

Mark Twain Journals Vol. XIV-No. 2 & Vol. XIII-No. 3
1966-1968

832

MARK TWAIN JOURNAL



Mark Twain draws a picture at "Doe" Luncheon given February 11, 1908, for Kate Douglas Wiggin, (then Mrs. Riggs.)

Admiral and Mrs Harold R. Stark
 Two Wonderful Americans!
 Editor's friendship.
 April O. Jensen

THE MARK TWAIN JOURNAL

Kirkwood, Mo. 63122

Vol. XIV

Summer, 1968

No. 2

CYRIL CLEMENS, *Editor-in-Chief*

One dollar a copy

Three dollars a subscription

Mark Twain is the only American writer who is also an American hero, known to many men and women who have barely read his books. He created many characters, but none of them is greater than himself.

Carl Van Doren

CONTENTS

HUCKLEBERRY BUMPPPO: A COMPARISON OF "TOM SAWYER" AND "THE PIONEERS," <i>Sacvan Bercovitch</i>	1
MARK TWAIN AND MELVILLE; <i>Margaret Myers</i>	5
UNCLE SILAS PHELPS: A NOTE ON MARK TWAIN'S CHARACTERIZATION, <i>Elmo Howell</i>	8
MARK TWAIN'S PASSAGE TO INDIA, <i>Mohan Lal Sharma</i>	12
THE CURING, Poem, <i>Frances Hall</i>	14
THE NEGLECTED GRAVEYARD IN FRANKLIN COUNTY, Poem, <i>Carleton Drewry</i>	14
LITTLE FABLE by JOAQUIN MARIA BARTRINA from the Spanish: FABULITA, Poem, <i>D. M. Pettinella</i>	14
MARK TWAIN AND HEMINGWAY: "A CATASTROPHE" AND "A NATURAL HISTORY OF THE DEAD," <i>Lewis E. Weeks, Jr.</i>	15
MOMENT, Poem, <i>Patricia Robinson King</i>	17
THE PAPER-DOLL CHARACTERS OF SINCLAIR LEWIS' ARROWSMITH, <i>Marilyn Morgan Helleberg</i>	17
THE WIDOW OF A KING (TO THREE BEAUTIFUL YOUNG WIDOWS), Poem, <i>Grace Hollwell</i>	21
BURIALS, Poem, <i>John C. Evans</i>	21

The first twelve volumes of the Mark Twain Journal has been published
by Kraus Reprint Corporation, 16 East 46th St., New York, N. Y. 10017.

Huckleberry Bumppo: A Comparison of "Tom Sawyer" and "The Pioneers"

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In his celebrated attack on James Fenimore Cooper, Mark Twain unequivocally condemns the Leatherstocking Tales. They have "no invention," he writes, "no order, system, sequence, or result . . . no lifelikeness, no thrill, no stir, no seeming of reality."¹ The very virulence of the denunciation, however, makes the essay somewhat suspect. It seems to express not the views of Clemens himself, as a recent critic has put it, but the "sulphurous grumbling" of "a hoodwinking *persona* who . . . is not always entitled to the horror he reports."² Further, it is a *persona* who has read Cooper closely and thoroughly—and whose "puckish" exaggerations, therefore, suggest a problem of motive. Is he perhaps protesting too much? Does the ridicule cover up, for Twain, a certain feeling of kinship? At least a tentative affirmative to this question emerges from a comparison of *Tom Sawyer* and *The Pioneers*.

A striking similarity shows itself, first, in the structure of the two novels. In *The Pioneers*, Natty Bumppo, a half-comic figure, lives on the outskirts of a frontier village whose most prominent citizen, Judge Temple, represents the antithesis to Leatherstocking's way of life. Mediating between both, the hero, Edwards, pretends to adopt the latter though secretly he courts the Judge's daughter and plans all along to establish himself in the community. After a trial, a treasure hunt, and a climactic death-trap escape by the lovers, the denouement brings together the judge, the lovers, and in a temporary reconciliation also the old pioneer. This pattern forms a direct parallel with the story of *Tom Sawyer*—a parallel which seems with great significance to relate Judge Thatcher and Judge Temple, Tom and Edwards, Becky and Elizabeth, Huck and Natty, Injun Joe and Indian

John, and the Negro boys Jim and Aggy.

Of course, Twain's work by no means duplicates that of Cooper; but the differences themselves only serve more clearly to define the literary influence. Central to these is the distance between St. Petersburg and Templeton, or more strictly speaking between the author's boyhood towns which they reflect, Hannibal and Cooperstown. In his first-generation frontier village, Cooper grew up in the conflicting atmosphere of enlightened progress and romantic naturalism. Templeton seems an anomaly in a "virgin land," and *The Pioneers* builds upon the tension between the values of the settlement and the "sinfulness" and "waste" inherent in the "process of civilization" (p. 293). Hannibal, on the contrary, exemplified the *de facto* betrayal of the natural ideal in the society which the frontiersman had created. Huck's way of life expresses not a viable social philosophy but, at most, an act of subversion. Accordingly, a full understanding of *Tom Sawyer* requires a double perspective: on one hand Twain's unacknowledged (and perhaps only dimly conscious) debt to Cooper, and on the other hand the different impact of the frontier myth in eighteen hundred and eighteen forty.

The values of St. Petersburg and Templeton are somewhat ambivalently upheld through Judge Thatcher³ and Judge Temple. Both men appear as town patriarchs, mainstays of their local church and schoolhouse, "majestic" and "judicial" (*Tom Sawyer*, p. 38; *Prairie*, pp. 24, 423). Judge Temple keeps Edwards' inheritance in good faith and even enlarges it; Tom may well feel confident that Judge Thatcher will make the best use of the fortune entrusted to him in the boy's name. Yet both men, as representatives of the social order, are subtly criticized, and in similar ways. Elizabeth's reproval of her father after he pomp-

1. "Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offences," in *The Writings of Mark Twain*, vol. XXII, Stormfield Edition, ed. Albert B. Paine (New York and London, 1929), 77. References to *Tom Sawyer* are from vol. VIII of this edition; references to *The Pioneers* are from the standard edition of *Cooper's Novels*, D. Appleton & Co. (New York and London [n.d.]), vol. III.

2. Sidney J. Krause, "Cooper's Literary Offences: Mark Twain in Wonderland," *NEQ*, XXXVIII (1965), 291.

3. At this stage of the novel Jeff Thatcher is still only a lawyer, though the prototype of what he will become is seen in his brother, "the great Judge Thatcher" (p. 37), who has come from Constantino, twelve miles away, to grace the Sunday School ceremonies.

ously explains his importance in the community (p. 249) returns implicitly in the portrayal of Thatcher as he sits on the Sunday School platform "and warmed himself in the sun of his own grandeur" (p. 38). Similarly, in Judge Temple's over-riding concern with profit—in his contempt, for example, for the farmer who sold out too cheap—we discern the elements that cause Judge Thatcher suddenly to "conceive a great opinion of Tom" (p. 286) after Tom has become rich.

Perhaps the major distinction between the two figures lies in Temple's greater force and stature. In order to justify the march of civilization across the continent Cooper must examine the judge's viewpoint in detail. The trial of Natty, for example, brings the law itself into question as much as its violation. Temple's instinctive compassion and Natty's fundamental innocence conflict with the execution of duty—and therefore the necessity of law expresses itself in its full implications. In self-defense, the judge explains at length how "Society cannot exist without wholesome restraints. Those restraints cannot be inflicted without security and respect to the persons of those who administer them" (p. 422). The contradiction implicit here between "inflicted" and "wholesome restraints" suggests a major tension in Cooper's thought. He believed in society's enforced "security and respect," but equally he felt attracted to the idea of a natural freedom which might still be realized in the "untamed wilderness" beyond Cooperstown. By the time of Twain's *Hannibal*, this idea was merely a dream. Hence Thatcher is a caricature of Temple, lacking Temple's dignity and dramatic inner conflict. He does not even speak at the trial of Muff Potter, which contains in *potentia* some important elements of Natty's trial. Muff, like Natty, feels himself innocent but helpless, a stranger to the town and its laws. Equally, he resembles Huck—not only because he is the village's senior pariah but also because he is warm-hearted and guileless. More than Pap, this outcast drunkard projects the adult Huck Finn should Huck remain in St. Petersburg. As in the trial in *The Pioneers* the mob reaction changes from hostility to pity when the accused appears and speaks, and, again as in the earlier novel, the rescue arises

from a bond of natural sympathy between the prisoner and the hero. But the crucial issue of natural *versus* human justice lies beyond the experience of St. Petersburg-Hannibal. Twain allows Muff to disintegrate into a pathetic joke and conceives of no real function as judge for Thatcher. Thatcher's position defines itself in terms of popular acceptance rather than as a combative force for good. Unchallenged by a positive alternative to his system, he undermines himself by unwitting self-ridicule.

Huckleberry Finn and Natty Bumppo stand at the opposite pole from Judge Thatcher and Judge Temple. The aging hunter appears awkward and inadequate in the settlement in much the same way as does Huck, the "juvenile pariah of the village" (p. 54). Both speak with an outsider's diffidence about "scholarship" and "writing" (*Pioneers*, p. 146; *Tom Sawyer*, p. 91); both display the fumbling courtesy with women characteristic of their "unlabeled" male world; both function, within society, merely as helper to the hero, help him win the wealth which *he* knows how to use, help him establish himself in the realm of women and money and organized religion to which they feel estranged, and of which they are the victims. It is only in their own world that Huck and Natty become skillful and noble. Edwards has to teach Natty about legal procedure but what he knows of nature he has learned, respectfully, at the old man's feet. So, too, outside of town, St. Petersburg's "vulgar and bad boy" takes on the aura of a "romantic outcast" (p. 55); though Tom Sawyer tells him what to say in the Robin Hood games, Huck guides his friend in the "black magic" of nature lore. And when he bravely saves the Widow Douglas—through shrewdness and agility learned from hard experience⁴—his modesty (like that of Natty after he rescues the girls from the panther) enhances the virtue of his natural qualities. Finally, both Leatherstocking and Huck instinctively realize that

4. Huck glides noiselessly in the dark "behind the men, cat-like, with bare feet" (p. 234)—but, at the most "precarious" moment, "a twig snapped under his foot" (p. 237). Cf. Twain on Cooper: "Another stage property that he [Cooper] pulled out of his box pretty frequently was the broken twig. . . . It is a restful chapter in any book of his when somebody doesn't step on a dry twig. . . . Every time a Cooper person is in peril and absolute silence is worth four dollars a minute, he is sure to step on a dry twig." "Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offences," p. 82. It would seem that Huck, in this sense as well, is a "Cooper person."

their integrity depends on their freedom from civilization. The pioneer at first promises to settle near Templeton but finds that he must leave. "I know you mean all for the best, but our ways don't agree. I love the woods. . . . I eat when hungry and drink when a-dry; and ye keep stated hours and rules. . . . I'm formed for the wilderness" (p. 504). And Huck says to Tom: "The widder's good to me, and friendly; but I can't stand them ways. . . . It's awful to be tied up so. And grub comes too easy—I don't take no interest in vittles, that way. . . . No, Tom, I won't be rich. . . . I like the woods, and the river" (pp. 288-89). Huck's and Natty's declarations, in expression as well as in spirit, are almost interchangeable. In the manipulated last-page reversal Huck agrees to return after all, but we understand that as soon as he turns true to his inmost feelings he will "light out."

When Leatherstocking leaves Templeton he heads West, and continues to be "foremost in that band of pioneers who are opening the way for the march of the nation across the continent" (p. 506). Though we sense the paradox, the underlying melancholy, of this concluding sentence, Natty Bumppo represents here a social movement, a national ideal not yet lost. But where can Huck go? Only to Jackson's Island or (as we know) to the river itself, in a purely passive gesture against "civilization." Consequently, Natty is more forthright and articulate than Huck Finn, more conscious of his values. When Tom extolls the superiority of Jackson's Island to St. Petersburg, "I reckon so," said Huckleberry; "anyways, I'm suited. I don't want nothing better'n this" (p. 324). This vision of "a man's life" significantly challenges the ways of "towns and schools." Both Natty Bumppo and Huckleberry Finn are outsiders, but one is a pioneer, guide to a new type of life, the other is an outcast and fugitive.

Tom and Edwards, each shifting between forest and town, outsider and judge, dramatize the choice of respectability. Edwards feels genuinely attracted to the Leatherstocking's mode of life, as Tom does to Huck's; the joy he finds in the "manly sport and excitement" of fishing and hunting with Natty and Mohegan (p. 304) is mir-

rored in Tom's delight in the "glorious sport" of fishing and smoking on Jackson's Island with his two friends (p. 116). But for all this they basically belong to the town. Natty's protégé, as Mr. Grant recognizes from the start, is a "genteel savage" (p. 154), and in fact Edwards' wildness proves to be a masquerade devised for the very purpose of reclaiming his rights in the community. Like Edwards', Tom's adventures are merely romantic games. "He warn't *bad*," as Aunt Polly says of him, . . . "only mischeevous" (p. 133); in his final triumphant re-entry into St. Petersburg he seems, again following the pattern of Edwards, all the more "glorious" for his former disobedience. Significantly, too, in each case the decision to conform manifests itself in the love theme of the novel, which centers on the judge's daughter. Edwards' great moment comes on the flaming hill where he reveals his love, and he later has his reward in marriage and the Templeton Patent. Similarly, in his climactic escapade in the subterranean cave, Tom wins Becky's "undying love" and the approval of Judge Thatcher who promises to see Tom made "a great lawyer or a great soldier some day" (p. 286).

In one fundamental sense, however, Tom Sawyer contrasts with his counterpart in *The Pioneers*. As Edwards first appears to Elizabeth, he "bespoke . . . familiarity with a splendor that in those new settlements was thought to be unequalled" (p. 70): the proximity to nature of the new settlers, their familiarity with pioneer life, lends real substance to his "coarse and even wild" manner. Tom sees himself in a similar light, but he does so only in his retreat in the woods where he becomes the Black Avenger of the Spanish Main, talking "'by the book,' from memory" and imagining "with swelling ecstasy the whisperings, 'It's Tom Sawyer the Pirate!'" (pp. 78, 75). In town, the reality which belies his private fantasies, he seems "Only just giddy" (p. 130). The difference between Edwards and Tom, like that between Natty and Huck, is symbolic of the change wrought by forty years of the nation's march; and, as in Huck's case, it is distinctly fitting that Tom is only a boy.

Twain singles out the portrayal of the Indian for special contempt in his essay on

Cooper. "The difference," he concludes, "between a Cooper Indian and the Indian that stands in front of the cigar-shop is not spacious."⁵ Nonetheless, in all essentials his own creation, Injun Joe, reflects *The Pioneers'* Indian John — and even seems, indeed, to be closer to the cigar-shop stereotype. Drunken vindictiveness characterizes much of old John's talk and behavior. Edwards explains to Louisa that "revenge is a virtue with an Indian. They are taught from infancy upwards to believe it a duty never to allow an injury to pass unrevenged" (p. 152); and accordingly, though he has adopted Christianity, John's racial "peculiarity" exiles him from the settlement. He remains an outsider, suspicious of white men and rendered dangerous by whiskey. Drunkenness, suspicion, and revenge also characterize Injun Joe; he keeps a room in a tavern, he mistrusts his partner, his crimes are acts of vengeance ("Did you think I'd forget? The Injun blood ain't in me for nothing" [p. 85]). No less than John, Joe is racially typed as a menace and outcast. Yet Cooper endows his Indian with a dimension entirely lacking in *Tom Sawyer*. Joe projects the "Injun" image of an age which had largely forgotten the Indian atrocities. These, however, presented a crucial matter of conscience in the early days of Templeton; and as a result, John emerges in part as a natural man deprived of his proper state, dignified when sober, and wise with experience. Even in his drunken moments a sense of tragedy humanizes and ameliorates his viciousness: "yes . . . John is a beast. The smokes were once few in these hills. The deer would lick the hand of the white man, and the birds rest on his head. . . . Then John was the man. But warriors and traders followed them. One brought the long knife and one brought rum . . . they broke up the councils and took the lands. . . . Yes, yes . . . John is a Christian beast!" (pp. 203-04). This pathos and this accusation find no place in Twain's novel. In the parallel passage in *Tom Sawyer*, the treacherous half-breed rages (as his victim cowers before him): "Five years ago you drove me away from your father's kitchen one night, when I came to ask you for something to eat, and you said I warn't there for any good; and when I swore I'd get even with you if it

5. "Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offences," p. 69.

took a hundred years, your father had me jailed for a vagrant. Did you think I'd forget? . . . And now I've got you" (p. 85). There is a hint here, certainly, of Indian destitution and alienation, but it dwindles to insignificance in context of the savage vengeance about to occur. Possessed by his unforgiving "Injun blood," Joe victimizes St. Petersburg, and to the town's relief he starves horribly in the sealed cave. On the other hand, Cooper's Old Chingachgook, the victim of white civilization, dies in the mountain fire with a proud resignation which strikes a great chord of moral protest.

It would make a symmetrical conclusion to this comparison if Twain had developed the situation of Miss Watson's Nigger Jim as Cooper did Indian John's. But, in fact, Jim acts much like *The Pioneers'* Aggy. Both Aggy and Jim enter, somewhat irrelevantly, at the start of the novel. Aggy is bribed by Richard and then caught between divided loyalties to him and the judge. Jim similarly wavers between Tom's bribe and his duty. Both depict the typical minstrel-show servant-boy, confused, scared, happy-go-lucky. Yet in a profounder sense the very absence of a real precursor to the Jim of *Huckleberry Finn* rounds out the intimate relationship between *The Pioneers* and *Tom Sawyer*. It is not simply that Jim here seems modelled upon Aggy; more important, his inadequacy as a character becomes apparent through an analysis of the parallel structures of *The Pioneers* and *Tom Sawyer*. The development in the later Leatherstocking Tales of Indian John into young Chingachgook in a sense predicts Jim's growth in stature in *Huckleberry Finn*. Chingachgook living in the wilderness in perfect friendship with the Deerslayer embodies the Cooperstown reconstruction of the pioneer ideal, after the Indian massacres and the national triumph of the Judge Temples. The spiritual counterpart of *Deerslayer* portrays a vastly ennobled Jim travelling to freedom with Huck in defiance of the slavery-sullied reality of pre-industrial America. The prairie and a raft: it is the difference of half a century, but, however indirectly, the vision is similar and the literary source is the same. Twain might well have changed the opening sentence of *Huckleberry Finn* to read: "You don't know about me without you have read a book by the name of *The Pioneers*."

