any listener the pictures of her fancy. It is an impressive piece of work; but the author, for some reason, did not offer it for publication.—[This poem was completed on the anniversary of Susy's death and is of considerable length. Some selections from it will be found under Appendix U, at the end of this work.]

Mrs. Clemens, whose health earlier in the year had been delicate, became very seriously ill at York Harbor. Howells writes:

At first she had been about the house, and there was one gentle afternoon when she made tea for us in the parlor, but that was the last time I spoke with her. After that it was really a question of how soonest and easiest she could be got back to Riverdale.

She had seemed to be in fairly good health and spirits for several weeks after the arrival at York. Then, early in August, there came a great celebration of some municipal anniversary, and for two or three days there were processions, mass-meetings, and so on by day, with fireworks at night. Mrs. Clemens, always young in spirit, was greatly interested. She went about more than her strength warranted, seeing and hearing and enjoying all that was going on. She was finally persuaded to forego the remaining ceremonies and rest quietly on the pleasant veranda at home; but she had overtaxed herself and a collapse was inevitable. Howells and two friends called one afternoon, and a friend of the Queen of Rumania, a Madame Hartwig, who had brought from that gracious sovereign a letter which closed in this simple and modest fashion:

Page 694

I beg your pardon for being a bore to one I so deeply love and admire, to whom I owe days and days of forgetfulness of self and troubles, and the intensest of all joys-hero-worship! People don't always realize what a happiness that is! God bless you for every beautiful thought you poured into my tired heart, and for every smile on a weary way.
Carmen Sylva.

This was the occasion mentioned by Howells when Mrs. Clemens made tea for them in the parlor for the last time. Her social life may be said to have ended that afternoon. Next morning the break came. Clemens, in his notebook for that day, writes:

Tuesday, August 12, 1902. At 7 A.M. Livy taken violently ill. Telephoned and Dr. Lambert was here in 1/2 hour. She could not breathe-was likely to stifle. Also she had severe palpitation. She believed she was dying. I also believed it.

Nurses were summoned, and Mrs. Crane and others came from Elmira. Clara Clemens took charge of the household and matters generally, and the patient was secluded and guarded from every disturbing influence. Clemens slipped about with warnings of silence. A visitor found notices in Mark Twain's writing pinned to the trees near Mrs. Clemens's window warning the birds not to sing too loudly.

The patient rallied, but she remained very much debilitated. On September 3d the notebook says:

Always Mr. Rogers keeps his yacht Kanawha in commission & ready to fly here and take us to Riverdale on telegraphic notice.

But Mrs. Clemens was unable to return by sea. When it was decided at last, in October, that she could be removed to Riverdale, Clemens and Howells went to Boston and engaged an invalid car to make the journey from York Harbor to Riverdale without change. Howells tells us that Clemens gave his strictest personal attention to the arrangement of these details, and that they absorbed him.

There was no particular of the business which he did not scrutinize and master With the inertness that grows upon an aging man he had been used to delegate more and more things, but of that thing I perceived that he would not delegate the least detail.

They made the journey on the 16th, in nine and a half hours. With the exception of the natural weariness due to such a trip, the invalid was apparently no worse on their arrival. The stout English butler carried her to her room. It would be many months before she would leave it again. In one of his memoranda Clemens wrote:

Our dear prisoner is where she is through overwork-day & night devotion to the children & me. We did not know how to value it. We know now.

And in a notation, on a letter praising him for what he had done for the world's enjoyment, and for his splendid triumph over debt, he said:

Livy never gets her share of these applauses, but it is because the people do not know. Yet she is entitled to the lion's share.

Page 695

He wrote Twichell at the end of October:

Livy drags along drearily. It must be hard times for that turbulent spirit. It will be a long time before she is on her feet again. It is a most pathetic case. I wish I could transfer it to myself. Between ripping & raging & smoking & reading I could get a good deal of holiday out of it. Clara runs the house smoothly & capitably.

Heavy as was the cloud of illness, he could not help pestering Twichell a little about a recent mishap—a sprained shoulder:

I should like to know how & where it happened. In the pulpit, as like as not, otherwise you would not be taking so much pains to conceal it. This is not a malicious suggestion, & not a personally invented one: you told me yourself once that you threw artificial power & impressiveness in your sermons where needed by “banging the Bible”—(your own words). You have reached a time of life when it is not wise to take these risks. You would better jump around. We all have to change our methods as the infirmities of age creep upon us. Jumping around will be impressive now, whereas before you were gray it would have excited remark.

Mrs. Clemens seemed to improve as the weeks passed, and they had great hopes of her complete recovery. Clemens took up some work—a new Huck Finn story, inspired by his trip to Hannibal. It was to have two parts—Huck and Tom in youth, and then their return in old age. He did some chapters quite in the old vein, and wrote to Howells of his plan. Howells answered:

It is a great lay-out: what I shall enjoy most will be the return of the old fellows to the scene and their tall lying. There is a matchless chance there. I suppose you will put in plenty of pegs in this prefatory part.

But the new story did not reach completion. Huck and Tom would not come back, even to go over the old scenes.

CCXXIV

THE SIXTY-SEVENTH BIRTHDAY DINNER

It was on the evening of the 27th of November, 1902, I at the Metropolitan Club, New York City, that Col. George Harvey, president of the Harper Company, gave Mark Twain a dinner in celebration of his sixty-seventh birthday. The actual date fell three days later; but that would bring it on Sunday, and to give it on Saturday night would be more than likely to carry it into Sabbath morning, and so the 27th was chosen. Colonel Harvey himself presided, and Howells led the speakers with a poem, “A Double-Barreled Sonnet to Mark Twain,” which closed:

Still, to have everything beyond cavil right,
We will dine with you here till Sunday night.

Thomas Brackett Reed followed with what proved to be the last speech he would ever make, as it was also one of his best. All the speakers did well that night, and they included some of the country's foremost in oratory: Chauncey Depew, St. Clair McKelway, Hamilton Mabie, and Wayne MacVeagh. Dr. Henry van Dyke and John Kendrick Bangs read poems. The chairman constantly kept the occasion from becoming too serious by maintaining an attitude of "thinking ambassador" for the guest of the evening, gently pushing Clemens back in his seat when he attempted to rise and expressing for him an opinion of each of the various tributes.

Page 696

"The limit has been reached," he announced at the close of Dr. van Dyke's poem. "More that is better could not be said. Gentlemen, Mr. Clemens."

It is seldom that Mark Twain has made a better after-dinner speech than he delivered then. He was surrounded by some of the best minds of the nation, men assembled to do him honor. They expected much of him—to Mark Twain always an inspiring circumstance. He was greeted with cheers and hand-clapping that came volley after volley, and seemed never ready to end. When it had died away at last he stood waiting a little in the stillness for his voice; then he said, "I think I ought to be allowed to talk as long as I want to," and again the storm broke.

It is a speech not easy to abridge—a finished and perfect piece of after-dinner eloquence,—[The "Sixty-seventh Birthday Speech" entire is included in the volume *Mark Twain's Speeches*.]—full of humorous stories and moving references to old friends—to Hay; and Reed, and Twichell, and Howells, and Rogers, the friends he had known so long and loved so well. He told of his recent trip to his boyhood home, and how he had stood with John Briggs on Holliday's Hill and they had pointed out the haunts of their youth. Then at the end he paid a tribute to the companion of his home, who could not be there to share his evening's triumph. This peroration—a beautiful heart-offering to her and to those that had shared in long friendship—demands admission:

Now, there is one invisible guest here. A part of me is not present; the larger part, the better part, is yonder at her home; that is my wife, and she has a good many personal friends here, and I think it won't distress any one of them to know that, although she is going to be confined to her bed for many months to come from that nervous prostration, there is not any danger and she is coming along very well—and I think it quite appropriate that I should speak of her. I knew her for the first time just in the same year that I first knew John Hay and Tom Reed and Mr. Twichell—thirty-six years ago—and she has been the best friend I have ever had, and that is saying a good deal—she has reared me—she and Twichell together—and what I am I owe to them. Twichell—why, it is such a pleasure to look upon Twichell's face! For five and twenty years I was under the Rev. Mr. Twichell's tuition, I was in his pastorate occupying a pew in his church and held him in due reverence. That man is full of all the graces that go to make a person companionable and beloved; and wherever Twichell goes to start a church the people flock there to buy the land; they find real estate goes up all around the spot, and the envious and the thoughtful always try to get Twichell to move to their neighborhood and start a church; and wherever you see him go you can go and buy land there with confidence, feeling sure that there will be a double price for you before very long. I have tried to do good in this world,

Page 697

and it is marvelous in how many different ways I have done good, and it is comfortable to reflect—now, there's Mr. Rogers—just out of the affection I bear that man many a time I have given him points in finance that he had never thought of—and if he could lay aside envy, prejudice, and superstition, and utilize those ideas in his business, it would make a difference in his bank-account. Well, I liked the poetry. I liked all the speeches and the poetry, too. I liked Dr. van Dyke's poem. I wish I could return thanks in proper measure to you, gentlemen, who have spoken and violated your feelings to pay me compliments; some were merited and some you overlooked, it is true; and Colonel Harvey did slander every one of you, and put things into my mouth that I never said, never thought of at all.

And now my wife and I, out of our single heart, return you our deepest and most grateful thanks, and—yesterday was her birthday.

The sixty-seventh birthday dinner was widely celebrated by the press, and newspaper men generally took occasion to pay brilliant compliments to Mark Twain. Arthur Brisbane wrote editorially:

For more than a generation he has been the Messiah of a genuine gladness and joy to the millions of three continents.

It was little more than a week later that one of the old friends he had mentioned, Thomas Brackett Reed, apparently well and strong that birthday evening, passed from the things of this world. Clemens felt his death keenly, and in a "good-by" which he wrote for Harper's Weekly he said:

His was a nature which invited affection—compelled it, in fact—and met it half-way. Hence, he was "Tom" to the most of his friends and to half of the nation

I cannot remember back to a time when he was not "Tom" Reed to me, nor to a time when he could have been offended at being so addressed by me. I cannot remember back to a time when I could let him alone in an after-dinner speech if he was present, nor to a time when he did not take my extravagance concerning him and misstatements about him in good part, nor yet to a time when he did not pay them back with usury when his turn came. The last speech he made was at my birthday dinner at the end of November, when naturally I was his text; my last word to him was in a letter the next day; a day later I was illustrating a fantastic article on art with his portrait among others—a portrait now to be laid reverently away among the jests that begin in humor and end in pathos. These things happened only eight days ago, and now he is gone from us, and the nation is speaking of him as one who was. It seems incredible, impossible. Such a man, such a friend, seems to us a permanent possession; his vanishing from

our midst is unthinkable, as was the vanishing of the Campanile, that had stood for a thousand years and was turned to dust in a moment.

The appreciation closes:

Page 698

I have only wished to say how fine and beautiful was his life and character, and to take him by the hand and say good-by, as to a fortunate friend who has done well his work and gees a pleasant journey.

CCXXV

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CONTROVERSIES

The North American Review for December (1902) contained an instalment of the Christian Science series which Mark Twain had written in Vienna several years before. He had renewed his interest in the doctrine, and his admiration for Mrs. Eddy's peculiar abilities and his antagonism toward her had augmented in the mean time. Howells refers to the "mighty moment when Clemens was building his engines of war for the destruction of Christian Science, which superstition nobody, and he least of all, expected to destroy":

He believed that as a religious machine the Christian Science Church was as perfect as the Roman Church, and destined to be more formidable in its control of the minds of men

An interesting phase of his psychology in this business was not. only his admiration for the masterly policy of the Christian Science hierarchy, but his willingness to allow the miracles of its healers to be tried on his friends and family if they wished it. He had a tender heart for the whole generation of empirics, as well as the newer sorts of scientists, but he seemed to base his faith in them largely upon the failure of the regulars, rather than upon their own successes, which also he believed in. He was recurrently, but not insisently, desirous that you should try their strange magics when you were going to try the familiar medicines.

Clemens never had any quarrel with the theory of Christian Science or mental healing, or with any of the empiric practices. He acknowledged good in all of them, and he welcomed most of them in preference to materia medica. It is true that his animosity for the founder of the Christian Science cult sometimes seems to lap over and fringe the religion itself; but this is apparent rather than real. Furthermore, he frequently expressed a deep obligation which humanity owed to the founder of the faith, in that she had organized a healing element ignorantly and indifferently employed hitherto. His quarrel with Mrs. Eddy lay in the belief that she herself, as he expressed it, was "a very unsound Christian Scientist."

I believe she has a serious malady—self-edification—and that it will be well to have one of the experts demonstrate over her. [But he added]: Closely examined, painstakingly studied, she is easily the most interesting person on the planet, and in several ways as easily the most extraordinary woman that was ever born upon it.

Necessarily, the forces of Christian Science were aroused by these articles, and there were various replies, among them, one by the founder herself, a moderate rejoinder in her usual literary form.

Page 699

"Mrs. Eddy in Error," in the North American Review for April, 1903, completed what Clemens had to say on the matter for this time.

He was putting together a book on the subject, comprised of his various published papers and some added chapters. It would not be a large volume, and he offered to let his Christian Science opponents share it with him, stating their side of the case. Mr. William D. McCrackan, one of the church's chief advocates, was among those invited to participate. McCrackan and Clemens, from having begun as enemies, had become quite friendly, and had discussed their differences face to face at considerable length. Early in the controversy Clemens one night wrote McCrackan a pretty savage letter. He threw it on the hall table for mailing, but later got out of bed and slipped down-stairs to get it. It was too late—the letters had been gathered up and mailed. Next evening a truly Christian note came from McCrackan, returning the hasty letter, which he said he was sure the writer would wish to recall. Their friendship began there. For some reason, however, the collaborated volume did not materialize. In the end, publication was delayed a number of years, by which time Clemens's active interest was a good deal modified, though the practice itself never failed to invite his attention.

Howells refers to his anti-Christian Science rages, which began with the postponement of the book, and these Clemens vented at the time in another manuscript entitled, "Eddypus," an imaginary history of a thousand years hence, when Eddyism should rule the world. By that day its founder would have become a deity, and the calendar would be changed to accord with her birth. It was not publishable matter, and really never intended as such. It was just one of the things which Mark Twain wrote to relieve mental pressure.

CCXXVI

"Was it heaven? Or hell?"

The Christmas number of Harper's Magazine for 1902 contained the story, "Was it Heaven? or Hell?" and it immediately brought a flood of letters to its author from grateful readers on both sides of the ocean. An Englishman wrote: "I want to thank you for writing so pathetic and so profoundly true a story"; and an American declared it to be the best short story ever written. Another letter said:

I have learned to love those maiden liars—love and weep over them
—then put them beside Dante's Beatrice in Paradise.

There were plenty of such letters; but there was one of a different sort. It was a letter from a man who had but recently gone through almost precisely the experience narrated in the tale. His dead daughter had even borne the same name—Helen. She had died of typhus while her mother was prostrated with the same malady, and the

deception had been maintained in precisely the same way, even to the fictitiously written letters. Clemens replied to this letter, acknowledging the striking nature of the coincidence it related, and added that, had he invented the story, he would have believed it a case of mental telegraphy.

Page 700

I was merely telling a true story just as it had been told to me by one who well knew the mother and the daughter & all the beautiful & pathetic details. I was living in the house where it had happened, three years before, & I put it on paper at once while it was fresh in my mind, & its pathos still straining at my heartstrings.

Clemens did not guess that the coincidences were not yet complete, that within a month the drama of the tale would be enacted in his own home. In his note-book, under the date of December 24(1902), he wrote:

Jean was hit with a chill: Clara was completing her watch in her mother's room and there was no one able to force Jean to go to bed. As a result she is pretty ill to-day-fever & high temperature.

Three days later he added:

It was pneumonia. For 5 days Jean's temperature ranged between 103 & 104 $\frac{2}{5}$, till this morning, when it got down to 101. She looks like an escaped survivor of a forest fire. For 6 days now my story in the Christmas Harper's "Was it Heaven? or Hell?"—has been enacted in this household. Every day Clara & the nurses have lied about Jean to her mother, describing the fine times she is having outdoors in the winter sports.

That proved a hard, trying winter in the Clemens home, and the burden of it fell chiefly, indeed almost entirely, upon Clara Clemens. Mrs. Clemens became still more frail, and no other member of the family, not even her husband, was allowed to see her for longer than the briefest interval. Yet the patient was all the more anxious to know the news, and daily it had to be prepared—chiefly invented—for her comfort. In an account which Clemens once set down of the "Siege and Season of Unveracity," as he called it, he said:

Clara stood a daily watch of three or four hours, and hers was a hard office indeed. Daily she sealed up in her heart a dozen dangerous truths, and thus saved her mother's life and hope and happiness with holy lies. She had never told her mother a lie in her life before, and I may almost say that she never told her a truth afterward. It was fortunate for us all that Clara's reputation for truthfulness was so well established in her mother's mind. It was our daily protection from disaster. The mother never doubted Clara's word. Clara could tell her large improbabilities without exciting any suspicion, whereas if I tried to market even a small and simple one the case would have been different. I was never able to get a reputation like Clara's. Mrs. Clemens questioned Clara every day concerning Jean's health, spirits, clothes, employments, and amusements, and how she was enjoying herself; and Clara furnished the information right along in minute detail—every word of it false, of course. Every day she had to tell how Jean dressed, and in time she got so tired of using Jean's existing clothes over and over again, and trying to get new effects out of them, that

Page 701

finally, as a relief to her hard-worked invention, she got to adding imaginary clothes to Jean's wardrobe, and probably would have doubled it and trebled it if a warning note in her mother's comments had not admonished her that she was spending more money on these spectral gowns and things than the family income justified.

Some portions of detailed accounts of Clara's busy days of this period, as written at the time by Clemens to Twichell and to Mrs. Crane, are eminently worth preserving. To Mrs. Crane:

Clara does not go to her Monday lesson in New York today [her mother having seemed not so well through the night], but forgets that fact and enters her mother's room (where she has no business to be) toward train-time dressed in a wrapper. *Livy*. Why, Clara, aren't you going to your lesson? *Clara* (almost caught). Yes. *L*. In that costume? *CL*. Oh no. *L*. Well, you can't make your train; it's impossible. *CL*. I know, but I'm going to take the other one. *L*. Indeed that won't do—you'll be ever so much too late for your lesson. *CL*. No, the lesson-time has been put an hour later. *L*. (satisfied, then suddenly). But, Clara, that train and the late lesson together will make you late to Mrs. Hapgood's luncheon. *CL*. No, the train leaves fifteen minutes earlier than it used to. *L*. (satisfied). Tell Mrs. Hapgood, *etc.*, *etc.*, *etc.* (which Clara promises to do). Clara, dear, after the luncheon—I hate to put this on you—but could you do two or three little shopping-errands for me? *CL*. Oh, it won't trouble me a bit—I can do it. (Takes a list of the things she is to buy—a list which she will presently hand to another.)

At 3 or 4 P.M. Clara takes the things brought from New York, studies over her part a little, then goes to her mother's room.

Livy. It's very good of you, dear. Of course, if I had known it was going to be so snowy and drizzly and sloppy I wouldn't have asked you to buy them. Did you get wet? *CL*. Oh, nothing to hurt. *L*. You took a cab both ways? *CL*. Not from the station to the lesson—the weather was good enough till that was over. *L*. Well, now, tell me everything Mrs. Hapgood said. Clara tells her a long yarn—avoiding novelties and surprises and anything likely to inspire questions difficult to answer; and of course detailing the menu, for if it had been the feeding of the 5,000 *Livy* would have insisted on knowing what kind of bread it was and how the fishes were served. By and by, while talking of something else: *Livy*. Clams!—in the end of December. Are you sure it was clams? *CL*. I didn't say cl—I meant Blue Points. *L*. (tranquilized). It seemed odd. What is Jean doing? *CL*. She said she was going to do a little typewriting. *L*. Has she been out to-day? *CL*. Only a moment, right after luncheon. She was determined

Page 702

to go out again, but—— L. How did you know she was out? CL. (saving herself in time). Katie told me. She was determined to go out again in the rain and snow, but I persuaded her to stay in. L. (with moving and grateful admiration). Clara, you are wonderful! the wise watch you keep over Jean, and the influence you have over her; it's so lovely of you, and I tied here and can't take care of her myself. (And she goes on with these undeserved praises till Clara is expiring with shame.)

To Twichell:

I am to see Livy a moment every afternoon until she has another bad night; and I stand in dread, for with all my practice I realize that in a sudden emergency I am but a poor, clumsy liar, whereas a fine alert and capable emergency liar is the only sort that is worth anything in a sick-chamber. Now, Joe, just see what reputation can do. All Clara's life she has told Livy the truth and now the reward comes; Clara lies to her three and a half hours every day, and Livy takes it all at par, whereas even when I tell her a truth it isn't worth much without corroboration

Soon my brief visit is due. I've just been up listening at Livy's door.

5 P.M. A great disappointment. I was sitting outside Livy's door waiting. Clara came out a minute ago and said Livy is not so well, and the nurse can't let me see her to-day.

That pathetic drama was to continue in some degree for many a long month. All that winter and spring Mrs. Clemens kept but a frail hold on life. Clemens wrote little, and refused invitations everywhere he could. He spent his time largely in waiting for the two-minute period each day when he could stand at the bed-foot and say a few words to the invalid, and he confined his writing mainly to the comforting, affectionate messages which he was allowed to push under her door. He was always waiting there long before the moment he was permitted to enter. Her illness and her helplessness made manifest what Howells has fittingly characterized as his "beautiful and tender loyalty to her, which was the most moving quality of his most faithful soul."

CCXXVII

THE SECOND RIVERDALE WINTER

Most of Mark Twain's stories have been dramatized at one time or another, and with more or less success. He had two plays going that winter, one of them the little "Death Disk," which—in story form had appeared a year before in Harper's Magazine. It was

put on at the Carnegie Lyceum with considerable effect, but it was not of sufficient importance to warrant a long continuance.

Another play of that year was a dramatization of Huckleberry Finn, by Lee Arthur. This was played with a good deal of success in Baltimore, Philadelphia, and elsewhere, the receipts ranging from three hundred to twenty-one hundred dollars per night, according to the weather and locality. Why the play was discontinued is not altogether apparent; certainly many a dramatic enterprise has gone further, faring worse.

Page 703

Huck in book form also had been having adventures a little earlier, in being tabooed on account of his morals by certain librarians of Denver and Omaha. It was years since Huck had been in trouble of that sort, and he acquired a good deal of newspaper notoriety in consequence.

Certain entries in Mark Twain's note-book reveal somewhat of his life and thought at this period. We find such entries as this:

Saturday, January 3, 1903. The offspring of riches: Pride, vanity, ostentation, arrogance, tyranny.

Sunday, January 4, 1903. The offspring of poverty: Greed, sordidness, envy, hate, malice, cruelty, meanness, lying, shirking, cheating, stealing, murder.

Monday, February 2, 1903. 33d wedding anniversary. I was allowed to see Livy 5 minutes this morning in honor of the day. She makes but little progress toward recovery, still there is certainly some, we are sure.

Sunday, March 1, 1903. We may not doubt that society in heaven consists mainly of undesirable persons.

Thursday, March 19, 1903. Susy's birthday. She would be 31 now.

The family illnesses, which presently included an allotment for himself, his old bronchitis, made him rage more than ever at the imperfections of the species which could be subject to such a variety of ills. Once he wrote:

Man was made at the end of the week's work when God was tired.

And again:

Adam, man's benefactor—he gave him all that he has ever received that was worth having—death.

The Riverdale home was in reality little more than a hospital that spring. Jean had scarcely recovered her physical strength when she was attacked by measles, and Clara also fell a victim to the infection. Fortunately Mrs. Clemens's health had somewhat improved.

It was during this period that Clemens formulated his eclectic therapeutic doctrine. Writing to Twichell April 4, 1903, he said:

Livy does make a little progress these past 3 or 4 days, progress which is visible to even the untrained eye. The physicians are doing good work for her, but my notion is,



that no art of healing is the best for all ills. I should distribute the ailments around: surgery cases to the surgeon; lupus to the actinic-ray specialist; nervous prostration to the Christian Scientist; most ills to the allopath & the homeopath; & (in my own particular case) rheumatism, gout, & bronchial attack to the osteopathist.

He had plenty of time to think and to read during those weeks of confinement, and to rage, and to write when he felt the need of that expression, though he appears to have completed not much for print beyond his reply to Mrs. Eddy, already mentioned, and his burlesque, "Instructions in Art," with pictures by himself, published in the Metropolitan for April and May.

Page 704

Howells called his attention to some military outrages in the Philippines, citing a case where a certain lieutenant had tortured one of his men, a mild offender, to death out of pure deviltry, and had been tried but not punished for his fiendish crime.—[The torture to death of Private Edward C. Richter, an American soldier, by orders of a commissioned officer of the United States army on the night of February 7, 1902. Private Richter was bound and gagged and the gag held in his mouth by means of a club while ice-water was slowly poured into his face, a dipper full at a time, for two hours and a half, until life became extinct.]

Clemens undertook to give expression to his feelings on this subject, but he boiled so when he touched pen to paper to write of it that it was simply impossible for him to say anything within the bounds of print. Then his only relief was to rise and walk the floor, and curse out his fury at the race that had produced such a specimen.

Mrs. Clemens, who perhaps got some drift or the echo of these tempests, now and then sent him a little admonitory, affectionate note.

Among the books that Clemens read, or tried to read, during his confinement were certain of the novels of Sir Walter Scott. He had never been able to admire Scott, and determined now to try to understand this author's popularity and his standing with the critics; but after wading through the first volume of one novel, and beginning another one, he concluded to apply to one who could speak as having authority. He wrote to Brander Matthews:

Dear Brander,—I haven't been out of my bed for 4 weeks, but-well, I have been reading a good deal, & it occurs to me to ask you to sit down, some time or other when you have 8 or 9 months to spare, & jot me down a certain few literary particulars for my help & elevation. Your time need not be thrown away, for at your further leisure you can make Columbian lectures out of the results & do your students a good turn.

1. Are there in Sir Walter's novels passages done in good English—English which is neither slovenly nor involved?
2. Are there passages whose English is not poor & thin & commonplace, but is of a quality above that?
3. Are there passages which burn with real fire—not punk, fox-fire, make-believe?
4. Has he heroes & heroines who are not cads and cadesses?
5. Has he personages whose acts & talk correspond with their characters as described by him?



6. Has he heroes & heroines whom the reader admires—admires and knows why?
7. Has he funny characters that are funny, and humorous passages that are humorous?
8. Does he ever chain the reader's interest & make him reluctant to lay the book down?
9. Are there pages where he ceases from posing, ceases from admiring the placid flood & flow of his own dilution, ceases from being artificial, & is for a time, long or short, recognizably sincere & in earnest?
10. Did he know how to write English, & didn't do it because he didn't want to?

Page 705

11. Did he use the right word only when he couldn't think of another one, or did he run so much to wrong words because he didn't know the right one when he saw it?

12. Can you read him and keep your respect for him? Of course a person could in his day—an era of sentimentality & sloppy romantics—but land! can a body do it to-day?

Brander, I lie here dying; slowly dying, under the blight of Sir Walter. I have read the first volume of Rob Roy, & as far as Chapter xix of Guy Mannering, & I can no longer hold my head up or take my nourishment. Lord, it's all so juvenile! so artificial, so shoddy; & such wax figures & skeletons & specters. Interest? Why, it is impossible to feel an interest in these bloodless shams, these milk-&-water humbugs. And oh, the poverty of invention! Not poverty in inventing situations, but poverty in furnishing reasons for them. Sir Walter usually gives himself away when he arranges for a situation—elaborates & elaborates & elaborates till, if you live to get to it, you don't believe in it when it happens.

I can't find the rest of Rob Roy, I, can't stand any more Mannering—I do not know just what to do, but I will reflect, & not quit this great study rashly

My, I wish I could see you & Leigh Hunt!

Sincerely yours,

S. L. Clemens.

But a few days later he experienced a revelation. It came when he perseveringly attacked still a third work of Scott—Quentin Durward. Hastily he wrote to Matthews again:

I'm still in bed, but the days have lost their dullness since I broke into Sir Walter & lost my temper. I finished Guy Mannering that curious, curious book, with its mob of squalid shadows gibbering around a single flesh-&-blood being—Dinmont; a book crazily put together out of the very refuse of the romance artist's stage properties—finished it & took up Quentin Durward & finished that.

It was like leaving the dead to mingle with the living; it was like withdrawing from the infant class in the college of journalism to sit under the lectures in English literature in Columbia University.

I wonder who wrote Quentin Durward?—[This letter, enveloped, addressed, and stamped, was evidently mislaid. It was found and mailed seven years later, June, 1910 message from the dead.]

Among other books which he read that winter and spring was Helen Keller's 'The Story of My Life', then recently published. That he finished it in a mood of sweet gentleness we gather from a long, lovely letter which he wrote her—a letter in which he said:

I am charmed with your book—enchanted. You are a wonderful creature, the most wonderful in the world—you and your other half together—Miss Sullivan, I mean—for it took the pair of you to make a complete & perfect whole. How she stands out in her letters! her brilliancy, penetration, originality, wisdom, character, & the fine literary competencies of her pen—they are all there.

Page 706

When reading and writing failed as diversion, Mark Twain often turned to mathematics. With no special talent for accuracy in the matter of figures, he had a curious fondness for calculations, scientific and financial, and he used to cover pages, ciphering at one thing and another, arriving pretty inevitably at the wrong results. When the problem was financial, and had to do with his own fortunes, his figures were as likely as not to leave him in a state of panic. The expenditures were naturally heavy that spring; and one night, when he had nothing better to do, he figured the relative proportion to his income. The result showed that they were headed straight for financial ruin. He put in the rest of the night fearfully rolling and tossing, and reconstructing his figures that grew always worse, and next morning summoned Jean and Clara and petrified them with the announcement that the cost of living was one hundred and twenty-five per cent. more than the money-supply.

Writing to MacAlister three days later he said:

It was a mistake. When I came down in the morning, a gray and aged wreck, I found that in some unaccountable way (unaccountable to a business man, but not to me) I had multiplied the totals by two. By God, I dropped seventy-five years on the floor where I stood! Do you know it affected me as one is affected when one wakes out of a hideous dream & finds it was only a dream. It was a great comfort & satisfaction to me to call the daughters to a private meeting of the board again. Certainly there is a blistering & awful reality about a well-arranged unreality. It is quite within the possibilities that two or three nights like that of mine would drive a man to suicide. He would refuse to examine the figures, they would revolt him so, & he would go to his death unaware that there was nothing serious about them. I cannot get that night out of my head, it was so vivid, so real, so ghastly: In any other year of these thirty-three the relief would have been simple: go where you can, cut your cloth to fit your income. You can't do that when your wife can't be moved, even from one room to the next. The doctor & a specialist met in conspiracy five days ago, & in their belief she will by and by come out of this as good as new, substantially. They ordered her to Italy for next winter—which seems to indicate that by autumn she will be able to undertake the voyage. So Clara is writing to a Florence friend to take a look around among the villas for us in the regions near that city.

CCXXVIII

PROFFERED HONORS

Mark Twain had been at home well on toward three years; but his popularity showed no signs of diminishing. So far from having waned, it had surged to a higher point than ever before. His crusade against public and private abuses had stirred readers, and had set them to thinking; the news of illness in his household; a report that he was contemplating another residence abroad—these things moved deeply the public heart,

and a tide of letters flowed in, letters of every sort—of sympathy, of love, or hearty endorsement, whatever his attitude of reform.

Page 707

When a writer in a New York newspaper said, "Let us go outside the realm of practical politics next time in choosing our candidates for the Presidency," and asked, "Who is our ablest and most conspicuous private citizen?" another editorial writer, Joseph Hollister, replied that Mark Twain was "the greatest man of his day in private life, and entitled to the fullest measure of recognition."

But Clemens was without political ambitions. He knew the way of such things too well. When Hollister sent him the editorial he replied only with a word of thanks, and did not, even in jest, encourage that tiny seed of a Presidential boom. One would like to publish many of the beautiful letters received during this period, for they are beautiful, most of them, however illiterate in form, however discouraging in length —beautiful in that they overflow with the writers' sincerity and gratitude.

So many of them came from children, usually without the hope of a reply, some signed only with initials, that the writers might not be open to the suspicion of being seekers for his autograph. Almost more than any other reward, Mark Twain valued this love of the children.

A department in the St. Nicholas Magazine offered a prize for a caricature drawing of some well-known man. There were one or two of certain prominent politicians and capitalists, and there was literally a wheelbarrow load of Mark Twain. When he was informed of this he wrote: "No tribute could have pleased me more than that—the friendship of the children."

Tributes came to him in many forms. In his native State it was proposed to form a Mark Twain Association, with headquarters at Hannibal, with the immediate purpose of having a week set apart at the St. Louis World's Fair, to be called the Mark Twain week, with a special Mark Twain day, on which a national literary convention would be held. But when his consent was asked, and his co-operation invited, he wrote characteristically:

It is indeed a high compliment which you offer me, in naming an association after me and in proposing the setting apart of a Mark Twain day at the great St. Louis Fair, but such compliments are not proper for the living; they are proper and safe for the dead only. I value the impulse which moves you to tender me these honors. I value it as highly as any one can, and am grateful for it, but I should stand in a sort of terror of the honors themselves. So long as we remain alive we are not safe from doing things which, however righteously and honorably intended, can wreck our reputations and extinguish our friendships.

I hope that no society will be named for me while I am still alive, for I might at some time or other do something which would cause its members to regret having done me that honor. After I shall have joined the dead I shall follow the custom of those people, and be guilty of no conduct that can wound any friend; but until that time shall come I shall be a doubtful quantity, like the rest of our race.

Page 708

The committee, still hoping for his consent, again appealed to him. But again he wrote:

While I am deeply touched by the desire of my friends of Hannibal to confer these great honors upon me I must still forbear to accept them. Spontaneous and unpremeditated honors, like those which came to me at Hannibal, Columbia, St. Louis, and at the village stations all down the line, are beyond all price and are a treasure for life in the memory, for they are a free gift out of the heart and they come without solicitation; but I am a Missourian, and so I shrink from distinctions which have to be arranged beforehand and with my privity, for I then become a party to my own exalting. I am humanly fond of honors that happen, but chary of those that come by canvass and intention.

Somewhat later he suggested a different feature for the fair; one that was not practical, perhaps, but which certainly would have aroused interest—that is to say, an old-fashioned six-day steamboat-race from New Orleans to St. Louis, with the old-fashioned accessories, such as torch-baskets, forecastle crowds of negro singers, with a negro on the safety-valve. In his letter to President Francis he said:

As to particulars, I think that the race should be a genuine reproduction of the old-time race, not just an imitation of it, and that it should cover the whole course. I think the boats should begin the trip at New Orleans, and side by side (not an interval between), and end it at North St. Louis, a mile or two above the Big Mound.

In a subsequent letter to Governor Francis he wrote:

It has been a dear wish of mine to exhibit myself at the great Fair & get a prize, but circumstances beyond my control have interfered . . .

I suppose you will get a prize, because you have created the most prodigious Fair the planet has ever seen. Very well, you have indeed earned it, and with it the gratitude of the State and the nation.

Newspaper men used every inducement to get interviews from him. They invited him to name a price for any time he could give them, long or short. One reporter offered him five hundred dollars for a two-hour talk. Another proposed to pay him one hundred dollars a week for a quarter of a day each week, allowing him to discuss any subject he pleased. One wrote asking him two questions: the first, "Your favorite method of escaping from Indians"; the second, "Your favorite method of escaping capture by the Indians when they were in pursuit of you." They inquired as to his favorite copy-book maxim; as to what he considered most important to a young man's success; his definition of a gentleman. They wished to know his plan for the settlement of labor troubles. But they did not awaken his interest, or his cupidity. To one applicant he wrote:

No, there are temptations against which we are fire-proof. Your proposition is one which comes to me with considerable frequency, but it never tempts me. The price isn't the objection; you offer plenty. It is the nature of the work that is the objection—a kind of work which I could not do well enough to satisfy me. To multiply the price by twenty would not enable me to do the work to my satisfaction, & by consequence would make no impression upon me.

Page 709

Once he allowed himself to be interviewed for the Herald, when from Mr. Rogers's yacht he had watched Sir Thomas Lipton's Shamrock go down to defeat; but this was a subject which appealed to him—a kind of hotweather subject—and he could be as light-minded about it as he chose.

CCXXXIX

THE LAST SUMMER AT ELMIRA

The Clemenses were preparing to take up residence in Florence, Italy. The Hartford house had been sold in May, ending forever the association with the city that had so long been a part of their lives. The Tarrytown place, which they had never occupied, they also agreed to sell, for it was the belief now that Mrs. Clemens's health would never greatly prosper there. Howells says, or at least implies, that they expected their removal to Florence to be final. He tells us, too, of one sunny afternoon when he and Clemens sat on the grass before the mansion at Riverdale, after Mrs. Clemens had somewhat improved, and how they "looked up toward a balcony where by and by that lovely presence made itself visible, as if it had stooped there from a cloud. A hand frailly waved a handkerchief; Clemens ran over the lawn toward it, calling tenderly." It was a greeting to Howells the last he would ever receive from her.

Mrs. Clemens was able to make a trip to Elmira by the end of June, and on the 1st of July Mr. Rogers brought Clemens and his wife down the river on his yacht to the Lackawanna pier, and they reached Quarry Farm that evening. She improved in the quietude and restfulness of that beloved place. Three weeks later Clemens wrote to Twichell:

Livy is coming along: eats well, sleeps some, is mostly very gay, not very often depressed; spends all day on the porch, sleeps there a part of the night; makes excursions in carriage & in wheel-chair; &, in the matter of superintending everything & everybody, has resumed business at the old stand.

During three peaceful months she spent most of her days reclining on the wide veranda, surrounded by those dearest to her, and looking out on the dreamlike landscape—the long, grassy slope, the drowsy city, and the distant hills—getting strength for the far journey by sea. Clemens did some writing, occupying the old octagonal study—shut in now and overgrown with vines—where during the thirty years since it was built so many of his stories had been written. 'A Dog's Tale'—that pathetic anti-vivisection story—appears to have been the last manuscript ever completed in the spot consecrated by Huck and Tom, and by Tom Canty the Pauper and the little wandering Prince.

It was October 5th when they left Elmira. Two days earlier Clemens had written in his note-book:

Today I placed flowers on Susy's grave—for the last time probably
—& read words:

“Good-night, dear heart, good-night.”

They did not return to Riverdale, but went to the Hotel Grosvenor for the intervening weeks. They had engaged passage for Italy on the Princess Irene, which would sail on the 24th. It was during the period of their waiting that Clemens concluded his final Harper contract. On that day, in his note-book, he wrote:

Page 710

The prophecy

In 1895 Cheiro the palmist examined my hand & said that in my 68th year (1903) I would become suddenly rich. I was a bankrupt & \$94,000 in debt at the time through the failure of Charles L. Webster & Co. Two years later—in London—Cheiro repeated this long-distance prediction, & added that the riches would come from a quite unexpected source. I am superstitious. I kept the prediction in mind & often thought of it. When at last it came true, October 22, 1903, there was but a month & 9 days to spare.

The contract signed that day concentrates all my books in Harper's hands & now at last they are valuable; in fact they are a fortune. They guarantee me \$25,000 a year for 5 years, and they will yield twice as much as that.—[In earlier note-books and letters Clemens more than once refers to this prophecy and wonders if it is to be realized. The Harper contract, which brought all of his books into the hands of one publisher (negotiated for him by Mr. Rogers), proved, in fact, a fortune. The books yielded always more than the guarantee; sometimes twice that amount, as he had foreseen.]

During the conclusion of this contract Clemens made frequent visits to Fairhaven on the Kanawha. Joe Goodman came from the Pacific to pay him a good-by visit during this period. Goodman had translated the Mayan inscriptions, and his work had received official recognition and publication by the British Museum. It was a fine achievement for a man in later life and Clemens admired it immensely. Goodman and Clemens enjoyed each other in the old way at quiet resorts where they could talk over the old tales. Another visitor of that summer was the son of an old friend, a Hannibal printer named Daulton. Young Daulton came with manuscripts seeking a hearing of the magazine editors, so Clemens wrote a letter which would insure that favor: *Introducing Mr. Geo. Daulton*:

To Gilder, Alden, Harvey, McClURE, walker, page, Bok, Collier, and such other members of the sacred guild as privilege me to call them friends—these:

Although I have no personal knowledge of the bearer of this, I have what is better: He comes recommended to me by his own father—a thing not likely to happen in any of your families, I reckon. I ask you, as a favor to me, to waive prejudice & superstition for this once & examine his work with an eye to its literary merit, instead of to the chastity of its spelling. I wish to God you cared less for that particular.

I set (or sat) type alongside of his father, in Hannibal, more than 50 years ago, when none but the pure in heart were in that business. A true man he was; and if I can be of any service to his son—and to you at the same time, let me hope—I am here heartily to try.

Yours by the sanctions of time & deserving,



Sincerely,
S. L. *Clemens*.

Page 711

Among the kindly words which came to Mark Twain before leaving America was this one which Rudyard Kipling had written to his publisher, Frank Doubleday:

I love to think of the great and godlike Clemens. He is the biggest man you have on your side of the water by a damn sight, and don't you forget it. Cervantes was a relation of his.

It curiously happened that Clemens at the same moment was writing to Doubleday about Kipling:

I have been reading "The Bell Buoy" and "The Old Man" over and over again—my custom with Kipling's work—and saving up the rest for other leisurely and luxurious meals. A bell-buoy is a deeply impressive fellow-being. In these many recent trips up and down the Sound in the Kanawha he has talked to me nightly sometimes in his pathetic and melancholy way, sometimes with his strenuous and urgent note, and I got his meaning—now I have his words! No one but Kipling could do this strong and vivid thing. Some day I hope to hear the poem chanted or sung—with the bell-buoy breaking in out of the distance.

P. S.—Your letter has arrived. It makes me proud and glad—what Kipling says. I hope Fate will fetch him to Florence while we are there. I would rather see him than any other man.

CCXXX

THE RETURN TO FLORENCE

From the note-book:

Saturday, October 24, 1903. Sailed in the Princess Irene for Genoa at 11. Flowers & fruit from Mrs. Rogers & Mrs. Coe. We have with us Katie Leary (in our domestic service 23 years) & Miss Margaret Sherry (trained nurse).

Two days later he wrote:

Heavy storm all night. Only 3 stewardesses. Ours served 60 meals in rooms this morning.

On the 27th:

Livy is enduring the voyage marvelously well. As well as Clara & Jean, I think, & far better than the trained nurse.

She has been out on deck an hour.

November 2. Due at Gibraltar 10 days from New York. 3 days to Naples, then 2 day to Genoa. At supper the band played “Cavalleria Rusticana,” which is forever associated in my mind with Susy. I love it better than any other, but it breaks my heart.

It was the “Intermezzo” he referred to, which had been Susy’s favorite music, and whenever he heard it he remembered always one particular opera-night long ago, and Susy’s face rose before him.

They were in Naples on the 5th; thence to Genoa, and to Florence, where presently they were installed in the Villa Reale di Quarto, a fine old Italian palace built by Cosimo more than four centuries ago. In later times it has been occupied and altered by royal families of Wurtemberg and Russia. Now it was the property of the Countess Massiglia, from whom Clemens had leased it.

Page 712

They had hoped to secure the Villa Papiniano, under Fiesole, near Professor Fiske, but negotiations for it had fallen through. The Villa Quarto, as it is usually called, was a more pretentious place and as beautifully located, standing as it does in an ancient garden looking out over Florence toward Vallombrosa and the Chianti hills. Yet now in the retrospect, it seems hardly to have been the retreat for an invalid. Its garden was supernaturally beautiful, all that one expects that a garden of Italy should be—such a garden as Maxfield Parrish might dream; but its beauty was that which comes of antiquity—the accumulation of dead years. Its funereal cypresses, its crumbling walls and arches, its clinging ivy and moldering marbles, and a clock that long ago forgot the hours, gave it a mortuary look. In a way it suggested Arnold Böcklin's "Todteninsel," and it might well have served as the allegorical setting for a gateway to the bourne of silence.

The house itself, one of the most picturesque of the old Florentine suburban palaces, was historically interesting, rather than cheerful. The rooms, in number more than sixty, though richly furnished, were vast and barnlike, and there were numbers of them wholly unused and never entered. There was a dearth of the modern improvements which Americans have learned to regard as a necessity, and the plumbing, such as it was, was not always in order. The place was approached by narrow streets, along which the more uninviting aspects of Italy were not infrequent. Youth and health and romance might easily have reveled in the place; but it seems now not to have been the best choice for that frail invalid, to whom cheer and brightness and freshness and the lovelier things of hope meant always so much.—[Villa Quarto has recently been purchased by Signor P. de Ritter Lahony, and thoroughly restored and refreshed and beautified without the sacrifice of any of its romantic features.]—Neither was the climate of Florence all that they had hoped for. Their former sunny winter had misled them. Tradition to the contrary, Italy—or at least Tuscany—is not one perpetual dream of sunlight. It is apt to be damp and cloudy; it is likely to be cold. Writing to MacAlister, Clemens said:

Florentine sunshine? Bless you, there isn't any. We have heavy fogs every morning & rain all day. This house is not merely large, it is vast—therefore I think it must always lack the home feeling.

His dissatisfaction in it began thus early, and it grew as one thing after another went wrong. With it all, however, Mrs. Clemens seemed to gain a little, and was glad to see company—a reasonable amount of company—to brighten her surroundings.

Clemens began to work and wrote a story or two, and those lively articles about the Italian language.

To Twichell he reported progress:

Page 713

I have a handsome success in one way here. I left New York under a sort of half-promise to furnish to the Harper magazines 30,000 words this year. Magazining is difficult work because every third page represents two pages that you have put in the fire (you are nearly sure to start wrong twice), & so when you have finished an article & are willing to let it go to print it represents only 10 cents a word instead of 30. But this time I had the curious (& unprecedented) luck to start right in each case. I turned out 37,000 words in 25 working days; & the reason I think I started right every time is, that not only have I approved and accepted the several articles, but the court of last resort (Livy) has done the same. On many of the between-days I did some work, but only of an idle & not necessarily necessary sort, since it will not see print until I am dead. I shall continue this (an hour per day), but the rest of the year I expect to put in on a couple of long books (half-completed ones). No more magazine work hanging over my head. This secluded & silent solitude, this clean, soft air, & this enchanting view of Florence, the great valley & snow-mountains that frame it, are the right conditions for work. They are a persistent inspiration. To-day is very lovely; when the afternoon arrives there will be a new picture every hour till dark, & each of them divine—or progressing from divine to diviner & divinest. On this (second) floor Clara's room commands the finest; she keeps a window ten feet high wide open all the time & frames it in that. I go in from time to time every day & trade sass for a look. The central detail is a distant & stately snow-hump that rises above & behind black-forested hills, & its sloping vast buttresses, velvety & sun-polished, with purple shadows between, make the sort of picture we knew that time we walked in Switzerland in the days of our youth.

From this letter, which is of January 7, 1904, we gather that the weather had greatly improved, and with it Mrs. Clemens's health, notwithstanding she had an alarming attack in December. One of the stories he had finished was "The \$30,000 Bequest." The work mentioned, which would not see print until after his death, was a continuation of those autobiographical chapters which for years he had been setting down as the mood seized him.

He experimented with dictation, which he had tried long before with Redpath, and for a time now found it quite to his liking. He dictated some of his copyright memories, and some anecdotes and episodes; but his amanuensis wrote only longhand, which perhaps hampered him, for he tired of it by and by and the dictations were discontinued.

Among these notes there is one elaborate description of the Villa di Quarto, dictated at the end of the winter, by which time we are not surprised to find he had become much attached to the place. The Italian spring was in the air, and it was his habit to grow fond of his surroundings. Some atmospheric paragraphs of these impressions invite us here:

Page 714

We are in the extreme south end of the house, if there is any such thing as a south end to a house, whose orientation cannot be determined by me, because I am incompetent in all cases where an object does not point directly north & south. This one slants across between, & is therefore a confusion. This little private parlor is in one of the two corners of what I call the south end of the house. The sun rises in such a way that all the morning it is pouring its light through the 33 glass doors or windows which pierce the side of the house which looks upon the terrace & garden; the rest of the day the light floods this south end of the house, as I call it; at noon the sun is directly above Florence yonder in the distance in the plain, directly across those architectural features which have been so familiar to the world in pictures for some centuries, the Duomo, the Campanile, the Tomb of the Medici, & the beautiful tower of the Palazzo Vecchio; in this position it begins to reveal the secrets of the delicious blue mountains that circle around into the west, for its light discovers, uncovers, & exposes a white snowstorm of villas & cities that you cannot train yourself to have confidence in, they appear & disappear so mysteriously, as if they might not be villas & cities at all, but the ghosts of perished ones of the remote & dim Etruscan times; & late in the afternoon the sun sets down behind those mountains somewhere, at no particular time & at no particular place, so far as I can see.

Again at the end of March he wrote:

Now that we have lived in this house four and a half months my prejudices have fallen away one by one & the place has become very homelike to me. Under certain conditions I should like to go on living in it indefinitely. I should wish the Countess to move out of Italy, out of Europe, out of the planet. I should want her bonded to retire to her place in the next world & inform me which of the two it was, so that I could arrange for my own hereafter.

Complications with their landlady had begun early, and in time, next to Mrs. Clemens's health, to which it bore such an intimate and vital relation, the indifference of the Countess Massiglia to their needs became the supreme and absorbing concern of life at the villa, and led to continued and almost continuous house-hunting.

Days when the weather permitted, Clemens drove over the hills looking for a villa which he could lease or buy—one with conveniences and just the right elevation and surroundings. There were plenty of villas; but some of them were badly situated as to altitude or view; some were falling to decay, and the search was rather a discouraging one. Still it was not abandoned, and the reports of these excursions furnished new interest and new hope always to the invalid at home.

“Even if we find it,” he wrote Howells, “I am afraid it will be months before we can move Mrs. Clemens. Of course it will. But it comforts us to let on that we think otherwise, and these pretensions help to keep hope alive in her.”

Page 715

She had her bad days and her good days, days when it was believed she had passed the turning-point and was traveling the way to recovery; but the good days were always a little less hopeful, the bad days a little more discouraging. On February 22d Clemens wrote in his note-book:

At midnight Livy's pulse went to 192 & there was a collapse. Great alarm. Subcutaneous injection of brandy saved her.

And to MacAlister toward the end of March:

We are having quite perfect weather now & are hoping that it will bring effects for Mrs. Clemens.

But a few days later he added that he was watching the driving rain through the windows, and that it was bad weather for the invalid. "But it will not last," he said.

The invalid improved then, and there was a concert in Florence at which Clara Clemens sang. Clemens in his note-book says:

April 8. Clara's concert was a triumph. Livy woke up & sent for her to tell her all about it, near midnight.

But a day or two later she was worse again—then better. The hearts in that household were as pendulums, swinging always between hope and despair.

One familiar with the Clemens history might well have been filled with forebodings. Already in January a member of the family, Mollie Clemens, Orion's wife, died, news which was kept from Mrs. Clemens, as was the death of Aldrich's son, and that of Sir Henry M. Stanley, both of which occurred that spring.

Indeed, death harvested freely that year among the Clemens friendships. Clemens wrote Twichell:

Yours has just this moment arrived—just as I was finishing a note to poor Lady Stanley. I believe the last country-house visit we paid in England was to Stanley's. Lord! how my friends & acquaintances fall about me now in my gray-headed days! Vereshchagin, Mommsen, Dvorak, Lenbach, & Jokai, all so recently, & now Stanley. I have known Stanley 37 years. Goodness, who is there I haven't known?

CCXXXI

THE CLOSE OF A BEAUTIFUL LIFE

In one of his notes near the end of April Clemens writes that once more, as at Riverdale, he has been excluded from Mrs. Clemens's room except for the briefest moment at a time. But on May 12th, to R. W. Gilder, he reported:

For two days now we have not been anxious about Mrs. Clemens (unberufen). After 20 months of bedridden solitude & bodily misery she all of a sudden ceases to be a pallid, shrunken shadow, & looks bright & young & pretty. She remains what she always was, the most wonderful creature of fortitude, patience, endurance, and recuperative power that ever was. But ah, dear! it won't last; this fiendish malady will play new treacheries upon her, and I shall go back to my prayers again—unutterable from any pulpit!

May 13, A.M. I have just paid one of my pair of permitted 2-minute visits per day to the sick-room. And found what I have learned to expect—retrogression.

Page 716

There was a day when she was brought out on the terrace in a wheel-chair to see the wonder of the early Italian summer. She had been a prisoner so long that she was almost overcome with the delight of it all—the more so, perhaps, in the feeling that she might so soon be leaving it.

It was on Sunday, the 5th of June, that the end came. Clemens and Jean had driven out to make some calls, and had stopped at a villa, which promised to fulfil most of the requirements. They came home full of enthusiasm concerning it, and Clemens, in his mind, had decided on the purchase. In the corridor Clara said:

“She is better to-day than she has been for three months.”

Then quickly, under her breath, “Unberufen,” which the others, too, added hastily—superstitiously.

Mrs. Clemens was, in fact, bright and cheerful, and anxious to hear all about the new property which was to become their home. She urged him to sit by her during the dinner-hour and tell her the details; but once, when the sense of her frailties came upon her, she said they must not mind if she could not go very soon, but be content where they were. He remained from half past seven until eight—a forbidden privilege, but permitted because she was so animated, feeling so well. Their talk was as it had been in the old days, and once during it he reproached himself, as he had so often done, and asked forgiveness for the tears he had brought into her life. When he was summoned to go at last he chided himself for remaining so long; but she said there was no harm, and kissed him, saying: “You will come back,” and he answered, “Yes, to say good night,” meaning at half past nine, as was the permitted custom. He stood a moment at the door throwing kisses to her, and she returning them, her face bright with smiles.

He was so hopeful and happy that it amounted to exaltation. He went to his room at first, then he was moved to do a thing which he had seldom done since Susy died. He went to the piano up-stairs and sang the old jubilee songs that Susy had liked to hear him sing. Jean came in presently, listening. She had not done this before, that he could remember. He sang “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot,” and “My Lord He Calls Me.” He noticed Jean then and stopped, but she asked him to go on.

Mrs. Clemens, in her room, heard the distant music, and said to her attendant:

“He is singing a good-night carol to me.”

The music ceased presently, and then a moment later she asked to be lifted up. Almost in that instant life slipped away without a sound.

Clemens, coming to say good night, saw a little group about her bed, Clara and Jean standing as if dazed. He went and bent over and looked into her face, surprised that

she did not greet him. He did not suspect what had happened until he heard one of the daughters ask:

“Katie, is it true? Oh, Katie, is it true?”

He realized then that she was gone.

Page 717

In his note-book that night he wrote:

At a quarter past 9 this evening she that was the life of my life passed to the relief & the peace of death after as months of unjust & unearned suffering. I first saw her near 37 years ago, & now I have looked upon her face for the last time. Oh, so unexpected!... I was full of remorse for things done & said in these 34 years of married life that hurt Livy's heart.

He envied her lying there, so free from it all, with the great peace upon her face. He wrote to Howells and to Twichell, and to Mrs. Crane, those nearest and dearest ones. To Twichell he said:

How sweet she was in death, how young, how beautiful, how like her dear girlish self of thirty years ago, not a gray hair showing! This rejuvenescence was noticeable within two hours after her death; & when I went down again (2.30) it was complete. In all that night & all that day she never noticed my caressing hand—it seemed strange.

To Howells he recalled the closing scene:

I bent over her & looked in her face & I think I spoke—I was surprised & troubled that she did not notice me. Then we understood & our hearts broke. How poor we are to-day!

But how thankful I am that her persecutions are ended! I would not call her back if I could.

To-day, treasured in her worn, old Testament, I found a dear & gentle letter from you dated Far Rockaway, September 13, 1896, about our poor Susy's death. I am tired & old; I wish I were with Livy.

And in a few days:

It would break Livy's heart to see Clara. We excuse ourself from all the friends that call—though, of course, only intimates come. Intimates—but they are not the old, old friends, the friends of the old, old times when we laughed. Shall we ever laugh again? If I could only see a dog that I knew in the old times & could put my arms around his neck and tell him all, everything, & ease my heart!

CCXXXII

THE SAD JOURNEY HOME

A tidal wave of sympathy poured in. Noble and commoner, friend and stranger—humanity of every station—sent their messages of condolence to the friend of mankind.

The cablegrams came first—bundles of them from every corner of the world—then the letters, a steady inflow. Howells, Twichell, Aldrich—those oldest friends who had themselves learned the meaning of grief—spoke such few and futile words as the language can supply to allay a heart's mourning, each recalling the rarity and beauty of the life that had slipped away. Twichell and his wife wrote:

Dear, dear mark,—There is nothing we can say. What is there to say? But here we are—with you all every hour and every minute—filled with unutterable thoughts; unutterable affection for the dead and for the living.

Harmony and Joe.

Page 718

Howells in his letter said:

She hallowed what she touched far beyond priests What are you going to do, you poor soul?

A hundred letters crowd in for expression here, but must be denied—not, however, the beam of hope out of Helen Keller's illumined night:

Do try to reach through grief and feel the pressure of her hand, as
I reach through darkness and feel the smile on my friends' lips and
the light in their eyes though mine are closed.

They were adrift again without plans for the future. They would return to America to lay Mrs. Clemens to rest by Susy and little Langdon, but beyond that they could not see. Then they remembered a quiet spot in Massachusetts, Tyringham, near Lee, where the Gilders lived, and so, on June 7th, he wrote:

Dear Gilder family,—I have been worrying and worrying to know what to do; at last I went to the girls with an idea—to ask the Gilders to get us shelter near their summer home. It was the first time they have not shaken their heads. So to-morrow I will cable to you and shall hope to be in time. An hour ago the best heart that ever beat for me and mine was carried silent out of this house, and I am as one who wanders and has lost his way. She who is gone was our head, she was our hands. We are now trying to make plans—we: we who have never made a plan before, nor ever needed to. If she could speak to us she would make it all simple and easy with a word, & our perplexities would vanish away. If she had known she was near to death she would have told us where to go and what to do, but she was not suspecting, neither were we. She was all our riches and she is gone; she was our breath, she was our life, and now we are nothing.

We send you our love-and with it the love of you that was in her heart when she died.
S. L. Clemens.

They arranged to sail on the Prince Oscar on the 29th of June. There was an earlier steamer, but it was the Princess Irene, which had brought them, and they felt they would not make the return voyage on that vessel. During the period of waiting a curious thing happened. Clemens one day got up in a chair in his room on the second floor to pull down the high window-sash. It did not move easily and his hand slipped. It was only by the merest chance that he saved himself from falling to the ground far below. He mentions this in his note-book, and once, speaking of it to Frederick Duneka, he said:

“Had I fallen it would probably have killed me, and in my bereaved circumstances the world would have been convinced that it was suicide. It was one of those curious coincidences which are always happening and being misunderstood.”

The homeward voyage and its sorrowful conclusion are pathetically conveyed in his notes:

June 29, 1904. Sailed last night at 10. The bugle-call to breakfast. I recognized the notes and was distressed. When I heard them last Livy heard them with me; now they fall upon her ear unheeded.

In my life there have been 68 Junes—but how vague & colorless 67 of them are contrasted with the deep blackness of this one!

Page 719

July 1, 1904. I cannot reproduce Livy's face in my mind's eye—I was never in my life able to reproduce a face. It is a curious infirmity—and now at last I realize it is a calamity.

July 2, 1904. In these 34 years we have made many voyages together, Livy dear—and now we are making our last; you down below & lonely; I above with the crowd & lonely.

July 3, 1904. Ship-time, 8 A.M. In 13 hours & a quarter it will be 4 weeks since Livy died.

Thirty-one years ago we made our first voyage together—and this is our last one in company. Susy was a year old then. She died at 24 & had been in her grave 8 years.

July 10, 1904. To-night it will be 5 weeks. But to me it remains yesterday—as it has from the first. But this funeral march—how sad & long it is!

Two days more will end the second stage of it.

July 14, 1904 (*Elmira*). Funeral private in the house of Livy's young maidenhood. Where she stood as a bride 34 years ago there her coffin rested; & over it the same voice that had made her a wife then committed her departed spirit to God now.

It was Joseph Twichell who rendered that last service. Mr. Beecher was long since dead. It was a simple, touching utterance, closing with this tender word of farewell:

Robert Browning, when he was nearing the end of his earthly days, said that death was the thing that we did not believe in. Nor do we believe in it. We who journeyed through the bygone years in companionship with the bright spirit now withdrawn are growing old. The way behind is long; the way before is short. The end cannot be far off. But what of that? Can we not say, each one:

"So long that power hath blessed me, sure it still
Will lead me on;
O'er moor and fen; o'er crag and torrent, till
The night is gone;
And with the morn, their angel faces smile,
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile!"

And so good-by. Good-by, dear heart! Strong, tender, and true.
Good-by until for us the morning break and these shadows fly away.

Dr. Eastman, who had succeeded Mr. Beecher, closed the service with a prayer, and so the last office we can render in this life for those we love was finished.

Clemens ordered that a simple marker should be placed at the grave, bearing, besides the name, the record of birth and death, followed by the German line:

‘Gott sei dir gnadig, O meine Wonne’!

CCXXXIII

BEGINNING ANOTHER HOME

There was an extra cottage on the Gilder place at Tyringham, and this they occupied for the rest of that sad summer. Clemens, in his note-book, has preserved some of its aspects and incidents.

July 24, 1904. Rain—rain—rain. Cold. We built a fire in my room. Then clawed the logs out & threw water, remembering there was a brood of swallows in the chimney. The tragedy was averted.

Page 720

July 31. *Lee, Massachusetts (Berkshire hills)*. Last night the young people out on a moonlight ride. Trolley frightened Jean's horse —collision—horse killed. Rodman Gilder picked Jean up, unconscious; she was taken to the doctor, per the car. Face, nose, side, back contused; tendon of left ankle broken.

August 10. *New York*. Clam here sick—never well since June 5. Jean is at the summer home in the Berkshire Hills crippled.

The next entry records the third death in the Clemens family within a period of eight months—that of Mrs. Moffett, who had been Pamela Clemens. Clemens writes:

September 1. Died at Greenwich, Connecticut, my sister, Pamela Moffett, aged about 73.

Death dates this year January 14, June 5, September 1.

That fall they took a house in New York City, on the corner of Ninth Street and Fifth Avenue, No. 21, remaining for a time at the Grosvenor while the new home was being set in order. The home furniture was brought from Hartford, unwrapped, and established in the light of strange environment. Clemens wrote:

We have not seen it for thirteen years. Katie Leary, our old housekeeper, who has been in our service more than twenty-four years, cried when she told me about it to-day. She said, "I had forgotten it was so beautiful, and it brought Mrs. Clemens right back to me—in that old time when she was so young and lovely."

Clara Clemens had not recovered from the strain of her mother's long illness and the shock of her death, and she was ordered into retirement with the care of a trained nurse. The life at 21 Fifth Avenue, therefore, began with only two remaining members of the broken family —Clemens and Jean.

Clemens had undertaken to divert himself with work at Tyringham, though without much success. He was not well; he was restless and disturbed; his heart bleak with a great loneliness. He prepared an article on Copyright for the 'North American Review',—[Published Jan., 1905. A dialogue presentation of copyright conditions, addressed to Thorwald Stolberg, Register of Copyrights, Washington, D. C. One of the best of Mark Twain's papers on the subject.]—and he began, or at least contemplated, that beautiful fancy, 'Eve's Diary', which in the widest and most reverential sense, from the first word to the last, conveys his love, his worship, and his tenderness for the one he had laid away. Adam's single comment at the end, "Wheresoever she was, there was Eden," was his own comment, and is perhaps the most tenderly beautiful line he ever wrote. These two books, Adam's Diary and Eve's—amusing and sometimes absurd as they are, and so far removed from the literal—are as autobiographic as anything he has done, and one of them as lovely in its truth. Like the first Maker of men, Mark Twain

created Adam in his own image; and his rare Eve is no less the companion with whom, half a lifetime before, he had begun the marriage journey. Only here the likeness ceases. No Serpent ever entered their Eden. And they never left it; it traveled with them so long as they remained together.

Page 721

In the Christmas Harper for 1904 was published "Saint Joan of Arc"—the same being the Joan introduction prepared in London five years before. Joan's proposed beatification had stirred a new interest in the martyred girl, and this most beautiful article became a sort of key-note of the public heart. Those who read it were likely to go back and read the Recollections, and a new appreciation grew for that masterpiece. In his later and wider acceptance by his own land, and by the world at large, the book came to be regarded with a fresh understanding. Letters came from scores of readers, as if it were a newly issued volume. A distinguished educator wrote:

I would rather have written your history of Joan of Arc than any other piece of literature in any language.

And this sentiment grew. The demand for the book increased, and has continued to increase, steadily and rapidly. In the long and last analysis the good must prevail. A day will come when there will be as many readers of Joan as of any other of Mark Twain's works.

[The growing appreciation of Joan is shown by the report of sales for the three years following 1904. The sales for that year in America were 1,726; for 1905, 2,445 for 1906, 5,381; for 1907, 6,574. At this point it passed Pudd'nhead Wilson, the Yankee, The Gilded Age, Life on the Mississippi, overtook the Tramp Abroad, and more than doubled The American Claimant. Only The Innocents Abroad, Huckleberry Finn, Tom Sawyer, and Roughing It still ranged ahead of it, in the order named.]

CCXXXIV

LIFE AT 21 FIFTH AVENUE

The house at 21 Fifth Avenue, built by the architect who had designed Grace Church, had a distinctly ecclesiastical suggestion about its windows, and was of fine and stately proportions within. It was a proper residence for a venerable author and a sage, and with the handsome Hartford furnishings distributed through it, made a distinctly suitable setting for Mark Twain. But it was lonely for him. It lacked soul. He added, presently, a great AEolian Orchestrelle, with a variety of music for his different moods. He believed that he would play it himself when he needed the comfort of harmony, and that Jean, who had not received musical training, or his secretary could also play to him. He had a passion for music, or at least for melody and stately rhythmic measures, though his ear was not attuned to what are termed the more classical compositions. For Wagner, for instance, he cared little, though in a letter to Mrs. Crane he said:

Certainly nothing in the world is so solemn and impressive and so divinely beautiful as "Tannhauser." It ought to be used as a religious service.

Beethoven's sonatas and symphonies also moved him deeply. Once, writing to Jean, he asked:

What is your favorite piece of music, dear? Mine is Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. I have found that out within a day or two.

Page 722

It was the majestic movement and melodies of the second part that he found most satisfying; but he oftener inclined to the still tenderer themes of Chopin's nocturnes and one of Schubert's impromptus, while the "Lorelei" and the "Erlking" and the Scottish airs never wearied him. Music thus became a chief consolation during these lonely days—rich organ harmonies that filled the emptiness of his heart and beguiled from dull, material surroundings back into worlds and dreams that he had known and laid away.

He went out very little that winter—usually to the homes of old and intimate friends. Once he attended a small dinner given him by George Smalley at the Metropolitan Club; but it was a private affair, with only good friends present. Still, it formed the beginning of his return to social life, and it was not in his nature to retire from the brightness of human society, or to submerge himself in mourning. As the months wore on he appeared here and there, and took on something of his old-time habit. Then his annual bronchitis appeared, and he was confined a good deal to his home, where he wrote or planned new reforms and enterprises.

The improvement of railway service, through which fewer persons should be maimed and destroyed each year, interested him. He estimated that the railroads and electric lines killed and wounded more than all of the wars combined, and he accumulated statistics and prepared articles on the subject, though he appears to have offered little of such matter for publication. Once, however, when his sympathy was awakened by the victim of a frightful trolley and train collision in Newark, New Jersey, he wrote a letter which promptly found its way into print.

Dear miss Madeline, Your good & admiring & affectionate brother has told me of your sorrowful share in the trolley disaster which brought unaccustomed tears to millions of eyes & fierce resentment against those whose criminal indifference to their responsibilities caused it, & the reminder has brought back to me a pang out of that bygone time. I wish I could take you sound & whole out of your bed & break the legs of those officials & put them in it—to stay there. For in my spirit I am merciful, and would not break their necks & backs also, as some would who have no feeling.

It is your brother who permits me to write this line—and so it is not an intrusion, you see.

May you get well-& soon!
Sincerely yours,
S. L. Clemens.

A very little later he was writing another letter on a similar subject to St. Clair McKelway, who had narrowly escaped injury in a railway accident.

Dear McKELWAY, Your innumerable friends are grateful, most grateful.

Page 723

As I understand the telegrams, the engineers of your train had never seen a locomotive before The government's official report, showing that our railways killed twelve hundred persons last year & injured sixty thousand, convinces me that under present conditions one Providence is not enough properly & efficiently to take care of our railroad business. But it is characteristically American—always trying to get along short-handed & save wages.

A massacre of Jews in Moscow renewed his animosity for semi-barbaric Russia. Asked for a Christmas sentiment, he wrote:

It is my warm & world-embracing Christmas hope that all of us that deserve it may finally be gathered together in a heaven of rest & peace, & the others permitted to retire into the clutches of Satan, or the Emperor of Russia, according to preference—if they have a preference.

An article, "The Tsar's Soliloquy," written at this time, was published in the North American Review for March (1905). He wrote much more, but most of the other matter he put aside. On a subject like that he always discarded three times as much as he published, and it was usually about three times as terrific as that which found its way into type. "The Soliloquy," however, is severe enough. It represents the Tsar as contemplating himself without his clothes, and reflecting on what a poor human specimen he presents:

Is it this that 140,000,000 Russians kiss the dust before and worship?—manifestly not! No one could worship this spectacle which is Me. Then who is it, what is it, that they worship? Privately, none knows better than I: it is my clothes! Without my clothes I should be as destitute of authority as any other naked person. No one could tell me from a parson and barber tutor. Then who is the real Emperor of Russia! My clothes! There is no other.

The emperor continues this fancy, and reflects on the fierce cruelties that are done in his name. It was a withering satire on Russian imperialism, and it stirred a wide response. This encouraged Clemens to something even more pretentious and effective in the same line. He wrote "King Leopold's Soliloquy," the reflections of the fiendish sovereign who had maimed and slaughtered fifteen millions of African subjects in his greed—gentle, harmless blacks-men, women, and little children whom he had butchered and mutilated in his Congo rubber-fields. Seldom in the history of the world have there been such atrocious practices as those of King Leopold in the Congo, and Clemens spared nothing in his picture of them. The article was regarded as not quite suitable for magazine publication, and it was given to the Congo Reform Association and issued as a booklet for distribution, with no return to the author, who would gladly have written a hundred times as much if he could have saved that unhappy race and have sent Leopold to the electric chair.—[The

Page 724

book was price-marked twenty-five cents, but the returns from such as were sold went to the cause. Thousands of them were distributed free. The Congo, a domain four times as large as the German empire, had been made the ward of Belgium at a convention in Berlin by the agreement of fourteen nations, America and thirteen European states. Leopold promptly seized the country for his personal advantage and the nations apparently found themselves powerless to depose him. No more terrible blunder was ever committed by an assemblage of civilized people.]

Various plans and movements were undertaken for Congo reform, and Clemens worked and wrote letters and gave his voice and his influence and exhausted his rage, at last, as one after another of the half-organized and altogether futile undertakings showed no results. His interest did not die, but it became inactive. Eventually he declared: "I have said all I can say on that terrible subject. I am heart and soul in any movement that will rescue the Congo and hang Leopold, but I cannot write any more."

His fires were likely to burn themselves out, they raged so fiercely. His final paragraph on the subject was a proposed epitaph for Leopold when time should have claimed him. It ran:

Here under this gilded tomb lies rotting the body of one the smell of whose name will still offend the nostrils of men ages upon ages after all the Caesars and Washingtons & Napoleons shall have ceased to be praised or blamed & been forgotten—Leopold of Belgium.

Clemens had not yet lost interest in the American policy in the Philippines, and in his letters to Twichell he did not hesitate to criticize the President's attitude in this and related matters. Once, in a moment of irritation, he wrote:

Dear Joe,—I knew I had in me somewhere a definite feeling about the President. If I could only find the words to define it with! Here they are, to a hair—from Leonard Jerome:

"For twenty years I have loved Roosevelt the man, and hated Roosevelt the statesman and politician."

It's mighty good. Every time in twenty-five years that I have met Roosevelt the man a wave of welcome has streaked through me with the hand-grip; but whenever (as a rule) I meet Roosevelt the statesman & politician I find him destitute of morals & not respectable. It is plain that where his political self & party self are concerned he has nothing resembling a conscience; that under those inspirations he is naively indifferent to the restraints of duty & even unaware of them; ready to kick the Constitution into the back yard whenever it gets in his way....But Roosevelt is excusable—I recognize it & (ought

to) concede it. We are all insane, each in his own way, & with insanity goes irresponsibility. Theodore the man is sane; in fairness we ought to keep in mind that Theodore, as statesman & politician, is insane & irresponsible.

Page 725

He wrote a great deal more from time to time on this subject; but that is the gist of his conclusions, and whether justified by time, or otherwise, it expresses today the deduction of a very large number of people. It is set down here, because it is a part of Mark Twain's history, and also because a little while after his death there happened to creep into print an incomplete and misleading note (since often reprinted), which he once made in a moment of anger, when he was in a less judicial frame of mind. It seems proper that a man's honest sentiments should be recorded concerning the nation's servants.

Clemens wrote an article at this period which he called the "War Prayer." It pictured the young recruits about to march away for war—the excitement and the celebration—the drum-beat and the heart-beat of patriotism—the final assembly in the church where the minister utters that tremendous invocation:

God the all-terrible! Thou who ordainest,
Thunder, Thy clarion, and lightning, Thy sword!

and the "long prayer" for victory to the nation's armies. As the prayer closes a white-robed stranger enters, moves up the aisle, and takes the preacher's place; then, after some moments of impressive silence, he begins:

"I come from the Throne-bearing a message from Almighty God!..... He has heard the prayer of His servant, your shepherd, & will grant it if such shall be your desire after I His messenger shall have explained to you its import—that is to say its full import. For it is like unto many of the prayers of men in that it asks for more than he who utters it is aware of—except he pause & think.

"God's servant & yours has prayed his prayer. Has he paused & taken thought? Is it one prayer? No, it is two—one uttered, the other not. Both have reached the ear of Him who heareth all supplications, the spoken & the unspoken . . . "You have heard your servant's prayer—the uttered part of it. I am commissioned of God to put into words the other part of it—that part which the pastor—and also you in your hearts—fervently prayed, silently. And ignorantly & unthinkingly? God grant that it was so! You heard these words: 'Grant us the victory, O Lord our God!' That is sufficient. The whole of the uttered prayer is completed into those pregnant words.

"Upon the listening spirit of God the Father fell also the unspoken part of the prayer. He commandeth me to put it into words. Listen!

"O Lord our Father, our young patriots, idols of our hearts, go forth to battle—be Thou near them! With them—in spirit—we also go forth from the sweet peace of our beloved firesides to smite the foe."O Lord our God, help us to tear their soldiers to bloody shreds

with our shells; help us to cover their smiling fields with the pale forms of their patriot
dead; help us to drown the thunder of the guns with the wounded, writhing

Page 726

in pain; help us to lay waste their humble homes with a hurricane of fire; help us to wring the hearts of their unoffending widows with unavailing grief; help us to turn them out roofless with their little children to wander unfriended through wastes of their desolated land in rags & hunger & thirst, sport of the sun- flames of summer & the icy winds of winter, broken in spirit, worn with travail, imploring Thee for the refuge of the grave & denied it—for our sakes, who adore Thee, Lord, blast their hopes, blight their lives, protract their bitter pilgrimage, make heavy their steps, water their way with their tears, stain the white snow with the blood of their wounded feet! We ask of one who is the Spirit of love & who is the ever-faithful refuge & friend of all that are sore beset, & seek His aid with humble & contrite hearts. Grant our prayer, O Lord; & Thine shall be the praise & honor & glory now & ever, Amen.”

(After a pause.) “Ye have prayed it; if ye still desire it, speak!—the messenger of the Most High waits.”

.....

It was believed, afterward, that the man was a lunatic, because there was no sense in what he said.

To Dan Beard, who dropped in to see him, Clemens read the “War Prayer,” stating that he had read it to his daughter Jean, and others, who had told him he must not print it, for it would be regarded as sacrilege.

“Still you—are going to publish it, are you not?”

Clemens, pacing up and down the room in his dressing-gown and slippers, shook his head.

“No,” he said, “I have told the whole truth in that, and only dead men can tell the truth in this world. It can be published after I am dead.”

He did not care to invite the public verdict that he was a lunatic, or even a fanatic with a mission to destroy the illusions and traditions and conclusions of mankind. To Twichell he wrote, playfully but sincerely:

Am I honest? I give you my word of honor (privately) I am not. For seven years I have suppressed a book which my conscience tells me I ought to publish. I hold it a duty to publish it. There are other difficult duties which I am equal to, but I am not equal to that one. Yes, even I am dishonest. Not in many ways, but in some. Forty-one, I think it is. We are certainly all honest in one or several ways—every man in the world—though I

have a reason to think I am the only one whose blacklist runs so light. Sometimes I feel lonely enough in this lofty solitude.

It was his Gospel he referred to as his unpublished book, his doctrine of Selfishness, and of Man the irresponsible Machine. To Twichell he pretended to favor war, which he declared, to his mind, was one of the very best methods known of diminishing the human race.

What a life it is!—this one! Everything we try to do, somebody intrudes & obstructs it. After years of thought & labor I have arrived within one little bit of a step of perfecting my invention for exhausting the oxygen in the globe's air during a stretch of two minutes, & of course along comes an obstructor who is inventing something to protect human life. Damn such a world anyway.

Page 727

He generally wrote Twichell when he had things to say that were outside of the pale of print. He was sure of an attentive audience of one, and the audience, whether it agreed with him or not, would at least understand him and be honored by his confidence. In one letter of that year he said:

I have written you to-day, not to do you a service, but to do myself one. There was bile in me. I had to empty it or lose my day to-morrow. If I tried to empty it into the North American Review—oh, well, I couldn't afford the risk. No, the certainty! The certainty that I wouldn't be satisfied with the result; so I would burn it, & try again to-morrow; burn that and try again the next day. It happens so nearly every time. I have a family to support, & I can't afford this kind of dissipation. Last winter when I was sick I wrote a magazine article three times before I got it to suit me. I Put \$500 worth of work on it every day for ten days, & at last when I got it to suit me it contained but 3,000 words—\$900. I burned it & said I would reform.

And I have reformed. I have to work my bile off whenever it gets to where I can't stand it, but I can work it off on you economically, because I don't have to make it suit me. It may not suit you, but that isn't any matter; I'm not writing it for that. I have used you as an equilibrium—restorer more than once in my time, & shall continue, I guess. I would like to use Mr. Rogers, & he is plenty good-natured enough, but it wouldn't be fair to keep him rescuing me from my leather-headed business snarls & make him read interminable bile-irruptions besides; I can't use Howells, he is busy & old & lazy, & won't stand it; I dasn't use Clara, there's things I have to say which she wouldn't put up with—a very dear little ashcat, but has claws. And so—you're It.

[See the preface to the "Autobiography of Mark Twain": 'I am writing from the grave. On these terms only can a man be approximately frank. He cannot be straitly and unqualifiedly frank either in the grave or out of it.' D.W.]

CCXXXV

A SUMMER IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

He took for the summer a house at Dublin, New Hampshire, the home of Henry Copley Greene, Lone Tree Hill, on the Monadnock slope. It was in a lovely locality, and for neighbors there were artists, literary people, and those of kindred pursuits, among them a number of old friends. Colonel Higginson had a place near by, and Abbott H. Thayer, the painter, and George de Forest Brush, and the Raphael Pumpelly family, and many more.

Colonel Higginson wrote Clemens a letter of welcome as soon as the news got out that he was going to Dublin; and Clemens, answering, said:

Page 728

I early learned that you would be my neighbor in the summer & I rejoiced, recognizing in you & your family a large asset. I hope for frequent intercourse between the two households. I shall have my youngest daughter with me. The other one will go from the rest-cure in this city to the rest-cure in Norfolk, Connecticut; & we shall not see her before autumn. We have not seen her since the middle of October. Jean, the younger daughter, went to Dublin & saw the house & came back charmed with it. I know the Thayers of old—manifestly there is no lack of attractions up there. Mrs. Thayer and I were shipmates in a wild excursion perilously near 40 years ago.

Aldrich was here half an hour ago, like a breeze from over the fields, with the fragrance still upon his spirit. I am tired wanting for that man to get old.

They went to Dublin in May, and became at once a part of the summer colony which congregated there. There was much going to and fro among the different houses, pleasant afternoons in the woods, mountain-climbing for Jean, and everywhere a spirit of fine, unpretentious comradeship.

The Copley Greene house was romantically situated, with a charming outlook. Clemens wrote to Twichell:

We like it here in the mountains, in the shadows of Monadnock. It is a woody solitude. We have no near neighbors. We have neighbors and I can see their houses scattered in the forest distances, for we live on a hill. I am astonished to find that I have known 8 of these 14 neighbors a long time; 10 years is the shortest; then seven beginning with 25 years & running up to 37 years' friendship. It is the most remarkable thing I ever heard of.

This letter was written in July, and he states in it that he has turned out one hundred thousand words of a large manuscript. . It was a fantastic tale entitled "3,000 Years among the Microbes," a sort of scientific revel—or revelry—the autobiography of a microbe that had been once a man, and through a failure in a biological experiment transformed into a cholera germ when the experimenter was trying to turn him into a bird. His habitat was the person of a disreputable tramp named Blitzowski, a human continent of vast areas, with seething microbic nations and fantastic life problems. It was a satire, of course —Gulliver's Lilliput outdone—a sort of scientific, socialistic, mathematical jamboree.

He tired of it before it reached completion, though not before it had attained the proportions of a book of size. As a whole it would hardly have added to his reputation, though it is not without fine and humorous passages, and certainly not without interest. Its chief mission was to divert him mentally that summer during, those days and nights when he would otherwise have been alone and brooding upon his loneliness.—[For

extracts from “3,000 Years among the Microbes” see Appendix V, at the end of this work.] *Mark Twain’s suggested title-page for his microbe book:*

Page 729

3000 Years
among the microbes

By a Microbe

With notes
added by the same Hand
7000 years later

Translated from the Original
Microbic
by

Mark Twain

His inability to reproduce faces in his mind's eye he mourned as an increasing calamity. Photographs were lifeless things, and when he tried to conjure up the faces of his dead they seemed to drift farther out of reach; but now and then kindly sleep brought to him something out of that treasure-house where all our realities are kept for us fresh and fair, perhaps for a day when we may claim them again. Once he wrote to Mrs. Crane:

Susy dear,—I have had a lovely dream. Livy, dressed in black, was sitting up in my bed (here) at my right & looking as young & sweet as she used to when she was in health. She said, "What is the name of your sweet sister?" I said, "Pamela." "Oh yes, that is it, I thought it was—(naming a name which has escaped me) won't you write it down for me?" I reached eagerly for a pen & pad, laid my hands upon both, then said to myself, "It is only a dream," and turned back sorrowfully & there she was still. The conviction flamed through me that our lamented disaster was a dream, & this a reality. I said, "How blessed it is, how blessed it is, it was all a dream, only a dream!" She only smiled and did not ask what dream I meant, which surprised me. She leaned her head against mine & kept saying, "I was perfectly sure it was a dream; I never would have believed it wasn't." I think she said several things, but if so they are gone from my memory. I woke & did not know I had been dreaming. She was gone. I wondered how she could go without my knowing it, but I did not spend any thought upon that. I was too busy thinking of how vivid & real was the dream that we had lost her, & how unspeakably blessed it was to find that it was not true & that she was still ours & with us.

He had the orchestrelle moved to Dublin, although it was no small undertaking, for he needed the solace of its harmonies; and so the days passed along, and he grew stronger in body and courage as his grief drifted farther behind him. Sometimes, in the afternoon or in the evening; when the neighbors had come in for a little while, he would walk up and down and talk in his old, marvelous way of all the things on land and sea, of the past and of the future, "Of Providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate," of the

friends he had known and of the things he had done, of the sorrow and absurdities of the world.

It was the same old scintillating, incomparable talk of which Howells once said:

“We shall never know its like again. When he dies it will die with him.”

It was during the summer at Dublin that Clemens and Rogers together made up a philanthropic ruse on Twichell. Twichell, through his own prodigal charities, had fallen into debt, a fact which Rogers knew. Rogers was a man who concealed his philanthropies when he could, and he performed many of them of which the world will never know: In this case he said:

Page 730

“Clemens, I want to help Twichell out of his financial difficulty. I will supply the money and you will do the giving. Twichell must think it comes from you.”

