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### Declaration

I hereby declare that the following thesis is based on the results of research carried out by me, that the thesis is my composition, and that it has not previously been presented for a higher degree. The research was carried out in the Department of English in the University of St. Andrews.

Glen T. Cameron

### Certificate

I certify that Glen T. Cameron has spent 6 terms of research under my direction and that he has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolution of the University Court (1967, No. 1) and that he is qualified to submit the following thesis for the Degree of Bachelor of Philosophy.

Jay Lee Parini

Mark Twain: Candid Reporter and Anguished Thinker  
A Study of the Short Stories of Mark Twain

A thesis submitted for  
the Degree of Bachelor of Philosophy  
by  
Glen T. Cameron



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## Table of Contents

Chapter I.       The Two Branches of Mark Twain's Fiction

Chapter II.      Mark Twain: Candid Reporter

Chapter III.     Mark Twain: Anguished Thinker

Appendix

Notes

Bibliography

## Introduction

The serious study of the American short story, and particularly of the short stories written by Mark Twain, has been neglected. Until the recent completion of The American Short Story: A Critical Survey (1973) by Arthur Voss, the only survey which dealt with the genre as it developed in the Nineteenth Century was F.L. Pattee's The History and the Development of the American Short Story (1923), leaving a gap of fifty years in which no survey appeared. Neither work deals extensively or in depth with Mark Twain and no other books or articles have given reasonable consideration to the short stories of Mark Twain. It is hoped that my work will make a small contribution to the correction of this academic disregard of the American short story and prepare me to carry out more widely based work in the genre.

In order to understand the short stories of Mark Twain clearly, one must take into account his biography. A great deal of the material in the thesis deals with the relationship between Mark Twain's life and his work. This emphasis upon the sources of fiction in the author's life need not lead one to overlook the task of a close reading of the stories as works of art. As Alfred Kazin states in his preface to On Native Grounds, the study of a writer's life and of his works should not be considered mutually exclusive. "It may be sufficient to say here that I have never been able to understand why the study of literature in relation to society should be divorced from a full devotion to what literature is in itself, or why those who seek to analyze literary texts should cut off the act of writing from its irreducible sources in the life of men."<sup>1</sup> While concentrating my research on the influence that events in Mark Twain's life had on his short stories, I have done justice to the stories as integral works of art.

The biographical criticism of the short stories serves two goals besides the obvious object of a more complete understanding of Twain's stories. I intend to present a common-sensical analysis of Mark Twain's arrival at a realistic style of writing which will perhaps shed light on the question of how the American authors in the latter Nineteenth Century came to a realistic style when they seemingly gave it so

little thought and wrote very little about realism as a literary concept or movement, unlike their European counterparts who developed self-consciously into a realist-naturalist school. By proving that Mark Twain came to a realistic style as a result of his training as a reporter, I will contribute to the study of the genesis of American realism. The first part of Chapter One will analyse Mark Twain's background, his view of art as representational and his informal literary creed. Chapter Two will examine the stories which fulfill this reportorial creed, thereby placing him in literary history as an early American realist.

The second ancillary goal of my research is to clarify the issue of Mark Twain's celebrated despair, purported to have arisen precipitately out of the traumas of bankruptcy and the death of his daughter, Susy Clemens. Just as Mark Twain's biography helps elucidate the stories and clarify Twain's arrival at a realistic style, the short stories can help to clarify his biography. The study of Mark Twain's short stories lends itself to the making of a chronology of the writer's despair which proves that his mental anguish and torment started much earlier than the 1880's when the two traumas usually cited as the causes of his mental anguish occurred. A study of Twain's longer works which were written by fits and starts over many years cannot provide the regular and steady chronicle of his attitudes that can be obtained from the study of his stories. The second half of Chapter One will present a more accurate idea of the development of Mark Twain's pessimistic view of life starting in the 1860's during his apprenticeship as a writer in the journalistic trade on the West Coast. Chapter Three will be an examination of the moralistic, quasi-philosophical stories which lie outside the tradition of Twain's realism and which express his growing despair resulting from the frustration of an academically untrained, skeptical mind seeking answers to the most difficult questions which life poses.

In providing information pertaining to these two subjects, Mark Twain's realism and his mental torment, I have elucidated the stories, most of which have not been deemed by others as worthy of consideration. Perhaps their place as proofs of Twain's reportorial realism and as a means of dating and following the breakdown of Mark Twain's amateur thinking will lead to a greater appreciation of the stories as notable works in themselves.

## Chapter I

The literary figure Mark Twain, as created by Samuel L. Clemens, is an American folk hero. Mark Twain's The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (1885), considered by literary critics to be one of the best American novels of the Nineteenth Century, is held in even higher esteem by the American people. Over ten million copies of the book have been sold, three-fourths of them in the United States.<sup>1</sup> Somehow, Mark Twain has caught the spirit of America in his writing so that it can be clearly understood and appreciated by the vast American public. To read Mark Twain's fiction is a form of self-congratulation by that reading public, for they find the portion of his fiction that they read celebrates a young, innocent, frontier orientated people in a humorous manner.

Mark Twain's success in capturing a phase of America's social history and the spirit of the frontier, indeed, a spirit which was typically American in its naive optimism dampened by the loss of innocence through experience, is recognized in all parts of the world. Mark Twain knew a tremendous popularity throughout the world, with England being the first country to recognize his genius. A French critic, Maurice Le Breton, has best summarized the achievement and place of Mark Twain in American Literature and American History.

Optimist or pessimist, dupe of his own emotions or coerced by his audience, Mark Twain does not appear to the American reader as a man of letters imprisoned by the demands of his vocation, but rather as a free spirit to whom one turns in order to breathe the virile, joyous, healthy atmosphere of an America which has disappeared. He survives as the evocator, the poet of a unique phase of American experience. There is an understanding between him and his public, just as there was during his lifetime. He continues to have an almost seductive charm for his readers. The reasons for his success are sentimental; America sees him, with real affection, as the first of her writers to draw from the American soil the material for an original and lasting work.<sup>2</sup>

The assertion that Mark Twain evoked the American spirit is graphically illustrated by the nature of most Twain criticism. It deals as much with questions of social history in

the United States as it does with Mark Twain. During the Van Wyck Brooks-Bernard De Voto controversy in the 1920's and early 1930's, the debate was centered upon the nature of American society in the West and in the East, whether there was a difference between them and what sort of life and aura existed in these regions.<sup>3</sup> Brooks asserted that the West had been dehumanizing in its rugged conditions; De Voto countered that it was an inspiration and an essentially American experience. Brooks felt that it had destroyed Twain's creative psyche; while De Voto argued that the West was the key to Twain's entire career. He claimed that Mark Twain had drawn upon frontier Missouri and the western United States for his vision and his fictive material.

A second point of contention was again more concerned with battling out what was good or bad in the American experience of Mark Twain's time. There was less concern for examining Twain's literary methods or artistry, than for making a judgement on the America which it was assumed that Mark Twain had captured in his fiction. The second question dealt with the East which Mark Twain had also known, but which he had largely ignored as literary material.<sup>4</sup> Brooks argued that Mark Twain had encountered a censorious and inhibiting standard of morality in the East, particularly represented by the editorial advice of Twain's wife, Livy, and his friend, William Dean Howells. Even worse, the rising business ethic and ethos accompanying the industrialization of America had blunted his creative force at first, and finally destroyed it. De Voto denied this. Eventually a middle ground was found upon which to agree about the American social past. The debate proved that Mark Twain and his fiction were greatly identified in the minds of readers with the recording of that social history.

The reason that Mark Twain is so naturally granted the title of "evocator...of American experience," is that his own American experience plays an integral part in his fiction. The biography of Mark Twain written by Jerry Allen, The Adventures of Mark Twain, incorporates episodes and people from The Adventures of Tom Sawyer (1876) and Huckleberry Finn into the biography. Delancey Ferguson's excellent biography, Mark Twain: Man and Legend, deals with the life and the fiction similarly. One of the purposes of this chapter is to propose that Mark Twain's direct and natural development from a newspaper reporter into a writer of autobiographical

fiction, written for the general, popular audience which he had come to know as a newspaperman and lecturer, is the cause of his mixing actual life and fiction. This will then help to make sense of Mark Twain's unruly, variety of short stories.

Mark Twain, the American hero, had always intended to aim his fiction at the general public which consequently came to adore him and his works. His The Innocents Abroad (1869) was the first of many books which he disseminated through a system of salesmen throughout the hinterlands of America in what is known as subscription publishing. In subscription publishing, there is a minimum of book orders received before the book is ever produced. The orders come from the segment of the public which is most unlitrary, many of the subscribers obtaining books only when they encountered the smooth-talking salesman. Twain was aware of this fact and not ashamed of it. "When a subscription book of mine sells 60,000 I always think I know whither 50,000 of them went....They went to people who don't visit bookstores."<sup>5</sup> Mark Twain liked this assurance of sales in the form of book subscriptions and always watched the numbers closely, but he also liked the idea of writing for the vast majority of unlitrary, sparsely educated American people. In a letter to Andrew Lang he defends his intentionally low-brow literature. "I have never tried, in even one single little instance, to help cultivate the cultivated classes. I was not equipped for it either by native gifts or training. And I never had any ambition in that direction, but always hunted for bigger game -- the masses."<sup>6</sup>

This statement deserves analysis in view of my contention that Mark Twain's literary career grew out of a newspaper reporter's vocation and methods. Twain states that he was not trained to "cultivate the cultivated classes," his experience as a journalist, as we shall see, did not provide this training although it did prepare Twain to hunt for "bigger game -- the masses." Newspaper reporting is strictly accountable to the rise and fall of subscription rates since the mass audience is the sole arbiter of taste. Mark Twain quite proudly and somewhat defiantly chose this mass audience for his fictional writing as it had inevitably been the audience of his apprenticeship as a reporter. "My books are water; those of the great geniuses are wine. Everybody drinks

water."<sup>7</sup> He quite obviously set for his target the same sort of group that newspaper editors try to please -- the majority of the population.

Mark Twain sought widespread popularity with remarkable success. Even a subscription writer generally did not attain the sales figures that he enjoyed. The reason for his success is quite simple. He gave the audience what it wanted, an enjoyable and understandable, straightforward body of literature with which they could empathize. Two of Twain's own statements will indicate the insight which an early journalistic and lecturing career gave him into the nature of an audience made up of a vast majority of the population. "Things which are outside of our orbit -- our own particular world -- things which by our constitution and equipment we are unable to see, or feel, or otherwise experience -- cannot be made comprehensible to us in words."<sup>8</sup> "Words realize nothing, vivify nothing to you, unless you have suffered in your own person the thing which the word is trying to describe."<sup>9</sup>

Mark Twain achieved great popularity by using subscriptions and by writing autobiographical material for the masses which they would understand and appreciate. This simple method, closely related to a reporter's method, ultimately earned for him the title, "evocator...of American experience." Having stated the nature and extent of his achievement and having put forth a thesis concerning the means by which he earned success, I shall proceed to elaborate the argument that Mark Twain's journalistic career formed his literary talents and dominated his literary theory of composition.

Mark Twain stated that he was not "trained" or "equipped" to "cultivate the cultivated classes." The fact that he had never enjoyed or been subjected to academic training was a source of pride to him. In a biographical note written by Twain and then published with his collected works as being composed by Samuel Moffett, Twain's nephew, there is a thinly disguised sense of pride in his native genius. "It is a fortunate thing for literature that Mark Twain was never ground into smooth uniformity under the scholastic emery wheel."<sup>10</sup> He felt that his education had not been academic or theoretical at all, rather, it had come through the experiences of a self-made genius. "I have been through the world's mill...and I know it through and through and from back to back -- its

follies, its frauds and vanities -- all by personal experience and not through dainty theories culled from nice moral books in luxurious parlours where temptation never comes."<sup>11</sup> This high estimation of personal experience, which recurs constantly in his writings and letters, is the key to his success, for it was the experience of a growing America. It provided the material for his literature and the newspaper office taught the literary skills necessary to place his experience before the public. "I was educated not only in the common school at Hannibal but also in my brother Orion's newspaper office, where I served in all capacities, including staff work. My literature attracted the town's attention 'but not its admiration' (my brother's testimony)."<sup>12</sup>

Actually, Orion's newspaper office provided higher education for Mark Twain. He began his education in the journalistic trade at a much earlier date. His father, John Clemens, died in 1847 when Samuel was only twelve years old. The family was destitute, having experienced various financial losses in Florida, Missouri and Hannibal, Missouri due to John Clemens' speculative nature, a trait that was passed on to both Orion and Samuel. Samuel eventually had to quit school and was apprenticed to a printer in Hannibal named Joseph Ament. At the remarkably young age of fourteen, he faced hard work for no pay with the only recompense being a steady diversion in the learning of the trade.<sup>13</sup> All indications are that he liked this new state of affairs better than he had liked school. His reminiscences certainly deal more tenderly with the apprenticeship than with the school days.

Samuel stayed in the profession from the age of twelve, when he started part-time work, until he was thirty-six years old, except for a four year period from 1857 to 1861 when he served as a cub pilot and pilot on the Mississippi River. He worked as a typesetter for Ament and then briefly in New York City where he had gone seeking adventure. In 1851, he returned to Hannibal to work for his brother Orion as the staff for his upstart paper, the Hannibal Journal. It was for Orion that he first began to write articles and news. From his humble start learning to spell and set type, he had advanced to assistant editor, but still without pay. Some of his early creative endeavors remain. They are rough in their humor and dialect, mostly given to burlesque and satire.

His apprenticeship to the literary creation of dialect, one of Twain's areas of supreme excellence, had its crude start in this small town newspaper. "If yees iver git 'im thar, I hope ye'll hould 'im tight. Och! he's the dreadfulest man I 'iver see."<sup>14</sup> Humor, another of Mark Twain's literary strengths, also began a long development toward perfection in Orion's Journal. "Quite a contract, doubtless the poor woman thinks when her mind wanders back to the courtship and the honeymoon! Well we are all subject to change -- except printers; they never have any spare change."<sup>15</sup>

The pun was apparently not a strong enough source of humor. Irony and satire, he soon learned, could produce far greater sensations. Orion left Samuel in charge while he traveled to Tennessee in hopes of selling the large tract of Tennessee land which the Clemens family had inherited. During Orion's absence, Samuel worked feverishly to make fun of a rival editor in Hannibal whom Samuel claimed was love-sick and rejected. Albert Bigelow Paine makes the claim in his interesting, if sometimes too sympathetic, account of Mark Twain's life that the editor threatened to thrash Samuel and Orion and then in humiliation, left town. We do know that Orion was displeased, as Twain said in his Autobiography. "My literature attracted the town's attention 'but not its admiration' (my brother's testimony)."

This use of strong humor that has a biting element of honesty and truth began in the Hannibal Journal and was developed throughout Twain's journalistic career to emerge in his fiction as a finely tuned means of exposing the truth about people, society and man's institutions. Ultimately, the truth which Twain sought to know and express through humorous irony became nihilistic. This negative element, first expressed in his humor grew until his humor, and eventually, his literary faculty failed to work successfully. I shall trace the further development of Twain's journalistic career on the West Coast, his hesitancy to leave journalism for authorship and show how he actually did not discard the methods and theories of journalism in his perception of literary art and in his own simple, informal theories of literary construction. I shall then trace the development of his humor, which began in Hannibal, through to its final failure as his untrained intellectual gropings led him to a despairing and

cynical solution to the questions raised by death, cruelty and pain in life.

Mark Twain worked for Orion in Hannibal, grew restless, traveled to Cincinnati and returned to his brother's employ on the Keokuk, Iowa Saturday Post. During his trips to explore the city of Cincinnati, he wrote travel letters which his brother published. The start of another major element in Mark Twain's literary career, the travel book based on travel notes and letters, also began in one of Orion's struggling publications.

After an eventful and broadening experience as a Pilot on the Mississippi River which carried a vast array of characters to the frontiers of that time, Clemens ended up as an unofficial Confederate soldier in the Civil War and then an unofficial deserter. War had not suited him, so he went West with Orion to the Nevada Territory. He mined for silver and gold with all the speculative fever and foolishness of his father. Finally, his letters home, which were printed in Hannibal, made their way back to Orion who used his position as Secretary of the Territory to show them to the Territorial Enterprise in Virginia City and to secure a steady job for his brother. Twain was asked to join the staff after having contributed several articles under the penname, Josh. The nature of his digging satire and humor, the honesty of contributions, necessitated some sort of personal protection. Shortly, he adopted the penname, Mark Twain, which began to stand for a particularly witty and penetrating humor.