Mark Twain and Melville:

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Although Twain of course follows Melville chronologically, in thematic development, Melville seems to begin where Twain leaves off: at his peak, in *Huck Finn*, Twain is immersed in fond nostalgia, but by the end of his writing, in *The Mysterious Stranger*, he is embittered with disillusionment; Melville seems to seize Twain's disenchantment for the source of Ahab's defiance in *Moby-Dick*, then renounces the struggle in the submission of *Billy Budd*.

Huck Finn begins on a note of nostalgic wonder, with Tom and Huck at the edge of a hilltop: "we looked away down into the village and could see three or four lights twinkling . . . and the stars over us was sparkling ever so fine, and down by the village was the river, a whole mile broad and awful still and grand."¹ "When I was a boy . . ." (49) Twain begins *Old Times on the Mississippi*, providing the essence of the reverie from which comes the imaginative recreation of the boyhood experience in *Huck*. And the quintessence of that youthful sense of wonder is the appetite for adventure. Huck "felt just the way any other boy would 'a' felt" at the sight of the *Walter Scott* wrecked in the middle of the river: "I can't rest, Jim, till we give her a rummaging" (268). And the natural scene for this adventure-dream is the river, "the great Mississippi, the majestic, the magnificent Mississippi, rolling its mile-wide tide along, shining in the sun" (50).

But somewhere between the nostalgic dream and the mature reality falls the shadow. Even Huck, in his young adventure, finds "considerable trouble" as well as "considerable joy" (213), but his disillusionment is with "civilization," not the dream, for he can still "light out for the Territory ahead of the rest" (539), that is, ahead of civilization. The dream itself fades when the man learns what the boy only suspects from living a life on the Mississippi: "that piloting was not quite so romantic as I had imagined it was" (61). The cub pilot expresses the loss of the

romanticized life to experience: "I . . . had come to know every trifling feature that bordered the great river . . . I had made a valuable acquisition. But I had lost something, too. I had lost something which could never be restored to me while I lived. All the grace, the beauty, the poetry, had gone out of the majestic river" (86). It is the man, then, rather than the boy, whom we feel in Twain in *The Mysterious Stranger*. When man gains perspective, he loses innocence, and finds suddenly that the song has gone out of him; the nostalgic dream turns into nightmare.

The world of Theodor Fischer's Eseldorf is that nightmare world. Satan—that is, Philip Traum—is himself, in translation from the German, a dream, an enlightening nightmare that enables Theodor to transcend the limits of ordinary vision. Satan analyzes man's insights: "Your race never know good fortune from ill. They are always mistaking the one for the other. It is because they cannot see into the future" (695). Satan reveals man to himself, defining man by his Moral Sense. Father Peter explains the Moral Sense to Theodor as the most valuable of all human characteristics; it is the faculty "which enables us to distinguish good from evil . . . the one thing that lifts man above the beasts that perish and makes him heir to immortality" (655-6). Satan shows Theodor man's injustice to man—injustice in the name of Moral Sense—in "holy" wars, legal punishments, and witch-hunting. All injustice and brutality are based on the exercise of the Moral Sense: "No brute ever does a cruel thing—that is the monopoly of those with the Moral Sense. When a brute inflicts pain he does it innocently; it is not wrong; for him there is no such thing as wrong. And he does not inflict pain for the pleasure of it—only man does that" (669). The history and the future of the progress of the human race and its civilization based on its precious Moral Sense is the history and the future of murder, war, massacre, "hideous drenchings of the earth with blood," famine, desolation, and death. "And what does it amount to? Nothing at all" (720).

And that is the devastating enlighten-

1. Mark Twain, *The Portable Mark Twain*, ed. by Bernard DeVoto (New York: Viking Press, 1946), p. 200. All textual references for *Huckleberry Finn*, *The Mysterious Stranger*, *Old Times on the Mississippi*, and *Pudd'nhead Wilson* are to this edition.

ment: that man is "Nothing at all," no more than a shadow. The struggle is pathetically trivial and paltry, but worst of all, it is meaningless. To survive the void, men become as a herd of sheep. The herd "is governed by minorities. . . . It suppresses its feelings and its beliefs and follows the handful that makes the most noise. . . . Institutions will always remain and always flourish, and always oppress you, affront you, and degrade you, because you will always be and remain slaves of minorities" (725-6). To survive the void, the race of man lives "a life of continuous and uninterrupted self-deception. It duped itself from cradle to grave with shams and delusions which it mistook for realities, and this made its entire life a sham. . . . It regarded itself as gold, and was only brass" (736). Indeed the ultimate delusion—madness—is the only way to survive. To give meaning to his life, man invents a god "who mouths justice and invented hell— . . . who mouths morals to other people and has none himself . . . who created man without invitation, then tries to shuffle the responsibility for man's acts upon man . . . and finally, with altogether divine obtuseness, invites this poor, abused slave to worship him!" (743). With this terrible self-recognition, man can only welcome death. The citizens of Eseldorf hang the witch, and then break out into a fight among themselves over who has or has not thrown stones; "and so in a moment they were in a raging and noisy turmoil, and beating and banging one another, and in the midst was the only indifferent one—the dead lady hanging from her rope, her troubles forgotten, her spirit at peace" (724). The enlightened man knows the truth of Pudd'n-head Wilson's calendar notation: "Whoever has lived long enough to find out what life is, knows how deep a debt of gratitude we owe Adam, the first great benefactor of our race. He brought death into the world" (557).

Briefly then, although Melville in *Moby-Dick* does not seem to embrace Twain's solipsistic conclusions, he does seem to grasp the injustice of gods and nature, as well as of man himself, and the implications of the meaninglessness and futility of man's entire existence, and extend these themes by setting a man—Ahab—against

it all.

Melville-Ishmael recognizes the limitations of man's vision, realizing that man imposes meanings, significance, on all events. And he recognizes man's injustice to man. And finally he recognizes the blind indifference of God and/or nature to it all. Twain's Satan embodies exactly the kind of remote, blind indifference that Ahab rages against in crying out over Pip, "Oh, ye frozen heavens! look down here!"² It is blind, unreasoned nature that Ahab chases and defies in *Moby-Dick*. Here, the glory of man is in the struggle, however futile.

Much later, the uselessness of the struggle is synthesized into the beauty of submission in *Billy Budd*. The world of Billy Budd is filled with injustice—the essentially innocent still suffer. But rather than fitfully rebelling and defying until utter defeat, Billy calmly and faithfully accepts that which he can do nothing about. In *Moby-Dick*, Melville advises us to kick neither the whale nor Ahab, but he neither believes nor takes that advice until *Billy Budd*. The final transcendence then in *Billy Budd* is through acceptance.

With this progression of theme—from nostalgia to disillusionment to rebellion to submission—are the transformations of the two writers themselves: the humorist Twain devastated to bitterness; the rebel Melville humbled to submission. Twain moves from a celebration of life, of youth, to a welcome of death; Melville, from a screaming defiance to a calm acceptance, from spiritual wandering to faith. The metamorphoses are complete.

For both Twain and Melville, the transition from one extreme philosophical position at the peak of creativity, to the opposite extreme at the end of the writing career is not through a drastic exchange of themes, but rather a synthesis of the same themes with which the writer begins. For example, Twain's awareness of man's injustice is not new in *The Mysterious Stranger*. Huck is witness to (and sometimes participant in) his father's greed; he is sickened and disgusted at the senseless death in the Grangerford's feud, at the hypocrisy of religion, at the swindling "duke" and "king," and at the foolishness of whole towns at the hands of

2. Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick*, ed. by Alfred Kazin (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1956), p. 394. All textual references are to this edition.

the "royalty." He witnesses the cowardice of the average man in the mob's failure to lynch Sherburne, and in the lynching attempt itself, he witnesses the hunger for self-righteous punishment and revenge, and the failure of the law, of reason, for the "civilized." Huck concludes that "human beings can be awful cruel to one another. . . . It was enough to make a body ashamed of the human race" (470,393). But man's dignity is preserved in Huck himself when he decides to save Jim. He makes an ultimate and climactic choice in the struggle with his conscience—with his Moral Sense, Twain calls it later—between "duty" to Miss Watson and his friendship with Jim; he renounces his "duty" to the customs of slavery—that is, the Moral Sense imposed by society—and follows his conviction, even convinced as he is that he will go to hell for it. Thus human integrity survives, and so does the dream. Life on the raft and in the woods is still lovely. In the woods with pap, "it was kind of lazy and jolly, laying off comfortable all day, smoking and fishing. . . . I didn't want to go back no more. . . . It was a pretty good time up in the woods, take it all around" (220). If even this idyllic life is tarnished—"by and by pap got too handy with his hick'ry and I couldn't stand it"—there's still the territory ahead.

The only territory ahead to which a man can escape in *The Mysterious Stranger* is death. The implications half-realized in *Huck Finn* reach a devastating conclusion in the end of Twain's writing: the utter isolation, helplessness, and hopelessness of man, man who prides himself above all on his Moral Sense, then produces nothing except injustice and death in the name of it. Product of his community, Theodor justifies witch-hunting just as Huck justifies slavery—in the name of necessary social institution, in the name of the Moral Sense, but even Huck recognizes conscience for what it is—"it don't make no difference whether you do right or wrong, a person's conscience ain't got no sense and just goes for him anyway. . . . It takes up more room than all the rest of a person's insides and yet ain't no good, nohow" (470)—and, like Theodor, rejects society's Moral Sense. But unlike Huck, Theodor has nothing left, not even himself, for Twain now sees the full

implication of such injustice in man and indifference in God as solipsism. Theodor is left with nothing but a dream—"a grotesque and foolish dream"; he is left "alone in shoreless space, to wander its limitless solitudes without friend of comrade ever," no more than a "vagrant . . . useless . . . homeless thought, wandering forlorn among the eternities." (742-44).

Similarly, Melville's early themes of free will, chance, and necessity, when reaching their full implications at last in *Billy Budd*, produce the seeming transformation in Melville's attitude. Ishmael, when weaving a mat with Queequeg in Chapter Forty-seven, discovers that even if man does have free will, it is free only insofar as necessity and chance allows the will to be free; chance is the ultimate controlling factor. Indeed that chance "has the last featuring blow at events" (177) is shown in the violent ending of the story as *Moby-Dick* blindly and unintelligently rams and sinks the ship. It is exactly this kind of natural chaos and disorder—the implications of a world ruled by chance—that Ahab rages against.

Melville indicates that Ahab is exercising what he thinks is free will to make order in the midst of nature's chaos, but before the end of the struggle, we realize, as does perhaps, Ahab, that his actions may not be free will at all, but may be determined in a larger unknowable design in which necessity seems to be free will. Moreover, Melville shows that most of man's actions stem from instinct. Ishmael instinctively fears the whiteness of the whale as being the void, the absence of any meaning or purpose for life, even as man instinctively imposes meanings wherever he encounters the void. Ishmael cries out for human nature when he says, "and some certain significance lurks in all things, else all things are little worth, and the round world itself but an empty cipher" (332). But that is just it, Melville seems to go on to say; it is human nature. This search, this struggle is not a man's own free will. Man may be entirely deluded about the freedom of his actions, for all events may well be predetermined in nature. Is then this quest for meaning, this whole struggle, merely the playing out of some divine, uncontrollable plan? This seems to be Melville's implied, ironic afterthought in *Moby-Dick*. But although Melville presents

this implicit idea, he does not accept it for himself—rather he still struggles against it—until *Billy Budd*.

The idea of necessity reaches a fuller development in *Billy Budd*. Vere does not so much make a free-will choice between his private convictions and his military duty as he merely gives up the choice for his social obligation. His action is predetermined by his office. Even we can see that Vere really has no choice. Claggart's accusation is predetermined by his "natural depravity," and Billy's response to the accusation stems from and is caused by his natural inability to speak under stress, and therefore his response, too, is involuntary. Thus the human responses are instinctive, predetermined, and necessary. Man does not control his own destiny as much as he thinks. Melville implies an unknowable design when he argues through Vere, "In receiving our commissions we in the most

important regards ceased to be natural free agents . . . We fight at command."³

Both Twain and Melville, on actually covering that land promised after *Huck Finn* and *Moby-Dick*—that territory ahead—come to a dead end: Twain's embittered desolation; Melville's faithful submission.

Why, then, are their masterworks not at the end of their writing, at the culmination of their living and thinking? Perhaps merely because the agony was over; the pressure of the original pursuit of the raw material of knowledge is relieved. Wright Morris calls *Moby-Dick* and *Huckleberry Finn* "moments of grace under pressure. . . . If we now ask ourselves under what pressure these moments of grace are achieved, I believe it is the pressure of the raw material itself."⁴ The raw material itself turned out to be no more than a dream; in *The Mysterious Stranger*, Twain had lost hold of his dream of innocence, as in *Billy Budd*, Melville had lost his dream of defiance.

Uncle Silas Phelps: A Note on Mark Twain's Characterization

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Like many people who move away from their home country and see it in a new light, Mark Twain became one of the severest critics of his native South. He left it at the beginning of the Civil War, after what he always liked to consider a jocular three weeks in the Confederate Army. Then after busying himself in the West until it was all over, he returned to make his home in the East and to become a good adopted Yankee, joining in the G.A.R. celebrations and becoming a personal friend and general factotum of General Ulysses S. Grant. He was "the most desouthernized Southerner I ever knew," said his friend William Dean Howells.¹

It is not surprising that Twain's work, and particularly *Huckleberry Finn*, should be read today with interest by those con-

cerned in the struggle for human rights. The South is no longer the focus of "lynch-erdom"—modern oppression finds subtler guises—but the flight of Jim from slavery and the moral conscience of Huck Finn are echoed today in the protest marches throughout the country and the growing national awareness of an ancient wrong. Mark Twain was a friend of the Negro. He loved him for himself, as only one who has known him from childhood can love him; and he never failed to speak out against the injustice he suffered, particularly in the South, where the Civil War did not free him so much as alter the conditions of his servitude. Racial injustice is part of what *Huckleberry Finn* is about.

But only a part, and that by no means

the most important part. Mark Twain also loved those Valley people who enslaved Jim and occasionally sold him down the river, who loved him as the boy Sam Clemens loved him but subjected him to the abuses of the brutal system that, through no fault of their own, had become the basis of their economy. Thus *Huckleberry Finn* is built around a paradox, and has a dimension lost on those readers who interpret it as an enslaved black man's flight down a river and an indictment of the white people who live along the banks. Those people on the banks are the enemy, says Mr. Leo Marx; the Phelps, who imprison the runaway Jim, are like those Germans who lived comfortable lives within earshot of Buchenwald.² How unjust and how uncritical, this facile rendering of an author to a personal view.

Far from being the enemy, the Phelps family of *Huckleberry Finn* and *Tom Sawyer*, *Detective* are among Mark Twain's favorite people, and Uncle Silas Phelps is his finest portrait of a good man. He says in the Autobiography that the Phelps place is patterned after that of his uncle John Quarles in Monroe County, Missouri, where he spent the summers of his boyhood until he was eleven or twelve years old, an experience that remained through life a gracious memory. Silas Phelps runs "a little one-horse plantation" in Arkansas, beneath the style of the Grangerfords and Shepherdsons, but more typical of the antebellum Southern establishment. He owns a few slaves, but he is only a yeoman farmer with little pretension to wealth and none to culture. Of greater importance, he is a solid respectable citizen, a good man and a preacher, with "a little one-horse log church down back of the plantation, which he built it himself at his own expense, for a church and schoolhouse."³

In every way his place is described in ideal terms. There is a wealth of the good things of life—all those physical delights to please a growing boy, the treasures of field, orchard, and wood; but just as im-

portant, there is the human kindness in family relationships and towards Huck and Tom, who are treated like members of the family. Aunt Sally "jumped for us with joy and tears running down her face," Huck says in *Tom Sawyer, Detective*, "and give us a whacking box on the ear, and then hugged us and kissed us and boxed us again, and just couldn't seem to get enough of it, she was so glad to see us."⁴ This kindness extends to the servants, who are slaves, but from whom there is no murmur of complaint. If Mark Twain intended *Huckleberry Finn* to be a blast at racial discrimination, he weakened his argument by his portrait of the Phelps home, "where the people's all so kind and good" (294). When Jim is chained to his bed in an outhouse, Uncle Silas entrusts his care to another Negro, the witch-haunted Nat, who delivers his "vittles" but shows no sympathy for the prisoner. "Uncle Silas he trusts everybody; sends the key to the punkin-headed nigger, and don't send nobody to watch the nigger" (300). But there is no need to check on Nat, since Jim can escape any time by raising up his bed and slipping the chain off, which he does when Tom and Huck need him to help bring the grindstone into the shack. Moreover, Jim tells Tom that if he brings a rattlesnake into the place, "Ise gwyne to leave, dat's shore" (329). Jim's situation is comfortable, at least until Tom introduces the snakes, rats, spiders, and other paraphernalia necessary to an heroic escape. He cannot water his mullen plant with his tears, as a prisoner should do, "kase I doan' skasely ever cry," (331) and Uncle Silas and Aunt Sally visit him every day to pray with him and to see if he has enough to eat, "and both of them was kind as they could be" (312). In other words, Jim is treated humanely by the Phelps, who are themselves good people. Mr. Kenneth S. Lynn's observations about the "paranoid hatred" and the "frantic state of mind" in the "slavocracy" are not supported by Mark Twain's portrait of this gentle family who go to bed at night with doors unlocked.⁵ "You only have to pull a buckskin latch-string, they don't fasten the doors" (297).

2. Leo Marx, "Mr. Eliot, Mr. Trilling and *Huckleberry Finn*," *American Scholar*, XXII (Autumn, 1953), 432.

3. Mark Twain, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Facsimile of First Edition (San Francisco, 1962), p. 286. (Subsequent references are placed in parentheses.)

4. Mark Twain, *Tom Sawyer, Detective* (New York, 1924), p. 36.

5. Kenneth S. Lynn, *Mark Twain and Southwestern Humor* (Boston, 1959), pp. 136-137.

1. William Dean Howells, *My Mark Twain* (New York, 1910), p. 35.

3. Herman Melville, *Billy Budd, Foretopman*, in *Four Short Novels* (New York: Bantam, 1959), p. 261.

4. Wright Morris, *The Territory Ahead* (New York: Atheneum, 1963), p. 8.

Discipline in the Phelps home is left to Aunt Sally, who scolds and loves into submission children and servants alike. Uncle Silas's authority is felt only through the force of moral character. He is a wool-gathering old gentleman, who never seems to have all his wits about him. He is one of Mark Twain's finest comic achievements, "absent-minded as year before last" (319), subject of laughter and jest, and yet "a mighty nice old man" (320). When things begin to disappear about the place—a shirt, spoons, candles—Aunt Sally blames the rats, for the candles at least, and jumps on Uncle Silas for not stopping up the rat holes.