Clemens agreed to this on the condition that he be permitted to leave a record of the matter for his children, so that he would not appear in a false light to them, and that Twichell should learn the truth of the gift, sooner or later. So the deed was done, and Twichell and his wife lavished their thanks upon Clemens, who, with his wife, had more than once been their benefactors, making the deception easy enough now. Clemens writhed under these letters of gratitude, and forwarded them to Clara in Norfolk, and later to Rogers himself. He pretended to take great pleasure in this part of the conspiracy, but it was not an unmixed delight. To Rogers he wrote:

I wanted her [Clara] to see what a generous father she's got. I didn't tell her it was you, but by and by I want to tell her, when I have your consent; then I shall want her to remember the letters. I want a record there, for my Life when I am dead, & must be able to furnish the facts about the Relief-of-Lucknow-Twichell in case I fall suddenly, before I get those facts with your consent, before the Twichells themselves.

I read those letters with immense pride! I recognized that I had scored one good deed for sure on my halo account. I haven't had anything that tasted so good since the stolen watermelon.

P. S.-I am hurrying them off to you because I dasn't read them again! I should blush to my heels to fill up with this unearned gratitude again, pouring out of the thankful hearts of those poor swindled people who do not suspect you, but honestly believe I gave that money.

Mr. Rogers hastily replied:

My dear Clemens,—The letters are lovely. Don't breathe. They are so happy! It would be a crime to let them think that you have in any way deceived them. I can keep still. You must. I am sending you all traces of the crime, so that you may look innocent and tell the truth, as you usually do when you think you can escape detection. Don't get rattled.Seriously. You have done a kindness. You are proud of it, I know. You have made your friends happy, and you ought to be so glad as to cheerfully accept reproof from your conscience. Joe Wadsworth and I once stole a goose and gave it to a poor widow as a Christmas present. No crime in that. I always put my counterfeit money on the plate. “The passer of the sasser” always smiles at me and I get credit for doing generous things. But seriously again, if you do feel a little uncomfortable wait until I see you before you tell anybody. Avoid cultivating misery. I am trying to loaf ten solid days. We do hope to see you soon.

The secret was kept, and the matter presently (and characteristically) passed out of Clemens's mind altogether. He never remembered to tell Twichell, and it is revealed here, according to his wish.

Page 731

The Russian-Japanese war was in progress that summer, and its settlement occurred in August. The terms of it did not please Mark Twain. When a newspaper correspondent asked him for an expression of opinion on the subject he wrote:

Russia was on the highroad to emancipation from an insane and intolerable slavery. I was hoping there would be no peace until Russian liberty was safe. I think that this was a holy war, in the best and noblest sense of that abused term, and that no war was ever charged with a higher mission. I think there can be no doubt that that mission is now defeated and Russia's chain riveted; this time to stay. I think the Tsar will now withdraw the small humanities that have been forced from him, and resume his medieval barbarisms with a relieved spirit and an immeasurable joy. I think Russian liberty has had its last chance and has lost it. I think nothing has been gained by the peace that is remotely comparable to what has been sacrificed by it. One more battle would have abolished the waiting chains of billions upon billions of unborn Russians, and I wish it could have been fought. I hope I am mistaken, yet in all sincerity I believe that this peace is entitled to rank as the most conspicuous disaster in political history.

It was the wisest public utterance on the subject—the deep, resonant note of truth sounding amid a clamor of foolish joy-bells. It was the message of a seer—the prophecy of a sage who sees with the clairvoyance of knowledge and human understanding. Clemens, a few days later, was invited by Colonel Harvey to dine with Baron Rosen and M. Sergius Witte; but an attack of his old malady—rheumatism—prevented his acceptance. His telegram of declination apparently pleased the Russian officials, for Witte asked permission to publish it, and declared that he was going to take it home to show to the Tsar. It was as follows:

To *colonel Harvey*,—I am still a cripple, otherwise I should be more than glad of this opportunity to meet the illustrious magicians who came here equipped with nothing but a pen, & with it have divided the honors of the war with the sword. It is fair to presume that in thirty centuries history will not get done in admiring these men who attempted what the world regarded as the impossible & achieved it.

Mark twain.

But this was a modified form. His original draft would perhaps have been less gratifying to that Russian embassy. It read:

To *colonel Harvey*,—I am still a cripple, otherwise I should be more than glad of this opportunity to meet those illustrious magicians who with the pen have annulled, obliterated, & abolished every high achievement of the Japanese sword and turned the tragedy of a tremendous war into a gay & blithesome comedy. If I may, let me in all respect and honor salute them as my fellow-humorists, I taking third place, as becomes one who was not born to modesty, but by diligence & hard work is acquiring it.

Mark.

Page 732

There was still another form, brief and expressive:

*Dear colonel,—No, this is a love-feast; when you call a lodge of sorrow send for me.
Mark.*

Clemens's war sentiment was given the widest newspaper circulation, and brought him many letters, most of them applauding his words. Charles Francis Adams wrote him:

It attracted my attention because it so exactly expresses the views
I have myself all along entertained.

And this was the gist of most of the expressed sentiments which came to him.

Clemens wrote a number of things that summer, among them a little essay entitled, "The Privilege of the Grave"—that is to say, free speech. He was looking forward, he said, to the time when he should inherit that privilege, when some of the things he had said, written and laid away, could be published without damage to his friends or family. An article entitled, "Interpreting the Deity," he counted as among the things to be uttered when he had entered into that last great privilege. It is an article on the reading of signs and auguries in all ages to discover the intentions of the Almighty, with historical examples of God's judgments and vindications. Here is a fair specimen. It refers to the chronicle of Henry Huntington:

All through this book Henry exhibits his familiarity with the intentions of God and with the reasons for the intentions. Sometimes very often, in fact—the act follows the intention after such a wide interval of time that one wonders how Henry could fit one act out of a hundred to one intention, and get the thing right every time, when there was such abundant choice among acts and intentions. Sometimes a man offends the Deity with a crime, and is punished for it thirty years later; meantime he has committed a million other crimes: no matter, Henry can pick out the one that brought the worms. Worms were generally used in those days for the slaying of particularly wicked people. This has gone out now, but in the old times it was a favorite. It always indicated a case of "wrath." For instance: "The just God avenging Robert Fitzhildebrand's perfidity, a worm grew in his vitals which, gradually gnawing its way through his intestines, fattened on the abandoned man till, tortured with excruciating sufferings and venting himself in bitter moans, he was by a fitting punishment brought to his end" (p. 400).

It was probably an alligator, but we cannot tell; we only know it was a particular breed, and only used to convey wrath. Some authorities think it was an ichthyosaurus, but there is much doubt.

The entire article is in this amusing, satirical strain, and might well enough be printed to-day. It is not altogether clear why it was withheld, even then.

He finished his Eve's Diary that summer, and wrote a story which was originally planned to oblige Mrs. Minnie Maddern Fiske, to aid her in a crusade against bullfighting in Spain. Mrs. Fiske wrote him that she had read his dog story, written against the cruelties of vivisection, and urged him to do something to save the horses that, after faithful service, were sacrificed in the bull-ring. Her letter closed:

Page 733

I have lain awake nights very often wondering if I dare ask you to write a story of an old horse that is finally given over to the bull-ring. The story you would write would do more good than all the laws we are trying to have made and enforced for the prevention of cruelty to animals in Spain. We would translate and circulate the story in that country. I have wondered if you would ever write it.

With most devoted homage,
Sincerely yours,
Minnie Maddern Fiske.

Clemens promptly replied:

Dear Mrs. Fiske, I shall certainly write the story. But I may not get it to suit me, in which case it will go in the fire. Later I will try it again—& yet again—& again. I am used to this. It has taken me twelve years to write a short story—the shortest one I ever wrote, I think. —[Probably “The Death Disk:”]—So do not be discouraged; I will stick to this one in the same way.

Sincerely yours,
S. L. Clemens.

It was an inspiring subject, and he began work on it immediately. Within a month from the time he received Mrs. Fiske’s letter he had written that pathetic, heartbreaking little story, “A Horse’s Tale,” and sent it to Harper’s Magazine for illustration. In a letter written to Mr. Duneka at the time, he tells of his interest in the narrative, and adds:

This strong interest is natural, for the heroine is my small daughter Susy, whom we lost. It was not intentional—it was a good while before I found it out, so I am sending you her picture to use —& to reproduce with photographic exactness the unsurpassable expression & all. May you find an artist who has lost an idol.

He explains how he had put in a good deal of work, with his secretary, on the orchestrelle to get the bugle-calls.

We are to do these theatricals this evening with a couple of neighbors for audience, and then pass the hat.

It is not one of Mark Twain’s greatest stories, but its pathos brings the tears, and no one can read it without indignation toward the custom which it was intended to oppose. When it was published, a year later, Mrs. Fiske sent him her grateful acknowledgments, and asked permission to have it printed for pamphlet circulation in Spain.

A number of more or less notable things happened in this, Mark Twain’s seventieth year. There was some kind of a reunion going on in California, and he was variously invited to attend. Robert Fulton, of Nevada, was appointed a committee of one to invite

him to Reno for a great celebration which was to be held there. Clemens replied that he remembered, as if it were but yesterday, when he had disembarked from the Overland stage in front of the Ormsby Hotel, in Carson City, and told how he would like to accept the invitation.

Page 734

If I were a few years younger I would accept it, and promptly, and I would go. I would let somebody else do the oration, but as for me I would talk—just talk. I would renew my youth; and talk—and talk—and talk—and have the time of my life! I would march the unforgotten and unforgettable antiques by, and name their names, and give them reverent hail and farewell as they passed—Goodman, McCarthy, Gillis, Curry, Baldwin, Winters, Howard, Nye, Stewart, Neely Johnson, Hal Clayton, North, Root—and my brother, upon whom be peace!—and then the desperadoes, who made life a joy, and the “slaughter-house,” a precious possession: Sam Brown, Farmer Pete, Bill Mayfield, Six-fingered Jake, Jack Williams, and the rest of the crimson discipleship, and so on, and so on. Believe me, I would start a resurrection it would do you more good to look at than the next one will, if you go on the way you are going now.

Those were the days!—those old ones. They will come no more; youth will come no more. They were so full to the brim with the wine of life; there have been no others like them. It chokes me up to think of them. Would you like me to come out there and cry? It would not beseem my white head.

Good-by. I drink to you all. Have a good time-and take an old man’s blessing.

In reply to another invitation from H. H. Bancroft, of San Francisco, he wrote that his wandering days were over, and that it was his purpose to sit by the fire for the rest of his “remnant of life.”

A man who, like me, is going to strike 70 on the 30th of next November has no business to be flitting around the way Howells does —that shameless old fictitious butterfly. (But if he comes don’t tell him I said it, for it would hurt him & I wouldn’t brush a flake of powder from his wing for anything. I only say it in envy of his indestructible youth anyway. Howells will be 88 in October.)

And it was either then or on a similar occasion that he replied after this fashion:

I have done more for San Francisco than any other of its old residents. Since I left there it has increased in population fully 300,000. I could have done more—I could have gone earlier—it was suggested.

Which, by the way, is a perfect example of Mark Twain’s humorous manner, the delicately timed pause, and the afterthought. Most humorists would have been contented to end with the statement, “I could have gone earlier.” Only Mark Twain could have added that final exquisite touch —“it was suggested.”

CCXXXVI

AT PIER 70

Mark Twain was nearing seventy, the scriptural limitation of life, and the returns were coming in. Some one of the old group was dying all the time. The roll-call returned only a scattering answer. Of his oldest friends, Charles Henry Webb, John Hay, and Sir Henry Irving, all died that year. When Hay died Clemens gave this message to the press:

Page 735

I am deeply grieved, & I mourn with the nation this loss which is irreparable. My friendship with Mr. Hay & my admiration of him endured 38 years without impairment.

It was only a little earlier that he had written Hay an anonymous letter, a copy of which he preserved. It here follows:

Dear & honored sir,—I never hear any one speak of you & of your long roll of illustrious services in other than terms of pride & praise—& out of the heart. I think I am right in believing you to be the only man in the civil service of the country the cleanness of whose motives is never questioned by any citizen, & whose acts proceed always upon a broad & high plane, never by accident or pressure of circumstance upon a narrow or low one. There are majorities that are proud of more than one of the nation's great servants, but I believe, & I think I know, that you are the only one of whom the entire nation is proud. Proud & thankful.

Name & address are lacking here, & for a purpose: to leave you no chance to make my words a burden to you and a reproach to me, who would lighten your burdens if I could, not add to them.

Irving died in October, and Clemens ordered a wreath for his funeral. To MacAlister he wrote:

I profoundly grieve over Irving's death. It is another reminder. My section of the procession has but a little way to go. I could not be very sorry if I tried.

Mark Twain, nearing seventy, felt that there was not much left for him to celebrate; and when Colonel Harvey proposed a birthday gathering in his honor, Clemens suggested a bohemian assembly over beer and sandwiches in some snug place, with Howells, Henry Rogers, Twichell, Dr. Rice, Dr. Edward Quintard, Augustus Thomas, and such other kindred souls as were still left to answer the call. But Harvey had something different in view: something more splendid even than the sixty-seventh birthday feast, more pretentious, indeed, than any former literary gathering. He felt that the attainment of seventy years by America's most distinguished man of letters and private citizen was a circumstance which could not be moderately or even modestly observed. The date was set five days later than the actual birthday—that is to say, on December 5th, in order that it might not conflict with the various Thanksgiving holidays and occasions. Delmonico's great room was chosen for the celebration of it, and invitations were sent out to practically every writer of any distinction in America, and to many abroad. Of these nearly two hundred accepted, while such as could not come sent pathetic regrets.

Page 736

What an occasion it was! The flower of American literature gathered to do honor to its chief. The whole atmosphere of the place seemed permeated with his presence, and when Colonel Harvey presented William Dean Howells, and when Howells had read another double-barreled sonnet, and introduced the guest of the evening with the words, "I will not say, 'O King, live forever,' but, 'O King, live as long as you like!'" and Mark Twain rose, his snow-white hair gleaming above that brilliant assembly, it seemed that a world was speaking out in a voice of applause and welcome. With a great tumult the throng rose, a billow of life, the white handkerchiefs flying foam-like on its crest. Those who had gathered there realized that it was a mighty moment, not only in his life but in theirs. They were there to see this supreme embodiment of the American spirit as he scaled the mountain-top. He, too, realized the drama of that moment—the marvel of it—and he must have flashed a swift panoramic view backward over the long way he had come, to stand, as he had himself once expressed it, "for a single, splendid moment on the Alps of fame outlined against the sun." He must have remembered; for when he came to speak he went back to the very beginning, to his very first banquet, as he called it, when, as he said, "I hadn't any hair; I hadn't any teeth; I hadn't any clothes." He sketched the meagerness of that little hamlet which had seen his birth, sketched it playfully, delightfully, so that his hearers laughed and shouted; but there was always a tenderness under it all, and often the tears were not far beneath the surface. He told of his habits of life, how he had attained seventy years by simply sticking to a scheme of living which would kill anybody else; how he smoked constantly, loathed exercise, and had no other regularity of habits. Then, at last, he reached that wonderful, unforgettable close:

Threescore years and ten!

It is the scriptural statute of limitations. After that you owe no active duties; for you the strenuous life is over. You are a time- expired man, to use Kipling's military phrase: You have served your term, well or less well, and you are mustered out. You are become an honorary member of the republic, you are emancipated, compulsions are not for you, nor any bugle-call but "lights out." You pay the time-worn duty bills if you choose, or decline if you prefer—and without prejudice—for they are not legally collectable. The previous-engagement plea, which in forty years has cost you so many twinges, you can lay aside forever; on this side of the grave you will never need it again. If you shrink at thought of night, and winter, and the late homecomings from the banquet and the lights and laughter through the deserted streets—a desolation which would not remind you now, as for a generation it did, that your friends are sleeping and you must creep in a-tiptoe and not disturb them, but

Page 737

would only remind you that you need not tiptoe, you can never disturb them more—if you shrink at the thought of these things you need only reply, “Your invitation honors me and pleases me because you still keep me in your remembrance, but I am seventy; seventy, and would nestle in the chimney-corner, and smoke my pipe, and read my book, and take my rest, wishing you well in all affection, and that when you in your turn shall arrive at Pier 70 you may step aboard your waiting ship with a reconciled spirit, and lay your course toward the sinking sun with a contented heart.”

The tears that had been lying in wait were not restrained now. If there were any present who did not let them flow without shame, who did not shout their applause from throats choked with sobs, the writer of these lines failed to see them or to hear of them. There was not one who was ashamed to pay the great tribute of tears.

Many of his old friends, one after another, rose to tell their love for him—Brander Matthews, Cable, Kate Douglas Riggs, Gilder, Carnegie, Bangs, Bacheller—they kept it up far into the next morning. No other arrival at Pier 70 ever awoke a grander welcome.

CCXXXVII

AFTERMATH

The announcement of the seventieth birthday dinner had precipitated a perfect avalanche of letters, which continued to flow in until the news accounts of it precipitated another avalanche. The carriers' bags were stuffed with greetings that came from every part of the world, from every class of humanity. They were all full of love and tender wishes. A card signed only with initials said: “God bless your old sweet soul for having lived.”

Aldrich, who could not attend the dinner, declared that all through the evening he had been listening in his mind to a murmur of voices in the hall at Delmonico's. A group of English authors in London combined in a cable of congratulations. Anstey, Alfred Austin, Balfour, Barrie, Bryce, Chesterton, Dobson, Doyle, Gosse, Hardy, Hope, Jacobs, Kipling, Lang, Parker, Tenniel, Watson, and Zangwill were among the signatures.

Helen Keller wrote:

And you are seventy years old? Or is the report exaggerated, like that of your death? I remember, when I saw you last, at the house of dear Mr. Hutton, in Princeton, you said:

“If a man is a pessimist before he is forty-eight he knows too much. If he is an optimist after he is forty-eight he knows too little.”

Now we know you are an optimist, and nobody would dare to accuse one on the “seven-terraced summit” of knowing little. So probably you are not seventy after all, but only forty-seven!

Helen Keller was right. Mark Twain was not a pessimist in his heart, but only by premeditation. It was his observation and his logic that led him to write those things that, even in their bitterness, somehow conveyed that spirit of human sympathy which is so closely linked to hope. To Miss Keller he wrote:

Page 738

"Oh, thank you for your lovely words!"

He was given another birthday celebration that month—this time by the Society of Illustrators. Dan Beard, president, was also toast-master; and as he presented Mark Twain there was a trumpet-note, and a lovely girl, costumed as Joan of Arc, entered and, approaching him, presented him with a laurel wreath. It was planned and carried out as a surprise to him, and he hardly knew for the moment whether it was a vision or a reality. He was deeply affected, so much so that for several moments he could not find his voice to make any acknowledgments.

Clemens was more than ever sought now, and he responded when the cause was a worthy one. He spoke for the benefit of the Russian sufferers at the Casino on December 18th. Madame Sarah Bernhardt was also there, and spoke in French. He followed her, declaring that it seemed a sort of cruelty to inflict upon an audience our rude English after hearing that divine speech flowing in that lucid Gallic tongue.

It has always been a marvel to me—that French language; it has always been a puzzle to me. How beautiful that language is! How expressive it seems to be! How full of grace it is!

And when it comes from lips like those, how eloquent and how limpid it is! And, oh, I am always deceived—I always think I am going to understand it.

It is such a delight to me, such a delight to me, to meet Madame Bernhardt, and laugh hand to hand and heart to heart with her. I have seen her play, as we all have, and, oh, that is divine; but I have always wanted to know Madame Bernhardt herself—her fiery self. I have wanted to know that beautiful character.

Why, she is the youngest person I ever saw, except myself—for I always feel young when I come in the presence of young people.

And truly, at seventy, Mark Twain was young, his manner, his movement, his point of view—these were all, and always, young.

A number of palmists about that time examined impressions of his hand without knowledge as to the owner, and they all agreed that it was the hand of a man with the characteristics of youth, with inspiration, and enthusiasm, and sympathy—a lover of justice and of the sublime. They all agreed, too, that he was a deep philosopher, though, alas! they likewise agreed that he lacked the sense of humor, which is not as surprising as it sounds, for with Mark Twain humor was never mere fun-making nor the love of it; rather it was the flower of his philosophy—its bloom and fragrance.

When the fanfare and drum-beat of his birthday honors had passed by, and a moment of calm had followed, Mark Twain set down some reflections on the new estate he had achieved. The little paper, which forms a perfect pendant to the "Seventieth Birthday Speech," here follows:

Old age

I think it likely that people who have not been here will be interested to know what it is like. I arrived on the thirtieth of November, fresh from carefree & frivolous 69, & was disappointed.

Page 739

There is nothing novel about it, nothing striking, nothing to thrill you & make your eye glitter & your tongue cry out, "Oh, it is wonderful, perfectly wonderful!" Yes, it is disappointing. You say, "Is this it?—this? after all this talk and fuss of a thousand generations of travelers who have crossed this frontier & looked about them & told what they saw & felt? Why, it looks just like 69." And that is true. Also it is natural, for you have not come by the fast express; you have been lagging & dragging across the world's continents behind oxen; when that is your pace one country melts into the next one so gradually that you are not able to notice the change; 70 looks like 69; 69 looked like 68; 68 looked like 67—& so on back & back to the beginning. If you climb to a summit & look back—ah, then you see! Down that far-reaching perspective you can make out each country & climate that you crossed, all the way up from the hot equator to the ice-summit where you are perched. You can make out where Infancy verged into Boyhood; Boyhood into down-lipped Youth; Youth into bearded, indefinite Young-Manhood; indefinite Young-Manhood into definite Manhood; definite Manhood, with large, aggressive ambitions, into sobered & heedful Husbandhood & Fatherhood; these into troubled & foreboding Age, with graying hair; this into Old Age, white-headed, the temple empty, the idols broken, the worshipers in their graves, nothing left but You, a remnant, a tradition, belated fag-end of a foolish dream, a dream that was so ingeniously dreamed that it seemed real all the time; nothing left but You, center of a snowy desolation, perched on the ice-summit, gazing out over the stages of that long trek & asking Yourself, "Would you do it again if you had the chance?"

CCXXXVIII

THE WRITER MEETS MARK TWAIN

We have reached a point in this history where the narrative becomes mainly personal, and where, at the risk of inviting the charge of egotism, the form of the telling must change.

It was at the end of 1901 that I first met Mark Twain—at The Players Club on the night when he made the Founder's Address mentioned in an earlier chapter.

I was not able to arrive in time for the address, but as I reached the head of the stairs I saw him sitting on the couch at the dining-room entrance, talking earnestly to some one, who, as I remember it, did not enter into my consciousness at all. I saw only that crown of white hair, that familiar profile, and heard the slow modulations of his measured speech. I was surprised to see how frail and old he looked. From his pictures I had conceived him different. I did not realize that it was a temporary condition due to a period of poor health and a succession of social demands. I have no idea how long I stood there watching him. He had been my literary idol from childhood, as he had been of so many others; more than that, for the personality in his work had made him nothing less than a hero to his readers.

Page 740

He rose presently to go, and came directly toward me. A year before I had done what new writers were always doing—I had sent him a book I had written, and he had done what he was always doing—acknowledged it with a kindly letter. I made my thanks now an excuse for addressing him. It warmed me to hear him say that he remembered the book, though at the time I confess I thought it doubtful. Then he was gone; but the mind and ear had photographed those vivid first impressions that remain always clear.

It was the following spring that I saw him again—at an afternoon gathering, and the memory of that occasion is chiefly important because I met Mrs. Clemens there for the only time, and like all who met her, however briefly, felt the gentleness and beauty of her spirit. I think I spoke with her at two or three different moments during the afternoon, and on each occasion was impressed with that feeling of acquaintanceship which we immediately experience with those rare beings whose souls are wells of human sympathy and free from guile. Bret Harte had just died, and during the afternoon Mr. Clemens asked me to obtain for him some item concerning the obsequies.

It was more than three years before I saw him again. Meantime, a sort of acquaintance had progressed. I had been engaged in writing the life of Thomas Nast, the cartoonist, and I had found among the material a number of letters to Nast from Mark Twain. I was naturally anxious to use those fine characteristic letters, and I wrote him for his consent. He wished to see the letters, and the permission that followed was kindness itself. His admiration of Nast was very great.

It was proper, under the circumstances, to send him a copy of the book when it appeared; but that was 1904, his year of sorrow and absence, and the matter was postponed. Then came the great night of his seventieth birthday dinner, with an opportunity to thank him in person for the use of the letters. There was only a brief exchange of words, and it was the next day, I think, that I sent him a copy of the book. It did not occur to me that I should hear of it again.

We step back a moment here. Something more than a year earlier, through a misunderstanding, Mark Twain's long association with The Players had been severed. It was a sorrow to him, and a still greater sorrow to the club. There was a movement among what is generally known' as the "Round Table Group"—because its members have long had a habit of lunching at a large, round table in a certain window—to bring him back again. David Munro, associate editor of the North American Review—"David," a man well loved of men—and Robert Reid, the painter, prepared this simple document:

To
mark twain
from
the clansmen

Will ye no come back again?
Will ye no come back again?
Better lo'ed ye canna be,
Will ye no come back again?

Page 741

It was signed by Munro and by Reid and about thirty others, and it touched Mark Twain deeply. The lines had always moved him. He wrote:

To Robt. Reid & the others—

Well-beloved,—Surely those lovely verses went to Prince Charlie's heart, if he had one, & certainly they have gone to mine. I shall be glad & proud to come back again after such a moving & beautiful compliment as this from comrades whom I have loved so long. I hope you can poll the necessary vote; I know you will try, at any rate. It will be many months before I can foregather with you, for this black border is not perfunctory, not a convention; it symbolizes the loss of one whose memory is the only thing I worship.

It is not necessary for me to thank you—& words could not deliver what I feel, anyway. I will put the contents of your envelope in the small casket where I keep the things which have become sacred to me.

S. L. C.

So the matter was temporarily held in abeyance until he should return to social life. At the completion of his seventieth year the club had taken action, and Mark Twain had been brought back, not in the regular order of things, but as an honorary life member without dues or duties. There was only one other member of this class, Sir Henry Irving.

The Players, as a club, does not give dinners. Whatever is done in that way is done by one or more of the members in the private dining-room, where there is a single large table that holds twenty-five, even thirty when expanded to its limit. That room and that table have mingled with much distinguished entertainment, also with history. Henry James made his first after-dinner speech there, for one thing—at least he claimed it was his first, though this is by the way.

A letter came to me which said that those who had signed the plea for the Prince's return were going to welcome him in the private dining-room on the 5th of January. It was not an invitation, but a gracious privilege. I was in New York a day or two in advance of the date, and I think David Munro was the first person I met at The Players. As he greeted me his eyes were eager with something he knew I would wish to hear. He had been delegated to propose the dinner to Mark Twain, and had found him propped up in bed, and noticed on the table near him a copy of the *Nast* book. I suspect that Munro had led him to speak of it, and that the result had lost nothing filtered through that radiant benevolence of his.

Page 742

The night of January 5, 1906, remains a memory apart from other dinners. Brander Matthews presided, and Gilder was there, and Frank Millet and Willard Metcalf and Robert Reid, and a score of others; some of them are dead now, David Munro among them. It so happened that my seat was nearly facing the guest of the evening, who, by custom of The Players, is placed at the side and not at the end of the long table. He was no longer frail and thin, as when I had first met him. He had a robust, rested look; his complexion had the tints of a miniature painting. Lit by the glow of the shaded candles, relieved against the dusk richness of the walls, he made a picture of striking beauty. One could not take his eyes from it, and to one guest at least it stirred the farthest memories. I suddenly saw the interior of a farm-house sitting-room in the Middle West, where I had first heard uttered the name of Mark Twain, and where night after night a group gathered around the evening lamp to hear the tale of the first pilgrimage, which, to a boy of eight, had seemed only a wonderful poem and fairy tale. To Charles Harvey Genung, who sat next to me, I whispered something of this, and how, during the thirty-six years since then, no other human being to me had meant quite what Mark Twain had meant—in literature, in life, in the ineffable thing which means more than either, and which we call “inspiration,” for lack of a truer word. Now here he was, just across the table. It was the fairy tale come true.

Genung said:

“You should write his life.”

His remark seemed a pleasant courtesy, and was put aside as such. When he persisted I attributed it to the general bloom of the occasion, and a little to the wine, maybe, for the dinner was in its sweetest stage just then—that happy, early stage when the first glass of champagne, or the second, has proved its quality. He urged, in support of his idea, the word that Munro had brought concerning the Nast book, but nothing of what he said kindled any spark of hope. I could not but believe that some one with a larger equipment of experience, personal friendship, and abilities had already been selected for the task. By and by the speaking began—delightful, intimate speaking in that restricted circle—and the matter went out of my mind.

When the dinner had ended, and we were drifting about the table in general talk, I found an opportunity to say a word to the guest of the evening about his Joan of Arc, which I had recently re-read. To my happiness, he detained me while he told me the long-ago incident which had led to his interest, not only in the martyred girl, but in all literature. I think we broke up soon after, and descended to the lower rooms. At any rate, I presently found the faithful Charles Genung privately reasserting to me the proposition that I should undertake the biography of Mark Twain. Perhaps it was the brief sympathy established by the name of Joan of Arc, perhaps it was only Genung’s insistent purpose—his faith, if I may be permitted the word. Whatever it was, there came an impulse, in the instant of bidding good-by to our guest of honor, which prompted me to say:

Page 743

"May I call to see you, Mr. Clemens, some day?"

And something—dating from the primal atom, I suppose—prompted him to answer:

"Yes, come soon."

This was on Wednesday night, or rather on Thursday morning, for it was past midnight, and a day later I made an appointment with his secretary to call on Saturday.

I can say truly that I set out with no more than the barest hope of success, and wondering if I should have the courage, when I saw him, even to suggest the thought in my mind. I know I did not have the courage to confide in Genung that I had made the appointment—I was so sure it would fail. I arrived at 21 Fifth Avenue and was shown into that long library and drawing-room combined, and found a curious and deep interest in the books and ornaments along the shelves as I waited. Then I was summoned, and I remember ascending the stairs, wondering why I had come on so futile an errand, and trying to think of an excuse to offer for having come at all.

He was propped up in bed—in that stately bed-sitting, as was his habit, with his pillows placed at the foot, so that he might have always before him the rich, carved beauty of its headboard. He was delving through a copy of Huckleberry Finn, in search of a paragraph concerning which some random correspondent had asked explanation. He was commenting unfavorably on this correspondent and on miscellaneous letter-writing in general. He pushed the cigars toward me, and the talk of these matters ran along and blended into others more or less personal. By and by I told him what so many thousands had told him before: what he had meant to me, recalling the childhood impressions of that large, black-and-gilt-covered book with its wonderful pictures and adventures—the Mediterranean pilgrimage. Very likely it bored him—he had heard it so often—and he was willing enough, I dare say, to let me change the subject and thank him for the kindly word which David Munro had brought. I do not remember what he said then, but I suddenly found myself suggesting that out of his encouragement had grown a hope—though certainly it was something less—that I might some day undertake a book about himself. I expected the chapter to end at this point, and his silence which followed seemed long and ominous.

He said, at last, that at various times through his life he had been preparing some autobiographical matter, but that he had tired of the undertaking, and had put it aside. He added that he had hoped his daughters would one day collect his letters; but that a biography—a detailed story of personality and performance, of success and failure —was of course another matter, and that for such a work no arrangement had been made. He may have added one or two other general remarks; then, turning those piercing agate-blue eyes directly upon me, he said:

"When would you like to begin?"

There was a dresser with a large mirror behind him. I happened to catch my reflection in it, and I vividly recollect saying to it mentally: "This is not true; it is only one of many similar dreams." But even in a dream one must answer, and I said:

Page 744

"Whenever you like. I can begin now."

He was always eager in any new undertaking.

"Very good," he said. "The sooner, then, the better. Let's begin while we are in the humor. The longer you postpone a thing of this kind the less likely you are ever to get at it."

This was on Saturday, as I have stated. I mentioned that my family was still in the country, and that it would require a day or two to get established in the city. I asked if Tuesday, January 9th, would be too soon to begin. He agreed that Tuesday would do, and inquired something about my plan of work. Of course I had formed nothing definite, but I said that in similar undertakings a part of the work had been done with a stenographer, who had made the notes while I prompted the subject to recall a procession of incidents and episodes, to be supplemented with every variety of material obtainable—letters and other documentary accumulations. Then he said:

"I think I should enjoy dictating to a stenographer, with some one to prompt me and to act as audience. The room adjoining this was fitted up for my study. My manuscripts and notes and private books and many of my letters are there, and there are a trunkful or two of such things in the attic. I seldom use the room myself. I do my writing and reading in bed. I will turn that room over to you for this work. Whatever you need will be brought to you. We can have the dictation here in the morning, and you can put in the rest of the day to suit yourself. You can have a key and come and go as you please."

That was always his way. He did nothing by halves; nothing without unquestioning confidence and prodigality. He got up and showed me the lovely luxury of the study, with its treasures of material. I did not believe it true yet. It had all the atmosphere of a dream, and I have no distinct recollection of how I came away. When I returned to The Players and found Charles Harvey Genung there, and told him about it, it is quite certain that he perjured himself when he professed to believe it true and pretended that he was not surprised.

CCXXXIX

WORKING WITH MARK TWAIN

On Tuesday, January 9, 1906, I was on hand with a capable stenographer —Miss Josephine Hobby, who had successively, and successfully, held secretarial positions with Charles Dudley Warner and Mrs. Mary Mapes Dodge, and was therefore peculiarly qualified for the work in hand.



Clemens, meantime, had been revolving our plans and adding some features of his own. He proposed to double the value and interest of our employment by letting his dictations continue the form of those earlier autobiographical chapters, begun with Redpath in 1885, and continued later in Vienna and at the Villa Quarto. He said he did not think he could follow a definite chronological program; that he would like to wander about, picking up this point and that,

Page 745

as memory or fancy prompted, without any particular biographical order. It was his purpose, he declared, that his dictations should not be published until he had been dead a hundred years or more—a prospect which seemed to give him an especial gratification.—[As early as October, 1900, he had proposed to Harper & Brothers a contract for publishing his personal memoirs at the expiration of one hundred years from date; and letters covering the details were exchanged with Mr. Rogers. The document, however, was not completed.]

He wished to pay the stenographer, and to own these memoranda, he said, allowing me free access to them for any material I might find valuable. I could also suggest subjects for dictation, and ask particulars of any special episode or period. I believe this covered the whole arrangement, which did not require more than five minutes, and we set to work without further prologue.

I ought to state that he was in bed when we arrived, and that he remained there during almost all of these earlier dictations, clad in a handsome silk dressing-gown of rich Persian pattern, propped against great snowy pillows. He loved this loose luxury and ease, and found it conducive to thought. On the little table beside him, where lay his cigars, papers, pipes, and various knickknacks, shone a reading-lamp, making more brilliant the rich coloring of his complexion and the gleam of his shining hair. There was daylight, too, but it was north light, and the winter days were dull. Also the walls of the room were a deep, unreflecting red, and his eyes were getting old. The outlines of that vast bed blending into the luxuriant background, the whole focusing to the striking central figure, remain in my mind to-day—a picture of classic value.

He dictated that morning some matters connected with the history of the Comstock mine; then he drifted back to his childhood, returning again to the more modern period, and closed, I think, with some comments on current affairs. It was absorbingly interesting; his quaint, unhurried fashion of speech, the unconscious movement of his hands, the play of his features as his fancies and phrases passed in mental review and were accepted or waved aside. We were watching one of the great literary creators of his time in the very process of his architecture. We constituted about the most select audience in the world enjoying what was, likely enough, its most remarkable entertainment. When he turned at last and inquired the time we were all amazed that two hours and more had slipped away.

“And how much I have enjoyed it!” he said. “It is the ideal plan for this kind of work. Narrative writing is always disappointing. The moment you pick up a pen you begin to lose the spontaneity of the personal relation, which contains the very essence of interest. With shorthand dictation one can talk as if he were at his own dinner-table — always a most inspiring place. I expect to dictate all the rest of my life, if you good people are willing to come and listen to it.”

Page 746

The dictations thus begun continued steadily from week to week, and always with increasing charm. We never knew what he was going to talk about, and it was seldom that he knew until the moment of beginning; then he went drifting among episodes, incidents, and periods in his irresponsible fashion; the fashion of table-conversation, as he said, the methodless method of the human mind. It was always delightful, and always amusing, tragic, or instructive, and it was likely to be one of these at one instant, and another the next. I felt myself the most fortunate biographer in the world, as undoubtedly I was, though not just in the way that I first imagined.

It was not for several weeks that I began to realize that these marvelous reminiscences bore only an atmospheric relation to history; that they were aspects of biography rather than its veritable narrative, and built largely—sometimes wholly—from an imagination that, with age, had dominated memory, creating details, even reversing them, yet with a perfect sincerity of purpose on the part of the narrator to set down the literal and unvarnished truth. It was his constant effort to be frank and faithful to fact, to record, to confess, and to condemn without stint. If you wanted to know the worst of Mark Twain you had only to ask him for it. He would give it, to the last syllable—worse than the worst, for his imagination would magnify it and adorn it with new iniquities, and if he gave it again, or a dozen times, he would improve upon it each time, until the thread of history was almost impossible to trace through the marvel of that fabric; and he would do the same for another person just as willingly. Those vividly real personalities that he marched and countermarched before us were the most convincing creatures in the world; the most entertaining, the most excruciatingly humorous, or wicked, or tragic; but, alas, they were not always safe to include in a record that must bear a certain semblance to history. They often disagreed in their performance, and even in their characters, with the documents in the next room, as I learned by and by when those records, disentangled, began to rebuild the structure of the years.

His gift of dramatization had been exercised too long to be discarded now. The things he told of Mrs. Clemens and of Susy were true—marvelously and beautifully true, in spirit and in aspect—and the actual detail of these mattered little in such a record. The rest was history only as ‘*Roughing It*’ is history, or the ‘*Tramp Abroad*’; that is to say, it was fictional history, with fact as a starting-point. In a prefatory note to these volumes we have quoted Mark Twain’s own lovely and whimsical admission, made once when he realized his deviations:

“When I was younger I could remember anything, whether it happened or not; but I am getting old, and soon I shall remember only the latter.”

At another time he paraphrased one of Josh Billings’s sayings in the remark: “It isn’t so astonishing, the number of things that I can remember, as the number of things I can remember that aren’t so.”

Page 747

I do not wish to say, by any means, that his so-called autobiography is a mere fairy tale. It is far from that. It is amazingly truthful in the character-picture it represents of the man himself. It is only not reliable—and it is sometimes even unjust—as detailed history. Yet, curiously enough, there were occasional chapters that were photographically exact, and fitted precisely with the more positive, if less picturesque, materials. It is also true that such chapters were likely to be episodes intrinsically so perfect as to not require the touch of art.

In the talks which we usually had, when the dictations were ended and Miss Hobby had gone, I gathered much that was of still greater value. Imagination was temporarily dispossessed, as it were, and, whether expounding some theory or summarizing some event, he cared little for literary effect, and only for the idea and the moment immediately present.

It was at such times that he allowed me to make those inquiries we had planned in the beginning, and which apparently had little place in the dictations themselves. Sometimes I led him to speak of the genesis of his various books, how he had come to write them, and I think there was not a single case where later I did not find his memory of these matters almost exactly in accord with the letters of the moment, written to Howells or Twichell, or to some member of his family. Such reminiscence was usually followed by some vigorous burst of human philosophy, often too vigorous for print, too human, but as dazzling as a search-light in its revelation.

It was during this earlier association that he propounded, one day, his theory of circumstance, already set down, that inevitable sequence of cause and effect, beginning with the first act of the primal atom. He had been dictating that morning his story of the clairvoyant dream which preceded his brother's death, and the talk of foreknowledge had continued. I said one might logically conclude from such a circumstance that the future was a fixed quantity.

"As absolutely fixed as the past," he said; and added the remark already quoted.—[Chap. lxxv] A little later he continued:

"Even the Almighty Himself cannot check or change that sequence of events once it is started. It is a fixed quantity, and a part of the scheme is a mental condition during certain moments usually of sleep—when the mind may reach out and grasp some of the acts which are still to come."

It was a new angle to me—a line of logic so simple and so utterly convincing that I have remained unshaken in it to this day. I have never been able to find any answer to it, nor any one who could even attempt to show that the first act of the first created atom did not strike the key-note of eternity.

At another time, speaking of the idea that God works through man, he burst out:

“Yes, of course, just about as much as a man works through his microbes!”

Page 748

He had a startling way of putting things like that, and it left not much to say.

I was at this period interested a good deal in mental healing, and had been treated for neurasthenia with gratifying results. Like most of the world, I had assumed, from his published articles, that he condemned Christian Science and its related practices out of hand. When I confessed, rather reluctantly, one day, the benefit I had received, he surprised me by answering:

“Of course you have been benefited. Christian Science is humanity’s boon. Mother Eddy deserves a place in the Trinity as much as any member of it. She has organized and made available a healing principle that for two thousand years has never been employed, except as the merest kind of guesswork. She is the benefactor of the age.”

It seemed strange, at the time, to hear him speak in this way concerning a practice of which he was generally regarded as the chief public antagonist. It was another angle of his many-sided character.

CCXL

THE DEFINITION OF A GENTLEMAN

That was a busy winter for him socially. He was constantly demanded for this thing and that—for public gatherings, dinners—everywhere he was a central figure. Once he presided at a Valentine dinner given by some Players to David Munro. He had never presided at a dinner before, he said, and he did it in his own way, which certainly was a taking one, suitable to that carefree company and occasion—a real Scotch occasion, with the Munro tartan everywhere, the table banked with heather, and a wild piper marching up and down in the anteroom, blowing savage airs in honor of Scotland’s gentlest son.

An important meeting of that winter was at Carnegie Hall—a great gathering which had assembled for the purpose of aiding Booker T. Washington in his work for the welfare of his race. The stage and the auditorium were thronged with notables. Joseph H. Choate and Mark Twain presided, and both spoke; also Robert C. Ogden and Booker T. Washington himself. It was all fine and interesting. Choate’s address was ably given, and Mark Twain was at his best. He talked of politics and of morals—public and private—how the average American citizen was true to his Christian principles three hundred and sixty-three days in the year, and how on the other two days of the year he left those principles at home and went to the tax-office and the voting-booths, and did his best to damage and undo his whole year’s faithful and righteous work.

I used to be an honest man, but I am crumbling—no, I have crumbled. When they assessed me at \$75,000 a fortnight ago I went out and tried to borrow the money and

couldn't. Then when I found they were letting a whole crowd of millionaires live in New York at a third of the price they were charging me I was hurt, I was indignant, and said, this is the last feather. I am

Page 749

not going to run this town all by myself. In that moment—in that memorable moment, I began to crumble. In fifteen minutes the disintegration was complete. In fifteen minutes I was become just a mere moral sand-pile, and I lifted up my hand, along with those seasoned and experienced deacons, and swore off every rag of personal property I've got in the world.

I had never heard him address a miscellaneous audience. It was marvelous to see how he convulsed it, and silenced it, and controlled it at will. He did not undertake any special pleading for the negro cause; he only prepared the way with cheerfulness.

Clemens and Choate joined forces again, a few weeks later, at a great public meeting assembled in aid of the adult blind. Helen Keller was to be present, but she had fallen ill through overwork. She sent to Clemens one of her beautiful letters, in which she said:

I should be happy if I could have spelled into my hand the words as they fall from your lips, and receive, even as it is uttered, the eloquence of our newest ambassador to the blind.

Clemens, dictating the following morning, told of his first meeting with Helen Keller at a little gathering in Lawrence Hutton's home, when she was about the age of fourteen. It was an incident that invited no elaboration, and probably received none.

Henry Rogers and I went together. The company had all assembled and had been waiting a while. The wonderful child arrived now with her about equally wonderful teacher, Miss Sullivan, and seemed quite well to recognize the character of her surroundings. She said, "Oh, the books, the books, so many, many books. How lovely!"

The guests were brought one after another. As she shook hands with each she took her hand away and laid her fingers lightly against Miss Sullivan's lips, who spoke against them the person's name.

Mr. Howells seated himself by Helen on the sofa, and she put her fingers against his lips and he told her a story of considerable length, and you could see each detail of it pass into her mind and strike fire there and throw the flash of it into her face. After a couple of hours spent very pleasantly some one asked if Helen would remember the feel of the hands of the company after this considerable interval of time and be able to discriminate the hands and name the possessors of them. Miss Sullivan said, "Oh, she will have no difficulty about that." So the company filed past, shook hands in turn, and with each hand-shake Helen greeted the owner of the hand pleasantly and spoke the name that belonged to it without hesitation. By and by the assemblage proceeded to the dining-room and sat down to the luncheon. I had to go away before it was over, and as I

passed by Helen I patted her lightly on the head and passed on. Miss Sullivan called to me and said,

Page 750

"Stop, Mr. Clemens, Helen is distressed because she did not recognize your hand. Won't you come back and do that again?" I went back and patted her lightly on the head, and she said at once, "Oh, it's Mr. Clemens."

Perhaps some one can explain this miracle, but I have never been able to do it. Could she feel the wrinkles in my hand through her hair? Some one else must answer this.

It was three years following this dictation that the mystery received a very simple and rather amusing solution. Helen had come to pay a visit to Mark Twain's Connecticut home, Stormfield, then but just completed. He had met her, meantime, but it had not occurred to him before to ask her how she had recognized him that morning at Hutton's, in what had seemed such a marvelous way. She remembered, and with a smile said:

"I smelled you." Which, after all, did not make the incident seem much less marvelous.

On one of the mornings after Miss Hobby had gone Clemens said:

"A very curious thing has happened—a very large-sized-joke." He was shaving at the time, and this information came in brief and broken relays, suited to a performance of that sort. The reader may perhaps imagine the effect without further indication of it.

"I was going on a yachting trip once, with Henry Rogers, when a reporter stopped me with the statement that Mrs. Astor had said that there had never been a gentleman in the White House, and he wanted me to give him my definition of a gentleman. I didn't give him my definition; but he printed it, just the same, in the afternoon paper. I was angry at first, and wanted to bring a damage suit. When I came to read the definition it was a satisfactory one, and I let it go. Now to-day comes a letter and a telegram from a man who has made a will in Missouri, leaving ten thousand dollars to provide tablets for various libraries in the State, on which shall be inscribed Mark Twain's definition of a gentleman. He hasn't got the definition—he has only heard of it, and he wants me to tell him in which one of my books or speeches he can find it. I couldn't think, when I read that letter, what in the nation the man meant, but shaving somehow has a tendency to release thought, and just now it all came to me."

It was a situation full of amusing possibilities; but he reached no conclusion in the matter. Another telegram was brought in just then, which gave a sadder aspect to his thought, for it said that his old coachman, Patrick McAleer, who had begun in the Clemens service with the bride and groom of thirty-six years before, was very low, and could not survive more than a few days. This led him to speak of Patrick, his noble and faithful nature, and how he always claimed to be in their service, even during their long intervals of absence abroad. Clemens gave orders that everything possible should be done for Patrick's comfort. When the end came, a few days later, he traveled to



Hartford to lay flowers on Patrick's bier, and to serve, with Patrick's friends —neighbor coachmen and John O'Neill, the gardener—as pall-bearer, taking his allotted place without distinction or favor.

Page 751

It was the following Sunday, at the Majestic Theater, in New York, that Mark Twain spoke to the Young Men's Christian Association. For several reasons it proved an unusual meeting. A large number of free tickets had been given out, far more than the place would hold; and, further, it had been announced that when the ticket-holders had been seated the admission would be free to the public. The subject chosen for the talk was "Reminiscences."

When we arrived the streets were packed from side to side for a considerable distance and a riot was in progress. A great crowd had swarmed about the place, and the officials, instead of throwing the doors wide and letting the theater fill up, regardless of tickets, had locked them. As a result there was a shouting, surging human mass that presently dashed itself against the entrance. Windows and doors gave way, and there followed a wild struggle for entrance. A moment later the house was packed solid. A detachment of police had now arrived, and in time cleared the street. It was said that amid the tumult some had lost their footing and had been trampled and injured, but of this we did not learn until later. We had been taken somehow to a side entrance and smuggled into boxes.—[The paper next morning bore the head-lines: "10,000 Stampeded at the Mark Twain Meeting. Well-dressed Men and Women Clubbed by Police at Majestic Theater." In this account the paper stated that the crowd had collected an hour before the time for opening; that nothing of the kind had been anticipated and no police preparation had been made.]

It was peaceful enough in the theater until Mark Twain appeared on the stage. He was wildly greeted, and when he said, slowly and seriously, "I thank you for this signal recognition of merit," there was a still noisier outburst. In the quiet that followed he began his memories, and went wandering along from one anecdote to another in the manner of his daily dictations.

At last it seemed to occur to him, in view of the character of his audience, that he ought to close with something in the nature of counsel suited to young men.

It is from experiences such as mine [he said] that we get our education of life. We string them into jewels or into tinware, as we may choose. I have received recently several letters asking for counsel or advice, the principal request being for some incident that may prove helpful to the young. It is my mission to teach, and I am always glad to furnish something. There have been a lot of incidents in my career to help me along—sometimes they helped me along faster than I wanted to go.

He took some papers from his pocket and started to unfold one of them; then, as if remembering, he asked how long he had been talking. The answer came, "Thirty-five minutes." He made as if to leave the stage, but the audience commanded him to go on.

"All right," he said, "I can stand more of my own talk than any one I ever knew." Opening one of the papers, a telegram, he read:

Page 752

"In which one of your works can we find the definition of a gentleman?" Then he added:

I have not answered that telegram. I couldn't. I never wrote any such definition, though it seems to me that if a man has just, merciful, and kindly instincts he would be a gentleman, for he would need nothing else in this world.

He opened a letter. "From Howells," he said.

My old friend, William Dean Howells—Howells, the head of American literature. No one is able to stand with him. He is an old, old friend of mine, and he writes me, "To-morrow I shall be sixty-nine years old." Why, I am surprised at Howells writing so. I have known him myself longer than that. I am sorry to see a man trying to appear so young. Let's see. Howells says now, "I see you have been burying Patrick. I suppose he was old, too."

The house became very still. Most of them had read an account of Mark Twain's journey to Hartford and his last service to his faithful servitor. The speaker's next words were not much above a whisper, but every syllable was distinct.

No, he was never old-Patrick. He came to us thirty-six years ago. He was our coachman from the day that I drove my young bride to our new home. He was a young Irishman, slender, tall, lithe, honest, truthful, and he never changed in all his life. He really was with us but twenty-five years, for he did not go with us to Europe; but he never regarded that a separation. As the children grew up he was their guide. He was all honor, honesty, and affection. He was with us in New Hampshire last summer, and his hair was just as black, his eyes were just as blue, his form just as straight, and his heart just as good as on the day we first met. In all the long years Patrick never made a mistake. He never needed an order; he never received a command. He knew. I have been asked for my idea of an ideal gentleman, and I give it to you—Patrick McAleer.

It was the sort of thing that no one but Mark Twain has quite been able to do, and it was just that recognized quality behind it that had made crowds jam the street and stampede the entrance to be in his presence—to see him and to hear his voice.

CCXLI

GORKY, HOWELLS, AND MARK TWAIN

Clemens was now fairly back again in the wash of banquets and speech-making that had claimed him on his return from England, five years before. He made no less than a dozen speeches altogether that winter, and he was continually at some feasting or other, where he was sure to be called upon for remarks. He fell out of the habit of preparing his addresses, relying upon the inspiration of the moment, merely following the procedure of his daily dictations, which had doubtless given him confidence for this

departure from his earlier method. There was seldom an afternoon or an evening that he was not required, and seldom a morning that the papers did not have some report of his doings. Once more, and in a larger fashion than ever, he had become “the belle of New York.” But he was something further. An editorial in the Evening Mail said:

Page 753

Mark Twain, in his “last and best of life for which the first was made,” seems to be advancing rapidly to a position which makes him a kind of joint Aristides, Solon, and Themistocles of the American metropolis—an Aristides for justness and boldness as well as incessancy of opinion, a Solon for wisdom and cogency, and a Themistocles for the democracy of his views and the popularity of his person. Things have reached the point where, if Mark Twain is not at a public meeting or banquet, he is expected to console it with one of his inimitable letters of advice and encouragement. If he deigns to make a public appearance there is a throng at the doors which overtaxes the energy and ability of the police. We must be glad that we have a public commentator like Mark Twain always at hand and his wit and wisdom continually on tap. His sound, breezy Mississippi Valley Americanism is a corrective to all sorts of snobbery. He cultivates respect for human rights by always making sure that he has his own.

He talked one afternoon to the Barnard girls, and another afternoon to the Women’s University Club, illustrating his talk with what purported to be moral tales. He spoke at a dinner given to City Tax Commissioner Mr. Charles Putzel; and when he was introduced there as the man who had said, “When in doubt tell the truth,” he replied that he had invented that maxim for others, but that when in doubt himself, he used more sagacity.

The speeches he made kept his hearers always in good humor; but he made them think, too, for there was always substance and sound reason and searching satire in the body of what he said.

It was natural that there should be reporters calling frequently at Mark Twain’s home, and now and then the place became a veritable storm-center of news. Such a moment arrived when it became known that a public library in Brooklyn had banished Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer from the children’s room, presided over by a young woman of rather severe morals. The incident had begun in November of the previous year. One of the librarians, Asa Don Dickinson, who had vigorously voted against the decree, wrote privately of the matter. Clemens had replied:

Dear sir,—I am greatly troubled by what you say. I wrote Tom Sawyer & Huck Finn for adults exclusively, & it always distresses me when I find that boys & girls have been allowed access to them. The mind that becomes soiled in youth can never again be washed clean. I know this by my own experience, & to this day I cherish an unappeasable bitterness against the unfaithful guardians of my young life, who not only permitted but compelled me to read an unexpurgated Bible through before I was 15 years old. None can do that and ever draw a clean, sweet breath again this side of the grave. Ask that young lady—she will tell you so. Most honestly do I wish that I could

Page 754

say a softening word or two in defense of Huck's character since you wish it, but really, in my opinion, it is no better than those of Solomon, David, & the rest of the sacred brotherhood.

If there is an unexpurgated in the Children's Department, won't you please help that young woman remove Tom & Huck from that questionable companionship?

Sincerely yours,
S. L. Clemens.

I shall not show your letter to any one-it is safe with me.

Mr. Dickinson naturally kept this letter from the public, though he read it aloud to the assembled librarians, and the fact of its existence and its character eventually leaked out.—[It has been supplied to the writer by Mr. Dickinson, and is published here with his consent.]—One of the librarians who had heard it mentioned it at a theater-party in hearing of an unrealized newspaper man. This was near the end of the following March.

The "tip" was sufficient. Telephone-bells began to jingle, and groups of newspaper men gathered simultaneously on Mr. Dickinson's and on Mark Twain's door-steps. At a 21 Fifth Avenue you could hardly get in or out, for stepping on them. The evening papers surmised details, and Huck and Tom had a perfectly fresh crop of advertising, not only in America, but in distant lands. Dickinson wrote Clemens that he would not give out the letter without his authority, and Clemens replied:

Be wise as a serpent and wary as a dove! The newspaper boys want that letter—don't you let them get hold of it. They say you refuse to allow them to see it without my consent. Keep on refusing, and I'll take care of this end of the line.

In a recent letter to the writer Mr. Dickinson states that Mark Twain's solicitude was for the librarian, whom he was unwilling to involve in difficulties with his official superiors, and he adds:

There may be some doubt as to whether Mark Twain was or was not a religious man, for there are many definitions of the word religion. He was certainly a hater of conventions, had no patience with sanctimony and bibliolatry, and was perhaps irreverent. But any one who reads carefully the description of the conflict in Huck's soul, in regard to the betrayal of Jim, will credit the creator of the scene with deep and true moral feeling.



The reporters thinned out in the course of a few days when no result was forthcoming; but they were all back again presently when the Maxim Gorky fiasco came along. The distinguished revolutionist, Tchaykovsky, as a sort of advance agent for Gorky, had already called upon Clemens to enlist his sympathy in their mission, which was to secure funds in the cause of Russian emancipation. Clemens gave his sympathy, and now promised his aid, though he did not hesitate to discourage the mission. He said that American enthusiasm in such matters stopped well above their pockets, and that this revolutionary errand would fail. Howells, too, was of this opinion. In his account of the episode he says:

Page 755

I told a valued friend of his and mine that I did not believe he could get twenty-five hundred dollars, and I think now I set the figure too high.

Clemens's interest, however, grew. He attended a dinner given to Gorky at the "A Club," No. 3 Fifth Avenue, and introduced Gorky to the diners. Also he wrote a letter to be read by Tchaykoffsky at a meeting held at the Grand Central Palace, where three thousand people gathered to hear this great revolutionist recite the story of Russia's wrongs. The letter ran:

Dear Mr. Tchaykoffsky,—My sympathies are with the Russian revolution, of course. It goes without saying. I hope it will succeed, and now that I have talked with you I take heart to believe it will. Government by falsified promises, by lies, by treachery, and by the butcher-knife, for the aggrandizement of a single family of drones and its idle and vicious kin has been borne quite long enough in Russia, I should think. And it is to be hoped that the roused nation, now rising in its strength, will presently put an end to it and set up the republic in its place. Some of us, even the white-headed, may live to see the blessed day when tsars and grand dukes will be as scarce there as I trust they are in heaven.

Most sincerely yours,
mark twain.

Clemens and Howells called on Gorky and agreed to figure prominently in a literary dinner to be given in his honor. The movement was really assuming considerable proportions, when suddenly something happened which caused it to flatten permanently, and rather ridiculously.

Arriving at 21 Fifth Avenue, one afternoon, I met Howells coming out. I thought he had an unhappy, hunted look. I went up to the study, and on opening the door I found the atmosphere semi-opaque with cigar smoke, and Clemens among the drifting blue wreaths and layers, pacing up and down rather fiercely. He turned, inquiringly, as I entered. I had clipped a cartoon from a morning paper, which pictured him as upsetting the Tsar's throne—the kind of thing he was likely to enjoy. I said:

"Here is something perhaps you may wish to see, Mr. Clemens."

He shook his head violently.

"No, I can't see anything now," and in another moment had disappeared into his own room. Something extraordinary had happened. I wondered if, after all their lifelong friendship, he and Howells had quarreled. I was naturally curious, but it was not a good time to investigate. By and by I went down on the street, where the newsboys were calling extras. When I had bought one, and glanced at the first page, I knew. Gorky had been expelled from his hotel for having brought to America, as his wife, a woman

not so recognized by the American laws. Madame Andreieva, a Russian actress, was a leader in the cause of freedom, and by Russian custom her relation with Gorky was recognized and respected; but it was not sufficiently orthodox for American conventions, and it was certainly unfortunate that an apostle of high purpose should come handicapped in that way. Apparently the news had already reached Howells and Clemens, and they had been feverishly discussing what was best to do about the dinner.

Page 756

Within a day or two Gorky and Madame Andreieva were evicted from a procession of hotels, and of course the papers rang with the head-lines. An army of reporters was chasing Clemens and Howells. The Russian revolution was entirely forgotten in this more lively, more intimate domestic interest. Howells came again, the reporters following and standing guard at the door below. In 'My Mark Twain' he says:

That was the moment of the great Vesuvian eruption, and we figured ourselves in easy reach of a volcano which was every now and then "blowing a cone off," as the telegraphic phrase was. The roof of the great market in Naples had just broken in under its load of ashes and cinders, and crushed hundreds of people; and we asked each other if we were not sorry we had not been there, where the pressure would have been far less terrific than it was with us in Fifth Avenue. The forbidden butler came up with a message that there were some gentlemen below who wanted to see Clemens.

"How many?" he demanded.

"Five," the butler faltered.

"Reporters?"

The butler feigned uncertainty.

"What would you do?" he asked me.

"I wouldn't see them," I said, and then Clemens went directly down to them. How or by what means he appeased their voracity I cannot say, but I fancy it was by the confession of the exact truth, which was harmless enough. They went away joyfully, and he came back in radiant satisfaction with having seen them.

It is not quite clear at this time just what word was sent to Gorky but the matter must have been settled that night, for Clemens was in a fine humor next morning. It was before dictation time, and he came drifting into the study and began at once to speak of the dinner and the impossibility of its being given now. Then he said:

"American public opinion is a delicate fabric. It shrivels like the webs of morning at the lightest touch."

Later in the day he made this memorandum:

Laws can be evaded and punishment escaped, but an openly transgressed custom brings sure punishment. The penalty may be unfair, unrighteous, illogical, and a cruelty; no matter, it will be inflicted just the same. Certainly, then, there can be but one wise thing for a visiting stranger to do—find out what the country's customs are and refrain from offending against them. The efforts which have been made in Gorky's justification are entitled to all respect because of the magnanimity of the motive back of them, but I

think that the ink was wasted. Custom is custom: it is built of brass, boiler-iron, granite; facts, seasonings, arguments have no more effect upon it than the idle winds have upon Gibraltar.—[To Dan Beard he said, “Gorky made an awful mistake, Dan. He might as well have come over here in his shirt-tail.”]

The Gorky disturbance had hardly begun to subside when there came another upheaval that snuffed it out completely. On the afternoon of the 18th of April I heard, at The Players, a wandering telephonic rumor that a great earthquake was going on in San Francisco. Half an hour later, perhaps, I met Clemens coming out of No. 21. He asked:

Page 757

“Have you heard the news about San Francisco?”

I said I had heard a rumor of an earthquake; and had seen an extra with big scare-heads; but I supposed the matter was exaggerated.

“No,” he said, “I am afraid it isn’t. We have just had a telephone message that it is even worse than at first reported. A great fire is consuming the city. Come along to the news-stand and we’ll see if there is a later edition.”

We walked to Sixth Avenue and Eighth Street and got some fresh extras. The news was indeed worse, than at first reported. San Francisco was going to destruction. Clemens was moved deeply, and began to recall this old friend and that whose lives and property might be in danger. He spoke of Joe Goodman and the Gillis families, and pictured conditions in the perishing city.

CCXLII

MARK TWAIN’S GOOD-BY TO THE PLATFORM

It was on April 19, 1906, the day following the great earthquake, that Mark Twain gave a “Farewell Lecture” at Carnegie Hall for the benefit of the Robert Fulton Memorial Association. Some weeks earlier Gen. Frederick D. Grant, its president, had proposed to pay one thousand dollars for a Mark Twain lecture; but Clemens’ had replied that he was permanently out of the field, and would never again address any audience that had to pay to hear him.

“I always expect to talk as long as I can get people to listen to me,” he sand, “but I never again expect to charge for it.” Later came one of his inspirations, and he wrote: “I will lecture for one thousand dollars, on one condition: that it will be understood to be my farewell lecture, and that I may contribute the thousand dollars to the Fulton Association.”

It was a suggestion not to be discouraged, and the bills and notices, “Mark Twain’s Farewell Lecture,” were published without delay.

I first heard of the matter one afternoon when General Grant had called. Clemens came into the study where I was working; he often wandered in and out-sometimes without a word, sometimes to relieve himself concerning things in general. But this time he suddenly chilled me by saying:

“I’m going to deliver my farewell lecture, and I want you to appear on the stage and help me.”

I feebly expressed my pleasure at the prospect. Then he said:



“I am going to lecture on Fulton—on the story of his achievements. It will be a burlesque, of course, and I am going to pretend to forget my facts, and I want you to sit there in a chair. Now and then, when I seem to get stuck, I’ll lean over and pretend to ask you some thing, and I want you to pretend to prompt me. You don’t need to laugh, or to pretend to be assisting in the performance any more than just that.” *Handbill of mark Twain’s “Farewell lecture”:*

Mark twain

Will Deliver His Farewell Lecture

Carnegie hall

Page 758

April 19th, 1906

For the benefit of

Robert Fulton Memorial Association

*Military organization old guard in
full dress uniform will be present*

Music by old guard band

*Tickets and boxes on sale at Carnegie hall
and Waldorf-Astoria*

Seats \$1.50, \$1.00, 50 Cents

It was not likely that I should laugh. I had a sinking feeling in the cardiac region which does not go with mirth. It did not for the moment occur to me that the stage would be filled with eminent citizens and vice-presidents, and I had a vision of myself sitting there alone in the chair in that wide emptiness, with the chief performer directing attention to me every other moment or so, for perhaps an hour. Let me hurry on to say that it did not happen. I dare say he realized my unfitness for the work, and the far greater appropriateness of conferring the honor on General Grant, for in the end he gave him the assignment, to my immeasurable relief.

It was a magnificent occasion. That spacious hall was hung with bunting, the stage was banked and festooned with decoration of every sort. General Grant, surrounded by his splendidly uniformed staff, sat in the foreground, and behind was ranged a levee of foremost citizens of the republic. The band played "America" as Mark Twain entered, and the great audience rose and roared out its welcome. Some of those who knew him best had hoped that on this occasion of his last lecture he would tell of that first appearance in San Francisco, forty years before, when his fortunes had hung in the balance. Perhaps he did not think of it, and no one had had the courage to suggest it. At all events, he did a different thing. He began by making a strong plea for the smitten city where the flames were still raging, urging prompt help for those who had lost not only their homes, but the last shred of their belongings and their means of livelihood. Then followed his farcical history of Fulton, with General Grant to make the responses, and presently he drifted into the kind of lecture he had given so often in his long trip around the world-retelling the tales which had won him fortune and friends in many lands.

I do not know whether the entertainment was long or short. I think few took account of time. To a letter of inquiry as to how long the entertainment would last, he had replied:

I cannot say for sure. It is my custom to keep on talking till I get the audience cowed. Sometimes it takes an hour and fifteen minutes, sometimes I can do it in an hour.

There was no indication at any time that the audience was cowed. The house was packed, and the applause was so recurrent and continuous that often his voice was lost to those in its remoter corners. It did not matter. The tales were familiar to his hearers; merely to see Mark Twain, in his old age and in that splendid setting, relating them was enough. The audience realized that it was witnessing the close of a heroic chapter in a unique career.

Page 759

CCXLIII

AN INVESTMENT IN REDDING

Many of the less important happenings seem worth remembering now. Among them was the sale, at the Nast auction, of the Mark Twain letters, already mentioned. The fact that these letters brought higher prices than any others offered in this sale was gratifying. Roosevelt, Grant, and even Lincoln items were sold; but the Mark Twain letters led the list. One of them sold for forty-three dollars, which was said to be the highest price ever paid for the letter of a living man. It was the letter written in 1877, quoted earlier in this work, in which Clemens proposed the lecture tour to Nast. None of the Clemens-Nast letters brought less than twenty-seven dollars, and some of them were very brief. It was a new measurement of public sentiment. Clemens, when he heard of it, said:

"I can't rise to General Grant's lofty place in the estimation of this country; but it is a deep satisfaction to me to know that when it comes to letter-writing he can't sit in the front seat along with me. That forty-three-dollar letter ought to be worth as much as eighty-six dollars after I'm dead."

A perpetual string of callers came to 21 Fifth Avenue, and it kept the secretary busy explaining to most of them why Mark Twain could not entertain their propositions, or listen to their complaints, or allow them to express in person their views on public questions. He did see a great many of what might be called the milder type persons who were evidently sincere and not too heavily freighted with eloquence. Of these there came one day a very gentle-spoken woman who had promised that she would stay but a moment, and say no more than a few words, if only she might sit face to face with the great man. It was in the morning hour before the dictations, and he received her, quite correctly clad in his beautiful dressing-robe and propped against his pillows. She kept her contract to the letter; but when she rose to go she said, in a voice of deepest reverence:

"May I kiss your hand?"

It was a delicate situation, and might easily have been made ludicrous. Denial would have hurt her. As it was, he lifted his hand, a small, exquisite hand it was, with the gentle dignity and poise of a king, and she touched her lips to it with what was certainly adoration. Then, as she went, she said:

"How God must love you!"

"I hope so," he said, softly, and he did not even smile; but after she had gone he could not help saying, in a quaint, half-pathetic voice "I guess she hasn't heard of our strained relations."

Sitting in that royal bed, clad in that rich fashion, he easily conveyed the impression of royalty, and watching him through those marvelous mornings he seemed never less than a king, as indeed he was—the king of a realm without national boundaries. Some of those nearest to him fell naturally into the habit of referring to him as “the King,” and in time the title crept out of the immediate household and was taken up by others who loved him.

Page 760

He had been more than once photographed in his bed; but it was by those who had come and gone in a brief time, with little chance to study his natural attitudes. I had acquired some knowledge of the camera, and I obtained his permission to let me photograph him—a permission he seldom denied to any one. We had no dictations on Saturdays, and I took the pictures on one of these holiday mornings. He was so patient and tractable, and so natural in every attitude, that it was a delight to make the negatives. I was afraid he would become impatient, and made fewer exposures than I might otherwise have done. I think he expected very little from this amateur performance; but, by that happy element of accident which plays so large a part in photographic success, the results were better than I had hoped for. When I brought him the prints, a few days later, he expressed pleasure and asked, “Why didn’t you make more?”

Among them was one in an attitude which had grown so familiar to us, that of leaning over to get his pipe from the smoking-table, and this seemed to give him particular satisfaction. It being a holiday, he had not donned his dressing-gown, which on the whole was well for the photographic result. He spoke of other pictures that had been made of him, especially denouncing one photograph, taken some twenty years before by Sarony, a picture, as he said, of a gorilla in an overcoat, which the papers and magazines had insisted on using ever since.

“Sarony was as enthusiastic about wild animals as he was about photography, and when Du Chaillu brought over the first gorilla he sent for me to look at it and see if our genealogy was straight. I said it was, and Sarony was so excited that I had recognized the resemblance between us, that he wanted to make it more complete, so he borrowed my overcoat and put it on the gorilla and photographed it, and spread that picture out over the world as mine. It turns up every week in some newspaper or magazine; but it’s not my favorite; I have tried to get it suppressed.”

Mark Twain made his first investment in Redding that spring. I had located there the autumn before, and bought a vacant old house, with a few acres of land, at what seemed a modest price. I was naturally enthusiastic over the bargain, and the beauty and salubrity of the situation. His interest was aroused, and when he learned that there was a place adjoining, equally reasonable and perhaps even more attractive, he suggested immediately that I buy it for him; and he wanted to write a check then for the purchase price, for fear the opportunity might be lost. I think there was then no purpose in his mind of building a country home; but he foresaw that such a site, at no great distance from New York, would become more valuable, and he had plenty of idle means. The purchase was made without difficulty—a tract of seventy-five acres, to which presently was added another tract of one hundred and ten acres, and subsequently still

Page 761

other parcels of land, to complete the ownership of the hilltop, for it was not long until he had conceived the idea of a home. He was getting weary of the heavy pressure of city life. He craved the retirement of solitude—one not too far from the maelstrom, so that he might mingle with it now and then when he chose. The country home would not be begun for another year yet, but the purpose of it was already in the air. No one of the family had at this time seen the location.

CCXLIV

TRAITS AND PHILOSOPHIES

I brought to the dictation one morning the Omar Khayyam card which Twichell had written him so long ago; I had found it among the letters. It furnished him a subject for that morning. He said:

How strange there was a time when I had never heard of Omar Khayyam! When that card arrived I had already read the dozen quatrains or so in the morning paper, and was still steeped in the ecstasy of delight which they occasioned. No poem had ever given me so much pleasure before, and none has given me so much pleasure since. It is the only poem I have ever carried about with me. It has not been from under my hand all these years.

He had no general fondness for poetry; but many poems appealed to him, and on occasion he liked to read them aloud. Once, during the dictation, some verses were sent up by a young authoress who was waiting below for his verdict. The lines pictured a phase of negro life, and she wished to know if he thought them worthy of being read at some Tuskegee ceremony. He did not fancy the idea of attending to the matter just then and said:

“Tell her she can read it. She has my permission. She may commit any crime she wishes in my name.”

It was urged that the verses were of high merit and the author a very charming young lady.

“I’m very glad,” he said, “and I am glad the Lord made her; I hope He will make some more just like her. I don’t always approve of His handiwork, but in this case I do.”

Then suddenly he added:

“Well, let me see it—no time like the present to get rid of these things.”

He took the manuscript and gave such a rendition of those really fine verses as I believe could not be improved upon. We were held breathless by his dramatic fervor and power. He returned a message to that young aspirant that must have made her heart sing. When the dictation had ended that day, I mentioned his dramatic gift.

“Yes,” he said, “it is a gift, I suppose, like spelling and punctuation and smoking. I seem to have inherited all those.” Continuing, he spoke of inherited traits in general.

Page 762

"There was Paige," he said; "an ignorant man who could not make a machine himself that would stand up, nor draw the working plans for one; but he invented the eighteen thousand details of the most wonderful machine the world has ever known. He watched over the expert draftsmen, and superintended the building of that marvel. Pratt & Whitney built it; but it was Paige's machine, nevertheless—the child of his marvelous gift. We don't create any of our traits; we inherit all of them. They have come down to us from what we impudently call the lower animals. Man is the last expression, and combines every attribute of the animal tribes that preceded him. One or two conspicuous traits distinguish each family of animals from the others, and those one or two traits are found in every member of each family, and are so prominent as to eternally and unchangeably establish the character of that branch of the animal world. In these cases we concede that the several temperaments constitute a law of God, a command of God, and that whatsoever is done in obedience to that law is blameless. Man, in his evolution, inherited the whole sum of these numerous traits, and with each trait its share of the law of God. He widely differs from them in this: that he possesses not a single characteristic that is equally prominent in each member of his race. You can say the housefly is limitlessly brave, and in saying it you describe the whole housefly tribe; you can say the rabbit is limitlessly timid, and by the phrase you describe the whole rabbit tribe; you can say the spider and the tiger are limitlessly murderous, and by that phrase you describe the whole spider and tiger tribes; you can say the lamb is limitlessly innocent and sweet and gentle, and by that phrase you describe all the lambs. There is hardly a creature that you cannot definitely and satisfactorily describe by one single trait—except man. Men are not all cowards like the rabbit, nor all brave like the house-fly, nor all sweet and innocent and gentle like the lamb, nor all murderous like the spider and the tiger and the wasp, nor all thieves like the fox and the bluejay, nor all vain like the peacock, nor all frisky like the monkey. These things are all in him somewhere, and they develop according to the proportion of each he received in his allotment: We describe a man by his vicious traits and condemn him; or by his fine traits and gifts, and praise him and accord him high merit for their possession. It is comical. He did not invent these things; he did not stock himself with them. God conferred them upon him in the first instant of creation. They constitute the law, and he could not escape obedience to the decree any more than Paige could have built the type-setter he invented, or the Pratt & Whitney machinists could have invented the machine which they built."

He liked to stride up and down, smoking as he talked, and generally his words were slowly measured, with varying pauses between them. He halted in the midst of his march, and without a suggestion of a smile added:

Page 763

“What an amusing creature the human being is!”

It is absolutely impossible, of course, to preserve the atmosphere and personality of such talks as this—the delicacies of his speech and manner which carried an ineffable charm. It was difficult, indeed, to record the substance. I did not know shorthand, and I should not have taken notes at such times in any case; but I had trained myself in similar work to preserve, with a fair degree of accuracy, the form of phrase, and to some extent its wording, if I could get hold of pencil and paper soon enough afterward. In time I acquired a sort of phonographic faculty; though it always seemed to me that the bouquet, the subtleness of speech, was lacking in the result. Sometimes, indeed, he would dictate next morning the substance of these experimental reflections; or I would find among his papers memoranda and fragmentary manuscripts where he had set them down himself, either before or after he had tried them verbally. In these cases I have not hesitated to amend my notes where it seemed to lend reality to his utterance, though, even so, there is always lacking—and must be—the wonder of his personality.

CCXLV

IN THE DAY’S ROUND

A number of dictations of this period were about Susy, her childhood, and the biography she had written of him, most of which he included in his chapters. More than once after such dictations he reproached himself bitterly for the misfortunes of his house. He consoled himself a little by saying that Susy had died at the right time, in the flower of youth and happiness; but he blamed himself for the lack of those things which might have made her childhood still more bright. Once he spoke of the biography she had begun, and added:

“Oh, I wish I had paid more attention to that little girl’s work! If I had only encouraged her now and then, what it would have meant to her, and what a beautiful thing it would have been to have had her story of me told in her own way, year after year! If I had shown her that I cared, she might have gone on with it. We are always too busy for our children; we never give them the time nor the interest they deserve. We lavish gifts upon them; but the most precious gift—our personal association, which means so much to them—we give grudgingly and throw it away on those who care for it so little.” Then, after a moment of silence: “But we are repaid for it at last. There comes a time when we want their company and their interest. We want it more than anything in the world, and we are likely to be starved for it, just as they were starved so long ago. There is no appreciation of my books that is so precious to me as appreciation from my children. Theirs is the praise we want, and the praise we are least likely to get.”

His moods of remorse seemed to overwhelm him at times. He spoke of Henry’s death and little Langdon’s, and charged himself with both. He declared that for years he had

filled Mrs. Clemens's life with privations, that the sorrow of Susy's death had hastened her own end. How darkly he painted it! One saw the jester, who for forty years had been making the world laugh, performing always before a background of tragedy.

Page 764

But such moods were evanescent. He was oftener gay than somber. One morning before we settled down to work he related with apparent joy how he had made a failure of story-telling at a party the night before. An artist had told him a yarn, he said, which he had considered the most amusing thing in the world. But he had not been satisfied with it, and had attempted to improve on it at the party. He had told it with what he considered the nicest elaboration of detail and artistic effect, and when he had concluded and expected applause, only a sickening silence had followed.

"A crowd like that can make a good deal of silence when they combine," he said, "and it probably lasted as long as ten seconds, because it seemed an hour and a half. Then a lady said, with evident feeling, 'Lord, how pathetic!' For a moment I was stupefied. Then the fountains of my great deeps were broken up, and I rained laughter for forty days and forty nights during as much as three minutes. By that time I realized it was my fault. I had overdone the thing. I started in to deceive them with elaborate burlesque pathos, in order to magnify the humorous explosion at the end; but I had constructed such a fog of pathos that when I got to the humor you couldn't find it."

He was likely to begin the morning with some such incident which perhaps he did not think worth while to include in his dictations, and sometimes he interrupted his dictations to relate something aside, or to outline some plan or scheme which his thought had suggested.

Once, when he was telling of a magazine he had proposed to start, the Back Number, which was, to contain reprints of exciting events from history—newspaper gleanings—eye-witness narrations, which he said never lost their freshness of interest—he suddenly interrupted himself to propose that we start such a magazine in the near future—he to be its publisher and I its editor. I think I assented, and the dictation proceeded, but the scheme disappeared permanently.

He usually had a number of clippings or slips among the many books on the bed beside him from which he proposed to dictate each day, but he seldom could find the one most needed. Once, after a feverishly impatient search for a few moments, he invited Miss Hobby to leave the room temporarily, so, as he said, that he might swear. He got up and we began to explore the bed, his profanity increasing amazingly with each moment. It was an enormously large bed, and he began to disparage the size of it.

"One could lose a dog in this bed," he declared.

Finally I suggested that he turn over the clipping which he had in his hand. He did so, and it proved to be the one he wanted. Its discovery was followed by a period of explosions, only half suppressed as to volume. Then he said:

"There ought to be a room in this house to swear in. It's dangerous to have to repress an emotion like that."

Page 765

A moment later, when Miss Hobby returned, he was serene and happy again. He was usually gentle during the dictations, and patient with those around him—remarkably so, I thought, as a rule. But there were moments that involved risk. He had requested me to interrupt his dictation at any time that I found him repeating or contradicting himself, or misstating some fact known to me. At first I hesitated to do this, and cautiously mentioned the matter when he had finished. Then he was likely to say:

“Why didn’t you stop me? Why did you let me go on making a jackass of myself when you could have saved me?”

So then I used to take the risk of getting struck by lightning, and nearly always stopped him at the time. But if it happened that I upset his thought the thunderbolt was apt to fly. He would say:

“Now you’ve knocked everything out of my head.”

Then, of course, I would apologize and say I was sorry, which would rectify matters, though half an hour later it might happen again. I became lightning-proof at last; also I learned better to select the psychological moment for the correction.

There was a humorous complexion to the dictations which perhaps I have not conveyed to the reader at all; humor was his natural breath and life, and was not wholly absent in his most somber intervals.

But poetry was there as well. His presence was full of it: the grandeur of his figure; the grace of his movement; the music of his measured speech. Sometimes there were long pauses when he was wandering in distant valleys of thought and did not speak at all. At such times he had a habit of folding and refolding the sleeve of his dressing-gown around his wrist, regarding it intently, as it seemed. His hands were so fair and shapely; the palms and finger-tips as pink as those of a child. Then when he spoke he was likely to fling back his great, white mane, his eyes half closed yet showing a gleam of fire between the lids, his clenched fist lifted, or his index-finger pointing, to give force and meaning to his words. I cannot recall the picture too often, or remind myself too frequently how precious it was to be there, and to see him and to hear him. I do not know why I have not said before that he smoked continually during these dictations—probably as an aid to thought—though he smoked at most other times, for that matter. His cigars were of that delicious fragrance which characterizes domestic tobacco; but I had learned early to take refuge in another brand when he offered me one. They were black and strong and inexpensive, and it was only his early training in the printing-office and on the river that had seasoned him to tobacco of that temper. Rich, admiring friends used to send him quantities of expensive imported cigars; but he seldom touched them, and they crumbled away or were smoked by visitors. Once, to a minister who proposed to send him something very special, he wrote:

Page 766

I should accept your hospitable offer at once but for the fact that I couldn't do it and remain honest. That is to say, if I allowed you to send me what you believed to be good cigars it would distinctly mean that I meant to smoke them, whereas I should do nothing of the kind. I know a good cigar better than you do, for I have had 60 years' experience. No, that is not what I mean; I mean I know a bad cigar better than anybody else. I judge by the price only; if it costs above 5 cents I know it to be either foreign or half foreign & unsmokable—by me. I have many boxes of Havana cigars, of all prices from 20 cents apiece up to \$1.66 apiece; I bought none of them, they were all presents; they are an accumulation of several years. I have never smoked one of them & never shall; I work them off on the visitor. You shall have a chance when you come.

He smoked a pipe a good deal, and he preferred it to be old and violent; and once, when he had bought a new, expensive English brier-root he regarded it doubtfully for a time, and then handed it over to me, saying:

"I'd like to have you smoke that a year or two, and when it gets so you can't stand it, maybe it will suit me."

I am happy to add that subsequently he presented me with the pipe altogether, for it apparently never seemed to get qualified for his taste, perhaps because the tobacco used was too mild.

One day, after the dictation, word was brought up that a newspaper man was downstairs who wished to see him concerning a report that Chauncey Depew was to resign his Senatorial seat and Mark Twain was to be nominated in his place. The fancy of this appealed to him, and the reporter was allowed to come up. He was a young man, and seemed rather nervous, and did not wish to state where the report had originated. His chief anxiety was apparently to have Mark Twain's comment on the matter. Clemens said very little at the time. He did not wish to be a Senator; he was too busy just now dictating biography, and added that he didn't think he would care for the job, anyway. When the reporter was gone, however, certain humorous possibilities developed. The Senatorship would be a stepping-stone to the Presidency, and with the combination of humorist, socialist, and peace-patriot in the Presidential chair the nation could expect an interesting time. Nothing further came of the matter. There was no such report. The young newspaper man had invented the whole idea to get a "story" out of Mark Twain. The item as printed next day invited a good deal of comment, and Collier's Weekly made it a text for an editorial on his mental vigor and general fitness for the place.

Page 767

If it happened that he had no particular engagement for the afternoon, he liked to walk out, especially when the pleasant weather came. Sometimes we walked up Fifth Avenue, and I must admit that for a good while I could not get rid of a feeling of self-consciousness, for most people turned to look, though I was fully aware that I did not in the least come into their scope of vision. They saw only Mark Twain. The feeling was a more comfortably one at The Players, where we sometimes went for luncheon, for the acquaintance there and the democracy of that institution had a tendency to eliminate contrasts and incongruities. We sat at the Round Table among those good fellows who were always so glad to welcome him.

Once we went to the "Music Master," that tender play of Charles Klein's, given by that matchless interpreter, David Warfield. Clemens was fascinated, and said more than once:

"It is as permanent as 'Rip Van Winkle.' Warfield, like Jefferson, can go on playing it all his life."

We went behind when it was over, and I could see that Warfield glowed with Mark Twain's unstinted approval. Later, when I saw him at The Players, he declared that no former compliment had ever made him so happy.

There were some billiard games going on between the champions Hoppe and Sutton, at the Madison Square Garden, and Clemens, with his eager fondness for the sport, was anxious to attend them. He did not like to go anywhere alone, and one evening he invited me to accompany him. Just as he stepped into the auditorium there was a vigorous round of applause. The players stopped, somewhat puzzled, for no especially brilliant shot had been made. Then they caught the figure of Mark Twain and realized that the game, for the moment, was not the chief attraction. The audience applauded again, and waved their handkerchiefs. Such a tribute is not often paid to a private citizen.

Clemens had a great admiration for the young champion Hoppe, which the billiardist's extreme youth and brilliancy invited, and he watched his game with intense eagerness. When it was over the referee said a few words and invited Mark Twain to speak. He rose and told them a story-probably invented on the instant. He said:

"Once in Nevada I dropped into a billiard-room casually, and picked up a cue and began to knock the balls around. The proprietor, who was a red-haired man, with such hair as I have never seen anywhere except on a torch, asked me if I would like to play. I said, 'Yes.' He said, 'Knock the balls around a little and let me see how you can shoot.' So I knocked them around, and thought I was doing pretty well, when he said, 'That's all right; I'll play you left-handed.' It hurt my pride, but I played him. We banked for the shot and he won it. Then he commenced to play, and I commenced to chalk my cue to

get ready to play, and he went on playing, and I went on chalking my cue; and he played and I chalked all through that game. When he had run his string out I said:

“That’s wonderful! perfectly wonderful! If you can play that way left-handed what could you do right-handed?”