The same sort of ironical writing which had caused trouble for Orion's publications, now brought danger to the reporter, Mark Twain. His hoaxes, the "Petrified Man" and the "Dutch Nick Massacre", were too subtle in their irony -- they were believed. His running battle with a reporter on the Virginia City Union named Clement Thiel, whom Twain dubbed, "The Unreliable", gave Twain a reputation as a spunky character. In a brief period as editor, he found himself faced with a challenge to duel. This episode has become legendary and apocryphal. Samuel Clemens, always intent on further elaboration of the colorful character, Mark Twain, had no small part in the creation of this legend. "I had looked around and selected several other people and delivered a new zest of life into them through warm criticism and

disapproval -- so that when I laid down my editorial pen I had four horse-whippings and two duels owing to me."<sup>16</sup> The notable point for my study is that Twain's editorial wit resulted in his being forced to flee the law because duels were illegal. It is important to observe that his humor, his honesty veiled in irony, could once again get out of hand and cause him discomfort.

Mark Twain fled to San Francisco where he worked for a number of publications as a reporter and, significantly, contributed to a literary weekly, the Golden Era at the same time as he carried on onerous duties as a reporter. His fame had spread with the borrowing of his Territorial Enterprise articles and hoaxes by California papers. He quit his job as a reporter; the routine writing and footwork were too much drudgery. Besides, his more creative humorous writing kept him very well until the satirical articles making fun of San Francisco police and public officials which he sent to Virginia City began to rebound to San Francisco. The humor again was too honest for his own good, and officials forced Mark Twain to flee the city. He spent three months exiled to the out-lying mining camps where he gained a rich experience of the new frontier.

He returned to San Francisco and continued the early practice which had started in Keokuk, Iowa of writing travel letters. The Sacramento Union commissioned him to write from Hawaii. He gained celebrity in this task by reporting the first personal accounts made by the survivors of the ship-wrecked Hornet. In California, he lectured successfully while always continuing his travel letters to the Territorial Enterprise. The desire to see his family and friends back East ended his Western experience, but not his journalistic career. It persisted even after he left the frontier where he had formed his ideas of what the American audience enjoyed and what made them laugh. Basically, they wanted a clear, surprising and often troubling glimpse of the truth. He was to find that the East would also appreciate this sort of writing in the form of travel letters from an American innocent, clear sighted and skeptical, who traveled abroad.

Mark Twain's letters from Europe and the Holy Land were published by the Alta California in San Francisco which had commissioned them and by the New York Tribune in the East.

They were so popular that in 1868 Mark Twain was urged to publish them in book form. A collection of his articles and sketches from California publications had been printed by Charles Webb under the title, The Jumping Frog (1867), with poor financial returns. Therefore, Mark Twain doubted that he wanted to become an author. His immediate goal was to settle into a home with a respectable and steady income from newspaper work. This goal was to be achieved by his marriage to Olivia Langdon in 1870 and his purchase of part ownership in the Buffalo, New York Express of which he became editor. However, the goal was not gained immediately upon his return from the Holy Land. Before settling down, he experienced American politics and newspaper work as it existed in Washington, D.C. while he was employed as Senator William Nye's secretary.

The prospect of publishing a book to subscribers, so much like writing for a newspaper with a tangibly large audience and sound finance, finally persuaded Mark Twain to work up his travel letters into the immensely popular, The Innocents Abroad. Then he turned from this project which he considered a distraction to the task of earning Olivia Langdon's hand and winning a respectable, stable position in society. He had drifted West with the frontier as a journalist and had traveled abroad, experiencing and enjoying much of interest; but at the age of thirty-four, he felt the need to settle down without suspecting that authorship of books would be a part of this stable, secure life. His daughter Susy recorded this fact years later in her biography of Mark Twain written as a child in 1886: "...and the other evening, as papa and I were promonading [sic] up and down the library, he told me that he didn't expect to write but one more book, and then he was ready to give up work altogether, die, or do anything; he said that he had written more than he had ever expected to,..."<sup>17</sup> At the time of his return from Europe and the Holy Land, Twain had not intended to write even one book. "I have other propositions for a book, but have doubted the propriety of interfering with good newspaper engagements, except my way as an author could be demonstrated to be plain before me."<sup>18</sup>

The move from journalist to author was neither planned, nor decisive. In effect, the move was not from one profession to another, not from one writing method to another; it was

simply a move from one literary outlet to a different one. Twain finally rejected first the newspaper and then the magazine as his primary publishing modes, in favor of subscription publishing which operated much like the former two outlets for his work and served the same audience. After Twain succeeded as an author, he developed a low opinion of newspaper and magazine work.

The first national success for Mark Twain had been the publishing of "Jim Smiley and the Jumping Frog" in the Saturday Press, November 18, 1865. That a simple sketch, similar to the rest of his California journalistic output would be so highly regarded came as a surprise to Mark Twain. "To think that, after writing many an article a man might be excused for thinking tolerably good, those New York people should single out a villainous backwoods sketch to compliment me on! -- 'Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog' -- a squib which would never have been written but to please Artemus Ward, and then it reached New York too late to appear in his book."<sup>19</sup> He felt that it was hardly possible that the sort of work he was doing in San Francisco could be worthy of this acclaim, or that his work could be successful in a book form. While in San Francisco, Mark Twain had been confronted by this dubious possibility. "He [Bret Harte] wants me to club a lot of old sketches together with a lot of his, and publish a book. I wouldn't do it, only he agrees to take all the trouble."<sup>20</sup> The project was so doubtful as not to merit any of his time or effort, and was never done.

These judgements by Mark Twain, the reporter, indicate that his move into book publishing was not self-conscious or planned. He did not esteem himself capable of writing outside his role as a newspaper reporter and did not regard authorship as a lucrative profession. This was a strong deterrent to a man who had always yearned and schemed for the fortune which would provide a sense of security and wealth that he had missed in his youth. "Eighteen or twenty years later I arrived in New York from California and by that time I had failed in all my other undertakings and had stumbled into literature without intending it."<sup>21</sup> The literature which he refers to is an article for the Sunday Mercury, "Jim Wolfe and the Cats", which he went on to describe in his Autobiography as an incident from his youth in Hannibal,

Missouri that he simply put on paper as he had been doing for various newspapers for over fifteen years. He noted that it paid him twenty five dollars.

After the compilation and editing of his travel letters for subscription publication, Mark Twain expected that the next step in his career was to return to the newspaper field. He bought one-third ownership in the Buffalo, New York Express and endeavoured to settle down to the work of an editor, writing witty articles and exposing the wrongs of society. Albert Bigelow Paine, the official Mark Twain biographer who became a friend and disciple of Mark Twain, was prepared to admit that Mark Twain began humbly with little regard for his own literary abilities. "The fact that he was prepared to settle down as an editorial contributor to a newspaper in what was then only a big village is the best evidence of a modest estimate of his talents."<sup>22</sup>

The later condemnation of his newspaper works as being ephemeral and low grade made by Twain in retirement, indicates the increased self-respect which fame and years of writing brought. The work that Mark Twain did during this time of transition from newsman to author was later rejected, but this does not deny that at the time, he thought that the newspaper and magazine would best provide wealth and success for him. The sketches from this period, written for Galaxy Magazine and the Buffalo Express, were compiled in The Stolen White Elephant (1882). The work that Osgood put together in this volume was described by Mark Twain as a "collection of rubbishy sketches, mainly."<sup>23</sup> The work suffered from the lack of time which could be spent on each article and from the prevalent view in the Nineteenth Century that the short story was not a distinct genre with integrity, but simply a short piece. Anything written for or suitable for periodical publication in one installment was a short story. Twain's short stories were all written according to this formula with never a thought that a volume of short stories need be more than "a collection of rubbishy sketches,..."

The success of The Innocents Abroad led him to believe that his newspaper and magazine work could be sold to the subscription book audience. The move to book length works was indirectly made through the realization that his articles could become the raw material for books. "I am going to edit

a ten-page department in the 'Galaxy' Magazine. The berth is exceedingly easy and the salary liberal. I am to rent the matter to them, not sell it -- and so I can use it in book form afterwards without sharing the proceeds with them."<sup>24</sup> The reference to his not sharing the proceeds indicates his constant desire for wealth and it also alludes to his experience with The Innocents Abroad in which he had been forced to go to California and plead for the release of the Alta California's rights to his Holy Land travel letters so that he could publish them. It is obvious that the lesson had been learned and the pattern set for his future book publications based on journalistic writing.

It would perhaps be enlightening to list the works by Mark Twain which were published first in newspapers or magazines. John C. Gerber in "The Relation between Point of View and Style in the Works of Mark Twain", lists part of the journalistic output of Mark Twain that found its way into book form. There were twenty five letters to the Sacramento Union about the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii), twenty six letters to the Alta California about a trip across the Nicaraguan Peninsula and back East, fifty three letters to the Alta California and a few to the New York Tribune and Herald about the Holy Land excursion which were used in the writing of The Innocents Abroad and Roughing It (1872).<sup>25</sup> The articles written for the Atlantic Monthly entitled "Old Times on the Mississippi" were revised and compiled in the book Life on the Mississippi (1883). His travel books A Tramp Abroad (1880) and Following the Equator (1897) were written from notes, personal letters and articles for the Atlantic Monthly.

Mark Twain's first three books, The Jumping Frog, etc., The Innocents Abroad, and Roughing It were all written by the same method; they were compilations of material used first in newspapers and magazines. His fourth book was a collaborative work, The Gilded Age (1873) which drew from his experiences in Washington, D.C. for satire and from his relative, James Lampton, for a humorous character. Mark Twain began to move away from reporting scenes and anecdotes based on his recent travels and to move toward a recollection of his own past. "As he grew older his increasing resentments against the initiations of the moment made it harder for him

to turn them immediately to literary account,....Only when his mind could roam at will in a past simplified and made peaceful by distance could he take his ease in his writing. His day of making reportorial books according to contract was almost over."<sup>26</sup> The use of immediate experiences as a reporter in a humorous way, in his early career with mild irony and later with increasingly bitter satire, was changed to recollections of the past as his quest for honesty and truth led him to more negative conclusions about the present. He began to report at a distance. His journalistic career maintained an influence in this respect, it created a reportorial element, a concern with realistic fiction and art.

The conception of art as being representative of life, as reflecting actuality, was one of the strongest ties which Mark Twain had with the folk mind of America.<sup>27</sup> In The Innocents Abroad, the Great Masters all receive harsh treatment by the American innocent for being overly concerned with otherworldliness. "To me, there is nothing tangible about [their] imaginary portraits, nothing that I can grasp and take a living interest in."<sup>28</sup> Opera was a constant scapegoat for Twain to attack, because it was unnatural and required a cultivated taste to be appreciated. "We have the grand opera; and I have witnessed and greatly enjoyed the first act of everything which Wagner created, but the effect on me has always been so powerful that one act was quite sufficient; whenever I have witnessed two acts I have gone away physically exhausted; and whenever I have ventured an entire opera the result has been the next thing to suicide. But if I could have the nigger show back again in its pristine purity and perfection I should have but little further use for opera."<sup>29</sup> The "nigger show" of his youth, from the time when he had been a part of the unique frontier America, was the folk ideal, Opera was an outrage. "He preferred Wagner in pantomime, he said; the singing in Lohengrin reminded him of 'the time the orphan asylum burned down'."<sup>30</sup>

The view that art should be natural, should deal with the actual and true elements of life is expressed time and again. The main criterion was that art reflect life, that it report to the viewer the way things actually are. "Five ornamental chairs, seats covered with a coarse rag, embroidered in flat expanse with a confusion of leaves such as

no tree ever bore,...."<sup>31</sup> If it did not deal with things as they are, he felt that it was false, almost insane. But he also believed that his judgement would change nothing -- that art in its highest forms would never be appreciated by him and that in fact, by established standards, his judgement in art would never be good. "This opera of 'Tristan and Isolde' last night broke the hearts of all witnesses who were of the faith, and I know of some, and have heard of many, who could not sleep after it, but cried the night away. I feel strongly out of place here. Sometimes I feel like the one sane person in the community of the mad....

Well, I ought to have recognized the sign -- the old, sure sign that has never failed me in matters of art. Whenever I enjoy anything in art it means that it is mighty poor."<sup>32</sup>

The folk view of fine art was a worthy one in his estimation, and he felt no desire to change. The sophisticated art which he chastised himself for not liking was appreciated by many out of a sense of duty, he suspected. While touring Europe, he noted this fact and was too honest to join in the sham. It took more than a guide pamphlet or a critic's decree to convince him that a masterpiece in any form of art was to be admired. In fact, he felt that it was usually admired without meeting personal standards. "It's [Paradise Lost] a classic, just as Professor Winchester says, and it meets his definition of a classic -- something that everybody wants to have read and nobody wants to read."<sup>33</sup>

Mark Twain's reading certainly answered to no sense of duty, it was almost completely unliterary.<sup>34</sup> "I never care for fiction or story books. What I like to read about are facts and statistics of any kind."<sup>35</sup> The books which he read were not exclusively within the realm of facts and statistics; he spoke more specifically of the types of reading which he enjoyed. "I like history, biography, travels, curious facts and strange happenings and science. And I detest novels, poetry, and theology,...."<sup>36</sup>

The one dominant criterion in all of his reading, one which eliminated nearly all fiction, as he judged it, was his hatred of sentimentality. He wanted sincere renderings of true emotional states which were not overdone for effect and which did not set a premium on high blown language for

its own sake. "There is one thing which I can't stand and won't stand from many people. That is sham sentimentality -- the kind a schoolgirl puts into her graduating composition; the sort that makes up the Original Poetry column of a country newspaper; the rot that deals in 'the happy days of yore,' 'the sweet yet melancholic past,' with its 'blighted hopes' and its 'vanished dreams' -- and all that sort of drivel."<sup>37</sup> This sort of "sham sentimentality" prevented his reading diverse authors such as Oliver Goldsmith, Jane Austen, Sir Walter Scott, James Fennimore Cooper and Bret Harte. There was little fiction aside from that of William Dean Howells which he could praise, and in his criticism of others, his anger often knew no bounds. The important observation to be made concerning his criticism of various writers is that his ideal in fiction reflects his experience in journalism and his kinship with the folk mind view of art: the novel or short story should be a sincere, unaffected attempt to report or reflect actual life as we know it.

The author who is aware of himself and his florid language did not arouse Twain's admiration, on the contrary, a self-conscious literary artist bored him. The plot had to move along quickly, the scenes change regularly, and the omniscient narrator avoid intrusions; but, the primary concern was with the author's duty to portray actualities of life, to do otherwise was considered artificial by Twain and this was the strongest criticism that could be made. "I can't stand George Eliot and Hawthorne and those people; I see what they are at a hundred years before they get to it and they just tire me to death. And as for 'The Bostonians', I would rather be damned to John Bunyan's heaven than read that."<sup>38</sup> The three authors mentioned were all considered guilty of a pointless overdevelopment of their characters and plots.

The same could be said for nearly the entire tradition of the short story in America which had been so greatly influenced by Washington Irving's tender sensibility in writing. The women writers of the mid-century had then developed an avoidance of the ugly, daimonic, negative, violent and common by embroidering and elaborating upon the delicate and protected elements of existence, imbuing their work with overdoses of sentimentality and a false sense of sorrow which

one can overcome with remarkable ease. This concern with a narrow vision had as its mouthpiece, "Godey's Lady's Book", a journal devoted almost exclusively to feminine contributors. Twain is known to have read it only once, even though his subscribing to numerous magazines and journals indicates his great interest in periodicals. "Read self to sleep with The Lady's Book of 44 years ago -- such pieces as the Broken Vow (Mrs. Norton) The Lone Indian &c. They were a sad and sentimental lot in those days."<sup>39</sup> Those two attributes were enough to put Mark Twain off any further reading of this school of feminine writers.

In an extended comment on The Vicar of Wakefield, Oliver Goldsmith, Mark Twain attacks the implausible portrayal of characters, the moralistic bent, the sentimentality and the humor as he saw it in the book.