"I wonder they don't walk off with the whole place, the way you're always going to stop their holes and don't do it; and if they warn't fools they'd sleep in your hair, Silas—you'd never find it out. . . .

"Well, Sally, I'm in fault, and I acknowledge it; I've been remiss; but I won't let tomorrow go by without stopping up them holes."

"Oh, I wouldn't hurry, next year'll do. . . ." Just then, the nigger woman steps onto the passage, and says:

"Missus, dey's a sheet gone."

"A sheet gone! Well, for the land's sake!"

"I'll stop up them holes today," says Uncle Silas, looking sorrowful.

"Oh, do shet up!—spose the rats took the sheet? Where's it gone, Lize?" (318)

When Uncle Silas finds a spoon in his pocket, where Tom Sawyer had put it, Aunt Sally stops talking "with her mouth open and her hands up."

"It's just as I expected. So you had it in your pocket all the time; and like as not you've got the other things there, too. How'd it get there?"

"I reely don't know, Sally," he says, kind of apologizing, "or you know I would tell. I was a-studying over my text in Acts Seventeen, before breakfast, and I reckon I put it in there, not noticing, meaning to put my Testament in, and it must be so, because my Testament ain't in, but I'll go and see, and if the Testament is where I had it, I'll know I didn't put it in, and that will show that I laid the Testament down and took up

the spoon, and—"

"Oh, for the land's sake! Give a body a rest! Go 'long now, the whole kit and biling of ye; and don't come nigh me again till I've got back my peace of mind." (319)

When Tom Sawyer reveals his plot at the end of the book, Aunt Sally was "one of the mixed-upest looking persons I ever see," except Uncle Silas, and he was just "drunk." "He didn't know nothing at all the rest of the day, and preached a prayer-meeting sermon that night that give him a rattling reputation, because the oldest man in the world couldn't understand it." (362)

In 1896, Mark Twain returns to the Phelps family in *Tom Sawyer, Detective*, where Tom solves a murder case and frees Uncle Silas who has confessed to a crime that he did not commit. The story is flimsy enough, a faint echo of Baker Street in the frontier South, with Tom Sawyer carrying off the honors. But it is lifted above the trivial by the familiar homeliness of characters and setting. "It was good to be there again," says Huck Finn, when they sat down to supper on the first night of their return, "behind all that noble corn-pone and spare-ribs, and everthing that you could ever want in this world." Uncle Silas "peeled off one of his bulliest old-time blessings, with as many layers to it as an onion," with the angels "hauling in the slack of it."⁶ The old man has been having trouble with his neighbor Brace Dunlap, who wants to marry Uncle Silas's daughter. He tries to get along and puts up with insults from Dunlap and his brother until finally in a sudden passion he strikes Jubiter Dunlap down and mistakenly assumes that he has killed him. He gives himself up and is thrown into jail, but at the trial Tom Sawyer brilliantly reveals that Brace Dunlap himself is the man who murdered his brother. Uncle Silas is the victim of a villain's plot because of his simple and guileless nature. His neighbors and his congregation turn away from him temporarily, but when he is cleared they return with their usual devotion.

Uncle Silas he preached them the blamedest jumbledest idiotic sermons you ever struck, and would tangle you up so you couldn't find your way home in day-

6. *Tom Sawyer, Detective*, p. 37.

light; but the people never let on but what they thought it was the clearest and brightest and elegantest sermons that ever was; and they would set there and cry, for love and pity . . . and by and by they loved the old man's intellects back into him again.⁷

In the character of Silas Phelps, Mark Twain gives a kindly picture of the ante-bellum Southern farmer, drawn from his own experience on his uncle's farm. Mr. Louis Budd says that he moved the farm six hundred miles down the river into the Deep South, because "he could not have kept the story in his native area without giving up the slavery interest."⁸ Mr. Budd overlooks the fact that Negroes on the Arkansas farm are treated with the same humanity they receive in St. Petersburg. Their work is likely to be different, of course. Selling down the river meant in most cases the cotton fields, but Mark Twain does not imply that slaveowners in the Deep South are less humane than those in Missouri. In *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, Roxana says that her planter master in Arkansas was "good enough, as planters goes." Her bad treatment came from the planter's wife, "a Yank," who is jealous, and from the overseer, also a Northerner, "outen New England, en anybody down South kin tell you what dat mean. Dey knows how to work a nigger to death, en dey knows how to whale 'em too—whale 'em till dey backs is welted like a washboard."⁹ In *Huckleberry Finn*, the Wilks family are concerned about separating the Negroes at the breakup of their place. Even Miss Watson repents that she ever thought of selling Jim away from his family. In spite of his open hostility to slavery and his sometimes violent anti-Southernism after the Civil War, Mark Twain gives a certain charm to his picture of ante-bellum life. Consequently, *Huckleberry Finn* presents an ambivalent view, which Twain makes no effort to bring into focus: Southern society was founded on wrong principles, but his recollections of life in the Old South are suffused with a joy and contentment that win the approval of his heart, if not of his head.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

8. Louis Budd, Jr., "The Southward Currents Under Huck Finn's Raft," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XLVI (September, 1959), 235.

9. Mark Twain, *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, ed. F. R. Leavis (New York, 1955), p. 169.

But apart from any social significance, the character of Silas Phelps deserves consideration in its own right. Huckleberry Finn and Nigger Jim have long claimed preeminence, but they are only two of a small gallery of characters among the most memorable in American literature. Silas Phelps is another one of those characters—endemic in English literature—whose obtuseness is part of their charm. Though the objects of mirth and sometimes of cruel jest, their honesty and sound moral principles command respect. Uncle Silas sometimes appears little short of a fool, but we know he is sound as a dollar and that his solidity is the source of the peace and discipline of his plantation. He is something of an American Parson Adams or Dr. Primrose or Mr. Balwhidder of the parish of Dalmailing in Scotland. All are clergymen who never seem quite at home in the practical affairs of this world, but when the laughter and the jests are over, they command alike our love and admiration. Twain's Silas Phelps does not suggest a conscious influence of the quixotic character in English fiction so much as a deep racial affinity. Mr. F. R. Leavis points out that Mark Twain's world, with its roots in Virginia and the older South, was far from being culturally deprived. In a very real sense, he says, Twain is "less positively un-English" than either Hawthorne or Henry James, by which he means that Twain was the product of the Old South, which was closer than the North to the mother country.¹⁰ In an obituary note in 1910, an English reviewer said that since the death of Dickens England had chosen Mark Twain as "the representative racial author of his day," whose passing left a vacancy in the hearts of "a world-scattered race" that would not soon be filled.¹¹

Mark Twain's concern with race relations is as relevant to our generation as to his, but what will happen to *Huckleberry Finn*, for example, when this interest subsides? The reader of *Oliver Twist* cares little today about the Poor Law of 1834, but Mr. Bumble, whom that law called forth, lives on, as well as Fagin and Sykes and Nancy and Mr. Brownlow, because

10. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

11. "England and Mark Twain," *North American Review*, CXCI (June, 1910), 823.

they represent something primal in human nature. At best, Mark Twain has this same timeless appeal. And Uncle Silas and Aunt Sally, Aunt Polly, Tom, Huck, Jim, and Pap, to mention only a few, reflecting the large human qualities of Mark Twain and his sense of the fundamental contrasts of

life, will live on beyond any partisan interest that a particular generation may attach to them. Uncle Silas happened to be a farmer in the Old South, but he is also the embodiment of a conviction as old as the race that in the long run it is better to be good than clever.

Mark Twain's Passage to India

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It was a sunny day in January, 1896. An impressive American tourist in white suit and straw hat, sightseeing in the outskirts of an Indian city, on seeing Indian washermen (*dhobis*) hard at work, asked his guide: "Are they breaking those stones with clothes?"

This was no ordinary tourist. He was America's beloved humorist and one of the best known writers, Samuel Langhorne Clemens, better known to the world as Mark Twain. He was perhaps one of the first important authors to visit India on a lecture tour.

Twain's impressions of India were set down in *Following the Equator*, an account of his world tour. Other details are available from his *Notebook* (published posthumously), and from reports appearing in the Indian press of the day.

Mark Twain came to India when he was dead broke; in effect, deep in debt. He had sunk a great deal of money into a typesetting machine which didn't work. On top of this, a relative had mismanaged his publishing firm, which went bankrupt. Mark Twain could have disavowed the debts, which ran over \$100,000. He chose (like Sir Walter Scott) like a great gentleman to repay every cent. In order to do this he undertook at the age of sixty a round-the-world lecture tour, accompanied by his wife and daughter.

Till such time the Clemens family reached India in 1896, the country had been, as Twain records in his autobiography, "an imaginary land—a fairy land, dreamland, a land made out of poetry and moonlight for the Arabian Nights to do

their gorgeous miracles in. . . ."

They arrived in Bombay on January 20, 1896 and found the place 'bewitching,' 'bewildering,' and 'enchanted.' And, one evening, Mark Twain walked up the stage of the Novelty Theater in Bombay. Without any sort of prelude, he began to speak in a low, conversational tone. "I was born modest," he said, "but it wore off. . . . If you can't get a compliment any other way, pay yourself one. I do that often. I can do it right now. I can state that at this moment there are two men who are most remarkable. Kipling is one and I am the other one. . . . Between us we cover all knowledge. He knows all that can be known, and I know the rest."

Twain was impressed by the grace of an Indian woman. "She is so straight, so erect," he wrote, "and she steps with such style, and such easy grace and dignity; and her curved arm and brazen jar are such a help to the picture. . . . Indeed, our working-women cannot begin with her as a road decoration."

He found the people "pleasant and accommodating." "They are kindly people. . . . The face and the bearing that indicate a surly spirit and a bad heart seemed . . . rare among Indians. . . ." he set down as an impression.

Commenting on the Indian heritage, Twain said: "India had the start of the whole world in the beginning of things. She had the first civilization; she had the first accumulation of material wealth; she was populous with deep thinkers and subtle intellects; she had mines and woods and a fruitful soil. . . ."

He was intrigued by the diversities in the Indian way of life. "Their character and their history, their customs and their religion confront you with riddles at every turn—riddles which are a trifle more perplexing after they are explained than they were before," he wrote.

In Allahabad, Twain saw pilgrims coming in thousands to attend a religious fair at the *Triveni* (confluence of three sacred rivers) and exclaimed: "It is wonderful, the power of a faith like that, that can make multitudes upon multitudes of the old and weak and the young and frail enter without hesitation or complaint upon such incredible journeys. . . . It is done in love, or it is done in fear; I do not know which it is. No matter what the impulse is, the act born of it is beyond imagination marvelous to our kind of people."

It was in Benares that Twain met an Indian saint, "one who had truly reached a state of perfection." He gave the saint an autographed copy of *Huckleberry Finn* and remarked: "I knew that if it didn't do him any good, it wouldn't do him any harm." He was sincerely moved by this meeting and wrote that he admired men who "went into the solitudes to live in a hut and study the sacred writings and meditate on virtue and holiness and seek to attain them."

Twain found Hindu customs, rituals and traditions a fascinating subject. Although he confessed that he found Hindu theology too intricate for his comprehension, from the warmth of his human understanding he found in the faith of the Hindus something which he instinctively recognized as genuine and remarkable.

Another of Mark Twain's pleasant experiences in India was his trip from Calcutta to Darjeeling. In Darjeeling he found some fascinating birds and he took some home. Describing his return journey from Darjeeling Twain writes: "That was the most enjoyable day I have spent on earth. For rousing, tingling, rapturous pleasure there is no holiday trip that approaches the bird-flight down the Himalayas in a hand-car. It has no fault, no blemish, no lack, except that there are only thirty-five miles of it instead of five hundred."

The fauna and flora and other aspects of Indian life seem to have delighted Twain.

Take his famous sketch of the Indian crow: "I never saw such a bird for delivering opinions . . . particularly if it is a matter that is none of his business. And it is never a mild opinion . . . the presence of ladies does not affect him."

Twain has described the antics of monkeys of "a watchful . . . sort, and not much troubled with fear." He relates an incident when "two of these creatures came into my room in the early morning . . . and when I woke, one of them was before the glass brushing his hair, and the other one had my note-book, and was reading a page of humorous notes and crying. I did not mind the one with the hair-brush, but the conduct of the other hurt me; it hurts me yet."

Twain and party also drove to the Taj Mahal, "arriving at 11-30—clear sky and splendid moon." At that time, he adds in the *Notebook*, "to our surprise an eclipse began and in an hour was total—an attention not before offered to any stranger since the Taj was built. Attempts were made to furnish an eclipse for the Prince of Wales in 1876 . . . but without success. . . ."

Old press clippings of the period provide a good idea of the impression Twain made as a lecturer in India. Here, for instance, is an extract from a Bombay newspaper: "Mark Twain has a scheme for the moral regeneration of the human race. It is simple—a man should save himself by his crimes, by reflection upon the moral lessons of each error he commits. The more crimes, the more lessons, so that by the time he has committed all possible crimes—there are only 352 — he would have reached the heights of absolute perfection. . . ."

Although he was a master of the comedian's art, Twain did not direct all of his effort towards making people laugh. As the *Bombay Gazette* put it, "Mark Twain has the power of moving people to tears as well as to laughter . . ." This then is the secret of the Twain legend in India. His appeal lay in his basic humanity and in his scintillating witticisms. For example, he said:

Thanksgiving is thanksgiving but for the turkey.

During his weeks in India, Twain took in every detail with the practised eye of a serious artist: "Out in the country in India, the day begins early. One sees a plain, per-

fectly flat, dust-covered and brickyardy, stretching limitlessly away on every side in the dim grey light, striped . . . with hard-beaten paths . . ." This is as good as a Kangra or Moghul painting.

Twain said repeatedly that India was his favorite land on the whole Equator journey. He loved the color and variety of Indian life. Take the famous passage in *Following the Equator*:

This is indeed India—the land of dreams and romance, of fabulous wealth and fabulous poverty, of splendour and rags, of palaces and hovels, of tigers and elephants, the cobra and the jungle, the . . . cradle of the human race, birthplace of human speech, mother of history, grandmother of legend, great-grandmother of tradition . . . the one land that all men desire to see, and having once seen, by even a glimpse, would not give that glimpse for all the shows of all the rest of the globe combined.

Twain did not stay in India for more than three months, but he expressed his heartfelt desire to revisit India. On receiving a copy of Kipling's *Kim*, Twain observed: "I think it was worth the journey to India to qualify myself to read *Kim* understandingly . . . I read the book every year and this way I go back to India . . ."

Let the last word remain with Twain (on India):

If I have ever seen anything like India before, it was years ago—perhaps in the Holy Land. But here there is so much life and colour; everything is so thoroughly alive.

The Curing

Frances Hall

You can smoke anger—
Hang it on the mind's dark rafter
And smoke it like a side of bacon.
They say it has too strong a flavor.
They say it hurts the stomach.
But I feed well on anger
Smoked by a slow fire,
Anger hung from a black rafter,
Suspended—turning—turning—
A great lean side of well-smoked anger
Stored for the quiet season.

The Neglected Graveyard In Franklin County

Carleton Drewry

Still poplars stand where centuries they stood
While flesh met other flesh, immortal blood
Fused with the nortal blood now mixed in me.

Millenniums moved to make the century
Which, there inclosed, includes, concludes my kind.

And the tall poplars stand, time out of mind.

I do not dare go back who am the last
Survivor prisoned in the nightmare past
To keep in retrospect the ruined alive,
Reliving lives and deaths that I survive,
The history's tale, too tragic now to tell,
Of names that their neglected tombstones tell.

Yet I never glimpse a poplar, never see
The first leaf, trembling, quit its autumn tree,

Or walk stripped country through the fatal fall,

Or naked streets, but know that I am all
The legacy they left from their lives' lack,
And in my mind I am always going back

To the stark headstones where forever stay
Those who, removed, remain like yesterday,
Immediate and moving through the mind
Of this lonely living one who lags behind
In earth's calendar, who, now nothing to the dead,

Desires their death living on in me instead.

LITTLE FABLE

by Joaquin Maria Bartrina
from the Spanish: FABULITA

D. M. Pettinella

John had a precious diamond
and wishing to know its worth
studied chemistry; with anxiety, he
analyzed the stone.

Ah! But to his horror he found
that the beautiful diamond
gleaming like the tear of a star,
was only a fragment of coal.

If you wish to be happy, my boy,
Don't analyze . . . don't analyze!

Mark Twain and Hemingway: "A Catastrophe" and "A Natural History of the Dead"

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Ernest Hemingway's enthusiastic admiration of Mark Twain is clearly evidenced by his oft quoted statement from *Green Hills of Africa*: "All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called *Huckleberry Finn*. If you read it you must stop where the Nigger Jim is stolen from the boys. That is the real end. The rest is just cheating. But it's the best book we've had. All American writing comes from that. There was nothing before. There has been nothing as good since."¹ Among the many critics who have mentioned this relationship, Philip Young in his book *Ernest Hemingway and the revision, Ernest Hemingway Reconsidered*, devotes an entire chapter "Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," to a consideration of the many similarities between the two men, their lives, and their work; the emphasis, aside from biographical, is chiefly on Hemingway's favorite, *Huckleberry Finn*, and deals with matters of philosophy, symbol, experiences, character, and style.

The trip Twain took on the River to provide material for the completion of *Life on the Mississippi* is said to have revived his interest in the long neglected *Huckleberry Finn*. *Life on the Mississippi*, in Chapter XX, entitled "A Catastrophe," describes a steamboat wreck and the death of Twain's younger brother and contains a number of interesting comparisons with one of Hemingway's short stories, "A Natural History of the Dead."

Hemingway's piece, it can hardly be called a story, is a skillful and terrifying parody and satire, forms at which Hemingway was adept but which are not much discussed among his abundant accomplishments. Twain too, especially in his later years, made skillful and mordant use of these forms to express his dismay over the "damned human race."