Page 768

“‘Couldn’t do anything,’ he said. ‘I’m a left-handed man.’”

How it delighted them! I think it was the last speech of any sort he made that season. A week or two later he went to Dublin, New Hampshire, for the summer—this time to the Upton House, which had been engaged a year before, the Copley Greene place being now occupied by its owner.

CCXLVI

THE SECOND SUMMER AT DUBLIN

The Upton House stands on the edge of a beautiful beech forest some two or three miles from Dublin, just under Monadnock—a good way up the slope. It is a handsome, roomy frame-house, and had a long colonnaded veranda overlooking one of the most beautiful landscape visions on the planet: lake, forest, hill, and a far range of blue mountains—all the handiwork of God is there. I had seen these things in paintings, but I had not dreamed that such a view really existed. The immediate foreground was a grassy slope, with ancient, blooming apple-trees; and just at the right hand Monadnock rose, superb and lofty, sloping down to the panorama below that stretched away, taking on an ever deeper blue, until it reached that remote range on which the sky rested and the world seemed to end. It was a masterpiece of the Greater Mind, and of the highest order, perhaps, for it had in it nothing of the touch of man. A church spire glinted here and there, but there was never a bit of field, or stone wall, or cultivated land. It was lonely; it was unfriendly; it cared nothing whatever for humankind; it was as if God, after creating all the world, had wrought His masterwork here, and had been so engrossed with the beauty of it that He had forgotten to give it a soul. In a sense this was true, for He had not made the place suitable for the habitation of men. It lacked the human touch; the human interest, and I could never quite believe in its reality.

The time of arrival heightened this first impression. It was mid-May and the lilacs were prodigally in bloom; but the bright sunlight was chill and unnatural, and there was a west wind that laid the grass flat and moaned through the house, and continued as steadily as if it must never stop from year’s end to year’s end. It seemed a spectral land, a place of supernatural beauty. Warm, still, languorous days would come, but that first feeling of unreality would remain permanent. I believe Jean Clemens was the only one who ever really loved the place. Something about it appealed to her elemental side and blended with her melancholy moods. She dressed always in white, and she was tall and pale and classically beautiful, and she was often silent, like a spirit. She had a little retreat for herself farther up the mountain-side, and spent most of her days there wood-carving, which was her chief diversion.

Page 769

Clara Clemens did not come to the place at all. She was not yet strong, and went to Norfolk, Connecticut, where she could still be in quiet retirement and have her physician's care. Miss Hobby came, and on the 21st of May the dictations were resumed. We began in his bedroom, as before, but the feeling there was depressing—the absence of the great carved bed and other furnishings, which had been so much a part of the picture, was felt by all of us. Nothing of the old luxury and richness was there. It was a summer-furnished place, handsome but with the customary bareness. At the end of this first session he dressed in his snowy flannels, which he had adopted in the place of linen for summer wear, and we descended to the veranda and looked out over that wide, wonderful expanse of scenery.

"I think I shall like it," he said, "when I get acquainted with it, and get it classified and labeled, and I think we'll do our dictating out here hereafter. It ought to be an inspiring place."

So the dictations were transferred to the long veranda, and he was generally ready for them, a white figure pacing up and down before that panoramic background. During the earlier, cooler weeks he usually continued walking with measured step during the dictations, pausing now and then to look across the far-lying horizon. When it stormed we moved into the great living-room, where at one end there was a fireplace with blazing logs, and at the other the orchestrelle, which had once more been freighted up those mountain heights for the comfort of its harmonies. Sometimes, when the wind and rain were beating outside, and he was striding up and down the long room within, with only the blurred shapes of mountains and trees outlined through the trailing rain, the feeling of the unreality became so strong that it was hard to believe that somewhere down below, beyond the rain and the woods, there was a literal world—a commonplace world, where the ordinary things of life were going on in the usual way. When the dictation finished early, there would be music—the music that he loved most—Beethoven's symphonies, or the Schubert impromptu, or the sonata by Chopin.—[Schubert, Op. 142, No. 2; Chopin, Op. 37, No. 2.]—It is easy to understand that this carried one a remove farther from the customary things of life. It was a setting far out of the usual, though it became that unique white figure and his occupation. In my notes, made from day to day, I find that I have set down more than once an impression of the curious unreality of the place and its surroundings, which would show that it was not a mere passing fancy.

Page 770

I had lodgings in the village, and drove out mornings for the dictations, but often came out again afoot on pleasant afternoons; for he was not much occupied with social matters, and there was opportunity for quiet, informing interviews. There was a woods path to the Upton place, and it was a walk through a fairyland. A part of the way was through such a growth of beech timber as I have never seen elsewhere: tall, straight, mottled trees with an undergrowth of laurel, the sunlight sifting through; one found it easy to expect there storybook ladies, wearing crowns and green mantles, riding on white palfreys. Then came a more open way, an abandoned grass-grown road full of sunlight and perfume; and this led to a dim, religious place, a natural cathedral, where the columns were stately pine-trees branching and meeting at the top: a veritable temple in which it always seemed that music was about to play. You crossed a brook and climbed a little hill, and pushed through a hedge into a place more open, and the house stood there among the trees.

The days drifted along, one a good deal like another, except, as the summer deepened, the weather became warmer, the foliage changed, a drowsy haze gathered along the valleys and on the mountain-side. He sat more often now in a large rocking-chair, and generally seemed to be looking through half-dosed lids toward the Monadnock heights, that were always changing in aspect-in color and in form—as cloud shapes drifted by or gathered in those lofty hollows. White and yellow butterflies hovered over the grass, and there were some curious, large black ants—the largest I have ever seen and quite harmless—that would slip in and out of the cracks on the veranda floor, wholly undisturbed by us. Now and then a light flutter of wind would come murmuring up from the trees below, and when the apple-bloom was falling there would be a whirl of white and pink petals that seemed a cloud of smaller butterflies.

On June 1st I find in my note-book this entry:

Warm and pleasant. The dictation about Grant continues; a great privilege to hear this foremost man, of letters review his associations with that foremost man of arms. He remained seated today, dressed in white as usual, a large yellow pansy in his buttonhole, his white hair ruffled by the breeze. He wears his worn morocco slippers with black hose; sits in the rocker, smoking and looking out over the hazy hills, delivering his sentences with a measured accuracy that seldom calls for change. He is speaking just now of a Grant dinner which he attended where Depew spoke. One is impressed with the thought that we are looking at and listening to the war-worn veteran of a thousand dinners—the honored guest of many; an honored figure of all. Earlier, when he had been chastising some old offender, he added, “However, he’s dead, and I forgive him.” Then, after a moment’s reflection, “No; strike that last sentence out.”

Page 771

When we laughed, he added, "We can't forgive him yet."

A few days later—it was June 4th, the day before the second anniversary of the death of Mrs. Clemens—we found him at first in excellent humor from the long dictation of the day before. Then his mind reverted to the tragedy of the season, and he began trying to tell of it. It was hard work. He walked back and forth in the soft sunlight, saying almost nothing. He gave it up at last, remarking, "We will not work to-morrow." So we went away.

He did not dictate on the 5th or the 6th, but on the 7th he resumed the story of Mrs. Clemens's last days at Florence. The weather had changed: the sunlight and warmth had all gone; a chill, penetrating mist was on the mountains; Monadnock was blotted out. We expected him to go to the fire, but evidently he could not bear being shut in with that subject in his mind. A black cape was brought out and thrown about his shoulders, which seemed to fit exactly into the somberness of the picture. For two hours or more we sat there in the gloom and chill, while he paced up and down, detailing as graphically as might be that final chapter in the life of the woman he had loved.

It is hardly necessary to say that beyond the dictation Clemens did very little literary work during these months. He had brought his "manuscript trunk" as usual, thinking, perhaps, to finish the "microbe" story and other of the uncompleted things; but the dictation gave him sufficient mental exercise, and he did no more than look over his "stock in trade," as he called it, and incorporate a few of the finished manuscripts into "autobiography." Among these were the notes of his trip down the Rhone, made in 1891, and the old Stormfield story, which he had been treasuring and suppressing so long. He wrote Howells in June:

The dictating goes lazily and pleasantly on. With intervals. I find that I've been at it, off & on, nearly two hours for 155 days since January 9. To be exact, I've dictated 75 hours in 80 days & loafed 75 days. I've added 60,000 words in the month that I've been here; which indicates that I've dictated during 20 days of that time—40 hours, at an average of 1,500 words an hour. It's a plenty, & I'm satisfied.

There's a good deal of "fat." I've dictated (from January 9) 210,000 words, & the "fat" adds about 50,000 more.

The "fat" is old pigeonholed things of the years gone by which I or editors didn't das't to print. For instance, I am dumping in the little old book which I read to you in Hartford about 30 years ago & which you said "publish & ask Dean Stanley to furnish an introduction; he'll do it" (Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven). It reads quite to suit me without altering a word now that it isn't to see print until I am dead. To-morrow I mean to

dictate a chapter which will get my heirs & assigns burned alive if they venture to print it this side of A.D. 2006—which

Page 772

I judge they won't. There'll be lots of such chapters if I live 3 or 4 years longer. The edition of A.D. 2006 will make a stir when it comes out. I shall be hovering around taking notice, along with other dead pals. You are invited.

The chapter which was to invite death at the stake for his successors was naturally one of religious heresies a violent attack on the orthodox, scriptural God, but really an expression of the highest reverence for the God which, as he said, had created the earth and sky and the music of the constellations. Mark Twain once expressed himself concerning reverence and the lack of it:

"I was never consciously and purposely irreverent in my life, yet one person or another is always charging me with a lack of reverence. Reverence for what—for whom? Who is to decide what ought to command my reverence—my neighbor or I? I think I ought to do the electing myself. The Mohammedan reveres Mohammed—it is his privilege; the Christian doesn't—apparently that is his privilege; the account is square enough. They haven't any right to complain of the other, yet they do complain of each other, and that is where the unfairness comes in. Each says that the other is irreverent, and both are mistaken, for manifestly you can't have reverence for a thing that doesn't command it. If you could do that you could digest what you haven't eaten, and do other miracles and get a reputation."

He was not reading many books at this time—he was inclined rather to be lazy, as he said, and to loaf during the afternoons; but I remember that he read aloud 'After the Wedding' and 'The Mother'—those two beautiful word-pictures by Howells—which he declared sounded the depths of humanity with a deep-sea lead. Also he read a book by William Allen White, 'In Our Town', a collection of tales that he found most admirable. I think he took the trouble to send White a personal, hand-written letter concerning them, although, with the habit of dictation, he had begun, as he said, to "loathe the use of the pen."

There were usually some sort of mild social affairs going on in the neighborhood, luncheons and afternoon gatherings like those of the previous year, though he seems to have attended fewer of them, for he did not often leave the house. Once, at least, he assisted in an afternoon entertainment at the Dublin Club, where he introduced his invention of the art of making an impromptu speech, and was assisted in its demonstration by George de Forest Brush and Joseph Lindon Smith, to the very great amusement of a crowd of summer visitors. The "art" consisted mainly of having on hand a few reliable anecdotes and a set formula which would lead directly to them from any given subject.

Twice or more he collected the children of the neighborhood for charades and rehearsed them, and took part in the performance, as in the Hartford days. Sometimes he drove out or took an extended walk. But these things were seldom.

Page 773

Now and then during the summer he made a trip to New York of a semi-business nature, usually going by the way of Fairhaven, where he would visit for a few days, journeying the rest of the way in Mr. Rogers's yacht. Once they made a cruise of considerable length to Bar Harbor and elsewhere. Here is an amusing letter which he wrote to Mrs. Rogers after such a visit:

Dear Mrs. Rogers,—In packing my things in your house yesterday morning I inadvertently put in some articles that was laying around, I thinking about theology & not noticing, the way this family does in similar circumstances like these. Two books, Mr. Rogers' brown slippers, & a ham. I thought it was ourn, it looks like one we used to have. I am very sorry it happened, but it sha'n't occur again & don't you worry. He will temper the wind to the shorn lamb & I will send some of the things back anyway if there is some that won't keep.

CCXLVI

DUBLIN, CONTINUED

In time Mark Twain became very lonely in Dublin. After the brilliant winter the contrast was too great. He was not yet ready for exile. In one of his dictations he said:

The skies are enchantingly blue. The world is a dazzle of sunshine. Monadnock is closer to us than usual by several hundred yards. The vast extent of spreading valley is intensely green—the lakes as intensely blue. And there is a new horizon, a remoter one than we have known before, for beyond the mighty half-circle of hazy mountains that form the usual frame of the picture rise certain shadowy great domes that are unfamiliar to our eyesBut there is a defect—only one, but it is a defect which almost entitles it to be spelled with a capital D. This is the defect of loneliness. We have not a single neighbor who is a neighbor. Nobody lives within two miles of us except Franklin MacVeagh, and he is the farthest off of any, because he is in EuropeI feel for Adam and Eve now, for I know how it was with them. I am existing, broken-hearted, in a Garden of Eden.... The Garden of Eden I now know was an unendurable solitude. I know that the advent of the serpent was a welcome change—anything for societyI never rose to the full appreciation of the utter solitude of this place until a symbol of it—a compact and visible allegory of it —furnished me the lacking lift three days ago. I was standing alone on this veranda, in the late afternoon, mourning over the stillness, the far-spreading, beautiful desolation, and the absence of visible life, when a couple of shapely and graceful deer came sauntering across the grounds and stopped, and at their leisure impudently looked me over, as if they had an idea of buying me as bric-a-brac. Then they seemed to conclude that they could do better for less money elsewhere, and they sauntered

Page 774

indolently away and disappeared among the trees. It sized up this solitude. It is so complete, so perfect, that even the wild animals are satisfied with it. Those dainty creatures were not in the least degree afraid of me.

This was no more than a mood—though real enough while it lasted—somber, and in its way regal. It was the loneliness of a king—King Lear. Yet he returned gladly enough to solitude after each absence.

It was just before one of his departures that I made another set of pictures of him, this time on the colonnaded veranda, where his figure had become so familiar. He had determined to have his hair cut when he reached New York, and I was anxious to get the pictures before this happened. When the proofs came seven of them—he arranged them as a series to illustrate what he called “The Progress of a Moral Purpose.” He ordered a number of sets of this series, and he wrote a legend on each photograph, numbering them from 1 to 7, laying each set in a sheet of letter-paper which formed a sort of wrapper, on which was written:

This series of q photographs registers with scientific precision, stage by stage, the progress of a moral purpose through the mind of the human race’s Oldest Friend. S. L. C.

He added a personal inscription, and sent one to each of his more intimate friends. One of the pictures amused him more than the others, because during the exposure a little kitten, unnoticed, had walked into it, and paused near his foot. He had never outgrown his love for cats, and he had rented this kitten and two others for the summer from a neighbor. He didn’t wish to own them, he said, for then he would have to leave them behind uncared for, so he preferred to rent them and pay sufficiently to insure their subsequent care. These kittens he called Sackcloth and Ashes—Ashes being the joint name of the two that looked exactly alike, and so did not need distinctive titles. Their gambols always amused him. He would stop any time in the midst of dictation to enjoy them. Once, as he was about to enter the screen-door that led into the hall, two of the kittens ran up in front of him and stood waiting. With grave politeness he opened the door, made a low bow, and stepped back and said: “Walk in, gentlemen. I always give precedence to royalty.” And the kittens marched in, tails in air. All summer long they played up and down the wide veranda, or chased grasshoppers and butterflies down the clover slope. It was a never-ending amusement to him to see them jump into the air after some insect, miss it and tumble back, and afterward jump up, with a surprised expression and a look of disappointment and disgust. I remember once, when he was walking up and down discussing some very serious subject—and one of the kittens was lying on the veranda asleep—a butterfly came drifting along three feet or so above the floor. The kitten must have got a glimpse of the insect out of the corner

Page 775

of its eye, and perhaps did not altogether realize its action. At all events, it suddenly shot straight up into the air, exactly like a bounding rubber ball, missed the butterfly, fell back on the porch floor with considerable force and with much surprise. Then it sprang to its feet, and, after spitting furiously once or twice, bounded away. Clemens had seen the performance, and it completely took his subject out of his mind. He laughed extravagantly, and evidently cared more for that moment's entertainment than for many philosophies.

In that remote solitude there was one important advantage—there was no procession of human beings with axes to grind, and few curious callers. Occasionally an automobile would find its way out there and make a circuit of the drive, but this happened too seldom to annoy him. Even newspaper men rarely made the long trip from Boston or New York to secure his opinions, and when they came it was by permission and appointment. Newspaper telegrams arrived now and then, asking for a sentiment on some public condition or event, and these he generally answered willingly enough. When the British Premier, Campbell-Bannerman, celebrated his seventieth birthday, the London Tribune and the New York Herald requested a tribute. He furnished it, for Bannerman was a very old friend. He had known him first at Marienbad in '91, and in Vienna in '98, in daily intercourse, when they had lived at the same hotel. His tribute ran:

To his excellency the British Premier,—Congratulations, not condolences. Before seventy we are merely respected, at best, and we have to behave all the time, or we lose that asset; but after seventy we are respected, esteemed, admired, revered, and don't have to behave unless we want to. When I first knew you, Honored Sir, one of us was hardly even respected.

Mark twain.

He had some misgivings concerning the telegram after it had gone, but he did not recall it.

Clemens became the victim of a very clever hoax that summer. One day a friend gave him two examples of the most deliciously illiterate letters, supposed to have been written by a woman who had contributed certain articles of clothing to the San Francisco sufferers, and later wished to recall them because of the protests of her household. He was so sure that the letters were genuine that he included them in his dictations, after reading them aloud with great effect. To tell the truth, they did seem the least bit too well done, too literary in their illiteracy; but his natural optimism refused to admit of any suspicion, and a little later he incorporated one of the Jennie Allen letters in a speech which he made at a Press Club dinner in New York on the subject of simplified spelling—offering it as an example of language with phonetic brevity exercising its supreme function, the direct conveyance of ideas. The letters, in the end, proved to be the clever

work of Miss Grace Donworth, who has since published them serially and in book form. Clemens was not at all offended or disturbed by the exposure. He even agreed to aid the young author in securing a publisher, and wrote to Miss Stockbridge, through whom he had originally received the documents:

Page 776

Dear miss Stockbridge (if she really exists),

257 Benefit Street (if there is any such place):

Yes, I should like a copy of that other letter. This whole fake is delightful; & I tremble with fear that you are a fake yourself & that I am your guileless prey. (But never mind, it isn't any matter.)

Now as to publication——

He set forth his views and promised his assistance when enough of the letters should be completed.

Clemens allowed his name to be included with the list of spelling reformers, but he never employed any of the reforms in his letters or writing. His interest was mainly theoretical, and when he wrote or spoke on the subject his remarks were not likely to be testimonials in its favor. His own theory was that the alphabet needed reform, first of all, so that each letter or character should have one sound, and one sound only; and he offered as a solution of this an adaptation of shorthand. He wrote and dictated in favor of this idea to the end of his life. Once he said:

“Our alphabet is pure insanity. It can hardly spell any large word in the English language with any degree of certainty. Its sillinesses are quite beyond enumeration. English orthography may need reforming and simplifying, but the English alphabet needs it a good many times as much.”

He would naturally favor simplicity in anything. I remember him reading, as an example of beautiful English, *The Death of King Arthur*, by Sir Thomas Malory, and his verdict:

“That is one of the most beautiful things ever written in English, and written when we had no vocabulary.”

“A vocabulary, then, is sometimes a handicap?”

“It is indeed.”

Still I think it was never a handicap with him, but rather the plumage of flight. Sometimes, when just the right word did not come, he would turn his head a little at different angles, as if looking about him for the precise term. He would find it directly, and it was invariably the word needed. Most writers employ, now and again, phrases that do not sharply present the idea—that blur the picture like a poor opera-glass. Mark Twain's English always focused exactly.

CCXLVIII

"What is man?" And the autobiography

Clemens decided to publish anonymously, or, rather, to print privately, the Gospel, which he had written in Vienna some eight years before and added to from time to time. He arranged with Frank Doubleday to take charge of the matter, and the De Vinne Press was engaged to do the work. The book was copyrighted in the name of J. W. Bothwell, the superintendent of the De Vinne company, and two hundred and fifty numbered copies were printed on hand-made paper, to be gradually distributed to intimate friends. —[In an introductory word (dated February, 1905) the author

Page 777

states that the studies for these papers had been made twenty-five or twenty-seven years before. He probably referred to the Monday Evening Club essay, "What Is Happiness?" (February, 1883). See chap. cxli.]—A number of the books were sent to newspaper reviewers, and so effectually had he concealed the personality of his work that no critic seems to have suspected the book's authorship. It was not over-favorably received. It was generally characterized as a clever, and even brilliant, expose of philosophies which were no longer startlingly new. The supremacy of self-interest and "man the irresponsible machine" are the main features of 'What Is Man' and both of these and all the rest are comprehended in his wider and more absolute doctrine of that inevitable life-sequence which began with the first created spark. There can be no training of the ideals, "upward and still upward," no selfishness and unselfishness, no atom of voluntary effort within the boundaries of that conclusion. Once admitting the postulate, that existence is merely a sequence of cause and effect beginning with the primal atom, and we have a theory that must stand or fall as a whole. We cannot say that man is a creature of circumstance and then leave him free to select his circumstance, even in the minutest fractional degree. It was selected for him with his disposition; in that first instant of created life. Clemens himself repeatedly emphasized this doctrine, and once, when it was suggested to him that it seemed to "surround every thing, like the sky," he answered:

"Yes, like the sky; you can't break through anywhere."

Colonel Harvey came to Dublin that summer and persuaded Clemens to let him print some selections from the dictations in the new volume of the North American Review, which he proposed to issue fortnightly. The matter was discussed a good deal, and it was believed that one hundred thousand words could be selected which would be usable forthwith, as well as in that long-deferred period for which it was planned. Colonel Harvey agreed to take a copy of the dictated matter and make the selections himself, and this plan was carried out. It may be said that most of the chapters were delightful enough; though, had it been possible to edit them with the more positive documents as a guide, certain complications might have been avoided. It does not matter now, and it was not a matter of very wide import then.

The payment of these chapters netted Clemens thirty thousand dollars—a comfortable sum, which he promptly proposed to spend in building on the property at Redding. He engaged John Mead Howells to prepare some preliminary plans.

Clara Clemens, at Norfolk, was written to of the matter.

A little later I joined her in Redding, and she was the first of the family to see that beautiful hilltop. She was well pleased with the situation, and that day selected the spot

where the house should stand. Clemens wrote Howells that he proposed to call it "Autobiography House," as it was to be built out of the Review money, and he said:

Page 778

"If you will build on my farm and live there it will set Mrs. Howells's health up for sure. Come and I'll sell you the site for twenty-five dollars. John will tell you it is a choice place."

The unusual summer was near its close. In my notebook, under date of September 16th, appears this entry:

Windy in valleys but not cold. This veranda is protected. It is peaceful here and perfect, but we are at the summer's end.

This is my last entry, and the dictations must have ceased a few days later. I do not remember the date of the return to New York, and apparently I made no record of it; but I do not think it could have been later than the 20th. It had been four months since the day of arrival, a long, marvelous summer such as I would hardly know again. When I think of that time I shall always hear the ceaseless slippered, shuffling walk, and see the white figure with its rocking, rolling movement passing up and down the long gallery, with that preternaturally beautiful landscape behind, and I shall hear his deliberate speech—always deliberate, save at rare intervals; always impressive, whatever the subject might be; whether recalling some old absurdity of youth, or denouncing orthodox creeds, or detailing the shortcomings of human-kind.

CCXLIX

BILLIARDS

The return to New York marked the beginning of a new era in my relations with Mark Twain. I have not meant to convey up to this time that there was between us anything resembling a personal friendship. Our relations were friendly, certainly, but they were relations of convenience and mainly of a business, or at least of a literary nature. He was twenty-six years my senior, and the discrepancy of experience and attainments was not measurable. With such conditions friendship must be a deliberate growth; something there must be to bridge the dividing gulf. Truth requires the confession that, in this case, the bridge took a very solid, material form, it being, in fact, nothing less than a billiard-table.—[Clemens had been without a billiard-table since 1891, the old one having been disposed of on the departure from Hartford.]

It was a present from Mrs. Henry H. Rogers, and had been intended for his Christmas; but when he heard of it he could not wait, and suggested delicately that if he had it "right now" he could begin using it sooner. So he went one day with Mr. Rogers to the Balke-Collender Company, and they selected a handsome combination table suitable to all games—the best that money could buy. He was greatly excited over the prospect, and his former bedroom was carefully measured, to be certain that it was large enough for billiard purposes. Then his bed was moved into the study, and the bookcases and

certain appropriate pictures were placed and hung in the billiard-room to give it the proper feeling.

The billiard-table arrived and was put in place, the brilliant green cloth in contrast with the rich red wallpaper and the bookbindings and pictures making the room wonderfully handsome and inviting.

Page 779

Meantime, Clemens, with one of his sudden impulses, had conceived the notion of spending the winter in Egypt, on the Nile. He had gone so far, within a few hours after the idea developed, as to plan the time of his departure, and to partially engage a traveling secretary, so that he might continue his dictations. He was quite full of the idea just at the moment when the billiard table was being installed. He had sent for a book on the subject—the letters of Lady Duff-Gordon, whose daughter, Janet Ross, had become a dear friend in Florence during the Viviani days. He spoke of this new purpose on the morning when we renewed the New York dictations, a month or more following the return from Dublin. When the dictation ended he said:

“Have you any special place to lunch to-day?”

I replied that I had not.

“Lunch here,” he said, “and we’ll try the new billiard-table.”

I said what was eminently true—that I could not play—that I had never played more “than a few games of pool, and those very long ago.

“No matter,” he answered; “the poorer you play, the better I shall like it.”

So I remained for luncheon and we began, November 2d, the first game ever played on the Christmas table. We played the English game, in which caroms and pockets both count. I had a beginner’s luck, on the whole, and I remember it as a riotous, rollicking game, the beginning of a closer understanding between us—of a distinct epoch in our association. When it was ended he said:

“I’m not going to Egypt. There was a man here yesterday afternoon who said it was bad for bronchitis, and, besides, it’s too far away from this billiard-table.”

He suggested that I come back in the evening and play some more. I did so, and the game lasted until after midnight. He gave me odds, of course, and my “nigger luck,” as he called it, continued. It kept him sweating and swearing feverishly to win. Finally, once I made a great fluke—a carom, followed by most of the balls falling into the pockets.

“Well,” he said, “when you pick up that cue this damn table drips at every pore.”

After that the morning dictations became a secondary interest. Like a boy, he was looking forward to the afternoon of play, and it never seemed to come quick enough to suit him. I remained regularly for luncheon, and he was inclined to cut the courses short, that he might the sooner get up-stairs to the billiard-room. His earlier habit of not eating in the middle of the day continued; but he would get up and dress, and walk about the dining-room in his old fashion, talking that marvelous, marvelous talk which I was always trying to remember, and with only fractional success at best. To him it was

only a method of killing time. I remember once, when he had been discussing with great earnestness the Japanese question, he suddenly noticed that the luncheon was about ending, and he said:

Page 780

"Now we'll proceed to more serious matters—it's your—shot." And he was quite serious, for the green cloth and the rolling balls afforded him a much larger interest.

To the donor of his new possession Clemens wrote:

Dear Mrs. Rogers,—The billiard-table is better than the doctors. I have a billiardist on the premises, & walk not less than ten miles every day with the cue in my hand. And the walking is not the whole of the exercise, nor the most health giving part of it, I think. Through the multitude of the positions and attitudes it brings into play every muscle in the body & exercises them all. The games begin right after luncheons, daily, & continue until midnight, with 2 hours' intermission for dinner & music. And so it is 9 hours' exercise per day & 10 or 12 on Sunday. Yesterday & last night it was 12—& I slept until 8 this morning without waking. The billiard-table as a Sabbath-breaker can beat any coal-breaker in Pennsylvania & give it 30 in the game. If Mr. Rogers will take to daily billiards he can do without the doctors & the masseur, I think.

We are really going to build a house on my farm, an hour & a half from New York. It is decided.

With love & many thanks.
S. L. C.

Naturally enough, with continued practice I improved my game, and he reduced my odds accordingly. He was willing to be beaten, but not too often. Like any other boy, he preferred to have the balance in his favor. We set down a record of the games, and he went to bed happier if the tally-sheet showed him winner.

It was natural, too, that an intimacy of association and of personal interest should grow under such conditions—to me a precious boon—and I wish here to record my own boundless gratitude to Mrs. Rogers for her gift, which, whatever it meant to him, meant so much more to me. The disparity of ages no longer existed; other discrepancies no longer mattered. The pleasant land of play is a democracy where such things do not count.

To recall all the humors and interesting happenings of those early billiard-days would be to fill a large volume. I can preserve no more than a few characteristic phases.

He was not an even-tempered player. When the balls were perverse in their movements and his aim unsteady, he was likely to become short with his opponent—critical and even fault-finding. Then presently a reaction would set in, and he would be seized with remorse. He would become unnecessarily gentle and kindly—even attentive—placing the balls as I knocked them into the pockets, hurrying from one end of the table to render this service, endeavoring to show in every way except by actual

confession in words that he was sorry for what seemed to him, no doubt, an unworthy display of temper, unjustified irritation.

Naturally, this was a mood that I enjoyed less than that which had induced it. I did not wish him to humble himself; I was willing that he should be severe, even harsh, if he felt so inclined; his age, his position, his genius entitled him to special privileges; yet I am glad, as I remember it now, that the other side revealed itself, for it completes the sum of his great humanity.

Page 781

Indeed, he was always not only human, but superhuman; not only a man, but superman. Nor does this term apply only to his psychology. In no other human being have I ever seen such physical endurance. I was comparatively a young man, and by no means an invalid; but many a time, far in the night, when I was ready to drop with exhaustion, he was still as fresh and buoyant and eager for the game as at the moment of beginning. He smoked and smoked continually, and followed the endless track around the billiard-table with the light step of youth. At three or four o'clock in the morning he would urge just one more game, and would taunt me for my weariness. I can truthfully testify that never until the last year of his life did he willingly lay down the billiard-cue, or show the least suggestion of fatigue.

He played always at high pressure. Now and then, in periods of adversity, he would fly into a perfect passion with things in general. But, in the end, it was a sham battle, and he saw the uselessness and humor of it, even in the moment of his climax. Once, when he found it impossible to make any of his favorite shots, he became more and more restive, the lightning became vividly picturesque as the clouds blackened. Finally, with a regular thunder-blast, he seized the cue with both hands and literally mowed the balls across the table, landing one or two of them on the floor. I do not recall his exact remarks during the performance; I was chiefly concerned in getting out of the way, and those sublime utterances were lost. I gathered up the balls and we went on playing as if nothing had happened, only he was very gentle and sweet, like the sun on the meadows after the storm has passed by. After a little he said:

"This is a most amusing game. When you play badly it amuses me, and when I play badly and lose my temper it certainly must amuse you."

His enjoyment of his opponent's perplexities was very keen. When he had left the balls in some unfortunate position which made it almost impossible for me to score he would laugh boisterously. I used to affect to be injured and disturbed by this ridicule. Once, when he had made the conditions unusually hard for me, and was enjoying the situation accordingly, I was tempted to remark:

"Whenever I see you laugh at a thing like that I always doubt your sense of humor." Which seemed to add to his amusement.

Sometimes, when the balls were badly placed for me, he would offer ostensible advice, suggesting that I should shoot here and there—shots that were possible, perhaps, but not promising. Often I would follow his advice, and then when I failed to score his amusement broke out afresh.

Page 782

Other billiardists came from time to time: Colonel Harvey, Mr. Duneka, and Major Leigh, of the Harper Company, and Peter Finley Dunne (Mr. Dooley); but they were handicapped by their business affairs, and were not dependable for daily and protracted sessions. Any number of his friends were willing, even eager, to come for his entertainment; but the percentage of them who could and would devote a number of hours each day to being beaten at billiards and enjoy the operation dwindled down to a single individual. Even I could not have done it—could not have afforded it, however much I might have enjoyed the diversion—had it not been contributory to my work. To me the association was invaluable; it drew from him a thousand long-forgotten incidents; it invited a stream of picturesque comments and philosophies; it furnished the most intimate insight into his character.

He was not always glad to see promiscuous callers, even some one that he might have met pleasantly elsewhere. One afternoon a young man whom he had casually invited to “drop in some day in town” happened to call in the midst of a very close series of afternoon games. It would all have been well enough if the visitor had been content to sit quietly on the couch and “bet on the game,” as Clemens suggested, after the greetings were over; but he was a very young man, and he felt the necessity of being entertaining. He insisted on walking about the room and getting in the way, and on talking about the Mark Twain books he had read, and the people he had met from time to time who had known Mark Twain on the river, or on the Pacific coast, or elsewhere. I knew how fatal it was for him to talk to Clemens during his play, especially concerning matters most of which had been laid away. I trembled for our visitor. If I could have got his ear privately I should have said: “For heaven’s sake sit down and keep still or go away! There’s going to be a combination of earthquake and cyclone and avalanche if you keep this thing up.”

I did what I could. I looked at my watch every other minute. At last, in desperation, I suggested that I retire from the game and let the visitor have my cue. I suppose I thought this would eliminate an element of danger. He declined on the ground that he seldom played, and continued his deadly visit. I have never been in an atmosphere so fraught with danger. I did not know how the game stood, and I played mechanically and forgot to count the score. Clemens’s face was grim and set and savage. He no longer ventured even a word. By and by I noticed that he was getting white, and I said, privately, “Now, this young man’s hour has come.”

It was certainly by the mercy of God just then that the visitor said:

“I’m sorry, but I’ve got to go. I’d like to stay longer, but I’ve got an engagement for dinner.”

I don’t remember how he got out, but I know that tons lifted as the door closed behind him. Clemens made his shot, then very softly said:

Page 783

"If he had stayed another five minutes I should have offered him twenty-five cents to go."

But a moment later he glared at me.

"Why in nation did you offer him your cue?"

"Wasn't that the courteous thing to do?" I asked.

"No!" he ripped out. "The courteous and proper thing would have been to strike him dead. Did you want to saddle that disaster upon us for life?"

He was blowing off steam, and I knew it and encouraged it. My impulse was to lie down on the couch and shout with hysterical laughter, but I suspected that would be indiscreet. He made some further comment on the propriety of offering a visitor a cue, and suddenly began to sing a travesty of an old hymn:

"How tedious are they
Who their sovereign obey,"

and so loudly that I said:

"Aren't you afraid he'll hear you and come back?" Whereupon he pretended alarm and sang under his breath, and for the rest of the evening was in boundless good-humor.

I have recalled this incident merely as a sample of things that were likely to happen at any time in his company, and to show the difficulty one might find in fitting himself to his varying moods. He was not to be learned in a day, or a week, or a month; some of those who knew him longest did not learn him at all.

We celebrated his seventy-first birthday by playing billiards all day. He invented a new game for the occasion; inventing rules for it with almost every shot.

It happened that no member of the family was at home on this birthday. Ill health had banished every one, even the secretary. Flowers, telegrams, and congratulations came, and there was a string of callers; but he saw no one beyond some intimate friends—the Gilders—late in the afternoon. When they had gone we went down to dinner. We were entirely alone, and I felt the great honor of being his only guest on such an occasion. Once between the courses, when he rose, as usual, to walk about, he wandered into the drawing-room, and seating himself at the orchestrelle began to play the beautiful flower-song from "Faust." It was a thing I had not seen him do before, and I never saw him do it again. When he came back to the table he said:

"Speaking of companions of the long ago, after fifty years they become only shadows and might as well be in the grave. Only those whom one has really loved mean

anything at all. Of my playmates I recall John Briggs, John Garth, and Laura Hawkins—just those three; the rest I buried long ago, and memory cannot even find their graves.”

He was in his loveliest humor all that day and evening; and that night, when he stopped playing, he said:

“I have never had a pleasanter day at this game.”

I answered, “I hope ten years from to-night we shall still be playing it.”

“Yes,” he said, “still playing the best game on earth.”

CCL

Page 784

PHILOSOPHY AND PESSIMISM

In a letter to MacAlister, written at this time, he said:

The doctors banished Jean to the country 5 weeks ago; they banished my secretary to the country for a fortnight last Saturday; they banished Clara to the country for a fortnight last Monday They banished me to Bermuda to sail next Wednesday, but I struck and sha'n't go. My complaint is permanent bronchitis & is one of the very best assets I've got, for it excuses me from every public function this winter—& all other winters that may come.

If he had bronchitis when this letter was written, it must have been of a very mild form, for it did not interfere with billiard games, which were more protracted and strenuous than at almost any other period. I conclude, therefore, that it was a convenient bronchitis, useful on occasion.

For a full ten days we were alone in the big house with the servants. It was a holiday most of the time. We hurried through the mail in the morning and the telephone calls; then, while I answered such letters as required attention, he dictated for an hour or so to Miss Hobby, after which, billiards for the rest of the day and evening. When callers were reported by the butler, I went down and got rid of them. Clara Clemens, before her departure, had pinned up a sign, "*No billiards after 10 P.M.*," which still hung on the wall, but it was outlawed. Clemens occasionally planned excursions to Bermuda and other places; but, remembering the billiard-table, which he could not handily take along, he abandoned these projects. He was a boy whose parents had been called away, left to his own devices, and bent on a good time.

There were likely to be irritations in his morning's mail, and more often he did not wish to see it until it had been pretty carefully sifted. So many people wrote who wanted things, so many others who made the claim of more or less distant acquaintanceship the excuse for long and trivial letters.

"I have stirred up three generations," he said; "first the grandparents, then the children, and now the grandchildren; the great-grandchildren will begin to arrive soon."

His mail was always large; but often it did not look interesting. One could tell from the envelope and the superscription something of the contents. Going over one assortment he burst out:

"Look at them! Look how trivial they are! Every envelope looks as if it contained a trivial human soul."

Many letters were filled with fulsome praise and compliment, usually of one pattern. He was sated with such things, and seldom found it possible to bear more than a line or two of them. Yet a fresh, well-expressed note of appreciation always pleased him.

“I can live for two months on a good compliment,” he once said. Certain persistent correspondents, too self-centered to realize their lack of consideration, or the futility of their purpose, followed him relentlessly. Of one such he remarked:

Page 785

"That woman intends to pursue me to the grave. I wish something could be done to appease her."

And again:

"Everybody in the world who wants something—something of no interest to me—writes to me to get it."

These morning sessions were likely to be of great interest. Once a letter spoke of the desirability of being an optimist. "That word perfectly disgusts me," he said, and his features materialized the disgust, "just as that other word, pessimist, does; and the idea that one can, by any effort of will, be one or the other, any more than he can change the color of his hair. The reason why a man is a pessimist or an optimist is not because he wants to be, but because he was born so; and this man [a minister of the Gospel who was going to explain life to him] is going to tell me why he isn't a pessimist. Oh, he'll do it, but he won't tell the truth; he won't make it short enough."

Yet he was always patient with any one who came with spiritual messages, theological arguments, and consolations. He might have said to them: "Oh, dear friends, those things of which you speak are the toys that long ago I played with and set aside." He could have said it and spoken the truth; but I believe he did not even think it. He listened to any one for whom he had respect, and was grateful for any effort in his behalf. One morning he read aloud a lecture given in London by George Bernard Shaw on religion, commenting as he read. He said:

"This letter is a frank breath of expression [and his comments were equally frank]. There is no such thing as morality; it is not immoral for the tiger to eat the wolf, or the wolf the cat, or the cat the bird, and so on down; that is their business. There is always enough for each one to live on. It is not immoral for one nation to seize another nation by force of arms, or for one man to seize another man's property or life if he is strong enough and wants to take it. It is not immoral to create the human species—with or without ceremony; nature intended exactly these things."

At one place in the lecture Shaw had said: "No one of good sense can accept any creed to-day without reservation."

"Certainly not," commented Clemens; "the reservation is that he is a d—d fool to accept it at all."

He was in one of his somber moods that morning. I had received a print of a large picture of Thomas Nast—the last one taken. The face had a pathetic expression which told the tragedy of his last years. Clemens looked at the picture several moments without speaking. Then he broke out:



“Why can’t a man die when he’s had his tragedy? I ought to have died long ago.” And somewhat later: “Once Twichell heard me cussing the human race, and he said, ‘Why, Mark, you are the last person in the world to do that—one selected and set apart as you are.’ I said ‘Joe, you don’t know what you are talking about. I am not cussing altogether about my own little troubles. Any one can stand his own misfortunes; but when I read in the papers all about the rascalities and outrages going on I realize what a creature the human animal is. Don’t you care more about the wretchedness of others than anything that happens to you?’ Joe said he did, and shut up.”

Page 786

It occurred to me to suggest that he should not read the daily papers. "No difference," he said. "I read books printed two hundred years ago, and they hurt just the same."

"Those people are all dead and gone," I objected.

"They hurt just the same," he maintained.

I sometimes thought of his inner consciousness as a pool darkened by his tragedies, its glassy surface, when calm, reflecting all the joy and sunlight and merriment of the world, but easily—so easily—troubled and stirred even to violence. Once following the dictation, when I came to the billiard-room he was shooting the balls about the table, apparently much depressed. He said:

"I have been thinking it out—if I live two years more I will put an end to it all. I will kill myself."

"You have much to live for——"

"But I am so tired of the eternal round," he interrupted; "so tired." And I knew he meant that he was ill of the great loneliness that had come to him that day in Florence, and would never pass away.

I referred to the pressure of social demands in the city, and the relief he would find in his country home. He shook his head.

"The country home I need," he said, fiercely, "is a cemetery."

Yet the mood changed quickly enough when the play began. He was gay and hilarious presently, full of the humors and complexities of the game. H. H. Rogers came in with a good deal of frequency, seldom making very long calls, but never seeming to have that air of being hurried which one might expect to find in a man whose day was only twenty-four hours long, and whose interests were so vast and innumerable. He would come in where we were playing, and sit down and watch the game, or perhaps would pick up a book and read, exchanging a remark now and then. More often, however, he sat in the bedroom, for his visits were likely to be in the morning. They were seldom business calls, or if they were, the business was quickly settled, and then followed gossip, humorous incident, or perhaps Clemens would read aloud something he had written. But once, after greetings, he began:

"Well, Rogers, I don't know what you think of it, but I think I have had about enough of this world, and I wish I were out of it."

Mr. Rogers replied, "I don't say much about it, but that expresses my view."

This from the foremost man of letters and one of the foremost financiers of the time was impressive. Each at the mountain-top of his career, they agreed that the journey was not worth while—that what the world had still to give was not attractive enough to tempt them to prevent a desire to experiment with the next stage. One could remember a thousand poor and obscure men who were perfectly willing to go on struggling and starving, postponing the day of settlement as long as possible; but perhaps, when one has had all the world has to give, when there are no new worlds in sight to conquer, one has a different feeling.



Page 787

Well, the realization lay not so far ahead for either of them, though at that moment they both seemed full of life and vigor—full of youth. One could not imagine the day when for them it would all be over.

CCLI

A LOBBYING EXPEDITION

Clara Clemens came home now and then to see how matters were progressing, and very properly, for Clemens was likely to become involved in social intricacies which required a directing hand. The daughter inherited no little of the father's characteristics of thought and phrase, and it was always a delight to see them together when one could be just out of range of the crossfire. I remember soon after her return, when she was making some searching inquiries concerning the billiard-room sign, and other suggested or instituted reforms, he said:

"Oh well, never mind, it doesn't matter. I'm boss in this house."

She replied, quickly: "Oh no, you're not. You're merely owner. I'm the captain—the commander-in-chief."

One night at dinner she mentioned the possibility of going abroad that year. During several previous summers she had planned to visit Vienna to see her old music-master, Leschetizky, once more before his death. She said:

"Leschetizky is getting so old. If I don't go soon I'm afraid I sha'n't be in time for his funeral."

"Yes," said her father, thoughtfully, "you keep rushing over to Leschetizky's funeral, and you'll miss mine."

He had made one or two social engagements without careful reflection, and the situation would require some delicacy of adjustment. During a moment between the courses, when he left the table and was taking his exercise in the farther room, she made some remark which suggested a doubt of her father's gift for social management. I said:

"Oh, well, he is a king, you know, and a king can do no wrong."

"Yes, I know," she answered. "The king can do no wrong; but he frightens me almost to death, sometimes, he comes so near it."

He came back and began to comment rather critically on some recent performance of Roosevelt's, which had stirred up a good deal of newspaper amusement—it was the

Storer matter and those indiscreet letters which Roosevelt had written relative to the ambassadorship which Storer so much desired. Miss Clemens was inclined to defend the President, and spoke with considerable enthusiasm concerning his elements of popularity, which had won him such extraordinary admiration.

“Certainly he is popular,” Clemens admitted, “and with the best of reasons. If the twelve apostles should call at the White House, he would say, ‘Come in, come in! I am delighted to see you. I’ve been watching your progress, and I admired it very much.’ Then if Satan should come, he would slap him on the shoulder and say, ‘Why, Satan, how do you do? I am so glad to meet you. I’ve read all your works and enjoyed every one of them.’ Anybody could be popular with a gift like that.”

Page 788

It was that evening or the next, perhaps, that he said to her:

“Ben [one of his pet names for her], now that you are here to run the ranch, Paine and I are going to Washington on a vacation. You don’t seem to admire our society much, anyhow.”

There were still other reasons for the Washington expedition. There was an important bill up for the extension of the book royalty period, and the forces of copyright were going down in a body to use every possible means to get the measure through.

Clemens, during Cleveland’s first administration, some nineteen years before, had accompanied such an expedition, and through S. S. (“Sunset”) Cox had obtained the “privileges of the floor” of the House, which had enabled him to canvass the members individually. Cox assured the doorkeeper that Clemens had received the thanks of Congress for national literary service, and was therefore entitled to that privilege. This was not strictly true; but regulations were not very severe in those days, and the ruse had been regarded as a good joke, which had yielded excellent results. Clemens had a similar scheme in mind now, and believed that his friendship with Speaker Cannon—“Uncle Joe”—would obtain for him a similar privilege. The Copyright Association working in its regular way was very well, he said, but he felt he could do more as an individual than by acting merely as a unit of that body.

“I canvassed the entire House personally that other time,” he said. “Cox introduced me to the Democrats, and John D. Long, afterward Secretary of the Navy, introduced me to the Republicans. I had a darling time converting those members, and I’d like to try the experiment again.”

I should have mentioned earlier, perhaps, that at this time he had begun to wear white clothing regularly, regardless of the weather and season. On the return from Dublin he had said:

“I can’t bear to put on black clothes again. I wish I could wear white all winter. I should prefer, of course, to wear colors, beautiful rainbow hues, such as the women have monopolized. Their clothing makes a great opera audience an enchanting spectacle, a delight to the eye and to the spirit—a garden of Eden for charm and color.

“The men, clothed in odious black, are scattered here and there over the garden like so many charred stumps. If we are going to be gay in spirit, why be clad in funeral garments? I should like to dress in a loose and flowing costume made all of silks and velvets resplendent with stunning dyes, and so would every man I have ever known; but none of us dares to venture it. If I should appear on Fifth Avenue on a Sunday morning clothed as I would like to be clothed the churches would all be vacant and the congregation would come tagging after me. They would scoff, of course, but they would

envy me, too. When I put on black it reminds me of my funerals. I could be satisfied with white all the year round.”

Page 789

It was not long after this that he said:

"I have made up my mind not to wear black any more, but white, and let the critics say what they will."

So his tailor was sent for, and six creamy flannel and serge suits were ordered, made with the short coats, which he preferred, with a gray suit or two for travel, and he did not wear black again, except for evening dress and on special occasions. It was a gratifying change, and though the newspapers made much of it, there was no one who was not gladdened by the beauty of his garments and their general harmony with his person. He had never worn anything so appropriate or so impressive.

This departure of costume came along a week or two before the Washington trip, and when his bags were being packed for the excursion he was somewhat in doubt as to the propriety of bursting upon Washington in December in that snowy plumage. I ventured:

"This is a lobbying expedition of a peculiar kind, and does not seem to invite any half-way measures. I should vote in favor of the white suit."

I think Miss Clemens was for it, too. She must have been or the vote wouldn't have carried, though it was clear he strongly favored the idea. At all events, the white suits came along.

We were off the following afternoon: Howells, Robert Underwood Johnson, one of the Appletons, one of the Putnams, George Bowker, and others were on the train. On the trip down in the dining-car there was a discussion concerning the copyrighting of ideas, which finally resolved itself into the possibility of originating a new one. Clemens said:

"There is no such thing as a new idea. It is impossible. We simply take a lot of old ideas and put them into a sort of mental kaleidoscope. We give them a turn and they make new and curious combinations. We keep on turning and making new combinations indefinitely; but they are the same old pieces of colored glass that have been in use through all the ages."

We put up at the Willard, and in the morning drove over to the Congressional Library, where the copyright hearing was in progress. There was a joint committee of the two Houses seated round a long table at work, and a number of spectators more or less interested in the bill, mainly, it would seem, men concerned with the protection of mechanical music-rolls. The fact that this feature was mixed up with literature was not viewed with favor by most of the writers. Clemens referred to the musical contingent as "those hand-organ men who ought to have a bill of their own."

I should mention that early that morning Clemens had written this letter to Speaker Cannon:

December 7, 1906.

Dear uncle Joseph,—Please get me the thanks of the Congress—not next week, but right away. It is very necessary. Do accomplish this for your affectionate old friend right away; by persuasion, if you can; by violence, if you must, for it is imperatively necessary that I get on the floor for two or three hours and talk to the members, man by man, in behalf of the support, encouragement, and protection of one of the nation's most valuable assets and industries—its literature. I have arguments with me, also a barrel with liquid in it.

Page 790

Give me a chance. Get me the thanks of Congress. Don't wait for others —there isn't time. I have stayed away and let Congress alone for seventy-one years and I am entitled to thanks. Congress knows it perfectly well, and I have long felt hurt that this quite proper and earned expression of gratitude has been merely felt by the House and never publicly uttered. Send me an order on the Sergeant-at-Arms quick. When shall I come?

With love and a benediction;
mark twain.

We went over to the Capitol now to deliver to "Uncle Joe" this characteristic letter. We had picked up Clemens's nephew, Samuel E. Moffett, at the Library, and he came along and led the way to the Speaker's room. Arriving there, Clemens laid off his dark overcoat and stood there, all in white, certainly a startling figure among those clerks, newspaper men, and incidental politicians. He had been noticed as he entered the Capitol, and a number of reporters had followed close behind. Within less than a minute word was being passed through the corridors that Mark Twain was at the Capitol in his white suit. The privileged ones began to gather, and a crowd assembled in the hall outside.

Speaker Cannon was not present at the moment; but a little later he "billowed" in—which seems to be the word to express it—he came with such a rush and tide of life. After greetings, Clemens produced the letter and read it to him solemnly, as if he were presenting a petition. Uncle Joe listened quite seriously, his head bowed a little, as if it were really a petition, as in fact it was. He smiled, but he said, quite seriously:

"That is a request that ought to be granted; but the time has gone by when I am permitted any such liberties. Tom Reed, when he was Speaker, inaugurated a strict precedent excluding all outsiders from the use of the floor of the House."

"I got in the other time," Clemens insisted.

"Yes," said Uncle Joe; "but that ain't now. Sunset Cox could let you in, but I can't. They'd hang me." He reflected a moment, and added: "I'll tell you what I'll do: I've got a private room down-stairs that I never use. It's all fitted up with table and desk, stationery, chinaware, and cutlery; you could keep house there, if you wanted to. I'll let you have it as long as you want to stay here, and I'll give you my private servant, Neal, who's been here all his life and knows every official, every Senator and Representative, and they all know him. He'll bring you whatever you want, and you can send in messages by him. You can have the members brought down singly or in bunches, and convert them as much as you please. I'd give you a key to the room, only I haven't got one myself. I never can get in when I want to, but Neal can get in, and he'll unlock it for you. You can have the room, and you can have Neal. Now, will that do you?"

Page 791

Clemens said it would. It was, in fact, an offer without precedent. Probably never in the history of the country had a Speaker given up his private room to lobbyists. We went in to see the House open, and then went down with Neal and took possession of the room. The reporters had promptly seized upon the letter, and they now got hold of its author, led him to their own quarters, and, gathering around him, fired questions at him, and kept their note-books busy. He made a great figure, all in white there among them, and they didn't fail to realize the value of it as "copy." He talked about copyright, and about his white clothes, and about a silk hat which Howells wore.

Back in the Speaker's room, at last, he began laying out the campaign, which would begin next day. By and by he said:

"Look here! I believe I've got to speak over there in that committee-room to-day or to-morrow. I ought to know just when it is."

I had not heard of this before, and offered to go over and see about it, which I did at once. I hurried back faster than I had gone.

"Mr. Clemens, you are to speak in half an hour, and the room is crowded full; people waiting to hear you."

"The devil!" he said. "Well, all right; I'll just lie down here a few minutes and then we'll go over. Take paper and pencil and make a few headings."

There was a couch in the room. He lay down while I sat at the table with a pencil, making headings now and then, as he suggested, and presently he rose and, shoving the notes into his pocket, was ready. It was half past three when we entered the committee-room, which was packed with people and rather dimly lighted, for it was gloomy outside. Herbert Putnam, the librarian, led us to seats among the literary group, and Clemens, removing his overcoat, stood in that dim room clad as in white armor. There was a perceptible stir. Howells, startled for a moment, whispered:

"What in the world did he wear that white suit for?" though in his heart he admired it as much as the others.

I don't remember who was speaking when we came in, but he was saying nothing important. Whoever it was, he was followed by Dr. Edward Everett Hale, whose age always commanded respect, and whose words always invited interest. Then it was Mark Twain's turn. He did not stand by his chair, as the others had done, but walked over to the Speaker's table, and, turning, faced his audience. I have never seen a more impressive sight than that snow-white figure in that dim-lit, crowded room. He never touched his notes; he didn't even remember them. He began in that even, quiet, deliberate voice of his the most even, the most quiet, the most deliberate voice in the world—and, without a break or a hesitation for a word, he delivered a copyright

argument, full of humor and serious reasoning, such a speech as no one in that room, I suppose, had ever heard. Certainly it was a fine and dramatic bit

Page 792

of impromptu pleading. The weary committee, which had been tortured all day with dull, statistical arguments made by the mechanical device fiends, and dreary platitudes unloaded by men whose chief ambition was to shine as copyright champions, suddenly realized that they were being rewarded for the long waiting. They began to brighten and freshen, and uplift and smile, like flowers that have been wilted by a drought when comes the refreshing shower that means renewed life and vigor. Every listener was as if standing on tiptoe. When the last sentence was spoken the applause came like an explosion.—[Howells in his book *My Mark Twain* speaks of Clemens's white clothing as "an inspiration which few men would have had the courage to act upon." He adds: "The first time I saw him wear it was at the authors' hearing before the Congressional Committee on Copyright in Washington. Nothing could have been more dramatic than the gesture with which he flung off his long, loose overcoat and stood forth in white from his feet to the crown of his silvery head. It was a magnificent coup, and he dearly loved a coup; but the magnificent speech which he made, tearing to shreds the venerable farrago of nonsense about nonproperty in ideas which had formed the basis of all copyright legislation, made you forget even his spectacularity."]

There came a universal rush of men and women to get near enough for a word and to shake his hand. But he was anxious to get away. We drove to the Willard and talked and smoked, and got ready for dinner. He was elated, and said the occasion required full-dress. We started down at last, fronted and frocked like penguins.

I did not realize then the fullness of his love for theatrical effect. I supposed he would want to go down with as little ostentation as possible, so took him by the elevator which enters the dining-room without passing through the long corridor known as "Peacock Alley," because of its being a favorite place for handsomely dressed fashionables of the national capital. When we reached the entrance of the dining-room he said:

"Isn't there another entrance to this place?"

I said there was, but that it was very conspicuous. We should have to go down the long corridor.

"Oh, well," he said, "I don't mind that. Let's go back and try it over."

So we went back up the elevator, walked to the other end of the hotel, and came down to the F Street entrance. There is a fine, stately flight of steps—a really royal stair—leading from this entrance down into "Peacock Alley." To slowly descend that flight is an impressive thing to do. It is like descending the steps of a throne-room, or to some royal landing-place where Cleopatra's barge might lie. I confess that I was somewhat nervous at the awfulness of the occasion, but I reflected that I was powerfully protected;

so side by side, both in full-dress, white ties, white-silk waistcoats, and all, we came down that regal flight.

Page 793

Of course he was seized upon at once by a lot of feminine admirers, and the passage along the corridor was a perpetual gantlet. I realize now that this gave the dramatic finish to his day, and furnished him with proper appetite for his dinner. I did not again make the mistake of taking him around to the more secluded elevator. I aided and abetted him every evening in making that spectacular descent of the royal stairway, and in running that fair and frivolous gantlet the length of "Peacock Alley." The dinner was a continuous reception. No sooner was he seated than this Congressman and that Senator came over to shake hands with Mark Twain. Governor Francis of Missouri also came. Eventually Howells drifted in, and Clemens reviewed the day, its humors and successes. Back in the rooms at last he summed up the progress thus far—smoked, laughed over "Uncle Joe's" surrender to the "copyright bandits," and turned in for the night.

We were at the Capitol headquarters in Speaker Cannon's private room about eleven o'clock next morning. Clemens was not in the best humor because I had allowed him to oversleep. He was inclined to be discouraged at the prospect, and did not believe many of the members would come down to see him. He expressed a wish for some person of influence and wide acquaintance, and walked up and down, smoking gloomily. I slipped out and found the Speaker's colored body-guard, Neal, and suggested that Mr. Clemens was ready now to receive the members.

That was enough. They began to arrive immediately. John Sharp Williams came first, then Boutell, from Illinois, Littlefield, of Maine, and after them a perfect procession, including all the leading lights—Dalzell, Champ Clark, McCall—one hundred and eighty or so in all during the next three or four hours.

Neal announced each name at the door, and in turn I announced it to Clemens when the press was not too great. He had provided boxes of cigars, and the room was presently blue with smoke, Clemens in his white suit in the midst of it, surrounded by those darker figures—shaking hands, dealing out copyright gospel and anecdotes—happy and wonderfully excited. There were chairs, but usually there was only standing room. He was on his feet for several hours and talked continually; but when at last it was over, and Champ Clark, who I believe remained longest and was most enthusiastic in the movement, had bade him good-by, he declared that he was not a particle tired, and added:

"I believe if our bill could be presented now it would pass."

He was highly elated, and pronounced everything a perfect success. Neal, who was largely responsible for the triumph, received a ten-dollar bill.

Page 794

We drove to the hotel and dined that night with the Dodges, who had been neighbors at Riverdale. Later, the usual crowd of admirers gathered around him, among them I remember the minister from Costa Rica, the Italian minister, and others of the diplomatic service, most of whom he had known during his European residence. Some one told of traveling in India and China, and how a certain Hindu “god” who had exchanged autographs with Mark Twain during his sojourn there was familiar with only two other American names—George Washington and Chicago; while the King of Siam had read but three English books—the Bible, Bryce’s American Commonwealth, and The Innocents Abroad.

We were at Thomas Nelson Page’s for dinner next evening—a wonderfully beautiful home, full of art treasures. A number of guests had been invited. Clemens naturally led the dinner-talk, which eventually drifted to reading. He told of Mrs. Clemens’s embarrassment when Stepniak had visited them and talked books, and asked her what her husband thought of Balzac, Thackeray, and the others. She had been obliged to say that he had not read them.

“‘How interesting!’ said Stepniak. But it wasn’t interesting to Mrs. Clemens. It was torture.”

He was light-spirited and gay; but recalling Mrs. Clemens saddened him, perhaps, for he was silent as we drove to the hotel, and after he was in bed he said, with a weary despair which even the words do not convey:

“If I had been there a minute earlier, it is possible—it is possible that she might have died in my arms. Sometimes I think that perhaps there was an instant—a single instant—when she realized that she was dying and that I was not there.”

In New York I had once brought him a print of the superb “Adams Memorial,” by Saint-Gaudens—the bronze woman who sits in the still court in the Rock Creek Cemetery at Washington.

On the morning following the Page dinner at breakfast, he said:

“Engage a carriage and we will drive out and see the Saint-Gaudens bronze.”

It was a bleak, dull December day, and as we walked down through the avenues of the dead there was a presence of realized sorrow that seemed exactly suited to such a visit. We entered the little inclosure of cedars where sits the dark figure which is art’s supreme expression of the great human mystery of life and death. Instinctively we removed our hats, and neither spoke until after we had come away. Then:

“What does he call it?” he asked.

I did not know, though I had heard applied to it that great line of Shakespeare's—"the rest is silence."

"But that figure is not silent," he said.

And later, as we were driving home:

"It is in deep meditation on sorrowful things."

When we returned to New York he had the little print framed, and kept it always on his mantelpiece.

CCLII

Page 795

THEOLOGY AND EVOLUTION

From the Washington trip dates a period of still closer association with Mark Twain. On the way to New York he suggested that I take up residence in his house—a privilege which I had no wish to refuse. There was room going to waste, he said, and it would be handier for the early and late billiard sessions. So, after that, most of the days and nights I was there.

Looking back on that time now, I see pretty vividly three quite distinct pictures. One of them, the rich, red interior of the billiard-room with the brilliant, green square in the center, on which the gay balls are rolling, and bending over it that luminous white figure in the instant of play. Then there is the long, lighted drawing-room with the same figure stretched on a couch in the corner, drowsily smoking, while the rich organ tones fill the place summoning for him scenes and faces which others do not see. This was the hour between dinner and billiards—the hour which he found most restful of the day. Sometimes he rose, walking the length of the parlors, his step timed to the music and his thought. Of medium height, he gave the impression of being tall—his head thrown up, and like a lion's, rather large for his body. But oftener he lay among the cushions, the light flooding his white hair and dress and heightening his brilliant coloring.

The third picture is that of the dinner-table—always beautifully laid, and always a shrine of wisdom when he was there. He did not always talk; but it was his habit to do so, and memory holds the clearer vision of him when, with eyes and face alive with interest, he presented some new angle of thought in fresh picturesqueness of speech. These are the pictures that have remained to me out of the days spent under his roof, and they will not fade while memory lasts.

Of Mark Twain's table philosophies it seems proper to make rather extended record. They were usually unpremeditated, and they presented the man as he was, and thought. I preserved as much of them as I could, and have verified phrase and idea, when possible, from his own notes and other unprinted writings.

This dinner-table talk naturally varied in character from that of the billiard-room. The latter was likely to be anecdotal and personal; the former was more often philosophical and commentative, ranging through a great variety of subjects scientific, political, sociological, and religious. His talk was often of infinity—the forces of creation—and it was likely to be satire of the orthodox conceptions, intermingled with heresies of his own devising.

Once, after a period of general silence, he said:

“No one who thinks can imagine the universe made by chance. It is too nicely assembled and regulated. There is, of course, a great Master Mind, but it cares nothing for our happiness or our unhappiness.”

It was objected, by one of those present, that as the Infinite Mind suggested perfect harmony, sorrow and suffering were defects which that Mind must feel and eventually regulate.

Page 796

"Yes," he said, "not a sparrow falls but He is noticing, if that is what you mean; but the human conception of it is that God is sitting up nights worrying over the individuals of this infinitesimal race."

Then he recalled a fancy which I have since found among his memoranda. In this note he had written:

The suns & planets that form the constellations of a billion billion solar systems & go pouring, a tossing flood of shining globes, through the viewless arteries of space are the blood-corpuscles in the veins of God; & the nations are the microbes that swarm and wiggle & brag in each, & think God can tell them apart at that distance & has nothing better to do than try. This—the entertainment of an eternity. Who so poor in his ambitions as to consent to be God on those terms? Blasphemy? No, it is not blasphemy. If God is as vast as that, He is above blasphemy; if He is as little as that, He is beneath it.

"The Bible," he said, "reveals the character of its God with minute exactness. It is a portrait of a man, if one can imagine a man with evil impulses far beyond the human limit. In the Old Testament He is pictured as unjust, ungenerous, pitiless, and revengeful, punishing innocent children for the misdeeds of their parents; punishing unoffending people for the sins of their rulers, even descending to bloody vengeance upon harmless calves and sheep as punishment for puny trespasses committed by their proprietors. It is the most damnatory biography that ever found its way into print. Its beginning is merely childish. Adam is forbidden to eat the fruit of a certain tree, and gravely informed that if he disobeys he shall die. How could that impress Adam? He could have no idea of what death meant. He had never seen a dead thing. He had never heard of one. If he had been told that if he ate the apples he would be turned into a meridian of longitude that threat would have meant just as much as the other one. The watery intellect that invented that notion could be depended on to go on and decree that all of Adam's descendants down to the latest day should be punished for that nursery trespass in the beginning.

"There is a curious poverty of invention in Bibles. Most of the great races each have one, and they all show this striking defect. Each pretends to originality, without possessing any. Each of them borrows from the other, confiscates old stage properties, puts them forth as fresh and new inspirations from on high. We borrowed the Golden Rule from Confucius, after it had seen service for centuries, and copyrighted it without a blush. We went back to Babylon for the Deluge, and are as proud of it and as satisfied with it as if it had been worth the trouble; whereas we know now that Noah's flood never happened, and couldn't have happened—not in that way. The flood is a favorite with Bible-makers. Another favorite with the founders of religions is the Immaculate Conception. It had been worn threadbare; but we adopted it as a new idea. It was old in Egypt several thousand years before Christ was born. The Hindus prized it ages ago. The Egyptians adopted it even for some of their kings. The Romans borrowed the

idea from Greece. We got it straight from heaven by way of Rome. We are still charmed with it."

Page 797

He would continue in this strain, rising occasionally and walking about the room. Once, considering the character of God—the Bible God—he said:

“We haven’t been satisfied with God’s character as it is given in the Old Testament; we have amended it. We have called Him a God of mercy and love and morals. He didn’t have a single one of those qualities in the beginning. He didn’t hesitate to send the plagues on Egypt, the most fiendish punishments that could be devised—not for the king, but for his innocent subjects, the women and the little children, and then only to exhibit His power just to show off—and He kept hardening Pharaoh’s heart so that He could send some further ingenuity of torture, new rivers of blood, and swarms of vermin and new pestilences, merely to exhibit samples of His workmanship. Now and then, during the forty years’ wandering, Moses persuaded Him to be a little more lenient with the Israelites, which would show that Moses was the better character of the two. That Old Testament God never had an inspiration of His own.”

He referred to the larger conception of God, that Infinite Mind which had projected the universe. He said:

“In some details that Old Bible God is probably a more correct picture than our conception of that Incomparable One that created the universe and flung upon its horizonless ocean of space those giant suns, whose signal-lights are so remote that we only catch their flash when it has been a myriad of years on its way. For that Supreme One is not a God of pity or mercy—not as we recognize these qualities. Think of a God of mercy who would create the typhus germ, or the house-fly, or the centipede, or the rattlesnake, yet these are all His handiwork. They are a part of the Infinite plan. The minister is careful to explain that all these tribulations are sent for a good purpose; but he hires a doctor to destroy the fever germ, and he kills the rattlesnake when he doesn’t run from it, and he sets paper with molasses on it for the house-fly.

“Two things are quite certain: one is that God, the limitless God, manufactured those things, for no man could have done it. The man has never lived who could create even the humblest of God’s creatures. The other conclusion is that God has no special consideration for man’s welfare or comfort, or He wouldn’t have created those things to disturb and destroy him. The human conception of pity and morality must be entirely unknown to that Infinite God, as much unknown as the conceptions of a microbe to man, or at least as little regarded.

“If God ever contemplates those qualities in man He probably admires them, as we always admire the thing which we do not possess ourselves; probably a little grain of pity in a man or a little atom of mercy would look as big to Him as a constellation. He could create a constellation with a thought; but He has been all the measureless ages, and He has never acquired those qualities that we have named—pity and mercy and morality. He goes on destroying a whole island of people with an earthquake, or a whole cityful with a plague, when we punish a man in the electric chair for merely killing

the poorest of our race. The human being needs to revise his ideas again about God. Most of the scientists have done it already; but most of them don't dare to say so."

Page 798

He pointed out that the moral idea was undergoing constant change; that what was considered justifiable in an earlier day was regarded as highly immoral now. He pointed out that even the Decalogue made no reference to lying, except in the matter of bearing false witness against a neighbor. Also, that there was a commandment against covetousness, though covetousness to-day was the basis of all commerce: The general conclusion being that the morals of the Lord had been the morals of the beginning; the morals of the first-created man, the morals of the troglodyte, the morals of necessity; and that the morals of mankind had kept pace with necessity, whereas those of the Lord had remained unchanged. It is hardly necessary to say that no one ever undertook to contradict any statements of this sort from him. In the first place, there was no desire to do so; and in the second place, any one attempting it would have cut a puny figure with his less substantial arguments and his less vigorous phrase. It was the part of wisdom and immeasurably the part of happiness to be silent and listen.

On another evening he began:

“The mental evolution of the species proceeds apparently by regular progress side by side with the physical development until it comes to man, then there is a long, unexplained gulf. Somewhere man acquired an asset which sets him immeasurably apart from the other animals—his imagination. Out of it he created for himself a conscience, and clothes, and immodesty, and a hereafter, and a soul. I wonder where he got that asset. It almost makes one agree with Alfred Russel Wallace that the world and the universe were created just for his benefit, that he is the chief love and delight of God. Wallace says that the whole universe was made to take care of and to keep steady this little floating mote in the center of it, which we call the world. It looks like a good deal of trouble for such a small result; but it's dangerous to dispute with a learned astronomer like Wallace. Still, I don't think we ought to decide too soon about it—not until the returns are all in. There is the geological evidence, for instance. Even after the universe was created, it took a long time to prepare the world for man. Some of the scientists, ciphering out the evidence furnished by geology, have arrived at the conviction that the world is prodigiously old. Lord Kelvin doesn't agree with them. He says that it isn't more than a hundred million years old, and he thinks the human race has inhabited it about thirty thousand years of that time. Even so, it was 99,970,000 years getting ready, impatient as the Creator doubtless was to see man and admire him. That was because God first had to make the oyster. You can't make an oyster out of nothing, nor you can't do it in a day. You've got to start with a vast variety of invertebrates, belemnites, trilobites, jebusites, amalekites, and that sort of fry, and put them into soak in a primary

Page 799

sea and observe and wait what will happen. Some of them will turn out a disappointment; the belemnites and the amalekites and such will be failures, and they will die out and become extinct in the course of the nineteen million years covered by the experiment; but all is not lost, for the amalekites will develop gradually into encrinites and stalactites and blatherskites, and one thing and another, as the mighty ages creep on and the periods pile their lofty crags in the primordial seas, and at last the first grand stage in the preparation of the world for man stands completed; the oyster is done. Now an oyster has hardly any more reasoning power than a man has, so it is probable this one jumped to the conclusion that the nineteen million years was a preparation for him. That would be just like an oyster, and, anyway, this one could not know at that early date that he was only an incident in a scheme, and that there was some more to the scheme yet.

“The oyster being finished, the next step in the preparation of the world for man was fish. So the old Silurian seas were opened up to breed the fish in. It took twenty million years to make the fish and to fossilize him so we’d have the evidence later.

“Then, the Paleozoic limit having been reached, it was necessary to start a new age to make the reptiles. Man would have to have some reptiles —not to eat, but to develop himself from. Thirty million years were required for the reptiles, and out of such material as was left were made those stupendous saurians that used to prowl about the steamy world in remote ages, with their snaky heads forty feet in the air and their sixty feet of body and tail racing and thrashing after them. They are all gone now, every one of them; just a few fossil remnants of them left on this far-flung fringe of time.

“It took all those years to get one of those creatures properly constructed to proceed to the next step. Then came the pterodactyl, who thought all that preparation all those millions of years had been intended to produce him, for there wasn’t anything too foolish for a, pterodactyl to imagine. I suppose he did attract a good deal of attention, for even the least observant could see that there was the making of a bird in him, also the making of a mammal, in the course of time. You can’t say too much for the picturesqueness of the pterodactyl —he was the triumph of his period. He wore wings and had teeth, and was a starchy-looking creature. But the progression went right along.

“During the next thirty million years the bird arrived, and the kangaroo, and by and by the mastodon, and the giant sloth, and the Irish elk, and the old Silurian ass, and some people thought that man was about due. But that was a mistake, for the next thing they knew there came a great ice-sheet, and those creatures all escaped across the Bering Strait and wandered around in Asia and died, all except a few to carry on the preparation with. There were

Page 800

six of those glacial periods, with two million years or so between each. They chased those poor orphans up and down the earth, from weather to weather, from tropic temperature to fifty degrees below. They never knew what kind of weather was going to turn up next, and if they settled any place the whole continent suddenly sank from under them, and they had to make a scramble for dry land. Sometimes a volcano would turn itself loose just as they got located. They led that uncertain, strenuous existence for about twenty-five million years, always wondering what was going to happen next, never suspecting that it was just a preparation for man, who had to be done just so or there wouldn't be any proper or harmonious place for him when he arrived, and then at last the monkey came, and everybody could see at a glance that man wasn't far off now, and that was true enough. The monkey went on developing for close upon five million years, and then he turned into a man—to all appearances.

"It does look like a lot of fuss and trouble to go through to build anything, especially a human being, and nowhere along the way is there any evidence of where he picked up that final asset—his imagination. It makes him different from the others—not any better, but certainly different. Those earlier animals didn't have it, and the monkey hasn't it or he wouldn't be so cheerful."

[Paine records Twain's thoughts in that magnificent essay: "Was the World Made for Man" published long after his death in the group of essays under the title "Letters from the Earth. There are minor additions in the published version: "coal to fry the fish" ; and the remnants of life being chased from pole to pole "without a dry rag on them,"; and the "coat of paint" on top of the bulb on top the Eiffel Tower representing "man's portion of this world's history." Ed.]

He often held forth on the shortcomings of the human race—always a favorite subject—the incompetencies and imperfections of this final creation, in spite of, or because of, his great attribute—the imagination. Once (this was in the billiard-room) I started him by saying that whatever the conditions in other planets, there seemed no reason why life should not develop in each, adapted as perfectly to prevailing conditions as man is suited to conditions here. He said:

"Is it your idea, then, that man is perfectly adapted to the conditions of this planet?"

I began to qualify, rather weakly; but what I said did not matter. He was off on his favorite theme.

"Man adapted to the earth?" he said. "Why, he can't sleep out-of-doors without freezing to death or getting the rheumatism or the malaria; he can't keep his nose under water over a minute without being drowned; he can't climb a tree without falling out and

breaking his neck. Why, he's the poorest, clumsiest excuse of all the creatures that inhabit this earth. He has got to be coddled and housed and swathed and bandaged

Page 801

and up holstered to be able to live at all. He is a rickety sort of a thing, anyway you take him, a regular British Museum of infirmities and inferiorities. He is always under going repairs. A machine that is as unreliable as he is would have no market. The higher animals get their teeth without pain or inconvenience. The original cave man, the troglodyte, may have got his that way. But now they come through months and months of cruel torture, and at a time of life when he is least able to bear it. As soon as he gets them they must all be pulled out again, for they were of no value in the first place, not worth the loss of a night's rest. The second set will answer for a while; but he will never get a set that can be depended on until the dentist makes one. The animals are not much troubled that way. In a wild state, a natural state, they have few diseases; their main one is old age. But man starts in as a child and lives on diseases to the end as a regular diet. He has mumps, measles, whooping-cough, croup, tonsillitis, diphtheria, scarlet-fever, as a matter of course. Afterward, as he goes along, his life continues to be threatened at every turn by colds, coughs, asthma, bronchitis, quinsy, consumption, yellow-fever, blindness, influenza, carbuncles, pneumonia, softening of the brain, diseases of the heart and bones, and a thousand other maladies of one sort and another. He's just a basketful of festering, pestilent corruption, provided for the support and entertainment of microbes. Look at the workmanship of him in some of its particulars. What are his tonsils for? They perform no useful function; they have no value. They are but a trap for tonsillitis and quinsy. And what is the appendix for? It has no value. Its sole interest is to lie and wait for stray grape-seeds and breed trouble. What is his beard for? It is just a nuisance. All nations persecute it with the razor. Nature, however, always keeps him supplied with it, instead of putting it on his head, where it ought to be. You seldom see a man bald-headed on his chin, but on his head. A man wants to keep his hair. It is a graceful ornament, a comfort, the best of all protections against weather, and he prizes it above emeralds and rubies, and Nature half the time puts it on so it won't stay.

"Man's sight and smell and hearing are all inferior. If he were suited to the conditions he could smell an enemy; he could hear him; he could see him, just as the animals can detect their enemies. The robin hears the earthworm burrowing his course under the ground; the bloodhound follows a scent that is two days old. Man isn't even handsome, as compared with the birds; and as for style, look at the Bengal tiger—that ideal of grace, physical perfection, and majesty. Think of the lion and the tiger and the leopard, and then think of man—that poor thing!—the animal of the wig, the ear-trumpet, the glass eye, the porcelain teeth, the wooden leg, the trepanned skull, the silver wind-pipe—a creature that is mended and patched all over from top to bottom. If he can't get renewals of his bric-a-brac in the next world what will he look like? He has just that one stupendous superiority—his imagination, his intellect. It makes him supreme—the higher animals can't match him there. It's very curious."

Page 802

A letter which he wrote to J. Howard Moore concerning his book *The Universal Kinship* was of this period, and seems to belong here.

Dear Mr. Moore, The book has furnished me several days of deep pleasure & satisfaction; it has compelled my gratitude at the same time, since it saves me the labor of stating my own long-cherished opinions & reflections & resentments by doing it lucidly & fervently & irascibly for me. There is one thing that always puzzles me: as inheritors of the mentality of our reptile ancestors we have improved the inheritance by a thousand grades; but in the matter of the morals which they left us we have gone backward as many grades. That evolution is strange & to me unaccountable & unnatural. Necessarily we started equipped with their perfect and blemishless morals; now we are wholly destitute; we have no real morals, but only artificial ones—morals created and preserved by the forced suppression of natural & healthy instincts. Yes, we are a sufficiently comical invention, we humans.

Sincerely yours,
S. L. Clemens.

CCLIII

AN EVENING WITH HELEN KELLER

I recall two pleasant social events of that winter: one a little party given at the Clemenses' home on New-Year's Eve, with charades and story-telling and music. It was the music feature of this party that was distinctive; it was supplied by wire through an invention known as the telharmonium which, it was believed, would revolutionize musical entertainment in such places as hotels, and to some extent in private houses. The music came over the regular telephone wire, and was delivered through a series of horns or megaphones—similar to those used for phonographs—the playing being done, meanwhile, by skilled performers at the central station. Just why the telharmonium has not made good its promises of popularity I do not know. Clemens was filled with enthusiasm over the idea. He made a speech a little before midnight, in which he told how he had generally been enthusiastic about inventions which had turned out more or less well in about equal proportions. He did not dwell on the failures, but he told how he had been the first to use a typewriter for manuscript work; how he had been one of the earliest users of the fountain-pen; how he had installed the first telephone ever used in a private house, and how the audience now would have a demonstration of the first telharmonium music so employed. It was just about the stroke of midnight when he finished, and a moment later the horns began to play chimes and "Auld Lang Syne" and "America."

Page 803

The other pleasant evening referred to was a little company given in honor of Helen Keller. It was fascinating to watch her, and to realize with what a store of knowledge she had lighted the black silence of her physical life. To see Mark Twain and Helen Keller together was something not easily to be forgotten. When Mrs. Macy (who, as Miss Sullivan, had led her so marvelously out of the shadows) communicated his words to her with what seemed a lightning touch of the fingers her face radiated every shade of his meaning—humorous, serious, pathetic. Helen visited the various objects in the room, and seemed to enjoy them more than the usual observer of these things, and certainly in greater detail. Her sensitive fingers spread over articles of bric-a-brac, and the exclamations she uttered were always fitting, showing that she somehow visualized each thing in all its particulars. There was a bronze cat of handsome workmanship and happy expression, and when she had run those all—seeing fingers of hers over it she said: “It is smiling.”

CCLIV

BILLIARD-ROOM NOTES

The billiard games went along pretty steadily that winter. My play improved, and Clemens found it necessary to eliminate my odds altogether, and to change the game frequently in order to keep me in subjection. Frequently there were long and apparently violent arguments over the legitimacy of some particular shot or play—arguments to us quite as enjoyable as the rest of the game. Sometimes he would count a shot which was clearly out of the legal limits, and then it was always a delight to him to have a mock-serious discussion over the matter of conscience, and whether or not his conscience was in its usual state of repair. It would always end by him saying: “I don’t wish even to seem to do anything which can invite suspicion. I refuse to count that shot,” or something of like nature. Sometimes when I had let a questionable play pass without comment, he would watch anxiously until I had made a similar one and then insist on my scoring it to square accounts. His conscience was always repairing itself.

He had experimented, a great many years before, with what was in the nature of a trick on some unsuspecting player. It consisted in turning out twelve pool-balls on the table with one cue ball, and asking his guest how many caroms he thought he could make with all those twelve balls to play on. He had learned that the average player would seldom make more than thirty-one counts, and usually, before this number was reached, he would miss through some careless play or get himself into a position where he couldn’t play at all. The thing looked absurdly easy. It looked as if one could go on playing all day long, and the victim was usually eager to bet that he could make fifty or perhaps a hundred; but for more than an hour I tried it patiently, and seldom succeeded in scoring more than fifteen or twenty without missing. Long after the play itself ceased to be amusing to me, he insisted on my going on and trying it some more, and he would

throw himself back and roar with laughter, the tears streaming down his cheeks, to see me work and fume and fail.

Page 804

It was very soon after that that Peter Dunne ("Mr. Dooley") came down for luncheon, and after several games of the usual sort, Clemens quietly—as if the idea had just occurred to him—rolled out the twelve balls and asked Dunne how many caroms he thought he could make without a miss. Dunne said he thought he could make a thousand. Clemens quite indifferently said that he didn't believe he could make fifty. Dunne offered to bet five dollars that he could, and the wager was made. Dunne scored about twenty-five the first time and missed; then he insisted on betting five dollars again, and his defeats continued until Clemens had twenty-five dollars of Dunne's money, and Dunne was sweating and swearing, and Mark Twain rocking with delight. Dunne went away still unsatisfied, promising that he would come back and try it again. Perhaps he practised in his absence, for when he returned he had learned something. He won his twenty-five dollars back, and I think something more added. Mark Twain was still ahead, for Dunne furnished him with a good five hundred dollars' worth of amusement.

Clemens never cared to talk and never wished to be talked to when the game was actually in progress. If there was anything to be said on either side, he would stop and rest his cue on the floor, or sit down on the couch, until the matter was concluded. Such interruptions happened pretty frequently, and many of the bits of personal comment and incident scattered along through this work are the result of those brief rests. Some shot, or situation, or word would strike back through the past and awaken a note long silent, and I generally kept a pad and pencil on the window-sill with the score-sheet, and later, during his play, I would scrawl some reminder that would be precious by and by.

On one of these I find a memorandum of what he called his three recurrent dreams. All of us have such things, but his seem worth remembering.

"There is never a month passes," he said, "that I do not dream of being in reduced circumstances, and obliged to go back to the river to earn a living. It is never a pleasant dream, either. I love to think about those days; but there's always something sickening about the thought that I have been obliged to go back to them; and usually in my dream I am just about to start into a black shadow without being able to tell whether it is Selma bluff, or Hat Island, or only a black wall of night.

"Another dream that I have of that kind is being compelled to go back to the lecture platform. I hate that dream worse than the other. In it I am always getting up before an audience with nothing to say, trying to be funny; trying to make the audience laugh, realizing that I am only making silly jokes. Then the audience realizes it, and pretty soon they commence to get up and leave. That dream always ends by my standing there in the semidarkness talking to an empty house.

Page 805

“My other dream is of being at a brilliant gathering in my night-garments. People don’t seem to notice me there at first, and then pretty soon somebody points me out, and they all begin to look at me suspiciously, and I can see that they are wondering who I am and why I am there in that costume. Then it occurs to me that I can fix it by making myself known. I take hold of some man and whisper to him, ‘I am Mark Twain’; but that does not improve it, for immediately I can hear him whispering to the others, ‘He says he is Mark Twain,’ and they all look at me a good deal more suspiciously than before, and I can see that they don’t believe it, and that it was a mistake to make that confession. Sometimes, in that dream, I am dressed like a tramp instead of being in my night-clothes; but it all ends about the same—they go away and leave me standing there, ashamed. I generally enjoy my dreams, but not those three, and they are the ones I have oftenest.”

Quite often some curious episode of the world’s history would flash upon him—something amusing, or coarse, or tragic, and he would bring the game to a standstill and recount it with wonderful accuracy as to date and circumstance. He had a natural passion for historic events and a gift for mentally fixing them, but his memory in other ways was seldom reliable. He was likely to forget the names even of those he knew best and saw oftenest, and the small details of life seldom registered at all.