Also, to be fair, there is another word of praise due to this ship's library: it contains no copy of the Vicar of Wakefield, that strange menagerie of complacent hypocrites and idiots, of theatrical cheap-john heroes and heroines, who are always showing off, of bad people who are not interesting, and good people who are fatiguing. A singular book. Not a sincere line in it, and not a character that invites respect; a book which is one long waste-pipe discharge of goody-goody puerilities and dreary moralities; a book which is full of pathos which revolts, and humor which grieves the heart. There are few things in literature that are more piteous, more pathetic, than the celebrated 'humorous' incident of Moses and the spectacles.<sup>40</sup>

The key to his criticism is his statement that there is not a "sincere line in it." Sincerity, honesty and unartificial writing were attained by an author's not being conscious of himself as an artist; he must not take liberties with characters and he must simply tell the story without sermonizing. Sincerity was an adherence to the actual; it is considered essential to good reporting in newspaper writing and Twain considered it the key to good fictional writing by extension of the principle from his journalistic apprenticeship. A lack of sincerity with regard to this rule meant total failure in his eyes. "In the past year [I] have read Vicar of Wakefield and some of Jane Austen. Thoroughly artificial."<sup>41</sup> Nothing more than the word, artificial, was needed as a condemnation. It summed up the reporter's sole criterion that the writing be true to life as observed by him.

Mark Twain's critical position is obviously naive. Fiction, inevitably an artifice, was considered by the unsophisticated Mark Twain, the reporter with a kinship to the folk mind of America, as a form of writing which could not afford to be artificial.<sup>42</sup>

Mark Twain was aware that his training and experience did not give him the skills needed to understand or appreciate art, specifically fiction. He was not concerned with altering this state and in fact rather enjoyed playing the rebel who just might be right -- no matter how uneducated and narrowly read. "When I take up one of Jane Austen's books such as Pride and Prejudice, I feel like a barkeeper entering the kingdom of heaven. I know what his sensation would be and his private comments. He would not find the place to his taste, and he would probably say so." He goes on by recalling his wife's humiliation because he was not well read and then concludes: "I don't know anything about anything and never did. My brother used to try to get me to read Dickens, long ago. I couldn't do it -- I was ashamed; but I couldn't do it. Yes, I have read The Tale of Two Cities, and could do it again. I have read it a good many times; but I never could stand Meredith and most of the other celebrities."<sup>43</sup>

This anti-intellectual pride combined with his early successes as a reporter of his travel experiences in The Jumping Frog, The Innocents Abroad, and Roughing It helped to entrench Mark Twain in his own reportorial theory of literary criticism which I shall examine shortly. He remained committed to this method long enough to produce some good short stories and his masterpiece, Huckleberry Finn, before he succumbed to deterministic philosophical speculations concerning God and the human race which overwhelmed his ironical humor, turned it to bitter satire and finally destroyed it.

Several further comments on authors which Twain made will shed light on the reportorial theory that Twain carried into his fictional career from his journalistic career. In a letter to the popular literary critic and Columbia University professor, Brander Matthews, Twain presents several points in his reportorial theory. He attacks artificiality again and shows his agreement with the American folk view of art as a reflection of the actual. Ostensibly, the letter is a critique of Sir Walter Scott, but it serves more as a

rare statement of Twain's literary principles.

Dear Brander, -- I haven't been out of my bed for 4 weeks, but -- well, I have been reading a good deal, & it occurs to me to ask you to sit down, some time or other when you have 8 or 9 months to spare, & jot me down a certain few literary particulars for my help & elevation. Your time need not be thrown away, for at your further leisure you can make Columbian lectures out of the results & do your students a good turn.

1. Are there in Sir Walter's novels passages done in good English -- English which is neither slovenly nor involved?

2. Are there passages whose English is not poor & thin & commonplace, but is of a quality above that?

3. Are there passages which burn with real fire -- not punk, fox-fire, make-believe?

4. Has he heroes & heroines who are not cads and cadesses?

5. Has he personages whose acts & talk correspond with their characters as described by him?

6. Has he heroes & heroines whom the reader admires -- admires and knows why?

7. Has he funny characters that are funny, and humorous passages that are humorous?

8. Does he ever chain the reader's interest & make him reluctant to lay the book down?

9. Are there pages where he ceases from posing, ceases from admiring the placid flood & flow of his own dilution, ceases from being artificial, & is for a time, long or short, recognizably sincere & in earnest?

10. Did he know how to write English, & didn't do it because he didn't want to?

11. Did he use the right word only when he couldn't think of another one, or did he run so much to wrong words because he didn't know the right one when he saw it?

12. Can you read him and keep your respect for him? Of course a person could in his day -- an era of sentimentality & sloppy romantics -- but land! Can a body do it to-day?.....

...Lord, its all so juvenile! so artificial, so shoddy, and such wax figures & skeletons & specters. 44

Of course a number of the points made by Twain are purely rhetorical, made to highlight his disgust and anger, but several of the questions do illuminate and reiterate what

Twain felt was correct and appropriate in fiction of his time. Firstly, he was concerned with the use of diction as a practical means of portraying the scenes and characters, not for its own sake as an aural delight or a sign of the author's presence, perhaps even a display of the author's genius. The diction should be refreshing, interesting, but straightforward and functional. Secondly, he was concerned with consistency. Mark Twain was an extremely careful reader as Sydney J. Krause has shown in his fine analysis of Mark Twain's critical faculties and methods. If persons in the story did not stay in character, Twain was upset and irritated. His marginal notes on Bret Harte best illustrate this fact.<sup>45</sup> As a result of inconsistencies or impossibilities cropping up in a story, he would lose respect for the characters and the author. Thirdly, the bombast, the overly embroidered development of characters and situations taxed his interest in a work and contributed to his fury when, after all the elaborations, a character would act inconsistently or the inevitable consequences, so long prepared for, would simply occur with no plausible twist or surprise. The real problem behind all of these objections was the question of sincerity and artificiality. The reporter, the craftsman writing for a common-sensical, pragmatic and widely uneducated American audience, like Twain was himself, could not afford to take his eye from things as they were experienced by that audience to create things as he would like them to be or as he needed for a given staged effect.

I have provided some examples of what Mark Twain disliked, that being nearly the entire tradition of literature before his time, a tradition which was predominantly British, even in its American literary copies. He liked the unassuming language and style of a uniquely American genre, the frontier schoolboy's essay. H. N. Smith and Frederick Anderson document this approval from Twain's writings in Nevada: "...the cutting to the bone of the subject with the very first gash, without any preliminary foolishness in the way of a gorgeous introductory;...the brief, monosyllabic sentences...; the penchant for presenting rigid, uncompromising facts for the consideration of the hearer, rather than ornamental fancies; [and] the depending for the success of the composition upon its general merits, without tacking artificial aids to the end

of it, in the shape of deductions or conclusions, or clap-trap climaxes...."<sup>46</sup> The key to the schoolboy essay is its total concern with the subject, not wasting effort on language as an end in itself. The author stays out of sight in the unassuming role of fact presenter and honest reporter.

William Dean Howells, whom Twain respected most highly as a writer and critic, came from this same sort of country school and print shop background. He too remained loyal to his experience and gave it first priority in literary creation. Howells is considered the hub of the American realists, the man who provided encouragement and guidance to Twain and support to Henry James and Hamlin Garland. His writing was perfect in Mark Twain's eyes because it reported life. "If your literature has not struck perfection now, we are not able to see what is lacking. It is all such truth -- truth to the life; everywhere your pen falls it leaves a photograph...."<sup>47</sup>

To sum up Twain's reading, one would have to say it was guided by a greater concern with experience, with details and elements of human existence than with style or fanciful creations of the human mind. Howells said of Twain's reading, that "...he was always reading some vital book. It might be some out-of-the-way-book, but it had the root of the human matter in it: a volume of great trials; one of the supreme autobiographies; a signal passage of history, a narrative of travel, a story of a captivity, which gave him life at first-hand...."<sup>48</sup>

Besides disliking most fiction that he sampled, Mark Twain avoided reading fiction on the grounds that it could inhibit his carefully guarded originality. "I have always had a fear that I should get into someone else's style if I dabbled among the modern writers too much, and I don't want to do that."<sup>49</sup> He stated on another occasion, "I am not in the imitation business."<sup>50</sup> This was in reply to being accused of plagiarising Bret Harte. The plagiaristic article had not been written by Twain, but attributed to him. Such an accusation infuriated Twain. Being rebellious by nature against all conventions, he cherished his originality. Early in his career, he had envied Adam. "What a good thing Adam had -- when he said a good thing he knew nobody had said it before."<sup>51</sup>

Twain's desire to do and say new things led him to reject two main and related institutions in American literature,

the prevalent awe of British literature and the Eastern American standards of literary excellence. The first took the form of a nearly exclusive publication of English authors, due in part to the copyright laws which enabled piracy. American publishers could copy the typeset of a novel from England and publish it with no royalty payments, whereas an American novel would have to be set in type for the first time and royalties paid to the author. For this reason, only short stories and literary annuals or gift books used American material predominantly. Twain rejected this. "For some years a custom has been growing up in our literature to praise everything English and do it affectionately. This is not met halfway, and so it will cease."<sup>52</sup>

This reverence for English literature meant that the effete Eastern standards, as Twain considered them, were merely borrowings. His hard hitting honesty, his devotion to the American experience, "photographs" of life in America, stood in the way of his acceptance of these Eastern standards. In his early career in the East, it resulted in his being rejected by the literary aristocracy in the East, while Bret Harte arrived from the West to a warm recognition. Twain accused Harte of borrowing lavishly from Dickens and this identity with the prevailing literary traditions, if not actually the result of borrowing, certainly gave Harte early fame when his rebellious contemporary, Mark Twain, was ignored. Mark Twain was committed to reporting life in America as he knew it and to letting his style adapt to that goal. His strong independence, his loyalty to original work kept him from compromising to the literary Brahmins of the East and insured that the popular audience would eventually come to celebrate themselves through his "photographs" of them.

Mark Twain, having read little fiction, could hardly theorize about it. He was unaware that his literature would play a part in the introduction of realism to literature or even that his writing belonged to any particular school. His desire for originality would have made such a realization objectionable. Harold Aspiz, in his widely quoted Ph.D. thesis, "Mark Twain's Reading," notes this lack of consciousness by Twain of constructive theories and styles in literature and quotes Twain on the subject. "Now and then, on the stream of time, small gobs of that thing which we call genius drift

down and a few of them lodge at some particular point, and others collect about them and make a sort of intellectual island -- a towhead, as they say on the river -- such an accumulation of intellect we call a group, or school, and name it."<sup>53</sup> This naive and simplified view of literary styles and periods gives ample indication of Twain's small concern with literary criticism as a discipline.

The fact that all of Mark Twain's attempts to write plays or adapt his works for the stage failed, gives a further indication of his naivety, lack of self-conscious artistic devices and ignorance of constructive rules in literature. He assumed that his plays could work much like his stories and novels which all use an anecdotal, and relaxed structure. He was unaware of the need to develop a tight plot and a more economic use of language in dramatic writing. Years of putting forth articles for newspapers and lecturing before audiences employed and developed his knack for spinning out a humorous yarn, filled with vivid characters and exact details, but it did not prepare him for the task of arranging plot and developing dramatic effects on the stage. Likewise, we shall see that his background and his writing methods, filled with enthusiasm but without any real self criticism, prevented his short stories from using many of the devices and effects of the short story as an organic whole. Unaware of the short story as a separate genre, as was the case for most writers in the Nineteenth Century, and unaware of the new recognition his contemporaries late in the Century were giving the short story, he failed as a short story writer, particularly from a formalistic point of view. "In any case, we can point to the fact that those authors who have excelled in the American short story have all indicated a deliberate awareness of the problems of their craft: Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, Henry James, Ernest Hemingway, and William Faulkner; those who have not had this awareness -- Mark Twain, Theodore Dreiser, and Thomas Wolfe -- are best known for their longer fiction."<sup>54</sup>

Although Mark Twain was not a literary theoretician and critic, his writings do contain an informal creed. I shall examine the various statements made in letters, notebooks and articles which must suffice as a casual formulation of Twain's literary theories of construction and standards of excellence. These statements are consistent with his experience as a

journalist, with his kinship to the folk mind of America, with his view of art and specifically, literature, which he read sparingly. His theories explain why he was a successful writer, recognized as a great American author. In the statements, the primary concern is with an honest report of one's own experience, especially external facts from this experience.

In notations for an intended article in the Princeton Review, he expresses his distrust of imagination and artificiality and his reliance upon facts and experiences to control the imagination.

For Princeton Review -- to be written in April, 1888: If you attempt to create a wholly imaginary incident, adventure or situation, you will go astray and the artificiality of the thing will be detectable, but if you found on a fact in your personal experience it is an acorn, a root and every created adornment that grows up out of it, and spreads its foliage and blossoms to the sun will seem reality, not inventions. You will not be likely to go astray; your compass of fact is there to keep you on the right course.

Mention instances in this article where I think the author was imaginary. Others where he built upon a solid and actually lived basis of fact.<sup>55</sup>

Two more quotations stress the essential importance of previously experiencing what you write about.

Literature is an art, not an inspiration ...And its capital is experience -- and you are too young, yet to have much of that in your bank to draw from...Is it hypocritical to notice these little blemishes? No -- not in this case: for I wish to impress upon you this truth: that the moment you venture outside your own experience, you are in peril -- don't ever do it....Whatever you have lived, you can write -- & by hard work & a genuine apprenticeship, you can learn to write well; but what you have not lived you cannot write, you can only pretend to write it -- you will merely issue a plausible-looking bill which will be pronounced spurious at the first counter.<sup>56</sup>

"A man who attempts to wield a dialect which he has not been actually bred to is a muggins. Neither Bret Harte nor Dickens nor anybody else can write a dialect not acquainted with."<sup>57</sup>

Implied in the statements is the need for apprenticeship which he would refer to often. Although it is not stated that a newspaper was the only place to apprentice, it certainly was the only place which Twain could have possibly learned his writing skills, not having been educated formally after fourteen years of age, nor having engaged in a regimen of self-education.

The stock in trade of a writer then, was his experience and Mark Twain was extremely proud of his own inventory of experience.

...I confine myself to life with which I am familiar when pretending to portray life. But I confined myself to the boy-life out on the Mississippi because that had a peculiar charm for me, and not because I was not familiar with other phases of life. I was a soldier two weeks once in the beginning of the war, and was hunted like a rat the whole time. Familiar? My splendid Kipling himself hasn't a more burnt-in, hard-baked, and unforgettable familiarity with that death-on-the-pale-horse-with-hell-following-after, which is a raw soldier's first fortnight in the field -- and which, without any doubt, is the most tremendous fortnight and the vividest he is ever going to see.

Yes, and I have shoveled silver tailings in a quartz-mill a couple of weeks, and acquired the last possibilities of culture in that direction. And I've done 'pocket-mining' during three months in the one little patch of ground in the whole globe, where Nature conceals gold in pockets -- or did before we robbed all of those pockets and exhausted, obliterated, annihilated the most curious freak Nature ever indulged in....

And I've been a prospector and know pay rock from poor when I find it -- just with a touch of the tongue. And I've been a silver miner and know how to dig and shovel and drill and put in a blast. And so I know the mines and the miners interiorly as well as Bret Harte knows them exteriorly.

And I was a newspaper reporter four years in cities and so saw the inside of many things; and was a reporter in a legislature two sessions and the same in Congress one session, and thus learned to know personally three sample bodies of the smallest minds and the selfishest souls and the cowardliest hearts that God makes.

And I was some years a Mississippi pilot, and familiarly knew all the different kinds of steamboatmen -- a race apart, and not like other folk.

And I was for some years a traveling 'jour' printer, and wandered from city to city -- and so I know that sect familiarly.

And I was a lecturer on the public platform a number of seasons and was a responder to toasts at all the different kinds of banquets -- and so I know a great many secrets about audiences -- secrets not to be got out of books, but only acquirable by experience.

And I watched over one dear project of mine for years, spent a fortune on it, and failed to make it go -- and the history of that would make a large book in which a million men would see themselves as in a mirror; and they would testify and say, Verily this is not imagination; this fellow has been there....

And I am a publisher, and did pay to one author's widow (General Grant's) the largest copyright checks this world has seen -- aggregating more than \$80,000 in the first year.

And I have been an author for 20 years and an ass for 55.

Now then: as the most valuable capital or culture or education usable in the building of novels is personal experience I ought to be well equipped for that trade.