1. Ernest Hemingway, *Green Hills of Africa*, (New York, 1935), p. 22.

The general tone of "A Natural History of the Dead," which should probably be called "A Natural History of the Dead in War," is one of cool, even somewhat casual, though perceptive, objectivity; the diction is formal, even slightly pedantic and occasionally archaic; and the sentence structure is, unlike the "typical" Hemingway style, involved and convoluted. In structure, the story consists of four parts. The first is a biting introduction, attacking through irony those who see God's hand and find inspiration in every aspect of nature and then turning for the same purpose to the inspirational study of the dead. The second section deals principally with the predominance of the male sex among the dead, except in the case of horses and mules and with the shocking exception of the dead women observed as the result of an explosion in a munitions factory. The story was written of course before our more advanced methods of waging total war were scientifically developed, methods which now provide the opportunity not only for the widespread observation of a virtually unending supply of dead women but also of children of all ages. The third and major section exhausts in severely logical order the various characteristics of the dead in war and the effect on them of such factors as weather, temperature, and season. This section includes a digression describing the single opportunity the author has experienced to observe a natural death.

The final part, which is my chief concern, consists of the only "story" aspect of the piece, a dramatic incident presented primarily through "typical" Hemingway dialog. The place is an aid station in the mountains during winter on the Italian front of World War I. All the characters are suffering from emotional stress and fatigue. Among the corpses, which have been placed in a cave apart from the wounded, is a soldier who has dreadful head injuries and is assumed to be dead.

However, he is heard breathing, is examined by the doctor, but is left with the dead in anticipation of his immediate death, his wounds are so terrible. He hovers near death a day, a night, and another day. The stretcher bearers want to place him with the badly wounded, but the doctor insists he cannot be helped and that it would be a waste of effort to move him. Conflict develops when an officer who is being treated for an injured arm challenges the doctor's authority and demands that the doctor give the soldier an overdose of morphine. The doctor replies that he must use the morphine for those who can be helped and suggests that the officer can himself shoot the soldier if he wishes. The quarrel erupts into violence: the officer moves threateningly towards the doctor, who throws a dish of iodine in his face, trips him, and secures the pistol which he was trying to draw. As the doctor asserts his authority and treats the screaming officer, one of the stretcher bearers announces that the soldier in the cave is dead. The story ends in typical Hemingway fashion with an often repeated, suggestive comment: "Hold him [the officer] tight," said the doctor. "He is in much pain. Hold him very tight."

Chapter XX, "A Catastrophe," of Twain's *Life on the Mississippi* tells of a steamboat wreck, involving the death of the author's brother Henry and that of many other passengers and crewmen. It offers interesting comparisons to the last section of the Hemingway story outlined above. The question of mercy killing is introduced in the Twain narrative through the imprisonment of members of the crew in the wreckage of the burning steamboat. Twain tells of one individual pinned down in this way who begged that he be shot when it became apparent that he could not possibly be extricated from the wreckage as the approaching flames drove the would-be rescuers back. The horror of the situation is greater than in Hemingway's tale because the wounded man is alive and aware of the death that awaits him. He is the one begging that he be released from his agony, not, as in Hemingway, a third person. Another difference, of course, is that the soldier in Hemingway is unconscious at all times. In the case of Twain's brother, whose injuries were fatal, the doctors in Memphis, where the injured

are taken, make no attempt to treat him because there are others who need and would benefit more from their ministrations, as is the case in the doctor's decision in Hemingway. Among the examples of heroism which Twain recounts is that of his brother, who, being quite unaware of the extent of his injuries, swam back to the stricken ship to do what he could to aid those he thought to be more seriously injured. Twain recalls a conversation he had with his brother shortly before the latter left on his ill-fated voyage, in which the two talked of disasters and emergencies and agreed that the burden of handling rescue operations and preventing panic lay most heavily on those in authority but that each individual in his small way should act as responsibly as possible. There is not the least hint of heroics in Hemingway.

The most interesting comparison involves the situation in Memphis, where forty of the injured were hospitalized on the floor of a large public hall. All were desperately wounded, and a separate room was provided where the dying were taken so that their death agonies would not be forced upon the living. Although such removals were made as unobtrusively as possible, the patients were all aware of their purpose and could not help but wonder who would be next. During his six day vigil at his brother's bedside, Twain saw many sufferers taken to the death room and tells of one whose fate differed from that of most and from that of Hemingway's soldier. Not once but three times was the dreadfully burned and injured mate of the *Pennsylvania* carried into the death room only to be returned to the hall of the living. His torment was increased by the fact that he refused morphine and also water when he came to believe that the doctors were giving him medication in it. Incredibly, Twain tells us, he lived to return to work on the River once again.

A few additional comments might be made. Twain is simply recounting actual experiences; Hemingway is shaping the material of experience into fiction. The relative impact of the two works is very different, as is the intent of the two authors. Twain has no specific thesis in this particular chapter, but Hemingway powerfully and remorselessly exploits his attack on super-

ficial optimism and the ugliness and destruction of war. In some ways, Twain's writing in this chapter is ironically similar to the very style and treatment that Hemingway is satirizing. Strangely too, Twain's conclusion, although it refers to his own brother's death is far less moving than Hemingway's, quoted above. In fact it seems curiously lacking in feeling. "His hour had struck; we bore him to the death room, poor boy."

Moment

Patricia Robinson King

George died a month ago.
Harsh fact. Face it!
But today a swallow dipped its wings
outside my kitchen window
in gay salute. I smiled,
and felt my true love's arms
in ghostly splendor through the
glass.

The Paper-Doll Characters of Sinclair Lewis' *Arrowsmith*

Marilyn Morgan Helleberg

University of Nebraska

By skillful manipulation of the paper-doll characters in *Arrowsmith*, Sinclair Lewis attacks a society which interferes with scientific individualism. Critic Robert Cantwell, in his essay, "Sinclair Lewis," summarizes the belabored point of the novel: "The message of *Arrowsmith*, however Lewis might deny that it was his intention to preach it, was simply that American society was death to any disinterested scientific effort."¹ It cannot be denied that the message leaps out at the reader from almost every page in the novel. It is impossible to ignore Lewis's contention, but it is also difficult to accept the validity of a thesis which is demonstrated by the actions of contrived, stereotyped characters.

The *Arrowsmith* paper dolls are either black or white, and the two groups are separated by a too-neatly drawn line. On the white side are the lonely, suffering rebels, the truth-seekers, the idealists who are true to their own inner nobility, and the complementary characters. Max Gottlieb, the eccentric European laboratory scientist, devoted to scientific individualism, is not an individual but a representative of a type. Alfred Kazin, in *On Native Grounds: An Interpretation of Modern American Prose Literature*, notes of Gottlieb:

(He) was not merely a European scien-

tist; he was *the* European scientist, the very incarnation of the indescribable cultivation and fathomless European wisdom—a man on speaking terms with Leonardo, Brahms, and Nietzsche; a scientist whose classic work on immunology only seven men in all the world could understand; a cosmopolitan who could prepare exotic little sandwiches for his grubby co-workers.²

Lewis's description of Martin Arrowsmith's first encounter with Gottlieb clearly reveals a stereotype:

On the stone steps of the Main Medical, appeared beneath the arc-light a tall figure, ascetic, self-contained, apart. He did not hurry, like the belated homebodies. He was unconscious of the world. He looked at Martin and through him; he moved away, muttering to himself, his shoulders stooped, his long hands clasped behind him. He was lost in the shadows, himself a shadow.

He had worn the threadbare top-coat of a poor professor yet Martin remembered him as wrapped in a black velvet cape with a silver star arrogant on his breast.³

Gustaf Sondelius, also on the white side of the line, was the soldier of science. "He held reasonable and lengthy degrees, but he

1. Robert Cantwell, "Sinclair Lewis," *Sinclair Lewis: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Mark Shorer (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1962), p. 114.

2. Alfred Kazin, *On Native Grounds* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1942), p. 222.

3. Sinclair Lewis, *Arrowsmith* (New York: P. F. Collier & Son Company, 1925), p. 10.

was a rich man and eccentric. He roamed the world fighting epidemics and founding institutions and making inconvenient speeches and trying new drinks."⁴ To Martin, Sondelius was not a man but a symbol of the war on disease.

Aggressive, slangy, dedicated Terry Wickett also stands clearly on the side of the rebels, giving up everything for his work:

Martin perceived that Wickett's snarls were partly a resentment, as great as Gottlieb's of the morphological scientists who ticket things with the nicest little tickets, who name things and rename them and never analyze them. Wickett often worked all night; he was to be seen in shirt-sleeves, his sulky red hair ruffled, sitting with a stop-watch before a temperature bath for hours.⁵

Though Wickett's character is a bit more plausible than that of Gottlieb or Sondelius, he, too, is type-cast. Cut out of paper to Lewis's specifications, his actions and reactions are confined within the narrow limits of the author's single-dimensional view of the dedicated scientist.

Martin Arrowsmith is Mr. Truth-seeker. T. K. Whipple, one of Lewis's severest critics, describes Martin's struggle:

In *Arrowsmith*, Lewis has devoted all of a long book to the tribulations of a seeker for truth in the United States. Before he finally takes refuge in the wilds of Vermont where he can pursue his researches undisturbed, he encounters all the difficulties which the United States puts in the way of a doctor and an investigator who would like to be honest. He is offered every possible inducement to prostitute himself to an easy success . . . but he is unable to cope with an ineluctable honesty and stubborn drive in himself. In the end, he succumbs to his own integrity.⁶

Even Arrowsmith is not three-dimensional. He is a man with a dominant trait, (his drive toward scientific individualism), which has the appearance of being assumed for effect. Though he sometimes appears to pass back and forth over the dividing line between black and white, his feet never

really touch ground. Columnist Walter Lippmann comments that "Arrowsmith is saved by embracing the religion of science . . . but the religion which (he) embraces, ascetic, disinterested, purified, is for Lewis like some fine mystery seen at a distance."⁷ Hans Zinsser, in *Rats, Lice, and History*, declares that "if an epidemiologist on a plague study talked and behaved in the manner of the hero of *Arrowsmith*, he would not only be useless, but he would be regarded as something of a yellow ass and a nuisance by his associates."⁸ Lewis is not interested in Martin as an individual. He uses him as bait for luring the black paper dolls into his social display case. Martin is Lewis's means of exposing the commercialism of medical schools, the quackery of general practitioners, the politics and fraud of Public Health Departments, the more refined commercialism of metropolitan clinics, the social and financial temptations inherent in institutes for research, and the false values of a middle-class society. Though Martin passes through innumerable temptations and pressures, the emphasis is not on his inner struggle, but upon forces outside of himself. The focus is upon the parade of *forces* acting upon him and his reactions to each merely serve to keep the plot going so that Lewis may proceed to his exemplification of the *next* negative and external force against his hero. Alfred Kazin notes:

With his lonely suffering rebels, he, (Lewis), attains not an average type but an average myth; and though Lewis admires them and suffers with them, the characters he gives them are just those which the artist-rebels, the men who are "different" would seem to possess by average standards.⁹

In addition to the rebels, there are three complementary characters in the novel who earn their positions on the white side of the line not because of what they are or what they do, but because of what they are not and what they refrain from doing. Martin's first wife, Leora, his friend, Cliff Clawson, and the object of his infatuation, Orchid Pickerbaugh, are acceptable to Martin and to Lewis because they do not interfere with

7. Walter Lippmann, "Sinclair Lewis," *Ibid.*, p. 89.

8. Hans Zinsser, *Rats, Lice, and History*, cited by Mark Shorer, *Sinclair Lewis: An American Life* (New York, Toronto, London: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1961), p. 417.

9. Kazin, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

Arrowsmith's dedication to science. Leora is considered by most reviewers to be Lewis's most successful characterization, but even she lacks depth. T. K. Whipple has this to say about her:

Leora, Martin's first wife, is by general consent Lewis's masterpiece in the creation of character. Not only is she likeable, but she is indubitably real . . . yet even Leora interests Lewis less than his national portrait gallery of typical frauds and fakirs. He prefers to stay safely on the surface of social appearances. He shows little of Sherwood Anderson's hunger to delve into the lives of men and women.¹⁰

Leora is too perfect. She is the ideal marital companion for the aspiring scientific researcher who encourages him, at every turn, to remain faithful to his ideal. Her only discernable fault is her carelessness about her appearance, which is a purely external thing. As with all of his characters, Lewis touches only the surface of Leora, and she merges more as a wish than as a reality. Dorothy Thompson wrote in her diary: "Leora, more than any character whom I can remember in fiction, represents the sexual ideal of the truly dynamic and creative male."¹¹ What flesh-and-blood wife would say to her husband at the close of his affair with another woman: "Sandy, dear, I know how you feel about losing your Orchid. It's sort of Youth going. She really is a peach. Honestly, I can appreciate how you feel, and sympathize with you . . ."¹² Sherwood Anderson's observation about Lewis's characterizations could be applied to Leora:

There can be no doubt that this man, with his sharp journalistic nose for news of the outer surface of our lives, has found out a lot about us and the way we live in our towns and cities but I am very sure that in the life of every man, woman and child in the country there are forces at work that seem to have escaped the notice of Mr. Lewis. . . . Reading Mr. Sinclair Lewis, one comes inevitably to the conclusion that here is a man writing who, wanting passionately to love the life

10. Whipple, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

11. Dorothy Thompson, cited by Vincent Sheean, *Dorothy and Red* (Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Publications, Inc., 1963), p. 37.

12. Lewis, *op. cit.*, p. 254.

about him, cannot bring himself to do so, and who, wanting perhaps to see beauty descend upon our lives like a rainstorm, has become blind to the minor beauties our lives hold.¹³

Lewis would *like* to find a woman like Leora, but he would be unable to accept any flaws in her personality, so he creates a dream to serve as Martin's help-mate.

The other two complementary characters are "white" in a negative sense. Orchid is harmless because she is a nonentity. Cliff Clawson is the typical hale and hardy, well-met extrovert. He is not a rebel, but he is treated sympathetically because he is neither a pretender nor an improver.

The paper dolls on the black side of the line so far outnumber their opponents that it becomes obvious that they are the real subjects of the novel. Of these, Dr. Almus Pickerbaugh, the jingle-writing, hypocritical public health officer and politician, is the most ridiculous. Lewis treats him with satirical humor, whereas the other blacks are the objects of Lewis's abusive invective. Typical of Pickerbaugh's poetic devices is the following:

Zenith welcomes with high hurraw
A friend in Almus Pickerbaugh,
The two-fisted fightin' poet doc
Who stands for health like Gibraltar's
rock.

He's jammed with figgers and facts and
fun,

The plucky old, lucky ol' son-of-a-gun!¹⁴

The reader is allowed to laugh at Pickerbaugh while condemning him, and this attitude is a relief. If his characterization were not so obviously contrived for a purpose, it would be easier to accept Lewis's judgment of him.

Ira Hinkley typifies Lewis's disdain for evangelical Christians. He is a medical Elmer Gantry, though less malicious. When Fatty Pfaff remarks that Hinkley is at least sincere, Martin replies, "Sincere? Hell! So is a cockroach!"¹⁵ Though Hinkley appears and reappears throughout the novel, the only trait he ever displays is his assumed piety. He is clearly a representation of a type. Other medical stereotypes include

13. Sherwood Anderson, "Sinclair Lewis," ed. Shorer, *op. cit.*, pp. 27, 28.

14. Lewis, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 171.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 291.

6. T. K. Whipple, "Sinclair Lewis," ed. Shorer, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

Robertshaw, the pompous, ineffective professor of physiology; Angus Duer, the studious four-flusher; Dr. Roscoe Geake, the commercialistic otolaryngologist who "believed that tonsils had been placed in the human organism for the purpose of providing specialists with closed motors,"¹⁶ Dr. Tubbs and Rippleton Holabird, the commercialists of the drug industry; and the general practitioners of Wheatsylvania, who are, naturally, quacks. "To parade such heresies in the face of the progressive American public is," according to Vernon Louis Parrington, "enough to damn any man, genius or not."¹⁷ Robert Morss Lovett, writing of Lewis as "An Interpreter of American Life," observes that "Mr. Lewis is determined to leave no stone of the medical edifice unturned, and under each he finds human nature in reptilian form."¹⁸ Are we to assume, then, that only the disinterested medical researcher who finds fulfillment in escape is of value to society? Are all general practitioners quacks and all public health officials fraudulent? This is the inevitable conclusion to be drawn if we accept Lewis's portrayal of them. These stereotypes are never counterbalanced by men of integrity in the same positions. Devoted, disinterested researchers are indispensable to the medical profession, but must all others be condemned in order to make the point?

It may be argued that Lewis is a satirist and must employ such half-truths in order to emphasize his contentions, but is he really a satirist? Thrall, Hibbard, and Holman, in *A Handbook to Literature*, define satire in these words:

A literary manner which blends a critical attitude with humor and wit to the end that human institutions or humanity may be improved. The true satirist is conscious of the frailty of institutions of man's devising and attempts through laughter not so much to tear them down as to inspire a remodeling (italics not in the original).¹⁹

With the exception of the characterization

of Pickerbaugh, Lewis employs very little humor in his condemnation. As S.P.B. Mais sees it, in *Some Modern Authors*, "Lewis expends all his energy in purely destructive criticism."²⁰ Certainly, he admits no hope of "remodeling". It is all quite hopeless, and Lewis puts these thoughts in Martin's mind: "God help any man that likes his work and his wife! He's beaten from the beginning."²¹ His rebel heroes either succumb to the pressures or escape into a never-never-land where they can shut out the world. In an article published in *American Literature*, Dening Brown says, "Arrowsmith's resolution of his rebellion is one of escape, since he takes refuge in a hermit-like existence as a pure scientist."²² As Maxwell Geismar states it in "The Land of Faery":

So all this eloquence and artistic vitality operates in a vacuum in the end. You could say that the whole import of Lewis's work shows that he has learned nothing, answered nothing, solved nothing.²³

In "Our Photography: Sinclair Lewis," E. M. Forster claims:

... one can safely class him with writers termed advanced, with people who prefer truth to comfort, passion to stability, prevention to cure. But the classification lets what is most vital in him escape; his attitude, though it exists, does not dwell in the depth of his being.²⁴

Whipple summarizes the result of Lewis's fatal limitations as a satirist by stating that "the net result of Lewis's work is not a truer apprehension or a deeper insight, but an increase in mutual dissatisfaction."²⁵ This fact is made all the more tragic because of what Lewis might have been had he been less conscious of his own battle scars. "The satirist, like the jailer, is the victim of his own system of punishment," says Lewis Mumford in "The America of Sinclair Lewis." Mumford believes:

... were he not driven by some inner exacerbation to "get back at" the com-

munity that produced him, Mr. Lewis could give back much to it; for he has real insight and might easily create characters on a large scale who would exist in their own right, not merely as creatures in a malicious demonstration.²⁶

It is interesting to note that Sinclair Lewis denied that he was a satirist and claimed to be a romantic; so even if half-truths were acceptable in satire, he could not claim justification for his flat paper-doll characters under that label.