He had his breakfast served in his room, and once, on a slip of paper, he wrote, for his own reminder:

The accuracy of your forgetfulness is absolute—it seems never to fail. I prepare to pour my coffee so it can cool while I shave—and I always forget to pour it.

Yet, very curiously, he would sometimes single out a minute detail, something every one else had overlooked, and days or even weeks afterward would recall it vividly, and not always at an opportune moment. Perhaps this also was a part of his old pilot-training. Once Clara Clemens remarked:

“It always amazes me the things that father does and does not remember. Some little trifle that nobody else would notice, and you are hoping that he didn’t, will suddenly come back to him just when you least expect it or care for it.”

My note-book contains the entry:

February 11, 1907. He said to-day:

“A blindfolded chess-player can remember every play and discuss the game afterward, while we can’t remember from one shot to the next.”

I mentioned his old pilot-memory as an example of what he could do if he wished.

“Yes,” he answered, “those are special memories; a pilot will tell you the number of feet in every crossing at any time, but he can’t remember what he had for breakfast.”

“How long did you keep your pilot-memory?” I asked.

“Not long; it faded out right away, but the training served me, for when I went to report on a paper a year or two later I never had to make any notes.”

Page 806

"I suppose you still remember some of the river?"

"Not much. Hat Island, Helena and here and there a place; but that is about all."

CCLV

FURTHER PERSONALITIES

Like every person living, Mark Twain had some peculiar and petty economies. Such things in great men are noticeable. He lived extravagantly. His household expenses at the time amounted to more than fifty dollars a day. In the matter of food, the choicest, and most expensive the market could furnish was always served in lavish abundance. He had the best and highest-priced servants, ample as to number. His clothes he bought generously; he gave without stint to his children; his gratuities were always liberal. He never questioned pecuniary outgoes —seldom worried as to the state of his bank-account so long as there was plenty. He smoked cheap cigars because he preferred their flavor. Yet he had his economies. I have seen him, before leaving a room, go around and carefully lower the gas-jets, to provide against that waste. I have known him to examine into the cost of a cab, and object to an apparent overcharge of a few cents.

It seemed that his idea of economy might be expressed in these words: He abhorred extortion and visible waste.

Furthermore, he had exact ideas as to ownership. One evening, while we were playing billiards, I noticed a five-cent piece on the floor. I picked it up, saying:

"Here is five cents; I don't know whose it is."

He regarded the coin rather seriously, I thought, and said:

"I don't know, either."

I laid it on the top of the book-shelves which ran around the room. The play went on, and I forgot the circumstance. When the game ended that night I went into his room with him, as usual, for a good-night word. As he took his change and keys from the pocket of his trousers, he looked the assortment over and said:

"That five-cent piece you found was mine."

I brought it to him at once, and he took it solemnly, laid it with the rest of his change, and neither of us referred to it again. It may have been one of his jokes, but I think it

more likely that he remembered having had a five-cent piece, probably reserved for car fare, and that it was missing.

More than once, in Washington, he had said:

“Draw plenty of money for incidental expenses. Don’t bother to keep account of them.”

So it was not miserliness; it was just a peculiarity, a curious attention to a trifling detail.

He had a fondness for riding on the then newly completed Subway, which he called the Underground. Sometimes he would say:

“I’ll pay your fare on the Underground if you want to take a ride with me.” And he always insisted on paying the fare, and once when I rode far up-town with him to a place where he was going to luncheon, and had taken him to the door, he turned and said, gravely:

Page 807

"Here is five cents to pay your way home." And I took it in the same spirit in which it had been offered. It was probably this trait which caused some one occasionally to claim that Mark Twain was close in money matters. Perhaps there may have been times in his life when he was parsimonious; but, if so, I must believe that it was when he was sorely pressed and exercising the natural instinct of self-preservation. He wished to receive the full value (who does not?) of his labors and properties. He took a childish delight in piling up money; but it became greed only when he believed some one with whom he had dealings was trying to get an unfair division of profits. Then it became something besides greed. It became an indignation that amounted to malevolence. I was concerned in a number of dealings with Mark Twain, and at a period in his life when human traits are supposed to become exaggerated, which is to say old age, and if he had any natural tendency to be unfair, or small, or greedy in his money dealings I think I should have seen it. Personally, I found him liberal to excess, and I never observed in him anything less than generosity to those who were fair with him.

Once that winter, when a letter came from Steve Gillis saying that he was an invalid now, and would have plenty of time to read Sam's books if he owned them, Clemens ordered an expensive set from his publishers, and did what meant to him even more than the cost in money—he autographed each of those twenty-five volumes. Then he sent them, charges paid, to that far Californian retreat. It was hardly the act of a stingy man.

He had the human fondness for a compliment when it was genuine and from an authoritative source, and I remember how pleased he was that winter with Prof. William Lyon Phelps's widely published opinion, which ranked Mark Twain as the greatest American novelist, and declared that his fame would outlive any American of his time. Phelps had placed him above Holmes, Howells, James, and even Hawthorne. He had declared him to be more American than any of these—more American even than Whitman. Professor Phelps's position in Yale College gave this opinion a certain official weight; but I think the fact of Phelps himself being a writer of great force, with an American freshness of style, gave it a still greater value.

Among the pleasant things that winter was a meeting with Eugene F. Ware, of Kansas, with whose penname—"Ironquill"—Clemens had long been familiar.

Ware was a breezy Western genius of the finest type. If he had abandoned law for poetry, there is no telling how far his fame might have reached. There was in his work that same spirit of Americanism and humor and humanity that is found in Mark Twain's writings, and he had the added faculty of rhyme and rhythm, which would have set him in a place apart. I had known Ware personally during a period of Western residence, and later, when he was Commissioner of

Page 808

Pensions under Roosevelt. I usually saw him when he came to New York, and it was a great pleasure now to bring together the two men whose work I so admired. They met at a small private luncheon at The Players, and Peter Dunne was there, and Robert Collier, and it was such an afternoon as Howells has told of when he and Aldrich and Bret Harte and those others talked until the day faded into twilight, and twilight deepened into evening. Clemens had put in most of the day before reading Ware's book of poems, 'The Rhymes of Ironquill', and had declared his work to rank with the very greatest of American poetry—I think he called it the most truly American in flavor. I remember that at the luncheon he noted Ware's big, splendid physique and his Western liberties of syntax with a curious intentness. I believe he regarded him as being nearer his own type in mind and expression than any one he had met before.

Among Ware's poems he had been especially impressed with the "Fables," and with some verses entitled "Whist," which, though rather more optimistic, conformed to his own philosophy. They have a distinctly "Western" feeling.

Whist

Hour after hour the cards were fairly shuffled,
And fairly dealt, and still I got no hand;
The morning came; but I, with mind unruffled,
Did simply say, "I do not understand."
Life is a game of whist. From unseen sources
The cards are shuffled, and the hands are dealt.
Blind are our efforts to control the forces
That, though unseen, are no less strongly felt.
I do not like the way the cards are shuffled,
But still I like the game and want to play;
And through the long, long night will I, unruffled,
Play what I get, until the break of day.

MARK TWAIN, A BIOGRAPHY

By Albert Bigelow Paine

VOLUME III, Part 2: 1907-1910

CCLVI

HONORS FROM OXFORD

Clemens made a brief trip to Bermuda during the winter, taking Twichell along; their first return to the island since the trip when they had promised to come back so soon-nearly thirty years before. They had been comparatively young men then. They were old now, but they found the green island as fresh and full of bloom as ever. They did not find their old landlady; they could not even remember her name at first, and then Twichell recalled that it was the same as an author of certain schoolbooks in his youth, and Clemens promptly said, "Kirkham's Grammar." Kirkham was truly the name, and they went to find her; but she was dead, and the daughter, who had been a young girl in that earlier time, reigned in her stead and entertained the successors of her mother's guests. They walked and drove about the island, and it was like taking up again a long-discontinued book and reading another chapter of the same tale. It gave Mark Twain a fresh interest in Bermuda, one which he did not allow to fade again.

Page 809

Later in the year (March, 1907) I also made a journey; it having been agreed that I should take a trip to the Mississippi and to the Pacific coast to see those old friends of Mark Twain's who were so rapidly passing away. John Briggs was still alive, and other Hannibal schoolmates; also Joe Goodman and Steve Gillis, and a few more of the early pioneers—all eminently worth seeing in the matter of such work as I had in hand. The billiard games would be interrupted; but whatever reluctance to the plan there may have been on that account was put aside in view of prospective benefits. Clemens, in fact, seemed to derive joy from the thought that he was commissioning a kind of personal emissary to his old comrades, and provided me with a letter of credentials.

It was a long, successful trip that I made, and it was undertaken none too soon. John Briggs, a gentle-hearted man, was already entering the valley of the shadow as he talked to me by his fire one memorable afternoon, and reviewed the pranks of those days along the river and in the cave and on Holliday's Hill. I think it was six weeks later that he died; and there were others of that scattering procession who did not reach the end of the year. Joe Goodman, still full of vigor (in 1912), journeyed with me to the green and dreamy solitudes of Jackass Hill to see Steve and Jim Gillis, and that was an unforgettable Sunday when Steve Gillis, an invalid, but with the fire still in his eyes and speech, sat up on his couch in his little cabin in that Arcadian stillness and told old tales and adventures. When I left he said:

"Tell Sam I'm going to die pretty soon, but that I love him; that I've loved him all my life, and I'll love him till I die. This is the last word I'll ever send to him." Jim Gillis, down in Sonora, was already lying at the point of death, and so for him the visit was too late, though he was able to receive a message from his ancient mining partner, and to send back a parting word.

I returned by way of New Orleans and the Mississippi River, for I wished to follow that abandoned water highway, and to visit its presiding genius, Horace Bixby,—[He died August 2, 1912, at the age of 86]—still alive and in service as pilot of the government snagboat, his headquarters at St. Louis.

Coming up the river on one of the old passenger steam boats that still exist, I noticed in a paper which came aboard that Mark Twain was to receive from Oxford University the literary doctor's degree. There had been no hint of this when I came away, and it seemed rather too sudden and too good to be true. That the little barefoot lad that had played along the river-banks at Hannibal, and received such meager advantages in the way of schooling—whose highest ambition had been to pilot such a craft as this one—was about to be crowned by the world's greatest institution of learning, to receive the highest recognition for achievement in the world of letters, was a thing which would not be likely to happen outside of a fairy tale.

Page 810

Returning to New York, I ran out to Tuxedo, where he had taken a home for the summer (for it was already May), and walking along the shaded paths of that beautiful suburban park, he told me what he knew of the Oxford matter.

Moberly Bell, of the London Times, had been over in April, and soon after his return to England there had come word of the proposed honor. Clemens privately and openly (to Bell) attributed it largely to his influence. He wrote to him:

*Dear Mr. Bell,—*Your hand is in it & you have my best thanks. Although I wouldn't cross an ocean again for the price of the ship that carried me I am glad to do it for an Oxford degree. I shall plan to sail for England a shade before the middle of June, so that I can have a few days in London before the 26th.

A day or two later, when the time for sailing had been arranged, he overtook his letter with a cable:

I perceive your hand in it. You have my best thanks. Sail on
Minneapolis June 8th. Due in Southampton ten days later.

Clemens said that his first word of the matter had been a newspaper cablegram, and that he had been doubtful concerning it until a cablegram to himself had confirmed it.

"I never expected to cross the water again," he said; "but I would be willing to journey to Mars for that Oxford degree."

He put the matter aside then, and fell to talking of Jim Gillis and the others I had visited, dwelling especially on Gillis's astonishing faculty for improvising romances, recalling how he had stood with his back to the fire weaving his endless, grotesque yarns, with no other guide than his fancy. It was a long, happy walk we had, though rather a sad one in its memories; and he seemed that day, in a sense, to close the gate of those early scenes behind him, for he seldom referred to them afterward.

He was back at 21 Fifth Avenue presently, arranging for his voyage. Meantime, cable invitations of every sort were pouring in, from this and that society and dignitary; invitations to dinners and ceremonials, and what not, and it was clear enough that his English sojourn was to be a busy one. He had hoped to avoid this, and began by declining all but two invitations—a dinner-party given by Ambassador Whitelaw Reid and a luncheon proposed by the "Pilgrims." But it became clear that this would not do. England was not going to confer its greatest collegiate honor without being permitted to pay its wider and more popular tribute.

Clemens engaged a special secretary for the trip—Mr. Ralph W. Ashcroft, a young Englishman familiar with London life. They sailed on the 8th of June, by a curious coincidence exactly forty years from the day he had sailed on the Quaker City to win his



great fame. I went with him to the ship. His first elation had passed by this time, and he seemed a little sad, remembering, I think, the wife who would have enjoyed this honor with him but could not share it now.

Page 811

CCLVII

A TRUE ENGLISH WELCOME

Mark Twain's trip across the Atlantic would seem to have been a pleasant one. The Minneapolis is a fine, big ship, and there was plenty of company. Prof. Archibald Henderson, Bernard Shaw's biographer, was aboard;—[Professor Henderson has since then published a volume on Mark Twain—an interesting commentary on his writings—mainly from the sociological point of view.]—also President Patton, of the Princeton Theological Seminary; a well-known cartoonist, Richards, and some very attractive young people—school-girls in particular, such as all through his life had appealed to Mark Twain. Indeed, in his later life they made a stronger appeal than ever. The years had robbed him of his own little flock, and always he was trying to replace them. Once he said:

“During those years after my wife's death I was washing about on a forlorn sea of banquets and speech-making in high and holy causes, and these things furnished me intellectual cheer, and entertainment; but they got at my heart for an evening only, then left it dry and dusty. I had reached the grandfather stage of life without grandchildren, so I began to adopt some.”

He adopted several on that journey to England and on the return voyage, and he kept on adopting others during the rest of his life. These companionships became one of the happiest aspects of his final days, as we shall see by and by.

There were entertainments on the ship, one of them given for the benefit of the Seamen's Orphanage. One of his adopted granddaughters—“Charley” he called her—played a violin solo and Clemens made a speech. Later his autographs were sold at auction. Dr. Patton was auctioneer, and one autographed postal card brought twenty-five dollars, which is perhaps the record price for a single Mark Twain signature. He wore his white suit on this occasion, and in the course of his speech referred to it. He told first of the many defects in his behavior, and how members of his household had always tried to keep him straight. The children, he said, had fallen into the habit of calling it “dusting papa off.” Then he went on:

When my daughter came to see me off last Saturday at the boat she slipped a note in my hand and said, “Read it when you get aboard the ship.” I didn't think of it again until day before yesterday, and it was a “dusting off.” And if I carry out all the instructions that I got there I shall be more celebrated in England for my behavior than for anything else. I got instructions how to act on every occasion. She underscored “Now, don't you wear white clothes on ship or on shore until you get back,” and I intended to obey. I have been used to obeying my family all my life, but I wore the white clothes to-night because

the trunk that has the dark clothes in it is in the cellar. I am not apologizing for the white clothes; I am only apologizing to my

Page 812

daughter for not obeying her.

He received a great welcome when the ship arrived at Tilbury. A throng of rapid-fire reporters and photographers immediately surrounded him, and when he left the ship the stevedores gave him a round of cheers. It was the beginning of that almost unheard-of demonstration of affection and honor which never for a moment ceased, but augmented from day to day during the four weeks of his English sojourn.

In a dictation following his return, Mark Twain said:

Who began it? The very people of all people in the world whom I would have chosen: a hundred men of my own class—grimy sons of labor, the real builders of empires and civilizations, the stevedores! They stood in a body on the dock and charged their masculine lungs, and gave me a welcome which went to the marrow of me.

J. Y. W. MacAlister was at the St. Pancras railway station to meet him, and among others on the platform was Bernard Shaw, who had come down to meet Professor Henderson. Clemens and Shaw were presented, and met eagerly, for each greatly admired the other. A throng gathered. Mark Twain was extricated at last, and hurried away to his apartments at Brown's Hotel, "a placid, subdued, homelike, old-fashioned English inn," he called it, "well known to me years ago, a blessed retreat of a sort now rare in England, and becoming rarer every year."

But Brown's was not placid and subdued during his stay. The London newspapers declared that Mark Twain's arrival had turned Brown's not only into a royal court, but a post-office—that the procession of visitors and the bundles of mail fully warranted this statement. It was, in fact, an experience which surpassed in general magnitude and magnificence anything he had hitherto known. His former London visits, beginning with that of 1872, had been distinguished by high attentions, but all of them combined could not equal this. When England decides to get up an ovation, her people are not to be outdone even by the lavish Americans. An assistant secretary had to be engaged immediately, and it sometimes required from sixteen to twenty hours a day for two skilled and busy men to receive callers and reduce the pile of correspondence.

A pile of invitations had already accumulated, and others flowed in. Lady Stanley, widow of Henry M. Stanley, wrote:

You know I want to see you and join right hand to right hand. I must see your dear face again You will have no peace, rest, or leisure during your stay in London, and you will end by hating human beings. Let me come before you feel that way.

Mary Cholmondeley, the author of *Red Pottage*, niece of that lovable Reginald Cholmondeley, and herself an old friend, sent greetings and urgent invitations. Archdeacon Wilberforce wrote:

Page 813

I have just been preaching about your indictment of that scoundrel king of the Belgians and telling my people to buy the book. I am only a humble item among the very many who offer you a cordial welcome in England, but we long to see you again, and I should like to change hats with you again. Do you remember?

The Athenaeum, the Garrick, and a dozen other London clubs had anticipated his arrival with cards of honorary membership for the period of his stay. Every leading photographer had put in a claim for sittings. It was such a reception as Charles Dickens had received in America in 1842, and again in 1867. A London paper likened it to Voltaire's return to Paris in 1778, when France went mad over him. There is simply no limit to English affection and, hospitality once aroused. Clemens wrote:

Surely such weeks as this must be very rare in this world: I had seen nothing like them before; I shall see nothing approaching them again!

Sir Thomas Lipton and Bram Stoker, old friends, were among the first to present themselves, and there was no break in the line of callers.

Clemens's resolutions for secluding himself were swept away. On the very next morning following his arrival he breakfasted with J. Henniker Heaton, father of International Penny Postage, at the Bath Club, just across Dover Street from Brown's. He lunched at the Ritz with Marjorie Bowen and Miss Bisland. In the afternoon he sat for photographs at Barnett's, and made one or two calls. He could no more resist these things than a debutante in her first season.

He was breakfasting again with Heaton next morning; lunching with "Toby, M.P.," and Mrs. Lucy; and having tea with Lady Stanley in the afternoon, and being elaborately dined next day at Dorchester House by Ambassador and Mrs. Reid. These were all old and tried friends. He was not a stranger among them, he said; he was at home. Alfred Austin, Conan Doyle, Anthony Hope, Alma Tadema, E. A. Abbey, Edmund Goss, George Smalley, Sir Norman Lockyer, Henry W. Lucy, Sidney Brooks, and Bram Stoker were among those at Dorchester House—all old comrades, as were many of the other guests.

"I knew fully half of those present," he said afterward.

Mark Twain's bursting upon London society naturally was made the most of by the London papers, and all his movements were tabulated and elaborated, and when there was any opportunity for humor in the situation it was not left unimproved. The celebrated Ascot racing-cup was stolen just at the time of his arrival, and the papers suggestively mingled their head-lines, "Mark Twain Arrives: Ascot Cup Stolen," and kept the joke going in one form or another. Certain state jewels and other regalia also

disappeared during his stay, and the news of these burglaries was reported in suspicious juxtaposition with the news of Mark Twain's doings.

Page 814

English reporters adopted American habits for the occasion, and invented or embellished when the demand for a new sensation was urgent. Once, when following the custom of the place, he descended the hotel elevator in a perfectly proper and heavy brown bath robe, and stepped across narrow Dover Street to the Bath Club, the papers flamed next day with the story that Mark Twain had wandered about the lobby of Brown's and promenaded Dover Street in a sky-blue bath robe attracting wide attention.

Clara Clemens, across the ocean, was naturally a trifle disturbed by such reports, and cabled this delicate "dusting off":

"Much worried. Remember proprieties."

To which he answered:

"They all pattern after me," a reply to the last degree characteristic.

It was on the fourth day after his arrival, June 22d, that he attended the King's garden-party at Windsor Castle. There were eighty-five hundred guests at the King's party, and if we may judge from the London newspapers, Mark Twain was quite as much a figure in that great throng as any member of the royal family. His presentation to the King and the Queen is set down as an especially notable incident, and their conversation is quite fully given. Clemens himself reported:

His Majesty was very courteous. In the course of the conversation I reminded him of an episode of fifteen years ago, when I had the honor to walk a mile with him when he was taking the waters at Homburg, in Germany. I said that I had often told about that episode, and that whenever I was the historian I made good history of it and it was worth listening to, but that it had found its way into print once or twice in unauthentic ways and was badly damaged thereby. I said I should like to go on repeating this history, but that I should be quite fair and reasonably honest, and while I should probably never tell it twice in the same way I should at least never allow it to deteriorate in my hands. His Majesty intimated his willingness that I should continue to disseminate that piece of history; and he added a compliment, saying that he knew good and sound history would not suffer at my hands, and that if this good and sound history needed any improvement beyond the facts he would trust me to furnish that improvement. I think it is not an exaggeration to say that the Queen looked as young and beautiful as she did thirty-five years ago when I saw her first. I did not say this to her, because I learned long ago never to say the obvious thing, but leave the obvious thing to commonplace and inexperienced people to say. That she still looked to me as young and beautiful as she did thirty-five years ago is good evidence that ten thousand people have already noticed this and have mentioned it to her. I could have said it and spoken the truth, but I was too wise for that. I kept the remark unuttered and saved her Majesty the vexation of hearing it the ten-thousand-and-oneth time.

All that report about my proposal to buy Windsor Castle and its grounds was a false rumor. I started it myself.

Page 815

One newspaper said I patted his Majesty on the shoulder—an impertinence of which I was not guilty; I was reared in the most exclusive circles of Missouri and I know how to behave. The King rested his hand upon my arm a moment or two while we were chatting, but he did it of his own accord. The newspaper which said I talked with her Majesty with my hat on spoke the truth, but my reasons for doing it were good and sufficient—in fact unassailable. Rain was threatening, the temperature had cooled, and the Queen said, “Please put your hat on, Mr. Clemens.” I begged her pardon and excused myself from doing it. After a moment or two she said, “Mr. Clemens, put your hat on”—with a slight emphasis on the word “on” “I can’t allow you to catch cold here.” When a beautiful queen commands it is a pleasure to obey, and this time I obeyed—but I had already disobeyed once, which is more than a subject would have felt justified in doing; and so it is true, as charged; I did talk with the Queen of England with my hat on, but it wasn’t fair in the newspaper man to charge it upon me as an impoliteness, since there were reasons for it which he could not know of.

Nearly all the members of the British royal family were there, and there were foreign visitors which included the King of Siam and a party of India princes in their gorgeous court costumes, which Clemens admired openly and said he would like to wear himself.

The English papers spoke of it as one of the largest and most distinguished parties ever given at Windsor. Clemens attended it in company with Mr. and Mrs. J. Henniker Heaton, and when it was over Sir Thomas Lipton joined them and motored with them back to Brown’s.

He was at Archdeacon Wilberforce’s next day, where a curious circumstance developed. When he arrived Wilberforce said to him, in an undertone:

“Come into my library. I have something to show you.”

In the library Clemens was presented to a Mr. Pole, a plain-looking man, suggesting in dress and appearance the English tradesman. Wilberforce said:

“Mr. Pole, show to Mr. Clemens what you have brought here.”

Mr. Pole unrolled a long strip of white linen and brought to view at last a curious, saucer-looking vessel of silver, very ancient in appearance, and cunningly overlaid with green glass. The archdeacon took it and handed it to Clemens as some precious jewel.

Clemens said:

“What is it?”

Wilberforce impressively answered:

“It is the Holy Grail.”

Clemens naturally started with surprise.

“You may well start,” said Wilberforce; “but it’s the truth. That is the Holy Grail.”

Page 816

Then he gave this explanation: Mr. Pole, a grain merchant of Bristol, had developed some sort of clairvoyant power, or at all events he had dreamed several times with great vividness the location of the true Grail. Another dreamer, a Dr. Goodchild, of Bath, was mixed up in the matter, and between them this peculiar vessel, which was not a cup, or a goblet, or any of the traditional things, had been discovered. Mr. Pole seemed a man of integrity, and it was clear that the churchman believed the discovery to be genuine and authentic. Of course there could be no positive proof. It was a thing that must be taken on trust. That the vessel itself was wholly different from anything that the generations had conceived, and was apparently of very ancient make, was opposed to the natural suggestion of fraud.

Clemens, to whom the whole idea of the Holy Grail was simply a poetic legend and myth, had the feeling that he had suddenly been transmigrated, like his own Connecticut Yankee, back into the Arthurian days; but he made no question, suggested no doubt. Whatever it was, it was to them the materialization of a symbol of faith which ranked only second to the cross itself, and he handled it reverently and felt the honor of having been one of the first permitted to see the relic. In a subsequent dictation he said:

I am glad I have lived to see that half-hour—that astonishing half- hour. In its way it stands alone in my life's experience. In the belief of two persons present this was the very vessel which was brought by night and secretly delivered to Nicodemus, nearly nineteen centuries ago, after the Creator of the universe had delivered up His life on the cross for the redemption of the human race; the very cup which the stainless Sir Galahad had sought with knightly devotion in far fields of peril and adventure in Arthur's time, fourteen hundred years ago; the same cup which princely knights of other bygone ages had laid down their lives in long and patient efforts to find, and had passed from life disappointed—and here it was at last, dug up by a grain-broker at no cost of blood or travel, and apparently no purity required of him above the average purity of the twentieth-century dealer in cereal futures; not even a stately name required—no Sir Galahad, no Sir Bors de Ganis, no Sir Lancelot of the Lake—nothing but a mere Mr. Pole.—[From the New York Sun somewhat later: “Mr. Pole communicated the discovery to a dignitary of the Church of England, who summoned a number of eminent persons, including psychologists, to see and discuss it. Forty attended, including some peers with ecclesiastical interests, Ambassador Whitelaw Reid, Professor Crookas, and ministers of various religious bodies, including the Rev. R. J. Campbell. They heard Mr. Pole's story with deep attention, but he could not prove the genuineness of the relic.”]

Clemens saw Mr. and Mrs. Rogers at Claridge's Hotel that evening; lunched with his old friends Sir

Page 817

Norman and Lady Lockyer next day; took tea with T. P. O'Connor at the House of Commons, and on the day following, which was June 5th, he was the guest of honor at one of the most elaborate occasions of his visit—a luncheon given by the Pilgrims at the Savoy Hotel. It would be impossible to set down here a report of the doings, or even a list of the guests, of that gathering. The Pilgrims is a club with branches on both sides of the ocean, and Mark Twain, on either side, was a favorite associate. At this luncheon the picture on the bill of fare represented him as a robed pilgrim, with a great pen for his staff, turning his back on the Mississippi River and being led along his literary way by a huge jumping frog, to which he is attached by a string. On a guest-card was printed:

Pilot of many Pilgrims since the shout
“Mark Twain!”—that serves you for a deathless sign
—On Mississippi’s waterway rang out
Over the plummet’s line—
Still where the countless ripples laugh above
The blue of halcyon seas long may you keep
Your course unbroken, buoyed upon a love
Ten thousand fathoms deep!

—O. S. [*Owen Seaman*].

Augustine Birrell made the speech of introduction, closing with this paragraph:

Mark Twain is a man whom Englishmen and Americans do well to honor. He is a true consolidator of nations. His delightful humor is of the kind which dissipates and destroys national prejudices. His truth and his honor—his love of truth and his love of honor—overflow all boundaries. He has made the world better by his presence, and we rejoice to see him here. Long may he live to reap a plentiful harvest of hearty honest human affection.

The toast was drunk standing. Then Clemens rose and made a speech which delighted all England. In his introduction Mr. Birrell had happened to say, “How I came here I will not ask!” Clemens remembered this, and looking down into Mr. Birrell’s wine-glass, which was apparently unused, he said:

“Mr. Birrell doesn’t know how he got here. But he will be able to get away all right—he has not drunk anything since he came.”

He told stories about Howells and Twichell, and how Darwin had gone to sleep reading his books, and then he came down to personal things and company, and told them how, on the day of his arrival, he had been shocked to read on a great placard, “Mark Twain Arrives: Ascot Cup Stolen.”



No doubt many a person was misled by those sentences joined together in that unkind way. I have no doubt my character has suffered from it. I suppose I ought to defend my character, but how can I defend it? I can say here and now that anybody can see by my face that I am sincere—that I speak the truth, and that I have never seen that Cup. I have not got the Cup, I did not have a chance to get it. I have always had a good character in that way.

Page 818

I have hardly ever stolen anything, and if I did steal anything I had discretion enough to know about the value of it first. I do not steal things that are likely to get myself into trouble. I do not think any of us do that. I know we all take things—that is to be expected; but really I have never taken anything, certainly in England, that amounts to any great thing. I do confess that when I was here seven years ago I stole a hat—but that did not amount to anything. It was not a good hat it was only a clergyman's hat, anyway. I was at a luncheon-party and Archdeacon Wilberforce was there also. I dare say he is archdeacon now—he was a canon then—and he was serving in the Westminster Battery, if that is the proper term. I do not know, as you mix military and ecclesiastical things together so much.

He recounted the incident of the exchanged hats; then he spoke of graver things. He closed:

I cannot always be cheerful, and I cannot always be chaffing. I must sometimes lay the cap and bells aside and recognize that I am of the human race. I have my cares and griefs, and I therefore noticed what Mr. Birrell said—I was so glad to hear him say it —something that was in the nature of these verses here at the top of the program: He lit our life with shafts of sun
And vanquished pain.
Thus two great nations stand as one
In honoring Twain.

I am very glad to have those verses. I am very glad and very grateful for what Mr. Birrell said in that connection. I have received since I have been here, in this one week, hundreds of letters from all conditions of people in England, men, women, and children, and there is compliment, praise, and, above all, and better than all, there is in them a note of affection.

Praise is well, compliment is well, but affection—that is the last and final and most precious reward that any man can win, whether by character or achievement, and I am very grateful to have that reward. All these letters make me feel that here in England, as in America, when I stand under the English or the American flag I am not a, stranger, I am not an alien, but at home.

CCLVIII

DOCTOR OF LITERATURE, OXFORD

He left, immediately following the Pilgrim luncheon, with Hon. Robert P. Porter, of the London Times, for Oxford, to remain his guest there during the various ceremonies.

The encenia—the ceremony of conferring the degrees—occurred at the Sheldonian Theater the following morning, June 26, 1907.

It was a memorable affair. Among those who were to receive degrees that morning besides Samuel Clemens were: Prince Arthur of Connaught; Prime Minister Campbell-Bannerman; Whitelaw Reid; Rudyard Kipling; Sidney Lee; Sidney Colvin; Lord Archbishop of Armagh, Primate of Ireland; Sir Norman Lockyer; Auguste Rodin, the sculptor; Saint-Saens, and Gen. William Booth, of the Salvation Army—something more than thirty, in all, of the world's distinguished citizens.

Page 819

The candidates assembled at Magdalen College, and led by Lord Curzon, the Chancellor, and clad in their academic plumage, filed in radiant procession to the Sheldonian Theater, a group of men such as the world seldom sees collected together. The London Standard said of it:

So brilliant and so interesting was the list of those who had been selected by Oxford University on Convocation to receive degrees, 'honoris causa', in this first year of Lord Curzon's chancellorship, that it is small wonder that the Sheldonian Theater was besieged today at an early hour.

Shortly after 11 o'clock the organ started playing the strains of "God Save the King," and at once a great volume of sound arose as the anthem was taken up by the undergraduates and the rest of the assemblage. Every one stood up as, headed by the mace of office, the procession slowly filed into the theater, under the leadership of Lord Curzon, in all the glory of his robes of office, the long black gown heavily embroidered with gold, the gold-tasseled mortar-board, and the medals on his breast forming an admirable setting, thoroughly in keeping with the dignity and bearing of the late Viceroy of India. Following him came the members of Convocation, a goodly number consisting of doctors of divinity, whose robes of scarlet and black enhanced the brilliance of the scene. Robes of salmon and scarlet—which proclaim the wearer to be a doctor of civil law—were also seen in numbers, while here and there was a gown of gray and scarlet, emblematic of the doctorate of science or of letters.

The encenia is an impressive occasion; but it is not a silent one. There is a splendid dignity about it; but there goes with it all a sort of Greek chorus of hilarity, the time-honored prerogative of the Oxford undergraduate, who insists on having his joke and his merriment at the expense of those honored guests. The degrees of doctor of law were conferred first. Prince Arthur was treated with proper dignity by the gallery; but when Whitelaw Reid stepped forth a voice shouted, "Where's your Star-spangled Banner?" and when England's Prime Minister-Campbell-Bannerman—came forward some one shouted, "What about the House of Lords?" and so they kept it up, cheering and chaffing, until General Booth was introduced as the "Passionate advocate of the dregs of the people, leader of the submerged tenth," and "general of the Salvation Army," when the place broke into a perfect storm of applause, a storm that a few minutes later became, according to the Daily News, "a veritable cyclone," for Mark Twain, clad in his robe of scarlet and gray, had been summoned forward to receive the highest academic honors which the world has to give. The undergraduates went wild then. There was such a mingling of yells and calls and questions, such as, "Have you brought the jumping Frog with you?" "Where is the Ascot Cup?" "Where are the rest

Page 820

of the Innocents?” that it seemed as if it would not be possible to present him at all; but, finally, Chancellor Curzon addressed him (in Latin), “Most amiable and charming sir, you shake the sides of the whole world with your merriment,” and the great degree was conferred. If only Tom Sawyer could have seen him then! If only Olivia Clemens could have sat among those who gave him welcome! But life is not like that. There is always an incompleteness somewhere, and the shadow across the path.

Rudyard Kipling followed—another supreme favorite, who was hailed with the chorus, “For he’s a jolly good fellow,” and then came Saint-Satins. The prize poems and essays followed, and then the procession of newly created doctors left the theater with Lord Curzon at their head. So it was all over—that for which, as he said, he would have made the journey to Mars. The world had nothing more to give him now except that which he had already long possessed—its honor and its love.

The newly made doctors were to be the guests of Lord Curzon at All Souls College for luncheon. As they left the theater (according to Sidney Lee):

The people in the streets singled out Mark Twain, formed a vast and cheering body-guard around him and escorted him to the college gates. But before and after the lunch it was Mark Twain again whom everybody seemed most of all to want to meet. The Maharajah of Bikanir, for instance, finding himself seated at lunch next to Mrs. Riggs (Kate Douglas Wiggin), and hearing that she knew Mark Twain, asked her to present him a ceremony duly performed later on the quadrangle. At the garden-party given the same afternoon in the beautiful grounds of St. John’s, where the indefatigable Mark put in an appearance, it was just the same—every one pressed forward for an exchange of greetings and a hand-shake. On the following day, when the Oxford pageant took place, it was even more so. “Mark Twain’s Pageant,” it was called by one of the papers. —[There was a dinner that evening at one of the colleges where, through mistaken information, Clemens wore black evening dress when he should have worn his scarlet gown. “When I arrived,” he said, “the place was just a conflagration—a kind of human prairie-fire. I looked as out of place as a Presbyterian in hell.”]

Clemens remained the guest of Robert Porter, whose house was besieged with those desiring a glimpse of their new doctor of letters. If he went on the streets he was instantly recognized by some newsboy or cabman or butcher-boy, and the word ran along like a cry of fire, while the crowds assembled.

At a luncheon which the Porters gave him the proprietor of the catering establishment garbed himself as a waiter in order to have the distinction of serving Mark Twain, and declared it to have been the greatest moment of his life. This gentleman—for he was no less than that—was a man well-read, and his tribute was not inspired by mere

snobbery. Clemens, learning of the situation, later withdrew from the drawing-room for a talk with him.

Page 821

"I found," he said, "that he knew about ten or fifteen times as much about my books as I knew about them myself."

Mark Twain viewed the Oxford pageant from a box with Rudyard Kipling and Lord Curzon, and as they sat there some one passed up a folded slip of paper, on the outside of which was written, "Not true." Opening it, they read:

East is East and West is West,
And never the Twain shall meet,

—a quotation from Kipling.

They saw the panorama of history file by, a wonderful spectacle which made Oxford a veritable dream of the Middle Ages. The lanes and streets and meadows were thronged with such costumes as Oxford had seen in its long history. History was realized in a manner which no one could appreciate more fully than Mark Twain.

"I was particularly anxious to see this pageant," he said, "so that I could get ideas for my funeral procession, which I am planning on a large scale."

He was not disappointed; it was a realization to him of all the gorgeous spectacles that his soul had dreamed from youth up.

He easily recognized the great characters of history as they passed by, and he was recognized by them in turn; for they waved to him and bowed and sometimes called his name, and when he went down out of his box, by and by, Henry VIII. shook hands with him, a monarch he had always detested, though he was full of friendship for him now; and Charles I. took off his broad, velvet-plumed hat when they met, and Henry II. and Rosamond and Queen Elizabeth all saluted him—ghosts of the dead centuries.

CCLIX

LONDON SOCIAL HONORS

We may not detail all the story of that English visit; even the path of glory leads to monotony at last. We may only mention a few more of the great honors paid to our unofficial ambassador to the world: among them a dinner given to members of the Savage Club by the Lord Mayor of London at the Mansion House, also a dinner given by the American Society at the Hotel Cecil in honor of the Fourth of July. Clemens was the guest of honor, and responded to the toast given by Ambassador Reid, "The Day we Celebrate." He made an amusing and not altogether unserious reference to the American habit of exploding enthusiasm in dangerous fireworks.

To English colonists he gave credit for having established American independence, and closed:

We have, however, one Fourth of July which is absolutely our own, and that is the memorable proclamation issued forty years ago by that great American to whom Sir Mortimer Durand paid that just and beautiful tribute—Abraham Lincoln: a proclamation which not only set the black slave free, but set his white owner free also. The owner was set free from that burden and offense, that sad condition of things where he was in so many instances a master and owner of slaves when he did not want to be. That proclamation set them

Page 822

all free. But even in this matter England led the way, for she had set her slaves free thirty years before, and we but followed her example. We always follow her example, whether it is good or bad. And it was an English judge, a century ago, that issued that other great proclamation, and established that great principle, that when a slave, let him belong to whom he may, and let him come whence he may, sets his foot upon English soil his fetters, by that act, fall away and he is a free man before the world! It is true, then, that all our Fourths of July, and we have five of them, England gave to us, except that one that I have mentioned—the Emancipation Proclamation; and let us not forget that we owe this debt to her. Let us be able to say to old England, this great-hearted, venerable old mother of the race, you gave us our Fourths of July, that we love and that we honor and revere; you gave us the Declaration of Independence, which is the charter of our rights; you, the venerable Mother of Liberties, the Champion and Protector of Anglo-Saxon Freedom—you gave us these things, and we do most honestly thank you for them.

It was at this dinner that he characteristically confessed, at last, to having stolen the Ascot Cup.

He lunched one day with Bernard Shaw, and the two discussed the philosophies in which they were mutually interested. Shaw regarded Clemens as a sociologist before all else, and gave it out with great frankness that America had produced just two great geniuses—Edgar Allan Poe and Mark Twain. Later Shaw wrote him a note, in which he said:

I am persuaded that the future historian of America will find your works as indispensable to him as a French historian finds the political tracts of Voltaire. I tell you so because I am the author of a play in which a priest says, "Telling the truth's the funniest joke in the world," a piece of wisdom which you helped to teach me.

Clemens saw a great deal of Moberly Bell. The two lunched and dined privately together when there was opportunity, and often met at the public gatherings.

The bare memorandum of the week following July Fourth will convey something of Mark Twain's London activities:

Friday, July 5. Dined with Lord and Lady Portsmouth.

Saturday, July 6. Breakfasted at Lord Avebury's. Lord Kelvin, Sir Charles Lyell, and Sir Archibald Geikie were there. Sat 22 times for photos, 16 at Histed's. Savage Club dinner in the evening. White suit. Ascot Cup.

Sunday, July 7. Called on Lady Langattock and others. Lunched with Sir Norman Lockyer.

Monday, July 8. Lunched with Plasmon directors at Bath Club. Dined privately at C. F. Moberly Bell's.

Tuesday, July 9. Lunched at the House with Sir Benjamin Stone. Balfour and Komura were the other guests of honor. Punch dinner in the evening. Joy Agnew and the cartoon.

Page 823

Wednesday, July 10. Went to Liverpool with Tay Pay. Attended banquet in the Town Hall in the evening.

Thursday, July 11. Returned to London with Tay Pay. Calls in the afternoon.

The Savage Club would inevitably want to entertain him on its own account, and their dinner of July 6th was a handsome affair. He felt at home with the Savages, and put on white for the only time publicly in England. He made them one of his reminiscent speeches, recalling his association with them on his first visit to London, thirty-seven years before. Then he said:

That is a long time ago, and as I had come into a very strange land, and was with friends, as I could see, that has always remained in my mind as a peculiarly blessed evening, since it brought me into contact with men of my own kind and my own feelings. I am glad to be here, and to see you all, because it is very likely that I shall not see you again. I have been received, as you know, in the most delightfully generous way in England ever since I came here. It keeps me choked up all the time. Everybody is so generous, and they do seem to give you such a hearty welcome. Nobody in the world can appreciate it higher than I do.

The club gave him a surprise in the course of the evening. A note was sent to him accompanied by a parcel, which, when opened, proved to contain a gilded plaster replica of the Ascot Gold Cup. The note said:

Dere Mark, i return the Cup. You couldn't keep your mouth shut about it. 'Tis 2 pretty 2 melt, as you want me 2; nest time I work a pinch ile have a pard who don't make after-dinner speeches.

There was a postscript which said: "I changed the acorn atop for another nut with my knife." The acorn was, in fact, replaced by a well-modeled head of Mark Twain.

So, after all, the Ascot Cup would be one of the trophies which he would bear home with him across the Atlantic.

Probably the most valued of his London honors was the dinner given to him by the staff of Punch. Punch had already saluted him with a front-page cartoon by Bernard Partridge, a picture in which the presiding genius of that paper, Mr. Punch himself, presents him with a glass of the patronymic beverage with the words, "Sir, I honor myself by drinking your health. Long life to you—and happiness—and perpetual youth!"

Mr. Agnew, chief editor; Linley Sambourne, Francis Burnand, Henry Lucy, and others of the staff welcomed him at the Punch offices at 10 Bouverie Street, in the historic Punch dining-room where Thackeray had sat, and Douglas Jerrold, and so many of the great

departed. Mark Twain was the first foreign visitor to be so honored—in fifty years the first stranger to sit at the sacred board—a mighty distinction. In the course of the dinner they gave him a pretty surprise, when little joy Agnew presented him with the original drawing of Partridge's cartoon.

Page 824

Nothing could have appealed to him more, and the Punch dinner, with its associations and that dainty presentation, remained apart in his memory from all other feastings.

Clemens had intended to return early in July, but so much was happening that he postponed his sailing until the 13th. Before leaving America, he had declined a dinner offered by the Lord Mayor of Liverpool.

Repeatedly urged to let Liverpool share in his visit, he had reconsidered now, and on the day following the Punch dinner, on July 10th, they carried him, with T. P. O'Connor (Tay Pay) in the Prince of Wales's special coach to Liverpool, to be guest of honor at the reception and banquet which Lord Mayor Japp tendered him at the Town Hall. Clemens was too tired to be present while the courses were being served, but arrived rested and fresh to respond to his toast. Perhaps because it was his farewell speech in England, he made that night the most effective address of his four weeks' visit—one of the most effective of his whole career: He began by some light reference to the Ascot Cup and the Dublin Jewels and the State Regalia, and other disappearances that had been laid to his charge, to amuse his hearers, and spoke at greater length than usual, and with even greater variety. Then laying all levity aside, he told them, like the Queen of Sheba, all that was in his heart.

. . . Home is dear to us all, and now I am departing to my own home beyond the ocean. Oxford has conferred upon me the highest honor that has ever fallen to my share of this life's prizes. It is the very one I would have chosen, as outranking all and any others, the one more precious to me than any and all others within the gift of man or state. During my four weeks' sojourn in England I have had another lofty honor, a continuous honor, an honor which has flowed serenely along, without halt or obstruction, through all these twenty-six days, a most moving and pulse-stirring honor—the heartfelt grip of the hand, and the welcome that does not descend from the pale-gray matter of the brain, but rushes up with the red blood from the heart. It makes me proud and sometimes it makes me humble, too. Many and many a year ago I gathered an incident from Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast*. It was like this: There was a presumptuous little self-important skipper in a coasting sloop engaged in the dried-apple and kitchen-furniture trade, and he was always hailing every ship that came in sight. He did it just to hear himself talk and to air his small grandeur. One day a majestic Indiaman came plowing by with course on course of canvas towering into the sky, her decks and yards swarming with sailors, her hull burdened to the Plimsoll line with a rich freightage of precious spices, lading the breezes with gracious and mysterious odors of the Orient. It was a noble spectacle, a sublime spectacle! Of course the little skipper popped into the shrouds and squeaked out a hail, "Ship

Page 825

ahoy! What ship is that? And whence and whither?" In a deep and thunderous bass the answer came back through the speaking- trumpet, "The Begum, of Bengal—142 days out from Canton—homeward bound! What ship is that?" Well, it just crushed that poor little creature's vanity flat, and he squeaked back most humbly, "Only the Mary Ann, fourteen hours out from Boston, bound for Kittery Point—with nothing to speak of!" Oh, what an eloquent word that "only," to express the depths of his humbleness! That is just my case. During just one hour in the twenty-four—not more—I pause and reflect in the stillness of the night with the echoes of your English welcome still lingering in my ears, and then I am humble. Then I am properly meek, and for that little while I am only the Mary Ann, fourteen hours out, cargoed with vegetables and tinware; but during all the other twenty-three hours my vain self-complacency rides high on the white crests of your approval, and then I am a stately Indiaman, plowing the great seas under a cloud of canvas and laden with the kindest words that have ever been vouchsafed to any wandering alien in this world, I think; then my twenty-six fortunate days on this old mother soil seem to be multiplied by six, and I am the Begum, of Bengal, 142 days out from Canton—homeward bound!

He returned to London, and with one of his young acquaintances, an American—he called her Francesca—paid many calls. It took the dreariness out of that social function to perform it in that way. With a list of the calls they were to make they drove forth each day to cancel the social debt. They paid calls in every walk of life. His young companion was privileged to see the inside of London homes of almost every class, for he showed no partiality; he went to the homes of the poor and the rich alike. One day they visited the home of an old bookkeeper whom he had known in 1872 as a clerk in a large establishment, earning a salary of perhaps a pound a week, who now had risen mightily, for he had become head bookkeeper in that establishment on a salary of six pounds a week, and thought it great prosperity and fortune for his old age.

He sailed on July 13th for home, besought to the last moment by a crowd of autograph-seekers and reporters and photographers, and a multitude who only wished to see him and to shout and wave good-by. He was sailing away from them for the last time. They hoped he would make a speech, but that would not have been possible. To the reporters he gave a farewell message: "It has been the most enjoyable holiday I have ever had, and I am sorry the end of it has come. I have met a hundred, old friends, and I have made a hundred new ones. It is a good kind of riches to have; there is none better, I think." And the London Tribune declared that "the ship that bore him away had difficulty in getting clear, so thickly was the water strewn with the bay-leaves of his triumph. For Mark Twain has triumphed, and in his all-too-brief stay of a month has done more for the cause of the world's peace than will be accomplished by the Hague Conference. He has made the world laugh again."

Page 826

His ship was the Minnetonka, and there were some little folks aboard to be adopted as grandchildren. On July 5th, in a fog, the Minnetonka collided with the bark Sterling, and narrowly escaped sinking her. On the whole, however, the homeward way was clear, and the vessel reached New York nearly a day in advance of their schedule. Some ceremonies of welcome had been prepared for him; but they were upset by the early arrival, so that when he descended the gang-plank to his native soil only a few who had received special information were there to greet him. But perhaps he did not notice it. He seldom took account of the absence of such things. By early afternoon, however, the papers rang with the announcement that Mark Twain was home again.

It is a sorrow to me that I was not at the dock to welcome him. I had been visiting in Elmira, and timed my return for the evening of the 2d, to be on hand the following morning, when the ship was due. When I saw the announcement that he had already arrived I called a greeting over the telephone, and was told to come down and play billiards. I confess I went with a certain degree of awe, for one could not but be overwhelmed with the echoes of the great splendor he had so recently achieved, and I prepared to sit a good way off in silence, and hear something of the tale of this returning conqueror; but when I arrived he was already in the billiard-room knocking the balls about—his coat off, for it was a hot night. As I entered he said:

“Get your cue. I have been inventing a new game.” And I think there were scarcely ten words exchanged before we were at it. The pageant was over; the curtain was rung down. Business was resumed at the old stand.

CCLX

MATTERS PSYCHIC AND OTHERWISE

He returned to Tuxedo and took up his dictations, and mingled freely with the social life; but the contrast between his recent London experience and his semi-retirement must have been very great. When I visited him now and then, he seemed to me lonely—not especially for companionship, but rather for the life that lay behind him—the great career which in a sense now had been completed since he had touched its highest point. There was no billiard-table at Tuxedo, and he spoke expectantly of getting back to town and the games there, also of the new home which was then building in Redding, and which would have a billiard-room where we could assemble daily—my own habitation being not far away. Various diversions were planned for Redding; among them was discussed a possible school of philosophy, such as Hawthorne and Emerson and Alcott had established at Concord.

He spoke quite freely of his English experiences, but usually of the more amusing phases. He almost never referred to the honors that had been paid to him, yet he must have thought of them sometimes, and cherished them, for it had been the greatest



national tribute ever paid to a private citizen; he must have known that in his heart. He spoke amusingly of his visit to Marie Corelli, in Stratford, and of the Holy Grail incident, ending the latter by questioning—in words at least—all psychic manifestations. I said to him:

Page 827

“But remember your own dream, Mr. Clemens, which presaged the death of your brother.”

He answered: “I ask nobody to believe that it ever happened. To me it is true; but it has no logical right to be true, and I do not expect belief in it.” Which I thought a peculiar point of view, but on the whole characteristic.

He was invited to be a special guest at the Jamestown Exposition on Fulton Day, in September, and Mr. Rogers lent him his yacht in which to make the trip. It was a break in the summer’s monotonies, and the Jamestown honors must have reminded him of those in London. When he entered the auditorium where the services were to be held there was a demonstration which lasted more than five minutes. Every person in the hall rose and cheered, waving handkerchiefs and umbrellas. He made them a brief, amusing talk on Fulton and other matters, then introduced Admiral Harrington, who delivered a masterly address and was followed by Martin W. Littleton, the real orator of the day. Littleton acquitted himself so notably that Mark Twain conceived for him a deep admiration, and the two men quickly became friends. They saw each other often during the remainder of the Jamestown stay, and Clemens, learning that Littleton lived just across Ninth Street from him in New York, invited him to come over when he had an evening to spare and join the billiard games.

So it happened, somewhat later, when every one was back in town, Mr. and Mrs. Littleton frequently came over for billiards, and the games became three-handed with an audience—very pleasant games played in that way. Clemens sometimes set himself up as umpire, and became critic and gave advice, while Littleton and I played. He had a favorite shot that he frequently used himself and was always wanting us to try, which was to drive the ball to the cushion at the beginning of the shot.

He played it with a good deal of success, and achieved unexpected results with it. He was even inspired to write a poem on the subject.

“Cushion first”

When all your days are dark with doubt,
And dying hope is at its worst;
When all life’s balls are scattered wide,
With not a shot in sight, to left or right,
Don’t give it up;
Advance your cue and shut your eyes,
And take the cushion first.

The Harry Thaw trial was in progress just then, and Littleton was Thaw’s chief attorney. It was most interesting to hear from him direct the day’s proceedings and his views of the situation and of Thaw.



Littleton and billiards recall a curious thing which happened one afternoon. I had been absent the evening before, and Littleton had been over. It was after luncheon now, and Clemens and I began preparing for the customary games. We were playing then a game with four balls, two white and two red. I began by placing the red balls on the table, and then went around looking in the pockets for the two white cue-balls. When I had made the round of the table I had found but one white ball. I thought I must have overlooked the other, and made the round again. Then I said:

Page 828

"There is one white ball missing."

Clemens, to satisfy himself, also made the round of the pockets, and said:

"It was here last night." He felt in the pockets of the little white-silk coat which he usually wore, thinking that he might unconsciously have placed it there at the end of the last game, but his coat pockets were empty.

He said: "I'll bet Littleton carried that ball home with him."

Then I suggested that near the end of the game it might have jumped off the table, and I looked carefully under the furniture and in the various corners, but without success. There was another set of balls, and out of it I selected a white one for our play, and the game began. It went along in the usual way, the balls constantly falling into the pockets, and as constantly being replaced on the table. This had continued for perhaps half an hour, there being no pocket that had not been frequently occupied and emptied during that time; but then it happened that Clemens reached into the middle pocket, and taking out a white ball laid it in place, whereupon we made the discovery that three white balls lay upon the table. The one just taken from the pocket was the missing ball. We looked at each other, both at first too astonished to say anything at all. No one had been in the room since we began to play, and at no time during the play had there been more than two white balls in evidence, though the pockets had been emptied at the end of each shot. The pocket from which the missing ball had been taken had been filled and emptied again and again. Then Clemens said:

"We must be dreaming."

We stopped the game for a while to discuss it, but we could devise no material explanation. I suggested the kobold—that mischievous invisible which is supposed to play pranks by carrying off such things as pencils, letters, and the like, and suddenly restoring them almost before one's eyes. Clemens, who, in spite of his material logic, was always a mystic at heart, said:

"But that, so far as I know, has never happened to more than one person at a time, and has been explained by a sort of temporary mental blindness. This thing has happened to two of us, and there can be no question as to the positive absence of the object."

"How about dematerialization?"

"Yes, if one of us were a medium that might be considered an explanation."

He went on to recall that Sir Alfred Russel Wallace had written of such things, and cited instances which Wallace had recorded. In the end he said:

“Well, it happened, that’s all we can say, and nobody can ever convince me that it didn’t.”

We went on playing, and the ball remained solid and substantial ever after, so far as I know.

Page 829

I am reminded of two more or less related incidents of this period. Clemens was, one morning, dictating something about his Christian Union article concerning Mrs. Clemens's government of children, published in 1885. I had discovered no copy of it among the materials, and he was wishing very much that he could see one. Somewhat later, as he was walking down Fifth Avenue, the thought of this article and his desire for it suddenly entered his mind. Reaching the corner of Forty-second Street, he stopped a moment to let a jam of vehicles pass. As he did so a stranger crossed the street, noticed him, and came dodging his way through the blockade and thrust some clippings into his hand.

"Mr. Clemens," he said, "you don't know me, but here is something you may wish to have. I have been saving them for more than twenty years, and this morning it occurred to me to send them to you. I was going to mail them from my office, but now I will give them to you," and with a word or two he disappeared. The clippings were from the Christian Union of 1885, and were the much-desired article. Clemens regarded it as a remarkable case of mental telegraphy.

"Or, if it wasn't that," he said, "it was a most remarkable coincidence."

The other circumstance has been thought amusing. I had gone to Redding for a few days, and while there, one afternoon about five o'clock, fell over a coal-scuttle and scarified myself a good deal between the ankle and the knee. I mention the hour because it seems important. Next morning I received a note, prompted by Mr. Clemens, in which he said:

Tell Paine I am sorry he fell and skinned his shin at five o'clock yesterday afternoon.

I was naturally astonished, and immediately wrote:

I did fall and skin my shin at five o'clock yesterday afternoon, but how did you find it out?

I followed the letter in person next day, and learned that at the same hour on the same afternoon Clemens himself had fallen up the front steps and, as he said, peeled off from his "starboard shin a ribbon of skin three inches long." The disaster was still uppermost in his mind at the time of writing, and the suggestion of my own mishap had flashed out for no particular reason.

Clemens was always having his fortune told, in one way or another, being superstitious, as he readily confessed, though at times professing little faith in these prognostics. Once when a clairvoyant, of whom he had never even heard, and whom he had reason to believe was ignorant of his family history, told him more about it than he knew himself, besides reading a list of names from a piece of paper which Clemens had concealed in his vest pocket he came home deeply impressed. The clairvoyant added

that he would probably live to a great age and die in a, foreign land—a prophecy which did not comfort him.

CCLXI

MINOR EVENTS AND DIVERSIONS

Page 830

Mark Twain was deeply interested during the autumn of 1907 in the Children's Theater of the Jewish Educational Alliance, on the lower East Side—a most worthy institution which ought to have survived. A Miss Alice M. Herts, who developed and directed it, gave her strength and health to build up an institution through which the interest of the children could be diverted from less fortunate amusements. She had interested a great body of Jewish children in the plays of Shakespeare, and of more modern dramatists, and these they had performed from time to time with great success. The admission fee to the performance was ten cents, and the theater was always crowded with other children—certainly a better diversion for them than the amusements of the street, though of course, as a business enterprise, the theater could not pay. It required patrons. Miss Herts obtained permission to play “The Prince and the Pauper,” and Mark Twain agreed to become a sort of chief patron in using his influence to bring together an audience who might be willing to assist financially in this worthy work.

“The Prince and the Pauper” evening turned out a distinguished affair. On the night of November 19, 1907, the hall of the Educational Alliance was crowded with such an audience as perhaps never before assembled on the East Side; the finance and the fashion of New York were there. It was a gala night for the little East Side performers. Behind the curtain they whispered to each other that they were to play before queens. The performance they gave was an astonishing one. So fully did they enter into the spirit of Tom Canty's rise to royalty that they seemed absolutely to forget that they were lowly-born children of the Ghetto. They had become little princesses and lords and maids-in-waiting, and they moved through their pretty tinsel parts as if all their ornaments were gems and their raiment cloth of gold. There was no hesitation, no awkwardness of speech or gesture, and they rose really to sublime heights in the barn scene where the little Prince is in the hands of the mob. Never in the history of the stage has there been assembled a mob more wonderful than that. These children knew mobs! A mob to them was a daily sight, and their reproduction of it was a thing to startle you with its realism. Never was it absurd; never was there a single note of artificiality in it. It was Hogarthian in its bigness.

Both Mark Twain and Miss Herts made brief addresses, and the audience shouted approval of their words. It seems a pity that such a project as that must fail, and I do not know why it happened. Wealthy men and women manifested an interest; but there was some hitch somewhere, and the Children's Theater exists to-day only as history.—[In a letter to a Mrs. Amelia Dunne Hookway, who had conducted some children's plays at the Howland School, Chicago, Mark Twain once wrote: “If I were going to begin life over again I would have a children's theater and watch it, and work for it, and see it grow and blossom and bear its rich moral and intellectual fruitage; and I should get more pleasure and a saner and healthier profit out of my vocation than I should ever be able to get out of any other, constituted as I am. Yes, you are easily the most fortunate of women, I think.”]

Page 831

It was at a dinner at The Players—a small, private dinner given by Mr. George C. Riggs—that I saw Edward L. Burlingame and Mark Twain for the only time together. They had often met during the forty-two years that had passed since their long-ago Sandwich Island friendship; but only incidentally, for Mr. Burlingame cared not much for great public occasions, and as editor of Scribner's Magazine he had been somewhat out of the line of Mark Twain's literary doings.

Howells was there, and Gen. Stewart L. Woodford, and David Bispham, John Finley, Evan Shipman, Nicholas Biddle, and David Munro. Clemens told that night, for the first time, the story of General Miles and the three-dollar dog, inventing it, I believe, as he went along, though for the moment it certainly did sound like history. He told it often after that, and it has been included in his book of speeches.

Later, in the cab, he said:

"That was a mighty good dinner. Riggs knows how to do that sort of thing. I enjoyed it ever so much. Now we'll go home and play billiards."

We began about eleven o'clock, and played until after midnight. I happened to be too strong for him, and he swore amazingly. He vowed that it was not a gentleman's game at all, that Riggs's wine had demoralized the play. But at the end, when we were putting up the cues, he said:

"Well, those were good games. There is nothing like billiards after all."

We did not play billiards on his birthday that year. He went to the theater in the afternoon; and it happened that, with Jesse Lynch Williams, I attended the same performance—the "Toy-Maker of Nuremberg"—written by Austin Strong. It proved to be a charming play, and I could see that Clemens was enjoying it. He sat in a box next to the stage, and the actors clearly were doing their very prettiest for his benefit.

When later I mentioned having seen him at the play, he spoke freely of his pleasure in it.

"It is a fine, delicate piece of work," he said. "I wish I could do such things as that."

"I believe you are too literary for play-writing."

"Yes, no doubt. There was never any question with the managers about my plays. They always said they wouldn't act. Howells has come pretty near to something once or twice. I judge the trouble is that the literary man is thinking of the style and quality of the thing, while the playwright thinks only of how it will play. One is thinking of how it will sound, the other of how it will look."

"I suppose," I said, "the literary man should have a collaborator with a genius for stage mechanism. John Luther Long's exquisite plays would hardly have been successful

without David Belasco to stage them. Belasco cannot write a play himself, but in the matter of acting construction his genius is supreme.”

“Yes, so it is; it was Belasco who made it possible to play ‘The Prince and the Pauper’—a collection of literary garbage before he got hold of it.”

Page 832

Clemens attended few public functions now. He was beset with invitations, but he declined most of them. He told the dog story one night to the Pleiades Club, assembled at the Brevoort; but that was only a step away, and we went in after the dining was ended and came away before the exercises were concluded.

He also spoke at a banquet given to Andrew Carnegie—Saint Andrew, as he called him—by the Engineers Club, and had his usual fun at the chief guest's expense.

I have been chief guest at a good many banquets myself, and I know what brother Andrew is feeling like now. He has been receiving compliments and nothing but compliments, but he knows that there is another side to him that needs censure. I am going to vary the complimentary monotony. While we have all been listening to the complimentary talk Mr. Carnegie's face has scintillated with fictitious innocence. You'd think he never committed a crime in his life. But he has. Look at his pestiferous simplified spelling. Imagine the calamity on two sides of the ocean when he foisted his simplified spelling on the whole human race. We've got it all now so that nobody could spell

If Mr. Carnegie had left spelling alone we wouldn't have had any spots on the sun, or any San Francisco quake, or any business depression.

There, I trust he feels better now and that he has enjoyed my abuse more than he did his compliments. And now that I think I have him smoothed down and feeling comfortable I just want to say one thing more—that his simplified spelling is all right enough, but, like chastity, you can carry it too far.

As he was about to go, Carnegie called his attention to the beautiful souvenir bronze and gold-plated goblets that stood at each guest's plate. Carnegie said:

"The club had those especially made at Tiffany's for this occasion. They cost ten dollars apiece."

Clemens said: "Is that so? Well, I only meant to take my own; but if that's the case I'll load my cab with them."

We made an attempt to reform on the matter of billiards. The continued strain of late hours was doing neither of us any particular good. More than once I journeyed into the country on one errand and another, mainly for rest; but a card saying that he was lonely and upset, for lack of his evening games, quickly brought me back again. It was my wish only to serve him; it was a privilege and an honor to give him happiness.

Billiards, however, was not his only recreation just then. He walked out a good deal, and especially of a pleasant Sunday morning he liked the stroll up Fifth Avenue.

Sometimes we went as high as Carnegie's, on Ninety-second Street, and rode home on top of the electric stage—always one of Mark Twain's favorite diversions.

From that high seat he liked to look down on the panorama of the streets, and in that free, open air he could smoke without interference. Oftener, however, we turned at Fifty-ninth Street, walking both ways.

Page 833

When it was pleasant we sometimes sat on a bench in Central Park; and once he must have left a handkerchief there, for a few days later one of his handkerchiefs came to him accompanied by a note. Its finder, a Mr. Lockwood, received a reward, for Mark Twain wrote him:

There is more rejoicing in this house over that one handkerchief that was lost and is found again than over the ninety and nine that never went to the wash at all. Heaven will reward you, I know it will.

On Sunday mornings the return walk would be timed for about the hour that the churches would be dismissed. On the first Sunday morning we had started a little early, and I thoughtlessly suggested, when we reached Fifty-ninth Street, that if we returned at once we would avoid the throng. He said, quietly:

"I like the throng."

So we rested in the Plaza Hotel until the appointed hour. Men and women noticed him, and came over to shake his hand. The gigantic man in uniform; in charge of the carriages at the door, came in for a word. He had opened carriages for Mr. Clemens at the Twenty-third Street station, and now wanted to claim that honor. I think he received the most cordial welcome of any one who came. I am sure he did. It was Mark Twain's way to warm to the man of the lower social rank. He was never too busy, never too preoccupied, to grasp the hand of such a man; to listen to his story, and to say just the words that would make that man happy remembering them.

We left the Plaza Hotel and presently were amid the throng of outpouring congregations. Of course he was the object on which every passing eye turned; the presence to which every hat was lifted. I realized that this open and eagerly paid homage of the multitude was still dear to him, not in any small and petty way, but as the tribute of a nation, the expression of that affection which in his London and Liverpool speeches he had declared to be the last and final and most precious reward that any man can win, whether by character or achievement. It was his final harvest, and he had the courage to claim it—the aftermath of all his years of honorable labor and noble living.

CCLXII

From mark TWAIN's mail

If the reader has any curiosity as to some of the less usual letters which a man of wide public note may inspire, perhaps he will find a certain interest in a few selected from the thousands which yearly came to Mark Twain.



For one thing, he was constantly receiving prescriptions and remedies whenever the papers reported one of his bronchial or rheumatic attacks. It is hardly necessary to quote examples of these, but only a form of his occasional reply, which was likely to be in this wise:

Dear sir [or madam],—I try every remedy sent to me. I am now on No. 87. Yours is 2,653. I am looking forward to its beneficial results.



Page 834

Of course a large number of the nostrums and palliatives offered were preparations made by the wildest and longest-haired medical cranks. One of these sent an advertisement of a certain Elixir of Life, which was guaranteed to cure everything—to “wash and cleanse the human molecules, and so restore youth and preserve life everlasting.”

Anonymous letters are not usually popular or to be encouraged, but Mark Twain had an especial weakness for compliments that came in that way. They were not mercenary compliments. The writer had nothing to gain. Two such letters follow—both written in England just at the time of his return.

Mark twain.

Dear sir,—Please accept a poor widow's good-by and kindest wishes. I have had some of your books sent to me; have enjoyed them very much—only wish I could afford to buy some.

I should very much like to have seen you. I have many photos of you which I have cut from several papers which I read. I have one where you are writing in bed, which I cut from the Daily News. Like myself, you believe in lots of sleep and rest. I am 70 and I find I need plenty. Please forgive the liberty I have taken in writing to you. If I can't come to your funeral may we meet beyond the river.

May God guard you, is the wish of a lonely old widow.
Yours sincerely,

The other letter also tells its own story:

Dear, kind mark twain,—For years I have wanted to write and thank you for the comfort you were to me once, only I never quite knew where you were, and besides I did not want to bother you; but to-day I was told by some one who saw you going into the lift at the Savoy that you looked sad and I thought it might cheer you a little tiny bit to hear how you kept a poor lonely girl from ruining her eyes with crying every night for long months. Ten years ago I had to leave home and earn my living as a governess and Fate sent me to spend a winter with a very dull old country family in the depths of Staffordshire. According to the genial English custom, after my five charges had gone to bed, I took my evening meal alone in the school-room, where “Henry Tudor had supped the night before Bosworth,” and there I had to stay without a soul to speak to till I went to bed. At first I used to cry every night, but a friend sent me a copy of your Huckleberry Finn and I never cried any more. I kept him handy under the copy-books and maps, and when Henry Tudor commenced to stretch out his chilly hands toward me I grabbed my dear Huck and he never once failed me; I opened him at random and in two minutes I was in another world. That's why I am so grateful to you and so fond of

you, and I thought you might like to know; for it is yourself that has the kind heart, as is easily seen from the way you wrote about the poor old nigger. I am a stenographer

Page 835

now and live at home, but I shall never forget how you helped me. God bless you and spare you long to those you are dear to.

A letter which came to him soon after his return from England contained a clipping which reported the good work done by Christian missionaries in the Congo, especially among natives afflicted by the terrible sleeping sickness. The letter itself consisted merely of a line, which said:

Won't you give your friends, the missionaries, a good mark for this?

The writer's name was signed, and Mark Twain answered:

In China the missionaries are not wanted, & so they ought to be decent & go away. But I have not heard that in the Congo the missionary servants of God are unwelcome to the native.

Evidently those missionaries axe pitying, compassionate, kind. How it would improve God to take a lesson from them! He invented & distributed the germ of that awful disease among those helpless, poor savages, & now He sits with His elbows on the balusters & looks down & enjoys this wanton crime. Confidently, & between you & me—well, never mind, I might get struck by lightning if I said it.

Those are good and kindly men, those missionaries, but they are a measureless satire upon their Master.

To which the writer answered:

O wicked Mr. Clemens! I have to ask Saint Joan of Arc to pray for you; then one of these days, when we all stand before the Golden Gates and we no longer “see through a glass darkly and know only in part,” there will be a struggle at the heavenly portals between Joan of Arc and St. Peter, but your blessed Joan will conquer and she'll lead Mr. Clemens through the gates of pearl and apologize and plead for him.

Of the letters that irritated him, perhaps the following is as fair a sample as any, and it has additional interest in its sequel.

Dear sir,—I have written a book—naturally—which fact, however, since I am not your enemy, need give you no occasion to rejoice. Nor need you grieve, though I am sending you a copy. If I knew of any way of compelling you to read it I would do so, but unless the first few pages have that effect I can do nothing. Try the first few pages. I have done a great deal more than that with your books, so perhaps you owe me some thing—say ten pages. If after that attempt you put it aside I shall be sorry—for you. I am afraid that the above looks flippant—but think of the twitterings of the soul of him who brings in his hand an unbidden book, written by himself. To such a one much is due in

the way of indulgence. Will you remember that? Have you forgotten early twitterings of your own?

In a memorandum made on this letter Mark Twain wrote:

Another one of those peculiarly depressing letters—a letter cast in artificially humorous form, whilst no art could make the subject humorous—to me.

Page 836

Commenting further, he said:

As I have remarked before about one thousand times the coat of arms of the human race ought to consist of a man with an ax on his shoulder proceeding toward a grindstone, or it ought to represent the several members of the human race holding out the hat to one another; for we are all beggars, each in his own way. One beggar is too proud to beg for pennies, but will beg for an introduction into society; another does not care for society, but he wants a postmastership; another will inveigle a lawyer into conversation and then sponge on him for free advice. The man who wouldn't do any of these things will beg for the Presidency. Each admires his own dignity and greatly guards it, but in his opinion the others haven't any. Mendicancy is a matter of taste and temperament, no doubt, but no human being is without some form of it. I know my own form, you know yours. Let us conceal them from view and abuse the others. There is no man so poor but what at intervals some man comes to him with an ax to grind. By and by the ax's aspect becomes familiar to the proprietor of the grindstone. He perceives that it is the same old ax. If you are a governor you know that the stranger wants an office. The first time he arrives you are deceived; he pours out such noble praises of you and your political record that you are moved to tears; there's a lump in your throat and you are thankful that you have lived for this happiness. Then the stranger discloses his ax, and you are ashamed of yourself and your race. Six repetitions will cure you. After that you interrupt the compliments and say, "Yes, yes, that's all right; never mind about that. What is it you want?" But you and I are in the business ourselves. Every now and then we carry our ax to somebody and ask a whet. I don't carry mine to strangers—I draw the line there; perhaps that is your way. This is bound to set us up on a high and holy pinnacle and make us look down in cold rebuke on persons who carry their axes to strangers. I do not know how to answer that stranger's letter. I wish he had spared me. Never mind about him—I am thinking about myself. I wish he had spared me. The book has not arrived yet; but no matter, I am prejudiced against it.

It was a few days later that he added:

I wrote to that man. I fell back upon the old Overworked, polite lie, and thanked him for his book and said I was promising myself the pleasure of reading it. Of course that set me free; I was not obliged to read it now at all, and, being free, my prejudice was gone, and as soon as the book came I opened it to see what it was like. I was not able to put it down until I had finished. It was an embarrassing thing to have to write to that man and confess that fact, but I had to do it. That first letter was merely a lie. Do you think I wrote the second one to give that man pleasure? Well, I did, but it was second-hand pleasure. I wrote it first to give myself comfort, to make myself forget the original lie.

Mark Twain's interest was once aroused by the following:



Page 837

Dear sir,—I have had more or less of your works on my shelves for years, and believe I have practically a complete set now. This is nothing unusual, of course, but I presume it will seem to you unusual for any one to keep books constantly in sight which the owner regrets ever having read. Every time my glance rests on the books I do regret having read them, and do not hesitate to tell you so to your face, and care not who may know my feelings. You, who must be kept busy attending to your correspondence, will probably pay little or no attention to this small fraction of it, yet my reasons, I believe, are sound and are probably shared by more people than you are aware of. Probably you will not read far enough through this to see who has signed it, but if you do, and care to know why I wish I had left your work unread, I will tell you as briefly as possible if you will ask me.

George B. Lauder.

Clemens did not answer the letter, but put it in his pocket, perhaps intending to do so, and a few days later, in Boston, when a reporter called, he happened to remember it. The reporter asked permission to print the queer document, and it appeared in his Mark Twain interview next morning. A few days later the writer of it sent a second letter, this time explaining:

My dear sir,—I saw in to-day's paper a copy of the letter which I wrote you October 26th.

I have read and re-read your works until I can almost recall some of them word for word. My familiarity with them is a constant source of pleasure which I would not have missed, and therefore the regret which I have expressed is more than offset by thankfulness.

Believe me, the regret which I feel for having read your works is entirely due to the unalterable fact that I can never again have the pleasure of reading them for the first time.

Your sincere admirer,
George B. Ladder.

Mark Twain promptly replied this time:

Dear sir, You fooled me completely; I didn't divine what the letter was concealing, neither did the newspaper men, so you are a very competent deceiver.

Truly yours,
S. L. Clemens.

It was about the end of 1907 that the new St. Louis Harbor boat, was completed. The editor of the St. Louis Republic reported that it has been christened "Mark Twain," and asked for a word of comment. Clemens sent this line:

May my namesake follow in my righteous footsteps, then neither of us will need any fire insurance.

CCLXIII

SOME LITERARY LUNCHEONS

Howells, in his book, refers to the Human Race Luncheon Club, which Clemens once organized for the particular purpose of damning the species in concert. It was to consist, beside Clemens himself, of Howells, Colonel Harvey, and Peter Dunne; but it somehow never happened that even this small membership could be assembled while the idea was still fresh, and therefore potent.

Page 838

Out of it, however, grew a number of those private social gatherings which Clemens so dearly loved—small luncheons and dinners given at his own table. The first of these came along toward the end of 1907, when Howells was planning to spend the winter in Italy.

“Howells is going away,” he said, “and I should like to give him a stag-party. We’ll enlarge the Human Race Club for the occasion.”

So Howells, Colonel Harvey, Martin Littleton, Augustus Thomas, Robert Porter, and Paderewski were invited. Paderewski was unable to come, and seven in all assembled.

Howells was first to arrive.

“Here comes Howells,” Clemens said. “Old Howells a thousand years old.”

But Howells didn’t look it. His face was full of good-nature and apparent health, and he was by no means venerable, either in speech or action. Thomas, Porter, Littleton, and Harvey drifted in. Cocktails were served and luncheon was announced.

Claude, the butler, had prepared the table with fine artistry—its center a mass of roses. There was to be no woman in the neighborhood—Clemens announced this fact as a sort of warrant for general freedom of expression.

Thomas’s play, “The Witching Hour,” was then at the height of its great acceptance, and the talk naturally began there. Thomas told something of the difficulty which he found in being able to convince a manager that it would succeed, and declared it to be his own favorite work. I believe there was no dissenting opinion as to its artistic value, or concerning its purpose and psychology, though these had been the stumbling-blocks from a managerial point of view.

When the subject was concluded, and there had come a lull, Colonel Harvey, who was seated at Clemens’s left, said:

“Uncle Mark”—he often called him that—“Major Leigh handed me a report of the year’s sales just as I was leaving. It shows your royalty returns this year to be very close to fifty thousand dollars. I don’t believe there is another such return from old books on record.”

This was said in an undertone, to Clemens only, but was overheard by one or two of those who sat nearest. Clemens was not unwilling to repeat it for the benefit of all, and did so. Howells said:

“A statement like that arouses my basest passions. The books are no good; it’s just the advertising they get.”

Clemens said: "Yes, my contract compels the publisher to advertise. It costs them two hundred dollars every time they leave the advertisement out of the magazines."

"And three hundred every time we put it in," said Harvey. "We often debate whether it is more profitable to put in the advertisement or to leave it out."

The talk switched back to plays and acting. Thomas recalled an incident of Beerbohm Tree's performance of "Hamlet." W. S. Gilbert, of light-opera celebrity, was present at a performance, and when the play ended Mrs. Tree hurried over to him and said:

Page 839

"Oh, Mr. Gilbert, what did you think of Mr. Tree's rendition of Hamlet?" "Remarkable," said Gilbert. "Funny without being vulgar."

It was with such idle tales and talk-play that the afternoon passed. Not much of it all is left to me, but I remember Howells saying, "Did it ever occur to you that the newspapers abolished hell? Well, they did—it was never done by the church. There was a consensus of newspaper opinion that the old hell with its lake of fire and brimstone was an antiquated institution; in fact a dead letter." And again, "I was coming down Broadway last night, and I stopped to look at one of the street-venders selling those little toy fighting roosters. It was a bleak, desolate evening; nobody was buying anything, and as he pulled the string and kept those little roosters dancing and fighting his remarks grew more and more cheerless and sardonic.

"'Japanese game chickens,' he said; 'pretty toys, amuse the children with their antics. Child of three can operate it. Take them home for Christmas. Chicken-fight at your own fireside.' I tried to catch his eye to show him that I understood his desolation and sorrow, but it was no use. He went on dancing his toy chickens, and saying, over and over, 'Chicken-fight at your own fireside.'"

The luncheon over, we wandered back into the drawing-room, and presently all left but Colonel Harvey. Clemens and the Colonel went up to the billiard-room and engaged in a game of cushion caroms, at twenty-five cents a game. I was umpire and stakeholder, and it was a most interesting occupation, for the series was close and a very cheerful one. It ended the day much to Mark Twain's satisfaction, for he was oftenest winner. That evening he said:

"We will repeat that luncheon; we ought to repeat it once a month. Howells will be gone, but we must have the others. We cannot have a thing like that too often."

There was, in fact, a second stag-luncheon very soon after, at which George Riggs was present and that rare Irish musician, Denis O'Sullivan. It was another choice afternoon, with a mystical quality which came of the music made by O'Sullivan on some Hindu reeds-pipes of Pan. But we shall have more of O'Sullivan presently—all too little, for his days were few and fleeting.

Howells could not get away just yet. Colonel Harvey, who, like James Osgood, would not fail to find excuse for entertainment, chartered two drawing-room cars, and with Mrs. Harvey took a party of fifty-five or sixty congenial men and women to Lakewood for a good-by luncheon to Howells. It was a day borrowed from June, warm and beautiful.

The trip down was a sort of reception. Most of the guests were acquainted, but many of them did not often meet. There was constant visiting back and forth the full length of the two coaches. Denis O'Sullivan was among the guests. He looked in the bloom of health, and he had his pipes and played his mystic airs; then he brought out the tin-

whistle of Ireland, and blew such rollicking melodies as capering fairies invented a long time ago. This was on the train going down.

Page 840

There was a brief program following the light-hearted feasting—an informal program fitting to that sunny day. It opened with some recitations by Miss Kitty Cheatham; then Colonel Harvey introduced Howells, with mention of his coming journey. As a rule, Howells does not enjoy speaking. He is willing to read an address on occasion, but he has owned that the prospect of talking without his notes terrifies him. This time, however, there was no reluctance, though he had prepared no speech. He was among friends. He looked even happy when he got on his feet, and he spoke like a happy man. He talked about Mark Twain. It was all delicate, delicious chaffing which showed Howells at his very best—all too short for his listeners.

Clemens, replying, returned the chaff, and rambled amusingly among his fancies, closing with a few beautiful words of “Godspeed and safe return” to his old comrade and friend.

Then once more came Denis and his pipes. No one will ever forget his part of the program. The little samples we had heard on the train were expanded and multiplied and elaborated in a way that fairly swept his listeners out of themselves into that land where perhaps Denis himself wanders playing now; for a month later, strong and lusty and beautiful as he seemed that day, he suddenly vanished from among us and his reeds were silent. It never occurred to us then that Denis could die; and as he finished each melody and song there was a shout for a repetition, and I think we could have sat there and let the days and years slip away unheeded, for time is banished by music like that, and one wonders if it might not even divert death.

It was dark when we crossed the river homeward; the myriad lights from heaven-climbing windows made an enchanted city in the sky. The evening, like the day, was warm, and some of the party left the ferry-cabin to lean over and watch the magic spectacle, the like of which is not to be found elsewhere on the earth.

CCLXIV

“Captain Stormfield” In print

During the forty years or so that had elapsed since the publication of the “Gates Ajar” and the perpetration of Mark Twain’s intended burlesque, built on Captain Ned Wakeman’s dream, the Christian religion in its more orthodox aspects had undergone some large modifications. It was no longer regarded as dangerous to speak lightly of hell, or even to suggest that the golden streets and jeweled architecture of the sky might be regarded as symbols of hope rather than exhibits of actual bullion and lapidary construction. Clemens re-read his extravaganza, Captain Stormfields Visit to Heaven, gave it a modernizing touch here and there, and handed it to his publishers, who must have agreed that it was no longer dangerous, for it was promptly accepted and appeared in the December and January numbers (1907-8) of Harper’s Magazine, and

was also issued as a small book. If there were any readers who still found it blasphemous, or even irreverent, they did not say so; the letters that came—and they were a good many—expressed enjoyment and approval, also (some of them) a good deal of satisfaction that Mark Twain “had returned to his earlier form.”

Page 841

The publication of this story recalled to Clemens's mind another heresy somewhat similar which he had written during the winter of 1891 and 1892 in Berlin. This was a dream of his own, in which he had set out on a train with the evangelist Sam Jones and the Archbishop of Canterbury for the other world. He had noticed that his ticket was to a different destination than the Archbishop's, and so, when the prelate nodded and finally went to sleep, he changed the tickets in their hats with disturbing results. Clemens thought a good deal of this fancy when he wrote it, and when Mrs. Clemens had refused to allow it to be printed he had laboriously translated it into German, with some idea of publishing it surreptitiously; but his conscience had been too much for him. He had confessed, and even the German version had been suppressed.

Clemens often allowed his fancy to play with the idea of the orthodox heaven, its curiosities of architecture, and its employments of continuous prayer, psalm-singing, and harpistry.

"What a childish notion it was," he said, "and how curious that only a little while ago human beings were so willing to accept such fragile evidences about a place of so much importance. If we should find somewhere to-day an ancient book containing an account of a beautiful and blooming tropical Paradise secreted in the center of eternal icebergs—an account written by men who did not even claim to have seen it themselves—no geographical society on earth would take any stock in that book, yet that account would be quite as authentic as any we have of heaven. If God has such a place prepared for us, and really wanted us to know it, He could have found some better way than a book so liable to alterations and misinterpretation. God has had no trouble to prove to man the laws of the constellations and the construction of the world, and such things as that, none of which agree with His so-called book. As to a hereafter, we have not the slightest evidence that there is any—no evidence that appeals to logic and reason. I have never seen what to me seemed an atom of proof that there is a future life."

Then, after a long pause, he added:

"And yet—I am strongly inclined to expect one."

CCLXV

LOTOS CLUB HONORS

It was on January 11, 1908, that Mark Twain was given his last great banquet by the Lotos Club. The club was about to move again, into splendid new quarters, and it wished to entertain him once more in its old rooms.

He wore white, and amid the throng of black-clad men was like a white moth among a horde of beetles. The room fairly swarmed with them, and they seemed likely to overwhelm him.

Page 842

President Lawrence was toast-master of the evening, and he ended his customary address by introducing Robert Porter, who had been Mark Twain's host at Oxford. Porter told something of the great Oxford week, and ended by introducing Mark Twain. It had been expected that Clemens would tell of his London experiences. Instead of doing this, he said he had started a new kind of collection, a collection of compliments. He had picked up a number of valuable ones abroad and some at home. He read selections from them, and kept the company going with cheers and merriment until just before the close of his speech. Then he repeated, in his most impressive manner, that stately conclusion of his Liverpool speech, and the room became still and the eyes of his hearers grew dim. It may have been even more moving than when originally given, for now the closing words, "homeward bound," had only the deeper meaning.

Dr. John MacArthur followed with a speech that was as good a sermon as any he ever delivered, and closed it by saying:

"I do not want men to prepare for heaven, but to prepare to remain on earth, and it is such men as Mark Twain who make other men not fit to die, but fit to live."

Andrew Carnegie also spoke, and Colonel Harvey, and as the speaking ended Robert Porter stepped up behind Clemens and threw over his shoulders the scarlet Oxford robe which had been surreptitiously brought, and placed the mortar-board cap upon his head, while the diners vociferated their approval. Clemens was quite calm.

