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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK MARK TWAIN: A BIOGRAPHY. VOLUME I, PART 2: 1866-1875 ***

MARK TWAIN A BIOGRAPHY

THE PERSONAL AND LITERARY LIFE OF SAMUEL LANGHORNE CLEMENS

BY ALBERT BIGELOW PAINE

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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 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.

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.

"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:

“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.

“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?'

“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."

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 came 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.*

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.

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.

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.

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 Mask 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.

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:

"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:

"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:

"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

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.

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:

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 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 dawn, 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 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 be sides 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 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."

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, 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.

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.

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, Moult, 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, 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?”

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.

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 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:

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 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.

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.]

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.]

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.

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.

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 wealty 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!"

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 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 minature 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.

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.

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.

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. 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.

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.]

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.”

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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, acid 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 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.

'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 kindliness always.

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.

LXXII.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:

> *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."

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 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, 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.

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 a girl even better and lovelier than the peerless "Chapparal 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.]

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.”

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:

“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.”

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.”

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.

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 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."

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:

> *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.

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 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 “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 unfailing; 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.

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 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.

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. Futhermore, 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:

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.

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.”

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.

“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:

> *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.

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.

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 Twa in 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.

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!"

"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:

"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.

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 you full, untrammeled 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:

“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 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 expeckt 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 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 Chinee.'” 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:

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 overflowingly 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.

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".

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:

> *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.

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-robes 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. Tonsilitis 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.

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.

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.

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 Sewards 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:

> *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 wined 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.

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!

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 axe 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 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 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.

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.

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."

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 Clafin 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:

“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, LII, 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.

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.

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 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 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, Turgenieff, 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:

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, 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:

> *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 Condover 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.

> *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

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 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:

> *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:

“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:

> *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:

> *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.”

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.

"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"

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:

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.

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.

> *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 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."

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. 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.”

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.”

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:

> *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:

> *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 companied 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.

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:

“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 momently 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 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.*

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 escalloped 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:

> *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.

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.

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.

“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:

> *“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.)

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:

> *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, 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:

> *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 yeas 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 tally-ho 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:

> *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 Tom 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.”

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. 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 inebriate 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'ints 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.

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.

> *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 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 enaction; 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!

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:

> *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.”

“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 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!

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