The critics agree that Lewis's weak characterizations greatly reduce the literary merit of his novels, but many of them side with Mark Shorer, who insists that "the power of the creation lies in these very limitations. This deficiency contributes to the force of his image, for it permits his characters no escape."²⁸ Kazin admits that "Lewis's characters have often been criticized as 'types' and they are, partly because he memorialized some of them as such," but he defends Lewis's approach:

What is really significant in his use of types is that his mind moved creatively in their channels. Lewis has been able to invest his stereotypes with a careless energy that other writers would not have been able to understand much less share, since they did not work so close to the surface.²⁹

Shorer was able to perceive something valuable in Lewis's intentionally limited view of his characters:

(Lewis had a particularly narrow and feeble perspective, but given the character of his achievement, its force paradoxically rests upon its narrowness. For its narrowness projects a very sharply defined image.³⁰

What is the value of a sharply defined image if that image is only a half-truth? Max Gottlieb has this to say about half-truths, "the scientist is intensely religious—he is so religious that he will not accept half-truths, because they are an insult to his faith."³¹ Would Lewis, then, condemn his own writing? Lippman asserts, "Mr.

Lewis has an extraordinary talent for inventing stereotypes. A man with a greater instinct for reality would have remembered that life is not so simple. But what he would have gained in truthfulness, he would have lost in influence."³²

Are paper dolls, then, more effective influences for good than human beings?

32. Lippmann, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

The Widow of A King (to three beautiful young widows)

Grace Hollwell

Indirectly I was told
By them . . . that in
Entering His Grave
He became free of His Shroud
As of all graves. . . While I
Still clothed in out-ward
Earth . . . must also struggle
Past the Great White Boulder
He left in my tortured
Path—The only one
Left to me that will lead
Toward the Light

That took Him from me. . .
Oh Three so young and Beautiful
So close in Love, in bitter Loss

A world in Sorrow
Still cherishes, as all who love
Must . . . their youth and beauty
Their brave Exemplar-Loveliness!

Though in those precious ways
I dare not approach them,
Nor broach comparison, I who
could only ask and Kiss Him in His last
Sleep, and whisper to Him, that
Both of us were even then, "Goin-Home"—
"Goin' Home Together."

Burials

John C. Evans

My father sleeps at Belleau Wood
Full six feet underground;
My father's father's bones are sunk
Nine fathoms in the sound;
My old great-grand sire rides and drifts
Frozen in Arctic floes,
While I must meekly lie beneath
Small stones in prim, white rows.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 83.

17. Vernon Louis Parrington, *The Beginnings of Critical Realism in America* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1930), p. 369.

18. Robert Morss Lovett, "An Interpreter of American Life," ed. Shorer, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

19. Thrall, Hibbard, and Holman, *A Handbook to Literature* (New York: The Odyssey Press, 1960), p. 436.

20. S.P.B. Mais, *Some Modern Authors* (London: Grant Richards Ltd., 1923), p. 103.

21. Lewis, *op. cit.*, p. 235.

22. Dening Brown, "Sinclair Lewis," *American Literature*, XXVII (May, 1955), 243.

23. Maxwell Geismar, "The Land of Faery," ed. Shorer, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

24. E. M. Forster, "Our Photography: Sinclair Lewis," ed. Shorer, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

25. Whipple, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

26. Lewis Mumford, "The America of Sinclair Lewis," ed. Shorer, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

27. Robert Cantwell, "Sinclair Lewis," ed. Shorer, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

28. Mark Shorer, "Sinclair Lewis and the Method of Half-Truths," ed. Shorer, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

29. Kazin, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

30. Mark Shorer, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

31. Lewis, *op. cit.*, p. 279.

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Dear Cousin Katherine:

I am grateful for
the prayers of those good nuns,
& for yours; they have already
answered themselves, in giving
me a deep pleasure.

I have lost that dear Jean,
& my sorrow lies heavy upon me
— but I would not bring her
back if I could. Not fifty, nor
Susy. Death is the most precious
of all the gifts this life has for us —
& it is theirs. Peace to their sacred
ashes!

About a month hence
I shall be homeward bound,
after half a year's sojourn
in these Islands of the Blest.
Write me as soon as you get
to New Casanau & tell me
when I can have you at
Stormfield.

Yours affectionately
J. H. Clemens

2

Admiral Harold R. Stark
Defender of Democracy
Cyril L. Jones

PUBLISHED SINCE 1936

THE MARK TWAIN JOURNAL

Kirkwood, Mo. 63122

Vol. XIII

Winter, 1966-1967

No. 3

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All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called *Huckleberry Finn*. If you read it you must stop where the Nigger Jim is stolen from the boys. That is the real end. The rest is just cheating. But it's the best book we've had. All American writing comes from that. There was nothing before. There has been nothing as good since."

Ernest Hemingway

CONTENTS

MARK TWAIN AND JAMES JOYCE, <i>Anthony Burgess</i>	1
THE STRUCTURE OF "THE PRIVATE HISTORY OF A CAMPAIGN THAT FAILED", <i>Joanne Altieri</i>	2
TEACHING HUCKLEBERRY FINN TO FOREIGN STUDENTS <i>Robert H. Woodward</i>	5
PUDD'NHEAD WILSON'S CALENDAR, <i>Jim Wayne Miller</i>	8
ON THREE MARK TWAIN POEMS, <i>Richard E. Peck</i>	10
HUCK FINN'S SEARCH FOR IDENTITY, <i>Marvin I. LaHood</i>	11
THE BEST-KNOWN TEENAGER: HUCK FINN, <i>Abigail Ann Hamblen</i>	15
LABORING SPIDERS, Poem, <i>D.M. Pettinella</i>	19
THE PRISONER, Poem, <i>Gene Marine</i>	19
A LEAF, Poem, <i>H. Michael Holt</i>	19
ADAM, Poem, <i>Myna Pearson</i>	19
THE APPIAN WAY, Poem, <i>Thomas Dwight Thompson</i>	20
A DREAM OF FAIR WOMEN, Poem, <i>Grace Baer Hollowell</i>	20

Mark Twain and James Joyce

Anthony Burgess

James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* has a very considerable American following; indeed, the task of elucidating that obscure masterpiece has become a major industry of American universities. It is piquant to reflect that the most demotic and lucid of all American humorists finds his place in that Irish "cross-mess parzle" (a combination of Christmas parcel and crossword puzzle), and that this place is not on the fringes but in the very core of the book.

Finnegans Wake is perhaps the only book in the world that is both uproariously funny and screamingly difficult. It is an attempt to present the history of mankind as a number of recurring cycles of falls and resurrections, and to compress this history into the Saturday night dream of a Dublin publican. Real dreams are obscure; Joyce's dream pushes obscurity to the limit. The obscurity lies in the language, which is a kind of Alice-in-Wonderland jabberwocky made of outrageous multilingual puns. But this language so often hits the nerve of laughter—sometimes excruciatingly—that there is a tendency to regard it as a kind of surrealist Joe-Miller game, with no deeper significance. In fact, the story of the book—the tale of the human fall and resurrection, endlessly repeated through time—is very profound and highly detailed. As in Mark Twain's own books, the high gloss of entertainment shines on a narrative of the particular which turns out to be universal myth.

Joyce's innkeeper-hero is called Earwicker—a real surname which, in his dream, tends to disclose very powerfully its insect associations. Earwicker, a man of Scandinavian stock who wants desperately to be accepted by his Irish customers as "one of them," finds that "Earwicker" becomes not only "earwig" but also—through the French *perce-oreille*—the very Irish name Persse O'Reilly. What is the significance of this insect motif? It is not solely a device for turning himself into an Irishman; it is a means of disguising the terrible word "incest" from his sleeping mind. For Earwicker, an ageing man with an ageing wife, is developing a sexual fixation on his daughter Isobel. His dream disinfects this hopeless love into an aspect of Arthurian myth. He has two sons, in whom he sees the virile future which is fast overtaking him, and he dreams one of these sons into Tristram, who fell in love with Iseult, the destined bride of his ageing uncle. The

name of this uncle was, of course, King Mark. Earwicker is Mark.

Now this story of hopeless love, with all the human sin behind it, is not reserved to the Old World. What happens in dream-Europe must also happen in dream-America, since man is the same on both sides of the dream-Atlantic. Europe yields Mark One; America gives us Mark Twain. Needless to say, there is no imputation of hopeless ageing love to Samuel Clemens; we are dealing only with names, with the punning possibilities of sheer vocables. But it is strange that Mark Twain should have dreamed of a Yankee at King Arthur's Court, the New World harking back to the world that produced King Mark of Cornwall. And once we admit this wisp of coincidence, we find that other coincidences follow.

Thus, on the very first page of *Finnegans Wake*, we learn that the Dublin of the Old World is exactly matched by a Dublin in the New. There is a Dublin in Georgia, USA, and this Dublin turns out to have been founded by none other than Jonathan Sawyer. A dream finds no difficulty in turning Jonathan (a very American name) into a very American hero, Tom Sawyer. And is not Tom Sawyer (or brother Jonathan) a real live nephew of his uncle Sam, another form of the conquering son before whom the whole New World lies open? But, just as a Connecticut Yankee has to dream his way back to the England of the early middle ages, so Tom Sawyer has to be sent to Coventry to witness the naked Lady Godiva on her white horse. He becomes peeping Tom—"Tom -saw-yer." Innocence has to be corrupted, so that the pattern of the human cycle may be fulfilled.

But, Joyce's interest in the creations of Mark Twain being mainly verbal, it is Huckleberry Finn who claims more of Earwicker's dreaming attention. In the eternal myth of the *Wake*, it is the function of Earwicker, as ordinary sinful man, to supersede the heroic creation which first rules the earth. Joyce sums up the fabulous race of giants in one being who is really two—the giant Finn MacCool who, in the New World, becomes Tim Finnegan, a bricklayer of Irish descent. Giants must fall just as man falls, and Finnegan fell from his ladder while he was drunk. He was believed to be dead and a wake was held over his body, but he suddenly revived when whisky was accidentally spilt on him. Thus he stands for the whole

process of death and resurrection. He is himself another incarnation of the giant Finn, since his name resolves itself into "Finn again."

Well, here in *Huck Finn* we have one of the mythical giant race. Take him and Tom Sawyer together, and we have a pair of lively New World brothers who correspond to the two sons—the twin or twain sons, in fact—of the ageing Earwicker. Tom Sawyer, who is identified (through "Jonathan") with the son Shaun or John, is a city-builder: the New World Dublin is the work of a "topsawyer"; Huck has in him the giant stuff of Finn MacCool. We hear something of the authentic voice of Huck—"fantods" and "no slouch of a name"—but his main function is symbolic. And yet without the tough stitching of the names of Mark Twain and his major creations into the

dream fabric of the *Wake*, much of the flavour of repetition and resurrection would be lacking.

Sadly, it has to be confessed that Joyce was no real Mark Twain scholar. Indeed, it seems that he did not read either *Tom Sawyer* or *Huckleberry Finn* very thoroughly, if at all. When he was working on *Finnegan's Wake* his eyesight was too bad for overmuch reading and, as those two Twain books had played no part in his childhood, he was now approaching them as a word-obsessed adult, not a story-lover seeking new delights. He got some young people of his acquaintance to read Mark Twain and make such notes as would be useful for his scheme. So a great American was drawn deeply into his complex plan, himself turned into myth and his own myths transformed into new myths.

The Structure of "The Private History of a Campaign That Failed"

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The major battlelines of Twain criticism have been drawn up behind the charge and counter-charge of Van Wyck Brooks (*The Ordeal of Mark Twain*, 1920) and Bernard De Voto (*Mark Twain's America*, 1932), the one arguing that Twain's milieu warped his genius, the other that Twain was the positive product of that environment, turning its features into art.¹ Behind the arguments of either man and of many of their followers lie in varying degrees an environmental determinism and/or an overriding biographical interest which tend to diminish the critic's concern for Twain's writings as art. And while a subsidiary battle—is or is not Mark Twain a conscious literary craftsman?—has been waged alongside the major one, there is obvious even among those arguing for Twain's artistic capabilities a tendency to fall under the seductive sway of the environmental and biographical interests and thus to be deflected from their purpose.² It is not, of course, impossible to combine historic and critical investigation, yet it seems to me that Twain scholarship has repeatedly damaged itself as literary criticism—when that has been its attempted function—by

allowing its stress to fall upon the personality and the milieu to such a degree that conscious craft becomes unimaginable. We are given a man who merely responded in one way or another to his environment, the result having somehow become verbalized, gotten onto paper, and finally into book form.³ Recent scholarship has attempted to right the balance, its predominant interest being *Huck Finn*.

The major unresolved critical problem with that book is structural—the relationship of the last eleven chapters to the rest of the novel. While the case for Twain's conscious artistry in language has been well argued since Brander

1. Lewis Leary has nicely summarized the critical conflict in the introduction to his *Casebook on Mark Twain's Wound* (New York, 1962).
2. E. g., E. S. Fussell, "The Structural Problem of *The Mysterious Stranger*," SP, XLIX (1952), 95-104, where, as in many critiques of late Twain, the concern for vindicating his pessimism warps an otherwise acute study. *Huckleberry Finn* has best escaped the general trend, but here also the effects are evident; witness Leslie Fiedler, *Love and Death in the American Novel* (New York, 1960), pp. 553-574.
3. As late as 1957, long after the work of Gladys Bellamy and DeLancey Ferguson, Wright Morris built his analysis on a Twain who is "the supremely unconscious natural talent"—*The Territory Ahead* (New York, 1957), p. 84.

Matthews' study,⁴ his concern for and ability to handle larger elements—especially structure—have been constantly denigrated; the statement Edward Wagenknecht made in 1935 has not really yet been disproved: "Hardly any of his books achieve unity of tone or succeed in maintaining anything like a standard of uniform excellence. . . . Structure then, was his Waterloo."⁵ If the emphasis is temporarily transferred from the major works to the shorter pieces, it may be possible to make a stronger case for Twain as conscious craftsman, not merely for his interest in dialect and his mastery of colloquial syntax, but for his concern with the total architectonics of a work.⁶ "The Private History of a Campaign That Failed" is a superb example of controlled structure, the result of an eminently conscious craft.

The "Private History" is a deceptive essay, its apparent tendency to ramble and digress pleasantly disguising a relatively tight structure which achieves simultaneously a narrative crisis and affective climax, unobtrusively, with seeming ease. The narrative and thematic lines are introduced in conjunction with a statement of the ostensible purpose: those whose experience in the war was, at best, tangential "ought at least to be allowed to state why they didn't do anything, and also to explain the process by which they didn't do anything" (p. 119).⁷ The second paragraph gives the background out of which the action is to grow. The situation in Missouri at the beginning of the war was, Twain tells us, one of great confusion, a confusion not over practical or material actions and advantages, but over the "ideals" of the war. The inanity of action motivated by foggy idealism is illustrated in the counterturning of Twain's fellow-pilot, a foretaste of the parodic actions of the boy-warriors, inspired as they were by romantic idealism. ("Several of us got together in a secret place by night and formed ourselves into a military company." [p. 120])

The next seven paragraphs delineate the make-up of Twain's company, the "Marion

Rangers," revealing through each of its typical characters qualities of the company's milieu—a time and place unprepared for the rigors of war and its subjugation of the human: in Dunlap we are given the underlying snobbery cum Quixoticism of the Southern myth; in Stevens, the thoughtlessness of youth and the concomitant unreality of war; in Smith and Bowers, approached from opposite angles, the sentiment and good-nature possible in humanity. The men are boys, guileless and good, as seen from the narrator's point of view, a refraction over the passage of twenty-four years.⁸ What is most prominent in their portraits is the complete unsuitability of the average man for war. Their holiday spirit, made a positive value by the persona's nostalgic irony, is given the reader as the men's natural human reactions to the conditions that surround them. Twain sums the problem, made unproblematic by its comic presentation, admirably:

What could you expect of them? They did as well as they knew how but, really, what was justly to be expected of them? Nothing, I should say. That is what they did.

(p. 123)

Paragraphs nine through thirty-seven carry this company through several makeshift camps by way of several motley retreats, the reality of war never yet touching it despite a few encounters with mud and fear. The setting remains predominantly "a flowery prairie" fit for "our kind of war" (p. 125). Each setback gives way quickly to new hope, "for we were young then. How long ago that was!" (p. 133) Yet, amid the humor of the retreats, the tales of Camp Ralls' horses, and the "gunpowder and glory" of Colonel Ralls' "eloquence," Twain brings out two important aspects of his theme. For the first, there is established a pastoral flavor in the setting—accentuated by the narrator's *temps perdu* notes—in that "flowery prairie" where soapbox speeches could be "regarded as eloquence" because of the innocence of "that ancient time and that remote region" (p. 124). The boy-warriors are innocents being led, albeit comically and abortively, to the slaughter of reality (Several actual deaths later in the war are recounted to remind us of that reality.); their play is the unconscious beginning of the horror

4. "Mark Twain and the Art of Writing," *Harper's*, CXLII (1920), 635-643.
5. *Mark Twain: The Man and His Work* (New Haven, 1935), p. 62. He has, of course, been taken to task, notably by Miss Bellamy in *Mark Twain as a Literary Artist* (Norman, Okla., 1950).
6. George Feinstein, "Mark Twain's idea of Story Structure," AL, XVII (1946), 161, takes too much at their face value Twain's own statements on his literary casualness, I think, in concluding (from these statements and not from the examination of any works) that Twain "values, not the architectonic effort of a tale, but the art of the paragraph, the sentence, the illuminating incident."
7. Page references are to the text supplied in *The Portable Mark Twain*, ed., Bernard De Voto (New York, 1946), pp. 119-142.
8. John C. Gerber, "Mark Twain's Use of the Comic Pose," PMLA, LXXIII (1958), 302, has a fine analysis of the narrator's function in the "Private History." It moves toward the same end which this consideration of structure suggests.

Twain finds in experience.

For the second, we are given to know from the beginning that the idea of subordination is utterly foreign to these men; Arcadia and Western America have no hierarchies: "We said that if Lyman wanted to meddle with those soldiers, he could go ahead and do it" (p. 124). After several dramatic depictions of the fact (pp. 123-124, 127-128, 134), Twain makes his point explicit: these were "young men who had been reared to a sturdy independence," incapable of conceiving of themselves as parts of a military hierarchy. The idea that war is more universally alien to humanity underlies Twain's further comment: "It is quite within the probabilities that this same thing was happening all over the South" (p. 134). Yet by way of the Redpath story he assures us that they all could have "learned to obey like machines, become valuable soldiers" (p. 135). The ironic juxtaposition of these phrases, considered along with the humor with which Twain treats the effects of insubordination, leaves no doubt that "sturdy independence" is a positive value for him, one of those human qualities which conflicts with the nature of war and is destroyed to serve it. It would not, I think, be stretching a point to suggest that the young men of the Marion Rangers, with their pastoral overtones, are avatars of the natural man, cousins to Huck Finn, whose goodness is warped by that civilization which calls upon them to become effective soldiers by surrendering their humanity to the machine of war.