"I like this," he said, when the noise had subsided. "I like its splendid color. I would dress that way all the time, if I dared."

In the cab going home I mentioned the success of his speech, how well it had been received.

"Yes," he said; "but then I have the advantage of knowing now that I am likely to be favorably received, whatever I say. I know that my audiences are warm and responseful. It is an immense advantage to feel that. There are cold places in almost every speech, and if your audience notices them and becomes cool, you get a chill yourself in those zones, and it is hard to warm up again. Perhaps there haven't been so many lately; but I have been acquainted with them more than once." And then I could not help remembering that deadly Whittier birthday speech of more than thirty years before—that bleak, arctic experience from beginning to end.

"We have just time for four games," he said, as we reached the billiard-room; but there was no sign of stopping when the four games were over. We were winning alternately, and neither noted the time. I was leaving by an early train, and was willing to play all night. The milk-wagons were rattling outside when he said:

“Well, perhaps we’d better quit now. It seems pretty early, though.” I looked at my watch. It was quarter to four, and we said good night.

CCLXVI

Page 843

A WINTER IN BERMUDA

Edmund Clarence Stedman died suddenly at his desk, January 18, 1908, and Clemens, in response to telegrams, sent this message:

I do not wish to talk about it. He was a valued friend from days that date back thirty-five years. His loss stuns me and unfits me to speak.

He recalled the New England dinners which he used to attend, and where he had often met Stedman.

"Those were great affairs," he said. "They began early, and they ended early. I used to go down from Hartford with the feeling that it wasn't an all-night supper, and that it was going to be an enjoyable time. Choate and Depew and Stedman were in their prime then—we were all young men together. Their speeches were always worth listening to. Stedman was a prominent figure there. There don't seem to be any such men now—or any such occasions."

Stedman was one of the last of the old literary group. Aldrich had died the year before. Howells and Clemens were the lingering "last leaves."

Clemens gave some further luncheon entertainments to his friends, and added the feature of "doe" luncheons—pretty affairs where, with Clara Clemens as hostess, were entertained a group of brilliant women, such as Mrs. Kate Douglas Riggs, Geraldine Farrax, Mrs. Robert Collier, Mrs. Frank Doubleday, and others. I cannot report those luncheons, for I was not present, and the drift of the proceedings came to me later in too fragmentary a form to be used as history; but I gathered from Clemens himself that he had done all of the talking, and I think they must have been very pleasant afternoons. Among the acknowledgments that followed one of these affairs is this characteristic word-play from Mrs. Riggs:

N. B.—A lady who is invited to and attends a doe luncheon is, of course, a doe. The question is, if she attends two doe luncheons in succession is she a doe-doe? If so is she extinct and can never attend a third?

Luncheons and billiards, however, failed to give sufficient brightness to the dull winter days, or to insure him against an impending bronchial attack, and toward the end of January he sailed away to Bermuda, where skies were bluer and roadsides gay with bloom. His sojourn was brief this time, but long enough to cure him, he said, and he came back full of happiness. He had been driving about over the island with a newly adopted granddaughter, little Margaret Blackmer, whom he had met one morning in the hotel dining-room. A part of his dictated story will convey here this pretty experience.

My first day in Bermuda paid a dividend—in fact a double dividend: it broke the back of my cold and it added a jewel to my collection. As I entered the breakfast-room the first object I saw in that spacious and far-reaching place was a little girl seated solitary at a table for two. I bent down over her and patted her cheek and said:

“I don’t seem to remember your name; what is it?”

Page 844

By the sparkle in her brown eyes it amused her. She said:

“Why, you’ve never known it, Mr. Clemens, because you’ve never seen me before.”

“Why, that is true, now that I come to think; it certainly is true, and it must be one of the reasons why I have forgotten your name. But I remember it now perfectly—it’s Mary.”

She was amused again; amused beyond smiling; amused to a chuckle, and she said:

“Oh no, it isn’t; it’s Margaret.”

I feigned to be ashamed of my mistake and said:

“Ah, well, I couldn’t have made that mistake a few years ago; but I am old, and one of age’s earliest infirmities is a damaged memory; but I am clearer now—clearer-headed—it all comes back to me just as if it were yesterday. It’s Margaret Holcomb.”

She was surprised into a laugh this time, the rippling laugh that a happy brook makes when it breaks out of the shade into the sunshine, and she said:

“Oh, you are wrong again; you don’t get anything right. It isn’t Holcomb, it’s Blackmer.”

I was ashamed again, and confessed it; then:

“How old are you, dear?”

“Twelve; New-Year’s. Twelve and a month.”

We were close comrades-inseparables, in fact—for eight days. Every day we made pedestrian excursions—called them that anyway, and honestly they were intended for that, and that is what they would have been but for the persistent intrusion of a gray and grave and rough-coated donkey by the name of Maud. Maud was four feet long; she was mounted on four slender little stilts, and had ears that doubled her altitude when she stood them up straight. Her tender was a little bit of a cart with seat room for two in it, and you could fall out of it without knowing it, it was so close to the ground. This battery was in command of a nice, grave, dignified, gentlefaced little black boy whose age was about twelve, and whose name, for some reason or other, was Reginald. Reginald and Maud—I shall not easily forget those names, nor the combination they stood for. The trips going and coming were five or six miles, and it generally took us

three hours to make it. This was because Maud set the pace. Whenever she detected an ascending grade she respected it; she stopped and said with her ears:

“This is getting unsatisfactory. We will camp here.”

The whole idea of these excursions was that Margaret and I should employ them for the gathering of strength, by walking, yet we were oftener in the cart than out of it. She drove and I superintended. In the course of the first excursions I found a beautiful little shell on the beach at Spanish Point; its hinge was old and dry, and the two halves came apart in my hand. I gave one of them to Margaret and said: “Now dear, sometime or other in

Page 845

the future I shall run across you somewhere, and it may turn out that it is not you at all, but will be some girl that only resembles you. I shall be saying to myself 'I know that this is a Margaret by the look of her, but I don't know for sure whether this is my Margaret or somebody else's'; but, no matter, I can soon find out, for I shall take my half shell out of my pocket and say, 'I think you are my Margaret, but I am not certain; if you are my Margaret you can produce the other half of this shell.'"

Next morning when I entered the breakfast-room and saw the child I approached and scanned her searchingly all over, then said, sadly:

"No, I am mistaken; it looks like my Margaret,—but it isn't, and I am so sorry. I shall go away and cry now."

Her eyes danced triumphantly, and she cried out:

"No, you don't have to. There!" and she fetched out the identifying shell.

I was beside myself with gratitude and joyful surprise, and revealed it from every pore. The child could not have enjoyed this thrilling little drama more if we had been playing it on the stage. Many times afterward she played the chief part herself, pretending to be in doubt as to my identity and challenging me to produce my half of the shell. She was always hoping to catch me without it, but I always defeated that game—wherefore she came to recognize at last that I was not only old, but very smart.

Sometimes, when they were not walking or driving, they sat on the veranda, and he prepared history-lessons for little Margaret by making grotesque figures on cards with numerous legs and arms and other fantastic symbols and features to fix the length of some king's reign. For William the Conqueror, for instance, who reigned twenty-one years, he drew a figure of eleven legs and ten arms. It was the proper method of impressing facts upon the mind of a child. It carried him back to those days at Elmira when he had arranged for his own little girls the game of kings. A Miss Wallace, a friend of Margaret's, and usually one of the pedestrian party, has written a dainty book of those Bermudian days. —[Mark Twain and the Happy Islands, by Elizabeth Wallace.]

Miss Wallace says:

Margaret felt for him the deep affection that children have for an older person who understands them and treats them with respect. Mr. Clemens never talked down to her, but considered her opinions with a sweet dignity.

There were some pretty sequels to the shell incident. After Mark Twain had returned to New York, and Margaret was there, she called one day with her mother, and sent up her card. He sent back word, saying:

“I seem to remember the name; but if this is really the person whom I think it is she can identify herself by a certain shell I once gave her, of which I have the other half. If the two halves fit, I shall know that this is the same little Margaret that I remember.”

The message went down, and the other half of the shell was promptly sent up. Mark Twain had the two half-shells incised firmly in gold, and one of these he wore on his watch-fob, and sent the other to Margaret.

Page 846

He afterward corresponded with Margaret, and once wrote her:

I'm already making mistakes. When I was in New York, six weeks ago, I was on a corner of Fifth Avenue and I saw a small girl—not a big one—start across from the opposite corner, and I exclaimed to myself joyfully, "That is certainly my Margaret!" so I rushed to meet her. But as she came nearer I began to doubt, and said to myself, "It's a Margaret—that is plain enough—but I'm afraid it is somebody else's." So when I was passing her I held my shell so she couldn't help but see it. Dear, she only glanced at it and passed on! I wondered if she could have overlooked it. It seemed best to find out; so I turned and followed and caught up with her, and said, deferentially; "Dear Miss, I already know your first name by the look of you, but would you mind telling me your other one?" She was vexed and said pretty sharply, "It's Douglas, if you're so anxious to know. I know your name by your looks, and I'd advise you to shut yourself up with your pen and ink and write some more rubbish. I am surprised that they allow you to run' at large. You are likely to get run over by a baby-carriage any time. Run along now and don't let the cows bite you." What an idea! There aren't any cows in Fifth Avenue. But I didn't smile; I didn't let on to perceive how uncultured she was. She was from the country, of course, and didn't know what a comical blunder she was making.

Mr. Rogers's health was very poor that winter, and Clemens urged him to try Bermuda, and offered to go back with him; so they sailed away to the summer island, and though Margaret was gone, there was other entertaining company—other granddaughters to be adopted, and new friends and old friends, and diversions of many sorts. Mr. Rogers's son-in-law, William Evarts Benjamin, came down and joined the little group. It was one of Mark Twain's real holidays. Mr. Rogers's health improved rapidly, and Mark Twain was in fine trim. To Mrs. Rogers, at the end of the first week, he wrote:

Dear Mrs. Rogers, He is getting along splendidly! This was the very place for him. He enjoys himself & is as quarrelsome as a cat.

But he will get a backset if Benjamin goes home. Benjamin is the brightest man in these regions, & the best company. Bright? He is much more than that, he is brilliant. He keeps the crowd intensely alive.

With love & all good wishes.
S. L. C.

Mark Twain and Henry Rogers were much together and much observed. They were often referred to as "the King" and "the Rajah," and it was always a question whether it was "the King" who took care of "the Rajah," or vice versa. There was generally a group to gather around them, and Clemens was sure of an attentive audience, whether he wanted to air his philosophies, his views of the human race, or to read aloud from the verses of Kipling.

Page 847

"I am not fond of all poetry," he would say; "but there's something in Kipling that appeals to me. I guess he's just about my level."

Miss Wallace recalls certain Kipling readings in his room, when his friends gathered to listen.

On those Kipling evenings the 'mise-en-scene' was a striking one. The bare hotel room, the pine woodwork and pine furniture, loose windows which rattled in the sea-wind. Once in a while a gust of asthmatic music from the spiritless orchestra downstairs came up the hallway. Yellow, unprotected gas-lights burned uncertainly, and Mark Twain in the midst of this lay on his bed (there was no couch) still in his white serge suit, with the light from the jet shining down on the crown of his silver hair, making it gleam and glisten like frosted threads.

In one hand he held his book, in the other he had his pipe, which he used principally to gesture with in the most dramatic passages.

Margaret's small successors became the earliest members of the Angel Fish Club, which Clemens concluded to organize after a visit to the spectacular Bermuda aquarium. The pretty angel-fish suggested youth and feminine beauty to him, and his adopted granddaughters became angel-fish to him from that time forward. He bought little enamel angel-fish pins, and carried a number of them with him most of the time, so that he could create membership on short notice. It was just another of the harmless and happy diversions of his gentler side. He was always fond of youth and freshness. He regarded the decrepitude of old age as an unnecessary part of life. Often he said:

"If I had been helping the Almighty when, He created man, I would have had Him begin at the other end, and start human beings with old age. How much better it would have been to start old and have all the bitterness and blindness of age in the beginning! One would not mind then if he were looking forward to a joyful youth. Think of the joyous prospect of growing young instead of old! Think of looking forward to eighteen instead of eighty! Yes, the Almighty made a poor job of it. I wish He had invited my assistance."

To one of the angel fish he wrote, just after his return:

I miss you, dear. I miss Bermuda, too, but not so much as I miss you; for you were rare, and occasional and select, and Ltd.; whereas Bermuda's charms and, graciousnesses were free and common and unrestricted—like the rain, you know, which falls upon the just and the unjust alike; a thing which would not happen if I were superintending the rain's affairs. No, I would rain softly and sweetly upon the just, but whenever I caught a sample of the unjust outdoors I would drown him.

CCLXVII

VIEWS AND ADDRESSES

Page 848

[As I am beginning this chapter, April 16, 1912, the news comes of the loss, on her first trip, of the great White Star Line steamer Titanic, with the destruction of many passengers, among whom are Frank D. Millet, William T. Stead, Isadore Straus, John Jacob Astor, and other distinguished men. They died as heroes, remaining with the ship in order that the women and children might be saved. It was the kind of death Frank Millet would have wished to die. He was always a soldier—a knight. He has appeared from time to time in these pages, for he was a dear friend of the Clemens household. One of America's foremost painters; at the time of his death he was head of the American Academy of Arts in Rome.]

Mark Twain made a number of addresses during the spring of 1908. He spoke at the Cartoonists' dinner, very soon after his return from Bermuda; he spoke at the Booksellers' banquet, expressing his debt of obligation to those who had published and sold his books; he delivered a fine address at the dinner given by the British Schools and University Club at Delmonico's, May 25th, in honor of Queen Victoria's birthday. In that speech he paid high tribute to the Queen for her attitude toward America, during the crisis of the Civil War, and to her royal consort, Prince Albert.

What she did for us in America in our time of storm and stress we shall not forget, and whenever we call it to mind we shall always gratefully remember the wise and righteous mind that guided her in it and sustained and supported her—Prince Albert's. We need not talk any idle talk here to-night about either possible or impossible war between two countries; there will be no war while we remain sane and the son of Victoria and Albert sits upon the throne. In conclusion, I believe I may justly claim to utter the voice of my country in saying that we hold him in deep honor, and also in cordially wishing him a long life and a happy reign.

But perhaps his most impressive appearance was at the dedication of the great City College (May 14, 1908), where President John Finley, who had been struggling along with insufficient room, was to have space at last for his freer and fuller educational undertakings. A great number of honored scholars, statesmen, and diplomats assembled on the college campus, a spacious open court surrounded by stately college architecture of medieval design. These distinguished guests were clad in their academic robes, and the procession could not have been widely different from that one at Oxford of a year before. But there was something rather fearsome about it, too. A kind of scaffolding had been reared in the center of the campus for the ceremonies; and when those grave men in their robes of state stood grouped upon it the picture was strikingly suggestive of one of George Cruikshank's drawings of an execution scene at the Tower of London. Many of the robes were black—these would

Page 849

be the priests—and the few scarlet ones would be the cardinals who might have assembled for some royal martyrdom. There was a bright May sunlight over it all, one of those still, cool brightnesses which served to heighten the weird effect. I am sure that others felt it besides myself, for everybody seemed wordless and awed, even at times when there was no occasion for silence. There was something of another age about the whole setting, to say the least.

We left the place in a motor-car, a crowd of boys following after. As Clemens got in they gathered around the car and gave the college yell, ending with “Twain! Twain! Twain!” and added three cheers for Tom Sawyer, Huck Finn, and Pudd’nhead Wilson. They called for a speech, but he only said a few words in apology for not granting their request. He made a speech to them that night at the Waldorf—where he proposed for the City College a chair of citizenship, an idea which met with hearty applause.

In the same address he referred to the “God Trust” motto on the coins, and spoke approvingly of the President’s order for its removal.

We do not trust in God, in the important matters of life, and not even a minister of the Gospel will take any coin for a cent more than its accepted value because of that motto. If cholera should ever reach these shores we should probably pray to be delivered from the plague, but we would put our main trust in the Board of Health.

Next morning, commenting on the report of this speech, he said:

“If only the reporters would not try to improve on what I say. They seem to miss the fact that the very art of saying a thing effectively is in its delicacy, and as they can’t reproduce the manner and intonation in type they make it emphatic and clumsy in trying to convey it to the reader.”

I pleaded that the reporters were often young men, eager, and unmellowed in their sense of literary art.

“Yes,” he agreed, “they are so afraid their readers won’t see my good points that they set up red flags to mark them and beat a gong. They mean well, but I wish they wouldn’t do it.”

He referred to the portion of his speech concerning the motto on the coins. He had freely expressed similar sentiments on other public occasions, and he had received a letter criticizing him for saying that we do not really trust in God in any financial matter.

“I wanted to answer it,” he said; “but I destroyed it. It didn’t seem worth noticing.”

I asked how the motto had originated.

“About 1853 some idiot in Congress wanted to announce to the world that this was a religious nation, and proposed putting it there, and no other Congressman had courage enough to oppose it, of course. It took courage in those days to do a thing like that; but I think the same thing would happen to-day.”

“Still the country has become broader. It took a brave man before the Civil War to confess he had read the 'Age of Reason'.”

Page 850

“So it did, and yet that seems a mild book now. I read it first when I was a cub pilot, read it with fear and hesitation, but marveling at its fearlessness and wonderful power. I read it again a year or two ago, for some reason, and was amazed to see how tame it had become. It seemed that Paine was apologizing everywhere for hurting the feelings of the reader.”

He drifted, naturally, into a discussion of the Knickerbocker Trust Company's suspension, which had tied up some fifty-five thousand dollars of his capital, and wondered how many were trusting in God for the return of these imperiled sums. Clemens himself, at this time, did not expect to come out whole from that disaster. He had said very little when the news came, though it meant that his immediate fortunes were locked up, and it came near stopping the building activities at Redding. It was only the smaller things of life that irritated him. He often met large calamities with a serenity which almost resembled indifference. In the Knickerbocker situation he even found humor as time passed, and wrote a number of gay letters, some of which found their way into print.

It should be added that in the end there was no loss to any of the Knickerbocker depositors.

CCLXVIII

REDDING

The building of the new home at Redding had been going steadily forward for something more than a year. John Mead Howells had made the plans; W. W. Sunderland and his son Philip, of Danbury, Connecticut, were the builders, and in the absence of Miss Clemens, then on a concert tour, Mark Twain's secretary, Miss I. V. Lyon, had superintended the furnishing.

“Innocence at Home,” as the place was originally named, was to be ready for its occupant in June, with every detail in place, as he desired. He had never visited Redding; he had scarcely even glanced at the plans or discussed any of the decorations of the new home. He had required only that there should be one great living-room for the orchestrelle, and another big room for the billiard-table, with plenty of accommodations for guests. He had required that the billiard-room be red, for something in his nature answered to the warm luxury of that color, particularly in moments of diversion. Besides, his other billiard-rooms had been red, and such association may not be lightly disregarded. His one other requirement was that the place should be complete.

“I don't want to see it,” he said, “until the cat is purring on the hearth.”

Howells says:

“He had grown so weary of change, and so indifferent to it, that he was without interest.”

But it was rather, I think, that he was afraid of losing interest by becoming wearied with details which were likely to exasperate him; also, he wanted the dramatic surprise of walking into a home that had been conjured into existence as with a word.

Page 851

It was expected that the move would be made early in the month; but there were delays, and it was not until the 18th of June that he took possession.

The plan, at this time, was only to use the Redding place as a summer residence, and the Fifth Avenue house was not dismantled. A few days before the 18th the servants, with one exception, were taken up to the new house, Clemens and myself remaining in the loneliness of No. 21, attending to the letters in the morning and playing billiards the rest of the time, waiting for the appointed day and train. It was really a pleasant three days. He invented a new game, and we were riotous and laughed as loudly as we pleased. I think he talked very little of the new home which he was so soon to see. It was referred to no oftener than once or twice a day, and then I believe only in connection with certain of the billiard-room arrangements. I have wondered since what picture of it he could have had in his mind, for he had never seen a photograph. He had a general idea that it was built upon a hill, and that its architecture was of the Italian villa order. I confess I had moments of anxiety, for I had selected the land for him, and had been more or less accessory otherwise. I did not really worry, for I knew how beautiful and peaceful it all was; also something of his taste and needs.

It had been a dry spring, and country roads were dusty, so that those who were responsible had been praying for rain, to be followed by a pleasant day for his arrival. Both petitions were granted; June 18th would fall on Thursday, and Monday night there came a good, thorough, and refreshing shower that washed the vegetation clean and laid the dust. The morning of the 18th was bright and sunny and cool. Clemens was up and shaved by six o'clock in order to be in time, though the train did not leave until four in the afternoon—an express newly timed to stop at Redding—its first trip scheduled for the day of Mark Twain's arrival.

We were still playing billiards when word was brought up that the cab was waiting. My daughter, Louise, whose school on Long Island had closed that day, was with us. Clemens wore his white flannels and a Panama hat, and at the station a group quickly collected, reporters and others, to interview him and speed him to his new home. He was cordial and talkative, and quite evidently full of pleasant anticipation. A reporter or two and a special photographer came along, to be present at his arrival.

The new, quick train, the green, flying landscape, with glimpses of the Sound and white sails, the hillsides and clear streams becoming rapidly steeper and dearer as we turned northward: all seemed to gratify him, and when he spoke at all it was approvingly. The hour and a half required to cover the sixty miles of distance seemed very short. As the train slowed down for the Redding station, he said:

“We'll leave this box of candy”—he had bought a large box on the way —“those colored porters sometimes like candy, and we can get some more.”

Page 852

He drew out a great handful of silver.

“Give them something—give everybody liberally that does any service.”

There was a sort of open-air reception in waiting. Redding had recognized the occasion as historic. A varied assemblage of vehicles festooned with flowers had gathered to offer a gallant country welcome.

It was now a little before six o'clock of that long June day, still and dreamlike; and to the people assembled there may have been something which was not quite reality in the scene. There was a tendency to be very still. They nodded, waved their hands to him, smiled, and looked their fill; but a spell lay upon them, and they did not cheer. It would have been a pity if they had done so. A noise, and the illusion would have been shattered.

His carriage led away on the three-mile drive to the house on the hilltop, and the floral turnout fell in behind. No first impression of a fair land could have come at a sweeter time. Hillsides were green, fields were white with daisies, dog-wood and laurel shone among the trees. And over all was the blue sky, and everywhere the fragrance of June.

He was very quiet as we drove along. Once with gentle humor, looking over a white daisy field, he said:

“That is buckwheat. I always recognize buckwheat when I see it. I wish I knew as much about other things as I know about buckwheat. It seems to be very plentiful here; it even grows by the roadside.” And a little later: “This is the kind of a road I like; a good country road through the woods.”

The water was flowing over the mill-dam where the road crosses the Saugatuck, and he expressed approval of that clear, picturesque little river, one of those charming Connecticut streams. A little farther on a brook cascaded down the hillside, and he compared it with some of the tiny streams of Switzerland, I believe the Giessbach. The lane that led to the new home opened just above, and as he entered the leafy way he said, “This is just the kind of a lane I like,” thus completing his acceptance of everything but the house and the location.

The last of the procession had dropped away at the entrance of the lane, and he was alone with those who had most anxiety for his verdict. They had not long to wait. As the carriage ascended higher to the open view he looked away, across the Saugatuck Valley to the nestling village and church-spire and farm-houses, and to the distant hills, and declared the land to be a good land and beautiful—a spot to satisfy one's soul. Then came the house—simple and severe in its architecture—an Italian villa, such as he had known in Florence, adapted now to American climate and needs. The scars of building had not all healed yet, but close to the house waved green grass and blooming

flowers that might have been there always. Neither did the house itself look new. The soft, gray stucco had taken on a tone that melted into the sky and foliage of its

Page 853

background. At the entrance his domestic staff waited to greet him, and then he stepped across the threshold into the wide hall and stood in his own home for the first time in seventeen years. It was an anxious moment, and no one spoke immediately. But presently his eye had taken in the satisfying harmony of the place and followed on through the wide doors that led to the dining-room—on through the open French windows to an enchanting vista of tree-tops and distant farmside and blue hills. He said, very gently:

“How beautiful it all is? I did not think it could be as beautiful as this.”

He was taken through the rooms; the great living-room at one end of the hall—a room on the walls of which there was no picture, but only color-harmony—and at the other end of the hall, the splendid, glowing billiard-room, where hung all the pictures in which he took delight. Then to the floor above, with its spacious apartments and a continuation of color—welcome and concord, the windows open to the pleasant evening hills. When he had seen it all—the natural Italian garden below the terraces; the loggia, whose arches framed landscape vistas and formed a rare picture-gallery; when he had completed the round and stood in the billiard-room—his especial domain—once more he said, as a final verdict:

“It is a perfect house—perfect, so far as I can see, in every detail. It might have been here always.”

He was at home there from that moment—absolutely, marvelously at home, for he fitted the setting perfectly, and there was not a hitch or flaw in his adaptation. To see him over the billiard-table, five minutes later, one could easily fancy that Mark Twain, as well as the house, had “been there always.” Only the presence of his daughters was needed now to complete his satisfaction in everything.

There were guests that first evening—a small home dinner-party—and so perfect were the appointments and service, that one not knowing would scarcely have imagined it to be the first dinner served in that lovely room. A little later; at the foot of the garden of bay and cedar, neighbors, inspired by Dan Beard, who had recently located near by, set off some fireworks. Clemens stepped out on the terrace and saw rockets climbing through the summer sky to announce his arrival.

“I wonder why they all go to so much trouble for me,” he said, softly. “I never go to any trouble for anybody”—a statement which all who heard it, and all his multitude of readers in every land, stood ready to deny.

That first evening closed with billiards—boisterous, triumphant billiards—and when with midnight the day ended and the cues were set in the rack, there was none to say that Mark Twain's first day in his new home had not been a happy one.

CCLXIX

FIRST DAYS AT STORMFIELD

I went up next afternoon, for I knew how he dreaded loneliness. We played billiards for a time, then set out for a walk, following the long drive to the leafy lane that led to my own property. Presently he said:

Page 854

"In one way I am sorry I did not see this place sooner. I never want to leave it again. If I had known it was so beautiful I should have vacated the house in town and moved up here permanently."

I suggested that he could still do so, if he chose, and he entered immediately into the idea. By and by we turned down a deserted road, grassy and beautiful, that ran along his land. At one side was a slope facing the west, and dotted with the slender, cypress-like cedars of New England. He had asked if that were part of his land, and on being told it was he said:

"I would like Howells to have a house there. We must try to give that to Howells."

At the foot of the hill we came to a brook and followed it into a meadow. I told him that I had often caught fine trout there, and that soon I would bring in some for breakfast. He answered:

"Yes, I should like that. I don't care to catch them any more myself. I like them very hot."

We passed through some woods and came out near my own ancient little house. He noticed it and said:

"The man who built that had some memory of Greece in his mind when he put on that little porch with those columns."

My second daughter, Frances, was coming from a distant school on the evening train, and the carriage was starting just then to bring her. I suggested that perhaps he would find it pleasant to make the drive.

"Yes," he agreed, "I should enjoy that."

So I took the reins, and he picked up little Joy, who came running out just then, and climbed into the back seat. It was another beautiful evening, and he was in a talkative humor. Joy pointed out a small turtle in the road, and he said:

"That is a wild turtle. Do you think you could teach it arithmetic?"

Joy was uncertain.

"Well," he went on, "you ought to get an arithmetic—a little ten-cent arithmetic—and teach that turtle."

We passed some swampy woods, rather dim and junglelike.

"Those," he said, "are elephant woods."

But Joy answered:

“They are fairy woods. The fairies are there, but you can’t see them because they wear magic cloaks.”

He said: “I wish I had one of those magic cloaks, sometimes. I had one once, but it is worn out now.”

Joy looked at him reverently, as one who had once been the owner of a piece of fairyland.

It was a sweet drive to and from the village. There are none too many such evenings in a lifetime. Colonel Harvey’s little daughter, Dorothy, came up a day or two later, and with my daughter Louise spent the first week with him in the new home. They were created “Angel-Fishes”—the first in the new aquarium; that is to say, the billiard-room, where he followed out the idea by hanging a row of colored prints of Bermuda fishes in a sort of frieze around the walls. Each visiting member was required to select one as her particular patron fish and he

Page 855

wrote her name upon it. It was his delight to gather his juvenile guests in this room and teach them the science of billiard angles; but it was so difficult to resist taking the cue and making plays himself that he was required to stand on a little platform and give instruction just out of reach. His snowy flannels and gleaming white hair, against those rich red walls, with those small, summer-clad players, made a pretty picture.

The place did not retain its original name. He declared that it would always be “Innocence at Home” to the angel-fish visitors, but that the title didn’t remain continuously appropriate. The money which he had derived from Captain Stormfield’s Visit to Heaven had been used to build the loggia wing, and he considered the name of “Stormfield” as a substitute. When, presently, the summer storms gathered on that rock-bound, open hill, with its wide reaches of vine and shrub-wild, fierce storms that bent the birch and cedar, and strained at the bay and huckleberry, with lightning and turbulent wind and thunder, followed by the charging rain—the name seemed to become peculiarly appropriate. Standing with his head bared to the tumult, his white hair tossing in the blast, and looking out upon the wide splendor of the spectacle, he rechristened the place, and “Stormfield” it became and remained.

The last day of Mark Twain’s first week in Redding, June 25th, was saddened by the news of the death of Grover Cleveland at his home in Princeton, New Jersey. Clemens had always been an ardent Cleveland admirer, and to Mrs. Cleveland now he sent this word of condolence—

Your husband was a man I knew and loved and honored for twenty-five years. I mourn with you.

And once during the evening he said:

“He was one of our two or three real Presidents. There is none to take his place.”

CCLXX

THE ALDRICH MEMORIAL

At the end of June came the dedication at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, of the Thomas Bailey Aldrich Memorial Museum, which the poet’s wife had established there in the old Aldrich homestead. It was hot weather. We were obliged to take a rather poor train from South Norwalk, and Clemens was silent and gloomy most of the way to Boston. Once there, however, lodged in a cool and comfortable hotel, matters improved. He had brought along for reading the old copy of Sir Thomas Malory’s *Arthur Tales*, and after dinner he took off his clothes and climbed into bed and sat up and read aloud from

those stately legends, with comments that I wish I could remember now, only stopping at last when overpowered with sleep.

Page 856

We went on a special train to Portsmouth next morning through the summer heat, and assembled, with those who were to speak, in the back portion of the opera-house, behind the scenes: Clemens was genial and good-natured with all the discomfort of it; and he liked to fancy, with Howells, who had come over from Kittery Point, how Aldrich must be amused at the whole circumstance if he could see them punishing themselves to do honor to his memory. Richard Watson Gilder was there, and Hamilton Mabie; also Governor Floyd of New Hampshire; Colonel Higginson, Robert Bridges, and other distinguished men. We got to the more open atmosphere of the stage presently, and the exercises began. Clemens was last on the program.

The others had all said handsome, serious things, and Clemens himself had mentally prepared something of the sort; but when his turn came, and he rose to speak, a sudden reaction must have set in, for he delivered an address that certainly would have delighted Aldrich living, and must have delighted him dead, if he could hear it. It was full of the most charming humor, delicate, refreshing, and spontaneous. The audience, that had been maintaining a proper gravity throughout, showed its appreciation in ripples of merriment that grew presently into genuine waves of laughter. He spoke out his regret for having worn black clothes. It was a mistake, he said, to consider this a solemn time—Aldrich would not have wished it to be so considered. He had been a man who loved humor and brightness and wit, and had helped to make life merry and delightful. Certainly, if he could know, he would not wish this dedication of his own home to be a lugubrious, smileless occasion. Outside, when the services were ended, the venerable juvenile writer, J. T. Trowbridge, came up to Clemens with extended hand. Clemens said: "Trowbridge, are you still alive? You must be a thousand years old. Why, I listened to your stories while I was being rocked in the cradle." Trowbridge said:

"Mark, there's some mistake. My earliest infant smile was wakened with one of your jokes."

They stood side by side against a fence in the blazing sun and were photographed—an interesting picture.

We returned to Boston that evening. Clemens did not wish to hurry in the summer heat, and we remained another day quietly sight-seeing, and driving around and around Commonwealth Avenue in a victoria in the cool of the evening. Once, remembering Aldrich, he said:

"I was just planning Tom Sawyer when he was beginning the 'Story of a Bad Boy'. When I heard that he was writing that I thought of giving up mine, but Aldrich insisted that it would be a foolish thing to do. He thought my Missouri boy could not by any chance conflict with his boy of New England, and of course he was right."

He spoke of how great literary minds usually came along in company. He said:

“Now and then, on the stream of time, small gobs of that thing which we call genius drift down, and a few of these lodge at some particular point, and others collect about them and make a sort of intellectual island—a towhead, as they say on the river—such an accumulation of intellect we call a group, or school, and name it.

Page 857

"Thirty years ago there was the Cambridge group. Now there's been still another, which included Aldrich and Howells and Stedman and Cable. It will soon be gone. I suppose they will have to name it by and by."

He pointed out houses here and there of people he had known and visited in other days. The driver was very anxious to go farther, to other and more distinguished sights. Clemens mildly but firmly refused any variation of the program, and so we kept on driving around and around the shaded loop of Beacon Street until dusk fell and the lights began to twinkle among the trees.

CCLXXI

DEATH OF "SAM" MOFFETT

Clemens' next absence from Redding came on August 1, 1908, when the sudden and shocking news was received of the drowning of his nephew, Samuel E. Moffett, in the surf of the Jersey shore. Moffett was his nearest male relative, and a man of fine intellect and talents. He was superior in those qualities which men love—he was large-minded and large-hearted, and of noble ideals. With much of the same sense of humor which had made his uncle's fame, he had what was really an abnormal faculty of acquiring and retaining encyclopedic data. Once as a child he had visited Hartford when Clemens was laboring over his history game. The boy was much interested, and asked permission to help. His uncle willingly consented, and referred him to the library for his facts. But he did not need to consult the books; he already had English history stored away, and knew where to find every detail of it. At the time of his death Moffett held an important editorial position on Collier's Weekly.

Clemens was fond and proud of his nephew. Returning from the funeral, he was much depressed, and a day or two later became really ill. He was in bed for a few days, resting, he said, after the intense heat of the journey. Then he was about again and proposed billiards as a diversion. We were all alone one very still, warm August afternoon playing, when he suddenly said:

"I feel a little dizzy; I will sit down a moment."

I brought him a glass of water and he seemed to recover, but when he rose and started to play I thought he had a dazed look. He said:

"I have lost my memory. I don't know which is my ball. I don't know what game we are playing."

But immediately this condition passed, and we thought little of it, considering it merely a phase of biliousness due to his recent journey. I have been told since, by eminent practitioners, that it was the first indication of a more serious malady.



He became apparently quite himself again and showed his usual vigor-light of step and movement, able to skip up and down stairs as heretofore. In a letter to Mrs. Crane, August 12th, he spoke of recent happenings:

Page 858

Dear aunt sue,—It was a most moving, a most heartbreaking sight, the spectacle of that stunned & crushed & inconsolable family. I came back here in bad shape, & had a bilious collapse, but I am all right again, though the doctor from New York has given peremptory orders that I am not to stir from here before frost. O fortunate Sam Moffett! fortunate Livy Clemens! doubly fortunate Susy! Those swords go through & through my heart, but there is never a moment that I am not glad, for the sake of the dead, that they have escaped. How Livy would love this place! How her very soul would steep itself thankfully in this peace, this tranquillity, this deep stillness, this dreamy expanse of woodsy hill & valley! You must come, Aunt Sue, & stay with us a real good visit. Since June 26 we have had 21 guests, & they have all liked it and said they would come again.

To Howells, on the same day, he wrote:

Won't you & Mrs. Howells & Mildred come & give us as many days as you can spare & examine John's triumph? It is the most satisfactory house I am acquainted with, & the most satisfactorily situated . . . I have dismissed my stenographer, & have entered upon a holiday whose other end is the cemetery.

CCLXXII

STORMFIELD ADVENTURES

Clemens had fully decided, by this time, to live the year round in the retirement at Stormfield, and the house at 21 Fifth Avenue was being dismantled. He had also, as he said, given up his dictations for the time, at least, after continuing them, with more or less regularity, for a period of two and a half years, during which he had piled up about half a million words of comment and reminiscence. His general idea had been to add portions of this matter to his earlier books as the copyrights expired, to give them new life and interest, and he felt that he had plenty now for any such purpose.

He gave his time mainly to his guests, his billiards, and his reading, though of course he could not keep from writing on this subject and that as the fancy moved him, and a drawer in one of his dressers began to accumulate fresh though usually fragmentary manuscripts. . . He read the daily paper, but he no longer took the keen, restless interest in public affairs. New York politics did not concern him any more, and national politics not much. When the Evening Post wrote him concerning the advisability of renominating Governor Hughes he replied:

If you had asked me two months ago my answer would have been prompt & loud & strong: yes, I want Governor Hughes renominated. But it is too late, & my mouth is closed. I have become a citizen & taxpayer of Connecticut, & could not now, without

impertinence, meddle in matters which are none of my business. I could not do it with impertinence without trespassing on the monopoly of another.

Howells speaks of Mark Twain's "absolute content" with his new home, and these are the proper words' to express it. He was like a storm-beaten ship that had drifted at last into a serene South Sea haven.

Page 859

The days began and ended in tranquillity. There were no special morning regulations: One could have his breakfast at any time and at almost any place. He could have it in bed if he liked, or in the loggia or livingroom, or billiard-room. He might even have it in the diningroom, or on the terrace, just outside. Guests—there were usually guests—might suit their convenience in this matter—also as to the forenoons. The afternoon brought games—that is, billiards, provided the guest knew billiards, otherwise hearts. Those two games were his safety-valves, and while there were no printed requirements relating to them the unwritten code of Stormfield provided that guests, of whatever age or previous faith, should engage in one or both of these diversions.

Clemens, who usually spent his forenoon in bed with his reading and his letters, came to the green table of skill and chance eager for the onset; if the fates were kindly, he approved of them openly. If not—well, the fates were old enough to know better, and, as heretofore, had to take the consequences. Sometimes, when the weather was fine and there were no games (this was likely to be on Sunday afternoons), there were drives among the hills and along the Saugatuck through the Bedding Glen.

The cat was always “purring on the hearth” at Stormfield—several cats—for Mark Twain’s fondness for this clean, intelligent domestic animal remained, to the end, one of his happiest characteristics. There were never too many cats at Stormfield, and the “hearth” included the entire house, even the billiard-table. When, as was likely to happen at any time during the game, the kittens Sinbad, or Danbury, or Billiards would decide to hop up and play with the balls, or sit in the pockets and grab at them as they went by, the game simply added this element of chance, and the uninvited player was not disturbed. The cats really owned Stormfield; any one could tell that from their deportment. Mark Twain held the title deeds; but it was Danbury and Sinbad and the others that possessed the premises. They occupied any portion of the house or its furnishings at will, and they never failed to attract attention. Mark Twain might be preoccupied and indifferent to the comings and goings of other members of the household; but no matter what he was doing, let Danbury appear in the offing and he was observed and greeted with due deference, and complimented and made comfortable. Clemens would arise from the table and carry certain choice food out on the terrace to Tammany, and be satisfied with almost no acknowledgment by way of appreciation. One could not imagine any home of Mark Twain where the cats were not supreme. In the evening, as at 21 Fifth Avenue, there was music—the stately measures of the orchestrelle—while Mark Twain smoked and mingled unusual speculation with long, long backward dreams.

It was three months from the day of arrival in Redding that some guests came to Stormfield without invitation—two burglars, who were carrying off some bundles of silver when they were discovered. Claude, the butler, fired a pistol after them to hasten their departure, and Clemens, wakened by the shots, thought the family was opening champagne and went to sleep again.

Page 860

It was far in the night; but neighbor H. A. Lounsbury and Deputy-Sheriff Banks were notified, and by morning the thieves were captured, though only after a pretty desperate encounter, during which the officer received a bullet-wound. Lounsbury and a Stormfield guest had tracked them in the dark with a lantern to Bethel, a distance of some seven miles. The thieves, also their pursuers, had boarded the train there. Sheriff Banks was waiting at the West Redding station when the train came down, and there the capture was made. It was a remarkably prompt and shrewd piece of work. Clemens gave credit for its success chiefly to Lounsbury, whose talents in many fields always impressed him. The thieves were taken to the Redding Town Hall for a preliminary healing. Subsequently they received severe sentences.

Clemens tacked this notice on his front door:

Notice

To the next burglar

There is nothing but plated ware in this house now and henceforth.

You will find it in that brass thing in the dining-room over in the corner by the basket of kittens.

If you want the basket put the kittens in the brass thing. Do not make a noise—it disturbs the family.

You will find rubbers in the front hall by that thing which has the umbrellas in it, chiffonnier, I think they call it, or pergola, or something like that.

Please close the door when you go away!

Very truly yours,
S. L. Clemens.

CCLXXIII

STORMFIELD PHILOSOPHIES

Now came the tranquil days of the Connecticut autumn. The change of the landscape colors was a constant delight to Mark Twain. There were several large windows in his room, and he called them his picture-gallery. The window-panes were small, and each formed a separate picture of its own that was changing almost hourly. The red tones that began to run through the foliage; the red berry bushes; the fading grass, and the little touches of sparkling frost that came every now and then at early morning; the

background of distant blue hills and changing skies-these things gave his gallery a multitude of variation that no art-museums could furnish. He loved it all, and he loved to walk out in it, pacing up and down the terrace, or the long path that led to the pergola at the foot of a natural garden. If a friend came, he was willing to walk much farther; and we often descended the hill in one direction or another, though usually going toward the "gorge," a romantic spot where a clear brook found its way through a deep and rather dangerous-looking chasm. Once he was persuaded to descend into this fairy-like place, for it was well worth exploring; but his footing was no longer sure and he did not go far.

Page 861

He liked better to sit on the grass-grown, rocky arch above and look down into it, and let his talk follow his mood. He liked to contemplate the geology of his surroundings, the record of the ageless periods of construction required to build the world. The marvels of science always appealed to him. He reveled in the thought of the almost limitless stretches of time, the millions upon millions of years that had been required for this stratum and that—he liked to amaze himself with the sounding figures. I remember him expressing a wish to see the Grand Canon of Arizona, where, on perpendicular walls six thousand feet high, the long story of geological creation is written. I had stopped there during my Western trip of the previous year, and I told him something of its wonders. I urged him to see them for himself, offering to go with him. He said:

“I should enjoy that; but the railroad journey is so far and I should have no peace. The papers would get hold of it, and I would have to make speeches and be interviewed, and I never want to do any of those things again.”

I suggested that the railroads would probably be glad to place a private car at his service, so that he might travel in comfort; but he shook his head.

“That would only make me more conspicuous.”

“How about a disguise?”

“Yes,” he said, “I might put on a red wig and false whiskers and change my name, but I couldn’t disguise my drawling speech and they’d find me out.”

It was amusing, but it was rather sad, too. His fame had deprived him of valued privileges.

He talked of many things during these little excursions. Once he told how he had successively advised his nephew, Moffett, in the matter of obtaining a desirable position. Moffett had wanted to become a reporter. Clemens devised a characteristic scheme. He said:

“I will get you a place on any newspaper you may select if you promise faithfully to follow out my instructions.”

The applicant agreed, eagerly enough. Clemens said:

“Go to the newspaper of your choice. Say that you are idle and want work, that you are pining for work—longing for it, and that you ask no wages, and will support yourself. All that you ask is work. That you will do anything, sweep, fill the inkstands, mucilage-bottles, run errands, and be generally useful. You must never ask for wages. You must wait until the offer of wages comes to you. You must work just as faithfully and just as eagerly as if you were being paid for it. Then see what happens.”

The scheme had worked perfectly. Young Moffett had followed his instructions to the letter. By and by he attracted attention. He was employed in a variety of ways that earned him the gratitude and the confidence of the office. In obedience to further instructions, he began to make short, brief, unadorned notices of small news matters that came under his eye and laid them on the city editor's desk. No pay was asked; none was expected. Occasionally one of the items was used. Then, of course, it happened, as it must sooner or later at a busy time, that he was given a small news assignment. There was no trouble about his progress after that. He had won the confidence of the management and shown that he was not afraid to work.

Page 862

The plan had been variously tried since, Clemens said, and he could not remember any case in which it had failed. The idea may have grown out of his own pilot apprenticeship on the river, when cub pilots not only received no salary, but paid for the privilege of learning.

Clemens discussed public matters less often than formerly, but they were not altogether out of his mind. He thought our republic was in a fair way to become a monarchy—that the signs were already evident. He referred to the letter which he had written so long ago in Boston, with its amusing fancy of the Archbishop of Dublin and his Grace of Ponkapog, and declared that, after all, it contained something of prophecy.—[See chap. xcvi; also Appendix M.]—He would not live to see the actual monarchy, he said, but it was coming.

“I’m not expecting it in my time nor in my children’s time, though it may be sooner than we think. There are two special reasons for it and one condition. The first reason is, that it is in the nature of man to want a definite something to love, honor, reverently look up to and obey; a God and King, for example. The second reason is, that while little republics have lasted long, protected by their poverty and insignificance, great ones have not. And the condition is, vast power and wealth, which breed commercial and political corruptions, and incite public favorites to dangerous ambitions.”

He repeated what I had heard him say before, that in one sense we already had a monarchy; that is to say, a ruling public and political aristocracy which could create a Presidential succession. He did not say these things bitterly now, but reflectively and rather indifferently.

He was inclined to speak unhopefully of the international plans for universal peace, which were being agitated rather persistently.

“The gospel of peace,” he said, “is always making a deal of noise, always rejoicing in its progress but always neglecting to furnish statistics. There are no peaceful nations now. All Christendom is a soldier-camp. The poor have been taxed in some nations to the starvation point to support the giant armaments which Christian governments have built up, each to protect itself from the rest of the Christian brotherhood, and incidentally to snatch any scrap of real estate left exposed by a weaker owner. King Leopold II. of Belgium, the most intensely Christian monarch, except Alexander VI., that has escaped hell thus far, has stolen an entire kingdom in Africa, and in fourteen years of Christian endeavor there has reduced the population from thirty millions to fifteen by murder and mutilation and overwork, confiscating the labor of the helpless natives, and giving them nothing in return but salvation and a home in heaven, furnished at the last moment by the Christian priest.

“Within the last generation each Christian power has turned the bulk of its attention to finding out newer and still newer and more and more effective ways of killing Christians,

and, incidentally, a pagan now and then; and the surest way to get rich quickly in Christ's earthly kingdom is to invent a kind of gun that can kill more Christians at one shot than any other existing kind. All the Christian nations are at it. The more advanced they are, the bigger and more destructive engines of war they create."

Page 863

Once, speaking of battles great and small, and how important even a small battle must seem to a soldier who had fought in no other, he said:

“To him it is a mighty achievement, an achievement with a big A, when to a wax-worn veteran it would be a mere incident. For instance, to the soldier of one battle, San Juan Hill was an Achievement with an A as big as the Pyramids of Cheops; whereas, if Napoleon had fought it, he would have set it down on his cuff at the time to keep from forgetting it had happened. But that is all natural and human enough. We are all like that.”

The curiosities and absurdities of religious superstitions never failed to furnish him with themes more or less amusing. I remember one Sunday, when he walked down to have luncheon at my house, he sat under the shade and fell to talking of Herod's slaughter of the innocents, which he said could not have happened.

“Tacitus makes no mention of it,” he said, “and he would hardly have overlooked a sweeping order like that, issued by a petty ruler like Herod. Just consider a little king of a corner of the Roman Empire ordering the slaughter of the first-born of a lot of Roman subjects. Why, the Emperor would have reached out that long arm of his and dismissed Herod. That tradition is probably about as authentic as those connected with a number of old bridges in Europe which are said to have been built by Satan. The inhabitants used to go to Satan to build bridges for them, promising him the soul of the first one that crossed the bridge; then, when Satan had the bridge done, they would send over a rooster or a jackass—a cheap jackass; that was for Satan, and of course they could fool him that way every time. Satan must have been pretty simple, even according to the New Testament, or he wouldn't have led Christ up on a high mountain and offered him the world if he would fall down and worship him. That was a manifestly absurd proposition, because Christ, as the Son of God, already owned the world; and, besides, what Satan showed him was only a few rocky acres of Palestine. It is just as if some one should try to buy Rockefeller, the owner of all the Standard Oil Company, with a gallon of kerosene.”

He often spoke of the unseen forces of creation, the immutable laws that hold the planet in exact course and bring the years and the seasons always exactly on schedule time. “The Great Law” was a phrase often on his lips. The exquisite foliage, the cloud shapes, the varieties of color everywhere: these were for him outward manifestations of the Great Law, whose principle I understood to be unity—exact relations throughout all nature; and in this I failed to find any suggestion of pessimism, but only of justice. Once he wrote on a card for preservation:

From everlasting to everlasting, this is the law: the sum of wrong & misery shall always keep exact step with the sum of human blessedness.

Page 864

No “civilization,” no “advance,” has ever modified these proportions by even the shadow of a shade, nor ever can, while our race endures.

CCLXIV

CITIZEN AND FARMER

The procession of guests at Stormfield continued pretty steadily. Clemens kept a book in which visitors set down their names and the dates of arrival and departure, and when they failed to attend to these matters he diligently did it himself after they were gone.

Members of the Harper Company came up with their wives; “angel-fish” swam in and out of the aquarium; Bermuda friends came to see the new home; Robert Collier, the publisher, and his wife—“Mrs. Sally,” as Clemens liked to call her—paid their visits; Lord Northcliffe, who was visiting America, came with Colonel Harvey, and was so impressed with the architecture of Stormfield that he adopted its plans for a country-place he was about to build in Newfoundland. Helen Keller, with Mr. and Mrs. Macy, came up for a week-end visit. Mrs. Crane came over from Elmira; and, behold! one day came the long-ago sweetheart of his childhood, little Laura Hawkins—Laura Frazer now, widowed and in the seventies, with a granddaughter already a young lady quite grown up.

That Mark Twain was not wearying of the new conditions we may gather from a letter written to Mrs. Rogers in October:

I’ve grown young in these months of dissipation here. And I have left off drinking—it isn’t necessary now. Society & theology are sufficient for me.

To Helen Allen, a Bermuda “Angel-Fish,” he wrote:

We have good times here in this soundless solitude on the hilltop. The moment I saw the house I was glad I built it, & now I am gladder & gladder all the time. I was not dreaming of living here except in the summer-time—that was before I saw this region & the house, you see—but that is all changed now; I shall stay here winter & summer both & not go back to New York at all. My child, it’s as tranquil & contenting as Bermuda. You will be very welcome here, dear.

He interested himself in the affairs and in the people of Redding. Not long after his arrival he had gathered in all the inhabitants of the country-side, neighbors of every quality, for closer acquaintance, and threw open to them for inspection every part of the new house. He appointed Mrs. Lounsbury, whose acquaintance was very wide; a sort of committee on reception, and stood at the entrance with her to welcome each visitor in person.



It was a sort of gala day, and the rooms and the grounds were filled with the visitors. In the dining-room there were generous refreshments. Again, not long afterward, he issued a special invitation to all of those-architects, builders, and workmen who had taken any part, however great or small, in the building of his home. Mr. and Mrs. Littleton were visiting Stormfield at this time, and both Clemens and Littleton spoke to these assembled guests from the terrace, and made them feel that their efforts had been worth while.

Page 865

Presently the idea developed to establish something that would be of benefit to his neighbors, especially to those who did not have access to much reading-matter. He had been for years flooded with books by authors and publishers, and there was a heavy surplus at his home in the city. When these began to arrive he had a large number of volumes set aside as the nucleus of a public library. An unused chapel not far away—it could be seen from one of his windows—was obtained for the purpose; officers were elected; a librarian was appointed, and so the Mark Twain Library of Redding was duly established. Clemens himself was elected its first president, with the resident physician, Dr. Ernest H. Smith, vice-president, and another resident, William E. Grumman, librarian. On the afternoon of its opening the president made a brief address. He said:

I am here to speak a few instructive words to my fellow-farmers. I suppose you are all farmers: I am going to put in a crop next year, when I have been here long enough and know how. I couldn't make a turnip stay on a tree now after I had grown it. I like to talk. It would take more than the Redding air to make me keep still, and I like to instruct people. It's noble to be good, and it's nobler to teach others to be good, and less trouble. I am glad to help this library. We get our morals from books. I didn't get mine from books, but I know that morals do come from books—theoretically at least. Mr. Beard or Mr. Adams will give some land, and by and by we are going to have a building of our own.

This statement was news to both Mr. Beard and Mr. Adams and an inspiration of the moment; but Mr. Theodore Adams, who owned a most desirable site, did in fact promptly resolve to donate it for library purposes. Clemens continued:

I am going to help build that library with contributions from my visitors. Every male guest who comes to my house will have to contribute a dollar or go away without his baggage.

—[A characteristic notice to guests requiring them to contribute a dollar to the Library Building Fund was later placed on the billiard-room mantel at Stormfield with good results.]—If those burglars that broke into my house recently had done that they would have been happier now, or if they'd have broken into this library they would have read a few books and led a better life. Now they are in jail, and if they keep on they will go to Congress. When a person starts downhill you can never tell where he's going to stop. I am sorry for those burglars. They got nothing that they wanted and scared away most of my servants. Now we are putting in a burglar-alarm instead of a dog. Some advised the dog, but it costs even more to entertain a dog than a burglar. I am having the ground electrified, so that for a mile around any one who puts his foot across the line sets off an alarm that will be heard in Europe. Now I will introduce the real president to you, a man whom you know already—Dr. Smith.

So a new and important benefit was conferred upon the community, and there was a feeling that Redding, besides having a literary colony, was to be literary in fact.

Page 866

It might have been mentioned earlier that Redding already had literary associations when Mark Twain arrived. As far back as Revolutionary days Joel Barlow, a poet of distinction, and once Minister to France, had been a resident of Redding, and there were still Barlow descendants in the township.

William Edgar Grumman, the librarian, had written the story of Redding's share in the Revolutionary War—no small share, for Gen. Israel Putnam's army had been quartered there during at least one long, trying winter. Charles Burr Todd, of one of the oldest Redding families, himself—still a resident, was also the author of a Redding history.

Of literary folk not native to Redding, Dora Reed Goodale and her sister Elaine, the wife of Dr. Charles A. Eastman, had, long been residents of Redding Center; Jeanette L. Gilder and Ida M. Tarbell had summer homes on Redding Ridge; Dan Beard, as already mentioned, owned a place near the banks of the Saugatuck, while Kate V. St. Maur, also two of Nathaniel Hawthorne's granddaughters had recently located adjoining the Stormfield lands. By which it will be seen that Redding was in no way unsuitable as a home for Mark Twain.

CCLXV

A MANTEL AND A BABY ELEPHANT

Mark Twain was the receiver of two notable presents that year. The first of these, a mantel from Hawaii, presented to him by the Hawaiian Promotion Committee, was set in place in the billiard-room on the morning of his seventy-third birthday. This committee had written, proposing to build for his new home either a mantel or a chair, as he might prefer, the same to be carved from the native woods. Clemens decided on a billiard-room mantel, and John Howells forwarded the proper measurements. So, in due time, the mantel arrived, a beautiful piece of work and in fine condition, with the Hawaiian word, "Aloha," one of the sweetest forms of greeting in any tongue, carved as its central ornament.

To the donors of the gift Clemens wrote:

The beautiful mantel was put in its place an hour ago, & its friendly "Aloha" was the first uttered greeting received on my 73d birthday. It is rich in color, rich in quality, & rich in decoration; therefore it exactly harmonized with the taste for such things which was born in me & which I have seldom been able to indulge to my content. It will be a great pleasure to me, daily renewed, to have under my eye this lovely reminder of the loveliest fleet of islands that lies anchored in any ocean, & I beg to thank the committee for providing me that pleasure.

To F. N. Otremba, who had carved the mantel, he sent this word:



I am grateful to you for the valued compliment to me in the labor of heart and hand and brain which you have put upon it. It is worthy of the choicest place in the house and it has it.

It was the second beautiful mantel in Stormfield—the Hartford library mantel, removed when that house was sold, having been installed in the Stormfield living-room.

Page 867

Altogether the seventy-third birthday was a pleasant one. Clemens, in the morning, drove down to see the library lot which Mr. Theodore Adams had presented, and the rest of the day there were fine, close billiard games, during which he was in the gentlest and happiest moods. He recalled the games of two years before, and as we stopped playing I said:

"I hope a year from now we shall be here, still playing the great game."

And he answered, as then:

"Yes, it is a great game—the best game on earth." And he held out his hand and thanked me for coming, as he never failed to do when we parted, though it always hurt me a little, for the debt was so largely mine.

Mark Twain's second present came at Christmas-time. About ten days earlier, a letter came from Robert J. Collier, saying that he had bought a baby elephant which he intended to present to Mark Twain as a Christmas gift. He added that it would be sent as soon as he could get a car for it, and the loan of a keeper from Barnum & Bailey's headquarters at Bridgeport.

The news created a disturbance in Stormfield. One could not refuse, discourteously and abruptly, a costly present like that; but it seemed a disaster to accept it. An elephant would require a roomy and warm place, also a variety of attention which Stormfield was not prepared to supply. The telephone was set going and certain timid excuses were offered by the secretary. There was no good place to put an elephant in Stormfield, but Mr. Collier said, quite confidently:

"Oh, put him in the garage."

"But there's no heat in the garage."

"Well, put him in the loggia, then. That's closed in, isn't it, for the winter? Plenty of sunlight—just the place for a young elephant."

"But we play cards in the loggia. We use it for a sort of sun-parlor."

"But that wouldn't matter. He's a kindly, playful little thing. He'll be just like a kitten. I'll send the man up to look over the place and tell you just how to take care of him, and I'll send up several bales of hay in advance. It isn't a large elephant, you know: just a little one—a regular plaything."

There was nothing further to be done; only to wait and dread until the Christmas present's arrival.

A few days before Christmas ten bales of hay arrived and several bushels of carrots. This store of provender aroused no enthusiasm at Stormfield. It would seem there was no escape now.

On Christmas morning Mr. Lounsbury telephoned up that there was a man at the station who said he was an elephant-trainer from Barnum & Bailey's, sent by Mr. Collier to look at the elephant's quarters and get him settled when he should arrive. Orders were given to bring the man over. The day of doom was at hand.

But Lounsbury's detective instinct came once more into play. He had seen a good many elephant-trainers at Bridgeport, and he thought this one had a doubtful look.

Page 868

"Where is the elephant?" he asked, as they drove along.

"He will arrive at noon."

"Where are you going to put him?"

"In the loggia."

"How big is he?"

"About the size of a cow."

"How long have you been with Barnum and Bailey?"

"Six years."

"Then you must know some friends of mine" (naming two that had no existence until that moment).

"Oh yes, indeed. I know them well."

Lounsbury didn't say any more just then, but he had a feeling that perhaps the dread at Stormfield had grown unnecessarily large. Something told him that this man seemed rather more like a butler, or a valet, than an elephant-trainer. They drove to Stormfield, and the trainer looked over the place. It would do perfectly, he said. He gave a few instructions as to the care of this new household feature, and was driven back to the station to bring it.

Lounsbury came back by and by, bringing the elephant but not the trainer. It didn't need a trainer. It was a beautiful specimen, with soft, smooth coat and handsome trappings, perfectly quiet, well-behaved and small—suited to the loggia, as Collier had said—for it was only two feet long and beautifully made of cloth and cotton—one of the forest toy elephants ever seen anywhere.

It was a good joke, such as Mark Twain loved—a carefully prepared, harmless bit of foolery. He wrote Robert Collier, threatening him with all sorts of revenge, declaring that the elephant was devastating Stormfield.

"To send an elephant in a trance, under pretense that it was dead or stuffed!" he said. "The animal came to life, as you knew it would, and began to observe Christmas, and we now have no furniture left and no servants and no visitors, no friends, no photographs, no burglars—nothing but the elephant. Be kind, be merciful, be generous; take him away and send us what is left of the earthquake."

Collier wrote that he thought it unkind of him to look a gift-elephant in the trunk. And with such chaffing and gaiety the year came to an end.

CCLXXVI

SHAKESPEARE-BACON TALK

When the bad weather came there was not much company at Stormfield, and I went up regularly each afternoon, for it was lonely on that bleak hill, and after his forenoon of reading or writing he craved diversion. My own home was a little more than a half mile away, and I enjoyed the walk, whatever the weather. I usually managed to arrive about three o'clock. He would watch from his high windows until he saw me raise the hilltop, and he would be at the door when I arrived, so that there might be no delay in getting at the games. Or, if it happened that he wished to show me something in his room, I would hear his rich voice sounding down the stair. Once, when I arrived, I heard him calling, and going up I found him highly pleased with the arrangement of two pictures on a chair, placed so that the glasses of them reflected the sunlight on the ceiling. He said:

Page 869

"They seem to catch the reflection of the sky and the winter colors. Sometimes the hues are wonderfully iridescent."

He pointed to a bunch of wild red berries on the mantel with the sun on them.

"How beautifully they light up!" he said; "some of them in the sunlight, some still in the shadow."

He walked to the window and stood looking out on the somber fields.

"The lights and colors are always changing there," he said. "I never tire of it."

To see him then so full of the interest and delight of the moment, one might easily believe he had never known tragedy and shipwreck. More than any one I ever knew, he lived in the present. Most of us are either dreaming of the past or anticipating the future—forever beating the dirge of yesterday or the tattoo of to-morrow. Mark Twain's step was timed to the march of the moment. There were days when he recalled the past and grieved over it, and when he speculated concerning the future; but his greater interest was always of the now, and of the particular locality where he found it. The thing which caught his fancy, however slight or however important, possessed him fully for the time, even if never afterward.

He was especially interested that winter in the Shakespeare-Bacon problem. He had long been unable to believe that the actor-manager from Stratford had written those great plays, and now a book just published, 'The Shakespeare Problem Restated', by George Greenwood, and another one in press, 'Some Characteristic Signatures of Francis Bacon', by William Stone Booth, had added the last touch of conviction that Francis Bacon, and Bacon only, had written the Shakespeare dramas. I was ardently opposed to this idea. The romance of the boy, Will Shakespeare, who had come up to London and began, by holding horses outside of the theater, and ended by winning the proudest place in the world of letters, was something I did not wish to let perish. I produced all the stock testimony—Ben Jonson's sonnet, the internal evidence of the plays themselves, the actors who had published them—but he refused to accept any of it. He declared that there was not a single proof to show that Shakespeare had written one of them.

"Is there any evidence that he didn't?" I asked.

"There's evidence that he couldn't," he said. "It required a man with the fullest legal equipment to have written them. When you have read Greenwood's book you will see how untenable is any argument for Shakespeare's authorship."

I was willing to concede something, and offered a compromise.

“Perhaps,” I said, “Shakespeare was the Belasoo of that day—the managerial genius, unable to write plays himself, but with the supreme gift of making effective drama from the plays of others. In that case it is not unlikely that the plays would be known as Shakespeare’s. Even in this day John Luther Long’s ‘Madam Butterfly’ is sometimes called Belasco’s play; though it is doubtful if Belasco ever wrote a line of it.”

Page 870

He considered this view, but not very favorably. The Booth book was at this time a secret, and he had not told me anything concerning it; but he had it in his mind when he said, with an air of the greatest conviction:

“I know that Shakespeare did not write those plays, and I have reason to believe he did not touch the text in any way.”

“How can you be so positive?” I asked.

He replied:

“I have private knowledge from a source that cannot be questioned.”

I now suspected that he was joking, and asked if he had been consulting a spiritual medium; but he was clearly in earnest.

“It is the great discovery of the age,” he said, quite seriously. “The world will soon ring with it. I wish I could tell you about it, but I have passed my word. You will not have long to wait.”

I was going to sail for the Mediterranean in February, and I asked if it would be likely that I would know this great secret before I sailed. He thought not; but he said that more than likely the startling news would be given to the world while I was on the water, and it might come to me on the ship by wireless. I confess I was amazed and intensely curious by this time. I conjectured the discovery of some document—some Bacon or Shakespeare private paper which dispelled all the mystery of the authorship. I hinted that he might write me a letter which I could open on the ship; but he was firm in his refusal. He had passed his word, he repeated, and the news might not be given out as soon as that; but he assured me more than once that wherever I might be, in whatever remote locality, it would come by cable, and the world would quake with it. I was tempted to give up my trip, to be with him at Stormfield at the time of the upheaval.

Naturally the Shakespeare theme was uppermost during the remaining days that we were together. He had engaged another stenographer, and was now dictating, forenoons, his own views on the subject—views coordinated with those of Mr. Greenwood, whom he liberally quoted, but embellished and decorated in his own gay manner. These were chapters for his autobiography, he said, and I think he had then no intention of making a book of them. I could not quite see why he should take all this argumentary trouble if he had, as he said, positive evidence that Bacon, and not Shakespeare, had written the plays. I thought the whole matter very curious.

The Shakespeare interest had diverging by-paths. One evening, when we were alone at dinner, he said:

“There is only one other illustrious man in history about whom there is so little known,” and he added, “Jesus Christ.”

He reviewed the statements of the Gospels concerning Christ, though he declared them to be mainly traditional and of no value. I agreed that they contained confusing statements, and inflicted more or less with justice and reason; but I said I thought there was truth in them, too.

Page 871

"Why do you think so?" he asked.

"Because they contain matters that are self-evident—things eternally and essentially just."

"Then you make your own Bible?"

"Yes, from those materials combined with human reason."

"Then it does not matter where the truth, as you call it, comes from?"

I admitted that the source did not matter; that truth from Shakespeare, Epictetus, or Aristotle was quite as valuable as from the Scriptures. We were on common ground now. He mentioned Marcus Aurelius, the Stoics, and their blameless lives. I, still pursuing the thought of Jesus, asked:

"Do you not think it strange that in that day when Christ came, admitting that there was a Christ, such a character could have come at all—in the time of the Pharisees and the Sadducees, when all was ceremony and unbelief?"

"I remember," he said, "the Sadducees didn't believe in hell. He brought them one."

"Nor the resurrection. He brought them that, also."

He did not admit that there had been a Christ with the character and mission related by the Gospels.

"It is all a myth," he said. "There have been Saviours in every age of the world. It is all just a fairy tale, like the idea of Santa Claus."

"But," I argued, "even the spirit of Christmas is real when it is genuine. Suppose that we admit there was no physical Saviour—that it is only an idea—a spiritual embodiment which humanity has made for itself and is willing to improve upon as its own spirituality improves, wouldn't that make it worthy?"

"But then the fairy story of the atonement dissolves, and with it crumbles the very foundations of any established church. You can create your own Testament, your own Scripture, and your own Christ, but you've got to give up your atonement."

"As related to the crucifixion, yes, and good riddance to it; but the death of the old order and the growth of spirituality comes to a sort of atonement, doesn't it?"

He said:



“A conclusion like that has about as much to do with the Gospels and Christianity as Shakespeare had to do with Bacon’s plays. You are preaching a doctrine that would have sent a man to the stake a few centuries ago. I have preached that in my own Gospel.”

I remembered then, and realized that, by my own clumsy ladder, I had merely mounted from dogma, and superstition to his platform of training the ideals to a higher contentment of soul.

CCLXXVII

“Is Shakespeare dead?”

I set out on my long journey with much reluctance. However, a series of guests with various diversions had been planned, and it seemed a good time to go. Clemens gave me letters of introduction, and bade me Godspeed. It would be near the end of April before I should see him again.

Now and then on the ship, and in the course of my travels, I remembered the great news I was to hear concerning Shakespeare. In Cairo, at Shepheard’s, I looked eagerly through English newspapers, expecting any moment to come upon great head-lines; but I was always disappointed. Even on the return voyage there was no one I could find who had heard any particular Shakespeare news.

Page 872

Arriving in New York, I found that Clemens himself had published his Shakespeare dictations in a little volume of his own, entitled, 'Is Shakespeare Dead?' The title certainly suggested spiritistic matters, and I got a volume at Harpers', and read it going up on the train, hoping to find somewhere in it a solution of the great mystery. But it was only matter I had already known; the secret was still unrevealed.

At Redding I lost not much time in getting up to Stormfield. There had been changes in my absence. Clara Clemens had returned from her travels, and Jean, whose health seemed improved, was coming home to be her father's secretary. He was greatly pleased with these things, and declared he was going to have a home once more with his children about him.

He was quite alone that day, and we walked up and down the great living-room for an hour, perhaps, while he discussed his new plans. For one thing, he had incorporated his pen-name, Mark Twain, in order that the protection of his copyrights and the conduct of his literary business in general should not require his personal attention. He seemed to find a relief in this, as he always did in dismissing any kind of responsibility. When we went in for billiards I spoke of his book, which I had read on the way up, and of the great Shakespearian secret which was to astonish the world. Then he told me that the matter had been delayed, but that he was no longer required to suppress it; that the revelation was in the form of a book—a book which revealed conclusively to any one who would take the trouble to follow the directions that the acrostic name of Francis Bacon in a great variety of forms ran through many —probably through all of the so-called Shakespeare plays. He said it was far and away beyond anything of the kind ever published; that Ignatius Donnelly and others had merely glimpsed the truth, but that the author of this book, William Stone Booth, had demonstrated, beyond any doubt or question, that the Bacon signatures were there. The book would be issued in a few days, he said. He had seen a set of proofs of it, and while it had not been published in the best way to clearly demonstrate its great revelation, it must settle the matter with every reasoning mind. He confessed that his faculties had been more or less defeated in, attempting to follow the ciphers, and he complained bitterly that the evidence had not been set forth so that he who merely skims a book might grasp it.

He had failed on the acrostics at first; but more recently he had understood the rule, and had been able to work out several Bacon signatures. He complimented me by saying that he felt sure that when the book came I would have no trouble with it.

Without going further with this matter, I may say here that the book arrived presently, and between us we did work out a considerable number of the claimed acrostics by following the rules laid down. It was certainly an interesting if not wholly convincing occupation, and it would be a difficult task for any one to prove that the ciphers are not there. Just why this pretentious volume created so little agitation it would be hard to say. Certainly it did not cause any great upheaval in the literary world, and the name of

William Shakespeare still continues to be printed on the title-page of those marvelous dramas so long associated with his name.

Page 873

Mark Twain's own book on the subject—'Is Shakespeare Dead?'—found a wide acceptance, and probably convinced as many readers. It contained no new arguments; but it gave a convincing touch to the old ones, and it was certainly readable.—[Mark Twain had the fullest conviction as to the Bacon authorship of the Shakespeare plays. One evening, with Mr. Edward Loomis, we attended a fine performance of "Romeo and Juliet" given by Sothern and Marlowe. At the close of one splendid scene he said, quite earnestly, "That is about the best play that Lord Bacon ever wrote."]

Among the visitors who had come to Stormfield was Howells. Clemens had called a meeting of the Human Race Club, but only Howells was able to attend. We will let him tell of his visit:

We got on very well without the absentees, after finding them in the wrong, as usual, and the visit was like those I used to have with him so many years before in Hartford, but there was not the old ferment of subjects. Many things had been discussed and put away for good, but we had our old fondness for nature and for each other, who were so differently parts of it. He showed his absolute content with his house, and that was the greater pleasure for me because it was my son who designed it. The architect had been so fortunate as to be able to plan it where a natural avenue of savins, the close-knit, slender, cypress-like cedars of New England, led away from the rear of the villa to the little level of a pergola, meant some day to be wreathed and roofed with vines. But in the early spring days all the landscape was in the beautiful nakedness of the Northern winter. It opened in the surpassing loveliness of wooded and meadowed uplands, under skies that were the first days blue, and the last gray over a rainy and then a snowy floor. We walked up and down, up and down, between the villa terrace and the pergola, and talked with the melancholy amusement, the sad tolerance of age for the sort of men and things that used to excite us or enrage us; now we were far past turbulence or anger. Once we took a walk together across the yellow pastures to a chasmal creek on his grounds, where the ice still knit the clayey banks together like crystal mosses; and the stream far down clashed through and over the stones and the shards of ice. Clemens pointed out the scenery he had bought to give himself elbowroom, and showed me the lot he was going to have me build on. The next day we came again with the geologist he had asked up to Stormfield to analyze its rocks. Truly he loved the place . . . My visit at Stormfield came to an end with tender reluctance on his part and on mine. Every morning before I dressed I heard him sounding my name through the house for the fun of it and I know for the fondness, and if I looked out of my door there he was in his long nightgown swaying up and down the corridor, and wagging his great white head like a boy that leaves his bed and comes out in

Page 874

the hope of frolic with some one. The last morning a soft sugar-snow had fallen and was falling, and I drove through it down to the station in the carriage which had been given him by his wife's father when they were first married, and had been kept all those intervening years in honorable retirement for this final use.—[This carriage—a finely built coup—had been presented to Mrs. Crane when the Hartford house was closed. When Stormfield was built she returned it to its original owner.]—Its springs had not grown yielding with time, it had rather the stiffness and severity of age; but for him it must have swung low like the sweet chariot of the negro "spiritual" which I heard him sing with such fervor when those wonderful hymns of the slaves began to make their way northward.

Howells's visit resulted in a new inspiration. Clemens started to write him one night when he could not sleep, and had been reading the volume of letters of James Russell Lowell. Then, next morning, he was seized with the notion of writing a series of letters to such friends as Howells, Twichell, and Rogers—letters not to be mailed, but to be laid away for some future public. He wrote two of these immediately—to Howells and to Twichell. The Howells letter (or letters, for it was really double) is both pathetic and amusing. The first part ran:

3 in the morning, April 17, 1909.

My pen has gone dry and the ink is out of reach. Howells, did you write me day-before-day-before yesterday or did I dream it? In my mind's eye I most vividly see your hand-write on a square blue envelope in the mail-pile. I have hunted the house over, but there is no such letter. Was it an illusion?

I am reading Lowell's letters & smoking. I woke an hour ago & am reading to keep from wasting the time. On page 305, Vol. I, I have just margined a note:

"Young friend! I like that! You ought to see him now."

It seemed startlingly strange to hear a person call you young. It was a brick out of a blue sky, & knocked me groggy for a moment. Ah me, the pathos of it is that we were young then. And he—why, so was he, but he didn't know it. He didn't even know it 9 years later, when we saw him approaching and you warned me, saying:

"Don't say anything about age—he has just turned 50 & thinks he is old, & broods over it."

Well, Clara did sing! And you wrote her a dear letter.

Time to go to sleep.

Yours ever,
mark

The second letter, begun at 10 A.M., outlines the plan by which he is to write on the subject uppermost in his mind without restraint, knowing that the letter is not to be mailed.

Page 875

. . .The scheme furnishes a definite target for each letter, & you can choose the target that's going to be the most sympathetic for what you are hungering & thirsting to say at that particular moment. And you can talk with a quite unallowable frankness & freedom because you are not going to send the letter. When you are on fire with theology you'll not write it to Rogers, who wouldn't be an inspiration; you'll write it to Twichell, because it will make him writhe and squirm & break the furniture. When you are on fire with a good thing that's indecent you won't waste it on Twichell; you'll save it for Howells, who will love it. As he will never see it you can make it really indecenter than he could stand; & so no harm is done, yet a vast advantage is gained.

The letter was not finished, and the scheme perished there. The Twichell letter concerned missionaries, and added nothing to what he had already said on the subject.

He wrote no letter to Mr. Rogers—perhaps never wrote to him again.

CCLXXVIII

THE DEATH OF HENRY ROGERS

Clemens, a little before my return, had been on a trip to Norfolk, Virginia, to attend the opening ceremonies of the Virginia Railway. He had made a speech on that occasion, in which he had paid a public tribute to Henry Rogers, and told something of his personal obligation to the financier.

He began by telling what Mr. Rogers had done for Helen Keller, whom he called "the most marvelous person of her sex that has existed on this earth since Joan of Arc." Then he said:

That is not all Mr. Rogers has done, but you never see that side of his character because it is never protruding; but he lends a helping hand daily out of that generous heart of his. You never hear of it. He is supposed to be a moon which has one side dark and the other bright. But the other side, though you don't see it, is not dark; it is bright, and its rays penetrate, and others do see it who are not God. I would take this opportunity to tell something that I have never been allowed to tell by Mr. Rogers, either by my mouth or in print, and if I don't look at him I can tell it now. In 1894, when the publishing company of Charles L. Webster, of which I was financial agent, failed, it left me heavily in debt. If you will remember what commerce was at that time you will recall that you could not sell anything, and could not buy anything, and I was on my back; my books were not worth anything at all, and I could not give away my copyrights. Mr. Rogers had long-enough vision ahead to say, "Your books have supported you before, and after the panic is over they will support you again," and that was a correct proposition. He saved my copyrights, and saved me from financial ruin. He it was who

arranged with my creditors to allow me to roam the face of the earth and persecute the nations

Page 876

thereof with lectures, promising at the end of four years I would pay dollar for dollar. That arrangement was made, otherwise I would now be living out-of-doors under an umbrella, and a borrowed one at that. You see his white mustache and his hair trying to get white (he is always trying to look like me—I don't blame him for that). These are only emblematic of his character, and that is all. I say, without exception, hair and all, he is the whitest man I have ever known.

This had been early in April. Something more than a month later Clemens was making a business trip to New York to see Mr. Rogers. I was telephoned early to go up and look over some matters with him before he started. I do not remember why I was not to go along that day, for I usually made such trips with him. I think it was planned that Miss Clemens, who was in the city, was to meet him at the Grand Central Station. At all events, she did meet him there, with the news that during the night Mr. Rogers had suddenly died. This was May 20, 1909. The news had already come to the house, and I had lost no time in preparations to follow by the next train. I joined him at the Grosvenor Hotel, on Fifth Avenue and Tenth Street. He was upset and deeply troubled by the loss of his stanch adviser and friend. He had a helpless look, and he said his friends were dying away from him and leaving him adrift.

"And how I hate to do anything," he added, "that requires the least modicum of intelligence!"

We remained at the Grosvenor for Mr. Rogers's funeral. Clemens served as one of the pall-bearers, but he did not feel equal to the trip to Fairhaven. He wanted to be very quiet, he said. He could not undertake to travel that distance among those whom he knew so well, and with whom he must of necessity join in conversation; so we remained in the hotel apartment, reading and saying very little until bedtime. Once he asked me to write a letter to Jean: "Say, 'Your father says every little while, 'How glad I am that Jean is at home again!'" for that is true and I think of it all the time."

But by and by, after a long period of silence, he said:

"Mr. Rogers is under the ground now."

And so passed out of earthly affairs the man who had contributed so largely to the comfort of Mark Twain's old age. He was a man of fine sensibilities and generous impulses; withal a keen sense of humor.

One Christmas, when he presented Mark Twain with a watch and a match-case, he wrote:

My dear Clemens,—For many years your friends have been complaining of your use of tobacco, both as to quantity and quality. Complaints are now coming in of your use of

time. Most of your friends think that you are using your supply somewhat lavishly, but the chief complaint is in regard to the quality.

I have been appealed to in the mean time, and have concluded that it is impossible to get the right kind of time from a blacking-box.

Page 877

Therefore, I take the liberty of sending you herewith a machine that will furnish only the best. Please use it with the kind wishes of
Yours truly,
H. H. Rogers.

P. S.—Complaint has also been made in regard to the furrows you make in your trousers in scratching matches. You will find a furrow on the bottom of the article inclosed. Please use it. Compliments of the season to the family.

He was a man too busy to write many letters, but when he did write (to Clemens at least) they were always playful and unhurried. One reading them would not find it easy to believe that the writer was a man on whose shoulders lay the burdens of stupendous finance-burdens so heavy that at last he was crushed beneath their weight.

CCLXXIX

AN EXTENSION OF COPYRIGHT

One of the pleasant things that came to Mark Twain that year was the passage of a copyright bill, which added to the royalty period an extension of fourteen years. Champ Clark had been largely instrumental in the success of this measure, and had been fighting for it steadily since Mark Twain's visit to Washington in 1906. Following that visit, Clark wrote:

. . . It [the original bill] would never pass because the bill had literature and music all mixed together. Being a Missourian of course it would give me great pleasure to be of service to you. What I want to say is this: you have prepared a simple bill relating only to the copyright of books; send it to me and I will try to have it passed.

Clemens replied that he might have something more to say on the copyright question by and by—that he had in hand a dialogue—[Similar to the “Open Letter to the Register of Copyrights,” *North American Review*, January, 1905.]—which would instruct Congress, but this he did not complete. Meantime a simple bill was proposed and early in 1909 it became a law. In June Clark wrote:

Dr. Samuel L. Clemens,
Stormfield, Redding, Conn.

My dear doctor,—I am gradually becoming myself again, after a period of exhaustion that almost approximated prostration. After a long lecture tour last summer I went immediately into a hard campaign; as soon as the election was over, and I had recovered my disposition, I came here and went into those tariff hearings, which began shortly after breakfast each day, and sometimes lasted until midnight. Listening patiently and meekly, withal, to the lying of tariff barons for many days and nights was

followed by the work of the long session; that was followed by a hot campaign to take Uncle Joe's rules away from him; on the heels of that "Campaign that Failed" came the tariff fight in the House. I am now getting time to breathe regularly and I am writing to ask you if the copyright law is acceptable to you. If it is not acceptable to you I want to

Page 878

ask you to write and tell me how it should be changed and I will give my best endeavors to the work. I believe that your ideas and wishes in the matter constitute the best guide we have as to what should be done in the case.

Your friend,
Champ Clark.

To this Clemens replied:

Stormfield, Redding, Conn, June 5, 1909.

Dear Champ Clark,—Is the new copyright law acceptable to me? Emphatically yes! Clark, it is the only sane & clearly defined & just & righteous copyright law that has ever existed in the United States. Whosoever will compare it with its predecessors will have no trouble in arriving at that decision. The bill which was before the committee two years ago when I was down there was the most stupefying jumble of conflicting & apparently irreconcilable interests that was ever seen; and we all said “the case is hopeless, absolutely hopeless—out of this chaos nothing can be built.” But we were in error; out of that chaotic mass this excellent bill has been constructed, the warring interests have been reconciled, and the result is as comely and substantial a legislative edifice as lifts its domes and towers and protective lightning-rods out of the statute book I think. When I think of that other bill, which even the Deity couldn’t understand, and of this one, which even I can understand, I take off my hat to the man or men who devised this one. Was it R. U. Johnson? Was it the Authors’ League? Was it both together? I don’t know, but I take off my hat, anyway. Johnson has written a valuable article about the new law—I inclose it.

At last—at last and for the first time in copyright history—we are ahead of England! Ahead of her in two ways: by length of time and by fairness to all interests concerned. Does this sound like shouting? Then I must modify it: all we possessed of copyright justice before the 4th of last March we owed to England’s initiative.

Truly yours,
S. L. Clemens.

Clemens had prepared what was the final word on the subject of copyright just before this bill was passed—a petition for a law which he believed would regulate the whole matter. It was a generous, even if a somewhat Utopian, plan, eminently characteristic of its author. The new fourteen-year extension, with the prospect of more, made this or any other compromise seem inadvisable.—[The reader may consider this last copyright document by Mark Twain under Appendix N, at the end of this volume.]

CCLXXX

A WARNING

Clemens had promised to go to Baltimore for the graduation of “Francesca” of his London visit in 1907—and to make a short address to her class.

Page 879

It was the eighth of June when we set out on this journey,—[The reader may remember that it was the 8th of June, 1867, that Mark Twain sailed for the Holy Land. It was the 8th of June, 1907, that he sailed for England to take his Oxford degree. This 8th of June, 1909, was at least slightly connected with both events, for he was keeping an engagement made with Francesca in London, and my notes show that he discussed, on the way to the station, some incidents of his Holy Land trip and his attitude at that time toward Christian traditions. As he rarely mentioned the Quaker City trip, the coincidence seems rather curious. It is most unlikely that Clemens himself in any way associated the two dates.]—but the day was rather bleak and there was a chilly rain. Clemens had a number of errands to do in New York, and we drove from one place to another, attending to them. Finally, in the afternoon, the rain ceased, and while I was arranging some matters for him he concluded to take a ride on the top of a Fifth Avenue stage. It was fine and pleasant when he started, but the weather thickened again and when he returned he complained that he had felt a little chilly. He seemed in fine condition, however, next morning and was in good spirits all the way to Baltimore. Chauncey Depew was on the train and they met in the dining-car—the last time, I think, they ever saw each other. He was tired when we reached the Belvedere Hotel in Baltimore and did not wish to see the newspaper men. It happened that the reporters had a special purpose in coming just at this time, for it had suddenly developed that in his Shakespeare book, through an oversight, due to haste in publication, full credit had not been given to Mr. Greenwood for the long extracts quoted from his work. The sensational head-lines in a morning paper, “Is Mark Twain a Plagiarist?” had naturally prompted the newspaper men to see what he would have to say on the subject. It was a simple matter, easily explained, and Clemens himself was less disturbed about it than anybody. He felt no sense of guilt, he said; and the fact that he had been stealing and caught at it would give Mr. Greenwood’s book far more advertising than if he had given him the full credit which he had intended. He found a good deal of amusement in the situation, his only worry being that Clara and Jean would see the paper and be troubled.