I surely have the equipment, a wide culture, and all of it real, none of it artificial, for I don't know anything about books. 58

Mark Twain's pride in listing these experiences, all of which he used in his fiction, is significant. He felt that what made him a great writer was his vast wealth of experience, since he felt that a novelist simply captures this experience on paper: "Men observe and combine, that is all...."<sup>59</sup> He believed that this reportorial method was what distinguished the good work from the poor. "When I find a well drawn character in fiction or biography, I generally take a warm personal interest in him, for the reason that I have known him before -- met him on the river."<sup>60</sup> He assumed a close and direct connection existed between actual life and fiction.

Numerous statements by Twain confirm that this use of experiences, of characters from his own past, was the source of his own fiction until the time when a sense of pessimism,

of philosophical nihilism overpowered his psyche and his fiction became moral speculation. Mark Twain's greatest fictional effort, Huckleberry Finn was based on his experience. "In Huckleberry Finn I have drawn Tom Blankenship exactly as he was."<sup>61</sup> "Huck Finn was drawn from life, Tom Sawyer also, but not from an individual -- he is a combination of the characteristics of three boys whom I knew."<sup>62</sup> His boyhood experiences on Uncle John Quarles' farm were recalled and used. "I have never used him or his wife in a book, but his farm has come very handy to me in literature once or twice."<sup>63</sup>

One of Mark Twain's short stories was the transcription of a true account which he obtained through his friend Reverend Twichell. When it was published, a person who knew the source of the story accused Twain of plagiarism. His reply was vehement. "He knew there was not the shadow of a suggestion, from the beginning to the end of "A Curious Episode," that the story was an invention; he knew he had no warrant for trying to persuade the public that I had stolen the narrative and was endeavouring to palm it off as a piece of literary invention...."<sup>64</sup>

Colonel Sellers, Mark Twain's main contribution to The Gilded Age, a satire of American business and politics written in collaboration with Charles Dudley Warner was drawn from Twain's cousin, James Lampton. "Many persons regarded Colonel Sellers as a fiction, an invention, an extravagant impossibility, and did me the honor to call him a 'creation'; but they are mistaken. I merely put him on paper as he was; he was not a person who could be exaggerated."<sup>65</sup> Twain is quite emphatic in asserting that his task is to report, not to create; to "observe and combine, that is all...."<sup>66</sup> To William Dean Howells, he reiterated the point. "The actual truth is, that nobody created Sellers -- I simply put him on paper as I found him in life (he is a relative of mine -- but not my brother) and any scrub of a newspaper reporter could have done the same thing."<sup>67</sup> His final phrase is very telling. The Gilded Age was Twain's first effort at fiction which was not "clubbed together" from journalistic articles. It was nevertheless, no more inventive than the journalistic material he had done previously. A newspaper reporter works with the immediate past as a rule, Twain modified the method by using

autobiographical material as the basis for his longer fiction. In Chapter Two, I shall prove that the transition from reportorial use of the immediate past to reportorial use of the distant, autobiographical past was only partial when Twain worked in the short story genre. His long fiction, as we have seen, employs a modified newspaper reporter's methods. His short stories, written for newspaper and magazine publication, are even more journalistic. Mark Twain was not aware of the potential for fine literary artistry available in the short story genre. He wrote to entertain magazine and newspaper readers for money.

I have given only a few examples of Twain's recognition of the integral part that personal experience played in his fiction, my intention not being to document completely the experiences which went into all of his writings, but simply to prove that he did put his theory into practice. In my study of the short stories in the following two chapters, I shall document the autobiographical sources of his fiction that appear even in the quasi-philosophical fantasies and moralistic satires which are the subject of the third chapter.

Mark Twain had a purpose in writing fiction based upon facts, dialects, scenes, and characters which he knew intimately. He believed that to do so was to create the most accurate and sublime history of the time. It was a lesson both he and Howells had learned from reading Macauley who believed in making history interesting in order to make it have a greater effect upon the reader. Twain's view of history writing was that it should be an intimate report.

A foreigner can photograph the exteriors of a nation; but I think that is as far as he can get. I think that no foreigner can report its interior -- its soul, its life, its speech, its thought. I think that a knowledge of these is acquired in only one way; not two or four or six -- absorption; years and years of unconscious absorption; years and years of intercourse with the life concerned....

There is only one expert who is qualified to examine the souls and the life of a people and make a valuable report -- the native novelist.... This native specialist is not qualified to begin work until he has been absorbing during twenty five years. How much of his competency is derived from conscious 'observation'? The amount is so slight

that it counts for next to nothing in the equipment. Almost the whole capital of the novelist is the slow accumulation of unconscious observation -- absorption.<sup>68</sup>

By absorbing one's own experience, the report became valuable. A narrow scope with a clear focus was necessary. "To return to novel building. Does the native novelist try to generalize the nation? No, he lays plainly before you the ways and speech and life of a few people grouped in a certain place -- his own place -- and that is one book. In time he and his brethren will report to you the life and the people of the whole nation -- ...."<sup>69</sup> In this way, by reporting the life and the people, the objective as stated above, the writing of interesting, accurate and sublime history was to be achieved: "...to write a minute history of persons of all grades and callings, is the surest way to convey the intelligible history of the time."<sup>70</sup>

William Dean Howells, Twain's close friend, was a self-conscious champion of realism. Twain used his own journalistic experiences and his view of art as reflecting life to attain realistic fiction. The influence of Howells' ideas was small. Howells did not try to work out a mutually held creed with Twain. His part in Twain's writing career came mainly in the form of encouragement when Twain stayed on the path toward realism and of silence when his work did not. Twain took the encouragement to heart because of his high esteem for Howells' literary judgement. "Yours [Howells] is the recognized critical Court of Last Resort in this country; from its decision there is no appeal."<sup>71</sup> An example of the sort of judgements which came from this "Court" indicates the common concern each had with recording history and with reporting the not too distant past. "If I [Howells] might put in my jaw at this point, I should say, stick to actual fact and character in the thing, and give things in detail. All that belongs with old river life is novel and is now mostly historical. Don't write at any supposed Atlantic audience, but yarn it off as if into my sympathetic ear."<sup>72</sup> This advice shows that Howells realized just how informal were Twain's writing theories and how much he relied simply on getting the right attitude, or striking the right pose for his inspiration to flow. Proof that the advice had been taken comes from the letter which Twain received from John Hay and which

he quoted with pride to Howells in a letter. "Dear Clemens -- I have just read with delight your article in the Atlantic. It is perfect -- no more nor less. I don't see how you do it. I know all that, every word of it -- passed as much time on the levee as you ever did, knew the same crowd and saw the same scenes -- but I could not have remembered one word of it all. You have the two greatest gifts of the writer, memory and imagination. I congratulate you."<sup>73</sup> Twain was certainly justified in later writing to Howells to clarify the area in which he expected criticism and the area in which he was beyond criticism -- the reporting of facts. "I want you to accept my facts without fear and without reproach. I am careless in composition at times, but I am never careless with my facts, general outlines, details or color."<sup>74</sup>

As a reporter or absorber of experience, Twain had been trained extensively. Not only had he worked as a journalist in Missouri, New York, Iowa, Nevada, California, Hawaii and Europe, but he had developed a remarkable memory in his years as a river pilot. It irritated him to receive correspondence in which aspiring writers told him they had started writing recently and planned to have their work published if he thought it worthy. In his autobiography, he mentions many professions that require an apprenticeship and in which an untrained person would never expect immediately to gain recognition, or deserve it. "But when it comes to doing literature, his wisdoms vanish all of a sudden and he thinks he finds himself now in the presence of a profession which requires no apprenticeship, no experience, no training -- nothing whatever but conscious talent and a lion's courage."<sup>75</sup> Certainly, he is alluding to his journalistic training as a writer and also to his pilot training which gave him an awesome memory of details.

When asked by Paine how long he had kept his pilot memory, he replied: "Not long; it faded out right away, but the training served me, for when I went to report on a paper a year or two later I never had to take any notes."<sup>76</sup> This highly developed, remarkable memory, which John Hay had noted, is a vital aspect of Twain's unique genius. It was as essential to his sort of fictional writing as it had been to his work as a reporter. Twain repeatedly stated that he was not an inventor or creator, but rather more of a reporter of actually lived facts. He also described himself as an

amanuensis of his books without any creative responsibilities. "As long as a book would write itself I was a faithful and interested amanuensis and my industry did not flag, but the minute that the book tried to shift to my head the labor of contriving its situations, inventing its adventures and conducting its conversations, I put it away and dropped it out of my mind. Then I examined my unfinished properties to see if among them there might not be one whose interest in itself had revived through a couple of years of restful idleness and was ready to take me on again as amanuensis."<sup>77</sup> He goes on to tell of reaching the mid-point in Tom Sawyer and halting. "I was disappointed, distressed and immeasurably astonished, for I knew quite well that the tale was not finished and I could not understand why I was not able to go on with it. The reason was very simple -- my tank had run dry; it was empty; the stock of materials in it was exhausted; the story could not go on without materials; it could not be wrought out of nothing.... It was then that I made the great discovery that when the tank runs dry you've only to leave it alone and it will fill up again in time...."<sup>78</sup>

The stock of materials which the tank held was recollections of his childhood in Missouri, Twain told Brander Matthews. "It was in the course of one of our many conversations at Onteora that Mark described to me his method of work in writing 'Tom Sawyer' and 'Huckleberry Finn'. He declared that there was no episode in either of these stories which had not actually happened, either to himself or to one or another of the boys he had known."<sup>79</sup> Matthews goes on to say that Twain received "crops" of these experiences which obviously re-filled the "tank" that Twain had referred to in his description of the writing of Tom Sawyer. Inspiration, fictional material and story form were all dependent upon the pilot's memory of Twain's experiences.

As his career progressed, Mark Twain did not always use the distant past, although he tended more toward an exclusive use of it as a source. In writing his short stories, as I have mentioned earlier, he often worked more similarly to the conventional newspaper reporter, using a reporter's methods of note-taking and observing human actions which he would then use to entertain his reading audience. The writing of Roughing It, which contains four passages which function

as short stories, was saved from failure by the use of two methods commonly associated with reporting. Mark Twain used his brother Orion's recollections of their trip to the West, requested by Twain in a letter to his brother. "Have you a memorandum of the route we took, or the names of any of the stations we stopped at? Do you remember any of the scenes, names, incidents or adventures on the coach trip?"<sup>80</sup> The integral part that the recollections played is evidenced by Twain's paying Orion one thousand dollars out of the first royalty check from the book. The second factor was the arrival of an old friend from the West, Joe Goodman, the editor of the Virginia City Territorial Enterprise on which Twain had been employed. Their conversations and Goodman's Western dialect jogged Twain's memory, prompting him to offer Goodman a place in his home on a salary just to talk about old times as material for the book.

Mark Twain continued to use reportorial methods after writing Roughing It, by traveling to England in August, 1872 to gather material for a book similar to The Innocents Abroad that would make fun of British society. His reception was so grand that his intentions were never carried out. "I came here to take notes for a book, but I haven't done much but attend dinners and make speeches."<sup>81</sup> He later traveled to the South of the United States for a similar purpose, note-taking for Life on the Mississippi. "When I come to write the Mississippi book, then look out. I will spend two months on the river and make notes, and I bet I will make a standard work."<sup>82</sup> The conscientious reporter, Mark Twain, is an absolute contrast to the tradition of fiction in America represented, for example, by men such as James Fennimore Cooper who wrote of the West, having never crossed the Appalachian Mountains.

Several further examples of Twain's note-taking will suffice to illustrate how he gathered material for his fiction from his immediate experiences. "The great Tichborne trial was in progress then, and the spectacle of an illiterate imposter trying to establish his claim as the rightful heir to a great estate was highly diverting to Mark Twain. He wanted to preserve the evidence as future literary material, and Stoddard [Mark Twain's secretary] day after day patiently collected the news reports and neatly pasted them into

scrapbooks, where they still rest, a complete record of that now forgotten farce."<sup>83</sup> On another occasion, Twain again hired a secretary to gather information for him, but the task was more extraordinary. He sent J. H. Riley to South Africa to take notes, and explore the country. Then Twain planned to write a book based on Riley's notes.<sup>84</sup> Another claimant, similar to Tichborne, caught his attention and he wrote to Howells concerning a man who claimed to be the rightful Earl of Durham. "He [the claimant] is a perfectly stunning literary bonanza, and must be dug up and put on the market. You must get his entire biography out of him and have it ready for Osgood's magazine. Even if it isn't worth printing, you must have it anyway, and use it one of these days in one of your stories or in a plug."<sup>85</sup> The "bonanza" was used in an unsuccessful collaborative play, The American Claimant (1883), written by Twain and Howells.

Even personal experiences of little significance were considered to be possible fictional material and duly noted for future use. "Livy & Clara's young man at Lucerne -- student of Yale -- would make the same statement 3 or 4 times -- & forget it. Ask about him before writing him up."<sup>86</sup> Mark Twain's notebooks, including unpublished material from the Mark Twain Papers, Berkeley, California abound in similar notations starting from the very early days as a reporter in Nevada. Two of the most extreme cases of trivial details being deemed important and interesting by Twain are his use of an episode in which a mouse kept him up one night<sup>87</sup> and an incident in which the search for a missing sock in an hotel bedroom was worthy of being taken down for later fictional use in Chapter xiii of A Tramp Abroad (1880).<sup>88</sup>

No matter if the report were of a mouse chase or a trans-continental stagecoach trip, Twain reported it with humor and a pleasant anecdotal casualness. The important thing was to tell the truth about the experience, to see clearly and portray accurately the experiences that he knew. The humor which spiced his work and helped give it a semblance of form by providing a development toward the "nub" or punch-line was based upon an unclouded vision of American life from California to the Holy Land. This clear vision, bolstered by an uncompromising honesty, was used to make fun of man's foolish ways, including Twain's own.

Mark Twain's remarkable candor, his sense of justice and conscience for himself and his nation has often been noted. Justin Kaplan, in his sensitive biography, fully examines the concern Twain showed for the truth. Minnie M. Brashear, in her study of Twain, has attributed this honesty to his basic nature derived from upbringing and heritage. "While that which gave charm to Mark Twain's personality came doubtless, from his mother, the solid background of uprightness that won admirers for him abroad, where many an other American was merely the wonder of the day, the passion to avoid hypocrisy, the substratum of melancholy in his bearing as he grew older, came from his father."<sup>89</sup>

Twain was never afraid to tell the truth, to deride shams or to expose hypocrisy. His journalistic career, with dueling, threatened thrashings and his banishment from San Francisco, evidences the extent of his candor. Throughout his life, the question of lies and liars fascinated him as a source of humor at times, and at other times as a means of villifying an enemy. His rage could reach an extreme beyond even his wildest flights of profanity when only the denunciation that a man was a liar would express his anger fully. He stated that one of his publishers had finally died from telling the truth -- once.<sup>90</sup> Usually his interest in lying dealt more with its use as a source of humor. "When in doubt, tell the truth."<sup>91</sup> "Truth is the most precious thing we have. Economize it."<sup>92</sup> "When I was younger I could remember anything, whether it happened or not, but I am getting old, and soon I shall remember only the latter."<sup>93</sup> "It is often the case that a man who can't tell a lie thinks that he is the best judge of one."<sup>94</sup>

The sort of lies implied in the humorous quotations which I have mentioned were not serious. They were creative fictions much like the ones Twain confided to Howells that he used to please Livy and to save himself from her wrath.<sup>95</sup> But other lies committed constantly by every member of the human race were serious. "Then, if they examined a little further they recognized that all people are liars from the cradle onward, without exception; and that they begin to lie as soon as they wake in the morning, and keep it up without rest or refreshment until they go to sleep at night."<sup>96</sup> He goes on to describe "the lie of silent assertion" which is non-verbal. It occurs when one is not speaking out honestly; inaction is

in effect a lie. All of mankind commits this lie by silence in the face of a corrupt society and nation. Men contribute by silent assertion to the huge, "National Lie that is the support and confederate of all the tyrannies and shams and inequalities and unfairnesses that afflict the peoples -- that is the one to throw bricks and sermons at."<sup>97</sup> Twain certainly contributed his fair share of attacks through the use of humor.