This leads us to the climax of the theme, the death of the "Union soldier." The mechanical nature of the army, the inhuman quality of war are crystallized in an epithet:

The thought shot through me that I was a murderer, that I had killed a man, a man who had never done me any harm. That was the coldest sensation that ever went through my marrow. . . . And all the boys . . . had forgotten all about the enemy, they thought only of this one forlorn unit of the foe. (p. 138)

The metallic insensibility of the military "unit" is thrown into high relief by the human fact of the dying man, drawn from the language and emotion surrounding the picture. The crisis of the narrative is united to the thematic climax in the universalizing comment Twain makes on the act:

And it seemed an epitome of war, that all war must be just that killing

of strangers against whom you feel no personal animosity, strangers whom in other circumstances you would help if you found them in trouble, and who would help you if you needed it. My campaign was spoiled.

(p. 139)

The remainder of the narrative, its denouement, is structured through amplifications of the theme. Meetings with several troupes of trained fighters afford Twain the opportunity to implicitly contrast his Arcadian troupe with real rangers, the emphasis falling upon the "grisly spectacle" of their favored weapons (p. 140). The disbanded (by vote, in a last democratic, unmilitaristic action) company retreats into Generals Harris and Grant, the second Twain's war hero later. The fact that the two men of war stand, by nature and position, in direct antithesis to the Marion Rangers is pointed in two comic understatements:

We were accustomed to falling back and didn't need any of Tom Harris's help, we could get along perfectly well without him and save time, too. And I was within a few miles of the place and occasion too, though proceeding in the other direction.

(p. 141)

The history ends with an apologia which remains on the comic level:

I could have become a soldier myself if I had waited. I had got part of it learned, I knew more about retreating than the man that invented retreating.

(p. 142)

This is, of course, only a part of the part that he has learned. The maintainence of a unified tone requires that it close the tale, for a renewal of the indictment against war's education, the mechanization of man, would destroy the ironic humor which reigns throughout the essay, a humor which, together with the pastoral theme, ironically displaces the regulation heroes of war by making of this motley platoon a representative group of good and real men.

Whether or not it happened this way, whether or not this is strict biographical truth,⁹ hardly matters. It is artistic truth, and it is this that Twain was aiming at. Lorch misses the point entirely in asserting that since the murder incident is "pure invention,"

9. It isn't. The killing of the soldier, for instance,

it is utterly without value as a reason why Mark Twain didn't do anything in the war, the explanation of which was his stated purpose in writing "The Private History."¹⁰

The incident may not have factual value, but there is an imaginative truth more valuable in its sphere than fact can be. Reviewing the structure of the narrative, particularly the union of its affective and thematic climaxes and narrative crisis, one is justified in con-

cluding—since neat structural coincidences seldom occur in life—that Twain's "Private History" is an instance, through that craft and unity so often denied him by his critics, of a recreation of the imagination which does not simply relate events, but orders them, which does not simply give us the "other side" of war, but constitutes a whole version of war's meaning, the more stark for being couched in gaiety, even if that gaiety has at times the melancholy of an old remembrance.

Teaching Huckleberry Finn to Foreign Students

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In an article in a recent issue of *The Mark Twain Journal* Professor William White¹ relates what he termed his "disastrous" experience in attempting to teach *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* to Korean students when he was Visiting Professor of American Literature in the Hankuk University of Foreign Studies at Seoul during 1963-1964. The conclusions Professor White draws from his experience are thoughtful and sensible; he suggests that the failure of the students to comprehend the novel fully enough to write intelligently about its plot, characters, and ideas is not so much a reflection on the students themselves, who were in the main both interested and attentive, as the inevitable result in a course about literature for students who do not understand the language of the literature. His recommendations is that teachers of English as a second language "be sent to Korea, or anywhere else where such a language barrier exists"; the teacher of literature wastes both his own time and that of the students, as well as the money supporting the program.

Had I read Professor White's article before my own experience in literature classes for foreign students, I would have been even more apprehensive than I was when I met my first class during the spring of 1964. I had

the assignment to teach a course in American literature to a group of students who had come to San Jose State College to study the teaching of English as a second language in a program sponsored by the Agency for International Development. Before they arrived I learned that all had at least an intermediate command of English. They were teachers of various subjects in their homeland of the Republic of Mali, West Africa, and had studied English for several years. But they were not yet proficient in it. They knew little of the history of the United States and almost nothing of its geography. Needless to say, they knew nothing of our literature, save for certain well-known names such as Robert Frost,² Ernest Hemingway, and Mark Twain. What could I teach them in one semester, I wondered, about the literature of the United States?

Fortunately, the director of the program on campus had the good sense to warn me that my ambitions should be modest. He suggested that I introduce them to the writings of some major authors but that I not necessarily attempt any kind of historical coverage. Possibly I should approach our literature in its cultural setting rather than as a study of belles-lettres. During the past three AID programs for Mali students at San Jose his advice has proved to be sound. Since my ambitions have been more modest than Professor White's, and since my students were probably better prepared than

Paine proved to be fabrication. Fred W. Lorch, "Mark Twain and the 'Campaign That Failed,'" *AL*, XII (1940), 456.

10. Lorch, p. 456.

1. "Teaching Huck Finn in Korea," *The Mark Twain Journal*, XIII (Winter 1965-1966), 5-7.

2. For a discussion of my experience in teaching the poetry of Robert Frost to these students, see my article "Poetry and History: Robert Frost's Inaugural Poems," *Exercise Exchange*, XII (November 1964), 17-19.

his to begin with, the results have been far from disastrous. They have been, I believe, rewarding for both me and the students.

My experience with teaching *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is a case in point. First of all, I did not have the students read the entire novel. Although they could read modern expository prose with some fluency, literary prose—especially dialect—presented serious problems. They could overcome these problems in shorter works in which the dialect was more or less simple—as in Faulkner's "Two Soldiers" and Thornton Wilder's "Our Town," both of which we read aloud in class in their entirety, pausing with almost each sentence to discuss idioms, vocabulary, and dialect, as well as cultural, historical, and literary and philosophical matters that the pieces suggested. I knew that there would be too much of Twain's novel that they would not understand and that they might be turned against it through frustration. I did not want that to happen. What I hoped to do was to introduce them to some of the delights of the novel, to make it entertaining and rewarding, and to encourage them to read the entire book at a later time on their own.

The textbook we were using contains several selections from Twain's works, including one entitled "The Duke and the Dauphin"—excerpts from chapters 19-23 that introduce the Duke and the Dauphin and carry them through their escape after the Royal Nonesuch hoax.³ After some introductory remarks about Twain's life, character, work, his place in American literary history, and the story of *Huckleberry Finn*, I read this selection aloud to the class, devoting five seventy-five minute periods to it. The students had their books open before them; they had already read the material before class and had questions on the idioms, the vocabulary, history, customs, and manners; and if I did not discuss a point of interest, they were certain to bring it up themselves. We went slowly—and I believe that they enjoyed and understood the selection despite the difficulty of its language and the unfamiliarity of its historical and geographical setting. They laughed appreciatively at the humor and irony; they admired Huck's shrewdness and level-headedness; and they recognized in the Duke and the Dauphin the combination of attractiveness and depravity that characterizes confidence men the world over.

3. Sam S. Baskett and Theodore B. Strandness, eds., *The American Identity, Six Issues: A College Reader* (Boston, 1962), pp. 855-868.

In fact, it was these larger features of the selection that I emphasized in our discussions—not Twain's influence on Hemingway and Faulkner, which I felt they could not understand because they did not know enough about the later writers to make generalizations meaningful—but the human problems that make literature one of the universal languages of mankind.

For their writing assignment—which was to be done out of class—I posed three questions:

1. What characteristics of American frontier society in the nineteenth century are suggested in this selection? Be specific; give illustrations and examples.

2. Men like the Duke and the Dauphin are timeless and universal. What are their principal characteristics?

3. People like the Duke and the Dauphin are frequently the subjects of stories and anecdotes. Do you have any stories in your culture about such people? If so, what ones? Tell one such story in detail.

Answers to the first two questions were more or less routine, for in going through the selection we had answered them thoroughly. The students had ample material at hand and were faced with a task that was largely one of organization. One of the essays about the university of the Duke and the Dauphin is typical:

Men like the Duke and the Dauphin are timeless and universal. We find their examples everywhere. They are cunning, clever, shrewd, intelligent. Indeed, when they met the author [narrator] and Jim, they made themselves Duke and Dauphin in order to be respected, to exploit their partners and to be happy. They used the same qualities to deceive people, to gain their sympathy and their money. By doing so, they were also dishonest because they were wrong. Although poor and homeless, they were optimistic, always trusting in the future.

They were ingenious, resourceful people because they could invent, create interesting things to attract people. They were able to imitate great men, great writers such as Shakespeare. They were capable to learn what could interest people. They could adapt themselves to their time and to the old good time. They were vulgar because they would do everything in order to get money. They

were felons, crooks, frauds and they took advantage of people's naivety and ignorance to cheat them, to deceive their good faith.

It was the third question, however, that interested me the most, for it gave the students the opportunity to draw parallels between American literature and Malian life. I was delighted to find that several of the students recognized in Twain's impostors a Malian counterpart known as "the black dragons," confidence men who pretend to have certain magic powers and who supposedly have studied their art in India. One of the essays is worth printing in full, for it shows how well the student absorbed and understood many of the small touches in Twain's novel and was able to incorporate them in his own essay:

I am going to talk to you about a man who resemble strongly the duke and the dauphin. I met him in a restaurant in my village at lunch time. He was surrounded by many people, and he was speaking loudly, gesticulating like a devil. I introduced myself to him. He said that his name is "the black dragon." As to prove it, he asked me to give him a bill worth two dollars. I did it. He stroke a match, burned my money, took a little bit of the ashes, and put it in a glass of water. At first, I was worrying. But little by little I saw my bill coming up from the water. I was really amazed. He told me to buy the rest of the ashes because every quantity of them could be transformed into a bill. I trusted in him, and I bought the ashes for a great amount of money. I returned quickly at home, took a large plate, and filled it with water. First I put a very small ash in the water, then some more, then I poured the rest of the ashes. But I waited in vain, I didn't see anything. I realized that Mr. The Black Dragon double-crossed me. I was angry, and I went out for a walk in order to relax. All the trees in my village were covered with advertisements saying: the dragon, who comes directly from India, is the honorable guest of our village. He has been practicing for a long time in India. He is on his way to Bamako, the capital, hav-

ing been asked by the president himself. He is putting on a show tonight. You are welcomed. You will enjoy your night. Men and Women, two dollars; children, one dollar only. As soon as I finished reading these advertisements, I [a] car passed, slowly driven and followed by a cattle [group] of children. The dragon was in, singing. Well, at night, people flowed into the show. There were no seats left. Then the famous show began. The Dragon built a big fire and stood in the middle for a while. He crackled a blade between his teeth, swallowed it, and vomitted more than fifty new blades. He changed water into milk, and so on. I don't know how he was operating. All that I know is that he needed a lot of skillness to realize these magic tricks. At the end of the show, he transformed an egg into gold. He kept it and sold the rest of the egg four dollars each. The buyers might keep their eggs in their suitcases during seven days without looking at them. On the eighth day, and early in the morning, they might open their suitcases and find the gold instead of the egg. I remember my ashes, and I refused to make such a good bargain. One week later everybody was complaining because the black dragon had stolen four dollars from him.

The dragon is a kind of man who could double-team with the duke or the dauphin.

I realize, of course, that my approach to Twain's work was not particularly literary and that the students learned little in a formal way about *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* as an example of an American novel; but I believe that the cultural approach to literature is a realistic and useful one for students who have not mastered English as a second language. Although the language barrier prevents beltristic study of literature, it does not prevent the study of literature from being in itself a means to a better understanding of the English language, of the American people and their culture, and of the features in American life and literature that can be related closely to the students' own background and experience.

Pudd'nhead Wilson's Calendar

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The aphorisms in Pudd'nhead's Calendar still constitute a vexing problem for critics of Twain's *Pudd'nhead Wilson*. Richard Chase's overall judgment of the novel, that the moral truth which the book asserts is "not adequately attached to the characters," is reflected in his view of the calendar entries: "Except for the ones that are merely easy cynicism, we do not believe them to come from him."¹

It is possible to consider Pudd'nhead's aphorisms under the two grand heads of "merely easy cynicism" and what is by implication a darker, more pessimistic tone — a harder cynicism. Under the former head I would place those of the thirty-seven entries which are characterized by a wry, witty turn, a typical entry being:²

July 4.—Statistics show that we lose more fools on this day than in all other days of the year put together. This proves, by the number left in stock, that one Fourth of July per year is now inadequate, the country has grown so. Ch. 17 Entry 2

Entries similar in tone are:

Chapter 1
Chapter 4, 1 & 2
Chapter 5, 1 & 2
Chapter 6, 1 & 2
Chapter 7
Chapter 8, 1 & 2
Chapter 9, 2
Chapter 10, 2
Chapter 11, 1 & 2
Chapter 12
Chapter 13, 1 & 2
Chapter 14
Chapter 15, 1 & 2
Chapter 16, 1 & 2
Chapter 17, 1 & 2
Chapter 18, 2
Chapter 19, 1 & 2
Chapter 20
Conclusion, 1

Entries belonging under what, by implica-

tion is Chase's second head, are more somber, more straightforwardly pessimistic, and lack humor or wit. A typical example is:

Whoever has lived long enough to find out what life is, knows how deep a debt of gratitude we owe Adam, the first great benefactor of our race. He brought death into the world.

Ch. 3

Entries similar in tone are:

Chapter 9, 1
Chapter 10, 1
Chapter 18, 1
Chapter 21, 1 & 2
Conclusion 2

Even after allowing for a generous margin of error in subsuming the various aphorisms under Chase's suggested headings of 1) easy cynicism and 2) a gloomier, more frank pessimism, one soon realizes that no true distinction is possible with Chase's categories. The inadequacy of the division can be seen when one considers some of the calendar entries as they group themselves around certain themes. I choose four themes for the purpose of illustration: 1) Death 2) Religion 3) The Fall 4) Pessimistic View of Man. Some of the calendar entries may be classified as to theme as follows:

I. Death

Chapter 3
Chapter 6, 1
Chapter 9, 1,
Chapter 10, 1
Chapter 13, 1

II. Religion

Chapter 4, 2
Chapter 13, 1

III. The Fall

Chapter 2
Chapter 3
Chapter 4, 1
Chapter 12

IV. Pessimistic View of Man

Chapter 13, 1
Chapter 16, 1
Chapter 17, 2

Chapter 18, 1
Chapter 21, 2
Conclusion, 2

What is interesting here is that there is an overlapping of the "easy cynicism" and the more pessimistic entries in the thematic groupings. Under the theme, Death, Chapter entries 6,1; 9,1; 10,1 and 13,1 fall into the category of easy cynicism. The entry for chapter 3 is broodingly pessimistic. Under the theme, Religion, both calendar entries 4,2 and 13,1 are light and humorous in tone. Under the closely related theme, The Fall, entries 2; 4,1 and 14 are "easy cynicism." Again 3 is pessimistic.³ Under the theme, Pessimistic View of Man, entries 13,1; 16,1; 17,2 are light in tone. Entries 18,1; 21,2 and Conclusion, 2 are dark and pessimistic in tone. All this demonstrates that if Chase admits that the calendar entries characterized by "easy cynicism" can be ascribed to Wilson, it would be difficult not to attribute the more pessimistic entries to him, since a thematic unity exists between the two artificially separated groups.

Yet the fact remains that Pudd'nhead Wilson's actions consistently contradict the moods and attitudes suggested by the more pessimistic aphorisms. Chase and Fiedler have already pointed out the important contradictions here. For years the citizens of Dawson's Landing look upon Wilson as "a crank, a complainer, and an ironist."⁴ Wilson remains an aloof nonconformist, and yet, after all the years of social ostracism, he eventually shows that his aloofness and nonconformity are not really genuine, that he actually longs, as Chase says, "to be one of the boys."⁵ Fiedler points to more specific instances of this contradiction between Wilson's actions and the attitudes reflected in his aphorisms when he observes how Pudd'nhead adheres to the town's code of honor and its definition of a Negro, while at the same time he writes in private, and reads before a Free Thinkers' Society his unconventional ideas.⁶

The problem, then, is to discover whether the contradictions between Pudd'nhead's actions and his aphorisms constitute a fault in the conception of his character, or whether the aphorisms actually contribute to an understanding of Wilson's character. The answer is

3. I have placed the entry for chapter 3 and entry 1, chapter 13 in two different thematic groupings. Their content justifies this, I think.

4. Chase, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

5. *loc. cit.*

to be found in the aphorisms themselves.

It is characteristic of the calendar entries that they not only contradict Wilson's actions but that they owe their very existence to contradictions. For the most part they yoke together disparities, removing the sting of earnestness through the resultant absurdity. Their author looks seriously at the front side of ideas, objects and institutions, and then, as if he cannot bear what he sees, salves his proud feelings by quickly exposing their ridiculous backsides:

There is no character, howsoever good and fine, but that it can be destroyed by ridicule, howsoever poor and witless. Observe the ass, for instance: his character is about perfect, he is the choicest spirit among all the humbler animals, yet see what ridicule has brought him to. Instead of feeling complimented when we are called an ass, we are left in doubt. Chapter 1

This entry stands in a significant relationship to the incidents narrated in chapter one.⁶ The first sentence is the observation of a sensitive personality which has been injured, as Pudd'nhead was injured by the "poor and witless" ridicule of the villagers who failed to understand his brand of humor. The remainder of the entry forces a mildly absurd analogy upon the first part, robs the feelings of its poignancy, thus making it bearable. The entry demonstrates the destroying power of wit, and is typical of other entries in which the front of the idea is contemplated sadly, only to be discarded for the ridiculous or absurd backside:

Adam was but human—this explains all. He did not want the apple for the apple's sake; he wanted it only because it was forbidden. The mistake was in not forbidding the serpent; then he would have eaten the serpent. Let us endeavor so to live that when

6. This tendency of the Calendar entries to provide a commentary on the action of chapters they preface is noted by Fiedler in the second part of his article, "As Free as any Cretur . . ." in the *New Republic* for Aug. 22, 1955, p. 18. Fiedler refers to the two following entries:

April 1.—This is the day upon which we are reminded of what we are on the other three hundred and sixty-four. Ch. 21, 2

October 12.—The Discovery.—It was wonderful to find America, but it would have been more wonderful to miss it. Conclusion, 2

Here, according to Fiedler, Wilson's disclosure of Roxana's hoax coincides with Twain's "exposure to America of its own secret self," the double discovery being framed by Wilson's calendar entries for two of our favorite holidays.

we come to die even the undertaker will be sorry. Ch. 6,1

If you pick up a starving dog and make him prosperous, he will not bite you. This is the principal difference between a dog and a man. Ch. 16,1

It is the underlying seriousness and boyish earnestness, well-preserved in the entry for chapter 1, but hardly recognizable after it has been pulverized by the stamp of wit in many of the others, that forms the link between Pudd'nhead's actions and his cynical thoughts. Given the opportunity, he acquiesces to the popular opinions and attitudes (in his romantic, melodramatic, Tom Sawyerish way). But as long as that opportunity is not available, he must rob his feelings and experiences of significance by destroying them with wit. The aphorisms certainly contradict Wilson's actions, but by reflecting the contradictions in his life, his nature and his surroundings, they not only have a relation to his character, they add a dimension to it.