He had taken off his clothes and was lying down, reading. After a little he got up and began walking up and down the room. Presently he stopped and, facing me, placed his hand upon his breast. He said:

“I think I must have caught a little cold yesterday on that Fifth Avenue stage. I have a curious pain in my breast.”

I suggested that he lie down again and I would fill his hot-water bag. The pain passed away presently, and he seemed to be dozing. I stepped into the next room and busied myself with some writing. By and by I heard him stirring again and went in where he was. He was walking up and down and began talking of some recent ethnological discoveries—something relating to prehistoric man.

Page 880

“What a fine boy that prehistoric man must have been,” he said—“the very first one! Think of the gaudy style of him, how he must have lorded it over those other creatures, walking on his hind legs, waving his arms, practising and getting ready for the pulpit.”

The fancy amused him, but presently he paused in his walk and again put his hand on his breast, saying:

“That pain has come back. It’s a curious, sickening, deadly kind of pain. I never had anything just like it.”

It seemed to me that his face had become rather gray. I said:

“Where is it, exactly, Mr. Clemens?”

He laid his hand in the center of his breast and said:

“It is here, and it is very peculiar indeed.”

Remotely in my mind occurred the thought that he had located his heart, and the “peculiar deadly pain” he had mentioned seemed ominous. I suggested, however, that it was probably some rheumatic touch, and this opinion seemed warranted when, a few moments later, the hot water had again relieved it. This time the pain had apparently gone to stay, for it did not return while we were in Baltimore. It was the first positive manifestation of the angina which eventually would take him from us.

The weather was pleasant in Baltimore, and his visit to St. Timothy’s School and his address there were the kind of diversions that meant most to him. The flock of girls, all in their pretty commencement dresses, assembled and rejoicing at his playfully given advice: not to smoke—to excess; not to drink—to excess; not to marry—to excess; he standing there in a garb as white as their own—it made a rare picture—a sweet memory—and it was the last time he ever gave advice from the platform to any one.

Edward S. Martin also spoke to the school, and then there was a great feasting in the big assembly-hall.

It was on the lawn that a reporter approached him with the news of the death of Edward Everett Hale—another of the old group. Clemens said thoughtfully, after a moment:

“I had the greatest respect and esteem for Edward Everett Hale, the greatest admiration for his work. I am as grieved to hear of his death as I can ever be to hear of the death of any friend, though my grief is always tempered with the satisfaction of knowing that for the one that goes, the hard, bitter struggle of life is ended.”

We were leaving the Belvedere next morning, and when the subject of breakfast came up for discussion he said:

“That was the most delicious Baltimore fried chicken we had yesterday morning. I think we’ll just repeat that order. It reminds me of John Quarles’s farm.”

We had been having our meals served in the rooms, but we had breakfast that morning down in the diningroom, and “Francesca” and her mother were there.

As he stood on the railway platform waiting for the train, he told me how once, fifty-five years before, as a boy of eighteen, he had changed cars there for Washington and had barely caught his train—the crowd yelling at him as he ran.

Page 881

We remained overnight in New York, and that evening, at the Grosvenor, he read aloud a poem of his own which I had not seen before. He had brought it along with some intention of reading it at St. Timothy's, he said, but had not found the occasion suitable.

"I wrote it a long time ago in Paris. I'd been reading aloud to Mrs. Clemens and Susy—in '93, I think—about Lord Clive and Warren Hastings, from Macaulay—how great they were and how far they fell. Then I took an imaginary case—that of some old demented man mumbling of his former state. I described him, and repeated some of his mumblings. Susy and Mrs. Clemens said, 'Write it'—so I did, by and by, and this is it. I call it 'The Derelict.'"

He read in his effective manner that fine poem, the opening stanza of which follows:

You sneer, you ships that pass me by,
Your snow-pure canvas towering proud!
You traders base!—why, once such fry
Paid reverence, when like a cloud
Storm-swept I drove along,
My Admiral at post, his pennon blue
Faint in the wilderness of sky, my long
Yards bristling with my gallant crew,
My ports flung wide, my guns displayed,
My tall spars hid in bellying sail!
—You struck your topsails then, and made
Obeisance—now your manners fail.

He had employed rhyme with more facility than was usual for him, and the figure and phrasing were full of vigor.

"It is strong and fine," I said, when he had finished.

"Yes," he assented. "It seems so as I read it now. It is so long since I have seen it that it is like reading another man's work. I should call it good, I believe."

He put the manuscript in his bag and walked up and down the floor talking.

"There is no figure for the human being like the ship," he said; "no such figure for the storm-beaten human drift as the derelict—such men as Clive and Hastings could only be imagined as derelicts adrift, helpless, tossed by every wind and tide."

We returned to Redding next day. On the train going home he fell to talking of books and authors, mainly of the things he had never been able to read.

"When I take up one of Jane Austen's books," he said, "such as *Pride and Prejudice*, I feel like a barkeeper entering the kingdom of heaven. I know, what his sensation would

be and his private comments. He would not find the place to his taste, and he would probably say so."

He recalled again how Stepniak had come to Hartford, and how humiliated Mrs. Clemens had been to confess that her husband was not familiar with the writings of Thackeray and others.

"I don't know anything about anything," he said, mournfully, "and never did. My brother used to try to get me to read Dickens, long ago. I couldn't do it—I was ashamed; but I couldn't do it. Yes, I have read *The Tale of Two Cities*, and could do it again. I have read it a good many times; but I never could stand Meredith and most of the other celebrities."

Page 882

By and by he handed me the Saturday Times Review, saying:

"Here is a fine poem, a great poem, I think. I can stand that."

It was "The Palatine (in the 'Dark Ages')," by Willa Sibert Cather, reprinted from McClure's. The reader will understand better than I can express why these lofty opening stanzas appealed to Mark Twain:

The Palatine

"Have you been with the King to Rome,
Brother, big brother?"
"I've been there and I've come home,
Back to your play, little brother." "Oh, how high is Caesar's house,
Brother, big brother?"
"Goats about the doorways browse;
Night-hawks nest in the burnt roof-tree,
Home of the wild bird and home of the bee.
A thousand chambers of marble lie
Wide to the sun and the wind and the sky.
Poppies we find amongst our wheat
Grow on Caesar's banquet seat.
Cattle crop and neatherds drowse
On the floors of Caesar's house." "But what has become of Caesar's gold,
Brother, big brother?"
"The times are bad and the world is old
—Who knows the where of the Caesar's gold?
Night comes black on the Caesar's hill;
The wells are deep and the tales are ill.
Fireflies gleam in the damp and mold,
All that is left of the Caesar's gold.
Back to your play, little brother."

Farther along in our journey he handed me the paper again, pointing to these lines of Kipling:

How is it not good for the Christian's health
To hurry the Aryan brown,
For the Christian riles and the Aryan smiles,
And he weareth the Christian down;
And the end of the fight is a tombstone white
And the name of the late deceased:
And the epitaph drear: "A fool lies here
Who tried to hustle the East."

"I could stand any amount of that," he said, and presently: "Life is too long and too short. Too long for the weariness of it; too short for the work to be done. At the very most, the average mind can only master a few languages and a little history."

I said: "Still, we need not worry. If death ends all it does not matter; and if life is eternal there will be time enough."

"Yes," he assented, rather grimly, "that optimism of yours is always ready to turn hell's back yard into a playground."

I said that, old as I was, I had taken up the study of French, and mentioned Bayard Taylor's having begun Greek at fifty, expecting to need it in heaven.

Clemens said, reflectively: "Yes—but you see that was Greek."

CCLXXXI

THE LAST SUMMER AT STORMFIELD

Page 883

I was at Stormfield pretty constantly during the rest of that year. At first I went up only for the day; but later, when his health did not improve, and when he expressed a wish for companionship evenings, I remained most of the nights as well. Our rooms were separated only by a bath-room; and as neither of us was much given to sleep, there was likely to be talk or reading aloud at almost any hour when both were awake. In the very early morning I would usually slip in, softly, sometimes to find him propped up against his pillows sound asleep, his glasses on, the reading-lamp blazing away as it usually did, day or night; but as often as not he was awake, and would have some new plan or idea of which he was eager to be delivered, and there was always interest, and nearly always amusement in it, even if it happened to be three in the morning or earlier.

Sometimes, when he thought it time for me to be stirring, he would call softly, but loudly enough for me to hear if awake; and I would go in, and we would settle again problems of life and death and science, or, rather, he would settle them while I dropped in a remark here and there, merely to hold the matter a little longer in solution.

The pains in his breast came back, and with a good deal of frequency as the summer advanced; also, they became more severe. Dr. Edward Quintard came up from New York, and did not hesitate to say that the trouble proceeded chiefly from the heart, and counseled diminished smoking, with less active exercise, advising particularly against Clemens's lifetime habit of lightly skipping up and down stairs.

There was no prohibition as to billiards, however, or leisurely walking, and we played pretty steadily through those peaceful summer days, and often took a walk down into the meadows or perhaps in the other direction, when it was not too warm or windy. Once we went as far as the river, and I showed him a part of his land he had not seen before—a beautiful cedar hillside, remote and secluded, a place of enchantment. On the way I pointed out a little corner of land which earlier he had given me to straighten our division line. I told him I was going to build a study on it, and call it “Markland.” He thought it an admirable building-site, and I think he was pleased with the name. Later he said:

“If you had a place for that extra billiard-table of mine [the Rogers table, which had been left in New York] I would turn it over to you.”

I replied that I could adapt the size of my proposed study to fit a billiard-table, and he said:

“Now that will be very good. Then, when I want exercise, I can walk down and play billiards with you, and when you want exercise you can walk up and play billiards with me. You must build that study.”

So it was we planned, and by and by Mr. Lounsbury had undertaken the work.

Page 884

During the walks Clemens rested a good deal. There were the New England hills to climb, and then he found that he tired easily, and that weariness sometimes brought on the pain. As I remember now, I think how bravely he bore it. It must have been a deadly, sickening, numbing pain, for I have seen it crumple him, and his face become colorless while his hand dug at his breast; but he never complained, he never bewailed, and at billiards he would persist in going on and playing in his turn, even while he was bowed with the anguish of the attack.

We had found that a glass of very hot water relieved it, and we kept always a thermos bottle or two filled and ready. At the first hint from him I would pour out a glass and another, and sometimes the relief came quickly; but there were times, and alas! they came oftener, when that deadly gripping did not soon release him. Yet there would come a week or a fortnight when he was apparently perfectly well, and at such times we dismissed the thought of any heart malady, and attributed the whole trouble to acute indigestion, from which he had always suffered more or less.

We were alone together most of the time. He did not appear to care for company that summer. Clara Clemens had a concert tour in prospect, and her father, eager for her success, encouraged her to devote a large part of her time to study. For Jean, who was in love with every form of outdoor and animal life, he had established headquarters in a vacant farm-house on one corner of the estate, where she had collected some stock and poultry, and was over-flowingly happy. Ossip Gabrilowitsch was a guest in the house a good portion of the summer, but had been invalided through severe surgical operations, and for a long time rarely appeared, even at meal-times. So it came about that there could hardly have been a closer daily companionship than was ours during this the last year of Mark Twain's life. For me, of course, nothing can ever be like it again in this world. One is not likely to associate twice with a being from another star.

CCLXXXII

PERSONAL MEMORANDA

In the notes I made of this period I caught a little drift of personality and utterance, and I do not know better how to preserve these things than to give them here as nearly as may be in the sequence and in the forth in which they were set down.

One of the first of these entries occurs in June, when Clemens was rereading with great interest and relish Andrew D. White's *Science and Theology*, which he called a lovely book.—[*'A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom'*.]

June 21. A peaceful afternoon, and we walked farther than usual, resting at last in the shade of a tree in the lane that leads to Jean's farm-house. I picked a dandelion-ball, with some remark

about its being one of the evidences of the intelligent principle in nature—the seeds winged for a wider distribution.

Page 885

“Yes,” he said, “those are the great evidences; no one who reasons can doubt them.”

And presently he added:

“That is a most amusing book of White’s. When you read it you see how those old theologians never reasoned at all. White tells of an old bishop who figured out that God created the world in an instant on a certain day in October exactly so many years before Christ, and proved it. And I knew a preacher myself once who declared that the fossils in the rocks proved nothing as to the age of the world. He said that God could create the rocks with those fossils in them for ornaments if He wanted to. Why, it takes twenty years to build a little island in the Mississippi River, and that man actually believed that God created the whole world and all that’s in it in six days. White tells of another bishop who gave two new reasons for thunder; one being that God wanted to show the world His power, and another that He wished to frighten sinners to repent. Now consider the proportions of that conception, even in the pettiest way you can think of it. Consider the idea of God thinking of all that. Consider the President of the United States wanting to impress the flies and fleas and mosquitoes, getting up on the dome of the Capitol and beating a bass-drum and setting off red fire.”

He followed the theme a little further, then we made our way slowly back up the long hill, he holding to my arm, and resting here and there, but arriving at the house seemingly fresh and ready for billiards.

June 23. I came up this morning with a basket of strawberries. He was walking up and down, looking like an ancient Roman. He said:

“Consider the case of Elsie Sigel—[Granddaughter of Gen. Franz Sigel. She was mysteriously murdered while engaged in settlement work among the Chinese.]—what a ghastly ending to any life!”

Then turning upon me fiercely, he continued:

“Anybody that knows anything knows that there was not a single life that was ever lived that was worth living. Not a single child ever begotten that the begetting of it was not a crime. Suppose a community of people to be living on the slope of a volcano, directly under the crater and in the path of lava-flow; that volcano has been breaking out right along for ages and is certain to break out again. They do not know when it will break out, but they know it will do it—that much can be counted on. Suppose those people go to a community in a far neighborhood and say, ‘We’d like to change places with you. Come take our homes and let us have yours.’ Those people would say, ‘Never mind, we are not interested in your country. We know what has happened there, and what will happen again.’ We don’t care to live under the blow that is likely to fall at any moment; and yet every time we bring a child into the world we are bringing it to a country,

Page 886

to a community gathered under the crater of a volcano, knowing that sooner or later death will come, and that before death there will be catastrophes infinitely worse. Formerly it was much worse than now, for before the ministers abolished hell a man knew, when he was begetting a child, that he was begetting a soul that had only one chance in a hundred of escaping the eternal fires of damnation. He knew that in all probability that child would be brought to damnation—one of the ninety-nine black sheep. But since hell has been abolished death has become more welcome. I wrote a fairy story once. It was published somewhere. I don't remember just what it was now, but the substance of it was that a fairy gave a man the customary wishes. I was interested in seeing what he would take. First he chose wealth and went away with it, but it did not bring him happiness. Then he came back for the second selection, and chose fame, and that did not bring happiness either. Finally he went to the fairy and chose death, and the fairy said, in substance, 'If you hadn't been a fool you'd have chosen that in the first place.'

"The papers called me a pessimist for writing that story.
Pessimist—the man who isn't a pessimist is a d—d fool."

But this was one of his savage humors, stirred by tragic circumstance. Under date of July 5th I find this happier entry:

We have invented a new game, three-ball carom billiards, each player continuing until he has made five, counting the number of his shots as in golf, the one who finishes in the fewer shots wins. It is a game we play with almost exactly equal skill, and he is highly pleased with it. He said this afternoon: "I have never enjoyed billiards as I do now. I look forward to it every afternoon as my reward at the end of a good day's work."—[His work at this time was an article on Marjorie Fleming, the "wonder child," whose quaint writings and brief little life had been published to the world by Dr. John Brown. Clemens always adored the thought of Marjorie, and in this article one can see that she ranked almost next to Joan of Arc in his affections.]

We went out in the loggia by and by and Clemens read aloud from a book which Professor Zubelin left here a few days ago—'The Religion of a Democrat'. Something in it must have suggested to Clemens his favorite science, for presently he said:

"I have been reading an old astronomy; it speaks of the perfect line of curvature of the earth in spite of mountains and abysses, and I have imagined a man three hundred thousand miles high picking up a ball like the earth and looking at it and holding it in his hand. It would be about like a billiard-ball to him, and he would turn it over in his hand and rub it with his thumb, and where he rubbed over the mountain ranges he might say, 'There seems to be some slight roughness here, but I can't detect it with my eye; it seems perfectly smooth to look at.' The Himalayas to him, the highest peak, would be



one-sixty-thousandth of his height, or about the one- thousandth part of an inch as compared with the average man.”

I spoke of having somewhere read of some very tiny satellites, one as small, perhaps, as six miles in diameter, yet a genuine world.

Page 887

"Could a man live on a world so small as that?" I asked.

"Oh yes," he said. "The gravitation that holds it together would hold him on, and he would always seem upright, the same as here. His horizon would be smaller, but even if he were six feet tall he would only have one foot for each mile of that world's diameter, so you see he would be little enough, even for a world that he could walk around in half a day."

He talked astronomy a great deal—marvel astronomy. He had no real knowledge of the subject, and I had none of any kind, which made its ungraspable facts all the more thrilling. He was always thrown into a sort of ecstasy by the unthinkable distances of space—the supreme drama of the universe. The fact that Alpha Centauri was twenty-five trillions of miles away—two hundred and fifty thousand times the distance of our own remote sun, and that our solar system was traveling, as a whole, toward the bright star Vega, in the constellation of Lyra, at the rate of forty-four miles a second, yet would be thousands upon thousands of years reaching its destination, fairly enraptured him.

The astronomical light-year—that is to say, the distance which light travels in a year—was one of the things which he loved to contemplate; but he declared that no two authorities ever figured it alike, and that he was going to figure it for himself. I came in one morning, to find that he had covered several sheets of paper with almost interminable rows of ciphers, and with a result, to him at least, entirely satisfactory. I am quite certain that he was prouder of those figures and their enormous aggregate than if he had just completed an immortal tale; and when he added that the nearest fixed star—Alpha Centauri—was between four and five light-years distant from the earth, and that there was no possible way to think that distance in miles or even any calculable fraction of it, his glasses shone and his hair was roached up as with the stimulation of these stupendous facts.

By and by he said:

"I came in with Halley's comet in 1835. It is coming again next year, and I expect to go out with it. It will be the greatest disappointment of my life if I don't go out with Halley's comet. The Almighty has said, no doubt: 'Now here are these two unaccountable freaks; they came in together, they must go out together.' Oh! I am looking forward to that." And a little later he added:

"I've got some kind of a heart disease, and Quintard won't tell me whether it is the kind that carries a man off in an instant or keeps him lingering along and suffering for twenty years or so. I was in hopes that Quintard would tell me that I was likely to drop dead any minute; but he didn't. He only told me that my blood-pressure was too strong. He didn't give me any schedule; but I expect to go with Halley's comet."

I seem to have omitted making any entries for a few days; but among his notes I find this entry, which seems to refer to some discussion of a favorite philosophy, and has a special interest of its own:

Page 888

July 14, 1909. Yesterday's dispute resumed, I still maintaining that, whereas we can think, we generally don't do it. Don't do it, & don't have to do it: we are automatic machines which act unconsciously. From morning till sleeping-time, all day long. All day long our machinery is doing things from habit & instinct, & without requiring any help or attention from our poor little 7-by-9 thinking apparatus. This reminded me of something: thirty years ago, in Hartford, the billiard-room was my study, & I wrote my letters there the first thing every morning. My table lay two points off the starboard bow of the billiard-table, & the door of exit and entrance bore northeast-&-by-east-half-east from that position, consequently you could see the door across the length of the billiard-table, but you couldn't see the floor by the said table. I found I was always forgetting to ask intruders to carry my letters down-stairs for the mail, so I concluded to lay them on the floor by the door; then the intruder would have to walk over them, & that would indicate to him what they were there for. Did it? No, it didn't. He was a machine, & had habits. Habits take precedence of thought. Now consider this: a stamped & addressed letter lying on the floor—lying aggressively & conspicuously on the floor—is an unusual spectacle; so unusual a spectacle that you would think an intruder couldn't see it there without immediately divining that it was not there by accident, but had been deliberately placed there & for a definite purpose. Very well—it may surprise you to learn that that most simple & most natural & obvious thought would never occur to any intruder on this planet, whether he be fool, half-fool, or the most brilliant of thinkers. For he is always an automatic machine & has habits, & his habits will act before his thinking apparatus can get a chance to exert its powers. My scheme failed because every human being has the habit of picking up any apparently misplaced thing & placing it where it won't be stepped on. My first intruder was George. He went and came without saying anything. Presently I found the letters neatly piled up on the billiard-table. I was astonished. I put them on the floor again. The next intruder piled them on the billiard-table without a word. I was profoundly moved, profoundly interested. So I set the trap again. Also again, & again, & yet again—all day long. I caught every member of the family, & every servant; also I caught the three finest intellects in the town. In every instance old, time-worn automatic habit got in its work so promptly that the thinking apparatus never got a chance.

I do not remember this particular discussion, but I do distinctly recall being one of those whose intelligence was not sufficient to prevent my picking up the letter he had thrown on the floor in front of his bed, and being properly classified for doing it.



Page 889

Clemens no longer kept note-books, as in an earlier time, but set down innumerable memoranda-comments, stray reminders, and the like—on small pads, and bunches of these tiny sheets accumulated on his table and about his room. I gathered up many of them then and afterward, and a few of these characteristic bits may be offered here.

Knee

It is at our mother's knee that we acquire our noblest & truest & highest ideals, but there is seldom any money in them.

Jehovah

He is all-good. He made man for hell or hell for man, one or the other —take your choice. He made it hard to get into heaven and easy to get into hell. He commended man to multiply & replenish-what? Hell.

Modesty antedates clothes

& will be resumed when clothes are no more. [The latter part of this aphorism is erased and underneath it he adds:]

Modesty died

when clothes were born.

Modesty died

when false modesty was born.

History

A historian who would convey the truth has got to lie. Often he must enlarge the truth by diameters, otherwise his reader would not be able to see it.

Morals

are not the important thing—nor enlightenment—nor civilization. A man can do absolutely well without them, but he can't do without something to eat. The supremest thing is the needs of the body, not of the mind & spirit.

Suggestion

There is conscious suggestion & there is unconscious suggestion—both come from outside—whence all ideas come.

Duels



I think I could wipe out a dishonor by crippling the other man, but I don't see how I could do it by letting him cripple me.

I have no feeling of animosity toward people who do not believe as I do; I merely do not respect 'em. In some serious matters (relig.) I would have them burnt.

I am old now and once was a sinner. I often think of it with a kind of soft regret. I trust my days are numbered. I would not have that detail overlooked.

She was always a girl, she was always young because her heart was young; & I was young because she lived in my heart & preserved its youth from decay.

He often busied himself working out more extensively some of the ideas that came to him—moral ideas, he called them. One fancy which he followed in several forms (some of them not within the privilege of print) was that of an inquisitive little girl, Bessie, who pursues her mother with difficult questionings.—[Under Appendix w, at the end of this volume, the reader will find one of the "Bessie" dialogues.]—He read these aloud as he finished them, and it is certain that they lacked neither logic nor humor.

Sometimes he went to a big drawer in his dresser, where he kept his finished manuscripts, and took them out and looked over them, and read parts of them aloud, and talked of the plans he had had for them, and how one idea after another had been followed for a time and had failed to satisfy him in the end.

Page 890

Two fiction schemes that had always possessed him he had been unable to bring to any conclusion. Both of these have been mentioned in former chapters; one being the notion of a long period of dream-existence during a brief moment of sleep, and the other being the story of a mysterious visitant from another realm. He had experimented with each of these ideas in no less than three forms, and there was fine writing and dramatic narrative in all; but his literary architecture had somehow fallen short of his conception. "The Mysterious Stranger" in one of its forms I thought might be satisfactorily concluded, and he admitted that he could probably end it without much labor. He discussed something of his plans, and later I found the notes for its conclusion. But I suppose he was beyond the place where he could take up those old threads, though he contemplated, fondly enough, the possibility, and recalled how he had read at least one form of the dream tale to Howells, who had urged him to complete it.

CCLXXXIII

ASTRONOMY AND DREAMS

August 5, 1909. This morning I noticed on a chair a copy of Flaubert's *Salamambo* which I recently lent him. I asked if he liked it.

"No," he said, "I didn't like any of it."

"But you read it?"

"Yes, I read every line of it."

"You admitted its literary art?"

"Well, it's like this: If I should go to the Chicago stockyards and they should kill a beef and cut it up and the blood should splash all over everything, and then they should take me to another pen and kill another beef and the blood should splash over everything again, and so on to pen after pen, I should care for it about as much as I do for that book."

"But those were bloody days, and you care very much for that period in history."

"Yes, that is so. But when I read Tacitus and know that I am reading history I can accept it as such and supply the imaginary details and enjoy it, but this thing is such a continuous procession of blood and slaughter and stench it worries me. It has great art—I can see that. That scene of the crucified lions and the death canon and the tent scene are marvelous, but I wouldn't read that book again without a salary."

August 16. He is reading Suetonius, which he already knows by heart—so full of the cruelties and licentiousness of imperial Rome.

This afternoon he began talking about Claudius.

“They called Claudius a lunatic,” he said, “but just see what nice fancies he had. He would go to the arena between times and have captives and wild beasts brought out and turned in together for his special enjoyment. Sometimes when there were no captives on hand he would say, ‘Well, never mind; bring out a carpenter.’ Carpentering around the arena wasn’t a popular job in those days. He went visiting once to a province and thought it would be pleasant to see how they disposed of criminals and captives in their crude, old-fashioned way, but there was no executioner on hand. No matter; the Emperor of Rome was in no hurry—he would wait. So he sat down and stayed there until an executioner came.”

Page 891

I said, "How do you account for the changed attitude toward these things? We are filled with pity to-day at the thought of torture and suffering."

"Ah! but that is because we have drifted that way and exercised the quality of compassion. Relax a muscle and it soon loses its vigor; relax that quality and in two generations—in one generation—we should be gloating over the spectacle of blood and torture just the same. Why, I read somewhere a letter written just before the Lisbon catastrophe in 1755 about a scene on the public square of Lisbon: A lot of stakes with the fagots piled for burning and heretics chained for burning. The square was crowded with men and women and children, and when those fires were lighted, and the heretics began to shriek and writhe, those men and women and children laughed so they were fairly beside themselves with the enjoyment of the scene. The Greeks don't seem to have done these things. I suppose that indicates earlier advancement in compassion."

Colonel Harvey and Mr. Duneka came up to spend the night. Mr. Clemens had one of his seizures during the evening. They come oftener and last longer. One last night continued for an hour and a half. I slept there.

September 7. To-day news of the North Pole discovered by Peary. Five days ago the same discovery was reported by Cook. Clemens's comment: "It's the greatest joke of the ages." But a moment later he referred to the stupendous fact of Arcturus being fifty thousand times as big as the sun.

September 21. This morning he told me, with great glee, the dream he had had just before wakening. He said:

"I was in an automobile going slowly, with 'a little girl beside me, and some uniformed person walking along by us. I said, 'I'll get out and walk, too'; but the officer replied, 'This is only one of the smallest of our fleet.'" Then I noticed that the automobile had no front, and there were two cannons mounted where the front should be. I noticed, too, that we were traveling very low, almost down on the ground. Presently we got to the bottom of a hill and started up another, and I found myself walking ahead of the 'mobile. I turned around to look for the little girl, and instead of her I found a kitten capering beside me, and when we reached the top of the hill we were looking out over a most barren and desolate waste of sand-heaps without a speck of vegetation anywhere, and the kitten said, 'This view beggars all admiration.' Then all at once we were in a great group of people and I undertook to repeat to them the kitten's remark, but when I tried to do it the words were so touching that I broke down and cried, and all the group cried, too, over the kitten's moving remark."

The joy with which he told this absurd sleep fancy made it supremely ridiculous and we laughed until tears really came.

Page 892

One morning he said: "I was awake a good deal in the night, and I tried to think of interesting things. I got to working out geological periods, trying to think of some way to comprehend them, and then astronomical periods. Of course it's impossible, but I thought of a plan that seemed to mean something to me. I remembered that Neptune is two billion eight hundred million miles away. That, of course, is incomprehensible, but then there is the nearest fixed star with its twenty-five trillion miles —twenty-five trillion—or nearly a thousand times as far, and then I took this book and counted the lines on a page and I found that there was an average of thirty-two lines to the page and two hundred and forty pages, and I figured out that, counting the distance to Neptune as one line, there were still not enough lines in the book by nearly two thousand to reach the nearest fixed star, and somehow that gave me a sort of dim idea of the vastness of the distance and kind of a journey into space."

Later I figured out another method of comprehending a little of that great distance by estimating the existence of the human race at thirty thousand years (Lord Kelvin's figures) and the average generation to have been thirty-three years with a world population of 1,500,000,000 souls. I assumed the nearest fixed star to be the first station in Paradise and the first soul to have started thirty thousand years ago. Traveling at the rate of about thirty miles a second, it would just now be arriving in Alpha Centauri with all the rest of that buried multitude stringing out behind at an average distance of twenty miles apart.

Few things gave him more pleasure than the contemplation of such figures as these. We made occasional business trips to New York, and during one of them visited the Museum of Natural History to look at the brontosaur and the meteorites and the astronomical model in the entrance hall. To him these were the most fascinating things in the world. He contemplated the meteorites and the brontosaur, and lost himself in strange and marvelous imaginings concerning the far reaches of time and space whence they had come down to us.

Mark Twain lived curiously apart from the actualities of life. Dwelling mainly among his philosophies and speculations, he observed vaguely, or minutely, what went on about him; but in either case the fact took a place, not in the actual world, but in a world within his consciousness, or subconsciousness, a place where facts were likely to assume new and altogether different relations from those they had borne in the physical occurrence. It not infrequently happened, therefore, when he recounted some incident, even the most recent, that history took on fresh and startling forms. More than once I have known him to relate an occurrence of the day before with a reality of circumstance that carried absolute conviction, when the details themselves were precisely reversed. If his attention were called to the discrepancy, his face would take on a blank look, as of one suddenly aroused from dreamland, to be followed by an almost childish interest in your revelation and ready acknowledgment of his mistake. I do not think such mistakes humiliated him; but they often surprised and, I think, amused him.

Page 893

Insubstantial and deceptive as was this inner world of his, to him it must have been much more real than the world of flitting physical shapes about him. He would fix you keenly with his attention, but you realized, at last, that he was placing you and seeing you not as a part of the material landscape, but as an item of his own inner world—a world in which philosophies and morals stood upright—a very good world indeed, but certainly a topsy-turvy world when viewed with the eye of mere literal scrutiny. And this was, mainly, of course, because the routine of life did not appeal to him. Even members of his household did not always stir his consciousness.

He knew they were there; he could call them by name; he relied upon them; but his knowledge of them always suggested the knowledge that Mount Everest might have of the forests and caves and boulders upon its slopes, useful, perhaps, but hardly necessary to the giant's existence, and in no important matter a part of its greater life.

CCLXXXIV

A LIBRARY CONCERT

In a letter which Clemens wrote to Miss Wallace at this time, he tells of a concert given at Stormfield on September 21st for the benefit of the new Redding Library. Gabrilowitsch had so far recovered that he was up and about and able to play. David Bispham, the great barytone, always genial and generous, agreed to take part, and Clara Clemens, already accustomed to public singing, was to join in the program. The letter to Miss Wallace supplies the rest of the history.

We had a grand time here yesterday. Concert in aid of the little library.

Team

Gabrilowitsch, pianist.

David Bispham, vocalist.

Clara Clemens, ditto.

Mark Twain, introduces of team. Detachments and squads and groups and singles came from everywhere —Danbury, New Haven, Norwalk, Redding, Redding Ridge, Ridgefield, and even from New York: some in 60-h.p. motor-cars, some in buggies and carriages, and a swarm of farmer-young-folk on foot from miles around—525 altogether. If we hadn't stopped the sale of tickets a day and a half before the performance we should have been swamped. We jammed 160 into the library (not quite all had seats), we filled the loggia, the dining- room, the hall, clear into the billiard-room, the stairs, and the brick-paved square outside the dining-room door. The artists were received with a great welcome, and it woke them up, and I tell you they performed to the Queen's taste! The program was an hour and three-quarters long and the

encores added a half-hour to it. The enthusiasm of the house was hair-lifting. They all stayed an hour after the close to shake hands and congratulate. We had no dollar seats except in the library, but we accumulated \$372 for the Building

Page 894

Fund. We had tea at half past six for a dozen—the Hawthornes, Jeannette Gilder, and her niece, *etc.*; and after 8-o'clock dinner we had a private concert and a ball in the bare-stripped library until 10; nobody present but the team and Mr. and Mrs. Paine and Jean and her dog. And me. Bispham did “Danny Deever” and the “Erlkonig” in his majestic, great organ-tones and artillery, and Gabrilowitsch played the accompaniments as they were never played before, I do suppose.

There is not much to add to that account. Clemens, introducing the performers, was the gay feature of the occasion. He spoke of the great reputation of Bispham and Gabrilowitsch; then he said:

“My daughter is not as famous as these gentlemen, but she is ever so much better-looking.”

The music of the evening that followed, with Gabrilowitsch at the piano and David Bispham to sing, was something not likely ever to be repeated. Bispham sang the “Erlkonig” and “Killiecrankie” and the “Grenadiers” and several other songs. He spoke of having sung Wagner’s arrangement of the “Grenadiers” at the composer’s home following his death, and how none of the family had heard it before.

There followed dancing, and Jean Clemens, fine and handsome, apparently full of life and health, danced down that great living-room as care-free as if there was no shadow upon her life. And the evening was distinguished in another way, for before it ended Clara Clemens had promised Ossip Gabrilowitsch to become his wife.

CCLXXXV

A WEDDING AT STORMFIELD

The wedding of Ossip Gabrilowitsch and Clara Clemens was not delayed. Gabrilowitsch had signed for a concert tour in Europe, and unless the marriage took place forthwith it must be postponed many months. It followed, therefore, fifteen days after the engagement. They were busy days. Clemens, enormously excited and pleased over the prospect of the first wedding in his family, personally attended to the selection of those who were to have announcement-cards, employing a stenographer to make the list.

October 6th was a perfect wedding-day. It was one of those quiet, lovely fall days when the whole world seems at peace. Claude, the butler, with his usual skill in such matters, had decorated the great living-room with gay autumn foliage and flowers, brought in mainly from the woods and fields. They blended perfectly with the warm tones of the walls and furnishings, and I do not remember ever having seen a more beautiful room.

Only relatives and a few of the nearest friends were invited to the ceremony. The Twichells came over a day ahead, for Twichell, who had assisted in the marriage rites between Samuel Clemens and Olivia Langdon, was to perform that ceremony for their daughter now. A fellow-student of the bride and groom when they had been pupils of Leschetizky, in Vienna —Miss Ethel Newcomb—was

Page 895

at the piano and played softly the Wedding March from “Taunhauser.” Jean Clemens was the only bridesmaid, and she was stately and classically beautiful, with a proud dignity in her office. Jervis Langdon, the bride’s cousin and childhood playmate, acted as best man, and Clemens, of course, gave the bride away. By request he wore his scarlet Oxford gown over his snowy flannels, and was splendid beyond words. I do not write of the appearance of the bride and groom, for brides and grooms are always handsome and always happy, and certainly these were no exception. It was all so soon over, the feasting ended, and the principals whirling away into the future. I have a picture in my mind of them seated together in the automobile, with Richard Watson Gilder standing on the step for a last good-by, and before them a wide expanse of autumn foliage and distant hills. I remember Gilder’s voice saying, when the car was on the turn, and they were waving back to us:

“Over the hills and far away,
Beyond the utmost purple rim,
Beyond the night, beyond the day,
Through all the world she followed him.”

The matter of the wedding had been kept from the newspapers until the eve of the wedding, when the Associated Press had been notified. A representative was there; but Clemens had characteristically interviewed himself on the subject, and it was only necessary to hand the reporter a typewritten copy. Replying to the question (put to himself), “Are you pleased with the marriage?” he answered:

Yes, fully as much as any marriage could please me or any other father. There are two or three solemn things in life and a happy marriage is one of them, for the terrors of life are all to come. I am glad of this marriage, and Mrs. Clemens would be glad, for she always had a warm affection for Gabrilowitsch.

There was another wedding at Stormfield on the following afternoon—an imitation wedding. Little Joy came up with me, and wished she could stand in just the spot where she had seen the bride stand, and she expressed a wish that she could get married like that. Clemens said:

“Frankness is a jewel; only the young can afford it.”

Then he happened to remember a ridiculous boy-doll—a white-haired creature with red coat and green trousers, a souvenir imitation of himself from one of the Rogerses’ Christmas trees. He knew where it was, and he got it out. Then he said:

“Now, Joy, we will have another wedding. This is Mr. Colonel Williams, and you are to become his wedded wife.”

So Joy stood up very gravely and Clemens performed the ceremony, and I gave the bride away, and Joy to him became Mrs. Colonel Williams thereafter, and entered happily into her new estate.

CCLXXXVI

AUTUMN DAYS

Page 896

A harvest of letters followed the wedding: a general congratulatory expression, mingled with admiration, affection, and good-will. In his interview Clemens had referred to the pain in his breast; and many begged him to deny that there was anything serious the matter with him, urging him to try this relief or that, pathetically eager for his continued life and health. They cited the comfort he had brought to world-weary humanity and his unflinching stand for human justice as reasons why he should live. Such letters could not fail to cheer him.

A letter of this period, from John Bigelow, gave him a pleasure of its own. Clemens had written Bigelow, apropos of some adverse expression on the tariff:

Thank you for any hard word you can say about the tariff. I guess the government that robs its own people earns the future it is preparing for itself.

Bigelow was just then declining an invitation to the annual dinner of the Chamber of Commerce. In sending his regrets he said:

The sentiment I would propose if I dared to be present would be the words of Mark Twain, the statesman:

"The government that robs its own people earns the future it is preparing for itself."

Now to Clemens himself he wrote:

Rochefoucault never said a cleverer thing, nor Dr. Franklin a wiser one Be careful, or the Demos will be running you for President when you are not on your guard.

Yours more than ever,
John Bigelow.

Among the tributes that came, was a sermon by the Rev. Fred Window Adams, of Schenectady, New York, with Mark Twain as its subject. Mr. Adams chose for his text, "Take Mark and bring him with thee; for he is profitable for the ministry," and he placed the two Marks, St. Mark and Mark Twain, side by side as ministers to humanity, and characterized him as "a fearless knight of righteousness." A few weeks later Mr. Adams himself came to Stormfield, and, like all open-minded ministers of the Gospel, he found that he could get on very well indeed with Mark Twain.

In spite of the good-will and the good wishes Clemens's malady did not improve. As the days grew chillier he found that he must remain closer indoors. The cold air seemed to bring on the pains, and they were gradually becoming more severe; then, too, he did not follow the doctor's orders in the matter of smoking, nor altogether as to exercise.

To Miss Wallace he wrote:

I can't walk, I can't drive, I'm not down-stairs much, and I don't see company, but I drink barrels of water to keep the pain quiet; I read, and read, and read, and smoke, and smoke, and smoke all the time (as formerly), and it's a contented and comfortable life.

Page 897

But this was not altogether accurate as to details. He did come down-stairs many times daily, and he persisted in billiards regardless of the paroxysms. We found, too, that the seizures were induced by mental agitation. One night he read aloud to Jean and myself the first chapter of an article, "The Turning-Point in My Life," which he was preparing for Harper's Bazar. He had begun it with one of his impossible burlesque fancies, and he felt our attitude of disappointment even before any word had been said. Suddenly he rose, and laying his hand on his breast said, "I must lie down," and started toward the stair. I supported him to his room and hurriedly poured out the hot water. He drank it and dropped back on the bed.

"Don't speak to me," he said; "don't make me talk."

Jean came in, and we sat there several moments in silence. I think we both wondered if this might not be the end; but presently he spoke of his own accord, declaring he was better, and ready for billiards.

We played for at least an hour afterward, and he seemed no worse for the attack. It is a curious malady—that angina; even the doctors are acquainted with its manifestations, rather than its cause. Clemens's general habits of body and mind were probably not such as to delay its progress; furthermore, there had befallen him that year one of those misfortunes which his confiding nature peculiarly invited—a betrayal of trust by those in whom it had been boundlessly placed—and it seems likely that the resulting humiliation aggravated his complaint. The writing of a detailed history of this episode afforded him occupation and a certain amusement, but probably did not contribute to his health. One day he sent for his attorney, Mr. Charles T. Lark, and made some final revisions in his will.—[Mark Twain's estate, later appraised at something more than \$600,000 was left in the hands of trustees for his daughters. The trustees were Edward E. Loomis, Jervis Langdon, and Zoheth S. Freeman. The direction of his literary affairs was left to his daughter Clara and the writer of this history.]

To see him you would never have suspected that he was ill. He was in good flesh, and his movement was as airy and his eye as bright and his face as full of bloom as at any time during the period I had known him; also, he was as light-hearted and full of ideas and plans, and he was even gentler—having grown mellow with age and retirement, like good wine.

And of course he would find amusement in his condition. He said:

"I have always pretended to be sick to escape visitors; now, for the first time, I have got a genuine excuse. It makes me feel so honest."

And once, when Jean reported a caller in the livingroom, he said:

“Jean, I can’t see her. Tell her I am likely to drop dead any minute and it would be most embarrassing.”

But he did see her, for it was a poet—Angela Morgan—and he read her poem, “God’s Man,” aloud with great feeling, and later he sold it for her to Collier’s Weekly.

Page 898

He still had violent rages now and then, remembering some of the most notable of his mistakes; and once, after denouncing himself, rather inclusively, as an idiot, he said:

"I wish to God the lightning would strike me; but I've wished that fifty thousand times and never got anything out of it yet. I have missed several good chances. Mrs. Clemens was afraid of lightning, and would never let me bare my head to the storm."

The element of humor was never lacking, and the rages became less violent and less frequent.

I was at Stormfield steadily now, and there was a regular routine of afternoon sessions of billiards or reading, in which we were generally alone; for Jean, occupied with her farming and her secretary labors, seldom appeared except at meal-times. Occasionally she joined in the billiard games; but it was difficult learning and her interest was not great. She would have made a fine player, for she had a natural talent for games, as she had for languages, and she could have mastered the science of angles as she had mastered tennis and French and German and Italian. She had naturally a fine intellect, with many of her father's characteristics, and a tender heart that made every dumb creature her friend.

Katie Leary, who had been Jean's nurse, once told how, as a little child, Jean had not been particularly interested in a picture of the Lisbon earthquake, where the people were being swallowed up; but on looking at the next page, which showed a number of animals being overwhelmed, she had said:

"Poor things!"

Katie said:

"Why, you didn't say that about the people!"

But Jean answered:

"Oh, they could speak."

One night at the dinner-table her father was saying how difficult it must be for a man who had led a busy life to give up the habit of work.

"That is why the Rogerses kill themselves," he said. "They would rather kill themselves in the old treadmill than stop and try to kill time. They have forgotten how to rest. They know nothing but to keep on till they drop."

I told of something I had read not long before. It was about an aged lion that had broken loose from his cage at Coney Island. He had not offered to hurt any one; but after wandering about a little, rather aimlessly, he had come to a picket-fence, and a

moment later began pacing up and down in front of it, just the length of his cage. They had come and led him back to his prison without trouble, and he had rushed eagerly into it. I noticed that Jean was listening anxiously, and when I finished she said:

“Is that a true story?”

She had forgotten altogether the point in illustration. She was concerned only with the poor old beast that had found no joy in his liberty.

Among the letters that Clemens wrote just then was one to Miss Wallace, in which he described the glory of the fall colors as seen from his windows.

Page 899

The autumn splendors passed you by? What a pity! I wish you had been here. It was beyond words! It was heaven & hell & sunset & rainbows & the aurora all fused into one divine harmony, & you couldn't look at it and keep the tears back. Such a singing together, & such a whispering together, & such a snuggling together of cozy, soft colors, & such kissing & caressing, & such pretty blushing when the sun breaks out & catches those dainty weeds at it—you remember that weed-garden of mine?—& then —then the far hills sleeping in a dim blue trance—oh, hearing about it is nothing, you should be here to see it!

In the same letter he refers to some work that he was writing for his own satisfaction—'Letters from the Earth'; said letters supposed to have been written by an immortal visitant and addressed to other immortals in some remote sphere.

I'll read passages to you. This book will never be published—in fact it couldn't be, because it would be felony . . . Paine enjoys it, but Paine is going to be damned one of these days, I suppose.

I very well remember his writing those 'Letters from the Earth'. He read them to me from time to time as he wrote them, and they were fairly overflowing with humor and philosophy and satire concerning the human race. The immortal visitor pointed out, one after another, the absurdities of mankind, his ridiculous conception of heaven, and his special conceit in believing that he was the Creator's pet—the particular form of life for which all the universe was created. Clemens allowed his exuberant fancy free rein, being under no restrictions as to the possibility of print or public offense. He enjoyed them himself, too, as he read them aloud, and we laughed ourselves weak over his bold imaginings.

One admissible extract will carry something of the flavor of these chapters. It is where the celestial correspondent describes man's religion.

His heaven is like himself: strange, interesting, astonishing, grotesque. I give you my word it has not a single feature in it that he actually values. It consists—utterly and entirely—of diversions which he cares next to nothing about here in the earth, yet he is quite sure he will like in heaven. Isn't it curious? Isn't it interesting? You must not think I am exaggerating, for it is not so. I will give you the details.

Most, men do not sing, most men cannot sing, most men will not stay where others are singing if it be continued more than two hours.
Note that.

Only about two men in a hundred can play upon a musical instrument, and not four in a hundred have any wish to learn how. Set that down.

Many men pray, not many of them like to do it. A few pray long, the others make a short-cut.

More men go to church than want to.

To forty-nine men in fifty the Sabbath day is a dreary, dreary bore.

Page 900

Further, all sane people detest noise.

All people, sane or insane, like to have variety in their lives.
Monotony quickly wearies them.

Now then, you have the facts. You know what men don't enjoy. Well, they have invented a heaven, out of their own heads, all by themselves; guess what it is like? In fifteen hundred years you couldn't do it. They have left out the very things they care for most their dearest pleasures—and replaced them with prayer! In man's heaven everybody sings. There are no exceptions. The man who did not sing on earth sings there; the man who could not sing on earth sings there. Thus universal singing is not casual, not occasional, not relieved by intervals of quiet; it goes on all day long and every day during a stretch of twelve hours. And everybody stays where on earth the place would be empty in two hours. The singing is of hymns alone. Nay, it is one hymn alone. The words are always the same in number—they are only about a dozen—there is no rhyme—there is no poetry. "Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna unto the highest!" and a few such phrases constitute the whole service. Meantime, every person is playing on a harp! Consider the deafening hurricane of sound. Consider, further, it is a praise service—a service of compliment, flattery, adulation. Do you ask who it is that is willing to endure this strange compliment, this insane compliment, and who not only endures it but likes it, enjoys it, requires it, commands it? Hold your breath: It is God! This race's God I mean—their own pet invention.

Most of the ideas presented in this his last commentary on human absurdities were new only as to phrasing. He had exhausted the topic long ago, in one way or another; but it was one of the themes in which he never lost interest. Many subjects became stale to him at last; but the curious invention called man remained a novelty to him to the end.

From my note-book:

October 25. I am constantly amazed at his knowledge of history—all history—religious, political, military. He seems to have read everything in the world concerning Rome, France, and England particularly. Last night we stopped playing billiards while he reviewed, in the most vivid and picturesque phrasing, the reasons of Rome's decline. Such a presentation would have enthralled any audience—I could not help feeling a great pity that he had not devoted some of his public effort to work of that sort. No one could have equaled him at it. He concluded with some comments on the possibility of America following Rome's example, though he thought the vote of the people would always, or at least for a long period, prevent imperialism. November 1. To-day he has been absorbed in his old interest in shorthand. "It is the only rational alphabet," he declared. "All this spelling reform

Page 901

is nonsense. What we need is alphabet reform, and shorthand is the thing. Take the letter M, for instance; it is made with one stroke in shorthand, while in longhand it requires at least three. The word Mephistopheles can be written in shorthand with one-sixth the number of strokes that is required in longhand. I tell you shorthand should be adopted as the alphabet."

I said: "There is this objection: the characters are so slightly different that each writer soon forms a system of his own and it is seldom that two can read each other's notes."

"You are talking of stenographic reporting," he said, rather warmly. "Nothing of the kind is true in the case of the regular alphabet. It is perfectly clear and legible."

"Would you have it in the schools, then?"

"Yes, it should be taught in the schools, not for stenographic purposes, but only for use in writing to save time."

He was very much in earnest, and said he had undertaken an article on the subject.

November 3. He said he could not sleep last night, for thinking what a fool he had been in his various investments.

"I have always been the victim of somebody," he said, "and always an idiot myself, doing things that even a child would not do. Never asking anybody's advice—never taking it when it was offered. I can't see how anybody could do the things I have done and have kept right on doing." I could see that the thought agitated him, and I suggested that we go to his room and read, which we did, and had a riotous time over the most recent chapters of the 'Letters from the Earth', and some notes he had made for future chapters on infant damnation and other distinctive features of orthodox creeds. He told an anecdote of an old minister who declared that Presbyterianism without infant damnation would be like the dog on the train that couldn't be identified because it had lost its tag.

Somewhat on the defensive I said, "But we must admit that the so-called Christian nations are the most enlightened and progressive."

He answered, "Yes, but in spite of their religion, not because of it. The Church has opposed every innovation and discovery from the day of Galileo down to our own time, when the use of anesthetics in child-birth was regarded as a sin because it avoided the biblical curse pronounced against Eve. And every step in astronomy and geology ever

taken has been opposed by bigotry and superstition. The Greeks surpassed us in artistic culture and in architecture five hundred years before the Christian religion was born. "I have been reading Gibbon's celebrated Fifteenth Chapter," he said later, "and I don't see what Christians found against it. It is so mild—so gentle in its sarcasm." He added that he had been reading also a little book of brief biographies and had found in it the saying of Darwin's father, "Unitarianism is a featherbed to catch falling Christians."

"I was glad to find and identify that saying," he said; "it is so good."

Page 902

He finished the evening by reading a chapter from Carlyle's French Revolution—a fine pyrotechnic passage—the gathering at Versailles. I said that Carlyle somehow reminded me of a fervid stump-speaker who pounded his fists and went at his audience fiercely, determined to convince them.

"Yes," he said, "but he is the best one that ever lived."

November 10. This morning early he heard me stirring and called. I went in and found him propped up with a book, as usual. He said:

"I seldom read Christmas stories, but this is very beautiful. It has made me cry. I want you to read it." (It was Booth Tarkington's 'Beasley's Christmas Party'.) "Tarkington has the true touch," he said; "his work always satisfies me." Another book he has been reading with great enjoyment is James Branch Cabell's Chivalry. He cannot say enough of the subtle poetic art with which Cabell has flung the light of romance about dark and sordid chapters of history.

CCLXXVII

MARK TWAIN'S READING

Perhaps here one may speak of Mark Twain's reading in general. On the table by him, and on his bed, and in the billiard-room shelves he kept the books he read most. They were not many—not more than a dozen—but they were manifestly of familiar and frequent usage. All, or nearly all, had annotations—spontaneously uttered marginal notes, title prefatories, or concluding comments. They were the books he had read again and again, and it was seldom that he had not had something to say with each fresh reading.

There were the three big volumes by Saint-Simon—'The Memoirs'—which he once told me he had read no less than twenty times. On the fly-leaf of the first volume he wrote

This, & Casanova & Pepys, set in parallel columns, could afford a good coup d'oeil of French & English high life of that epoch.

All through those finely printed volumes are his commentaries, sometimes no more than a word, sometimes a filled, closely written margin. He found little to admire in the human nature of Saint-Simon's period—little to approve in Saint-Simon himself beyond his unrestrained frankness, which he admired without stint, and in one paragraph where the details of that early period are set down with startling fidelity he wrote: "Oh, incomparable Saint-Simon!"

Saint-Simon is always frank, and Mark Twain was equally so. Where the former tells one of the unspeakable compulsions of Louis XIV., the latter has commented:

We have to grant that God made this royal hog; we may also be permitted to believe that it was a crime to do so.

And on another page:

In her memories of this period the Duchesse de St. Clair makes this striking remark: "Sometimes one could tell a gentleman, but it was only by his manner of using his fork."

His comments on the orthodox religion of Saint-Simon's period are not marked by gentleness. Of the author's reference to the Edict of Nantes, which he says depopulated half of the realm, ruined its commerce, and "authorized torments and punishments by which so many innocent people of both sexes were killed by thousands," Clemens writes:

Page 903

So much blood has been shed by the Church because of an omission from the Gospel: "Ye shall be indifferent as to what your neighbor's religion is." Not merely tolerant of it, but indifferent to it. Divinity is claimed for many religions; but no religion is great enough or divine enough to add that new law to its code.

In the place where Saint-Simon describes the death of Monseigneur, son of the king, and the court hypocrites are wailing their extravagantly pretended sorrow, Clemens wrote:

It is all so true, all so human. God made these animals. He must have noticed this scene; I wish I knew how it struck Him.

There were not many notes in the Suetonius, nor in the Carlyle Revolution, though these were among the volumes he read oftenest. Perhaps they expressed for him too completely and too richly their subject-matter to require anything at his hand. Here and there are marked passages and occasional cross-references to related history and circumstance.

There was not much room for comment on the narrow margins of the old copy of Pepys, which he had read steadily since the early seventies; but here and there a few crisp words, and the underscoring and marked passages are plentiful enough to convey his devotion to that quaint record which, perhaps next to Suetonius, was the book he read and quoted most.

Francis Parkman's Canadian Histories he had read periodically, especially the story of the Old Regime and of the Jesuits in North America. As late as January, 1908, he wrote on the title-page of the Old Regime:

Very interesting. It tells how people religiously and otherwise insane came over from France and colonized Canada.

He was not always complimentary to those who undertook to Christianize the Indians; but he did not fail to write his admiration of their courage—their very willingness to endure privation and even the fiendish savage tortures for the sake of their faith. "What manner of men are these?" he wrote, apropos of the account of Bressani, who had undergone the most devilish inflictions which savage ingenuity could devise, and yet returned maimed and disfigured the following spring to "dare again the knives and fiery brand of the Iroquois." Clemens was likely to be on the side of the Indians, but hardly in their barbarism. In one place he wrote:

That men should be willing to leave their happy homes and endure what the missionaries endured in order to teach these Indians the road to hell would be rational, understandable, but why they should want to teach them a way to heaven is a thing which the mind somehow cannot grasp.

Other histories, mainly English and French, showed how he had read them —read and digested every word and line. There were two volumes of Lecky, much worn; Andrew D. White's 'Science and Theology'—a chief interest for at least one summer—and among the collection a well-worn copy of 'Modern English Literature—Its Blemishes and Defects', by Henry H. Breen. On the title-page of this book Clemens had written:

Page 904

Hartford, 1876. Use with care, for it is a scarce book. England had to be ransacked in order to get it—or the bookseller speaketh falsely.

He once wrote a paper for the Saturday Morning Club, using for his text examples of slipshod English which Breen had noted.

Clemens had a passion for biography, and especially for autobiography, diaries, letters, and such intimate human history. Greville's 'Journal of the Reigns of George IV. and William IV.' he had read much and annotated freely. Greville, while he admired Byron's talents, abhorred the poet's personality, and in one place condemns him as a vicious person and a debauchee. He adds:

Then he despises pretenders and charlatans of all sorts, while he is himself a pretender, as all men are who assume a character which does not belong to them and affect to be something which they are all the time conscious they are not in reality.

Clemens wrote on the margin:

But, dear sir, you are forgetting that what a man sees in the human race is merely himself in the deep and honest privacy of his own heart. Byron despised the race because he despised himself. I feel as Byron did, and for the same reason. Do you admire the race (& consequently yourself)?

A little further along—where Greville laments that Byron can take no profit to himself from the sinful characters he depicts so faithfully, Clemens commented:

If Byron—if any man—draws 50 characters, they are all himself—50 shades, 50 moods, of his own character. And when the man draws them well why do they stir my admiration? Because they are me—I recognize myself.

A volume of Plutarch was among the biographies that showed usage, and the Life of P. T. Barnum, Written by Himself. Two Years Before the Mast he loved, and never tired of. The more recent Memoirs of Andrew D. White and Moncure D. Conway both, I remember, gave him enjoyment, as did the Letters of Lowell. A volume of the Letters of Madame de Sevigne had some annotated margins which were not complimentary to the translator, or for that matter to Sevigne herself, whom he once designates as a "nauseating" person, many of whose letters had been uselessly translated, as well as poorly arranged for reading. But he would read any volume of letters or personal memoirs; none were too poor that had the throb of life in them, however slight.

Of such sort were the books that Mark Twain had loved best, and such were a few of his words concerning them. Some of them belong to his earlier reading, and among these is Darwin's 'Descent of Man', a book whose influence was always present, though I

believe he did not read it any more in later years. In the days I knew him he read steadily not much besides Suetonius and Pepys and Carlyle. These and his simple astronomies and geologies and the Morte Arthure and the poems of Kipling were seldom far from his hand.

Page 905

CCLXXXVIII

A BERMUDA BIRTHDAY

It was the middle of November, 1909, when Clemens decided to take another Bermuda vacation, and it was the 19th that we sailed. I went to New York a day ahead and arranged matters, and on the evening of the 18th received the news that Richard Watson Gilder had suddenly died.

Next morning there was other news. Clemens's old friend, William M. Laffan, of the Sun, had died while undergoing a surgical operation. I met Clemens at the train. He had already heard about Gilder; but he had not yet learned of Laffan's death. He said:

"That's just it. Gilder and Laffan get all the good things that come along and I never get anything."

Then, suddenly remembering, he added:

"How curious it is! I have been thinking of Laffan coming down on the train, and mentally writing a letter to him on this Stetson-Eddy affair."

I asked when he had begun thinking of Laffan.

He said: "Within the hour."

It was within the hour that I had received the news, and naturally in my mind had carried it instantly to him. Perhaps there was something telepathic in it.

He was not at all ill going down to Bermuda, which was a fortunate thing, for the water was rough and I was quite disqualified. We did not even discuss astronomy, though there was what seemed most important news—the reported discovery of a new planet.

But there was plenty of talk on the subject as soon as we got settled in the Hamilton Hotel. It was windy and rainy out-of-doors, and we looked out on the drenched semi-tropical foliage with a great bamboo swaying and bending in the foreground, while he speculated on the vast distance that the new planet must lie from our sun, to which it was still a satellite. The report had said that it was probably four hundred billions of miles distant, and that on this far frontier of the solar system the sun could not appear to it larger than the blaze of a tallow candle. To us it was wholly incredible how, in that dim remoteness, it could still hold true to the central force and follow at a snail-pace, yet with unvarying exactitude, its stupendous orbit. Clemens said that heretofore Neptune, the planetary outpost of our system, had been called the tortoise of the skies, but that comparatively it was rapid in its motion, and had become a near neighbor. He was a good deal excited at first, having somehow the impression that this new planet traveled

out beyond the nearest fixed star; but then he remembered that the distance to that first solar neighbor was estimated in trillions, not billions, and that our little system, even with its new additions, was a child's handbreadth on the plane of the sky. He had brought along a small book called *The Pith of Astronomy*—a fascinating little volume—and he read from it about the great tempest of fire in the sun, where the waves of flame roll up two thousand miles high, though the sun itself is such a tiny star in the deeps of the universe.

Page 906

If I dwell unwarrantably on this phase of Mark Twain's character, it is because it was always so fascinating to me, and the contemplation of the drama of the skies always meant so much to him, and somehow always seemed akin to him in its proportions. He had been born under a flaming star, a wanderer of the skies. He was himself, to me, always a comet rushing through space, from mystery to mystery, regardless of sun and systems. It is not likely to rain long in Bermuda, and when the sun comes back it brings summer, whatever the season. Within a day after our arrival we were driving about those coral roads along the beaches, and by that marvelously variegated water. We went often to the south shore, especially to Devonshire Bay, where the reefs and the sea coloring seem more beautiful than elsewhere. Usually, when we reached the bay, we got out to walk along the indurated shore, stopping here and there to look out over the jeweled water liquid turquoise, emerald lapis-lazuli, jade, the imperial garment of the Lord.

At first we went alone with only the colored driver, Clifford Trott, whose name Clemens could not recollect, though he was always attempting resemblances with ludicrous results. A little later Helen Allen, an early angel-fish member already mentioned, was with us and directed the drives, for she had been born on the island and knew every attractive locality, though, for that matter, it would be hard to find there a place that was not attractive.

Clemens, in fact, remained not many days regularly at the hotel. He kept a room and his wardrobe there; but he paid a visit to Bay House—the lovely and quiet home of Helen's parents—and prolonged it from day to day, and from week to week, because it was a quiet and peaceful place with affectionate attention and limitless welcome. Clifford Trott had orders to come with the carriage each afternoon, and we drove down to Bay House for Mark Twain and his playmate, and then went wandering at will among the labyrinth of blossom-bordered, perfectly kept roadways of a dainty paradise, that never, I believe, becomes quite a reality even to those who know it best.

Clemens had an occasional paroxysm during these weeks, but they were not likely to be severe or protracted; and I have no doubt the peace of his surroundings, the remoteness from disturbing events, as well as the balmy temperature, all contributed to his improved condition.

He talked pretty continuously during these drives, and he by no means restricted his subjects to juvenile matters. He discussed history and his favorite sciences and philosophies, and I am sure that his drift was rarely beyond the understanding of his young companion, for it was Mark Twain's gift to phrase his thought so that it commanded not only the respect of age, but the comprehension and the interest of youth. I remember that once he talked, during an afternoon's drive, on the French Revolution and the ridiculous episode of Anacharsis Cloots, "orator and advocate of the human race," collecting the vast populace of France to swear allegiance to a king even then doomed to the block. The very name of Cloots suggested humor, and nothing

could have been more delightful and graphic than the whole episode as he related it. Helen asked if he thought such a thing as that could ever happen in America.

Page 907

"No," he said, "the American sense of humor would have laughed it out of court in a week; and the Frenchman dreads ridicule, too, though he never seems to realize how ridiculous he is—the most ridiculous creature in the world."

On the morning of his seventy-fourth birthday he was looking wonderfully well after a night of sound sleep, his face full of color and freshness, his eyes bright and keen and full of good-humor. I presented him with a pair of cuff-buttons silver-enameled with the Bermuda lily, and I thought he seemed pleased with them.

It was rather gloomy outside, so we remained indoors by the fire and played cards, game after game of hearts, at which he excelled, and he was usually kept happy by winning. There were no visitors, and after dinner Helen asked him to read some of her favorite episodes from Tom Sawyer, so he read the whitewashing scene, Peter and the Pain-killer, and such chapters until tea-time. Then there was a birthday cake, and afterward cigars and talk and a quiet fireside evening.

Once, in the course of his talk, he forgot a word and denounced his poor memory:

"I'll forget the Lord's middle name some time," he declared, "right in the midst of a storm, when I need all the help I can get."

Later he said:

"Nobody dreamed, seventy-four years ago to-day, that I would be in Bermuda now." And I thought he meant a good deal more than the words conveyed.

It was during this Bermuda visit that Mark Twain added the finishing paragraph to his article, "The Turning-Point in My Life," which, at Howells's suggestion, he had been preparing for Harper's Bazar. It was a characteristic touch, and, as the last summary of his philosophy of human life, may be repeated here.

Necessarily the scene of the real turning-point of my life (and of yours) was the Garden of Eden. It was there that the first link was forged of the chain that was ultimately to lead to the emptying of me into the literary guild. Adam's temperament was the first command the Deity ever issued to a human being on this planet. And it was the only command Adam would never be able to disobey. It said, "Be weak, be water, be characterless, be cheaply persuadable." The later command, to let the fruit alone, was certain to be disobeyed. Not by Adam himself, but by his temperament—which he did not create and had no authority over. For the temperament is the man; the thing tricked out with clothes and named Man is merely its Shadow, nothing more. The law of the tiger's temperament is, Thou shalt kill; the law of the sheep's temperament is, Thou shalt not kill. To issue later commands requiring the tiger to let the fat stranger alone, and requiring the sheep to imbrue its hands in the blood of the lion is not worth while, for

those commands can't be obeyed. They would invite to violations of the law of temperament, which is supreme, and takes precedence of all other authorities.

Page 908

I cannot help feeling disappointed in Adam and Eve. That is, in their temperaments. Not in them, poor helpless young creatures—afflicted with temperaments made out of butter, which butter was commanded to get into contact with fire and be melted. What I cannot help wishing is, that Adam and Eve had been postponed, and Martin Luther and Joan of Arc put in their place—that splendid pair equipped with temperaments not made of butter, but of asbestos. By neither sugary persuasions nor by hell-fire could Satan have beguiled them to eat the apple. There would have been results! Indeed yes. The apple would be intact to-day; there would be no human race; there would be no you; there would be no me. And the old, old creation-dawn scheme of ultimately launching me into the literary guild would have been defeated.

CCLXXXIX

THE DEATH OF JEAN

He decided to go home for the holidays, and how fortunate it seems now that he did so! We sailed for America on the 18th of December, arriving the 21st. Jean was at the wharf to meet us, blue and shivering with the cold, for it was wretchedly bleak there, and I had the feeling that she should not have come.

She went directly, I think, to Stormfield, he following a day or two later. On the 23d I was lunching with Jean alone. She was full of interest in her Christmas preparations. She had a handsome tree set up in the loggia, and the packages were piled about it, with new ones constantly arriving. With her farm management, her housekeeping, her secretary work, and her Christmas preparations, it seemed to me that she had her hands overfull. Such a mental pressure could not be good for her. I suggested that for a time at least I might assume a part of her burden.

I was to remain at my own home that night, and I think it was as I left Stormfield that I passed Jean on the stair. She said, cheerfully, that she felt a little tired and was going up to lie down, so that she would be fresh for the evening. I did not go back, and I never saw her alive again.

I was at breakfast next morning when word was brought in that one of the men from Stormfield was outside and wished to see me immediately. When I went out he said: "Miss Jean is dead. They have just found her in her bath-room. Mr. Clemens sent me to bring you."

It was as incomprehensible as such things always are. I could not realize at all that Jean, so full of plans and industries and action less than a day before, had passed into that voiceless mystery which we call death.

Harry Iles drove me rapidly up the hill. As I entered Clemens's room he looked at me helplessly and said:

"Well, I suppose you have heard of this final disaster."

He was not violent or broken down with grief. He had come to that place where, whatever the shock or the ill-turn of fortune, he could accept it, and even in that first moment of loss he realized that, for Jean at least, the fortune was not ill. Her malady had never been cured, and it had been one of his deepest dreads that he would leave her behind him. It was believed, at first; that Jean had drowned, and Dr. Smith tried methods of resuscitation; but then he found that it was simply a case of heart cessation caused by the cold shock of her bath.

Page 909

The Gabrilowitsches were by this time in Europe, and Clemens cabled them not to come. Later in the day he asked me if we would be willing to close our home for the winter and come to Stormfield. He said that he should probably go back to Bermuda before long; but that he wished to keep the house open so that it would be there for him to come to at any time that he might need it.

We came, of course, for there was no thought among any of his friends but for his comfort and peace of mind. Jervis Langdon was summoned from Elmira, for Jean would lie there with the others.

In the loggia stood the half-trimmed Christmas tree, and all about lay the packages of gifts, and in Jean's room, on the chairs and upon her desk, were piled other packages. Nobody had been forgotten. For her father she had bought a handsome globe; he had always wanted one. Once when I went into his room he said:

"I have been looking in at Jean and envying her. I have never greatly envied any one but the dead. I always envy the dead."

He told me how the night before they had dined together alone; how he had urged her to turn over a part of her work to me; how she had clung to every duty as if now, after all the years, she was determined to make up for lost time.

While they were at dinner a telephone inquiry had come concerning his health, for the papers had reported him as returning from Bermuda in a critical condition. He had written this playful answer:

*Manager associated press,
New York.*

I hear the newspapers say I am dying. The charge is not true. I would not do such a thing at my time of life. I am behaving as good as I can.

Merry Christmas to everybody! *Mark twain.*

Jean telephoned it for him to the press. It had been the last secretary service she had ever rendered.

She had kissed his hand, he said, when they parted, for she had a severe cold and would not wish to impart it to him; then happily she had said good night, and he had not seen her again. The reciting of this was good to him, for it brought the comfort of tears.

Later, when I went in again, he was writing:

“I am setting it down,” he said—“everything. It is a relief to me to write it. It furnishes me an excuse for thinking.”

He continued writing most of the day, and at intervals during the next day, and the next.

It was on Christmas Day that they went with Jean on her last journey. Katie Leary, her baby nurse, had dressed her in the dainty gown which she had worn for Clara’s wedding, and they had pinned on it a pretty buckle which her father had brought her from Bermuda, and which she had not seen. No Greek statue was ever more classically beautiful than she was, lying there in the great living-room, which in its brief history had seen so much of the round of life.

Page 910

They were to start with Jean at about six o'clock, and a little before that time Clemens (he was unable to make the journey) asked me what had been her favorite music. I said that she seemed always to care most for the Schubert Impromptu.—[Op. 142, No. 2.]—Then he said:

“Play it when they get ready to leave with her, and add the Intermezzo for Susy and the Largo for Mrs. Clemens. When I hear the music I shall know that they are starting. Tell them to set lanterns at the door, so I can look down and see them go.”

So I sat at the organ and began playing as they lifted and bore her away. A soft, heavy snow was falling, and the gloom of those shortest days was closing in. There was not the least wind or noise, the whole world was muffled. The lanterns at the door threw their light out on the thickly falling flakes. I remained at the organ; but the little group at the door saw him come to the window above—the light on his white hair as he stood mournfully gazing down, watching Jean going away from him for the last time. I played steadily on as he had instructed, the Impromptu, the Intermezzo from “Cavalleria,” and Handel’s Largo. When I had finished I went up and found him.

“Poor little Jean,” he said; “but for her it is so good to go.”

In his own story of it he wrote:

From my windows I saw the hearse and the carriages wind along the road and gradually grow vague and spectral in the falling snow, and presently disappear. Jean was gone out of my life, and would not come back any more. The cousin she had played with when they were babies together—he and her beloved old Katie—were conducting her to her distant childhood home, where she will lie by her mother’s side once more, in the company of Susy and Langdon.

He did not come down to dinner, and when I went up afterward I found him curiously agitated. He said:

“For one who does not believe in spirits I have had a most peculiar experience. I went into the bath-room just now and closed the door. You know how warm it always is in there, and there are no draughts. All at once I felt a cold current of air about me. I thought the door must be open; but it was closed. I said, ‘Jean, is this you trying to let me know you have found the others?’ Then the cold air was gone.”

I saw that the incident had made a very great impression upon him; but I don’t remember that he ever mentioned it afterward.

Next day the storm had turned into a fearful blizzard; the whole hilltop was a raging, driving mass of white. He wrote most of the day, but stopped now and then to read some of the telegrams or letters of condolence which came flooding in. Sometimes he

walked over to the window to look out on the furious tempest. Once, during the afternoon, he said:

“Jean always so loved to see a storm like this, and just now at Elmira they are burying her.”

Later he read aloud some lines by Alfred Austin, which Mrs. Crane had sent him lines which he had remembered in the sorrow for Susy:

Page 911

When last came sorrow, around barn and byre
Wind-careen snow, the year's white sepulchre, lay.
"Come in," I said, "and warm you by the fire";
And there she sits and never goes away.

It was that evening that he came into the room where Mrs. Paine and I sat by the fire, bringing his manuscript.

"I have finished my story of Jean's death," he said. "It is the end of my autobiography. I shall never write any more. I can't judge it myself at all. One of you read it aloud to the other, and let me know what you think of it. If it is worthy, perhaps some day it may be published."

It was, in fact, one of the most exquisite and tender pieces of writing in the language. He had ended his literary labors with that perfect thing which so marvelously speaks the loftiness and tenderness of his soul. It was thoroughly in keeping with his entire career that he should, with this rare dramatic touch, bring it to a close. A paragraph which he omitted may be printed now:

December 27. Did I know Jean's value? No, I only thought I did. I knew a ten-thousandth fraction of it, that was all. It is always so, with us, it has always been so. We are like the poor ignorant private soldier-dead, now, four hundred years—who picked up the great Sancy diamond on the field of the lost battle and sold it for a franc. Later he knew what he had done. Shall I ever be cheerful again, happy again? Yes. And soon. For I know my temperament. And I know that the temperament is master of the man, and that he is its fettered and helpless slave and must in all things do as it commands. A man's temperament is born in him, and no circumstances can ever change it.

My temperament has never allowed my spirits to remain depressed long at a time.

That was a feature of Jean's temperament, too. She inherited it from me. I think she got the rest of it from her mother.

Jean Clemens had two natural endowments: the gift of justice and a genuine passion for all nature. In a little paper found in her desk she had written:

I know a few people who love the country as I do, but not many. Most of my acquaintances are enthusiastic over the spring and summer months, but very few care much for it the year round. A few people are interested in the spring foliage and the development of the wild flowers—nearly all enjoy the autumn colors—while comparatively few pay much attention to the coming and going of the birds, the changes in their plumage and songs, the apparent springing into life on some warm April day of



the chipmunks and woodchucks, the skurrying of baby rabbits, and again in the fall the equally sudden disappearance of some of the animals and the growing shyness of others. To me it is all as fascinating as a book—more so, since I have never lost interest in it.

It is simple and frank, like Thoreau. Perhaps, had she exercised it, there was a third gift—the gift of written thought.

Page 912

Clemens remained at Stormfield ten days after Jean was gone. The weather was fiercely cold, the landscape desolate, the house full of tragedy. He kept pretty closely to his room, where he had me bring the heaps of letters, a few of which he answered personally; for the others he prepared a simple card of acknowledgment. He was for the most part in gentle mood during these days, though he would break out now and then, and rage at the hardness of a fate that had laid an unearned burden of illness on Jean and shadowed her life.

They were days not wholly without humor—none of his days could be altogether without that, though it was likely to be of a melancholy sort.

Many of the letters offered orthodox comfort, saying, in effect: “God does not willingly punish us.”

When he had read a number of these he said:

“Well, why does He do it then? We don’t invite it. Why does He give Himself the trouble?”

I suggested that it was a sentiment that probably gave comfort to the writer of it.

“So it does,” he said, “and I am glad of it—glad of anything that gives comfort to anybody.”

He spoke of the larger God—the God of the great unvarying laws, and by and by dropped off to sleep, quite peacefully, and indeed peace came more and more to him each day with the thought that Jean and Susy and their mother could not be troubled any more. To Mrs. Gabrilowitsch he wrote:

Redding, Conn, December 29, 1909.

O, Clara, Clara dear, I am so glad she is out of it & safe—safe!

I am not melancholy; I shall never be melancholy again, I think.

You see, I was in such distress when I came to realize that you were gone far away & no one stood between her & danger but me—& I could die at any moment, & then—oh then what would become of her! For she was wilful, you know, & would not have been governable. You can’t imagine what a darling she was that last two or three days; & how fine, & good, & sweet, & noble—& joyful, thank Heaven! —& how intellectually brilliant. I had never been acquainted with Jean before. I recognized that.

But I mustn’t try to write about her—I can’t. I have already poured my heart out with the pen, recording that last day or two. I will send you that—& you must let no one but Ossip read it.

Good-by. I love you so! And Ossip.
Father.

CCXC

THE RETURN TO BERMUDA

I don't think he attempted any further writing for print. His mind was busy with ideas, but he was willing to talk, rather than to write, rather even than to play billiards, it seemed, although we had a few quiet games—the last we should ever play together. Evenings he asked for music, preferring the Scotch airs, such as “Bonnie Doon” and “The Campbells are Coming.” I remember that once, after playing the latter for him, he told, with great feeling, how the Highlanders, led by Gen. Colin Campbell, had charged at Lucknow, inspired by that stirring air. When he had retired I usually sat with him, and he drifted into literature, or theology, or science, or history—the story of the universe and man.

Page 913

One evening he spoke of those who had written but one immortal thing and stopped there. He mentioned "Ben Bolt."

"I met that man once," he said. "In my childhood I sang 'Sweet Alice, Ben Bolt,' and in my old age, fifteen years ago, I met the man who wrote it. His name was Brown.—[Thomas Dunn English. Mr. Clemens apparently remembered only the name satirically conferred upon him by Edgar Allan Poe, "Thomas Dunn Brown."]—He was aged, forgotten, a mere memory. I remember how it thrilled me to realize that this was the very author of 'Sweet Alice, Ben Bolt.' He was just an accident. He had a vision and echoed it. A good many persons do that—the thing they do is to put in compact form the thing which we have all vaguely felt. 'Twenty Years Ago' is just like it 'I have wandered through the village, Tom, and sat beneath the tree'—and Holmes's 'Last Leaf' is another: the memory of the hallowed past, and the gravestones of those we love. It is all so beautiful—the past is always beautiful."

He quoted, with great feeling and effect:

The massy marbles rest
On the lips that we have pressed
In their bloom,
And the names we love to hear
Have been carved for many a year
On the tomb.

He continued in this strain for an hour or more. He spoke of humor, and thought it must be one of the chief attributes of God. He cited plants and animals that were distinctly humorous in form and in their characteristics. These he declared were God's jokes.

"Why," he said, "humor is mankind's greatest blessing."

"Your own case is an example," I answered. "Without it, whatever your reputation as a philosopher, you could never have had the wide-spread affection that is shown by the writers of that great heap of letters."

"Yes," he said, gently, "they have liked to be amused."

I tucked him in for the night, promising to send him to Bermuda, with Claude to take care of him, if he felt he could undertake the journey in two days more.

He was able, and he was eager to go, for he longed for that sunny island, and for the quiet peace of the Allen home. His niece, Mrs. Loomis, came up to spend the last evening in Stormfield, a happy evening full of quiet talk, and next morning, in the old closed carriage that had been his wedding-gift, he was driven to the railway station. This was on January 4, 1910.



He was to sail next day, and that night, at Mr. Loomis's, Howells came in, and for an hour or two they reviewed some of the questions they had so long ago settled, or left forever unsettled, and laid away. I remember that at dinner Clemens spoke of his old Hartford butler, George, and how he had once brought George to New York and introduced him at the various publishing houses as his friend, with curious and sometimes rather embarrassing results.

The talk drifted to sociology and to the labor-unions, which Clemens defended as being the only means by which the workman could obtain recognition of his rights.

Page 914

Howells in his book mentions this evening, which he says “was made memorable to me by the kind, clear, judicial sense with which he explained and justified the labor-unions as the sole present help of the weak against the strong.”

They discussed dreams, and then in a little while Howells rose to go. I went also, and as we walked to his near-by apartment he spoke of Mark Twain’s supremacy. He said:

“I turn to his books for cheer when I am down-hearted. There was never anybody like him; there never will be.”

Clemens sailed next morning. They did not meet again.

CCXCI

LETTERS FROM BERMUDA

Stormfield was solemn and empty without Mark Twain; but he wrote by every steamer, at first with his own hand, and during the last week by the hand of one of his enlisted secretaries—some member of the Allen family usually Helen. His letters were full of brightness and pleasantry —always concerned more or less with business matters, though he was no longer disturbed by them, for Bermuda was too peaceful and too far away, and, besides, he had faith in the Mark Twain Company’s ability to look after his affairs. I cannot do better, I believe, than to offer some portions of these letters here.

He reached Bermuda on the 7th of January, 1910, and on the 12th he wrote:

Again I am living the ideal life. There is nothing to mar it but the bloody-minded bandit Arthur,—[A small playmate of Helen’s of whom Clemens pretended to be fiercely jealous. Once he wrote a memorandum to Helen: “Let Arthur read this book. There is a page in it that is poisoned.”]—who still fetches and carries Helen. Presently he will be found drowned. Claude comes to Bay House twice a day to see if I need any service. He is invaluable. There was a military lecture last night at the Officers’ Mess Prospect; as the lecturer honored me with a special urgent invitation, and said he wanted to lecture to me particularly, I naturally took Helen and her mother into the private carriage and went. As soon as we landed at the door with the crowd the Governor came to me & was very cordial. I “met up” with that charming Colonel Chapman [we had known him on the previous visit] and other officers of the regiment & had a good time.

A few days later he wrote:

Thanks for your letter & for its contenting news of the situation in that foreign & far-off & vaguely remembered country where you & Loomis & Lark and other beloved friends are.



I had a letter from Clara this morning. She is solicitous & wants me well & watchfully taken care of. My, my, she ought to see Helen & her parents & Claude administer that trust. Also she says, "I hope to hear from you or Mr. Paine very soon." I am writing her & I know you will respond to your part of her prayer. She is pretty desolate now after Jean's emancipation—the only kindness that God ever did that poor, unoffending child in all her hard life.

Send Clara a copy of Howells's gorgeous letter.

Page 915

The “gorgeous letter” mentioned was an appreciation of his recent Bazar article, “The Turning-Point in My Life,” and here follows:

January 18, 1910.

Dear Clemens,—While your wonderful words are warm in my mind yet I want to tell you what you know already: that you never wrote anything greater, finer, than that turning-point paper of yours.

I shall feel it honor enough if they put on my tombstone “He was born in the same century and general section of Middle Western country with Dr. S. L. Clemens, Oxon., and had his degree three years before him through a mistake of the University.”

I hope you are worse. You will never be riper for a purely intellectual life, and it is a pity to have you lagging along with a worn-out material body on top of your soul.

Yours ever,
W. D. Howells.

On the margin of this letter Clemens had written:

I reckon this spontaneous outburst from the first critic of the day is good to keep, ain't it, Paine?

January 24th he wrote again of his contentment:

Life continues here the same as usual. There isn't a fault in it —good times, good home, tranquil contentment all day & every day without a break. I know familiarly several very satisfactory people & meet them frequently: Mr. Hamilton, the Sloanes, Mr. & Mrs. Fells, Miss Waterman, & so on. I shouldn't know how to go about bettering my situation.

On February 5th he wrote that the climate and condition of his health might require him to stay in Bermuda pretty continuously, but that he wished Stormfield kept open so that he might come to it at any time. And he added:

Yesterday Mr. Allen took us on an excursion in Mr. Hamilton's big motor-boat. Present: Mrs. Allen, Mr. & Mrs. & Miss Sloane, Helen, Mildred Howells, Claude, & me. Several hours' swift skimming over ravishing blue seas, a brilliant sun; also a couple of hours of picnicking & lazying under the cedars in a secluded place.

The Orotava is arriving with 260 passengers—I shall get letters by her, no doubt.

P. S.—Please send me the Standard Unabridged that is on the table in my bedroom. I have no dictionary here.

There is no mention in any of these letters of his trouble; but he was having occasional spasms of pain, though in that soft climate they would seem to have come with less frequency, and there was so little to disturb him, and much that contributed to his peace. Among the callers at the Bay House to see him was Woodrow Wilson, and the two put in some pleasant hours at miniature golf, “putting” on the Allen lawn. Of course a catastrophe would come along now and then—such things could not always be guarded against. In a letter toward the end of February he wrote:

It is 2.30 in the morning & I am writing because I can’t sleep.

Page 916

I can't sleep because a professional pianist is coming to-morrow afternoon to play for me. My God! I wouldn't allow Paderewski or Gabrilowitsch to do that. I would rather have a leg amputated. I knew he was coming, but I never dreamed it was to play for me. When I heard the horrible news 4 hours ago, be d——d if I didn't come near screaming. I meant to slip out and be absent, but now I can't. Don't pray for me. The thing is just as d——d bad as it can be already.

Clemens's love for music did not include the piano, except for very gentle melodies, and he probably did not anticipate these from a professional player. He did not report the sequel of the matter; but it is likely that his imagination had discounted its tortures. Sometimes his letters were pure nonsense. Once he sent a sheet, on one side of which was written:

Bayhouse,
March s, 1910.
Received of S. L. C.
Two Dollars and Forty Cents
in return for my promise to believe everything he says
hereafter.
Helen S. Allen.

and on the reverse:

For sale

The proprietor of the hereinbefore mentioned Promise desires to part with it on account of ill health and obliged to go away somewheres so as to let it recipricate, and will take any reasonable amount for it above 2 percent of its face because experienced parties think it will not keep but only a little while in this kind of weather & is a kind of proppity that don't give a cuss for cold storage nohow.

Clearly, however serious Mark Twain regarded his physical condition, he did not allow it to make him gloomy. He wrote that matters were going everywhere to his satisfaction; that Clara was happy; that his household and business affairs no longer troubled him; that his personal surroundings were of the pleasantest sort. Sometimes he wrote of what he was reading, and once spoke particularly of Prof. William Lyon Phelps's Literary Essays, which he said he had been unable to lay down until he had finished the book.—[To Phelps himself he wrote: "I thank you ever so much for the book, which I

find charming—so charming, indeed, that I read it through in a single night, & did not regret the lost night's sleep. I am glad if I deserve what you have said about me; & even if I don't I am proud & well contented, since you think I deserve it.”]

So his days seemed full of comfort. But in March I noticed that he generally dictated his letters, and once when he sent some small photographs I thought he looked thinner and older. Still he kept up his merriment. In one letter he said:

Page 917

While the matter is in my mind I will remark that if you ever send me another letter which is not paged at the top I will write you with my own hand, so that I may use with utter freedom & without embarrassment the kind of words which alone can describe such a criminal, to wit, — — — -; you will have to put into words those dashes because propriety will not allow me to do it myself in my secretary's hearing. You are forgiven, but don't let it occur again.