His concern with the prevalence of lying and deceit led Mark Twain to consider himself a champion of honesty. "Club subject: The insincerity of man -- all men are liars, partial or hidiers of facts, half tellers of truths, shirks, moral sneaks. When a merely honest man appears he is a comet -- his fame eternal -- needs no genius, no talent -- mere honesty -- Luther, Christ, etc."<sup>98</sup> His own careful concern to avoid the hiding of facts, the production of shams in his work, as well as his outright attacks of phony conventions from his first major work, The Innocents Abroad, onward, indicates that he judged himself eligible to become a part of the group of comets of honesty. By being irreverent, this was accomplished: "...the word Irreverence will be regarded as the most meaningless, and foolish, and self-conceited, and insolent, and impudent and dictatorial word in the language."<sup>99</sup>

He was not perfect and made no pretensions that way, but he was proud of the extent of his truthfulness, the avoidance of that worst of all moral and literary faults -- artificiality. In the beginning of Huckleberry Finn, he evaluates himself. "That book [Tom Sawyer] was made by Mr. Mark Twain and he told the truth, mainly. There was things which he stretched, but mainly he told the truth. That is nothing. I never seen anybody but lied one time or another, ...."<sup>100</sup> Believing as he did that truthfully reporting one's experiences was the key to literary success, he suggested that Orion might also succeed in literature by "mere honesty." "About twenty-five years ago -- along there somewhere -- I wrote and suggested to Orion that he write an autobiography, I asked him to try to tell the straight truth in it;...." I said that this had never been done and that if he could do it his autobiography would be a most valuable piece of literature."<sup>101</sup> Orion was unable to write without distorting himself into a sort of hero. Once again, Twain saw how rare

honesty was in the human race. "The longer I live, the clearer I perceive how unmatchable, how unapproachable a compliment one pays when he says of a man 'he has the courage [to utter] his convictions.'"<sup>102</sup>

Twain's probing sense of honesty did not permit any aspect of human existence to go unexamined. He discovered many foolish habits and unjust conventions which he could not allow to escape unattacked. His weapon was his humor and with it he could make his report of life carry a sting which he hoped would bring elucidation and reform. In his early humor, this sting was controlled irony, but as he became disgusted with the human race and all of existence it became a blunted, hysterical rant which lacked effect. With his own despair and pessimism came the destruction of his faculty for humor. I shall close the chapter by examining the serious intent of Twain's humor and then trace the development of his personal despair until it destroyed his ability to write with the artistic control necessary to avert the unpleasant paradox of maudlin sentimentality mixed with sardonic humor in his short stories.

The balance required within oneself when using humor is parallel to the balance that exists within literature. "Humor, and humorous satire and farce, can be placed between tragic -- and, let us say, sentimental -- exaltation and heightened sense, on the one side, and invective and diatribic revulsion and utter reductionism on the other."<sup>103</sup> Humor does not have a final destination or resolution. It is not intended to inflate the subject or deflate the subject for the audience, but rather, its objective is to clarify, to expose the subject. Twain's use of a picaresque pattern in his novels has been evaluated by Robert A. Wiggins as totally consistent with the definition of humor as a form which need not arrive at a specific place.<sup>104</sup> The movement of characters in the picaresque novel enables random scene changes for further exposure without a need of sensing any real direction either physically or morally in the characters. They are simply displayed.

The use of the relaxed, yarn-spinning style of Mark Twain, with its almost total lack of plot structure, is the analogy in the short story to the picaresque in the novel. Story structures and scenes which lend themselves to little dramatic development, are neutral backdrops for the presentation of

humorous revelations of foibles and human weaknesses. Twain had no desire to devise epic structures which would bring catharsis to the reader and conversely, he did not just want to be a funny man. His purpose was serious.

J. G. Holland, a lecturer on the Redpath circuit with Mark Twain, attacked Twain as a frivolous and therefore dangerous lecturer, unfit for the edification of audiences. Bret Harte humiliated Twain on several occasions by implying that he was something of a clown. Twain was bothered by these attacks and even felt strong self-doubt as a result. "Oh, Cable, I am demeaning myself. I am allowing myself to be a mere buffoon. It's ghastly. I can't endure it any longer."<sup>105</sup> But he could not be permanently concerned with these attacks because he knew that his humor was not frivolous. Several statements will bear out the serious intent which underpinned his humor. "Humor must not professedly teach and it must not professedly preach, but it must do both if it would live forever. By forever, I mean thirty years."<sup>106</sup> What humor taught the reader was a cause for sorrow in the sensitive individual. "The secret source of humour itself is not joy but sorrow, there is no humour in heaven."<sup>107</sup> Twain was not moved to mirth by what he wrote because he most clearly sensed the sorrow that necessarily arose from the unveiling of a sham, a foible or a cruelty. "I don't often write anything that I laugh at myself...."<sup>108</sup>

The serious purpose of Twain's humor, the exposure of falsities, cruelties and hypocrisies grew in intensity until humor itself became a painful subject.

I can conceive of many wild and extravagant things when my imagination is in good repair but I can conceive of nothing quite so wild and extravagant as the idea of my accepting the editorship of a humorous periodical. I should regard that as the saddest (for me) of all occupations. If I should undertake it I should have to add to it the occupation of undertaker, to relieve it in some degree of its cheerlessness. I could edit a serious periodical with relish and a strong interest but I have never cared enough about humor to qualify me to edit it or sit in judgement upon it.<sup>109</sup>

Humor was a means to the end of expressing the strong sense of honesty with which he had been endowed.

On numerous occasions Twain made it quite clear that humor was intended to bring about reform. He felt that humor was an absolute utility. "Ours is a useful trade, a worthy calling, . . . with all its lightness, and frivolity it has one serious purpose, one aim, one specialty, and it is constant to it -- the deriding of shams, the exposure of pretentious falsities, the laughing of stupid superstitions out of existence, and . . . whose is by instinct engaged in this sort of warfare is the natural enemy of royalties, nobilities, privileges and all kindred swindles, and the natural friend of human rights and human liberties."<sup>110</sup> He considered himself to be engaged by instinct in this battle, but hampered by his own zeal, a zeal which we shall see was born of innate skepticism and melancholy and not, as is often argued, the result of several personal catastrophes. "If I could keep my faculty for humor uppermost, I'd laugh the dogs out of the country. But I can't. I get too mad."<sup>111</sup> One cannot write effective humor if the desire to disparage is too strong. In Twain's case, this desire often reached the extreme of hatred. "I wish I could give those sharp satires on European life which you mention; but of course a man can't write successful satire except he be in a calm judicial good-humor; whereas I hate travel, and I hate hotels, and I hate the opera, and I hate the old masters. In truth, I don't ever seem to be in a good-enough humor with anything to satirize it."<sup>112</sup> Mark Twain made one of his few accurate literary self-criticisms in this analysis of his humor's failure.

From his earliest newspaper contribution, "The Dandy Frightening the Squatter," The Carpet Bag, May 1, 1852 while a boy in Hannibal, Missouri to his death he engaged in satire and burlesque. His journalistic career was made exciting by the reaction his satire produced and even while a river pilot, he wrote a sensational burlesque of the contributions of the old river pilot, Isaiah Sellers, to the St. Louis newspapers.<sup>113</sup> The early humor, as we shall see in his stories, was typified by naivety, hence the humor was mildly ironical. As he became initiated to life's disappointments in his experience and his musings gained pessimistic momentum, the humor became satirical. With his ultimate sense of total alienation from life's positive values, at least in his theories and concomitant literary creations, if not in his actual life, his

humor failed. A man with Twain's ultimate view of life and God could hardly be expected to maintain a humorous vein. "It is the strangest thing that the world is not full of books that scoff at the pitiful world, and the useless universe and violent, contemptible human race -- books that laugh at the whole paltry scheme and deride it."<sup>114</sup>

In a famous aphorism, Mark Twain described the loss of innocence which he believed was inevitable. "The man who is a pessimist before he is forty-eight knows too much; the man who is an optimist after he is forty-eight knows too little."<sup>115</sup> The statement helped justify and dignify Twain's pessimism by implying that it was born of knowledge, of wisdom gained over years of experience. In fact, Mark Twain intimated a sense of pessimism and expressed severe melancholy long before the age of forty-eight. His father, John Clemens had been a man of passionate optimism and speculation, but also a man of deep emotional lows. Samuel inherited these traits from his father, being given to both speculation and despair throughout his life.

Several other men had an influence on Twain besides his father. John Quarles, an uncle on Twain's mother's side of the family, was a free thinker like John Clemens. The wonderful summers spent on the Quarles farm incremented Twain's youthful association with skepticism. Twain disliked school and hated Church; perhaps his father and uncle made this second heresy conceivable. As an impressionable young man in Cincinnati, Ohio where he was setting type in 1857, Twain shared rooms with a Scotsman named Macfarlane who introduced him to the discipline of philosophy. "Macfarlane said that the scheme [cosmogony] had stopped there [with man], and failed; that man had retrograded; that man's heart was the only bad one in the animal kingdom, that man was the only animal capable of malice, vindictiveness, drunkenness -- almost the only animal that could endure personal uncleanness."<sup>116</sup> This evolutionary view of man appealed to Mark Twain because it seemed factual and scientific. It also coincided with his own deterministic view of life which was the result of rejecting the Christian beliefs forced upon him in his youth while keeping the Calvinistic determinism that accompanied it. This mixture of science, and determinism proved to be overwhelming in the final analysis of life to

which it logically led. "His tragedy was that, by the time he left the river, he had anchored himself so firmly to external reality that he could not find assurance in anything but reason and concrete fact; and the facts about life he found to be negative."<sup>117</sup> The American philosophy of pragmatism, operative long before William James canonized it, provided its adherents like Twain with no sense of absolutes upon which one could rely for security and solace. Twain, often considered to be merely a writer of children's fiction, was actually one of the first critical realists and victims of existential malaise of the modern era of fiction in the United States.<sup>118</sup>

Individual events have been proposed as the causes of Mark Twain's despair. Bernard De Voto considered the two greatest catastrophes of Twain's life, his bankruptcy followed shortly by his daughter Susy's lonely death, as the cause of Twain's agonized psyche. Walter Blair refuted this by examining earlier hints of despair. Albert Bigelow Paine had begun this search years earlier by citing the death of Twain's brother Henry in 1858 as the key to Twain's despair and revulsion of mankind while remaining loving and personable in the company of his fellow man. "It [description of Henry Clemens' death] has been set down here because it accounts for much in his [Mark Twain's] after-life. It magnified his natural compassion for the weakness and blunders of humanity, while it increased the poor opinion implanted by the Scotchman Macfarlane of the human being as a divine invention. Two of Mark Twain's chief characteristics were -- consideration for the human species, and contempt for it."<sup>119</sup>

The events that are cited, the sort inevitable for all mankind, were the catalysts which activated the melancholy, and skepticism which constituted Mark Twain's nature and which arose from the influences of his father, John Quarles, Macfarlane, Calvinism and pragmatism. His religious belief, formulated by logic and quite unrelated to his instinctual faith in God, led him to a dichotomous life in which the mind with its crude philosophy and a related literature became bitter and despairing, while the active, affective man remained relatively complacent and optimistic in his own life. Because his literature and musings were coeval, the man who considered the function of literature to be reporting, could only report

his own experience of despair. His autobiographical style had escaped for a time from the immediate past in search of the idyllic, distant past of boyhood; and then had returned to the present. Attempting to deal honestly with his anguished conclusions obviated humor.

Mark Twain considered agnosticism to be the correct religious position. He treasured a statement by Susy Clemens which expressed Twainian skepticism perfectly. "Well, mamma, the Indians believed they knew, but now we know they were wrong. By and by it can turn out that we are wrong. So now I only pray that there may be a God and a heaven -- or something better."<sup>120</sup> In the early 1880's, Twain composed his own statement of religious belief. It was quite reasonable compared with later statements which rage against God.

I believe in God the Almighty.... I do not believe he has ever sent a message to man by anybody, or delivered one to him by word of mouth, or made Himself visible to mortal eyes at any time in any place.... I believe that the Old and New Testaments were imagined and written by man, and that no line in them was authorized by God, much less inspired by Him.

I think the goodness, the justice, and the mercy of God are manifested in His works... I do not believe in special providences. I believe that the universe is governed by strict and immutable laws.... I cannot see how eternal punishment hereafter could accomplish any good end, therefore I am not able to believe in it.... There may be a hereafter and there may not be. I am wholly indifferent about it.... I believe that the world's moral laws are the outcome of the world's experience.... If I break all these moral laws I cannot see how I injure God by it,....<sup>121</sup>

He had said years before, that, "Religion consists in a set of things which the average man thinks he believes, and wishes he was certain."<sup>122</sup> The intellectual honesty of Mark Twain, as he viewed it, did not allow him to settle for wishing his beliefs were true and leaving it at that. He wanted to know the truth, to believe without the hypocrisy which he hated. His process of questioning and searching for truths brought him to a state of intellectual melancholy which his personality had always contained.

The striking statements made by Twain from as early as his exciting adventures on the West Coast in which he expressed a strong death wish will bear out my contention that Twain had arrived at a sense of negation or nihilism forty years before it overwhelmed his humor and became explicit in his fiction. I shall simply list the quotations without comment. Their interpretation is unambiguous. "Of the demonstrably wise there are but two; those who commit suicide and those who keep their reasoning faculties atrophied with drink."<sup>123</sup> In California he had put a pistol to his head, but hadn't the courage to pull the trigger. He "was never ashamed of having tried."<sup>124</sup> "Oh Death where is thy sting! It has none. But life has."<sup>125</sup> "If I had the family in a comfortable poorhouse I would kill myself."<sup>126</sup> "The country home I need is a cemetery."<sup>127</sup> "I wish to God the lightning would strike me; but I've wished that fifty thousand times and never got anything out of it yet."<sup>128</sup> "The suicide seems to me the only sane person."<sup>129</sup> "He had arrived at the dignity of Death -- the only earthly dignity that is not artificial -- the only safe one. The others are traps that can beguile to humiliation."<sup>130</sup> "I have never greatly envied any one but the dead. I always envy the dead."<sup>131</sup>

The criticism of man which accompanied this low opinion of life took the form of attacks of conventions and institutions from the very beginning of Mark Twain's journalistic career and grew in violence until it could justify the sort of melancholy which Mark Twain harbored and suppressed for most of his life. The Church was first attacked while Twain was in Hawaii in 1866. "More missionaries and more row made about saving these 60000 people than would take to convert hell itself."<sup>132</sup> "Honolulu: The missionary (I should say preacher) feature of insincerity and hypocrisy makes the atmosphere of the place."<sup>133</sup> The cruelty of man first evoked Twain's notebook rancor on the same journey. "Caught 2 goneys. -- They are all the same size -- they measure 7 ft. 1 in. from tip to tip of wings -- They made a wooden clog fast to one and let him go -- a pitiful advantage for 'Godlike' man to take of a helpless bird. The bird looked reproachfully upon them with his great human eyes while they did him this wrong."<sup>134</sup> It is noteworthy that at this time human cruelty is likened to God's nature as an irony. Later, the irony

was cast away and the certainty that "Godlike" man was cruel simply helped to prove that God too was cruel. Van Wyck Brooks has portrayed a rough, frenetic existence in the West of Twain's time and it is not surprising that the early notations which I have quoted were all closely related in time. Mark Twain was kept so busy that he would be forced to escape from the hectic pace of his life by retreats to Steamboat Springs, California. There he would produce more reflective and literary articles and notebook entries. Hawaii provided the same sort of haven and enabled comments such as I have noted to be worked out. "Californians ought to come here [Hawaii] twice a year to soothe down their harassing business cares."<sup>135</sup>

Democratic political institutions and bureaucracies were particularly vulnerable to Twain's criticism. "Noble system, truly, where a man like R. H. Dana can't be confirmed, and where a person like Jones, whose proper place is shyster in a Tombs court, is sent to the U.S. Senate; where it is impossible to reward the most illustrious and fittest citizens with the presidency."<sup>136</sup> Congress was held in absolute derision. "The Congregational graveyard at Washington -- stones even for ex-members of Congress buried elsewhere. Chuckle-headed vanity of brief grandeur can no further go. Congressman is the trivialest distinction for a full grown man."<sup>137</sup> The elected representatives were worthy of scorn which might lead one to conclude that the disgust he felt toward politicians was due to their letting down the voters. This was not the case, for he campaigned against universal suffrage and the practice of one man-one vote because he didn't believe that the majority of citizens had good enough judgement to vote and that a superior citizen deserved to cast more votes than an inconsequential man. To Mollie Fairbanks he wrote that he was intent on overthrowing universal suffrage. "Tell your mother I am trying to do what every good citizen ought to do -- trying my best to win you and the rest of the rising generation over to an honest and saving loathing for universal suffrage."<sup>138</sup> The politicians were no good, but neither were the citizens. "The present era of incredible rottenness is not Democratic, it is not Republican, it is national...."<sup>139</sup>

The only alternative in Twain's knowledge of political

theories was monarchical rule. This prospect was at least as repugnant as democratic society. "By the absence of an irreverent press, Europe for a thousand years has existed merely for the advantage of half a dozen seventh-rate families called Monarchs, and some hundreds of riffraff sarcastically called Nobles. Our papers have one peculiarity -- it is American -- it exists nowhere else -- their irreverence.... They are irreverent toward pretty much everything, but where they laugh one good king to death, they laugh a thousand cruel and infamous shams and superstitions into the grave, and the account is squared. Irreverence is the champion of liberty and its only sure defence."<sup>140</sup>

Man was considered loathsome, much as Macfarlane had viewed him in Twain's youth, and God was responsible. "God is might (and He is shifty, malicious and uncertain)."<sup>141</sup> "If man had created man, he would be ashamed of his performance."<sup>142</sup> Twain felt relief in knowing that the universe determined his life and that he could not affect it or be blamed. "Circumstances make man, not man circumstances."<sup>143</sup> And yet he never stopped blaming man for evil in the world or for individual acts of an evil sort. The idea that God should be glorified, that man, his product, should be awed by his might was ultimately unthinkable. Firemen and policemen risked and lost their lives every day to save others, so the sacrifice of three days on the Cross and in death was small for a God guaranteed to rule the world thereafter.<sup>144</sup>

Mark Twain recognized that his state of mind had profoundly changed the nature of his fictional product. He realized that his introspection and moralistic concerns had come to dominate his creative efforts. "The last quarter of a century of my life has been pretty constantly and faithfully devoted to the study of the human race -- that is to say, the study of myself, for in my individual person I am the entire human race compacted together."<sup>145</sup> From an earlier view of the artist as reporter of the facts of existence about him, Twain had moved to a view of the artist as embodying all of his art much like Walt Whitman had done in the first half of the Century with a more pleasant vision. Twain had been forced into the use of his own intellectual despair as a source of material for his writing because it dominated his intellectual life. "If Byron -- if any man -- draws 50 characters,

they are all himself -- 50 shades, 50 moods, of his own character."<sup>146</sup> As a break with his former fictional source, the past, Twain notes that Huck and Tom "die together,...."<sup>147</sup> He then became obsessed with the unreality of existence, its transiency and lapsed into an obsession with dreams which are reality and realities which become dreams.