In characterizing the American novel in the first chapter of his *The American Novel and its Tradition*, Chase makes a statement which seems out of context, aimed specifically at *Pudd'nhead Wilson*:

The American novel tends to rest in contradictions and among extreme ranges of experience. When it attempts to resolve contradictions, it does so in oblique, morally equivocal

ways. As a general rule, it does so either in melodramatic actions or in pastoral idylls, although intermixed with both one may find the stirring instabilities of "American humor."⁷

In the same chapter, Chase calls de Tocqueville to the support of his thesis. de Tocqueville observes in American life "a disparity between ideals and practice, a lack of connection between thought and experience. . . ."⁸ While Chase wishes to avoid the "rather arid procedure that would result from trying to find a 'contradiction' behind every character and episode,"⁹ I believe he has erred on the other extreme in his judgment of Pudd'nhead Wilson's Calendar.

The thematic unity existing between the entries of easy cynicism and those of a more pessimistic nature, and the demonstration that the entries are reflections of contradictions and not contradictions themselves—these things suggest that the aphorisms of the Calendar are a legitimate part of the novel, providing both characterization and commentary upon the action. For it is not in spite of, but because some of the entries contradict what we know of Wilson from his actions that they are important for an understanding of both Wilson and the "radical dilemma turned into a stirring dialogue of traditions, attitudes and social forces," which, says Chase, Twain has given with "astonishing clairvoyance and honesty."¹⁰

On Three Mark Twain Poems

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The C. Waller Barrett Collection at the University of Virginia's Alderman Library has, among its Mark Twain holdings, autograph manuscripts of three poems. I recently checked them against the texts of the poems appearing in Arthur L. Scott's *On the Poetry of Mark Twain*¹ to discover that his printed text differs slightly from one of the three, markedly from another, and omits the third poem entirely.

The MS of "The Earth invoketh [sic] The Sun" differs perhaps insignificantly from Scott's printing in that line two has the word stripped

spelled "stript."

In printing "Be Good, Be Good. A Poem" under the title "Poem to Margaret," Scott follows an earlier appearance,² and duplicates the several errors in transcription which appeared at that time. More interesting, he omits the pre-Ogden Nash final line and thereby removes from the poem the exaggerated wit so apparent in the MS version:

7. Chase, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 155.

2. *Mark Twain Quarterly*, V (Summer, 1942), 23.

1. Urbana and London, 1966.

BE GOOD, BE GOOD. A POEM

Be good, be good, be always good,
And now and then be clever,
But don't you ever be *too* good,
Nor ever be too clever;
For such as be too awful good
They awful lonely are,
And such as often clever be
Get cut & stung & trodden on by
persons of lesser mental capacity,
for this kind do by a law of
their construction regard exhibitions
of superior intellectuality as an
offensive impertinence leveled at
their lack of this high gift, & are prompt
to resent such-like exhibitions in the
manner above indicated—& are
they justifiable? alas, alas, they
(It is not best to go on: I think the line
is already longer than it ought to be

for real true poetry.)

[signed] Mark Twain

To Margaret

The third MS constitutes, to the best of my knowledge, a hitherto unpublished example of Mark Twain's verse. In strategy typical of his humor, the poem sets an elaborate scene which is undercut and made laughable by the final, trivial line. The MS, untitled, reads:

She pondered long the question.
Under the stars in tranquil nights
she pondered it;
Or, sleeping, steeped in dreams;
In pearly dawns, faint with summer
scents;
Cosy & warm, lapped in winter furs,
reflecting;
In jingling sleigh careening,
Lost in thought, still pondering
The deep questions: "What most
Delicious is?"

Huck Finn's Search For Identity

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Huck Finn is one of a handful of classic American frontier heroes, from Cooper's Natty Bumppo to Richter's Worth Lockett, who are able to find their identity only in opposition to the society that threatens their freedom. All are essentially anarchic, and must "light out for the territory ahead of the rest." Huck's friend, Tom Sawyer, the good bad boy, will grow up to be an accepted member of the St. Petersburg community that Huck can never become a part of because Huck sees, all too clearly, the hypocrisy at its roots. As Huck examines the things that ordinarily help people answer the question of who they are: parents, community, and religion, he finds very little he can identify with. He is prevented by circumstances from forming a lasting relationship with any of the people with whom he has any rapport: Jim, Buck Grangerford, and Mary Jane Wilks. As he travels from St. Petersburg to the Phelps farm in Arkansas he seeks to find out who he is. Through a half dozen gloomy lies he traces a different genealogy for each person who asks. He begins his new life disguised as a girl and ends it mistaken

for Tom Sawyer, but he is never quite Huck. At novel's end the knowledge he has gained of himself is through repudiation, not acceptance, of parentage, community, and religion.

As *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* opens, Huck is undercutting the society that is try to "sivilize" him. His first narrative remarks clearly indicate that he is the touchstone against which the world of the novel must be measured. He is unhappy with the Widow Douglas' "dismal regular and decent ways" because he loves an easier life, but also because he is puzzled by her mores. While she is quite concerned about "Moses and the Bulrushers," she refuses to allow Huck the pleasure of a smoke. "And she took snuff, too; of course that was all right, because she done it herself." When Miss Watson takes over with a spelling lesson and a lecture "all about the bad place," Huck slips and says he wishes he were there—because he feels that any change would be for the better. The expectation that Huck can find a home with the widow and her sister is immediately defeated, and for precisely the same reason that he cannot find a home with Sally

and Silas Phelps: he instinctively senses that they are constrained by mores he finds stifling and often hypocritical. Because he clearly feels this, we must take seriously Huck's final statement: "But I reckon I got to light out for the territory ahead of the rest, because Aunt Sally she's going to adopt and sivilize me, and I can't stand it. I been there before." This is not bravado as some critics suggest, nor another prank that Huck and Tom will try for a few weeks and then return. It is the only logical move for a boy whose journey down the river in search of identity has forcibly proven to him that he will never be comfortable in the society he has seen.

When Tom Sawyer stipulates in the first chapter that Huck can join his gang only if he goes back to live with the Widow Douglas, he clearly aligns himself with the society Huck soon flees. But as Huck's best friend he is given another chance at the end. Throughout the long final episode Huck sees through the pretensions of Tom's romanticism, and he regretfully includes Tom with the other inhabitants of the society he must leave behind. If the final episode is seen as society's last attempt to attract Huck by using two of its strongest lures, Tom and Aunt Sally, the problem of the novel's ending diminishes. Leo Marx, in an interesting article, states: "I believe that the ending of *Huckleberry Finn* makes so many readers uneasy because they rightly sense that it jeopardizes the significance of the entire novel. To take seriously what happens at the Phelps farm is to take lightly the entire downstream journey." Marx explains the "happy" ending this way: "At this point Clemens, having only half escaped the genteel tradition, one of whose pre-eminent characteristics was an optimism undaunted by disheartening truth, returned to it. *Why* he did is another story, having to do with his parents and his boyhood, with his own personality and his wife's, and especially with the character of his audience." This is just one of the many critical approaches to the ending. But if Huck's adventures are seen as a series of episodes initiating him into an adult world he rejects, and the Phelps farm episode as the final, and *necessary* repudiation of Tom Sawyer and someone as close to a mother substitute as Aunt Sally, then the integrity of the novel is maintained and the customary Clemens biographical backwash is avoided.

There can be no doubt that Huck understands how ridiculous Tom's plans for Jim's

escape are—his remarks ironically undercut Tom's romanticism at every step of the way. Huck also realizes clearly, now, that Tom is a typical member of the community because he is horrified at his helping him free a runaway slave. When Huck convinces Tom that digging Jim out with case-knives is impossible and Tom asks for a "case-knife," meaning a pick, Huck hands him a pick, saying: "He was always just that particular. Full of principle." We know what the author thinks of Tom, but we can't assume any longer that Huck is not aware of Tom's hypocrisy. Just as Swift uses the initially naive Gulliver to undercut so many human pretensions through three books and has him become even more cynical than himself in the fourth, Twain has brought Huck to the point where he is fully aware of Sawyer's romantic impracticality. Huck probably accepts Tom's nonsense because he feels he has a better chance of freeing Jim with Tom's help than alone. And the Phelps episode begins just as the Duke and Dauphin are run out of town on a rail, tarred and feathered, a scene which elicits one of Huck's most compassionate remarks: "Well, it made me sick to see it; and I was sorry for them poor pitiful rascals, it seemed like I couldn't ever feel any hardness against them any more in the world. It was a dreadful thing to see. Human beings *can* be awfully cruel to one another." This comes after the horrors of the Grangerford-Shepherdson, Sherburn-Boggs, and Wilks episodes, and perhaps Twain felt the artistic need for something a little lighter. The final episode is amusing if read as comic relief. The gloom of Huck's sad initiation into the adult world would be unrelieved without it. And finally, it is Huck's last brief boyish stunt with Tom before leaving for the adult uncertainties of "the territory."

The Phelps farm episode is the last in a series of circumstances through which Huck moves in his search for identity. The first is his parentage. Motherless, he quickly marks his father as someone he cannot identify with: "Pap he hadn't been seen for more than a year, and that was comfortable for me; I didn't want to see him no more." His relationship with his father is most important. The hereditary implications of Pap Finn's primitivism are evident when he takes Huck from the civilizing influence of St. Petersburg to a rude cabin in the woods. Huck remarks: "It was kind of lazy and jolly, laying off comfortable all day, smoking and fishing, and no books nor study.

... I didn't want to go back no more." His preference for the primitive is evident throughout the novel. Huck dislikes the society he has seen because of its many constraints, physical and moral; but he is also positively drawn to the simple life of woods and raft. He is the embodiment of early America's great thirst for freedom, a facet of his character that has helped give him mythic proportions.

There are two other important aspects of Huck's relationship with Pap. The first is his pragmatic attitude toward physical danger. When the Duke and Dauphin first invade the raft Huck knows they are frauds, but doesn't let on to avoid trouble. He says: "If I never learnt nothing else out of pap, I learnt that the best way to get along with his kind of people is to let them have their own way." Perhaps this is the hardest part of boyhood, the physical inferiority to adults. Huck very often keeps out of reach of trouble; during the killing of Buck Grangerford he climbs a tree, and when Colonel Sherburn drives off the lynching mob Huck says, "I could 'a' stayed if I wanted to, but I didn't want to." This pragmatic avoidance of bodily injury is related to the beatings Huck receives from his father throughout childhood: "He used to always whale me when he was sober and could get his hands on me." His father's brutality has an even deeper effect on him. Some critics see Huck as a normal boy with normal experiences who just naturally settles down with Aunt Sally at the end. But these critics must wink at the violence Huck is exposed to from his earliest youth. Locked for days at a time alone in the woods, and "all over welts" from Pap's "hick'ry," Huck is nearly killed as "the Angel of Death" by his delirious father. This is the final horror perpetrated upon Huck by Pap, for just after this Huck escapes by executing a mock murder of himself. This is hardly a normal boyhood; Huck is a wounded hero, and once dead to his father and St. Petersburg he seeks his true identity as he floats downstream with Jim.

Only if Huck is placed squarely in the middle of the novel can Jim's place in it be properly assessed. Huck has killed himself to the world of St. Petersburg before he meets Jim on Jackson's island, so Huck's desire for freedom is clearly anterior to any thought of his helping Jim. Jim is important in Huck's search for identity; he is a sometime father substitute, a human being worthy of Huck's admiration and love, and he is the central

issue when Huck makes his famous decision to "go to hell." But Jim's escape to freedom is not the central theme of the novel. The critics who are upset because Jim seems forgotten through the Grangerford-Shepherdson feud and the Wilks episode must remember that when the raft was sunk by a steamboat, Twain meant it to stay sunk. Huck and Jim had passed the mouth of the Ohio river at Cairo, the only real escape route for Jim. When they again begin their journey southward on the resurfaced raft their search for freedom is more symbolic than real.

When Huck makes his carefully considered decision to go to hell rather than betray Jim, he is stating explicitly a moral pragmatism he has observed from the novel's beginning. He later says: "If I had a yaller dog that didn't know no more than a person's conscience does I would pison him. It takes up more room than all the rest of a person's insides, and yet ain't no good, nohow." Conscience in the context means what the community's mores dictate; Huck would rather rely on his "sound heart," which is almost always a surer index of reality. This conflict between appearance and reality forces Huck to decide what norms he will use in acting. He decides to follow his heart rather than a community-trained conscience, even if it means going to hell. It is also clear that he cannot make any judgment about the evil of slavery in general, he only knows that he wants to help Jim. Twain is explicit on this point. When Aunt Sally asks Huck if anyone was hurt when the boat that brought him to town blew a cylinder-head, he says, "No'm. Killed a nigger." His relationship to Jim is a purely personal one, and it is on just this basis that the community's inability to treat Jim as a human being touches Huck most deeply.

As Huck and Jim progress down the river, the society along the shore manifests its true nature in a series of episodes. The Grangerford-Shepherdson feud is the first, and it is particularly shocking to Huck because beyond the obvious uselessness of the slaughter, he sees his friend Buck murdered, and the ineffectuality of Christianity's sermon of brotherly love. The irony is heightened by the fact that the feud is carried to its horrible conclusion just after both families have attended church together. And the cold-blooded murder of Buck by Shepherdson men permanently affects Huck: "It made me so sick I most fell out of the tree. I ain't a-going to tell all that happened—it would make me sick again if I

was to do that. I wished I hadn't ever come ashore that night to see such things. I ain't ever going to get shut of them—lots of times I dream about them." He sees the home he had found with the Grangerfords tragically destroyed by hatred and a false sense of honor.

Once free of these horrors, Huck returns gratefully to the raft. "We said there warn't no home like a raft, after all. Other places do seem so cramped up and smothery, but a raft don't. You feel mighty free and easy and comfortable on a raft." However, the sanctity of the raft is soon violated by the society of the shore, and once the Duke and Dauphin come on board Huck cannot escape, even momentarily, the assorted horrors of society. The Duke and Dauphin are confidence men *par excellence*. Their duplicity amazes and disturbs Huck, and he is so concerned about their cheating the Wilks girls that he takes extraordinary means to thwart them. The episode affects Huck strongly. As the mob heads for Peter Wilks' grave to exhume him, Huck gasps: "This was the most awful trouble and most dangerous I ever was in; and I was kinder stunned . . . there was nothing in the world betwixt me and sudden death but just them tattoo-marks." Huck escapes because of the mob's lust for gold, but he does so with mixed emotions; he leaves behind the only romantic interest in his life, Mary Jane Wilks. Upon parting with her he says: "I hain't even seen her since, but I reckon I've thought of her a many and a many a million times." For him she is "full of sand," the highest compliment he can pay her. She seems to share the soundness of heart of Huck himself. The final index of the Duke and Dauphin's callousness is their selling of Jim back into slavery. Huck is stunned. He can't understand how they could "serve Jim such a trick as that, and make him a slave again all his life, and amongst strangers, too, for forty dirty dollars." It isn't very long after this that Huck sees the last of the two charlatans, as they are run out of town on a rail. The compassionate statement Huck utters, under the circumstances, indicates how mature he has become in his journey toward self-knowledge.

Another episode Huck must remember in deciding to flee to civilization is the shooting of the harmless drunk Boggs by Colonel Sher-

burn. The tone is overly melodramatic, but Twain makes his point about Sherburn's false sense of honor and the stupidity and cowardice of mobs. Once again the ineffectuality of religion is evident as Boggs dies with a Bible under his head and on his chest, none of its teachings seeming to have penetrated anyone's heart. It is only one small Arkansas town, but it must stand in Huck's mind for hundreds of towns he wouldn't feel comfortable in.

The Phelps farm is the end of Huck's Journey in many ways. Here he is rejoined by Tom, and Jim is freed. Huck is still trying to find out who he is when he arrives; mistaken for Tom Sawyer by the Phelps he exclaims, "But if they was joyful, it warn't nothing to what I was; for it was like being born again, I was so glad to find out who I was." This turns out to be his best disguise because he knows so much about Tom. But by now he is so different from Tom, and so aware of Tom's association with the society he repudiates, that the final disguise is a ironical one. It is also ironical that the Phelps farm was patterned after the farm of Twain's uncle John Quarles near Florida, Missouri, a place he loved dearly. At first glance then, it would seem that Huck had found his identity as another Tom, and that he had found a real home at last. Some critics believe this is true. A closer look at the last episode reveals, however, that he does not accept Tom's romantic pretensions as anything but nonsense, and that Sally and Silas Phelps aren't must different from the other adults he has met. They live comfortably and eat well while they keep Jim in a hut and feed him bread and water. Tom and the Phelps are an integral part of the society Huck has seen throughout his journey. They accept the hypocritical conventions Huck simply cannot abide. Twain did not weaken at the end except for the rather unbelievable freeing of Jim by Miss Watson. Toward the central issue, Huck's journey toward self-realization, he maintained the hard view established throughout. Huck is going to "light out for the territory"; given his nature and society's characteristics the novel must end this way. What will happen to him there is pure conjecture, but his search for a society with a heart as sound as his is Twain's unforgettable version of the American dream.

The Best-Known Teenager: Huck Finn

Abigail Ann Hamblen

For some years now, adolescents have played a large part in American fiction. Writers have used them to point up the ills of society, or to engender a kind of warm nostalgia in the reader. Certainly the flaws in civilization are never so formidable—or so frightening—as when a young person is a foil for them. And certainly too, everyone has gone through the pleasures and pains of growing up: identification with a teen-ager is easy.