He had still made no mention of his illness; but on the 25th of March he wrote something of his plans for coming home. He had engaged passage on the Bermudian for April 23d, he said; and he added:

But don't tell anybody. I don't want it known. I may have to go sooner if the pain in my breast does not mend its ways pretty considerable. I don't want to die here, for this is an unkind place for a person in that condition. I should have to lie in the undertaker's cellar until the ship would remove me & it is dark down there & unpleasant. The Colliers will meet me on the pier, & I may stay with them a week or two before going home. It all depends on the breast pain. I don't want to die there. I am growing more and more particular about the place.

But in the same letter he spoke of plans for the summer, suggesting that we must look into the magic-lantern possibilities, so that library entertainments could be given at Stormfield. I confess that this letter, in spite of its light tone, made me uneasy, and I was tempted to sail for Bermuda to bring him home. Three days later he wrote again:

I have been having a most uncomfortable time for the past four days with that breast pain, which turns out to be an affection of the heart, just as I originally suspected. The news from New York is to the effect that non-bronchial weather has arrived there at last; therefore, if I can get my breast trouble in traveling condition I may sail for home a week or two earlier than has been proposed.

The same mail that brought this brought a letter from Mr. Allen, who frankly stated that matters had become very serious indeed. Mr. Clemens had had some dangerous attacks, and the physicians considered his condition critical.

These letters arrived April 1st. I went to New York at once and sailed next morning. Before sailing I consulted with Dr. Quintard, who provided me with some opiates and instructed me in the use of the hypodermic needle. He also joined me in a cablegram to the Gabrilowitsches, then in Italy, advising them to sail without delay.

CCXCII

THE VOYAGE HOME

I sent no word to Bermuda that I was coming, and when on the second morning I arrived at Hamilton, I stepped quickly ashore from the tender and hurried to Bay House. The doors were all open, as they usually are in that summer island, and no one was visible. I was familiar with the place, and, without knocking, I went through to the room occupied by Mark Twain. As I entered I saw that he was alone, sitting in a large chair, clad in the familiar dressing-gown.

Page 918

Bay House stands upon the water, and the morning light, reflected in at the window, had an unusual quality. He was not yet shaven, and he seemed unnaturally pale and gray; certainly he was much thinner. I was too startled, for the moment, to say anything. When he turned and saw me he seemed a little dazed.

"Why," he said, holding out his hand, "you didn't tell us you were coming."

"No," I said, "it is rather sudden. I didn't quite like the sound of your last letters."

"But those were not serious," he protested. "You shouldn't have come on my account."

I said then that I had come on my own account; that I had felt the need of recreation, and had decided to run down and come home with him.

"That's—very—good," he said, in his slow, gentle fashion. "Now I'm glad to see you."

His breakfast came in and he ate with an appetite.

When he had been shaved and freshly propped tip in his pillows it seemed to me, after all, that I must have been mistaken in thinking him so changed. Certainly he was thinner, but his color was fine, his eyes were bright; he had no appearance of a man whose life was believed to be in danger. He told me then of the fierce attacks he had gone through, how the pains had torn at him, and how it had been necessary for him to have hypodermic injections, which he amusingly termed "hypnotic injunctions" and "subcutaneous applications," and he had his humor out of it, as of course he must have, even though Death should stand there in person.

From Mr. and Mrs. Allen and from the physician I learned how slender had been his chances and how uncertain were the days ahead. Mr. Allen had already engaged passage on the Oceana for the 12th, and the one purpose now was to get him physically in condition for the trip.

How devoted those kind friends had been to him! They had devised every imaginable thing for his comfort. Mr. Allen had rigged an electric bell which connected with his own room, so that he could be aroused instantly at any hour of the night. Clemens had refused to have a nurse, for it was only during the period of his extreme suffering that he needed any one, and he did not wish to have a nurse always around. When the pains were gone he was as bright and cheerful, and, seemingly, as well as ever.

On the afternoon of my arrival we drove out, as formerly, and he discussed some of the old subjects in quite the old way. He had been rereading Macaulay, he said, and spoke at considerable length of the hypocrisy and intrigue of the English court under James II. He spoke, too, of the Redding Library. I had sold for him that portion of the land where Jean's farm-house had stood, and it was in his mind to use the money for some sort of a memorial to Jean. I had written, suggesting that perhaps he would like to put up a

small library building, as the Adams lot faced the corner where Jean had passed every day when she rode to the station for the mail. He had been thinking this over, he said, and wished the idea carried out. He asked me to write at once to his lawyer, Mr. Lark, and have a paper prepared appointing trustees for a memorial library fund.

Page 919

The pain did not trouble him that afternoon, nor during several succeeding days. He was gay and quite himself, and he often went out on the lawn; but we did not drive out again. For the most part, he sat propped up in his bed, reading or smoking, or talking in the old way; and as I looked at him he seemed so full of vigor and the joy of life that I could not convince myself that he would not outlive us all. I found that he had been really very much alive during those three months—too much for his own good, sometimes—for he had not been careful of his hours or his diet, and had suffered in consequence.

He had not been writing, though he had scribbled some playful valentines and he had amused himself one day by preparing a chapter of advice—for me it appeared—which, after reading it aloud to the Allens and receiving their approval, he declared he intended to have printed for my benefit. As it would seem to have been the last bit of continued writing he ever did, and because it is characteristic and amusing, a few paragraphs may be admitted. The “advice” is concerning deportment on reaching the Gate which St. Peter is supposed to guard—

Upon arrival do not speak to St. Peter until spoken to. It is not your place to begin.

Do not begin any remark with “Say.”

When applying for a ticket avoid trying to make conversation. If you must talk let the weather alone. St. Peter cares not a damn for the weather. And don’t ask him what time the 4.30 train goes; there aren’t any trains in heaven, except through trains, and the less information you get about them the better for you.

You can ask him for his autograph—there is no harm in that—but be careful and don’t remark that it is one of the penalties of greatness. He has heard that before.

Don’t try to kodak him. Hell is full of people who have made that mistake.

Leave your dog outside. Heaven goes by favor. If it went by merit you would stay out and the dog would go in.

You will be wanting to slip down at night and smuggle water to those poor little chaps (the infant damned), but don’t you try it. You would be caught, and nobody in heaven would respect you after that.

Explain to Helen why I don’t come. If you can.

There were several pages of this counsel. One paragraph was written in shorthand. I meant to ask him to translate it; but there were many other things to think of, and I did not remember.

I spent most of each day with him, merely sitting by the bed and reading while he himself read or dozed. His nights were wakeful—he found it easier to sleep by day—and he liked to think that some one was there. He became interested in Hardy's *Jude*, and spoke of it with high approval, urging me to read it. He dwelt a good deal on the morals of it, or rather on the lack of them. He followed

Page 920

the tale to the end, finishing it the afternoon before we sailed. It was his last continuous reading. I noticed, when he slept, that his breathing was difficult, and I could see from day to day that he did not improve; but each evening he would be gay and lively, and he liked the entire family to gather around, while he became really hilarious over the various happenings of the day. It was only a few days before we sailed that the very severe attacks returned. The night of the 8th was a hard one. The doctors were summoned, and it was only after repeated injections of morphine that the pain had been eased. When I returned in the early morning he was sitting in his chair trying to sing, after his old morning habit. He took my hand and said:

"Well, I had a picturesque night. Every pain I had was on exhibition."

He looked out the window at the sunlight on the bay and green dotted islands. "Sparkling and bright in the liquid light," he quoted. "That's Hoffman. Anything left of Hoffman?"

"No," I said.

"I must watch for the Bermudian and see if she salutes," he said, presently. "The captain knows I am here sick, and he blows two short whistles just as they come up behind that little island. Those are for me."

He said he could breathe easier if he could lean forward, and I placed a card-table in front of him. His breakfast came in, and a little later he became quite gay. He drifted to Macaulay again, and spoke of King James's plot to assassinate William II., and how the clergy had brought themselves to see that there was no difference between killing a king in battle and by assassination. He had taken his seat by the window to watch for the Bermudian. She came down the bay presently, her bright red stacks towering vividly above the green island. It was a brilliant morning, the sky and the water a marvelous blue. He watched her anxiously and without speaking. Suddenly there were two white puffs of steam, and two short, hoarse notes went up from her.

"Those are for me," he said, his face full of contentment. "Captain Fraser does not forget me."

There followed another bad night. My room was only a little distance away, and Claude came for me. I do not think any of us thought he would survive it; but he slept at last, or at least dozed. In the morning he said:

"That breast pain stands watch all night and the short breath all day. I am losing enough sleep to supply a worn-out army. I want a jugful of that hypnotic injunction every night and every morning."

We began to fear now that he would not be able to sail on the 12th; but by great good-fortune he had wonderfully improved by the 12th, so much so that I began to believe, if once he could be in Stormfield, where the air was more vigorous, he might easily survive the summer. The humid atmosphere of the season increased the difficulty of his breathing.

Page 921

That evening he was unusually merry. Mr. and Mrs. Allen and Helen and myself went in to wish him good night. He was loath to let us leave, but was reminded that he would sail in the morning, and that the doctor had insisted that he must be quiet and lie still in bed and rest. He was never one to be very obedient. A little later Mrs. Allen and I, in the sitting-room, heard some one walking softly outside on the veranda. We went out there, and he was marching up and down in his dressing-gown as unconcerned as if he were not an invalid at all. He hadn't felt sleepy, he said, and thought a little exercise would do him good. Perhaps it did, for he slept soundly that night—a great blessing.

Mr. Allen had chartered a special tug to come to Bay House landing in the morning and take him to the ship. He was carried in a little hand-chair to the tug, and all the way out he seemed light-spirited, anything but an invalid: The sailors carried him again in the chair to his state-room, and he bade those dear Bermuda friends good-by, and we sailed away.

As long as I remember anything I shall remember the forty-eight hours of that homeward voyage. It was a brief two days as time is measured; but as time is lived it has taken its place among those unmeasured periods by the side of which even years do not count.

At first he seemed quite his natural self, and asked for a catalogue of the ship's library, and selected some memoirs of the Countess of Cardigan for his reading. He asked also for the second volume of Carlyle's French Revolution, which he had with him. But we ran immediately into the more humid, more oppressive air of the Gulf Stream, and his breathing became at first difficult, then next to impossible. There were two large port-holes, which I opened; but presently he suggested that it would be better outside. It was only a step to the main-deck, and no passengers were there. I had a steamer-chair brought, and with Claude supported him to it and bundled him with rugs; but it had grown damp and chilly, and his breathing did not improve. It seemed to me that the end might come at any moment, and this thought was in his mind, too, for once in the effort for breath he managed to say:

"I am going—I shall be gone in a moment."

Breath came; but I realized then that even his cabin was better than this. I steadied him back to his berth and shut out most of that deadly dampness. He asked for the "hypnotic 'injunction'" (for his humor never left him), and though it was not yet the hour prescribed I could not deny it. It was impossible for him to lie down, even to recline, without great distress. The opiate made him drowsy, and he longed for the relief of sleep; but when it seemed about to possess him the struggle for air would bring him upright.

Page 922

During the more comfortable moments he spoke quite in the old way, and time and again made an effort to read, and reached for his pipe or a cigar which lay in the little berth hammock at his side. I held the match, and he would take a puff or two with satisfaction. Then the peace of it would bring drowsiness, and while I supported him there would come a few moments, perhaps, of precious sleep. Only a few moments, for the devil of suffocation was always lying in wait to bring him back for fresh tortures. Over and over again this was repeated, varied by him being steadied on his feet or sitting on the couch opposite the berth. In spite of his suffering, two dominant characteristics remained—the sense of humor, and tender consideration for another.

Once when the ship rolled and his hat fell from the hook, and made the circuit of the cabin floor, he said:

“The ship is passing the hat.”

Again he said:

“I am sorry for you, Paine, but I can’t help it—I can’t hurry this dying business. Can’t you give me enough of the hypnotic injunction to put an end to me?”

He thought if I could arrange the pillows so he could sit straight up it would not be necessary to support him, and then I could sit on the couch and read while he tried to doze. He wanted me to read *Jude*, he said, so we could talk about it. I got all the pillows I could and built them up around him, and sat down with the book, and this seemed to give him contentment. He would doze off a little and then come up with a start, his piercing, agate eyes searching me out to see if I was still there. Over and over—twenty times in an hour—this was repeated. When I could deny him no longer I administered the opiate, but it never completely possessed him or gave him entire relief.

As I looked at him there, so reduced in his estate, I could not but remember all the labor of his years, and all the splendid honor which the world had paid to him. Something of this may have entered his mind, too, for once, when I offered him some of the milder remedies which we had brought, he said:

“After forty years of public effort I have become just a target for medicines.”

The program of change from berth to the floor, from floor to the couch, from the couch back to the berth among the pillows, was repeated again and again, he always thinking of the trouble he might be making, rarely uttering any complaint; but once he said:

“I never guessed that I was not going to outlive John Bigelow.” And again:

“This is such a mysterious disease. If we only had a bill of particulars we’d have something to swear at.”

Time and again he picked up Carlyle or the Cardigan Memoirs, and read, or seemed to read, a few lines; but then the drowsiness would come and the book would fall. Time and again he attempted to smoke, or in his drowse simulated the motion of placing a cigar to his lips and puffing in the old way.

Page 923

Two dreams beset him in his momentary slumber—one of a play in which the title-role of the general manager was always unfilled. He spoke of this now and then when it had passed, and it seemed to amuse him. The other was a discomfort: a college assembly was attempting to confer upon him some degree which he did not want. Once, half roused, he looked at me searchingly and asked:

“Isn’t there something I can resign and be out of all this? They keep trying to confer that degree upon me and I don’t want it.” Then realizing, he said: “I am like a bird in a cage: always expecting to get out, and always beaten back by the wires.” And, somewhat later: “Oh, it is such a mystery, and it takes so long.”

Toward the evening of the first day, when it grew dark outside, he asked:

“How long have we been on this voyage?”

I answered that this was the end of the first day.

“How many more are there?” he asked.

“Only one, and two nights.”

“We’ll never make it,” he said. “It’s an eternity.”

“But we must on Clara’s account,” I told him, and I estimated that Clara would be more than half-way across the ocean by now.

“It is a losing race,” he said; “no ship can outsail death.”

It has been written—I do not know with what proof—that certain great dissenters have recanted with the approach of death—have become weak, and afraid to ignore old traditions in the face of the great mystery. I wish to write here that Mark Twain, as he neared the end, showed never a single tremor of fear or even of reluctance. I have dwelt upon these hours when suffering was upon him, and death the imminent shadow, in order to show that at the end he was as he had always been, neither more nor less, and never less than brave.

Once, during a moment when he was comfortable and quite himself, he said, earnestly:

“When I seem to be dying I don’t want to be stimulated back to life. I want to be made comfortable to go.”

There was not a vestige of hesitation; there was no grasping at straws, no suggestion of dread.

Somehow those two days and nights went by. Once, when he was partially relieved by the opiate, I slept, while Claude watched; and again, in the fading end of the last night, when we had passed at length into the cold, bracing northern air, and breath had come back to him, and with it sleep.

Relatives, physicians, and news-gatherers were at the dock to welcome him. He was awake, and the northern air had brightened him, though it was the chill, I suppose, that brought on the pains in his breast, which, fortunately, he had escaped during the voyage. It was not a prolonged attack, and it was, blessedly, the last one.

Page 924

An invalid-carriage had been provided, and a compartment secured on the afternoon express to Redding—the same train that had taken him there two years before. Dr. Robert H. Halsey and Dr. Edward Quintard attended him, and he made the journey really in cheerful comfort, for he could breathe now, and in the relief came back old interests. Half reclining on the couch, he looked through the afternoon papers. It happened curiously that Charles Harvey Genung, who, something more than four years earlier, had been so largely responsible for my association with Mark Twain, was on the same train, in the same coach, bound for his country-place at New Hartford.

Lounsbury was waiting with the carriage, and on that still, sweet April evening we drove him to Stormfield much as we had driven him two years before. Now and then he mentioned the apparent backwardness of the season, for only a few of the trees were beginning to show their green. As we drove into the lane that led to the Stormfield entrance, he said:

“Can we see where you have built your billiard-room?”

The gable showed above the trees, and I pointed it out to him.

“It looks quite imposing,” he said.

I think it was the last outside interest he ever showed in anything. He had been carried from the ship and from the train, but when we drew up to Stormfield, where Mrs. Paine, with Katie Leary and others of the household, was waiting to greet him, he stepped from the carriage alone with something of his old lightness, and with all his old courtliness, and offered each one his hand. Then, in the canvas chair which we had brought, Claude and I carried him up-stairs to his room and delivered him to the physicians, and to the comforts and blessed air of home. This was Thursday evening, April 14, 1910.

CCXCIII

THE RETURN TO THE INVISIBLE

There would be two days more before Ossip and Clara Gabrilowitsch could arrive. Clemens remained fairly bright and comfortable during this interval, though he clearly was not improving. The physicians denied him the morphine, now, as he no longer suffered acutely. But he craved it, and once, when I went in, he said, rather mournfully:

“They won’t give me the subcutaneous any more.”

It was Sunday morning when Clara came. He was cheerful and able to talk quite freely. He did not dwell upon his condition, I think, but spoke rather of his plans for the summer. At all events, he did not then suggest that he counted the end so near; but a day later it became evident to all that his stay was very brief. His breathing was

becoming heavier, though it seemed not to give him much discomfort. His articulation also became affected. I think the last continuous talking he did was to Dr. Halsey on the evening of April 17th—the day of Clara’s arrival. A mild opiate had been administered, and he said he wished to talk himself to sleep. He recalled one of his old subjects, Dual Personality, and discussed various instances that flitted through his mind—Jekyll and Hyde phases in literature and fact. He became drowsier as he talked. He said at last:

Page 925

"This is a peculiar kind of disease. It does not invite you to read; it does not invite you to be read to; it does not invite you to talk, nor to enjoy any of the usual sick-room methods of treatment. What kind of a disease is that? Some kinds of sicknesses have pleasant features about them. You can read and smoke and have only to lie still."

And a little later he added:

"It is singular, very singular, the laws of mentality—vacuity. I put out my hand to reach a book or newspaper which I have been reading most glibly, and it isn't there, not a suggestion of it."

He coughed violently, and afterward commented:

"If one gets to meddling with a cough it very soon gets the upper hand and is meddling with you. That is my opinion—of seventy-four years' growth."

The news of his condition, everywhere published, brought great heaps of letters, but he could not see them. A few messages were reported to him. At intervals he read a little. Suetonius and Carlyle lay on the bed beside him, and he would pick them up as the spirit moved him and read a paragraph or a page. Sometimes, when I saw him thus—the high color still in his face, and the clear light in his eyes—I said: "It is not reality. He is not going to die." On Tuesday, the 19th, he asked me to tell Clara to come and sing to him. It was a heavy requirement, but she somehow found strength to sing some of the Scotch airs which he loved, and he seemed soothed and comforted. When she came away he bade her good-by, saying that he might not see her again.

But he lingered through the next day and the next. His mind was wandering a little on Wednesday, and his speech became less and less articulate; but there were intervals when he was quite clear, quite vigorous, and he apparently suffered little. We did not know it, then, but the mysterious messenger of his birth-year, so long anticipated by him, appeared that night in the sky.—[The perihelion of Halley's Comet for 1835 was November 16th; for 1910 it was April 20th.]

On Thursday morning, the 21st, his mind was generally clear, and it was said by the nurses that he read a little from one of the volumes on his bed, from the Suetonius, or from one of the volumes of Carlyle. Early in the forenoon he sent word by Clara that he wished to see me, and when I came in he spoke of two unfinished manuscripts which he wished me to "throw away," as he briefly expressed it, for he had not many words left now. I assured him that I would take care of them, and he pressed my hand. It was his last word to me.

Once or twice that morning he tried to write some request which he could not put into intelligible words.

And once he spoke to Gabrilowitsch, who, he said, could understand him better than the others. Most of the time he dozed.

Somewhat after midday, when Clara was by him, he roused up and took her hand, and seemed to speak with less effort.

Page 926

“Good-by,” he said, and Dr. Quintard, who was standing near, thought he added: “If we meet”—but the words were very faint. He looked at her for a little while, without speaking, then he sank into a doze, and from it passed into a deeper slumber, and did not heed us any more.

Through that peaceful spring afternoon the life-wave ebbed lower and lower. It was about half past six, and the sun lay just on the horizon when Dr. Quintard noticed that the breathing, which had gradually become more subdued, broke a little. There was no suggestion of any struggle. The noble head turned a little to one side, there was a fluttering sigh, and the breath that had been unceasing through seventy-four tumultuous years had stopped forever.

He had entered into the estate envied so long. In his own words—the words of one of his latest memoranda:

“He had arrived at the dignity of death—the only earthly dignity that is not artificial—the only safe one. The others are traps that can beguile to humiliation.

“Death—the only immortal who treats us all alike, whose pity and whose peace and whose refuge are for all—the soiled and the pure—the rich and the poor—the loved and the unloved.”

CCXCIV

THE LAST RITES

It is not often that a whole world mourns. Nations have often mourned a hero—and races—but perhaps never before had the entire world really united in tender sorrow for the death of any man.

In one of his aphorisms he wrote: “Let us endeavor so to live that when we come to die even the undertaker will be sorry.” And it was thus that Mark Twain himself had lived.

No man had ever so reached the heart of the world, and one may not even attempt to explain just why. Let us only say that it was because he was so limitlessly human that every other human heart, in whatever sphere or circumstance, responded to his touch. From every remote corner of the globe the cables of condolence swept in; every printed sheet in Christendom was filled with lavish tribute; pulpits forgot his heresies and paid him honor. No king ever died that received so rich a homage as his. To quote or to individualize would be to cheapen this vast offering.

We took him to New York to the Brick Church, and Dr. Henry van Dyke spoke only a few simple words, and Joseph Twichell came from Hartford and delivered brokenly a prayer from a heart wrung with double grief, for Harmony, his wife, was nearing the journey's

end, and a telegram that summoned him to her death-bed came before the services ended.

Page 927

Mark Twain, dressed in the white he loved so well, lay there with the nobility of death upon him, while a multitude of those who loved him passed by and looked at his face for the last time. The flowers, of which so many had been sent, were banked around him; but on the casket itself lay a single laurel wreath which Dan Beard and his wife had woven from the laurel which grows on Stormfield hill. He was never more beautiful than as he lay there, and it was an impressive scene to see those thousands file by, regard him for a moment gravely, thoughtfully, and pass on. All sorts were there, rich and poor; some crossed themselves, some saluted, some paused a little to take a closer look; but no one offered even to pick a flower. Howells came, and in his book he says:

I looked a moment at the face I knew so well; and it was patient with the patience I had so often seen in it: something of a puzzle, a great silent dignity, an assent to what must be from the depths of a nature whose tragical seriousness broke in the laughter which the unwise took for the whole of him.

That night we went with him to Elmira, and next day—a somber day of rain—he lay in those stately parlors that had seen his wedding-day, and where Susy had lain, and Mrs. Clemens, and Jean, while Dr. Eastman spoke the words of peace which separate us from our mortal dead. Then in the quiet, steady rain of that Sunday afternoon we laid him beside those others, where he sleeps well, though some have wished that, like De Soto, he might have been laid to rest in the bed of that great river which must always be associated with his name.

CCXCV

MARK TWAIN'S RELIGION

There is such a finality about death; however interesting it may be as an experience, one cannot discuss it afterward with one's friends. I have thought it a great pity that Mark Twain could not discuss, with Howells say, or with Twichell, the sensations and the particulars of the change, supposing there be a recognizable change, in that transition of which we have speculated so much, with such slender returns. No one ever debated the undiscovered country more than he. In his whimsical, semi-serious fashion he had considered all the possibilities of the future state—orthodox and otherwise—and had drawn picturesquely original conclusions. He had sent Captain Stormfield in a dream to report the aspects of the early Christian heaven. He had examined the scientific aspects of the more subtle philosophies. He had considered spiritualism, transmigration, the various esoteric doctrines, and in the end he had logically made up his mind that death concludes all, while with that less logical hunger which survives in every human heart he had never ceased to expect an existence beyond the grave. His disbelief and his pessimism were identical in their structure. They were of his mind; never of his heart.

Page 928

Once a woman said to him:

“Mr. Clemens, you are not a pessimist, you only think you are.” And she might have added, with equal force and truth:

“You are not a disbeliever in immortality; you only think you are.”

Nothing could have conveyed more truly his attitude toward life and death. His belief in God, the Creator, was absolute; but it was a God far removed from the Creator of his early teaching. Every man builds his God according to his own capacities. Mark Twain's God was of colossal proportions—so vast, indeed, that the constellated stars were but molecules in His veins—a God as big as space itself.

Mark Twain had many moods, and he did not always approve of his own God; but when he altered his conception, it was likely to be in the direction of enlargement—a further removal from the human conception, and the problem of what we call our lives.

In 1906 he wrote:—[See also 1870, chap. lxxviii; 1899, chap. ccv; and various talks, 1906-07, *etc.*]

Let us now consider the real God, the genuine God, the great God, the sublime and supreme God, the authentic Creator of the real universe, whose remotenesses are visited by comets only comets unto which incredible distant Neptune is merely an out post, a Sandy Hook to homeward-bound specters of the deeps of space that have not glimpsed it before for generations—a universe not made with hands and suited to an astronomical nursery, but spread abroad through the illimitable reaches of space by the fiat of the real God just mentioned, by comparison with whom the gods whose myriads infest the feeble imaginations of men are as a swarm of gnats scattered and lost in the infinitudes of the empty sky.

At an earlier period—the date is not exactly fixable, but the stationery used and the handwriting suggest the early eighties—he set down a few concisely written pages of conclusions—conclusions from which he did not deviate materially in after years. The document follows:

I believe in God the Almighty.

I do not believe He has ever sent a message to man by anybody, or delivered one to him by word of mouth, or made Himself visible to mortal eyes at any time in any place.

I believe that the Old and New Testaments were imagined and written by man, and that no line in them was authorized by God, much less inspired by Him.

I think the goodness, the justice, and the mercy of God are manifested in His works: I perceive that they are manifested toward me in this life; the logical conclusion is that they will be manifested toward me in the life to come, if there should be one. I do not believe in special providences. I believe that the universe is governed by strict and immutable laws: If one man's family is swept away by a pestilence and another man's

Page 929

spared it is only the law working: God is not interfering in that small matter, either against the one man or in favor of the other. I cannot see how eternal punishment hereafter could accomplish any good end, therefore I am not able to believe in it. To chasten a man in order to perfect him might be reasonable enough; to annihilate him when he shall have proved himself incapable of reaching perfection might be reasonable enough; but to roast him forever for the mere satisfaction of seeing him roast would not be reasonable—even the atrocious God imagined by the Jews would tire of the spectacle eventually. There may be a hereafter and there may not be. I am wholly indifferent about it. If I am appointed to live again I feel sure it will be for some more sane and useful purpose than to flounder about for ages in a lake of fire and brimstone for having violated a confusion of ill-defined and contradictory rules said (but not evidenced) to be of divine institution. If annihilation is to follow death I shall not be aware of the annihilation, and therefore shall not care a straw about it. I believe that the world's moral laws are the outcome of the world's experience. It needed no God to come down out of heaven to tell men that murder and theft and the other immoralities were bad, both for the individual who commits them and for society which suffers from them. If I break all these moral laws I cannot see how I injure God by it, for He is beyond the reach of injury from me—I could as easily injure a planet by throwing mud at it. It seems to me that my misconduct could only injure me and other men. I cannot benefit God by obeying these moral laws—I could as easily benefit the planet by withholding my mud. (Let these sentences be read in the light of the fact that I believe I have received moral laws only from man—none whatever from God.) Consequently I do not see why I should be either punished or rewarded hereafter for the deeds I do here.

If the tragedies of life shook his faith in the goodness and justice and the mercy of God as manifested toward himself, he at any rate never questioned that the wider scheme of the universe was attuned to the immutable law which contemplates nothing less than absolute harmony. I never knew him to refer to this particular document; but he never destroyed it and never amended it, nor is it likely that he would have done either had it been presented to him for consideration even during the last year of his life.

He was never intentionally dogmatic. In a memorandum on a fly-leaf of Moncure D. Conway's Sacred Anthology he wrote:

Religion

The easy confidence with which I know another man's religion is folly teaches me to suspect that my own is also.

Mark twain, 19th Cent. A.D.

And in another note:



I would not interfere with any one's religion, either to strengthen it or to weaken it. I am not able to believe one's religion can affect his hereafter one way or the other, no matter what that religion maybe. But it may easily be a great comfort to him in this life hence it is a valuable possession to him.

Page 930

Mark Twain's religion was a faith too wide for doctrines—a benevolence too limitless for creeds. From the beginning he strove against oppression, sham, and evil in every form. He despised meanness; he resented with every drop of blood in him anything that savored of persecution or a curtailment of human liberties. It was a religion identified with his daily life and his work. He lived as he wrote, and he wrote as he believed. His favorite weapon was humor—good-humor—with logic behind it. A sort of glorified truth it was truth wearing a smile of gentleness, hence all the more quickly heeded.

“He will be remembered with the great humorists of all time,” says Howells, “with Cervantes, with Swift, or with any others worthy of his company; none of them was his equal in humanity.”

Mark Twain understood the needs of men because he was himself supremely human. In one of his dictations he said:

I have found that there is no ingredient of the race which I do not possess in either a small or a large way. When it is small, as compared with the same ingredient in somebody else, there is still enough of it for all the purposes of examination.

With his strength he had inherited the weaknesses of our kind. With him, as with another, a myriad of dreams and schemes and purposes daily flitted by. With him, as with another, the spirit of desire led him often to a high mountain-top, and was not rudely put aside, but lingeringly—and often invited to return. With him, as with another, a crowd of jealousies and resentments, and wishes for the ill of others, daily went seething and scorching along the highways of the soul. With him, as with another, regret, remorse, and shame stood at the bedside during long watches of the night; and in the end, with him, the better thing triumphed—forgiveness and generosity and justice—in a word, Humanity. Certain of his aphorisms and memoranda each in itself constitutes an epitome of Mark Twain's creed. His paraphrase, “When in doubt tell the truth,” is one of these, and he embodied his whole attitude toward Infinity when in one of his stray pencilings he wrote:

Why, even poor little ungodlike man holds himself responsible for the welfare of his child to the extent of his ability. It is all that we require of God.

CCXCVI

POSTSCRIPT

Every life is a drama—a play in all its particulars; comedy, farce, tragedy—all the elements are there. To examine in detail any life, however conspicuous or obscure, is to become amazed not only at the inevitable sequence of events, but at the interlinking

of details, often far removed, into a marvelously intricate pattern which no art can hope to reproduce, and can only feebly imitate.

Page 931

The biographer may reconstruct an episode, present a picture, or reflect a mood by which the reader is enabled to feel something of the glow of personality and know, perhaps, a little of the substance of the past. In so far as the historian can accomplish this his work is a success. At best his labor will be pathetically incomplete, for whatever its detail and its resemblance to life, these will record mainly but an outward expression, behind which was the mighty sweep and tumult of unwritten thought, the overwhelming proportion of any life, which no other human soul can ever really know.

Mark Twain's appearance on the stage of the world was a succession of dramatic moments. He was always exactly in the setting. Whatever he did, or whatever came to him, was timed for the instant of greatest effect. At the end he was more widely observed and loved and honored than ever before, and at the right moment and in the right manner he died.

How little one may tell of such a life as his! He traveled always such a broad and brilliant highway, with plumes flying and crowds following after. Such a whirling panorama of life, and death, and change! I have written so much, and yet I have put so much aside—and often the best things, it seemed afterward, perhaps because each in its way was best and the variety infinite. One may only strive to be faithful—and I would have made it better if I could.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

LETTER FROM ORION CLEMENS TO MISS WOOD CONCERNING HENRY CLEMENS

(See Chapter xxvi)

Keokuk, Iowa, October 3, 1858.

Miss wood,—My mother having sent me your kind letter, with a request that myself and wife should write to you, I hasten to do so.

In my memory I can go away back to Henry's infancy; I see his large, blue eyes intently regarding my father when he rebuked him for his credulity in giving full faith to the boyish idea of planting his marbles, expecting a crop therefrom; then comes back the recollection of the time when, standing we three alone by our father's grave, I told them always to remember that brothers should be kind to each other; afterward I see Henry returning from school with his books for the last time. He must go into my printing-office. He learned rapidly. A word of encouragement or a word of discouragement told



upon his organization electrically. I could see the effects in his day's work. Sometimes I would say, "Henry!" He would stand full front with his eyes upon mine—all attention. If I commanded him to do something, without a word he was off instantly, probably in a run. If a cat was to be drowned or shot Sam (though unwilling yet firm) was selected for the work. If a stray kitten was to be fed and taken care of Henry was expected to attend to it, and he would faithfully

Page 932

do so. So they grew up, and many was the grave lecture commenced by ma, to the effect that Sam was misleading and spoiling Henry. But the lectures were never concluded, for Sam would reply with a witticism, or dry, unexpected humor, that would drive the lecture clean out of my mother's mind, and change it to a laugh. Those were happier days. My mother was as lively as any girl of sixteen. She is not so now. And sister Pamela I have described in describing Henry; for she was his counterpart. The blow falls crushingly on her. But the boys grew up—Sam a rugged, brave, quick-tempered, generous-hearted fellow, Henry quiet, observing, thoughtful, leaning on Sam for protection; Sam and I too leaning on him for knowledge picked up from conversation or books, for Henry seemed never to forget anything, and devoted much of his leisure hours to reading.

Henry is gone! His death was horrible! How I could have sat by him, hung over him, watched day and night every change of expression, and ministered to every want in my power that I could discover. This was denied to me, but Sam, whose organization is such as to feel the utmost extreme of every feeling, was there. Both his capacity of enjoyment and his capacity of suffering are greater than mine; and knowing how it would have affected me to see so sad a scene, I can somewhat appreciate Sam's sufferings. In this time of great trouble, when my two brothers, whose heartstrings have always been a part of my own, were suffering the utmost stretch of mortal endurance, you were there, like a good angel, to aid and console, and I bless and thank you for it with my whole heart. I thank all who helped them then; I thank them for the flowers they sent to Henry, for the tears that fell for their sufferings, and when he died, and all of them for all the kind attentions they bestowed upon the poor boys. We thank the physicians, and we shall always gratefully remember the kindness of the gentleman who at so much expense to himself enabled us to deposit Henry's remains by our father.

With many kind wishes for your future welfare, I remain your earnest friend,

Respectfully,
Orion Clemens.

APPENDIX B

MARK TWAIN'S BURLESQUE OF CAPTAIN ISAIAH SELLERS

(See Chapter xxvii)

The item which served as a text for the "Sergeant Fathom" communication was as follows:



Vicksburg, May 4, 1859.

My opinion for the benefit of the citizens of New Orleans: The water is higher this far up than it has been since 1815. My opinion is that the water will be four feet deep in Canal Street before the first of next June. Mrs. Turner's plantation at the head of Big Black Island is all under water, and it has not been since 1815.

I. *Sellers*.—[Captain Sellers, as in this case, sometimes signed his own name to his communications.]

*The burlesque
introductory*

Page 933

Our friend Sergeant Fathom, one of the oldest cub pilots on the river, and now on the Railroad Line steamer Trombone, sends us a rather bad account concerning the state of the river. Sergeant Fathom is a “cub” of much experience, and although we are loath to coincide in his view of the matter, we give his note a place in our columns, only hoping that his prophecy will not be verified in this instance. While introducing the Sergeant, “we consider it but simple justice (we quote from a friend of his) to remark that he is distinguished for being, in pilot phrase, ‘close,’ as well as superhumanly ‘safe.’” It is a well-known fact that he has made fourteen hundred and fifty trips in the New Orleans and St. Louis trade without causing serious damage to a steamboat. This astonishing success is attributed to the fact that he seldom runs his boat after early candle-light. It is related of the Sergeant that upon one occasion he actually ran the chute of Glasscock’s Island, down-stream, in the night, and at a time, too, when the river was scarcely more than bank full. His method of accomplishing this feat proves what we have just said of his “safeness”—he sounded the chute first, and then built a fire at the head of the island to run by. As to the Sergeant’s “closeness,” we have heard it whispered that he once went up to the right of the “Old Hen,”—[Glasscock’s Island and the “Old Hen” were phenomenally safe places.]—but this is probably a pardonable little exaggeration, prompted by the love and admiration in which he is held by various ancient dames of his acquaintance (for albeit the Sergeant may have already numbered the allotted years of man, still his form is erect, his step is firm, his hair retains its sable hue, and, more than all, he hath a winning way about him, an air of docility and sweetness, if you will, and a smoothness of speech, together with an exhaustless fund of funny sayings; and, lastly, an overflowing stream, without beginning, or middle, or end, of astonishing reminiscences of the ancient Mississippi, which, taken together, form a ‘tout ensemble’ which is sufficient excuse for the tender epithet which is, by common consent, applied to him by all those ancient dames aforesaid, of “che-arming creature!”). As the Sergeant has been longer on the river, and is better acquainted with it than any other “cub” extant, his remarks are entitled to far more consideration, and are always read with the deepest interest by high and low, rich and poor, from “Kiho” to Kamschatka, for let it be known that his fame extends to the uttermost parts of the earth: *The communication*

R.R. Steamer Trombone, *Vicksburg*, May 8, 1859.

The river from New Orleans up to Natchez is higher than it has been since the niggers were executed (which was in the fall of 1813) and my opinion is that if the rise continues at this rate the water will be on the roof of the St. Charles Hotel before the middle of January. The point at Cairo, which has not even been moistened by the river since 1813, is now entirely under water.

Page 934

However, Mr. Editor, the inhabitants of the Mississippi Valley should not act precipitately and sell their plantations at a sacrifice on account of this prophecy of mine, for I shall proceed to convince them of a great fact in regard to this matter, *viz.*: that the tendency of the Mississippi is to rise less and less high every year (with an occasional variation of the rule), that such has been the case for many centuries, and eventually that it will cease to rise at all. Therefore, I would hint to the planters, as we say in an innocent little parlor game commonly called “draw,” that if they can only “stand the rise” this time they may enjoy the comfortable assurance that the old river’s banks will never hold a “full” again during their natural lives.

In the summer of 1763 I came down the river on the old first Jubilee. She was new then, however; a singular sort of a single-engine boat, with a Chinese captain and a Choctaw crew, forecastle on her stern, wheels in the center, and the jackstaff “nowhere,” for I steered her with a window-shutter, and when we wanted to land we sent a line ashore and “rounded her to” with a yoke of oxen.

Well, sir, we wooded off the top of the big bluff above Selmathe only dry land visible—and waited there three weeks, swapping knives and playing “seven up” with the Indians, waiting for the river to fall. Finally, it fell about a hundred feet, and we went on. One day we rounded to, and I got in a horse-trough, which my partner borrowed from the Indians up there at Selma while they were at prayers, and went down to sound around No. 8, and while I was gone my partner got aground on the hills at Hickman. After three days’ labor we finally succeeded in sparring her off with a capstan bar, and went on to Memphis. By the time we got there the river had subsided to such an extent that we were able to land where the Gayoso House now stands. We finished loading at Memphis, and loaded part of the stone for the present St. Louis Court House (which was then in process of erection), to be taken up on our return trip.

You can form some conception, by these memoranda, of how high the water was in 1763. In 1775 it did not rise so high by thirty feet; in 1790 it missed the original mark at least sixty-five feet; in 1797, one hundred and fifty feet; and in 1806, nearly two hundred and fifty feet. These were “high-water” years. The “high waters” since then have been so insignificant that I have scarcely taken the trouble to notice them. Thus, you will perceive that the planters need not feel uneasy. The river may make an occasional spasmodic effort at a flood, but the time is approaching when it will cease to rise altogether.

In conclusion, sir, I will condescend to hint at the foundation of these arguments: When me and De Soto discovered the Mississippi I could stand at Bolivar Landing (several miles above “Roaring Waters Bar”) and pitch a biscuit to the main shore on the other side, and in low water we waded across at Donaldsonville. The gradual widening and deepening of the river is the whole secret of the matter.

Page 935

Yours, *etc.*
sergeant fathom.

APPENDIX C I

Mark Twain's empire city hoax (See Chapter xli)
the latest sensation

A Victim to Jeremy Diddling Trustees—He Cuts his Throat from Ear to Ear, Scalps his Wife, and Dashes Out the Brains of Six Helpless Children!

From Abram Curry, who arrived here yesterday afternoon from Carson, we learn the following particulars concerning a bloody massacre which was committed in Ormsby County night before last. It seems that during the past six months a man named P. Hopkins, or Philip Hopkins, has been residing with his family in the old log-house just at the edge of the great pine forest which lies between Empire City and Dutch Nick's. The family consisted of nine children—five girls and four boys—the oldest of the group, Mary, being nineteen years old, and the youngest, Tommy, about a year and a half. Twice in the past two months Mrs. Hopkins, while visiting Carson, expressed fears concerning the sanity of her husband, remarking that of late he had been subject to fits of violence, and that during the prevalence of one of these he had threatened to take her life. It was Mrs. Hopkins's misfortune to be given to exaggeration, however, and but little attention was given to what she said.

About 10 o'clock on Monday evening Hopkins dashed into Carson on horseback, with his throat cut from ear to ear, and bearing in his hand a reeking scalp, from which the warm, smoking blood was still dripping, and fell in a dying condition in front of the Magnolia saloon. Hopkins expired, in the course of five minutes, without speaking. The long, red hair of the scalp he bore marked it as that of Mrs. Hopkins. A number of citizens, headed by Sheriff Gasherie, mounted at once and rode down to Hopkins's house, where a ghastly scene met their eyes. The scalpless corpse of Mrs. Hopkins lay across the threshold, with her head split open and her right hand almost severed from the wrist. Near her lay the ax with which the murderous deed had been committed. In one of the bedrooms six of the children were found, one in bed and the others scattered about the floor. They were all dead. Their brains had evidently been dashed out with a club, and every mark about them seemed to have been made with a blunt instrument. The children must have struggled hard for their lives, as articles of clothing and broken furniture were strewn about the room in the utmost confusion. Julia and Emma, aged respectively fourteen and seventeen, were found in the kitchen, bruised and insensible, but it is thought their recovery is possible. The eldest girl, Mary, must have sought refuge, in her terror, in the garret, as her body was found there frightfully mutilated, and the knife with which her wounds had been inflicted still sticking in her side.

Page 936

The two girls Julia and Emma, who had recovered sufficiently to be able to talk yesterday morning, declare that their father knocked them down with a billet of wood and stamped on them. They think they were the first attacked. They further state that Hopkins had shown evidence of derangement all day, but had exhibited no violence. He flew into a passion and attempted to murder them because they advised him to go to bed and compose his mind.

Curry says Hopkins was about forty-two years of age, and a native of western Pennsylvania; he was always affable and polite, and until very recently no one had ever heard of his ill-treating his family. He had been a heavy owner in the best mines of Virginia and Gold Hill, but when the San Francisco papers exposed our game of cooking dividends in order to bolster up our stocks he grew afraid and sold out, and invested an immense amount in the Spring Valley Water Company, of San Francisco. He was advised to do this by a relative of his, one of the editors of the San Francisco Bulletin, who had suffered pecuniarily by the dividend-cooking system as applied to the Daney Mining Company recently. Hopkins had not long ceased to own in the various claims on the Comstock lead, however, when several dividends were cooked on his newly acquired property, their water totally dried up, and Spring Valley stock went down to nothing. It is presumed that this misfortune drove him mad, and resulted in his killing himself and the greater portion of his family. The newspapers of San Francisco permitted this water company to go on borrowing money and cooking dividends, under cover of which the cunning financiers crept out of the tottering concern, leaving the crash to come upon poor and unsuspecting stockholders, without offering to expose the villainy at work. We hope the fearful massacre detailed above may prove the saddest result of their silence. *Il news-gathering with mark twain*

Alfred Doten's son gives the following account of a reporting trip made by his father and Mark Twain, when the two were on Comstock papers:

My father and Mark Twain were once detailed to go over to Como and write up some new mines that had been discovered over there. My father was on the Gold Hill News. He and Mark had not met before, but became promptly acquainted, and were soon calling each other by their first names.

They went to a little hotel at Carson, agreeing to do their work there together next morning. When morning came they set out, and suddenly on a corner Mark stopped and turned to my father, saying:

"By gracious, Alf! Isn't that a brewery?"

"It is, Mark. Let's go in."

They did so, and remained there all day, swapping yarns, sipping beer, and lunching, going back to the hotel that night.

The next morning precisely the same thing occurred. When they were on the same corner, Mark stopped as if he had never been there before, and said:



Page 937

“Good gracious, Alf! Isn’t that a brewery?”

“It is, Mark. Let’s go in.”

So again they went in, and again stayed all day.

This happened again the next morning, and the next. Then my father became uneasy. A letter had come from Gold Hill, asking him where his report of the mines was. They agreed that next morning they would really begin the story; that they would climb to the top of a hill that overlooked the mines, and write it from there.

But the next morning, as before, Mark was surprised to discover the brewery, and once more they went in. A few moments later, however, a man who knew all about the mines—a mining engineer connected with them—came in. He was a godsend. My father set down a valuable, informing story, while Mark got a lot of entertaining mining yarns out of him.

Next day Virginia City and Gold Hill were gaining information from my father’s article, and entertainment from Mark’s story of the mines.

APPENDIX D

FROM MARK TWAIN’S FIRST LECTURE, DELIVERED OCTOBER 2, 1866

(See Chapter liv)

Hawaiian importance to America

After a full elucidation of the sugar industry of the Sandwich Islands, its profits and possibilities, he said:

I have dwelt upon this subject to show you that these islands have a genuine importance to America—an importance which is not generally appreciated by our citizens. They pay revenues into the United States Treasury now amounting to over a half a million a year.

I do not know what the sugar yield of the world is now, but ten years ago, according to the Patent Office reports, it was 800,000 hogsheads. The Sandwich Islands, properly cultivated by go-ahead Americans, are capable of providing one-third as much themselves. With the Pacific Railroad built, the great China Mail Line of steamers touching at Honolulu—we could stock the islands with Americans and supply a third of the civilized world with sugar—and with the silkiest, longest-stapled cotton this side of the Sea Islands, and the very best quality of rice The property has got to fall to some heir, and why not the United States? *Native passion for funerals*



They are very fond of funerals. Big funerals are their main weakness. Fine grave clothes, fine funeral appointments, and a long procession are things they take a generous delight in. They are fond of their chief and their king; they reverence them with a genuine reverence and love them with a warm affection, and often look forward to the happiness they will experience in burying them. They will beg, borrow, or steal money enough, and flock from all the islands, to be present at a royal funeral on Oahu. Years ago a Kanaka and his wife were condemned to be hanged for murder. They received the sentence with manifest satisfaction because it

Page 938

gave an opening for a funeral, you know. All they care for is a funeral. It makes but little difference to them whose it is; they would as soon attend their own funeral as anybody else's. This couple were people of consequence, and had landed estates. They sold every foot of ground they had and laid it out in fine clothes to be hung in. And the woman appeared on the scaffold in a white satin dress and slippers and fathoms of gaudy ribbon, and the man was arrayed in a gorgeous vest, blue claw-hammer coat and brass buttons, and white kid gloves. As the noose was adjusted around his neck, he blew his nose with a grand theatrical flourish, so as to show his embroidered white handkerchief. I never, never knew of a couple who enjoyed hanging more than they did. *View from Haleakala*

It is a solemn pleasure to stand upon the summit of the extinct crater of Haleakala, ten thousand feet above the sea, and gaze down into its awful crater, 27 miles in circumference and ago feet deep, and to picture to yourself the seething world of fire that once swept up out of the tremendous abyss ages ago.

The prodigious funnel is dead and silent now, and even has bushes growing far down in its bottom, where the deep-sea line could hardly have reached in the old times, when the place was filled with liquid lava. These bushes look like parlor shrubs from the summit where you stand, and the file of visitors moving through them on their mules is diminished to a detachment of mice almost; and to them you, standing so high up against the sun, ten thousand feet above their heads, look no larger than a grasshopper.

This in the morning; but at three or four in the afternoon a thousand little patches of white clouds, like handfuls of wool, come drifting noiselessly, one after another, into the crater, like a procession of shrouded phantoms, and circle round and round the vast sides, and settle gradually down and mingle together until the colossal basin is filled to the brim with snowy fog and all its seared and desolate wonders are hidden from sight.

And then you may turn your back to the crater and look far away upon the broad valley below, with its sugar-houses glinting like white specks in the distance, and the great sugar-fields diminished to green veils amid the lighter-tinted verdure around them, and abroad upon the limitless ocean. But I should not say you look down; you look up at these things.

You are ten thousand feet above them, but yet you seem to stand in a basin, with the green islands here and there, and the valleys and the wide ocean, and the remote snow-peak of Mauna Loa, all raised up before and above you, and pictured out like a brightly tinted map hung at the ceiling of a room.

You look up at everything; nothing is below you. It has a singular and startling effect to see a miniature world thus seemingly hung in mid-air.

Page 939

But soon the white clouds come trooping along in ghostly squadrons and mingle together in heavy masses a quarter of a mile below you and shut out everything—completely hide the sea and all the earth save the pinnacle you stand on. As far as the eye can reach, it finds nothing to rest upon but a boundless plain of clouds tumbled into all manner of fantastic shapes—a billowy ocean of wool aflame with the gold and purple and crimson splendors of the setting sun! And so firm does this grand cloud pavement look that you can hardly persuade yourself that you could not walk upon it; that if you stepped upon it you would plunge headlong and astonish your friends at dinner ten thousand feet below.

Standing on that peak, with all the world shut out by that vast plain of clouds, a feeling of loneliness comes over a man which suggests to his mind the last man at the flood, perched high upon the last rock, with nothing visible on any side but a mournful waste of waters, and the ark departing dimly through the distant mists and leaving him to storm and night and solitude and death!

NOTICE OF MARK TWAIN'S LECTURE

"The trouble is over"

"The inimitable Mark Twain, delivered himself last night of his first lecture on the Sandwich Islands, or anything else.

"Some time before the hour appointed to open his head the Academy of Music (on Pine Street) was densely crowded with one of the most fashionable audiences it was ever my privilege to witness during my long residence in this city. The Elite of the town were there, and so was the Governor of the State, occupying one of the boxes, whose rotund face was suffused with a halo of mirth during the whole entertainment. The audience promptly notified Mark by the usual sign—stamping—that the auspicious hour had arrived, and presently the lecturer came sidling and swinging out from the left of the stage. His very manner produced a generally vociferous laugh from the assemblage. He opened with an apology, by saying that he had partly succeeded in obtaining a band, but at the last moment the party engaged backed out. He explained that he had hired a man to play the trombone, but he, on learning that he was the only person engaged, came at the last moment and informed him that he could not play. This placed Mark in a bad predicament, and wishing to know his reasons for deserting him at that critical moment, he replied, 'That he wasn't going to make a fool of himself by sitting up there on the stage and blowing his horn all by himself.' After the applause subsided, he assumed a very grave countenance and commenced his remarks proper with the following well-known sentence: 'When, in the course of human events,' etc. He lectured fully an hour and a quarter, and his humorous sayings were interspersed with geographical, agricultural, and statistical remarks, sometimes branching off and

reaching beyond, soaring, in the very choicest language, up to the very pinnacle of descriptive power.”

Page 940

APPENDIX E

FROM “THE JUMPING FROG” BOOK (MARK TWAIN’S FIRST PUBLISHED VOLUME)

(See Chapters lviii and lix)

I

advertisement

“Mark Twain” is too well known to the public to require a formal introduction at my hands. By his story of the Frog he scaled the heights of popularity at a single jump and won for himself the ‘sobriquet’ of The Wild Humorist of the Pacific Slope. He is also known to fame as The Moralist of the Main; and it is not unlikely that as such he will go down to posterity. It is in his secondary character, as humorist, however, rather than in the primal one of moralist, that I aim to present him in the present volume. And here a ready explanation will be found for the somewhat fragmentary character of many of these sketches; for it was necessary to snatch threads of humor wherever they could be found—very often detaching them from serious articles and moral essays with which they were woven and entangled. Originally written for newspaper publication, many of the articles referred to events of the day, the interest of which has now passed away, and contained local allusions, which the general reader would fail to understand; in such cases excision became imperative. Further than this, remark or comment is unnecessary. Mark Twain never resorts to tricks of spelling nor rhetorical buffoonery for the purpose of provoking a laugh; the vein of his humor runs too rich and deep to make surface gliding necessary. But there are few who can resist the quaint similes, keen satire, and hard, good sense which form the staple of his writing.

J. P.

II from answers to correspondents

“*Moral statistician*”—I don’t want any of your statistics. I took your whole batch and lit my pipe with it. I hate your kind of people. You are always ciphering out how much a man’s health is injured, and how much his intellect is impaired, and how many pitiful dollars and cents he wastes in the course of ninety-two years’ indulgence in the fatal practice of smoking; and in the equally fatal practice of drinking coffee; and in playing billiards occasionally; and in taking a glass of wine at dinner, *etc.*, *etc.*, *etc.* . . .

Of course you can save money by denying yourself all these vicious little enjoyments for fifty years; but then what can you do with it? What use can you put it to? Money can’t save your infinitesimal soul. All the use that money can be put to is to purchase comfort and enjoyment in this life; therefore, as you are an enemy to comfort and enjoyment, where is the use in accumulating cash? It won’t do for you to say that you can use it to better purpose in furnishing good table, and in charities, and in supporting tract

societies, because you know yourself that you people who have no petty vices are never known to give away a cent, and that you stint yourselves

Page 941

so in the matter of food that you are always feeble and hungry. And you never dare to laugh in the daytime for fear some poor wretch, seeing you in a good-humor, will try to borrow a dollar of you; and in church you are always down on your knees, with your eyes buried in the cushion, when the contribution-box comes around; and you never give the revenue-officers a true statement of your income. Now you all know all these things yourself, don't you? Very well, then, what is the use of your stringing out your miserable lives to a clean and withered old age? What is the use of your saving money that is so utterly worthless to you? In a word, why don't you go off somewhere and die, and not be always trying to seduce people into becoming as "ornery" and unlovable as you are yourselves, by your ceaseless and villainous "moral statistics"? Now, I don't approve of dissipation, and I don't indulge in it, either; but I haven't a particle of confidence in a man who has no redeeming petty vices whatever, and so I don't want to hear from you any more. I think you are the very same man who read me a long lecture last week about the degrading vice of smoking cigars and then came back, in my absence, with your vile, reprehensible fire-proof gloves on, and carried off my beautiful parlor-stove.

III

From "A strange dream"

(Example of Mark Twain's Early Descriptive Writing)

. . . In due time I stood, with my companion, on the wall of the vast caldron which the natives, ages ago, named 'Hale mau mau'—the abyss wherein they were wont to throw the remains of their chiefs, to the end that vulgar feet might never tread above them. We stood there, at dead of night, a mile above the level of the sea, and looked down a thousand feet upon a boiling, surging, roaring ocean of fire!—shaded our eyes from the blinding glare, and gazed far away over the crimson waves with a vague notion that a supernatural fleet, manned by demons and freighted with the damned, might presently sail up out of the remote distance; started when tremendous thunder-bursts shook the earth, and followed with fascinated eyes the grand jets of molten lava that sprang high up toward the zenith and exploded in a world of fiery spray that lit up the somber heavens with an infernal splendor.

"What is your little bonfire of Vesuvius to this?"

My ejaculation roused my companion from his reverie, and we fell into a conversation appropriate to the occasion and the surroundings. We came at last to speak of the ancient custom of casting the bodies of dead chieftains into this fearful caldron; and my comrade, who is of the blood royal, mentioned that the founder of his race, old King



Kamehameha the First—that invincible old pagan Alexander—had found other sepulture than the burning depths of the 'Hale mau mau'. I grew interested at once; I knew that the mystery of what became of the corpse of the warrior king had never been fathomed; I was aware that there was a legend connected with this matter; and I felt as if there could be no more fitting time to listen to it than the present. The descendant of the Kamehamehas said:

Page 942

The dead king was brought in royal state down the long, winding road that descends from the rim of the crater to the scorched and chasm-riven plain that lies between the 'Hale mau mau' and those beetling walls yonder in the distance. The guards were set and the troops of mourners began the weird wail for the departed. In the middle of the night came a sound of innumerable voices in the air and the rush of invisible wings; the funeral torches wavered, burned blue, and went out. The mourners and watchers fell to the ground paralyzed by fright, and many minutes elapsed before any one dared to move or speak; for they believed that the phantom messengers of the dread Goddess of Fire had been in their midst. When at last a torch was lighted the bier was vacant—the dead monarch had been spirited away!

APPENDIX F

The innocents abroad (See Chapter lx)

New York "Herald" Editorial on the return of the "Quaker city" Pilgrimage, November 19, 1867

In yesterday's Herald we published a most amusing letter from the pen of that most amusing American genius, Mark Twain, giving an account of that most amusing of all modern pilgrimages—the pilgrimage of the 'Quaker City'. It has been amusing all through, this Quaker City affair. It might have become more serious than amusing if the ship had been sold at Jaffa, Alexandria, or Yalta, in the Black Sea, as it appears might have happened. In such a case the passengers would have been more effectually sold than the ship. The descendants of the Puritan pilgrims have, naturally enough, some of them, an affection for ships; but if all that is said about this religious cruise be true they have also a singularly sharp eye to business. It was scarcely wise on the part of the pilgrims, although it was well for the public, that so strange a genius as Mark Twain should have found admission into the sacred circle. We are not aware whether Mr. Twain intends giving us a book on this pilgrimage, but we do know that a book written from his own peculiar standpoint, giving an account of the characters and events on board ship and of the scenes which the pilgrims witnessed, would command an almost unprecedented sale. There are varieties of genius peculiar to America. Of one of these varieties Mark Twain is a striking specimen. For the development of his peculiar genius he has never had a more fitting opportunity. Besides, there are some things which he knows, and which the world ought to know, about this last edition of the Mayflower.

APPENDIX G

MARK TWAIN AT THE CORRESPONDENTS CLUB, WASHINGTON

(See Chapter lxiii)

woman

A eulogy of the fair sex

The Washington Correspondents Club held its anniversary on Saturday night. Mr. Clemens, better known as Mark Twain, responded to the toast, "Woman, the pride of the professions and the jewel of ours." He said:

Page 943

Mr. President,—I do not know why I should have been singled out to receive the greatest distinction of the evening—for so the office of replying to the toast to woman has been regarded in every age. [Applause.] I do not know why I have received this distinction, unless it be that I am a trifle less homely than the other members of the club. But, be this as it may, Mr. President, I am proud of the position, and you could not have chosen any one who would have accepted it more gladly, or labored with a heartier good—will to do the subject justice, than I. Because, Sir, I love the sex. [Laughter.] I love all the women, sir, irrespective of age or color. [Laughter.]

Human intelligence cannot estimate what we owe to woman, sir. She sews on our buttons [laughter]; she mends our clothes [laughter]; she ropes us in at the church fairs; she confides in us; she tells us whatever she can find out about the private affairs of the neighbors; she gives good advice, and plenty of it; she gives us a piece of her mind sometimes—and sometimes all of it; she soothes our aching brows; she bears our children. (Ours as a general thing.)—[this last sentence appears in Twain's published speeches and may have been added later. D.W.]

In all relations of life, sir, it is but just and a graceful tribute to woman to say of her that she is a brick. [Great laughter.]

Wheresoever you place woman, sir—in whatsoever position or estate—she is an ornament to that place she occupies, and a treasure to the world. [Here Mr. Twain paused, looked inquiringly at his hearers, and remarked that the applause should come in at this point. It came in. Mr. Twain resumed his eulogy.] Look at the noble names of history! Look at Cleopatra! Look at Desdemona! Look at Florence Nightingale! Look at Joan of Arc! Look at Lucretia Borgia! [Disapprobation expressed. “Well,” said Mr. Twain, scratching his head, doubtfully, “suppose we let Lucretia slide.”] Look at Joyce Heth! Look at Mother Eve! I repeat, sir, look at the illustrious names of history! Look at the Widow Machree! Look at Lucy Stone! Look at Elizabeth Cady Stanton! Look at George Francis Train! [Great laughter.] And, sir, I say with bowed head and deepest veneration, look at the mother of Washington! She raised a boy that could not lie—could not lie. [Applause.] But he never had any chance. It might have been different with him if he had belonged to a newspaper correspondents' club. [Laughter, groans, hisses, cries of “put him out.” Mark looked around placidly upon his excited audience, and resumed.]

I repeat, sir, that in whatsoever position you place a woman she is an ornament to society and a treasure to the world. As a sweetheart she has few equals and no superior [laughter]; as a cousin she is convenient; as a wealthy grandmother with an incurable distemper she is precious; as a wet nurse she has no equal among men! [Laughter.]

What, sir, would the people of this earth be without woman? They would be scarce, sir. (Mighty scarce.)—[another line added later in the published ‘Speeches’. D.W.] Then let

us cherish her, let us protect her, let us give her our support, our encouragement, our sympathy—ourselves, if we get a chance. [Laughter.]

Page 944

But, jesting aside, Mr. President, woman is lovable, gracious, kind of heart, beautiful; worthy of all respect, of all esteem, of all deference. Not any here will refuse to drink her health right cordially, for each and every one of us has personally known, loved, and honored the very best one of them all—his own mother! [Applause.]

APPENDIX H

ANNOUNCEMENT FOR LECTURE OF JULY 2, 1868

(See Chapter lxvi)
the public to mark twain-correspondence

San Francisco, June 30th.

Mr. Mark twain—dear sir,—Hearing that you are about to sail for New York in the P. M. S. S. Company's steamer of the 6th July, to publish a book, and learning with the deepest concern that you propose to read a chapter or two of that book in public before you go, we take this method of expressing our cordial desire that you will not. We beg and implore you do not. There is a limit to human endurance.

We are your personal friends. We have your welfare at heart. We desire to see you prosper. And it is upon these accounts, and upon these only, that we urge you to desist from the new atrocity you contemplate. Yours truly,

60 names including: Bret Harte, Maj.-Gen. Ord, Maj.-Gen. Halleck,
The Orphan Asylum, and various Benevolent Societies, Citizens on
Foot and Horseback, and 1500 in the Steerage.

(Reply)

San Francisco, June 30th

To the 1,500 and others,—It seems to me that your course is entirely unprecedented. Heretofore, when lecturers, singers, actors, and other frauds have said they were about to leave town, you have always been the very first people to come out in a card beseeching them to hold on for just one night more, and inflict just one more performance on the public, but as soon as I want to take a farewell benefit you come after me, with a card signed by the whole community and the board of aldermen, praying me not to do it. But it isn't of any use. You cannot move me from my fell purpose. I will torment the people if I want to. I have a better right to do it than these strange lecturers and orators that come here from abroad. It only costs the public a dollar apiece, and if they can't stand it what do they stay here for? Am I to go away and let them have peace and quiet for a year and a half, and then come back and only lecture them twice? What do you take me for?



No, gentlemen, ask of me anything else and I will do it cheerfully; but do not ask me not to afflict the people. I wish to tell them all I know about *Venice*. I wish to tell them about the City of the Sea—that most venerable, most brilliant, and proudest Republic the world has ever seen. I wish to hint at what it achieved in twelve hundred years, and what it lost in two hundred. I wish to furnish a deal of pleasant information, somewhat highly spiced, but still palatable, digestible, and eminently fitted for the intellectual stomach. My last lecture was not as fine as I thought it was, but I have submitted this discourse to several able critics, and they have pronounced it good. Now, therefore, why should I withhold it?

Page 945

Let me talk only just this once, and I will sail positively on the 6th of July, and stay away until I return from China—two years.

Yours truly, *mark twain*.

(*Further remonstrance*)

San Francisco, June 30th.

Mr. Mark twain,—Learning with profound regret that you have concluded to postpone your departure until the 6th July, and learning also, with unspeakable grief, that you propose to read from your forthcoming book, or lecture again before you go, at the New Mercantile Library, we hasten to beg of you that you will not do it. Curb this spirit of lawless violence, and emigrate at once. Have the vessel's bill for your passage sent to us. We will pay it.

Your friends,
Pacific Board of Brokers [and
other financial and social
institutions]

San Francisco, June 30th.

Mr. Mark twain—dear sir,—Will you start now, without any unnecessary delay?

Yours truly,
Proprietors of the *Alta*,
Bulletin, *Times*, *Call*, *Examiner*
[and other *San Francisco*
publications].

San Francisco, June 30th.

Mr. Mark twain—dear sir,—Do not delay your departure. You can come back and lecture another time. In the language of the worldly—you can “cut and come again.”

Your friends,
the clergy.

San Francisco, June 30th.

Mr. Mark twain—dear sir,—You had better go.

Yours,
the chief of police.

(*Reply*)

San Francisco, June 30th.

Gentlemen,—Restrain your emotions; you observe that they cannot avail.
Read:

New mercantile library
Bush Street

Thursday Evening, July 2, 1868
One Night Only

Farewell lecture
of
mark twain
Subject:
The Oldest of the Republics
Venice
past and present

Box-Office open Wednesday and Thursday
No extra charge for reserved seats

Admission One dollar

Doors open at 7 Orgies to commence at 8 P. M.

The public displays and ceremonies projected to give fitting eclat to this occasion have been unavoidably delayed until the 4th. The lecture will be delivered certainly on the 2d, and the event will be celebrated two days afterward by a discharge of artillery on the 4th, a procession of citizens,

Page 946

the reading of the Declaration of Independence, and by a gorgeous display of fireworks from Russian Hill in the evening, which I have ordered at my sole expense, the cost amounting to eighty thousand dollars.

At new mercantile library
Bush Street
Thursday Evening, July 2, 1868

APPENDIX I

MARK TWAIN'S CHAMPIONSHIP OF THOMAS K. BEECHER

(See Chapter lxxiv)

There was a religious turmoil in Elmira in 1869; a disturbance among the ministers, due to the success of Thomas K. Beecher in a series of meetings he was conducting in the Opera House. Mr. Beecher's teachings had never been very orthodox or doctrinal, but up to this time they had been seemingly unobjectionable to his brother clergymen, who fraternized with him and joined with him in the Monday meetings of the Ministerial Union of Elmira, when each Monday a sermon was read by one of the members. The situation presently changed. Mr. Beecher was preaching his doubtful theology to large and nightly increasing audiences, and it was time to check the exodus. The Ministerial Union of Elmira not only declined to recognize and abet the Opera House gatherings, but they requested him to withdraw from their Monday meetings, on the ground that his teachings were pernicious. Mr. Beecher said nothing of the matter, and it was not made public until a notice of it appeared in a religious paper. Naturally such a course did not meet with the approval of the Langdon family, and awoke the scorn of a man who so detested bigotry in any form as Mark Twain. He was a stranger in the place, and not justified to speak over his own signature, but he wrote an article and read it to members of the Langdon family and to Dr. and Mrs. Taylor, their intimate friends, who were spending an evening in the Langdon home. It was universally approved, and the next morning appeared in the Elmira Advertiser, over the signature of "S'cat." It created a stir, of course.

The article follows:

Mr. Beecher and the clergy

"The Ministerial Union of Elmira, N. Y., at a recent meeting passed resolutions disapproving the teachings of Rev. T. K. Beecher, declining to co-operate with him in his Sunday evening services at the Opera House, and requesting him to withdraw from their Monday morning meeting. This has resulted in his withdrawal, and thus the pastors are relieved from further responsibility as to his action."—N. Y. Evangelist.



Poor Beecher! All this time he could do whatever he pleased that was wrong, and then be perfectly serene and comfortable over it, because the Ministerial Union of Elmira was responsible to God for it. He could lie if he wanted to, and those ministers had to answer for it; he could promote discord in the church of Christ, and those parties had to make it right with the Deity as best they could; he could teach false

Page 947

doctrines to empty opera houses, and those sorrowing lambs of the Ministerial Union had to get out their sackcloth and ashes and stand responsible for it. He had such a comfortable thing of it! But he went too far. In an evil hour he slaughtered the simple geese that laid the golden egg of responsibility for him, and now they will uncover their customary complacency, and lift up their customary cackle in his behalf no more. And so, at last, he finds himself in the novel position of being responsible to God for his acts, instead of to the Ministerial Union of Elmira. To say that this is appalling is to state it with a degree of mildness which amounts to insipidity.

We cannot justly estimate this calamity, without first reviewing certain facts that conspired to bring it about. Mr. Beecher was and is in the habit of preaching to a full congregation in the Independent Congregational Church, in this city. The meeting-house was not large enough to accommodate all the people who desired admittance. Mr. Beecher regularly attended the meetings of the Ministerial Union of Elmira every Monday morning, and they received him into their fellowship, and never objected to the doctrines which he taught in his church. So, in an unfortunate moment, he conceived the strange idea that they would connive at the teaching of the same doctrines in the same way in a larger house. Therefore he secured the Opera House and proceeded to preach there every Sunday evening to assemblages comprising from a thousand to fifteen hundred persons. He felt warranted in this course by a passage of Scripture which says, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel unto every creature." Opera-houses were not ruled out specifically in this passage, and so he considered it proper to regard opera-houses as a part of "all the world." He looked upon the people who assembled there as coming under the head of "every creature." These ideas were as absurd as they were farfetched, but still they were the honest ebullitions of a diseased mind. His great mistake was in supposing that when he had the Saviour's indorsement of his conduct he had all that was necessary. He overlooked the fact that there might possibly be a conflict of opinion between the Saviour and the Ministerial Union of Elmira. And there was. Wherefore, blind and foolish Mr. Beecher went to his destruction. The Ministerial Union withdrew their approbation, and left him dangling in the air, with no other support than the countenance and approval of the gospel of Christ.

Mr. Beecher invited his brother ministers to join forces with him and help him conduct the Opera House meetings. They declined with great unanimity. In this they were wrong. Since they did not approve of those meetings, it was a duty they owed to their consciences and their God to contrive their discontinuance. They knew this. They felt it. Yet they turned coldly away and refused to help at those meetings, when they well knew that their help, earnestly and persistently given, was able to kill any great religious enterprise that ever was conceived of.

Page 948

The ministers refused, and the calamitous meetings at the Opera House continued; and not only continued, but grew in interest and importance, and sapped of their congregations churches where the Gospel was preached with that sweet monotonous tranquillity and that impenetrable profundity which stir up such consternation in the strongholds of sin. It is a pity to have to record here that one clergyman refused to preach at the Opera House at Mr. Beecher's request, even when that incendiary was sick and disabled; and if that man's conscience justifies him in that refusal I do not. Under the plea of charity for a sick brother he could have preached to that Opera House multitude a sermon that would have done incalculable damage to the Opera House experiment. And he need not have been particular about the sermon he chose, either. He could have relied on any he had in his barrel.

The Opera House meetings went on; other congregations were thin, and grew thinner, but the Opera House assemblages were vast. Every Sunday night, in spite of sense and reason, multitudes passed by the churches where they might have been saved, and marched deliberately to the Opera House to be damned. The community talked, talked, talked. Everybody discussed the fact that the Ministerial Union disapproved of the Opera House meetings; also the fact that they disapproved of the teachings put forth there. And everybody wondered how the Ministerial Union could tell whether to approve or disapprove of those teachings, seeing that those clergymen had never attended an Opera House meeting, and therefore didn't know what was taught there. Everybody wondered over that curious question, and they had to take it out in wondering.

Mr. Beecher asked the Ministerial Union to state their objections to the Opera House matter. They could not—at least they did not. He said to them that if they would come squarely out and tell him that they desired the discontinuance of those meetings he would discontinue them. They declined to do that. Why should they have declined? They had no right to decline, and no excuse to decline, if they honestly believed that those meetings interfered in the slightest degree with the best interests of religion. (That is a proposition which the profoundest head among them cannot get around.)

But the Opera House meetings went on. That was the mischief of it. And so, one Monday morning, when Mr. B. appeared at the usual Ministers' meeting, his brother clergymen desired him to come there no more. He asked why. They gave no reason. They simply declined to have his company longer. Mr. B. said he could not accept of this execution without a trial, and since he loved them and had nothing against them he must insist upon meeting with them in the future just the same as ever. And so, after that, they met in secret, and thus got rid of this man's importunate affection.

Page 949

The Ministerial Union had ruled out Beecher—a point gained. He would get up an excitement about it in public. But that was a miscalculation. He never mentioned it. They waited and waited for the grand crash, but it never came. After all their labor-pains, their ministerial mountain had brought forth only a mouse—and a still-born one at that. Beecher had not told on them; Beecher malignantly persisted in not telling on them. The opportunity was slipping away. Alas, for the humiliation of it, they had to come out and tell it themselves! And after all, their bombshell did not hurt anybody when they did explode it. They had ceased to be responsible to God for Beecher, and yet nobody seemed paralyzed about it. Somehow, it was not even of sufficient importance, apparently, to get into the papers, though even the poor little facts that Smith has bought a trotting team and Alderman Jones's child has the measles are chronicled there with avidity. Something must be done. As the Ministerial Union had told about their desolating action, when nobody else considered it of enough importance to tell, they would also publish it, now that the reporters failed to see anything in it important enough to print. And so they startled the entire religious world no doubt by solemnly printing in the Evangelist the paragraph which heads this article. They have got their excommunication-bull started at last. It is going along quite lively now, and making considerable stir, let us hope. They even know it in Podunk, wherever that may be. It excited a two-line paragraph there. Happy, happy world, that knows at last that a little congress of congregationless clergymen of whom it had never heard before have crushed a famous Beecher, and reduced his audiences from fifteen hundred down to fourteen hundred and seventy-five at one fell blow! Happy, happy world, that knows at last that these obscure innocents are no longer responsible for the blemishless teachings, the power, the pathos, the logic, and the other and manifold intellectual pyrotechnics that seduce, but to damn, the Opera House assemblages every Sunday night in Elmira! And miserable, O thrice miserable Beecher! For the Ministerial Union of Elmira will never, no, never more be responsible to God for his shortcomings. (Excuse these tears.)

(For the protection of a man who is uniformly charged with all the newspaper devilry that sees the light in Elmira journals, I take this opportunity of stating, under oath, duly subscribed before a magistrate, that Mr. Beecher did not write this article. And further still, that he did not inspire it. And further still, the Ministerial Union of Elmira did not write it. And finally, the Ministerial Union did not ask me to write it. No, I have taken up this cudgel in defense of the Ministerial Union of Elmira solely from a love of justice. Without solicitation, I have constituted myself the champion of the Ministerial Union of Elmira, and it shall be a labor of love with

Page 950

me to conduct their side of a quarrel in print for them whenever they desire me to do it; or if they are busy, and have not the time to ask me, I will cheerfully do it anyhow. In closing this I must remark that if any question the right of the clergymen of Elmira to turn Mr. Beecher out of the Ministerial Union, to such I answer that Mr. Beecher recreated that institution after it had been dead for many years, and invited those gentlemen to come into it, which they did, and so of course they have a right to turn him out if they want to. The difference between Beecher and the man who put an adder in his bosom is, that Beecher put in more adders than he did, and consequently had a proportionately livelier time of it when they got warmed up.)

Cheerfully,
S'cat.

APPENDIX J

The indignity put upon the remains of George Holland by the Rev. Mr. Sabine

(See Chapter lxxvii)

What a ludicrous satire it was upon Christian charity!—even upon the vague, theoretical idea of it which doubtless this small saint mouths from his own pulpit every Sunday. Contemplate this freak of nature, and think what a Cardiff giant of self-righteousness is crowded into his pigmy skin. If we probe, and dissect; and lay open this diseased, this cancerous piety of his, we are forced to the conviction that it is the production of an impression on his part that his guild do about all the good that is done on the earth, and hence are better than common clay—hence are competent to say to such as George Holland, “You are unworthy; you are a play-actor, and consequently a sinner; I cannot take the responsibility of recommending you to the mercy of Heaven.” It must have had its origin in that impression, else he would have thought, “We are all instruments for the carrying out of God’s purposes; it is not for me to pass judgment upon your appointed share of the work, or to praise or to revile it; I have divine authority for it that we are all sinners, and therefore it is not for me to discriminate and say we will supplicate for this sinner, for he was a merchant prince or a banker, but we will beseech no forgiveness for this other one, for he was a play-actor.”

It surely requires the furthest possible reach of self-righteousness to enable a man to lift his scornful nose in the air and turn his back upon so poor and pitiable a thing as a dead stranger come to beg the last kindness that humanity can do in its behalf. This creature has violated the letter of the Gospel, and judged George Holland—not George Holland, either, but his profession through him. Then it is, in a measure, fair that we judge this creature’s guild through him. In effect he has said, “We are the salt of the earth; we do all the good work that is done; to learn how to be good and do good

Page 951

men must come to us; actors and such are obstacles to moral progress.” Pray look at the thing reasonably a moment, laying aside all biases of education and custom. If a common public impression is fair evidence of a thing then this minister’s legitimate, recognized, and acceptable business is to tell people calmly, coldly, and in stiff, written sentences, from the pulpit, to go and do right, be just, be merciful, be charitable. And his congregation forget it all between church and home. But for fifty years it was George Holland’s business on the stage to make his audience go and do right, and be just, merciful, and charitable—because by his living, breathing, feeling pictures he showed them what it was to do these things, and how to do them, and how instant and ample was the reward! Is it not a singular teacher of men, this reverend gentleman who is so poorly informed himself as to put the whole stage under ban, and say, “I do not think it teaches moral lessons”? Where was ever a sermon preached that could make filial ingratitude so hateful to men as the sinful play of “King Lear”? Or where was there ever a sermon that could so convince men of the wrong and the cruelty of harboring a pampered and unanalyzed jealousy as the sinful play of “Othello”? And where are there ten preachers who can stand in the pulpit preaching heroism, unselfish devotion, and lofty patriotism, and hold their own against any one of five hundred William Tells that can be raised upon five hundred stages in the land at a day’s notice? It is almost fair and just to aver (although it is profanity) that nine-tenths of all the kindness and forbearance and Christian charity and generosity in the hearts of the American people today got there by being filtered down from their fountain-head, the gospel of Christ, through dramas and tragedies and comedies on the stage, and through the despised novel and the Christmas story, and through the thousand and one lessons, suggestions, and narratives of generous deeds that stir the pulses, and exalt and augment the nobility of the nation day by day from the teeming columns of ten thousand newspapers, and not from the drowsy pulpit.

All that is great and good in our particular civilization came straight from the hand of Jesus Christ, and many creatures, and of divers sorts, were doubtless appointed to disseminate it; and let us believe that this seed and the result are the main thing, and not the cut of the sower’s garment; and that whosoever, in his way and according to his opportunity, sows the one and produces the other, has done high service and worthy. And further, let us try with all our strength to believe that whenever old simple-hearted George Holland sowed this seed, and reared his crop of broader charities and better impulses in men’s hearts, it was just as acceptable before the Throne as if the seed had been scattered in vapid platitudes from the pulpit of the ineffable Sabine himself.

Am I saying that the pulpit does not do its share toward disseminating the marrow, the meat of the gospel of Christ? (For we are not talking of ceremonies and wire-drawn creeds now, but the living heart and soul of what is pretty often only a specter.)

Page 952

No, I am not saying that. The pulpit teaches assemblages of people twice a week nearly two hours altogether—and does what it can in that time. The theater teaches large audiences seven times a week—28 or 30 hours altogether—and the novels and newspapers plead, and argue, and illustrate, stir, move, thrill, thunder, urge, persuade, and supplicate, at the feet of millions and millions of people every single day, and all day long and far into the night; and so these vast agencies till nine-tenths of the vineyard, and the pulpit tills the other tenth. Yet now and then some complacent blind idiot says, “You unanointed are coarse clay and useless; you are not as we, the regenerators of the world; go, bury yourselves elsewhere, for we cannot take the responsibility of recommending idlers and sinners to the yearning mercy of Heaven.” How does a soul like that stay in a carcass without getting mixed with the secretions and sweated out through the pores? Think of this insect condemning the whole theatrical service as a disseminator of bad morals because it has Black Crooks in it; forgetting that if that were sufficient ground people would condemn the pulpit because it had Crooks and Kallochs and Sabines in it!

No, I am not trying to rob the pulpit of any atom of its full share and credit in the work of disseminating the meat and marrow of the gospel of Christ; but I am trying to get a moment's hearing for worthy agencies in the same work, that with overwrought modesty seldom or never claim a recognition of their great services. I am aware that the pulpit does its excellent one-tenth (and credits itself with it now and then, though most of the time a press of business causes it to forget it); I am aware that in its honest and well-meaning way it bores the people with unflammable truisms about doing good; bores them with correct compositions on charity; bores them, chloroforms them, stupefies them with argumentative mercy without a flaw in the grammar or an emotion which the minister could put in in the right place if he turned his back and took his finger off the manuscript. And in doing these things the pulpit is doing its duty, and let us believe that it is likewise doing its best, and doing it in the most harmless and respectable way. And so I have said, and shall keep on saying, let us give the pulpit its full share of credit in elevating and ennobling the people; but when a pulpit takes to itself authority to pass judgment upon the work and worth of just as legitimate an instrument of God as itself, who spent a long life preaching from the stage the selfsame gospel without the alteration of a single sentiment or a single axiom of right, it is fair and just that somebody who believes that actors were made for a high and good purpose, and that they accomplish the object of their creation and accomplish it well, should protest. And having protested, it is also fair and just—being driven to it, as it were—to whisper to the Sabine pattern of clergyman, under the breath, a simple, instructive truth, and say, “Ministers are not the only servants of God upon earth, nor his most efficient ones, either, by a very, very long distance!” Sensible ministers already know this, and it may do the other kind good to find it out.

Page 953

But to cease teaching and go back to the beginning again, was it not pitiable—that spectacle? Honored and honorable old George Holland, whose theatrical ministry had for fifty years softened hard hearts, bred generosity in cold ones, kindled emotion in dead ones, uplifted base ones, broadened bigoted ones, and made many and many a stricken one glad and filled it brimful of gratitude, figuratively spit upon in his unoffending coffin by this crawling, slimy, sanctimonious, self-righteous reptile!

APPENDIX K

A substitute for Ruloff have we A Sidney Carton among us?

(See Chapter lxxxii)

To *editor* of 'Tribune'.

Sir,—I believe in capital punishment. I believe that when a murder has been done it should be answered for with blood. I have all my life been taught to feel this way, and the fetters of education are strong. The fact that the death—law is rendered almost inoperative by its very severity does not alter my belief in its righteousness. The fact that in England the proportion of executions to condemnations is one to sixteen, and in this country only one to twenty-two, and in France only one to thirty-eight, does not shake my steadfast confidence in the propriety of retaining the death-penalty. It is better to hang one murderer in sixteen, twenty-two, thirty-eight than not to hang any at all.

Feeling as I do, I am not sorry that Ruloff is to be hanged, but I am sincerely sorry that he himself has made it necessary that his vast capabilities for usefulness should be lost to the world. In this, mine and the public's is a common regret. For it is plain that in the person of Ruloff one of the most marvelous of intellects that any age has produced is about to be sacrificed, and that, too, while half the mystery of its strange powers is yet a secret. Here is a man who has never entered the doors of a college or a university, and yet by the sheer might of his innate gifts has made himself such a colossus in abstruse learning that the ablest of our scholars are but pigmies in his presence. By the evidence of Professor Mather, Mr. Surbridge, Mr. Richmond, and other men qualified to testify, this man is as familiar with the broad domain of philology as common men are with the passing events of the day. His memory has such a limitless grasp that he is able to quote sentence after sentence, paragraph after paragraph, chapter after chapter, from a gnarled and knotty ancient literature that ordinary scholars are capable of achieving little more than a bowing acquaintance with. But his memory is the least of his great endowments. By the testimony of the gentlemen above referred to he is able to critically analyze the works of the old masters of literature, and while pointing out the beauties of the originals with a pure and discriminating taste is as quick to detect

Page 954

the defects of the accepted translations; and in the latter case, if exceptions be taken to his judgment, he straightway opens up the quarries of his exhaustless knowledge, and builds a very Chinese wall of evidence around his position. Every learned man who enters Ruloff's presence leaves it amazed and confounded by his prodigious capabilities and attainments. One scholar said he did not believe that in matters of subtle analysis, vast knowledge in his peculiar field of research, comprehensive grasp of subject, and serene kingship over its limitless and bewildering details, any land or any era of modern times had given birth to Ruloff's intellectual equal. What miracles this murderer might have wrought, and what luster he might have shed upon his country, if he had not put a forfeit upon his life so foolishly! But what if the law could be satisfied, and the gifted criminal still be saved. If a life be offered up on the gallows to atone for the murder Ruloff did, will that suffice? If so, give me the proofs, for in all earnestness and truth I aver that in such a case I will instantly bring forward a man who, in the interests of learning and science, will take Ruloff's crime upon himself, and submit to be hanged in Ruloff's place. I can, and will do this thing; and I propose this matter, and make this offer in good faith. You know me, and know my address.

Samuel Langhorne.

April 29, 1871.