A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur (1889) is coming to be considered Twain's declaration of total nihilism in that the feudal system of chivalry and the capitalist system of democracy are both destroyed in the book. It was finished in 1889 and in his writing for the next twenty six years, Mark Twain never really overcame the nihilistic conclusion it presents. "The last quarter of a century..." was devoted to recognition of and resolution to personal nihilism. "It would save those people a world of uncomfortable shuffling if they would recognize one plain fact -- a fact which a man willing to see cannot be blind to, namely, that there is nothing kindly, nothing beneficent, nothing friendly in Nature toward any creature, except by capricious fits and starts; and that Nature's attitude toward all life is profoundly vicious, treacherous and malignant."<sup>148</sup>

In this chapter I have established the two basic sources of Mark Twain's inspiration in writing. The first was his experience, a source which he came to through his training and education in journalism and the kinship of his thinking to the folk mind view of art as reflecting nature. The second source, his philosophical despair and melancholic temperament, was first manifested in humor based on the serious intention of telling the truth about life. The second source finally led Twain into the quasi-philosophical, moralistic sort of writing which he was incapable of rendering into good fiction. Chapter Two of this work will examine the stories which draw from the first source to create realistic and humorous stories mainly directed to a wide, uncritical newspaper and magazine audience. Chapter Three will examine the stories which drew from the second source, a vain attempt to reject his folk mind perception of art and life and adopt a sophisticated view which made the stories in the latter part of Twain's career pedantic and amateurish.

## Chapter II

The short stories of Mark Twain which draw directly from his experience would be expected to all evidence characteristics which we classify as realistic. In fact, the stories vary in the degree to which they are realistic in style and intention. Although inspired by experiences that I shall document, many of the stories are autobiographical as a starting point from which fanciful, anecdotal and playful stories were built solely to please the audience. Mark Twain's theory of literary creation has been shown to come from a journalistic career, his actual practice of that theory was also formed by his journalistic experience, particularly in the short story genre which Twain understood as a newspaper-magazine genre of no serious consequence. This underestimation of the short story as an art form was typical of all writers in the Nineteenth Century until the time of Edgar Allan Poe and most writers after Poe with the notable exception of Henry James. Mark Twain never wrote short stories with the intention of producing a volume that would be considered as artful literature: the stories were written like his reporter articles for immediate and ephemeral use before the mass public audience and often under the pressure of a deadline. The stories that I shall examine in this chapter can best be summarized by stating that they were lighthearted, undisciplined pieces, often quickly done with a tenuous concern for form or literary quality. Those extracted from travel books are slightly higher in quality in keeping with Twain's rejection of periodicals as his main and most respected literary outlet shortly after he sold his interest in the Buffalo Express and began to believe in himself as an author.

In order to examine the realistic, autobiographical and humorous elements of these ephemeral stories, it is necessary to clarify terminology. Realism has been carelessly described as a school of literature that tells the truth, that provides a "slice of life." The implication is that non-realists do not seek truths, nor do they deal with life. The assertion that realists deal with actualities comes closer to clarifying what realism is, but is still a nebulous definition. It attempts to sum up the methods of realism in terms of an

objective. The only accurate definition of realism is one which describes the methods, the style of the realist; for in the style one finds the key to what realism is.

Realists, like English Romantics such as Wordsworth, are concerned with the language of the common man as he speaks it. They are intent upon describing the material surface of things, normal, average sorts of things. They oppose art that imitates art; their stories and novels are organic, ending when the subject of the fiction has been completely examined, not when an artistic formula has been fulfilled. Being pragmatic, the moral theme of their work is ambiguous, accessible only to the careful reader and not based on a dogma. Being agnostic, they reject the omniscient narrator-author who knows more than could be humanly experienced. For the same reason, the characters and the situations in which they find themselves are complex and many faceted, beyond the simple grasp of doctrinaire or convention bound explanations. The characters are not allegorical or flat, they are unique, idiosyncratic and at the same time, still typical or universal. The imagery of realism is again reflective of an agnostic view of the universe. There is a concentration upon mundane, concrete examples or metaphors. Rather than a transcendental, enlarged vision which encompasses absolutes or abstractions, the realist's vision is a sharpened focus upon the democratic, quotidian and concrete articles and experiences within his own field of perception.

By adopting the methods and attitudes that I have described, the author ostensibly disappears and the story becomes an unbiased transcript of life. This effect is a notable one in realistic writing. The absence of the author tends to suggest that the truth is being portrayed, that we are getting a "slice of life." Mark Twain convinced himself that this was actually the case, even in several stories in which the narrator intrudes ponderously with sentimental touches which Twain reviled in theory. As Wayne Booth cautions, the reader should not mistake certain stylistic devices for life itself, as did Mark Twain in his own work. "We must never forget that though the author can to some extent choose his disguise, he can never choose to disappear."<sup>1</sup>

Mark Twain, being extremely uncritical of his own writing, never realized that he could not escape from the function of

creator simply by using his experiences in a reportorial fashion with the intention of creating a minute history. He was not aware of his own subjective influence on facts. The far more schooled literary craftsman, Guy de Maupassant, elucidates the true nature of literary realism. "J'en conclus que les Réalistes de talent devraient s'appeler plutôt des Illusionnistes."<sup>2</sup> If Mark Twain would have been aware of this, more of his short stories, all of which are drawn from his own experiences, would have been realistic, not just chatty pieces which touch upon Nineteenth Century life in America while compromising many realistic potentials to the audience by an over-balance upon entertaining humor and extravagance.

The first seven stories that I am going to examine are some of Mark Twain's most successful stories because they do not suffer from the lack of control which often overcame Mark Twain when he wrote for the newspaper or magazine audience. Five of these stories are extracted from the travel book, Roughing It, which deals with Mark Twain's adventures in the West. The stories contain a large number of the realistic devices which create an illusion of reality, humorous devices typical of Mark Twain and autobiographical material from his life. They owe their success to the use of these elements.

"The Notorious Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" (1865) has its roots in the three month exile from San Francisco to the mining camps of the Tuolumne district which resulted from Twain's satires of the bureaucracy, particularly the police. On January 30, 1865, he made the following notation in his notebook. "Coleman with his jumping frog -- bet a stranger \$50 -- stranger had no frog and C. got him one: -- In the meantime stranger filled C's frog full of shot and he couldn't jump. The stranger's frog won [.]"<sup>3</sup> This anecdote became the short story which began to make a name for Mark Twain when it was published in the Saturday Press in New York on November 18, 1865. Twain thought little of it and was surprised that a "villainous backwoods sketch"<sup>4</sup> such as that could be the basis of popular acclaim.

Mark Twain was not aware of his own skill in portraying dialogue, a skill which had developed through the writing of hundreds of articles for Western newspapers and which gives this ambling tale its distinctive excellence. The unassuming

way that the story begins with the first narrator seeking out a man who then tells a story to him provides the reader with the illusion that an actual person is speaking to an interviewer. This sort of frame device was used by Twain consistently throughout his career to give a realistic appearance to his stories.<sup>5</sup> The actual person is then clearly identified by the way he talks. "Well, thish-yer Smiley had rat-terriers, and chicken cocks, and tomcats and all them kind of things, till you couldn't rest, and you couldn't fetch nothing for him to bet on but he'd match you. He ketched a frog one day, and took him home, and said he cal'lated to educate him; and so he never done nothing for three months but set in his back yard and learn that frog to jump."<sup>6</sup> The vivid, ungrammatical structure, typical of uneducated workmen in America to this day, was combined with a key element in realistic writing: the use of concrete, mundane metaphors and similes. When the jumping frog landed, he would "flop down on the floor ag'in as solid as a gob of mud...."(p. 4).

This first story introduces the reader to Mark Twain's celebrated humor, a humor based on irony and which was used by Twain and other Nineteenth Century American realists such as William Dean Howells and Thomas Bailey Aldrich as a means of improving a society which was deemed generally healthy and good. In the short stories, Mark Twain's humor eventually became bitterly satirical and overwhelmed his creative spirit. But before it reached that stage, it was generally extravagant and often used rashly to evoke a response from the periodical reader. Twain's Western stories avoided both the pitfalls of entertaining silliness and the later excess of satire. Jim Smiley, the compulsive gambler who owns the jumping frog, would bet on anything. To illustrate this point, the narrator Simon Wheeler provides a humorous example. "Parson Walker's wife laid very sick once, for a good while, and it seemed as if they warn't going to save her; but one morning he come in, and Smiley up and asked him how she was, and <sup>he</sup> said she was considerable better -- thank the Lord for his inf'nite mercy -- and coming on so smart that with the blessing of Prov'dence she'd get well yet; and Smiley, before he thought, says, 'Well, I'll resk two-and-a-half she don't anyway' "(p. 2). This is the sort of humor that provides no bisociation, no new element; it lulls the reader and then

surprises him by an absurd extension of behavior beyond the readily imaginable. It is extravagant, often shocking and usually painful humor, verging on the sadistic or morbid yet neither silly nor mocking. It is illustrative, even realistic, in its comic effect.

The second sort of humorous device that Mark Twain uses in "The Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" and resorts to very often, is what might be called victim's humor. It is a benign source of mirth based on a character who laughs at and tells of his own misfortune or in Twain's fiction, usually his own naivety. In "The Jumping Frog", the narrator has been duped into engaging Simon Wheeler in conversation and is thereby forced to hear the story. One has the impression that the author did fall victim to such a story teller and the facts as disclosed by Mark Twain bear out this impression. "You remember the one gleam of jollity that shot across our dismal sojourn in the rain and mud of Angel's Camp -- I mean that day we sat around the tavern stove and heard that chap tell about the frog and how they filled him with shot. And you remember how we quoted from the yarn and laughed over it out there on the hillside while you and dear old Stoker panned and washed. I jotted the story down in my note-book that day, and would have been glad to get ten or fifteen dollars for it -- I was just that blind."<sup>7</sup>

The key to Mark Twain's success in this story is the skill with which he drew the character Simon Wheeler and his unforgettable manner of speaking. The plot scheme of the story is almost non-existent and certainly not of importance in the story. This lack of concern for elaborate plots can be traced through most of Twain's short stories. When he did concern himself with creating a story based on a complex plot structure, it failed. Twain's genius lies in the reporting of characters or types and dialogue that he knew from experience. The picaresque nature of Huckleberry Finn is a key to its success and superiority to Twain's other work. The picaresque is a form that introduces characters without necessitating a contrived plot for bringing the new characters into the story. Mark Twain's masterpiece is primarily a study of various characters, their dialects and their humor; his best short stories succeed in the same way. By avoiding complicated plot schemes and dwelling on well remembered

characters, Mark Twain was able to approach the excellence of Huckleberry Finn in several of his short stories which were incorporated into Roughing It.

"Buck Fanshawe's Funeral" (1872) is a character sketch and a study of the mining camp dialect which Mark Twain knew first-hand. In the story, a miner named Scotty Briggs is appointed to approach the young minister, recently arrived from an East Coast seminary. The two begin a conversation that entails nearly all of the story. Neither can make out the gist of the other's statements. Scotty Briggs' language is extremely colorful and imagistic. He calls the minister the "Head clerk of the doxology-works"(p. 72). The minister replies in equally metaphoric, though more familiar language that he is the "shepherd in charge of the flock"(p. 72). Scotty goes on to speak of the "gospel mill"(p. 72), that is, a church, and finally gets to the point of his conversation with the minister. He requests that the minister conduct the funeral service of Buck Fanshawe, "jerk a little chin music for us and waltz him through handsome"(p. 73). The images of action and work which Scotty's diction create are striking and humorous, reflecting the miners' familiarity with hard labor, active living and in recreation -- the miners' love of card playing. When Scotty fails to understand the polished phrases of the well educated minister, he replies, "You ruther hold over me, pard. I reckon I can't call that hand. Ante and pass the buck"(p. 72). In the end the message gets through, the funeral is a success and Scotty becomes a Sunday-school teacher, injecting his own vocabulary into that task.

The story is a perfect example of the frontier humor which juxtaposed an Eastern dandy with a common-sensical, independent Western pioneer. In this story, the dandy is not treated too harshly, although the hero of the story is undoubtedly Buck Fanshawe, because Mark Twain enjoyed the company of Christian ministers throughout his life. Perhaps his constant concern with religious and philosophical questions was stimulated by their presence. It is surprising that his blasphemous views did not alienate good ministerial friends like Joseph Twichell. In the West, a minister would have been one of the rare sources of good conversation on any subject. This was the attraction of Mr. Rising, a young minister from Virginia who was the inspiration and prototype for the preacher

in "Buck Fanshawe".<sup>8</sup>

In writing Roughing It, Mark Twain had researched his subject partially in the notes made by Orion Clemens and the conversations with Joe Goodman. He would also have gone to his notebooks kept during that time, and found the following reminder. "January-February, 1865 [:] Mountaineers in habit telling same old experiences over and over again in these little back settlements. Like Dan's old Ram, which he always drivels about when drunk."<sup>9</sup> "The Story of the Old Ram"(1872) which Mark Twain created from this recollection is an interesting combination of realistic elements and the absurd extravagance of a Western tall tale. Twain employed the frame structure used in "The Jumping Frog" again in this story and thereby gives the realistic effect of a reporter interviewing his real story-teller. The narrator is urged to seek out quite an ordinary miner when the man is properly drunk and draw from him his famous story about an old ram. Like the author in "The Jumping Frog", the narrator is being tricked into enduring a long meandering tale. The victim's humor of Twain's first national success is being repeated here.

The miner Jim Blaine, finally is just properly drunk, the scene is set with a concrete description of the miners in their story session, the fraternal alliance against boredom and frustration. "As I entered, he was sitting upon an empty powder-keg, with a clay pipe in one hand and the other raised to command silence. His face was round, red and very serious; his throat was bare and his hair tumbled; in general appearance and costume he was a stalwart miner of the period. On the pine table stood a candle, and its dim light revealed 'the boys' sitting here and there on bunks, candleboxes, powder-kegs, etc"(pp. 77-78).