One of the first—and probably the most famous—of these is, of course, Huckleberry Finn. Lost in the perennial charm and freshness of his story, the reader may fail to realize that it is a subtle anatomy not only of society ("civilization"), but of the growth of a personality. Huck is certainly not grown up by the end of the book, but he is more mature than he appears in his opening remarks. He has escaped death several times; he has mingled with men of varying degrees of perfidy and villainy. He has become more intimately acquainted with "goodness," too. And he has "faced up" to a problem fundamental in the society of his day.

His maturing is best seen by examining the most salient characteristics of his personality. There is a kind of charm in doing so, for almost every reader, young or old, finds it easy to identify with him.

Basically, of course, he is a realist. Probably every student of the novel has pointed out that in this way he forms a complete contrast to his admired chum, Tom Sawyer, who is one of the world's great romantics. The irony, skillfully intruded—and less glaringly so than is usual with Mark Twain—is that Tom is constantly referring to Huck as a "numskull" or as a "saphead." For Huck's reluctance to be entirely reconciled to Tom's far-fetched flights of fancy points up his superior rate of growth (and probably his superior intelligence). In other words, there is more of the adult in Huck than in Tom at the same age.

Thus, in the beginning of the story, when Tom forms his gang of "robbers," Huck goes along a little mistrustfully, but feeling no real objection. There is only boredom at their raids

on vegetable carts, etc. Finally, however, he is half-inclined to believe Tom's assurances that they are going to rob a caravan of camels laden with jewels and treasure of all sorts. It turns out that the victims are simply members of an infant Sunday School class. (A rag doll, a doughnut, a hymn book and a tract constitute the booty carried off by the gang. And even these they are forced to return to the teacher.) Huck gives up, then. He takes no stock in Tom's explanation that the Sunday School class picnic is a magic disguise for the richly laden Oriental caravan. ("It had all the earmarks of a Sunday School to me," he says.)

Huck's practicality increases as he develops. He understands that the king and the duke are crude imposters, but sees no point in telling Jim. And during the last long siege of Tom's foolery in rescuing the already-free Jim, he cooperates resignedly, getting what pleasure he can out of capturing rats and snakes for Jim's dungeon, and out of bewildering poor Aunt Sally.

"This adulthood," or sense of reality, is teamed with shrewdness, a kind of native caniness much developed by the hard conditions of his life. There are certainly many times in the story when it would be fatal for him not to look facts in the face, just as there are many times when he evinces great wisdom about human psychology. "If I never learnt nothing else out of pap, I learnt that the best way to get along with his kind of people is to let them have their own way." From the depths of his wisdom he tells a polite fib to Mary Jane Wilk, observing to himself that "it's the little things that smooths people's roads the most, down here below. . . ." Again, at the Wilk funeral, noting the obliging undertaker, he says it again: "it's just the little things that make a man to be looked up to and liked."

Along with his shrewdness, and setting it off, is a refreshing naivete. At the circus he is distressed when the "drunk" man tries to ride the horse around the ring. When the performer finally stands up, and, shedding "17 suits," rides the horse bare back, Huck is tremendously relieved, but is sorry that the ringmaster has been so fooled. "Well, I felt sheepish enough

to be took in so, but I wouldn't a been in that ring master's place, not for a thousand dollars."

With this simple gullibility he has an amazing tenderness. And it is noteworthy that, as the story progresses, and Huck makes his steady way toward true adulthood, the loss of innocence does not affect this tenderness. Dr. Edgar Z. Friedenber, in his study, *The Vanishing Adolescent*, says that the early adolescent becomes aware of people as *people*, as the child is not. "In adolescence, other people begin to make a difference as individuals rather than as sources of support or obstructions to impulse. Shortly before the physical onset of puberty, a different quality of feeling suffuses one's perceptions of certain other individuals. They are loved."¹

The unfolding of this perception can be seen in Huck all through the story. In the beginning, for instance, Nigger Jim is simply a slave—a friendly black man, very helpful at times with his knowledge of "sperrits," and of weather signs. But as the days go by, as the raft sweeps along down the river, as the two are parted and united and parted again, Jim becomes more and more a personality, a friend to be *loved*. The moment comes when Huck has to face the fact that this slave is a human being, a person of kindness and humor and loyalty—and not a piece of property, as the law of the country asserts.

The boy thinks of the long slow trip on the raft: "in the day and in the nighttime, sometimes moonlight, sometimes storms, and we a-floating along, talking and singing and laughing." He lives over again the times he has returned to the raft after an absence to find Jim glad to see him, how he "would always call me honey, and pet me, and do everything he could think of for me, and how good he always was. . . ."

Yet clearly it is his legal duty to help Jim's owner repossess her property. If he doesn't, he will be disgraced for the rest of his life. ("It would get all around that Huck Finn helped a nigger to get his freedom; and if I was ever to see anybody from that town again I'd be ready to get down and lick his boots for shame. . . .")

Then, as he turns over memories of shared experiences, one incident stands out and decides the issue for him. At one point in their adventure, Huck has kept slave-hunters from coming onto the raft by saying they had smallpox on board. Jim has been pathetically grateful: "said I was the best friend old Jim ever had in the world, and the *only* one he's got now. . . ." The Negro is a *person*, a friend, and Huck can see him as nothing else; he will help him escape from slavery.

In fact, not until Huck sees the Wilk girls as distinct, lovable personalities, does he begin really to abhor the perfidy being practiced on them by the king and the duke. "I says to myself, this is *another* one that I'm letting him rob her of her money. And . . . they all jest laid theirselves out to make me feel at home and know I was amongst friends."

It is interesting to see, too, that Huck begins to develop an interest in girls—that is, in a particular girl. Mary Jane Wilk, the lovely red-head, sparks the first shy beginnings of this interest. To be sure, Mary Jane is nineteen to his thirteen or fourteen—but how many boys have first been conscious of feminine charm exemplified in an "older woman"? Huck's description is almost pitiful in its rough boyishness: "She had the grit to pray for Judas if she took the notion—there wan't no back-down to her, I judge. You may say what you want to, but in my opinion she had more sand in her than any girl I ever see; in my opinion she was just full of sand" . . . "It sounds like flattery," he adds, as if embarrassed, "but it ain't no flattery. And when it comes to beauty—and goodness, too—she lays over them all. . . ." If this smacks of a romanticism inconsistent with Huck's work-a-day way of looking at things, we must remember that love, at least temporarily, makes romantics of the sternest realists.

With tenderness toward others, with sensitive perception of others' unique personalities, goes a keen sympathy in others' suffering. It is a sympathy that embraces the unworthiest of objects as well as the most worthy. Though near the end Huck can recognize evil more readily than he could earlier, he is no less compassionate. Contrast his wondering acceptance of the Grangerford-Shepherdson feud and its attendant monstrosities with his loathing of the chicaneries of the king and the duke.

1. N. Y., Dell Pub. Co., Inc., 1962, p. 47.

When Buck Grangerford is shot in the river, Huck pulls his body ashore. "I cried a little when I was covering up Buck's face, for he was mighty good to me." He can show a similar gentleness much later when he sees the king and duke being ridden out of town on a rail. "I was sorry for them poor pitiful rascals, it seemed like I couldn't ever feel hardness against them anymore in the world. It was a dreadful thing to see. Human beings *can* be awful cruel to one another."

Perhaps because he is a canny realist, Huck can afford to be courageous. Or it may be that a cool head is everything. Huck never boasts of his courage; indeed, he frequently mentions being frightened, or "in a sweat." But when the moment of peril comes, so does the proper plan. In his dealings with Pap and with the king and the duke he frequently finds real need for both bravery and agility of invention.

Finally, it may be noted in passing that Huck Finn is a kind of unwitting poet. For all his down-to-earth point of view, he is keenly aware of beauty in the world about him, as well as beauty of character. It is probably unnecessary to mention that the passages of pure lyricism in *Huckleberry Finn* are exceedingly informal and unself-conscious. Such bits of description as that of a severe electrical storm on the island are typical: "It would get so dark that it looked all blue-black outside, and lovely; and the rain would thrash along by so thick that the trees off a little ways looked dim and spider-webby; and here would come a blast of wind that would bend the trees down and turn up the pale underside of the leaves; and then a perfect ripper of a gust would follow along and set the branches to tossing their arms as if they were just wild . . . dark as sin again in a second, and now you'd hear the thunder let go with an awful crash, and then go rumbling, grumbling, tumbling . . . towards the underside of the world, like rolling empty barrels downstairs — where it's long stairs, and they bounced a good deal, you know."

In the long, gentle account of the raft voyage (during a peaceful period) the sentences fall in cadences that have the rippling serenity of the river flow. The uncompromising facts of disagreeable things mingle with the charming. As "the east reddens up," the cabin can be seen on "t'other side of the river, being a

wood yard, likely, and piled by them cheats so you can throw a dog through it anywhere. . . ." When the morning breeze springs up, it is "cool and fresh and sweet to smell on account of the woods and the flowers; but sometimes not that way, because they've left dead fish laying (sic) around, gars, and such, and they do get pretty rank. . . ."

In the light of the now familiar knowledge concerning Mark Twain's detestation of the evils in society, it would be easy to treat these passages as a kind of secret writing. A breeze wafting over our world today certainly carries odors not only of "woods and flowers," but of the dead fish of rotting superstitions and evil philosophies "left laying around." Even Huck's observation that one is much freer and more comfortable on a raft than in "other places" that "seem so cramped up and smothery" may be read as a cryptic utterance against the constrictions and conventions of Western culture.

Whether or not we are justified in the above interpretation, the fact remains that Huck Finn's is a sensitive imaginative mind, quick to perceive the details that go to make up, not only the good and the beautiful, but the evil and the ugly about him. He does so without any apparent rancor against things as they are. Such obstacles to comfortable living as Miss Watson's preachments, the viciousness of Pap, the criminality of the king and the duke, the Grangerford feud, and the slavery of Jim, are simply that—obstacles to be overcome, or surmounted, or, temporarily, put up with. They are not for hatred.

2

This brings us to an examination of the "sivilization" which Huck decides, first and last, that he must duck. We have pointed out that he was sensitive and perceptive. This means, of course, that what he sees makes more of an impact on him than it would on a dullard, or on such a self-absorbed organism as Tom Sawyer. He sees the senseless cruelty of the Grangerford-Shepherdson feud, and is surprised that Buck can answer none of his questions rationally:

"What was the trouble about, Buck?—land?"

"I reckon maybe—I don't know."

"Well, who done the shooting? Was it a Grangerford or a Shepherdson?"

"Laws, how do I know? It was so long ago."
"Don't anybody know?"

"Oh yes, pa knows, I reckon, and some of the other old people; but they don't know now what the row was about in the first place."

"Has there been many killed, Buck?"

"Yes; right smart chance of funerals. But they don't always kill. Pa's got a few buckshot in him. . . ."

The puzzling thing about it all is the bravery on both sides, and a gallant refusal to see the enemy as anything but personally courageous.

Huck is sickened as he watches one day's fighting from a tree. "I wished I hadn't ever come ashore that night to see such things. I ain't ever going to get shut of them—lots of times I dream about them." It is not, he sees, a very rational culture, this "sivilization" from which he is anxious to flee.

And it has room for viciousness, too. The feuding of the Grangerfords and Shepherdsons is strangely innocent in contrast with the sordid activities of the king and the duke. These two villains have contributed immeasurably to the sum total of picturesque roguery in American literature. Their antics are without parallel in fiction. For sheer audacity, rapacity, and ugly deceit they stand alone. Huck, an unwilling observer and some-time participant in their schemes, cannot help an almost awed admiration at the inventiveness of their chicanery. "If they weren't the beatenest lot, them two frauds, that ever I struck." And "Well, I never see anything like that old blister for clean out-and-out cheek."

He keeps his own counsel as he observes the way the two adventurers work on the incredible ignorance and superstition of the people in the sleepy river towns. It is important that he do so, for he senses that these are dangerous men; he and Jim must be circumspect. But he has a grandstand seat, as it were, for observing the depths of perfidy and cynicism of which men are capable. It

does not enhance his pride in the human race, as he remarks once.

Perhaps the most important social force in Huck's "sivilization" is the exceptionally brutal form of Calvinism subscribed to by the majority. The boy first encounters its glaring paradox in Miss Watson and her teaching. Ordering him to be "good," the widow's stern sister expounds the glories of salvation and the horrors of hell. Her whole demeanor is such that Huck is sure he will prefer the latter if Miss Watson succeeds in making Heaven. The widow's earnest Bible teaching fails to interest him. Moses in the "bullrushes" is dead, and her pupil can see in his doings no relevance to life in a Mississippi river town. Obviously he wonders at the widow's interest in the strange actions of a man who had lived long ago in a foreign place.

More glaringly ironic than the discrepancy between Miss Watson and her idea of Heaven is the interest in the Grangerfords take in theology. Dedicated though they are to killing Shepherdsons at sight, they profess the most profound beliefs in Christian doctrines. In fact, their church-going and their doctrinal discussions bore Huck exceedingly: "It was pretty ornery preaching—all about brotherly love and such-like tiresomeness; but everybody said it was a good sermon, and they all talked it over going home, and had such a powerful lot to say about faith and good works and free grace and preforeordination and I don't know what all, that it did seem to me to be one of the roughest Sundays I had run across yet."

Or is this boredom? Can it be that, however dimly, Huck senses and is appalled by, the dichotomy in the lives of all these people, these Grangerfords and Shepherdsons who take their guns to church and keep "them between their knees," or stand "them handy against the wall"?

His is, as we have seen, an essentially practical nature. He is not equipped for philosophical meditation: he can only react to the attitudes and actions of those about him. When it comes to his decision about letting Jim escape from Miss Watson, he does not stop to question the justice of a God who would approve a boy's betraying trust and friendship,

Continued on page 19

Laboring Spiders

D. M. Pettinella

Hanging resilient thread on spray of shale
the laboring spider weaves its silken net.
Its granite eyes send sparks beyond the pale
of air and mist, and steel-like spittle thread.
Its labors as it tries to reach the top beyond
the shimmering ladder it entwines.
Irrked by wind, it almost seems to drop
but quickly dangles back to its safe lair.
Spiders are architects of nature's world;
seeking to snare their prey, building their
traps
Like hanging gardens with their victims curled
for which they hold secret burials.

The Prisoner

Gene Marine

Close against the cold gray wall
The prisoner stood, bleak-eyed, despaired,
And watched the guard pace slowly by,

Continued from page 18

who would hold affection and loyalty in such
low esteem as to command them to be dis-
regarded.

With Huckleberry Finn, of course, love triumphs over the sordid theology of the backwoods. "All right, then, I'll go to hell," he says, and tears up the note he has written telling Jim's owner where Jim is. This is no idle defiance. This is a long step toward manhood.

Yes, Huck is closer to being grown up at the end of the story than at the beginning. But he is still unrestrained by the shackles of "sivilization." Perhaps he always will be. Perhaps he may stand as a symbol of the freedom men might have if they would.

Smoking. Contemptuously, the guard threw
down
The wet-mouthed butt-end, and walked on:
The prisoner moved snake-swift,
Darting out his hand for the glowing end,
And cupped it carefully, his eyes less bleak,
His mind reflecting slowly what his hands had
done:

I am yet more free than I might be.

A Leaf

H. Michael Holt

I caught a leaf, as it faltered in its fall,
At first, I questioned it's being at all.
But then I knew, a journey commenced in the
spring,
Was nearing its end—in the soft autumn rain.
It had shaded the farmer at the end of his
row,
Sheltered a baby robin, from the devilment
of the crow,
Posed for an artist on the side of a hill,
Furnished these words for a poor poet's quill.
Would that I could have taken such a journey
as this,
And during the long winter months—be as
sorely missed.

Adam

Myna Pearson

Adam was a man, but never a boy.
He never knew the agony or the joy
Of running with the wind, and listening
To singing brooks, and singing
Winds; and finding blue-birds nesting
Among the apple-blossoms on the hill.
He never knew the thrill

Of fishing with a pin for a hook,
And stealing doughnuts from the cook.

He never knew a mother's love or felt mother's
kiss.

In fact there is a lot of things that Adam had
to miss.

The Appian Way

Thomas Dwight Thompson

Bury me under the Appian Way
Where the cobblestone peacefully lay
That I may listen and hear
The rousing past of a Roman cheer
Place my body not so deep
That I can't hear the mournful weep
Of bonded slaves and wooden wheels
And the past echo of a thousand heals
Place my body when I'm dead
Beneath the road where no man tread
So that I can see each passerby
And sleep eternal with an open eye
Place my head beneath the sod
Where kings and carts have often trod
And here my flesh my blood my bone
Will turn to living cobblestone
So bury me under the Appian Way
That in life I'll always stay
To see times soldiers fruitless rath
A' coming down the eternal path

A Dream of Fair Women

Grace Baer Hollowell

Brilliant
And brittle
As is the love
Of woman
For women

In a house all sweet
And flowery
When these enter
That other house
Just across the street
From here . . .

Let the Mother of God
Let the mother of me
Let the young Maria have
Before the coldness of the grave
Of old shoes worn and mouldering . . .

Before these overtake her
Let her too have
A few cherries
From the low-bending-cherry-tree.

Letter to Governor David R. Francis of Missouri

Villa di Quarto
Florence, Italy

May 26, 1904

Dear Governor Francis:

It has been a dear wish of mine to exhibit myself at the great St. Louis Fair and get a prize, but circumstances beyond my control have interfered, and I must remain in Florence. Although I have never taken prizes anywhere else, I used to take them at school in Missouri half a century ago, and I ought to be able to repeat now if I could have a chance. I used to get the medal for good spelling every week, and I could have had the medal for good conduct if there hadn't been so much corruption in Missouri in those days; still, I got it several times by trading medals and giving boot. I am willing to give boot now, if---however those days are forever gone by in Missouri, and perhaps it is better so. Nothing ever stays the way it was, in this changeable world.

Although I cannot be at the Fair, I am going to be represented there, anyway, by a portrait by Professor Gelli. You will find it excellent. Good judges here say it is better than the original. They say it has the merits of the original, and keeps still, besides. It sounds like flattery but it is still just true.

I suppose you will get a prize, because you have created the most prodigious and in all ways most wonderful Fair the planet has ever seen. Very well you have indeed, earned it; and with it the gratitude of the state and nation.

Sincerely yours,

Mark Twain

Mark Twain and Lyndon B. Johnson

Cyril Clemens

with foreword by Adlai E. Stevenson

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