APPENDIX L

About London

address at A dinner given by the savage club, London, September 28, 1872

(See Chapter lxxxvii)

Reported by Moncure D. Conway in the Cincinnati Commercial

It affords me sincere pleasure to meet this distinguished club, a club which has extended its hospitalities and its cordial welcome to so many of my countrymen. I hope [and here the speaker's voice became low and fluttering] you will excuse these clothes. I am going to the theater; that will explain these clothes. I have other clothes than these. Judging human nature by what I have seen of it, I suppose that the customary thing for a stranger to do when he stands here is to make a pun on the name of this club, under the impression, of course, that he is the first man that that idea has occurred to. It is a credit to our human nature, not a blemish upon it; for it shows that underlying all our depravity (and God knows and you know we are depraved enough) and all our sophistication, and untarnished by them, there is a sweet germ of innocence and simplicity still. When a stranger says to me, with a glow of inspiration in his eye, some gentle, innocuous little thing about "Twain and one flesh" and all that sort of thing, I don't

try to crush that man into the earth—no. I feel like saying, “Let me take you by the hand, sir; let me embrace you;

Page 955

I have not heard that pun for weeks.” We will deal in palpable puns. We will call parties named King “your Majesty” and we will say to the Smiths that we think we have heard that name before somewhere. Such is human nature. We cannot alter this. It is God that made us so for some good and wise purpose. Let us not repine. But though I may seem strange, may seem eccentric, I mean to refrain from punning upon the name of this club, though I could make a very good one if I had time to think about it—a week.

I cannot express to you what entire enjoyment I find in this first visit to this prodigious metropolis of yours. Its wonders seem to me to be limitless. I go about as in a dream—as in a realm of enchantment—where many things are rare and beautiful, and all things are strange and marvelous. Hour after hour I stand—I stand spellbound, as it were—and gaze upon the statuary in Leicester Square. [Leicester Square being a horrible chaos, with the relic of an equestrian statue in the center, the king being headless and limbless, and the horse in little better condition.] I visit the mortuary effigies of noble old Henry VIII., and Judge Jeffreys, and the preserved gorilla, and try to make up my mind which of my ancestors I admire the most. I go to that matchless Hyde Park and drive all around it, and then I start to enter it at the Marble Arch—and am induced to “change my mind.” [Cabs are not permitted in Hyde Park—nothing less aristocratic than a private carriage.] It is a great benefaction—is Hyde Park. There, in his hansom cab, the invalid can go—the poor, sad child of misfortune—and insert his nose between the railings, and breathe the pure, health-giving air of the country and of heaven. And if he is a swell invalid who isn’t obliged to depend upon parks for his country air he can drive inside—if he owns his vehicle. I drive round and round Hyde Park and the more I see of the edges of it the more grateful I am that the margin is extensive.

And I have been to the Zoological Gardens. What a wonderful place that is! I have never seen such a curious and interesting variety of wild-animals in any garden before—except Mabille. I never believed before there were so many different kinds of animals in the world as you can find there—and I don’t believe it yet. I have been to the British Museum. I would advise you to drop in there some time when you have nothing to do for—five minutes—if you have never been there. It seems to me the noblest monument this nation has, yet erected to her greatness. I say to her, our greatness—as a nation. True, she has built other monuments, and stately ones, as well; but these she has uplifted in honor of two or three colossal demigods who have stalked across the world’s stage, destroying tyrants and delivering nations, and whose prodigies will still live in the memories of men ages after their monuments shall have crumbled to dust—I refer to the Wellington and Nelson monuments, and—the Albert memorial. [Sarcasm. The Albert memorial is the finest monument in the world, and celebrates the existence of as commonplace a person as good luck ever lifted out of obscurity.]

Page 956

The Library at the British Museum I find particularly astounding. I have read there hours together, and hardly made an impression on it. I revere that library. It is the author's friend. I don't care how mean a book is, it always takes one copy. [A copy of every book printed in Great Britain must by law be sent to the British Museum, a law much complained of by publishers.] And then every day that author goes there to gaze at that book, and is encouraged to go on in the good work. And what a touching sight it is of a Saturday afternoon to see the poor, careworn clergymen gathered together in that vast reading-room cabbaging sermons for Sunday! You will pardon my referring to these things. Everything in this monster city interests me, and I cannot keep from talking, even at the risk of being instructive. People here seem always to express distances by parables. To a stranger it is just a little confusing to be so parabolic—so to speak. I collar a citizen, and I think I am going to get some valuable information out of him. I ask him how far it is to Birmingham, and he says it is twenty-one shillings and sixpence. Now we know that doesn't help a man who is trying to learn. I find myself down-town somewhere, and I want to get some sort of idea where I am—being usually lost when alone—and I stop a citizen and say, "How far is it to Charing Cross?" "Shilling fare in a cab," and off he goes. I suppose if I were to ask a Londoner how far it is from the sublime to the ridiculous he would try to express it in a coin. But I am trespassing upon your time with these geological statistics and historical reflections. I will not longer keep you from your orgies. 'Tis a real pleasure for me to be here, and I thank you for it. The name of the Savage Club is associated in my mind with the kindly interest and the friendly offices which you lavished upon an old friend of mine who came among you a stranger, and you opened your English hearts to him and gave him a welcome and a home—Artemus Ward. Asking that you will join me, I give you his Memory.

APPENDIX M

Letter written to Mrs. Clemens from Boston, November, 1874, prophesying A monarchy in sixty-one years

(See Chapter xcvi)

Boston, November 16, 1935.

Dear livy,—You observe I still call this beloved old place by the name it had when I was young. Limerick! It is enough to make a body sick.

The gentlemen-in-waiting stare to see me sit here telegraphing this letter to you, and no doubt they are smiling in their sleeves. But let them! The slow old fashions are good enough for me, thank God, and I will none other. When I see one of these modern fools sit absorbed, holding the end of a telegraph wire in his hand, and reflect that a thousand miles away there is another fool hitched to the other

Page 957

end of it, it makes me frantic with rage; and then I am more implacably fixed and resolved than ever to continue taking twenty minutes to telegraph you what I might communicate in ten seconds by the new way if I would so debase myself. And when I see a whole silent, solemn drawing-room full of idiots sitting with their hands on each other's foreheads "communing" I tug the white hairs from my head and curse till my asthma brings me the blessed relief of suffocation. In our old day such a gathering talked pure drivel and "rot," mostly, but better that, a thousand times, than these dreary conversational funerals that oppress our spirits in this mad generation.

It is sixty years since I was here before. I walked hither then with my precious old friend. It seems incredible now that we did it in two days, but such is my recollection. I no longer mention that we walked back in a single day, it makes me so furious to see doubt in the face of the hearer. Men were men in those old times. Think of one of the puerile organisms in this effeminate age attempting such a feat.

My air-ship was delayed by a collision with a fellow from China loaded with the usual cargo of jabbering, copper-colored missionaries, and so I was nearly an hour on my journey. But by the goodness of God thirteen of the missionaries were crippled and several killed, so I was content to lose the time. I love to lose time anyway because it brings soothing reminiscences of the creeping railroad days of old, now lost to us forever.

Our game was neatly played, and successfully. None expected us, of course. You should have seen the guards at the ducal palace stare when I said, "Announce his Grace the Archbishop of Dublin and the Right Honorable the Earl of Hartford." Arrived within, we were all eyes to see the Duke of Cambridge and his Duchess, wondering if we might remember their faces and they ours. In a moment they came tottering in; he, bent and withered and bald; she, blooming with wholesome old age. He peered through his glasses a moment, then screeched in a reedy voice, "Come to my arms! Away with titles—I'll know ye by no names but Twain and Twichell!" Then fell he on our necks and jammed his trumpet in his ear, the which we filled with shoutings to this effect: "God bless you, old Howells, what is left of you!"

We talked late that night—none of your silent idiot "communings" for us —of the olden time. We rolled a stream of ancient anecdotes over our tongues and drank till the Lord Archbishop grew so mellow in the mellow past that Dublin ceased to be Dublin to him, and resumed its sweeter, forgotten name of New York. In truth he almost got back into his ancient religion, too, good Jesuit as he has always been since O'Mulligan the First established that faith in the empire.

And we canvassed everybody. Bailey Aldrich, Marquis of Ponkapog, came in, got nobly drunk, and told us all about how poor Osgood lost his earldom and was hanged for



conspiring against the second Emperor; but he didn't mention how near he himself came to being hanged, too, for engaging in the same enterprise. He was as chaffy as he was sixty years ago, too, and swore the Archbishop and I never walked to Boston; but there was never a day that Ponkapog wouldn't lie, so be it by the grace of God he got the opportunity.

Page 958

The Lord High Admiral came in, a hale gentleman close upon seventy and bronzed by the suns and storms of many climes and scarred by the wounds got in many battles, and I told him how I had seen him sit in a high-chair and eat fruit and cakes and answer to the name of Johnny. His granddaughter (the eldest) is but lately married to the youngest of the Grand Dukes, and so who knows but a day may come when the blood of the Howellses may reign in the land? I must not forget to say, while I think of it, that your new false teeth are done, my dear, and your wig. Keep your head well bundled with a shawl till the latter comes, and so cheat your persecuting neuralgias and rheumatisms. Would you believe it?—the Duchess of Cambridge is deafer than you—deafer than her husband. They call her to breakfast with a salvo of artillery; and usually when it thunders she looks up expectantly and says, “Come in.” But she has become subdued and gentle with age and never destroys the furniture now, except when uncommonly vexed. God knows, my dear, it would be a happy thing if you and old Lady Harmony would imitate this spirit. But indeed the older you grow the less secure becomes the furniture. When I throw chairs through the window I have sufficient reason to back it. But you—you are but a creature of passion.

The monument to the author of ‘Gloverson and His Silent Partners’ is finished.—[Ralph Keeler. See chap. lxxxiii.]—It is the stateliest and the costliest ever erected to the memory of any man. This noble classic has now been translated into all the languages of the earth and is adored by all nations and known to all creatures. Yet I have conversed as familiarly with the author of it as I do with my own great-grandchildren.

I wish you could see old Cambridge and Ponkapog. I love them as dearly as ever, but privately, my dear, they are not much improvement on idiots. It is melancholy to hear them jabber over the same pointless anecdotes three and four times of an evening, forgetting that they had jabbered them over three or four times the evening before. Ponkapog still writes poetry, but the old-time fire has mostly gone out of it. Perhaps his best effort of late years is this:

O soul, soul, soul of mine!
Soul, soul, soul of throe!
Thy soul, my soul, two souls entwine,
And sing thy lauds in crystal wine!

This he goes about repeating to everybody, daily and nightly, insomuch that he is become a sore affliction to all that know him.

But I must desist. There are draughts here everywhere and my gout is something frightful. My left foot hath resemblance to a snuff-bladder. God be with you.

Hartford.

These to Lady Hartford, in the earldom of Hartford, in the upper portion of the city of Dublin.

APPENDIX N

Mark twain and copyright

I

petition

Page 959

Concerning Copyright (1875) (See Chapter cii)

To the Senate and house of representatives of the united states in congress assembled.

We, your petitioners, do respectfully represent as follows, viz.: That justice, plain and simple, is a thing which right-feeling men stand ready at all times to accord to brothers and strangers alike. All such men will concede that it is but plain, simple justice that American authors should be protected by copyright in Europe; also, that European authors should be protected by copyright here.

Both divisions of this proposition being true, it behooves our government to concern itself with that division of it which comes peculiarly within its province—viz., the latter moiety—and to grant to foreign authors with all convenient despatch a full and effective copyright in America without marring the grace of the act by stopping to inquire whether a similar justice will be done our own authors by foreign governments. If it were even known that those governments would not extend this justice to us it would still not justify us in withholding this manifest right from their authors. If a thing is right it ought to be done—the thing called “expediency” or “policy” has no concern with such a matter. And we desire to repeat, with all respect, that it is not a grace or a privilege we ask for our foreign brethren, but a right—a right received from God, and only denied them by man. We hold no ownership in these authors, and when we take their work from them, as at present, without their consent, it is robbery. The fact that the handiwork of our own authors is seized in the same way in foreign lands neither excuses nor mitigates our sin.

With your permission we will say here, over our signatures, and earnestly and sincerely, that we very greatly desire that you shall grant a full copyright to foreign authors (the copyright fee for the entry in the office of the Congressional Librarian to be the same as we pay ourselves), and we also as greatly desire that this grant shall be made without a single hampering stipulation that American authors shall receive in turn an advantage of any kind from foreign governments.

Since no author who was applied to hesitated for a moment to append his signature to this petition we are satisfied that if time had permitted we could have procured the signature of every writer in the United States, great and small, obscure or famous. As it is, the list comprises the names of about all our writers whose works have at present a European market, and who are therefore chiefly concerned in this matter.

No objection to our proposition can come from any reputable publisher among us—or does come from such a quarter, as the appended signatures of our greatest publishing firms will attest. A European copyright here would be a manifest advantage to them. As the matter stands now the moment they have thoroughly advertised a desirable foreign book, and thus at great expense aroused public interest in it, some small-spirited

speculator (who has lain still in his kennel and spent nothing) rushes the same book on the market and robs the respectable publisher of half the gains.

Page 960

Then, since neither our authors nor the decent among our publishing firms will object to granting an American copyright to foreign authors and artists, who can there be to object? Surely nobody whose protest is entitled to any weight.

Trusting in the righteousness of our cause we, your petitioners, will ever pray, etc.

With great respect,
Your Ob't Serv'ts.

CIRCULAR TO AMERICAN AUTHORS AND PUBLISHERS

Dear sir,—We believe that you will recognize the justice and the righteousness of the thing we desire to accomplish through the accompanying petition. And we believe that you will be willing that our country shall be the first in the world to grant to all authors alike the free exercise of their manifest right to do as they please with the fruit of their own labor without inquiring what flag they live under. If the sentiments of the petition meet your views, will you do us the favor to sign it and forward it by post at your earliest convenience to our secretary?

}Committee

Address

-----Secretary of the Committee.

II

Communications supposed to have been written by the Tsar of Russia and the Sultan of Turkey to Mark Twain on the subject of International Copyright, about 1890.

St. Petersburg, February.

Col. Mark twain, Washington.

Your cablegram received. It should have been transmitted through my minister, but let that pass. I am opposed to international copyright. At present American literature is harmless here because we doctor it in such a way as to make it approve the various beneficent devices which we use to keep our people favorable to fetters as jewelry and pleased with Siberia as a summer resort. But your bill would spoil this. We should be obliged to let you say your say in your own way. 'Voila!' my empire would be a republic in five years and I should be sampling Siberia myself.



If you should run across Mr. Kennan—[George Kennan, who had graphically pictured the fearful conditions of Siberian exile.]—please ask him to come over and give some readings. I will take good care of him.

Alexander III.

144—Collect.

Constantinople, February.

Dr. Mark twain, Washington.

Great Scott, no! By the beard of the Prophet, no! How can you ask such a thing of me? I am a man of family. I cannot take chances, like other people. I cannot let a literature come in here which teaches that a man's wife is as good as the man himself. Such a doctrine cannot do any particular harm, of course, where the man has only one wife, for then it is a dead-level between them, and there is no humiliating inequality, and

Page 961

no resulting disorder; but you take an extremely married person, like me, and go to teaching that his wife is 964 times as good as he is, and what's hell to that harem, dear friend? I never saw such a fool as you. Do not mind that expression; I already regret it, and would replace it with a softer one if I could do it without debauching the truth. I beseech you, do not pass that bill. Roberts College is quite all the American product we can stand just now. On top of that, do you want to send us a flood of freedom-shrieking literature which we can't edit the poison out of, but must let it go among our people just as it is? My friend, we should be a republic inside of ten years.

Abdull.

III

mark Twain's last suggestion on copyright

A memorial respectfully tendered to the members of the Senate and the house of representatives

(Prepared early in 1909 at the suggestion of Mr. Champ Clack but not offered. A bill adding fourteen years to the copyright period was passed about this time.)

The Policy of Congress:—Nineteen or twenty years ago James Russell Lowell, George Haven Putnam, and the under signed appeared before the Senate Committee on Patents in the interest of Copyright. Up to that time, as explained by Senator Platt, of Connecticut, the policy of Congress had been to limit the life of a copyright by a term of years, with one definite end in view, and only one—to wit, that after an author had been permitted to enjoy for a reasonable length of time the income from literary property created by his hand and brain the property should then be transferred “to the public” as a free gift. That is still the policy of Congress to-day.

The Purpose in View:—The purpose in view was clear: to so reduce the price of the book as to bring it within the reach of all purses, and spread it among the millions who had not been able to buy it while it was still under the protection of copyright.

The Purpose Defeated:—This purpose has always been defeated. That is to say, that while the death of a copyright has sometimes reduced the price of a book by a half for a while, and in some cases by even more, it has never reduced it vastly, nor accomplished any reduction that was permanent and secure.

The Reason:—The reason is simple: Congress has never made a reduction compulsory. Congress was convinced that the removal of the author's royalty and the book's consequent (or at least probable) dispersal among several competing publishers would make the book cheap by force of the competition. It was an error. It has not

turned out so. The reason is, a publisher cannot find profit in an exceedingly cheap edition if he must divide the market with competitors.

Proposed Remedy:—The natural remedy would seem to be, amended law requiring the issue of cheap editions.

Page 962

Copyright Extension:—I think the remedy could be accomplished in the following way, without injury to author or publisher, and with extreme advantage to the public: by an amendment to the existing law providing as follows—to wit: that at any time between the beginning of a book's forty-first year and the ending of its forty-second the owner of the copyright may extend its life thirty years by issuing and placing on sale an edition of the book at one-tenth the price of the cheapest edition hitherto issued at any time during the ten immediately preceding years. This extension to lapse and become null and void if at any time during the thirty years he shall fail during the space of three consecutive months to furnish the ten per cent. book upon demand of any person or persons desiring to buy it.

The Result:—The result would be that no American classic enjoying the thirty-year extension would ever be out of the reach of any American purse, let its uncompulsory price be what it might. He would get a two-dollar book for 20 cents, and he could get none but copyright-expired classics at any such rate.

The Final Result:—At the end of the thirty-year extension the copyright would again die, and the price would again advance. This by a natural law, the excessively cheap edition no longer carrying with it an advantage to any publisher.

Reconstruction of The Present Law Not Necessary:—A clause of the suggested amendment could read about as follows, and would obviate the necessity of taking the present law to pieces and building it over again:

All books and all articles enjoying forty-two years copyright-life under the present law shall be admitted to the privilege of the thirty-year extension upon complying with the condition requiring the producing and placing upon permanent sale of one grade or form of said book or article at a price of 90 per cent. below the cheapest rate at which said book or article had been placed upon the market at any time during the immediately preceding ten years.

Remarks

If the suggested amendment shall meet with the favor of the present Congress and become law—and I hope it will—I shall have personal experience of its effects very soon. Next year, in fact, in the person of my first book, 'The Innocents Abroad'. For its forty-two-year copyright-life will then cease and its thirty-year extension begin—and with the latter the permanent low-rate edition. At present the highest price of the book is eight dollars, and its lowest price three dollars per copy. Thus the permanent low rate will be thirty cents per copy. A sweeping reduction like this is what Congress from the beginning has desired to achieve, but has not been able to accomplish because no inducement was offered to publishers to run the risk.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. *Clemens*.

(A full and interesting elucidation of Mark Twain's views on Copyright may be found in an article entitled "Concerning Copyright," published in the North American Review for January, 1905.)

Page 963

APPENDIX O

(See Chapter cxiv)

Address of Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain) from a report of the dinner given by the publishers of the Atlantic Monthly in honor of the Seventieth Anniversary of the Birth of John Greenleaf Whittier, at the Hotel Brunswick, Boston, December 17, 1877, as published in the Boston Evening Transcript, December 18, 1877.

Mr. Chairman, This is an occasion peculiarly meet for the digging up of pleasant reminiscences concerning literary folk, therefore I will drop lightly into history myself. Standing here on the shore of the Atlantic, and contemplating certain of its largest literary billows, I am reminded of a thing which happened to me thirteen years ago, when I had just succeeded in stirring up a little Nevadian literary puddle myself, whose spume-flakes were beginning to blow thinly California-ward. I started an inspection tramp through the southern mines of California. I was callow and conceited, and I resolved to try the virtue of my 'nom de guerre'. I very soon had an opportunity. I knocked at a miner's lonely log cabin in the foothills of the Sierras just at nightfall. It was snowing at the time. A jaded, melancholy man of fifty, barefooted, opened the door to me. When he heard my 'nom de guerre' he looked more dejected than before. He let me in—pretty reluctantly, I thought—and after the customary bacon and beans, black coffee and hot whisky, I took a pipe. This sorrowful man had not said three words up to this time. Now he spoke up and said, in the voice of one who is secretly suffering, "You're the fourth—I'm going to move." "The fourth what?" said I. "The fourth littery man that has been here in twenty-four hours—I'm going to move." "You don't tell me!" said I; "who were the others?" "Mr. Longfellow. Mr. Emerson, and Mr. Oliver Wendell Holmes—consound the lot!"

You can easily believe I was interested. I supplicated—three hot whiskies did the rest—and finally the melancholy miner began. Said he:

"They came here just at dark yesterday evening, and I let them in, of course. Said they were going to the Yosemite. They were a rough lot, but that's nothing; everybody looks rough that travels afoot. Mr. Emerson was a seedy little bit of a chap, red-headed. Mr. Holmes was as fat as a balloon; he weighed as much as three hundred, and had double chins all the way down to his stomach. Mr. Longfellow was built like a prize-fighter. His head was cropped and bristly, like as if he had a wig made of hair-brushes. His nose lay straight down in his face, like a finger with the end joint tilted up. They had been drinking, I could see that. And what queer talk they used! Mr. Holmes inspected this cabin, then he took me by the buttonhole and says he:

"Through the deep caves of thought
I hear a voice that sings,

"Build thee more stately mansions,
O my soul!"

Page 964

“Says I, ‘I can’t afford it, Mr. Holmes, and moreover I don’t want to.’ Blamed if I liked it pretty well, either, coming from a stranger that way. However, I started to get out my bacon and beans when Mr. Emerson came and looked on awhile, and then he takes me aside by the buttonhole and says:

“‘Give me agates for my meat;
Give me cantharids to eat;
From air and ocean bring me foods,
From all zones and altitudes.’

“Says I, ‘Mr. Emerson, if you’ll excuse me, this ain’t no hotel.’ You see, it sort of riled me—I warn’t used to the ways of Jittery swells. But I went on a-sweating over my work, and next comes Mr. Longfellow and buttonholes me and interrupts me. Says he:

“‘Honor be to Mudjekeewis!
You shall hear how Pau-Puk-Keewis—’

“But I broke in, and says I, ‘Beg your pardon, Mr. Longfellow, if you’ll be so kind as to hold your yawp for about five minutes and let me get this grub ready, you’ll do me proud.’ Well, sir, after they’d filled up I set out the jug. Mr. Holmes looks at it and then he fires up all of a sudden and yells:

“‘Flash out a stream of blood-red wine!
For I would drink to other days.’

“By George, I was getting kind of worked up. I don’t deny it, I was getting kind of worked up. I turns to Mr. Holmes and says I, ‘Looky here, my fat friend, I’m a-running this shanty, and if the court knows herself you’ll take whisky straight or you’ll go dry.’ Them’s the very words I said to him. Now I don’t want to sass such famous Littery people, but you see they kind of forced me. There ain’t nothing onreasonable ‘bout me. I don’t mind a passel of guests a-treadin’ on my tail three or four times, but when it comes to standing on it it’s different, ‘and if the court knows herself,’ I says, ‘you’ll take whisky straight or you’ll go dry.’ Well, between drinks they’d swell around the cabin and strike attitudes and spout; and pretty soon they got out a greasy old deck and went to playing euchre at ten cents a corner—on trust. I began to notice some pretty suspicious things. Mr. Emerson dealt, looked at his hand, shook his head, says:

“‘I am the doubter and the doubt—’

and calmly bunched the hands and went to shuffling for a new lay-out. Says he:

“‘They reckon ill who leave me out;
They know not well the subtle ways I keep.
I pass and deal again!’



Hang'd if he didn't go ahead and do it, too! Oh, he was a cool one! Well, in about a minute things were running pretty tight, but all of a sudden I see by Mr. Emerson's eye he judged he had 'em. He had already corralled two tricks and each of the others one. So now he kind of lifts a little in his chair and says,

"I tire of globes and aces!
Too long the game is played!"

and down he fetched a right bower. Mr. Longfellow smiles as sweet as pie and says,

Page 965

“Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught,’

and blamed if he didn’t down with another right bower! Emerson claps his hand on his bowie, Longfellow claps his on his revolver, and I went under a bunk. There was going to be trouble; but that monstrous Holmes rose up, wobbling his double chins, and says he, ‘Order, gentlemen; the first man that draws I’ll lay down on him and smother him!’ All quiet on the Potomac, you bet!

“They were pretty how-come-you-so by now, and they begun to blow. Emerson says, ‘The noblest thing I ever wrote was “Barbara Frietchie.”’ Says Longfellow, ‘It don’t begin with my “Bigelow Papers.”’ Says Holmes, ‘My “Thanatopsis” lays over ’em both.’ They mighty near ended in a fight. Then they wished they had some more company, and Mr. Emerson pointed to me and says:

“Is yonder squalid peasant all
That this proud nursery could breed?’

He was a-whetting his bowie on his boot—so I let it pass. Well, sir, next they took it into their heads that they would like some music; so they made me stand up and sing, ‘When Johnny Comes Marching Home’ till I dropped—at thirteen minutes past four this morning. That’s what I’ve been through, my friend. When I woke at seven they were leaving, thank goodness, and Mr. Longfellow had my only boots on and his’n under his arm. Says I, ‘Hold on there, Evangeline, what are you going to do with them?’ He says, ‘Going to make tracks with ’em, because—

“Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime;
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time.’

“As I said, Mr. Twain, you are the fourth in twenty-four hours and I’m going to move; I ain’t suited to a Littery atmosphere.”

I said to the miner, “Why, my dear sir, these were not the gracious singers to whom we and the world pay loving reverence and homage; these were impostors.”

The miner investigated me with a calm eye for a while; then said he, “Ah! impostors, were they? Are you?”

I did not pursue the subject, and since then I have not traveled on my ‘nom de guerre’ enough to hurt. Such was the reminiscence I was moved to contribute, Mr. Chairman. In my enthusiasm I may have exaggerated the details a little, but you will easily forgive

me that fault, since I believe it is the first time I have ever deflected from perpendicular fact on an occasion like this.

APPENDIX P

THE ADAM MONUMENT PETITION

(See Chapter cxxxiv)

*To the honorable Senate and house of representatives of the united states
in congress assembled.*

Whereas, A number of citizens of the city of Elmira in the State of New York having covenanted among themselves to erect in that city a monument in memory of Adam, the father of mankind, being moved thereto by a sentiment of love and duty, and these having appointed the undersigned to communicate with your honorable body, we beg leave to lay before you the following facts and append to the same our humble petition.

Page 966

1. As far as is known no monument has ever been raised in any part of the world to commemorate the services rendered to our race by this great man, whilst many men of far less note and worship have been rendered immortal by means of stately and indestructible memorials.
2. The common father of mankind has been suffered to lie in entire neglect, although even the Father of our Country has now, and has had for many years, a monument in course of construction.
3. No right-feeling human being can desire to see this neglect continued, but all just men, even to the farthest regions of the globe, should and will rejoice to know that he to whom we owe existence is about to have reverent and fitting recognition of his works at the hands of the people of Elmira. His labors were not in behalf of one locality, but for the extension of humanity at large and the blessings which go therewith; hence all races and all colors and all religions are interested in seeing that his name and fame shall be placed beyond the reach of the blight of oblivion by a permanent and suitable monument.
4. It will be to the imperishable credit of the United States if this monument shall be set up within her borders; moreover, it will be a peculiar grace to the beneficiary if this testimonial of affection and gratitude shall be the gift of the youngest of the nations that have sprung from his loins after 6,000 years of unappreciation on the part of its elders.
5. The idea of this sacred enterprise having originated in the city of Elmira, she will be always grateful if the general government shall encourage her in the good work by securing to her a certain advantage through the exercise of its great authority.

Therefore, Your petitioners beg that your honorable body will be pleased to issue a decree restricting to Elmira the right to build a monument to Adam and inflicting a heavy penalty upon any other community within the United States that shall propose or attempt to erect a monument or other memorial to the said Adam, and to this end we will ever pray.

Names: (100 signatures)

APPENDIX Q

GENERAL GRANT'S GRAMMAR

(Written in 1886. Delivered at an Army and Navy Club dinner in New York City)

Lately a great and honored author, Matthew Arnold, has been finding fault with General Grant's English. That would be fair enough, maybe, if the examples of imperfect English averaged more instances to the page in General Grant's book than they do in

Arnold's criticism on the book—but they do not. It would be fair enough, maybe, if such instances were commoner in General Grant's book than they are in the works of the average standard author—but they are not. In fact, General Grant's derelictions in the matter of grammar and construction are not more frequent than such derelictions in the works of a majority of the professional authors

Page 967

of our time, and of all previous times—authors as exclusively and painstakingly trained to the literary trade as was General Grant to the trade of war. This is not a random statement: it is a fact, and easily demonstrable. I have a book at home called *Modern English Literature: Its Blemishes and Defects*, by Henry H. Breen, a countryman of Mr. Arnold. In it I find examples of bad grammar and slovenly English from the pens of Sydney Smith, Sheridan, Hallam, Whately, Carlyle, Disraeli, Allison, Junius, Blair, Macaulay, Shakespeare, Milton, Gibbon, Southey, Lamb, Landor, Smollett, Walpole, Walker (of the dictionary), Christopher North, Kirk White, Benjamin Franklin, Sir Walter Scott, and Mr. Lindley Murray (who made the grammar).

In Mr. Arnold's criticism on General Grant's book we find two grammatical crimes and more than several examples of very crude and slovenly English, enough of them to entitle him to a lofty place in the illustrious list of delinquents just named.

The following passage all by itself ought to elect him:

"Meade suggested to Grant that he might wish to have immediately under him Sherman, who had been serving with Grant in the West. He begged him not to hesitate if he thought it for the good of the service. Grant assured him that he had not thought of moving him, and in his memoirs, after relating what had passed, he adds, *etc.*"

To read that passage a couple of times would make a man dizzy; to read it four times would make him drunk.

Mr. Breen makes this discriminating remark: "To suppose that because a man is a poet or a historian he must be correct in his grammar is to suppose that an architect must be a joiner, or a physician a compounder of medicine."

People may hunt out what microscopic motes they please, but, after all, the fact remains, and cannot be dislodged, that General Grant's book is a great and, in its peculiar department, a unique and unapproachable literary masterpiece. In their line there is no higher literature than those modest, simple memoirs. Their style is at least flawless and no man could improve upon it, and great books are weighed and measured by their style and matter, and not by the trimmings and shadings of their grammar.

There is that about the sun which makes us forget his spots, and when we think of General Grant our pulses quicken and his grammar vanishes; we only remember that this is the simple soldier who, all untaught of the silken phrase-makers, linked words together with an art surpassing the art of the schools and put into them a something which will still bring to American ears, as long as America shall last, the roll of his vanished drums and the tread of his marching hosts. What do we care for grammar

when we think of those thunderous phrases, “Unconditional and immediate surrender,” “I propose to move immediately upon your works,” “I propose to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer.”

Page 968

Mr. Arnold would doubtless claim that that last phrase is not strictly grammatical, and yet it did certainly wake up this nation as a hundred million tons of A-number-one fourth-proof, hard-boiled, hide-bound grammar from another mouth could not have done. And finally we have that gentler phrase, that one which shows you another true side of the man, shows you that in his soldier heart there was room for other than gory war mottoes and in his tongue the gift to fitly phrase them: "Let us have peace."

APPENDIX R

PARTY ALLEGIANCE

Being A portion of A paper on "Consistency," Read before the Monday evening club in 1887

(See Chapter clxiii)

. . . I have referred to the fact that when a man retires from his political party he is a traitor—that he is so pronounced in plain language. That is bold; so bold as to deceive many into the fancy that it is true. Desertion, treason—these are the terms applied. Their military form reveals the thought in the man's mind who uses them: to him a political party is an army. Well, is it? Are the two things identical? Do they even resemble each other? Necessarily a political party is not an army of conscripts, for they are in the ranks by compulsion. Then it must be a regular army or an army of volunteers. Is it a regular army? No, for these enlist for a specified and well-understood term, and can retire without reproach when the term is up. Is it an army of volunteers who have enlisted for the war, and may righteously be shot if they leave before the war is finished? No, it is not even an army in that sense. Those fine military terms are high-sounding, empty lies, and are no more rationally applicable to a political party than they would be to an oyster-bed. The volunteer soldier comes to the recruiting office and strips himself and proves that he is so many feet high, and has sufficiently good teeth, and no fingers gone, and is sufficiently sound in body generally; he is accepted; but not until he has sworn a deep oath or made other solemn form of promise to march under, that flag until that war is done or his term of enlistment completed. What is the process when a voter joins a party? Must he prove that he is sound in any way, mind or body? Must he prove that he knows anything—is capable of anything—whatever? Does he take an oath or make a promise of any sort?—or doesn't he leave himself entirely free? If he were informed by the political boss that if he join, it must be forever; that he must be that party's chattel and wear its brass collar the rest of his days—would not that insult him? It goes without saying. He would say some rude, unprintable thing, and turn his back on that preposterous organization. But the political boss puts no conditions upon him at all; and this volunteer makes no promises, enlists

Page 969

for no stated term. He has in no sense become a part of an army; he is in no way restrained of his freedom. Yet he will presently find that his bosses and his newspapers have assumed just the reverse of that: that they have blandly arrogated to themselves an ironclad military authority over him; and within twelve months, if he is an average man, he will have surrendered his liberty, and will actually be silly enough to believe that he cannot leave that party, for any cause whatever, without being a shameful traitor, a deserter, a legitimately dishonored man.

There you have the just measure of that freedom of conscience, freedom of opinion, freedom of speech and action which we hear so much inflated foolishness about as being the precious possession of the republic. Whereas, in truth, the surest way for a man to make of himself a target for almost universal scorn, obloquy, slander, and insult is to stop twaddling about these priceless independencies and attempt to exercise one of them. If he is a preacher half his congregation will clamor for his expulsion—and will expel him, except they find it will injure real estate in the neighborhood; if he is a doctor his own dead will turn against him.

I repeat that the new party-member who supposed himself independent will presently find that the party have somehow got a mortgage on his soul, and that within a year he will recognize the mortgage, deliver up his liberty, and actually believe he cannot retire from that party from any motive howsoever high and right in his own eyes without shame and dishonor.

Is it possible for human wickedness to invent a doctrine more infernal and poisonous than this? Is there imaginable a baser servitude than it imposes? What slave is so degraded as the slave that is proud that he is a slave? What is the essential difference between a lifelong democrat and any other kind of lifelong slave? Is it less humiliating to dance to the lash of one master than another?

This infamous doctrine of allegiance to party plays directly into the hands of politicians of the baser sort—and doubtless for that it was borrowed—or stolen—from the monarchical system. It enables them to foist upon the country officials whom no self-respecting man would vote for if he could but come to understand that loyalty to himself is his first and highest duty, not loyalty to any party name.

Shall you say the best good of the country demands allegiance to party? Shall you also say that it demands that a man kick his truth and his conscience into the gutter and become a mouthing lunatic besides? Oh no, you say; it does not demand that. But what if it produce that in spite of you? There is no obligation upon a man to do things which he ought not to do when drunk, but most men will do them just the same; and so we hear no arguments about obligations in the matter—we only hear men warned to avoid the habit of drinking; get rid of the thing that can betray men into such things.

Page 970

This is a funny business all around. The same men who enthusiastically preach loyal consistency to church and party are always ready and willing and anxious to persuade a Chinaman or an Indian or a Kanaka to desert his church or a fellow-American to desert his party. The man who deserts to them is all that is high and pure and beautiful—apparently; the man who deserts from them is all that is foul and despicable. This is Consistency—with a capital C.

With the daintiest and self-complacentest sarcasm the lifelong loyalist scoffs at the Independent—or as he calls him, with cutting irony, the Mugwump; makes himself too killingly funny for anything in this world about him. But—the Mugwump can stand it, for there is a great history at his back; stretching down the centuries, and he comes of a mighty ancestry. He knows that in the whole history of the race of men no single great and high and beneficent thing was ever done for the souls and bodies, the hearts and the brains of the children of this world, but a Mugwump started it and Mugwumps carried it to victory: And their names are the stateliest in history: Washington, Garrison, Galileo, Luther, Christ. Loyalty to petrified opinions never yet broke a chain or freed a human soul in this world-end never will.

APPENDIX S

Original preface for "A Connecticut Yankee in king Arthur's court"

(See Chapter clxxii)

My object has been to group together some of the most odious laws which have had vogue in the Christian countries within the past eight or ten centuries, and illustrate them by the incidents of a story.

There was never a time when America applied the death-penalty to more than fourteen crimes. But England, within the memory of men still living, had in her list of crimes 223 which were punishable by death! And yet from the beginning of our existence down to a time within the memory of babes England has distressed herself piteously over the ungentleness of our Connecticut Blue Laws. Those Blue Laws should have been spared English criticism for two reasons:

1. They were so insipidly mild, by contrast with the bloody and atrocious laws of England of the same period, as to seem characterless and colorless when one brings them into that awful presence.
2. The Blue Laws never had any existence. They were the fancy-work of an English clergyman; they were never a part of any statute-book. And yet they could have been made to serve a useful and merciful purpose; if they had been injected into the English

law the dilution would have given to the whole a less lurid aspect; or, to figure the effect in another way, they would have been coca mixed into vitriol.

Page 971

I have drawn no laws and no illustrations from the twin civilizations of hell and Russia. To have entered into that atmosphere would have defeated my purpose, which was to show a great and genuine progress in Christendom in these few later generations toward mercifulness—a wide and general relaxing of the grip of the law. Russia had to be left out because exile to Siberia remains, and in that single punishment is gathered together and concentrated all the bitter inventions of all the black ages for the infliction of suffering upon human beings. Exile for life from one's hearthstone and one's idols—this is rack, thumb-screw, the water-drop, fagot and stake, tearing asunder by horses, flaying alive—all these in one; and not compact into hours, but drawn out into years, each year a century, and the whole a mortal immortality of torture and despair. While exile to Siberia remains one will be obliged to admit that there is one country in Christendom where the punishments of all the ages are still preserved and still inflicted, that there is one country in Christendom where no advance has been made toward modifying the medieval penalties for offenses against society and the State.

APPENDIX T

A TRIBUTE TO HENRY H. ROGERS

(See Chapter cc and earlier)

April 25, 1902. I owe more to Henry Rogers than to any other man whom I have known. He was born in Fairhaven, Connecticut, in 1839, and is my junior by four years. He was graduated from the high school there in 1853, when he was fourteen years old, and from that time forward he earned his own living, beginning at first as the bottom subordinate in the village store with hard-work privileges and a low salary. When he was twenty-four he went out to the newly discovered petroleum fields in Pennsylvania and got work; then returned home, with enough money to pay passage, married a schoolmate, and took her to the oil regions. He prospered, and by and by established the Standard Oil Trust with Mr. Rockefeller and others, and is still one of its managers and directors.

In 1893 we fell together by accident one evening in the Murray Hill Hotel, and our friendship began on the spot and at once. Ever since then he has added my business affairs to his own and carried them through, and I have had no further trouble with them. Obstructions and perplexities which would have driven me mad were simplicities to his master mind and furnished him no difficulties. He released me from my entanglements with Paige and stopped that expensive outgo; when Charles L. Webster & Company failed he saved my copyrights for Mrs. Clemens when she would have sacrificed them to the creditors although they were in no way entitled to them; he offered to lend me money wherewith to save the life of that worthless firm; when I started lecturing around the world to make the money to pay off the Webster debts he spent more than a year trying

Page 972

to reconcile the differences between Harper & Brothers and the American Publishing Company and patch up a working-contract between them and succeeded where any other man would have failed; as fast as I earned money and sent it to him he banked it at interest and held onto it, refusing to pay any creditor until he could pay all of the 96 alike; when I had earned enough to pay dollar for dollar he swept off the indebtedness and sent me the whole batch of complimentary letters which the creditors wrote in return; when I had earned \$28,500 more, \$18,500 of which was in his hands, I wrote him from Vienna to put the latter into Federal Steel and leave it there; he obeyed to the extent of \$17,500, but sold it in two months at \$25,000 profit, and said it would go ten points higher, but that it was his custom to “give the other man a chance” (and that was a true word—there was never a truer one spoken). That was at the end of '99 and beginning of 1900; and from that day to this he has continued to break up my bad schemes and put better ones in their place, to my great advantage. I do things which ought to try man's patience, but they never seem to try his; he always finds a colorable excuse for what I have done. His soul was born superhumanly sweet, and I do not think anything can sour it. I have not known his equal among men for lovable qualities. But for his cool head and wise guidance I should never have come out of the Webster difficulties on top; it was his good steering that enabled me to work out my salvation and pay a hundred cents on the dollar—the most valuable service any man ever did me.

His character is full of fine graces, but the finest is this: that he can load you down with crushing obligations and then so conduct himself that you never feel their weight. If he would only require something in return—but that is not in his nature; it would not occur to him. With the Harpers and the American Company at war those copyrights were worth but little; he engineered a peace and made them valuable. He invests \$100,000 for me here, and in a few months returns a profit of \$31,000. I invest (in London and here) \$66,000 and must wait considerably for results (in case there shall be any). I tell him about it and he finds no fault, utters not a sarcasm. He was born serene, patient, all-enduring, where a friend is concerned, and nothing can extinguish that great quality in him. Such a man is entitled to the high gift of humor: he has it at its very best. He is not only the best friend I have ever had, but is the best man I have known.

S. L. Clemens.

APPENDIX U

FROM MARK TWAIN'S LAST POEM

Begun at Riverdale, new York. Finished at York harbor, Maine, august 18, 1902

(See Chapter ccxxiii)

(A bereft and demented mother speaks)

Page 973

. . . O, I can see my darling yet: the little form In slip of flimsy stuff all creamy white,
Pink-belted waist with ample bows, Blue shoes scarce bigger than the house-cat's ears
—Capering in delight and choked with glee.

It was a summer afternoon; the hill Rose green above me and about, and in the vale
below The distant village slept, and all the world Was steeped in dreams. Upon me lay
this peace, And I forgot my sorrow in its spell. And now My little maid passed by, and
she Was deep in thought upon a solemn thing: A disobedience, and my reproof. Upon
my face She must not look until the day was done; For she was doing penance . . .
She? O, it was I! What mother knows not that? And so she passed, I worshiping and
longing . . . It was not wrong? You do not think me wrong? I did it for the best. Indeed
I meant it so.

She flits before me now: The peach-bloom of her gauzy crepe, The plaited tails of hair,
The ribbons floating from the summer hat, The grieving face, dropp'd head absorbed
with care. O, dainty little form! I see it move, receding slow along the path, By hovering
butterflies besieged; I see it reach The breezy top clear-cut against the sky, . . . Then
pass beyond and sink from sight-forever!

Within, was light and cheer; without, A blustering winter's right. There was a play; It was
her own; for she had wrought it out Unhelped, from her own head-and she But turned
sixteen! A pretty play, All graced with cunning fantasies, And happy songs, and peopled
all with fays, And sylvan gods and goddesses, And shepherds, too, that piped and
danced, And wore the guileless hours away In care-free romps and games.

Her girlhood mates played in the piece, And she as well: a goddess, she, —And looked
it, as it seemed to me.

'Twas fairyland restored-so beautiful it was And innocent. It made us cry, we elder
ones, To live our lost youth o'er again With these its happy heirs.

Slowly, at last, the curtain fell. Before us, there, she stood, all wreathed and draped In
roses pearled with dew-so sweet, so glad, So radiant!—and flung us kisses through the
storm Of praise that crowned her triumph . . . O, Across the mists of time I see her yet,
My Goddess of the Flowers!

. . . The curtain hid her . . . Do you comprehend? Till time shall end! Out of my life
she vanished while I looked!

. . . Ten years are flown. O, I have watched so long, So long. But she will come no
more. No, she will come no more.

It seems so strange . . . so strange . . . Struck down unwarned! In the unbought grace,
of youth laid low—In the glory of her fresh young bloom laid low—In the morning of her

life cut down! And I not by! Not by When the shadows fell, the night of death closed
down The sun that lit my life went out. Not by to answer When the latest whisper
passed the lips That were so dear to me—my name! Far from my post! the world's
whole breadth away. O, sinking in the waves of death she cried to me For mother-help,
and got for answer Silence!

Page 974

We that are old—we comprehend; even we That are not mad: whose grown-up scions still abide; Their tale complete: Their earlier selves we glimpse at intervals Far in the dimming past; We see the little forms as once they were, And whilst we ache to take them to our hearts, The vision fades. We know them lost to us—Forever lost; we cannot have them back; We miss them as we miss the dead, We mourn them as we mourn the dead.

APPENDIX V

Selections from an unfinished book, “3,000 Years among the microbes”

The autobiography of A microbe, who, in A former existence, had been A man—his present habitat being the organism of A tramp, Blitzowski. (Written at Dublin, new Hampshire, 1905)

(See Chapter ccxxxv)

Our world (the tramp) is as large and grand and awe-compelling to us microscopic creatures as is man's world to man. Our tramp is mountainous, there are vast oceans in him, and lakes that are sea-like for size, there are many rivers (veins and arteries) which are fifteen miles across, and of a length so stupendous as to make the Mississippi and the Amazon trifling little Rhode Island brooks by comparison. As for our minor rivers, they are multitudinous, and the dutiable commerce of disease which they carry is rich beyond the dreams of the American custom-house.

Take a man like Sir Oliver Lodge, and what secret of Nature can be hidden from him? He says: “A billion, that is a million millions,[?? Trillion D.W.] of atoms is truly an immense number, but the resulting aggregate is still excessively minute. A portion of substance consisting, of a billion atoms is only barely visible with the highest power of a microscope; and a speck or granule, in order to be visible to the naked eye, like a grain of lycopodium-dust, must be a million times bigger still.”

The human eye could see it then—that dainty little speck. But with my microbe-eye I could see every individual of the whirling billions of atoms that compose the speck. Nothing is ever at rest—wood, iron, water, everything is alive, everything is raging, whirling, whizzing, day and night and night and day, nothing is dead, there is no such thing as death, everything is full of bristling life, tremendous life, even the bones of the crusader that perished before Jerusalem eight centuries ago. There are no vegetables, all things are animal; each electron is an animal, each molecule is a collection of animals, and each has an appointed duty to perform and a soul to be saved. Heaven was not made for man alone, and oblivion and neglect reserved for the rest of His creatures. He gave them life, He gave them humble services to perform, they have performed them, and they will not be forgotten, they will have their reward. Man-always

vain, windy, conceited-thinks he will be in the majority there. He will be disappointed. Let him humble himself. But for the despised microbe and the persecuted bacillus, who needed a home and nourishment, he would not have been created. He has a mission, therefore a reason for existing: let him do the service he was made for, and keep quiet.

Page 975

Three weeks ago I was a man myself, and thought and felt as men think and feel; I have lived 3,000 years since then [microbic time], and I see the foolishness of it now. We live to learn, and fortunate are we when we are wise enough to profit by it.

In matters pertaining to microscopy we necessarily have an advantage here over the scientist of the earth, because, as I have just been indicating, we see with our naked eyes minutenesses which no man-made microscope can detect, and are therefore able to register as facts many things which exist for him as theories only. Indeed, we know as facts several things which he has not yet divined even by theory. For example, he does not suspect that there is no life but animal life, and that all atoms are individual animals endowed each with a certain degree of consciousness, great or small, each with likes and dislikes, predilections and aversions—that, in a word, each has a character, a character of its own. Yet such is the case. Some of the molecules of a stone have an aversion for some of those of a vegetable or any other creature and will not associate with them—and would not be allowed to, if they tried. Nothing is more particular about society than a molecule. And so there are no end of castes; in this matter India is not a circumstance.

“Tell me, Franklin [a microbe of great learning], is the ocean an individual, an animal, a creature?”

“Yes.”

“Then water—any water—is an individual?”

“Yes.”

“Suppose you remove a drop of it? Is what is left an individual?”

“Yes, and so is the drop.”

“Suppose you divide the drop?”

“Then you have two individuals.”

“Suppose you separate the hydrogen and the oxygen?”

“Again you have two individuals. But you haven’t water any more.”

“Of course. Certainly. Well, suppose you combine them again, but in a new way: make the proportions equal—one part oxygen to one of hydrogen?”

“But you know you can’t. They won’t combine on equal terms.”

I was ashamed to have made that blunder. I was embarrassed; to cover it I started to say we used to combine them like that where I came from, but thought better of it, and stood pat.

“Now then,” I said, “it amounts to this: water is an individual, an animal, and is alive; remove the hydrogen and it is an animal and is alive; the remaining oxygen is also an individual, an animal, and is alive. Recapitulation: the two individuals combined constitute a third individual—and yet each continues to be an individual.”

I glanced at Franklin, but . . . upon reflection, held my peace. I could have pointed out to him that here was mute Nature explaining the sublime mystery of the Trinity so luminously—that even the commonest understanding could comprehend it, whereas many a trained master of words had labored to do it with speech and failed. But he would not have known what I was talking about. After a moment I resumed:

Page 976

"Listen—and see if I have understood you rightly, to wit: All the atoms that constitute each oxygen molecule are separate individuals, and each is a living animal; all the atoms that constitute each hydrogen molecule are separate individuals, and each one is a living animal; each drop of water consists of millions of living animals, the drop itself is an individual, a living animal, and the wide ocean is another. Is that it?"

"Yes, that is correct."

"By George, it beats the band!"

He liked the expression, and set it down in his tablets.

"Franklin, we've got it down fine. And to think—there are other animals that are still smaller than a hydrogen atom, and yet it is so small that it takes five thousand of them to make a molecule—a molecule so minute that it could get into a microbe's eye and he wouldn't know it was there!"

"Yes, the wee creatures that inhabit the bodies of us germs and feed upon us, and rot us with disease: Ah, what could they have been created for? They give us pain, they make our lives miserable, they murder us—and where is the use of it all, where the wisdom? Ah, friend Bkshp [microbic orthography], we live in a strange and unaccountable world; our birth is a mystery, our little life is a mystery, a trouble, we pass and are seen no more; all is mystery, mystery, mystery; we know not whence we came, nor why; we know not whither we go, nor why we go. We only know we were not made in vain, we only know we were made for a wise purpose, and that all is well! We shall not be cast aside in contumely and unblest after all we have suffered. Let us be patient, let us not repine, let us trust. The humblest of us is cared for—oh, believe it!—and this fleeting stay is not the end!"

You notice that? He did not suspect that he, also, was engaged in gnawing, torturing, defiling, rotting, and murdering a fellow-creature—he and all the swarming billions of his race. None of them suspects it. That is significant. It is suggestive—irresistibly suggestive—insistently suggestive. It hints at the possibility that the procession of known and listed devourers and persecutors is not complete. It suggests the possibility, and substantially the certainty, that man is himself a microbe, and his globe a blood-corpuscle drifting with its shining brethren of the Milky Way down a vein of the Master and Maker of all things, whose body, mayhap—glimpsed part-wise from the earth by night, and receding and lost to view in the measureless remotenesses of space—is what men name the Universe.

Yes, that was all old to me, but to find that our little old familiar microbes were themselves loaded up with microbes that fed them, enriched them, and persistently and faithfully preserved them and their poor old tramp-planet from destruction—oh, that was new, and too delicious!



I wanted to see them! I was in a fever to see them! I had lenses to two-million power, but of course the field was no bigger than a person's finger-nail, and so it wasn't possible to compass a considerable spectacle or a landscape with them; whereas what I had been craving was a thirty-foot field, which would represent a spread of several miles of country and show up things in a way to make them worth looking at. The boys and I had often tried to contrive this improvement, but had failed.

Page 977

I mentioned the matter to the Duke and it made him smile. He said it was a quite simple thing—he had it at home. I was eager to bargain for the secret, but he said it was a trifle and not worth bargaining for. He said:

“Hasn’t it occurred to you that all you have to do is to bend an X-ray to an angle-value of 8.4 and refract it with a parabolism, and there you are?”

Upon my word, I had never thought of that simple thing! You could have knocked me down with a feather.

We rigged a microscope for an exhibition at once and put a drop of my blood under it, which got mashed flat when the lens got shut down upon it. The result was beyond my dreams. The field stretched miles away, green and undulating, threaded with streams and roads, and bordered all down the mellowing distances with picturesque hills. And there was a great white city of tents; and everywhere were parks of artillery and divisions of cavalry and infantry waiting. We had hit a lucky moment, evidently there was going to be a march-past or some thing like that. At the front where the chief banner flew there was a large and showy tent, with showy guards on duty, and about it were some other tents of a swell kind.

The warriors—particularly the officers—were lovely to look at, they were so trim-built and so graceful and so handsomely uniformed. They were quite distinct, vividly distinct, for it was a fine day, and they were so immensely magnified that they looked to be fully a finger-nail high.—[My own expression, and a quite happy one. I said to the Duke: “Your Grace, they’re just about finger-milers!” “How do you mean, m’lord?” “This. You notice the stately General standing there with his hand resting upon the muzzle of a cannon? Well, if you could stick your little finger down against the ground alongside of him his plumes would just reach up to where your nail joins the flesh.” The Duke said “finger-milers was good”—good and exact; and he afterward used it several times himself.]—Everywhere you could see officers moving smartly about, and they looked gay, but the common soldiers looked sad. Many wife-swinks [“Swinks,” an atomic race] and daughter-swinks and sweetheart-swinks were about—crying, mainly. It seemed to indicate that this was a case of war, not a summer-camp for exercise, and that the poor labor-swinks were being torn from their planet-saving industries to go and distribute civilization and other forms of suffering among the feeble benighted somewhere; else why should the swinkesses cry?

The cavalry was very fine—shiny black horses, shapely and spirited; and presently when a flash of light struck a lifted bugle (delivering a command which we couldn’t hear) and a division came tearing down on a gallop it was a stirring and gallant sight, until the dust rose an inch—the Duke thought more—and swallowed it up in a rolling and tumbling long gray cloud, with bright weapons glinting and sparkling in it.

Page 978

Before long the real business of the occasion began. A battalion of priests arrived carrying sacred pictures. That settled it: this was war; these far-stretching masses of troops were bound for the front. Their little monarch came out now, the sweetest little thing that ever travestied the human shape I think, and he lifted up his hands and blessed the passing armies, and they looked as grateful as they could, and made signs of humble and real reverence as they drifted by the holy pictures.

It was beautiful—the whole thing; and wonderful, too, when those serried masses swung into line and went marching down the valley under the long array of fluttering flags.

Evidently they were going somewhere to fight for their king, which was the little manny that blessed them; and to preserve him and his brethren that occupied the other swell tents; to civilize and grasp a valuable little unwatched country for them somewhere. But the little fellow and his brethren didn't fall in—that was a noticeable particular. They didn't fight; they stayed at home, where it was safe, and waited for the swag.

Very well, then—what ought we to do? Had we no moral duty to perform? Ought we to allow this war to begin? Was it not our duty to stop it, in the name of right and righteousness? Was it not our duty to administer a rebuke to this selfish and heartless Family?

The Duke was struck by that, and greatly moved. He felt as I did about it, and was ready to do whatever was right, and thought we ought to pour boiling water on the Family and extinguish it, which we did.

It extinguished the armies, too, which was not intended. We both regretted this, but the Duke said that these people were nothing to us, and deserved extinction anyway for being so poor-spirited as to serve such a Family. He was loyally doing the like himself, and so was I, but I don't think we thought of that. And it wasn't just the same, anyway, because we were sooflaskies, and they were only swinks.

Franklin realizes that no atom is destructible; that it has always existed and will exist forever; but he thinks all atoms will go out of this world some day and continue their life in a happier one. Old Tolliver thinks no atom's life will ever end, but he also thinks Blitzowski is the only world it will ever see, and that at no time in its eternity will it be either worse off or better off than it is now and always has been. Of course he thinks the planet Blitzowski is itself eternal and indestructible—at any rate he says he thinks that. It could make me sad, only I know better. D. T. will fetch Blitzzy yet one of these days.

Page 979

But these are alien thoughts, human thoughts, and they falsely indicate that I do not want this tramp to go on living. What would become of me if he should disintegrate? My molecules would scatter all around and take up new quarters in hundreds of plants and animals; each would carry its special feelings along with it, each would be content in its new estate, but where should I be? I should not have a rag of a feeling left, after my disintegration—with his—was complete. Nothing to think with, nothing to grieve or rejoice with, nothing to hope or despair with. There would be no more me. I should be musing and thinking and dreaming somewhere else—in some distant animal maybe—perhaps a cat—by proxy of my oxygen I should be raging and fuming in some other creatures—a rat, perhaps; I should be smiling and hoping in still another child of Nature—heir to my hydrogen—a weed, or a cabbage, or something; my carbonic acid (ambition) would be dreaming dreams in some lowly wood-violet that was longing for a showy career; thus my details would be doing as much feeling as ever, but I should not be aware of it, it would all be going on for the benefit of those others, and I not in it at all. I should be gradually wasting away, atom by atom, molecule by molecule, as the years went on, and at last I should be all distributed, and nothing left of what had once been Me. It is curious, and not without impressiveness: I should still be alive, intensely alive, but so scattered that I would not know it. I should not be dead—no, one cannot call it that—but I should be the next thing to it. And to think what centuries and ages and aeons would drift over me before the disintegration was finished, the last bone turned to gas and blown away! I wish I knew what it is going to feel like, to lie helpless such a weary, weary time, and see my faculties decay and depart, one by one, like lights which burn low, and flicker and perish, until the ever-deepening gloom and darkness which—oh, away, away with these horrors, and let me think of something wholesome!

My tramp is only 85; there is good hope that he will live ten years longer—500,000 of my microbe years. So may it be.

Oh, dear, we are all so wise! Each of us knows it all, and knows he knows it all—the rest, to a man, are fools and deluded. One man knows there is a hell, the next one knows there isn't; one man knows high tariff is right, the next man knows it isn't; one man knows monarchy is best, the next one knows it isn't; one age knows there are witches, the next one knows there aren't; one sect knows its religion is the only true one, there are sixty-four thousand five hundred million sects that know it isn't so. There is not a mind present among this multitude of verdict-deliverers that is the superior of the minds that persuade and represent the rest of the divisions of the multitude. Yet this sarcastic fact does not humble the arrogance nor diminish the know-it-all bulk of a single verdict-maker of the lot by so much as a shade. Mind is plainly an ass, but it will be many ages before it finds it out, no doubt. Why do we respect the opinions of any man or any microbe that ever lived? I swear I don't know. Why do I respect my own? Well—that is different.

Page 980

APPENDIX W

LITTLE BESSIE WOULD ASSIST PROVIDENCE

(See Chapter cclxxxii)

[It is dull, and I need wholesome excitements and distractions; so I will go lightly excursioning along the primrose path of theology.]

Little Bessie was nearly three years old. She was a good child, and not shallow, not frivolous, but meditative and thoughtful, and much given to thinking out the reasons of things and trying to make them harmonize with results. One day she said:

“Mama, why is there so much pain and sorrow and suffering? What is it all for?”

It was an easy question, and mama had no difficulty in answering it:

“It is for our good, my child. In His wisdom and mercy the Lord sends us these afflictions to discipline us and make us better.”

“Is it He that sends them?”

“Yes.”

“Does He send all of them, mama?”

“Yes, dear, all of them. None of them comes by accident; He alone sends them, and always out of love for us, and to make us better.”

“Isn’t it strange?”

“Strange? Why, no, I have never thought of it in that way. I have not heard any one call it strange before. It has always seemed natural and right to me, and wise and most kindly and merciful.”

“Who first thought of it like that, mama? Was it you?”

“Oh no, child, I was taught it.”

“Who taught you so, mama?”

“Why, really, I don’t know—I can’t remember. My mother, I suppose; or the preacher. But it’s a thing that everybody knows.”

“Well, anyway, it does seem strange. Did He give Billy Norris the typhus?”



“Yes.”

“What for?”

“Why, to discipline him and make him good.”

“But he died, mama, and so it couldn’t make him good.”

“Well, then, I suppose it was for some other reason. We know it was a good reason, whatever it was.”

“What do you think it was, mama?”

“Oh, you ask so many questions! I think it was to discipline his parents.”

“Well, then, it wasn’t fair, mama. Why should his life be taken away for their sake, when he wasn’t doing anything?”

“Oh, I don’t know! I only know it was for a good and wise and merciful reason.”

“What reason, mama?”

“I think—I think-well, it was a judgment; it was to punish them for some sin they had committed.”

“But he was the one that was punished, mama. Was that right?”

“Certainly, certainly. He does nothing that isn’t right and wise and merciful. You can’t understand these things now, dear, but when you are grown up you will understand them, and then you will see that they are just and wise.”

After a pause:

“Did He make the roof fall in on the stranger that was trying to save the crippled old woman from the fire, mama?”



Page 981

"Yes, my child. Wait! Don't ask me why, because I don't know. I only know it was to discipline some one, or be a judgment upon somebody, or to show His power."

"That drunken man that stuck a pitchfork into Mrs. Welch's baby when—"

"Never mind about it, you needn't go into particulars; it was to discipline the child—that much is certain, anyway."

"Mama, Mr. Burgess said in his sermon that billions of little creatures are sent into us to give us cholera, and typhoid, and lockjaw, and more than a thousand other sicknesses and—mama, does He send them?"

"Oh, certainly, child, certainly. Of course."

"What for?"

"Oh, to discipline us! Haven't I told you so, over and over again?"

"It's awful cruel, mama! And silly! and if I——"

"Hush, oh, hush! Do you want to bring the lightning?"

"You know the lightning did come last week, mama, and struck the new church, and burnt it down. Was it to discipline the church?"

(Wearily.) "Oh, I suppose so."

"But it killed a hog that wasn't doing anything. Was it to discipline the hog, mama?"

"Dear child, don't you want to run out and play a while? If you would like to——"

"Mama, only think! Mr. Hollister says there isn't a bird, or fish, or reptile, or any other animal that hasn't got an enemy that Providence has sent to bite it and chase it and pester it and kill it and suck its blood and discipline it and make it good and religious. Is that true, mother —because if it is true why did Mr. Hollister laugh at it?"

"That Hollister is a scandalous person, and I don't want you to listen to anything he says."

"Why, mama, he is very interesting, and I think he tries to be good. He says the wasps catch spiders and cram them down into their nests in the ground—alive, mama!—and there they live and suffer days and days and days, and the hungry little wasps chewing their legs and gnawing into their bellies all the time, to make them good and religious and praise God for His infinite mercies. I think Mr. Hollister is just lovely, and ever so kind; for when I asked him if he would treat a spider like that he said he hoped to be

damned if he would; and then he——Dear mama, have you fainted! I will run and bring help! Now this comes of staying in town this hot weather.”

APPENDIX X

A chronological list of mark Twain's work

Published and otherwise—from 1851-1910

Note 1.—This is not a detailed bibliography, but merely a general list of Mark Twain's literary undertakings, in the order of performance, showing when, and usually where, the work was done, when and where first published, *etc.* An excellent Mark Twain bibliography has been compiled by Mr. Merle Johnson, to whom acknowledgments are due for important items.

Page 982

Note 2.—Only a few of the more important speeches are noted. Volumes that are merely collections of tales or articles are not noted.

Note 3.—Titles are shortened to those most commonly in use, as “Huck Finn” or “Huck” for “The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.”

Names of periodicals are abbreviated.

The initials U. E. stand for the “Uniform Edition” of Mark Twain’s works.

The chapter number or numbers in the line with the date refers to the place in this work where the items are mentioned.

1851.

(See Chapter xviii of this work.)

Edited the Hannibal Journal during the absence of the owner and editor, Orion Clemens.

Wrote local items for the Hannibal Journal.

Burlesque of a rival editor in the Hannibal Journal.

Wrote two sketches for The Sat. Eve. Post (Philadelphia).

To *Mary in H-I*. Hannibal Journal.

1852-53.

(See Chapter xviii.)

Jim Wolfe and the fire—Hannibal Journal.

Burlesque of a rival editor in the Hannibal Journal.

1853.

(See Chapter xix.)

Wrote obituary poems—not published.

Wrote first letters home.

1855-56.

(See Chapters xx and xxi.)

First after-dinner speech; delivered at a printers’ banquet in Keokuk, Iowa.

Letters from Cincinnati, November 16, 1856, signed “Snodgrass”

—Saturday Post (Keokuk).

1857.

(See Chapter xxi.)



Letters from Cincinnati, March 16, 1857, signed "Snodgrass"—Saturday Post (Keokuk).

1858.

Anonymous contributions to the New Orleans Crescent and probably to St. Louis papers.

1859.

(See Chapter xxvii; also Appendix B.)

Burlesque of Capt. Isaiah Sellers—True Delta (New Orleans), May 8 or 9.

1861.

(See Chapters xxxiii to xxxv.)

Letters home, published in The Gate City (Keokuk).

1862.

(See Chapters xxxv to xxxviii.)

Letters and sketches, signed "Josh," for the Territorial Enterprise (Virginia City, Nevada).

Report of the lecture of prof. Personal pronoun—Enterprise.

Report of A fourth of July oration—Enterprise.

The petrified man—Enterprise.

Local news reporter for the Enterprise from August.

1863.

(See Chapters xli to xliii; also Appendix C.)

Reported the Nevada Legislature for the Enterprise.

First used the name "Mark Twain," February 2.

Advice to the unreliable—Enterprise.

Curing A cold—Enterprise. U. E.

Information for the million—Enterprise.

Advice to good little girls—Enterprise.

The Dutch Nick massacre—Enterprise.

Many other Enterprise sketches.

The aged pilot man (poem)—"Roughing it." U. E.



Page 983

1864.

(See. Chapters xlv to xlvii.)

Reported the Nevada Legislature for the Enterprise.

Speech as "Governor of the Third House."

Letters to New York Sunday Mercury.

Local reporter on the San Francisco Call.

Articles and sketches for the Golden Era.

Articles and sketches for the Californian.

Daily letters from San Francisco to the Enterprise.

(Several of the Era and Californian sketches appear in *sketches new and old*. U. E.)

1865.

(See Chapters xlix to li; also Appendix E.)

Notes for the Jumping Frog story; Angel's Camp, February.

Sketches etc., for the Golden Era and Californian.

Daily letter to the Enterprise.

The jumping frog (San Francisco) Saturday Press. New York, November 18. U. E.

1866.

(See Chapters lii to lv; also Appendix D.)

Daily letter to the Enterprise.

Sandwich Island letters to the Sacramento Union.

Lecture on the Sandwich Islands, San Francisco, October 2.

Forty-three days in an open boat—Harper's Magazine, December (error in signature made it Mark Swain).

1867.

(See Chapters lvii to lxxv; also Appendices E, F, and G.)

Letters to Alta California from New York.

Jim Wolfe and the cats—N. Y. Sunday Mercury.

The jumping frog—book, published by Charles Henry Webb, May 1. U. E.

Lectured at Cooper Union, May, '66.

Letters to Alta California and New York Tribune from the Quaker City—Holy Land excursion.

Letter to New York Herald on the return from the Holy Land.

After-dinner speech on "Women" (Washington).

Began arrangement for the publication of *the innocents abroad*.

1868.

(See Chapters lxvi to lxi; also Appendices H and I.)

Newspaper letters, *etc.*, from Washington, for New York Citizen, Tribune, Herald, and other papers and periodicals. Preparing Quaker City letters (in Washington and San Francisco) for book publication. *Captain Wakeman's (Stormfield's) visit to heaven* (San Francisco), published Harper's Magazine, December, 1907-January, 1908 (also book, Harpers). Lectured in California and Nevada on the "Holy Land," July 2. S'cat! Anonymous article on T. K. Beecher (Elmira), published in local paper. Lecture-tour, season 1868-69.

1869.

(See Chapters lxx to lxxni.)

The innocents abroad—book (Am. Pub. Co.), July 20. U. E.
Bought one-third ownership in the Buffalo Express.
Contributed editorials, sketches, *etc.*, to the Express.
Contributed sketches to Packard's Monthly, Wood's Magazine, *etc.*
Lecture-tour, season 1869-70.



Page 984

1870.

(See Chapters lxxiv to lxxx; also Appendix J.)

Contributed various matter to Buffalo Express.

Contributed various matter under general head of “*Memoranda*” to Galaxy Magazine, May to April, ’71.

Roughing it begun in September (Buffalo).

Shem’s diary (Buffalo) (unfinished).

God, ancient and modern (unpublished).

1871.

(See Chapters lxxxi and lxxxii; also Appendix K.)

Memoranda continued in Galaxy to April.

Autobiography and first romance—[*the first romance* had appeared in the Express in 1870. Later included in *sketches*.]—booklet (Sheldon & Co.).

U. E.

Roughing it finished (Quarry Farm).

Ruloff letter—Tribune.

Wrote several sketches and lectures (Quarry Farm).

Western play (unfinished).

Lecture-tour, season 1871-72.

1872.

(See Chapters lxxxiii to lxxxvii; also Appendix L.)

Roughing it—book (Am. Pub. Co.), February. U. E.

The mark twain scrap-book invented (Saybrook, Connecticut).

Tom Sawyer begun as a play (Saybrook, Connecticut).

A few unimportant sketches published in “Practical jokes,” *etc*.

Began a book on England (London).

1873.

(See Chapters lxxxviii to xcii.)

Letters on the Sandwich Islands—Tribune, January 3 and 6. *The gilded age* (with C. D. Warner)—book (Am. Pub. Co), December. U. E. *The license of the press*—paper for The Monday Evening Club. Lectured in London, October 18 and season 1873-74.

1874.

(See Chapters xciii to xcvi; also Appendix M.)

Tom Sawyer continued (in the new study at Quarry Farm).

A true story (Quarry Farm)—Atlantic, November. U. E.



Fables (Quarry Farm). U. E.

Colonel Sellers—play (Quarry Farm) performed by John T. Raymond.

Undertaker's love-story (Quarry Farm) (unpublished).

Old times on the Mississippi (Hartford) Atlantic, January to July, 1875.

Monarchy letter to Mrs. Clemens, dated 1935 (Boston).

1875.

(See Chapters c to civ; also Appendix N.)

Universal suffrage—paper for The Monday Evening Club.

Sketches new and old—book (Am. Pub. Co.), July. U. E.

Tom Sawyer concluded (Hartford).

The curious rep. Of Gondour—Atlantic, October (unsigned).

Punch, conductor, punch—Atlantic, February, 1876. U. E.

The second advent (unfinished).

The mysterious chamber (unfinished).

Autobiography of A damn fool (unfinished).

Petition for International Copyright.

1876.

(See Chapters cvi to cx.)

Page 985

Performed in *the loan of the lover* as Peter Spuyk (Hartford).
Carnival of crime—paper for The Monday Evening Club—Atlantic, June.
U. E.
Huck Finn begun (Quarry Farm).
Canvasser's story (Quarry Farm)—Atlantic, December. U. E.
"1601" (Quarry Farm), privately printed. [And not edited by Livy. D.W.]
Ah sin (with Bret Harte)—play, (Hartford).
Tom Sawyer—book (Am. Pub. Co.), December. U. E.
Speech on "The Weather," New England Society, December 22.

1877.

(See Chapters cxii to cxv; also Appendix O.)

Loves of Alonzo Fitz-Clarence, etc. (Quarry Farm)—Atlantic.
Idle excursion (Quarry Farm)—Atlantic, October, November, December.
U. E.
Simon Wheeler, detective—play (Quarry Farm) (not produced).
Prince and pauper begun (Quarry Farm).
Whittier birthday speech (Boston), December.

1878.

(See Chapters cxvii to cxx.)

Magnanimous incident (Hartford)—Atlantic, May. U. E.
A tramp abroad (Heidelberg and Munich).
Mental telegraphy—Harper's Magazine, December, 1891. U. E.
Gambetta duel—Atlantic, February, 1879 (included in *tramp*). U. E.
Rev. In Pitcairn—Atlantic, March, 1879. U. E.
Stolen white elephant—book (Osgood & Co.), 1882. U. E.
(The three items last named were all originally a part of the *tramp abroad*.)

1879.

(See Chapters cxxi to cxxiv; also Chapter cxxxiv and Appendix P.)

A tramp abroad continued (Paris, Elmira, and Hartford).
Adam monument scheme (Elmira).
Speech on "The Babies" (Grant dinner, Chicago), November.
Speech on "Plagiarism" (Holmes breakfast, Boston), December.

1880.

(See Chapters cxxv to cxxxii.)



Prince and pauper concluded (Hartford and Elmira).

Huck Finn continued (Quarry Farm, Elmira).

A cat story (Quarry Farm) (unpublished).

A tramp abroad—book (Am. Pub. Co.), March 13. U. E.

Edward mills and Geo. Benton (Hartford)—Atlantic, August. U. E.

Mrs. McWILLIAMS and the lightning (Hartford)—Atlantic, September. U. E.

1881.

(See Chapters cxxxiv to cxxxvii.)

A curious experience—Century, November. U. E.

A biography of ----- (unfinished).

Prince and pauper—book (Osgood R; co.), December.

Burlesque etiquette (unfinished). [Included in *letters from the earth* D.W.]

1882.

(See Chapters cxi and cxli.)



Page 986

Life on the Mississippi (Elmira and Hartford).

1883.

(See Chapters cxlii to cxlviii.)

Life on the Mississippi—book (Osgood R co.), May. U. E.

What Is happiness?—paper for The Monday Evening Club.

Introduction to Portuguese conversation book (Hartford).

Huck Finn concluded (Quarry Farm).

History game (Quarry Farm).

American claimant (with W. D. Howells)—play (Hartford), produced by A. P. Burbank.

Dramatized *Tom Sawyer* and *prince and pauper* (not produced).

1884.

(See Chapters cxlix to cliii.)

Embarked in publishing with Charles L. Webster.

The Carson footprints—the San Franciscan.

Huck Finn—book (Charles L. Webster & Co.), December. U. E.

Platform-readings with George W. Cable, season '84-'85.

1885.

(See Chapters cliv to clvii.)

Contracted for General Grant's Memoirs.

A campaign that failed—Century, December. U. E.

The universal tinker—Century, December (open letter signed X. Y. Z.

Letter on the government of children—Christian Union.)

Kiditchin (children's poem).

1886.

(See Chapters clx to clxi; also Appendix Q.)

Introduced Henry M. Stanley (Boston).

Connecticut Yankee begun (Hartford).

English as she is taught—Century, April, 1887.

Luck—Harper's, August, 1891.

General grant and Matthew Arnold—Army and Navy dinner speech.

1887.

(See Chapters clxii to clxiv; also Appendix R.)

Meisterschaft—play (Hartford)—Century, January, 1888. U. E.

Knights of labor—essay (not published).



To the queen of England—Harper's Magazine, December. U. E.
Consistency—paper for The Monday Evening Club.

1888.

(See Chapters clxv to clxviii.)

Introductory for "Unsent Letters" (unpublished).

Master of Arts degree from Yale.

Yale Alumni address (unpublished).

Copyright controversy with Brander Matthews—Princeton Review.

Replies to Matthew Arnold's American criticisms (unpublished).

Yankee continued (Elmira and Hartford).

Introduction of Nye and Riley (Boston).

1889.

(See Chapters clxix to clxxiii; also Appendix S.)

A majestic literary fossil Harper's Magazine, February, 1890. U. E.

Huck and Tom among the Indians (unfinished).

Introduction to *Yankee* (not used).

Letter To Elsie Leslie—St Nicholas, February, 1890.

Connecticut Yankee—book (Webster & Co.), December. U. E.



Page 987

1890.

(See Chapters clxxii to clxxiv.)

Letter to Andrew Lang about English Criticism. (No important literary matters this year. Mark Twain engaged promoting the Paige typesetting-machine.)

1891.

(See Chapters clxxv to clxxvii.)

American claimant (Hartford) syndicated; also book (Webster & Co.), May,

1892. U. E.

European letters to New York Sun.

Down the Rhone (unfinished).

Kornerstrasse (unpublished).

1892.

(See Chapters clxxx to clxxxii.)

The German Chicago (Berlin—Sun.) U. E.

All kinds of ships (at sea). U. E.

Tom Sawyer abroad (Nauheim)—St. Nicholas, November, '93, to April, '94.

U. E.

Those extraordinary twins (Nauheim). U. E.

Pudd'nhead Wilson (Nauheim and Florence)—Century, December, '93, to

June, '94 U. E.

\$100,000 Bank-note (Florence)—Century, January, '93. U. E.

1893.

(See Chapters clxxxiii to clxxxvii.)

Joan of arc begun (at Villa Viviani, Florence) and completed up to the raising of the Siege of Orleans. *Californian's tale* (Florence) Liber Scriptorum, also Harper's. *Adam's diary* (Florence)—Niagara Book, also Harper's. *Esquimaux MAIDEN'S romance*—

Cosmopolitan, November. U. E. *Is he living or is he dead?*—Cosmopolitan, September.

U. E. *Traveling with A reformer*—Cosmopolitan, December. U. E. *In defense of Harriet Shelley* (Florence)—N. A.—Rev., July, '94. U. E. *Fenimore Cooper's literary offenses*

—[This may not have been written until early in 1894.]—(Players, New York)—N. A.

Rev., July, '95 U. E.

Rev., July, '95 U. E.

1894.

(See Chapters clxxxviii to cxc.)

Joan of arc continued (Etretat and Paris).

What Paul Bourget thinks of us (Etretat)—N. A. Rev., January, '95 U. E.



Tom Sawyer abroad—book (Webster & Co.), April. U. E.
Pudd'nhead Wilson—book (Am. Pub. Co.), November. U. E.
The failure of Charles L. Webster & Co., April 18.
The derelict—poem (Paris) (unpublished).

1895.

(See Chapters clxxxix and cxcii.)

Joan of arc finished (Paris), January 28, Harper's Magazine, April to December.

Mental telegraphy again—Harper's, September. U. E.

A little note to Paul Bourget. U. E.

Poem to Mrs. Beecher (Elmira) (not published). U. E.

Lecture-tour around the world, begun at Elmira, July 14, ended July 31.

1896.

(See Chapters cxci to cxciv.)



Page 988

Joan of arc—book (Harpers) May. U. E.

Tom Sawyer, detective, and other stories-book (Harpers), November.

Following the equator begun (23 Tedworth Square, London).

1897.

(See Chapters cxcvii to cxcix.)

Following the equator—book (Am. Pub. Co.), November.

Queen's jubilee (London), newspaper syndicate; book privately printed.

James Hammond Trumbull—Century, November.

Which was which? (London and Switzerland) (unfinished).

Tom and Huck (Switzerland) (unfinished).

Hellfire Hotchkiss (Switzerland) (unfinished).

In memoriam—poem (Switzerland)-Harper's Magazine. U. E.

Concordia Club speech (Vienna).

Stirring times in Austria (Vienna)—Harper's Magazine, March, 1898. U. E.

1898.

(See Chapters cc to cciii; also Appendix T.)

The Austrian Edison keeping school again (Vienna) Century, August. U. E. *At the*

appetite cure (Vienna)—Cosmopolitan, August. U. E. *From the London times*, 1904

(Vienna)—Century, November. U. E. *About play-acting* (Vienna)—Forum, October. U.

E. *Concerning the Jews* (Vienna)—Harper's Magazine, September, '99. U. E. *Christian*

science and Mrs. Eddy (Vienna)—Cosmopolitan, October. U. E. *The man that*

corrupted Hadleyburg (Vienna)—Harper's Magazine, December, '99 U. E.

Autobiographical chapters (Vienna); some of them used in the N. A. Rev., 1906-07.

What is man? (Kaltenleutgeben)—book (privately printed), August, 1906. *Assassination*

of an Empress (Kaltenleutgeben) (unpublished). *The mysterious stranger* (unfinished).

Translations of German plays (unproduced).

1899.

(See Chapters cciv to ccviii.)

Diplomatic pay and clothes (Vienna)—Forum, March. U. E.

My literary debut (Vienna)—Century, December. U. E.

Christian science (Vienna)—N. A. Rev., December, 1902, January and February, 1903.

Translated German plays (Vienna) (unproduced).

Collaborated with Siegmund Schlesinger on plays (Vienna) (unfinished).

Planned a postal-check scheme (Vienna).

Articles about the Kellgren treatment (Sanna, Sweden) (unpublished).



St. Joan of arc (London)—Harper's Magazine, December, 1904. U. E.
My first lie, and How I got out of it (London)—New York World. U. E.

Articles on South African War (London) (unpublished)
Uniform Edition of Mark Twain's works (Am. Pub. Co.).

Page 989

1900.

(See Chapters ccix to ccxii.)

Two little tales (London)—Century, November, 1901. U. E.
Spoke on “Copyright” before the House of Lords.
Delivered many speeches in London and New York.

1901.

(See Chapters ccxiii to ccxviii.)

To the person sitting in darkness (14 West Tenth Street, New York)
—N. A. Rev., February.
To my missionary critics (14 West Tenth Street, New York)—N. A. Rev.,
April.
Double-barrel detective story (Saranac Lake, “The Lair”) Harper’s
Magazine, January and February, 1902.
Lincoln Birthday Speech, February 11.
Many other speeches.
Plan for casting vote party (Riverdale) (unpublished).
The stupendous procession (Riverdale) (unpublished).
Ante-mortem obituaries—Harper’s Weekly.
Received degree of Doctor of Letters from Yale.

1902.

(See Chapters ccxix to ccxxiv; also Appendix U.)

Does the race of man love A lord? (Riverdale)—N. A. Rev., April. U. E.
Five boons of life (Riverdale)—Harper’s Weekly, July 5. U. E.
Why not abolish it? (Riverdale)—Harper’s Weekly, July 5.
Defense of general Funston (Riverdale)—N. A. Rev., May.
If I could be there (Riverdale unpublished).
Wrote various articles, unfinished or unpublished.
Received degree of LL.D. from the University of Missouri, June.

The belated Passport (York Harbor)—Harper’s Weekly, December 6. U. E.
Was it heaven? Or hell? (York Harbor)—Harper’s Magazine, December. U. E.
Poem (Riverdale and York Harbor) (unpublished)
Sixty-seventh Birthday speech (New York), November 27.

1903.

(See Chapters ccxxv to ccxxx.)

Mrs. Eddy in error (Riverdale)—N. A. Rev., April.
Instructions in art (Riverdale)-Metropolitan, April and May.



Eddypus, and other C. S. articles (unfinished).

A dog's tale (Elmira)—Harper's Magazine, December. U. E.

Italian without A master (Florence)—Harper's Weekly, January 21, 1904.

U. E.

Italian with grammar (Florence)—Harper's Magazine, August, U. E.

The \$30,000 bequest (Florence)—Harper's Weekly, December 10, 1904. U. E.

1904.

(See Chapters ccxxx to ccxxxiv.)

Autobiography (Florence)—portions published, N. A. Rev. and Harper's Weekly.

Concerning copyright (Tyringham, Massachusetts)—N. A. Rev., January, 1905.

TSARS *soliloquy* (21 Fifth Avenue, New York)—N. A. Rev., March, 1905.

Adam's diary—book (Harpers), April.



Page 990

1905.

(See Chapters ccxxxiv to ccxxxvii; also Appendix V.)

Leopold's soliloquy (21 Fifth Avenue, New York)—pamphlet, P. R. Warren Company.

The war prayer (21 Fifth Avenue, New York) (unpublished).

Eve's diary (Dublin, New Hampshire)—Harper's Magazine, December.

3,000 Years among the microbes (unpublished).

Interpreting the deity (Dublin New Hampshire) (unpublished).

A horse's tale (Dublin, New Hampshire)-Harper's Magazine, August and September, 1906.

Seventieth Birthday speech.

W. D. *Howells* (21 Fifth Avenue, New York)-Harper's Magazine, July, 1906.

1906.

(See Chapters ccxxxix to ccli.)

Autobiography dictation (21 Fifth Avenue, New York; and Dublin, New Hampshire)—selections published, N. A. Rev., 1906 and 1907.

Many speeches.

Farewell lecture, Carnegie Hall, April 19.

What is man?—book (privately printed).

Copyright speech (Washington), December.

1907.

(See Chapters cclvi to cclxiii.)

Autobiography dictations (27 Fifth Avenue, New York; and Tuxedo).

Degree of Doctor of Literature conferred by Oxford, June 26.

Made many London speeches.

Begum of Bengal speech (Liverpool).

Christian science—book (Harpers), February. U. E.

Captain Stormfield's visit To heaven—book (Harpers).

1908.

(See Chapters cclxiv to cclxx.)

Autobiography dictations (21 Fifth Avenue, New York; and Redding, Connecticut).

Lotos Club and other speeches.

Aldrich memorial speech.

1909.

(See Chapters cclxxvi to cclxxxix; also Appendices N and W.)



Is Shakespeare dead?—book (Harpers), April.

A fable—Harper's Magazine December.

Copyright documents (unpublished).

Address to St. Timothy School.

Marjorie Fleming (Stormfield)—Harper's Bazar, December.

The turning-point of my life (Stormfield)—Harper's Bazar, February, 1910

Bessie dialogue (unpublished).

Letters from the earth (unfinished).

The death of jean—Harper's, December, 1910.

The international lightning trust (unpublished).

1910.

(See Chapter ccxcii.)

Valentines to Helen and others (not published).

Advice to Paine (not published).