Once the story begins, we realize that Blaine's memory of people and places causes so many digressions that the story of the old ram will never be told. Mark Twain's piece is about a man telling a wild, rambling story that he never finishes. The manner of Jim Blaine's attempts to tell his story-within-the-story serves to sketch his character and provide the reader with another almost phonographic rendering of Western workman's dialect. Twain's setting of the story is highlighted by realistic touches; his character, Jim Blaine provides the typical extravagance and entertaining unreality

with a delightful diction, using neologisms and striking images to give the story a humorous spice. A fine young marriageable lady is "one of the likeliest heifers that was ever raised in old Stoddard..."(p. 78). A human leg is a "pin"(p. 79). Concrete images are also used in rather shocking or unusual ways such as the description of a woman "as bald as a jug..."(p. 79). The scene and the character captures a portion of the Western life-style, of a distinct people in American history. It is one of Twain's successful attempts to write fiction as he envisioned it in theory.

During Mark Twain's several trips to and from California and New York, he became good friends with a seaman, Captain Ned Wakeman, whose profanity and fresh interpretations of the Bible captured Twain's imagination. Twain admired honesty and courage such as Wakeman showed and he noted briefly: "Capt. Wakeman & the nigger hung [.]"<sup>10</sup> This refers to an incident in which Wakeman meted out justice to a murderer in an almost single-handed vigilante style. Twain wrote up an account of the affair, beginning his story, "A Trial"(1872), with an allusion to the Captain. "Captain Ned Blakely -- that name will answer as well as any other fictitious one (for he was still with the living at last accounts, and may not desire to be famous) -- sailed ships out of the harbor of San Francisco for many years"(p. 84).

The affair had become legendary on the West Coast, and Mark Twain absorbed this tone into his own story. It lacks concrete descriptions, consistent and colorful diction, and convincing dialogue. There is little humor in this story which fails due to an intrusive, omniscient narrator using language which is trite and inappropriate for the characters and locale. It is significant that Twain included Captain Ned's reading of four random chapters of Biblical verse, including Genesis 1 and 2, to the condemned man because the religious views of Wakeman were to fascinate Twain throughout his life, eventually coming to be fictionalized in "Extracts from Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven"(1907) which will be discussed in the third chapter.

"The Trials of Simon Erickson"(1872) is even less successful than "A Trial". Briefly, it is an encounter with a man driven mad by his attempts to read the handwriting of Horace Greeley in a letter concerning the feasibility of developing

the turnip into a climbing vine. Western extravagance of humor does not get any more fantastic than in this story, nor fail more completely. The similarities between the various versions of the letter are cleverly done and provide the one redeeming virtue of the story.

Significantly, this outrageous story, a far cry from a reporter's rendering of Western character, scene and dialect is nevertheless based on an experience that Mark Twain had. Twain held his position as editor of the Buffalo Express at the time when he began Roughing It. He had written an article for the paper in which he purported to analyze Horace Greeley's farming practices. Greeley sent him a note concerning the article in a hand that is almost undecipherable and from this, Mark Twain's imagination took the note to Hawaii and used it in his fiction. Strictly speaking, the story is based upon an experience of the author, but is clearly a story created in the imagination of the writer with the sole purpose of entertaining. There is no claim or attempt made to contribute to the minute history which Twain had posited as the object of all fiction. This story is the beginning of a tendency in Twain's stories to concentrate on humor and entertainment and minimize the experience that he so highly regarded in theory and used so masterfully in his longer, more serious fiction.

During Twain's banishment from San Francisco, he discovered the "Jumping Frog." He also picked up several other stories while staying with Jim Gillis, a brother of Twain's friend and newspaper colleague, Steve Gillis. In his Autobiography, Twain remembered how Jim Gillis could tell anecdotes with real mastery. "Every now and then Jim would have an inspiration and he would stand up before the great log fire, with his back to it and his hands crossed behind him, and deliver himself of an elaborate impromptu lie -- a fairy tale, an extravagant romance with Dick Stoker as the hero of it as a general thing...."<sup>11</sup> He gives Jim Gillis full credit for two of his Western stories, "What Stumped the Blue Jays"(1880) and "Tom Quartz"(1872).

I used another of Jim's impromptus in a book of mine called A Tramp Abroad, a tale of how the poor innocent and ignorant woodpeckers tried to fill up a house with acorns. It is a charming story, a delightful story, and full of happy fancies. Jim stood before the fire and reeled it off with the easiest

facility, inventing its details as he went along and claiming as usual that it was all straight fact, unassailable fact, history pure and undefiled. I used another of Jim's inventions in one of my books, the story of Jim Baker's cat, the remarkable Tom Quartz. Jim Baker was Dick Stoker, of course; Tom Quartz had never existed; there was no such cat; at least outside of Jim Gillis's imagination.<sup>12</sup>

Both of the stories use the frame device which involves a narrator in an interview with a Western character who proceeds to tell a story to him, just as was the case in Twain's own experience. Both stories are realistic portrayals of the man telling the fantastic yarn while the tales themselves are far from being realistic in style or subject. "Tom Quartz" (1872) is a tale about a cat that is given human traits and intelligence by the master, a gift quite often conferred upon pets. The cat is not actually portrayed as having human thoughts or acting like a human, rather, the story teller is portrayed as attributing a human sentience to the cat's actions. This high estimation of the cat's thoughts is an indication of the owner's affection for it and is also a means of producing an ironical sort of humor. There is a pathos in the situation where a man is so lonely and starved for affection that he must develop his pet's powers to pretend that he has a companion. Even so, the humor is prevalent. The cat is involved in a dynamite accident and is said to be prejudiced against further involvement with the explosive. It is an incurable prejudice. "Cure him! No! When Tom Quartz was sot [set] once, he was always sot -- and you might 'a' blowed him up as much as three million times 'n' you'd never 'a' broken him of his cussed prejudice agin quartz-mining"(p. 84).

"What Stumped the Bluejays"(1880) was not included in Roughing It, even though it comes from the same time-span as the stories from the western travelogue. "Bluejays" appeared in A Tramp Abroad probably as a result of reviewing notebooks as Twain occasionally did. His pocket-sized, leather-covered notebooks are extremely informal, disorganized works with lines written quickly, sometimes with a blunt pencil. In some instances, a reply will be written on or beside an earlier notation to clarify it or to confirm that the kernel for a story there expressed was fulfilled. Twain must have recalled Jim Gillis's story in 1878 when he made a mnemonic notation

of it which would then have been reviewed during the writing of A Tramp Abroad (1880) and included in that book. "Jim Gillis's yarn about the <jay-birds> blue jays that tried to fill Carrington's house with acorns -- 'By George this lays over anything I ever struck' says the jay. I've put <5> 460 in there."<sup>13</sup>

The story employs the frame device used in Roughing It to incorporate the yarn into the book and to introduce a story teller other than the narrator of the book. This second persona who has been introduced by the frame story then uses the colorful diction of the miner with its concrete, striking images and unreasonable extravagances. In other words, Jim Gillis telling the story, is recalled. "What Stumped the Bluejays," being so far removed from the actual events from which it is derived, suffers from the creation of a less distinctive tale-teller than in the earlier Western stories.

Mark Twain's final story based on the West, "The Californian's Tale" (1893) is even more problematic than "Bluejays" for the same reason, its distance from the source. While banished from San Francisco, Twain made the following notation in the Tuolumne District. "Angel's Camp, California, 6/30/1865 [:] Baden, crazy asking after his wife who had been dead 13 years -- first knowledge of his being deranged."<sup>14</sup> During 1882, a year of reminiscences, Baden was retrieved intact by Twain's remarkable memory. He recalled his experiences with the crazy miner more fully with a slip of recollection in the number of years since the wife had died.

The poor fellow at Tuttleville who entertained me on a long walk with enthusiastic talk about his wife, whom he was on his way to the next village to see & who had been absent a week, that I had the strongest desire to look upon a woman who could inspire such worship. And to my deep pain & astonishment I found that he was always making this weary journey & returning from it disappointed & marveling. His wife had been dead, 23 years. On her return from a week's absence, young & beautiful, the stage went over a precipice -- & when he arrived, uninformed, expecting to take her in his arms, they lifted a sheet & showed him her corpse.<sup>15</sup>

Another eleven years elapsed before the memory was finally taken up and developed into a story in 1893.

It begins with a recollection of the area where Twain

had been twenty-eight years before. The story is a fine example of the superior descriptive ability of Mark Twain when he followed his literary theories and drew from his own experiences. The scene avoids clichés by providing specific first-hand information about the area while it is being described. He begins his description with a phrase which might lead to the banal. "It was a lovely region, woodsy, balmy, delicious,..."(p. 267) but the trite beginning is redeemed by the direct, analytical focus of the remainder of the sentence, "and had once been populous, long years before, but now the people had vanished and the charming paradise was a solitude"(p. 267). This sort of redemption, a direct result of his recollecting the scene, justifies Twain's belief in the use of experience and fact in fiction. It makes a quite ordinary story into minute history, worthy of the reader's time. This historical element in "The Californian's Tale", due to the use of a definite, unimagined past by a unique character enabled Mark Twain to fulfill his literary theory and produce some good stories. Unfortunately, he did not remain as close to his sources, nor let the narrator's point of view be as uniquely colloquial in most of the remaining stories. Even "The Californian's Tale," written so far removed from his days in California fails to meet the standard of the first six stories discussed in this chapter. It's failings are typical of the remaining works to be discussed.

The story uses false emotions for their own sake to evoke a response from the reader. This sentimentality, a contrived false emotionality, represents the main trend in all of the remaining stories, an overdone concern for the audience, a need to entertain or move the reader strongly. This results in a lack of integrity in the stories that is expressed from the one extreme of outlandish silliness to the other, maudlin sentimentality. In "The Californian's Tale," for example, the rough, hardened miners cry over a letter and make fatuous statements. "Oho, you're at it again! Take your hands away, and let me see your eyes"(pp. 270-1). The miner must show that he is crying like a baby over a tragedy which another man suffered years before. Mark Twain succumbed to his audience's taste in the short stories, primarily because he wrote them for magazine publication without recognizing the possibility of their being serious literary works.

One of the few exceptions to this inadequacy, so painfully evident in the short stories not written for inclusion in a book, is "A True Story," (1874). It maintains a standard of literary excellence not based simply on audience response. Being unique in Twain's production meant that it was low in his esteem. It wouldn't make a good magazine article in his opinion because it was not striking or gimmicky, it had integrity and a serious purpose apart from the entertaining of a wide general audience. Twain was not aware of its quality and integrity. "I enclose also a 'True Story' which has no humor in it. You can pay as lightly as you choose for that, if you want it, for it is rather out of my line. I have not altered the old colored woman's story except to begin it at the beginning instead of the middle as she did -- and <worked> traveled both ways."<sup>16</sup> As Twain apologetically submitted this story, written entirely according to his literary theory of reporting specific character and scene to produce a history of the nation, it becomes evident that he did not believe such intentions were appropriate for the short story. This emphasis upon light entertainment was not to change until the seriousness of Twain's thinking dominated all of his intellectual pursuits, including the short story.

This particular story most certainly does adhere to his theory. In describing a picture of his household to a friend from Edinburgh, Scotland named Doctor John Brown, the historical nature of his story is stated. "Next to her is Auntie Cord (a fragment of whose history I have just sent to a magazine)."<sup>17</sup> This history was sub-titled, "Repeated Word for Word as I Heard It" (p. 94). Being a transcription of narrative gives the story control, preventing Twain from injecting a dose of wild humor or sentimentality to entertain the Atlantic Monthly audience, as was expected of him. In fact, the story puzzled many readers who looked in vain for the humor. Howells answered queries from subscribers and defended the story, regretting that Twain did not have forty more such stories because he recognized that a specific, unique narrator in Twain's fiction endowed it with a superior, fresh sort of descriptive style, a believable and interesting dialogue and prevented the intrusion of the author's strained touches of humor which veiled an increasing need to be serious.

Twain had always held a deep compassion for slaves. "I

being born to it [slavery] and unaware that elsewhere there were other methods; but I was also able to remember that those unresented sufferings made me sorry for the victim and ashamed for the punisher."<sup>18</sup> His wife, Livy, claimed that he should consider all men as negroes until he found different because he would then be far more patient and considerate in dealing with them.<sup>19</sup> It is surprising that with this sort of attitude toward slavery and negroes, he should have apologized because his story about a slave was not humorous. The apology vividly illustrates his self-judgement of what the short story could not be expected to do. Paradoxically, it is fortunate that he did not take a part in the story other than as reporter, because if he had taken a serious authorial role, his compassion would have compelled him to gross devices to make the reader aware of the injustices of slavery. By taking down another person's story, told to him in a straightforward manner, he created one of his best short fiction pieces. If the short story genre had been considered worthy of Twain's literary theory, the masterful use of Southern dialect in "A True Story" and the recording of a minute history done with a serious intent would have been repeated in the short story form.

Mark Twain had ample experience of the government bureaucracy in Nevada as legislative reporter, in California as a city reporter, and while in Washington, D.C. in 1868 as secretary to Senator William Stewart. It was in the last position that he got his most bitter experiences of bureaucratic inefficiency, political corruption and general governmental fatuity. Concerning his attempts to obtain work in the government for his brother Orion, he concluded as a rationalization for his inability to conquer the torpid system of forms and favoritism: "Surely government pap must be nauseating food for a man -- a man whom God has enabled to saw wood and be independent."<sup>20</sup> His disgust with Congress was far greater.

How insignificant a creature a Senator or MC [member of Congress] is in New York -- & how great a personage he is in Washington! --

We should have a much better sort of legislation if we had these swollen country jakes in New York as their capital. Congress ought to sit in a big city.

I remember how those pigmy [sic] Congressmen used to come into the Arlington breakfast room with a bundle of papers

& letters -- you could see by their affection for it & their <[----]> delight in this sort of display that out in the woods where they came from they warn't used to much mail matter.

They always occupied their seats at table a level hour after breakfast, to be looked at, though they wore a weak pretence of settling the affairs of Empires over their mail -- contracting brows, &c.

The Senator [.]

How New York would squeeze the conceit out of those poor little Congressmen.<sup>21</sup>

In spite of his anger, Twain was capable of some humor relating to this subject. "Whiskey is taken into the committee rooms in demijohns and carried out in demagogues."<sup>22</sup> "Reader, suppose you were an idiot. And suppose you were a member of Congress. But I repeat myself."<sup>23</sup> For the most part, he was derisive and critical; his conclusion about political life in Washington was a summary condemnation. "This is a place to get a poor opinion of everybody in -- There are some pitiful intellects in this Congress."<sup>24</sup>

With this sort of opinion of the political scene, it is not surprising that he would make fun of politics and bureaucracy on more than one occasion in his short fiction. "Cannibalism in the Cars" (1868) is clearly a satire of the heartless nature of parliamentary procedure used by ruthless men and the hypocritical posing which goes into a Congressman's speechmaking. The story also incorporates the memorable experience Twain had in Hawaii when he interviewed the survivors of the Hornet in 1866. "Today it was said to the Captain, and in hearing of all, that some of the men would not shrink, when a man was dead, from using the flesh, though they would not kill him."<sup>25</sup>

Employing the frame device as an introduction of the story-telling persona, the story begins with the narrator making the acquaintance of a stranger who then tells an anecdote to the interviewer. As this meeting occurs, the first satire of politics is made. The stranger knows about all the inner workings of the Washington system and is especially familiar with the vote buying and favoritism which prevails. They overhear a conversation which serves to prove the stranger does know of the corruption existing in Washington. "'Harris,

if you'll do that for me, I'll never forget you, my boy.' My new comrade's eye lighted pleasantly. The words had touched upon a happy memory, I thought"(p. 9). The recollection prompts the new comrade to relate a tale concerning politicians.

The anecdote that he tells is of a party in a railroad car being marooned by snowdrifts and blizzard conditions. There is ample heat, but no food. In time, cannibalism becomes necessary. The deliberations of the marooned men comprise the real point of the entire story, for their speeches are a burlesque of Congressional deliberations. The story is more of a journalistic editorial comment than an attempt to create a work of art. Still the irony is well done and produces the desired sting. "It may be urged by gentlemen that the hardships and privations of a frontier life have rendered Mr. Davis tough; but, gentlemen, is this a time to cavil at toughness? Is this a time to be fastidious concerning trifles? Is this a time to dispute about matters of paltry significance? No, gentlemen, bulk is what we desire, substance, weight, bulk -- these are the supreme requisites now -- not talent, not genius, not education. I insist upon my motion"(p. 13).

Mark Twain's next satirical attack of the political system resembles an article which he published in the San Francisco Golden Era, February 28, 1864. The story, "The Facts in the Great Beef Contract"(1870) is a burlesque of government offices and their obtuse inefficiency. The piece appeared in Twain's "Memorandum" column for Galaxy magazine and serves as an editorial comment like the previous story. The narrator, claiming to relate only the facts, tells of his struggle with numerous departments of the government in the process of collecting \$17,000 that is owed to him. When he is finally given a judgement, it amounts to \$100. He concludes: "I only know that if a man lives long enough he can trace a thing through the Circumlocution Office of Washington and find out, after much labor and trouble and delay, that which he could have found out on the first day if the business of the Circumlocution Office were as ingeniously systematized as it would be if it were a great private mercantile institution"(p. 45).

Mark Twain's final story making fun of the bureaucracy was included in A Tramp Abroad. It has several clearly autobiographical elements. After Twain's stint as secretary for William Stewart and before the publishing of The Innocents

Abroad, and his settling down in Buffalo, New York, he worked in Washington, D.C. as a reporter. He became friends with a fellow journalist, J.H. Riley. "The Man Who Put Up at Gadsby's"(1880) begins with a reference to this time and to Twain's friend. "When my odd friend Riley and I were newspaper correspondents in Washington, in the winter of '67, we were coming down Pennsylvania Avenue one night..."(p. 148). Riley is engaged in conversation by an enthusiastic school teacher from San Francisco who has come East to spend one day in securing the postmastership of San Francisco. To illustrate the foolishness of expecting literally overnight results from Washington bureaucrats, Riley tells the story of a man who has spent thirty years in Washington waiting for government action on a claim. The man had put up at Gadsby's Hotel, and Riley suggests that the school teacher do the same. The final sentence, "He never got that post-office"(p. 152), could very well have described Twain's own success in getting the San Francisco postmastership.<sup>26</sup>

By not being so abstract and transparent in condemnation of bureaucracy, this story is far more realistic in style than the "Beef Contract." It restricts itself to specific characters and, to a limited extent, develops those characters. The story lacks the humor that is found in the "Beef Contract" but is more successful because it is less purely entertaining. This is due to its being written for inclusion in A Tramp Abroad and not directly for a newspaper or magazine audience.

"A Day at Niagara"(1869) written for periodical publication, is a fantastic account of a visit to Niagara Falls, the natural wonder which is used repeatedly in Twain's short magazine fiction. Twain had a great love for rushing streams and falls; Reverend Joseph Twichell noted this childlike and passionate fascination during his travels in Europe with Twain to gather material for a travel book.<sup>27</sup> The story is lacking in careful workmanship with highly stylized descriptive passages and no attempt to create complex or distinctive characters. It is simply a fanciful sketch.

Several interesting autobiographical points serve as the basis for the poorly executed humor in the story. In Mark Twain's attack of James Fennimore Cooper's literature, "Fennimore Cooper's Literary Offenses," he makes a point of discrediting any attempt to portray the American Indian as a

noble savage and refers to his experience in the West as refuting any such claim. In "A Day at Niagara" the fatuous narrator approaches Indian craftsmen several times, filled with respect and awe. He finds that they are of another ethnic background which interested Twain and also irritated him, the Irish. His mild dislike of the Irish was first expressed in 1866 while in the Hawaiian Islands. "Apparently few or no Irish in the islands [.] "<sup>28</sup> Years later his apparent, mild dislike of the Irish was again expressed. "The fact that we have but 1200 soldiers to meet 6,000 Indians is well utilized here [Germany] to discourage immigration to America. The common people think the Indians are in New Jersey.

Nothing can stop the Irish from coming, alas!"<sup>29</sup> Whether he felt a similarity existed between the two races cannot be drawn from his notes, letters and stories, but he did feel that the duping of an overawed visitor to Niagara with the mixup would produce humor and perhaps serve as a slight to both races.

This surprise trick played on the narrator, an example of Twain's victim's humor, is benign and often pleasant when compared with more malicious forms of humor in which the narrator or fictional persona are spectators making fun of others. Mark Twain is at his best when he uses the victim's humor, although in the story, the mistaken identity and the foolish awe of the narrator for the mysterious noble savage is hampered by the reader's doubt of the plausibility of meeting Irish Indians. The sort of humorous device that Mark Twain is using, a bisociation or introduction of new elements, requires that the reader is pleasantly surprised, not completely baffled by the new element. By searching out the sources of the story in Twain's attitudes and experiences, we can understand why he felt that the bisociation was not too extreme, but the ordinary reader is simply perplexed and hence, hardly amused.

In the story another attempt at victim's humor is made when the narrator is whirling in the water calling for help, while an undertaker patiently awaits future business from a comfortable location on the bank. The victim is finally arrested and taken to court for disturbance of the peace. This type of humor was Twain's favorite brand of Western humor, filled with action and based on the extension of human traits to the ridiculous. It contains the usual strain of violence or sadism typical of the West. In the present story under

discussion Twain rushes the scenes, losing the element of suspense and tension necessary to create the relief which evokes laughter. By rushing the scenes along, Twain lost a good opportunity to unleash his humor. One is led to the conclusion that little time was spent in bringing the story to polished form. It is a fantastic tale, shoddily prepared, with several crude attempts at humor. The failures do lend themselves more to evaluation of humorous techniques than do his shining successes, and the story is worthy of examination for this reason alone.

Mark Twain perpetrated two extremely successful hoaxes while working as a journalist in the West, "The Petrified Man" and "The Dutch Nick Massacre," which not only completely took in the general public, but also fooled the editors of nearly all the West Coast newspapers that reprinted his items as genuine news. Mark Twain was given proof of the uncritical nature of not only the general public, but even the professionals in his field. A major theme in The Innocents Abroad is that art lovers, tourists and art critics are basically uncritical and taken in by the subtle persuasion of guides and promoters.

'The Last Supper' is painted on the dilapidated wall of what was a little chapel attached to the main church in ancient times, I suppose. It is battered and scarred in every direction, and stained and discolored by time,....

The colors are dimmed with age, the countenances are scaled and marred, and nearly all expression is gone from them; .... Only the attitudes are certain.

People come here from all parts of the world, and glorify this masterpiece. They stand entranced before it with bated breath and parted lips, and when they speak, it is only in the catchy ejaculations of rapture: Oh, wonderful;... Such faultless drawing!.... Such feeling! What delicacy of touch!...30

This low opinion of man's critical powers included the reading public as well. "I want the Tribune to say it right and say it powerful -- and then I will answer for the consequences. The consequences will be that all other papers will follow suit -- which you know, as well as I do."<sup>31</sup> His friend William Dean Howells described the reading public as sheep, to which he knew Twain would not object. "Give me a hint when

it's to be out, and I'll start the sheep to jumping in the right places."<sup>32</sup> Mark Twain always sought a complimentary review of his work just at the moment of release because he knew how much the standards of the public could be manipulated or at least stimulated. He wrote several stories at various times based on this conviction.

"The Legend of the Capitoline Venus"(1869) is an extremely transparent attempt to illustrate that the art world often fails to make correct judgements. It could also be said to illustrate Twain's estimation of his own ability to make perceptive judgements, since he never attempted to claim a keen insight, often posing as a totally uncritical muggins. "The Legend," written in a pseudo-stagescript form, contains a totally false dialogue, flat characters and an implausible plot. A young sculptor is refused the hand of a lady because he is penurious. His friend rebukes his ignorance and promises to make him rich within six months. This is effected by harshly damaging one of the sculptor's statues, burying it and then discovering it as a rare artefact of priceless value. It is "restored"(p. 26) and the hoax is successful. "The Capitoline Venus is still in the Capitol at Rome, and is still the most charming and most illustrious work of ancient art the world can boast of. But if ever it shall be your fortune to stand before it and go into the customary ecstasies over it, don't permit this true and secret history of its origin to mar your bliss -- and when you read about a gigantic Petrified Man being dug up near Syracuse, in the State of New York, or near any other place, keep your own counsel and if the Barnum that buried him there offers to sell to you at an enormous sum, don't you buy. Send him to the Pope!"(pp. 26-7).

This "Petrified Giant" swindle, not to be confused with Twain's "Petrified Man" hoax, was to recur in Twain's fiction nineteen years later. In "A Ghost Story"(1888), Twain's fascination with the duped victim of a trick leads to the making of a fantastic tale. The ghost of the Petrified Giant haunts a New York museum district, hopefully waiting for his remains to be buried so he can be in peace. He is informed by a victim of his haunting ploys that the real remains are in Albany, New York and that he is being fooled. There is a footnote included to document this fact (p. 249). This humorous twist is clever, but unfortunately, it is the only merit

of the story which was apparently created to present the ruse of the ghost with little regard for any other aspects of the story. Twain attempted to set a terrifying and haunting scene such as Edgar Allan Poe is noted for, but it is obvious that Twain has failed to create even the least bit of suspense and terror. His story moves too quickly from one effect to the next to be effective. A much more convincing and well elaborated sense of suspense and terror would have resulted in a frightening sense of surprise in finding a pitiful, duped ghost behind the horrible phenomena.

Mark Twain's final fictional product based on his interest in the ruse and the fallibility of critical standards was written in 1893. "Is He Living or Is He Dead" employs the frame device in which the narrator gains the confidence of a stranger who then provides an unusual anecdote. Perhaps this device released Twain from feeling the need to provide dialogue with a true ring to it. A raconteur would not be held accountable for his fanciful portrayal of dialogue, such as this story contains. The raconteur purports to have been a personal friend of Francois Millet, the famous artist whose secret of success is known just by the stranger and a few close intimates. The raconteur had been a fellow artist with Millet, struggling to make a living, when a group of the neglected and starving artists decided to stage the death of one of their party. Using the press and word of mouth they spread the news that Millet was dead which insured his immediate recognition and the high valuation of his works. The story makes its point that the public is fickle and uncritical as well as cruel in its treatment of artists. Nothing distinguishes the story except the oddities of including in this quite serious piece a number of slips of Western American jargon into the vocabulary of European artists. A state of poverty is described as, "Everybody has struck -- ..."(p. 310). An unsatisfactory purchase price "wouldn't answer,..."(p. 314).

These sorts of mistakes may seem niggling, but they are the types of errors which earned Twain's condemnation of others. The story is quite mediocre, being shallow in theme, lacking any remarkable insights, any humor and having a very simple plot, and yet Twain thought quite highly of it and sought to have the story dramatised. It fails to fulfill any of his ideals in fiction but could still be held in high regard by

him. Either Twain totally lacked the faculty of self-criticism or did not believe his short stories needed to fulfill his literary ideals.

"Journalism in Tennessee"(1869) was written for the Buffalo Express as a part of Twain's routine contributions to the paper as editor. It is a rather outlandish story, humorous but of no real significance. The piece does show the extent to which Twain could take his own experience and stretch it to suit his sense of humor. It is an imaginary extension or exaggeration of Mark Twain's own newspaper career which was filled with the sorts of events that can be easily made into wild fictional effects. His writing worried and irked Orion Clemens in Hannibal and Keokuk, got him into a duel in Nevada, and resulted in his forced departure from San Francisco. The story relates this sort of violence as a routine part of journalism.

A young greenhorn reporter arrives at a newspaper office in Tennessee and begins his career by writing a generous, courteous and bland review of the news printed in the rival papers, only to have the chief editor improve the article by adding insults, defamations of character, and strong criticism to it. This was the key to high subscription rates as Twain well knew, but also led to trouble. The editor no sooner finishes his revision than gun battles and fistfights begin in the office. The humor, permeated by a typical, Western strain of sadism, is derived from this violence and the fact that the new reporter falls victim to most of it. "'Ah,' said he, [chief editor] 'that is that scoundrel Smith, of the Moral Volcano -- he was due yesterday.' And he snatched a navy revolver from his belt and fired. Smith dropped, shot in the thigh. The shot spoiled Smith's aim, who was just taking a second chance, and he crippled a stranger. It was me. Merely a finger shot off"(p. 28). During a pause in the action, he sets the newcomer's assignments. He is to do battle on behalf of the paper. "If you have any odd time, you may write a blistering article on the police -- give the chief inspector rats"(pp. 30-31). This is exactly what Twain had done in San Francisco. The entire story is a fanciful rendering of his own experience, disguised by humorous extravagance. The story is most noteworthy as an indication of Twain's low opinion of the newspaper reader who is portrayed

as needing wild effects such as insults and intimations of violence to keep his interest. It is no wonder that his stories written for the newspaper and magazine audience also rely so heavily on forceful, and unsubtle effects.

While Twain was in Buffalo, writing for his Express and several magazines, he received a letter at the Express discussing the low quality of editing in agricultural papers.<sup>33</sup> This prompted him to write "How I Edited an Agriculture Paper"(1870) for the Galaxy magazine in his monthly "Memorandum." The story reiterates Twain's opinion that the key to newspaper success, farcical as it may be, is to greatly move the reading public by extravagant statements which may be humorous, or insulting or completely incorrect. The ostensible account of how the narrator edited an agricultural paper employs the turnip vine ruse which Twain used in "The Trials of Simon Erickson"(1872) for inclusion in Roughing It. As in "Journalism in Tennessee", the editorial office becomes a busy place. But instead of angry, violent visitors arriving, the office is flooded by subscribers who are docile, shaken persons doubting their own sanity when they read of geese "spawning"(p. 48), the planting of "buckwheat cakes"(p. 47) and "turnip vines" (p. 47). Others are congregated around the paper's office waiting to see the crazy editor in person before them (p. 49). The editor-owner of the paper returns from his holiday, like Orion in Keokuk, Iowa years before, to find the reputation of his paper damaged, but subscriptions rapidly increasing.

The story provides some humor through the tension set up between the apparently earnest attempts of the interim editor and the outlandish recommendations that he makes. But Mark Twain is only partially successful. It is surprising that he was able to write humorous material at all in this story and its counterpart, "Journalism in Tennessee." Mark Twain's father-in-law died in Twain's home of protracted illness during this time. The strain took its toll on Livy who was seriously ill with the complications resulting from the birth of Langdon Clemens, a sickly child close to death throughout his short life. Then Livy's weakened condition caused her to contract typhoid fever. A friend, Emma Nye, came to visit and care for Livy, only to die of typhoid in the home after a long illness. When Twain quit the Galaxy in April 1871, he apologized. "For the last eight months, with

hardly an interval, I have had for my fellows and comrades, night and day, doctors and watchers of the sick! During these eight months death has taken two members of my home and malignantly threatened two others. All this I have experienced, yet all the time been under contract to furnish 'humorous' matter once a month for this magazine.... Some of the humour I have written during this period could have been injected into a funeral sermon without disturbing the solemnity of the occasion."<sup>34</sup> Both of the journalism stories have a forced, heavy handed sort of humor. The lack of subtlety in them and in "The Facts in the Great Beef Contract" is no doubt partly due to Twain's discouraging and distracting situation. The result is humor of a simple sort which lends itself to sure, if undistinguished, mirth.

"A Medieval Romance"(1870) does not meet even the moderate standards of the other stories written for the Express and Galaxy during this trying time. The only significance of the story is its illustration of Twain's inability to devise and carry out a complicated plot in his fiction. The story involves the attempts of two brothers to gain an inheritance by fulfilling the will of their father. The story is intended to rely on elaborate twists of plot as indicated by the title of the third part, "The Plot Thickens"(p. 53). To concentrate upon plot in a story proved to be more than Twain could handle and he found it impossible to bring the story to a conclusion. It ends abruptly: "The truth is, I have got my hero (or heroine) into such a particularly close place that I do not see how I am ever going to get him (or her) out of it again, and therefore I will wash my hands of the whole business and leave that person to get out the best way that offers -- or else stay there, I thought it was going to be easy enough to straighten out that little difficulty, but it looks different now"(p. 56). Perhaps Twain, heavily pressed at home by his troubles, did not have the time or inspiration to pursue a task which was always difficult for him -- the sorting out of a plot line. His journalistic apprenticeship had never included such a skill.

It is important to note that this heavily contrived story, greatly relying on plot structure, is bereft of humor. Mark Twain's humor is most often victim's humor. It requires a well drawn and sympathetic character from his experience to

inspire his wit and to provide the element of surprise or relief which evokes laughter. The picaresque novel or the short story which is predominantly a character sketch lends itself to Twain's sort of humor. This story, comprised of flat characters, gorgeous diction and a complicated plot prevented Twain's unique humor from even being tried.

The final short story written at this time, "Political Economy" (1870) returns to the formless sketch of character and to a fair attempt by Mark Twain to write realistic and humorous fiction. Again one senses a sparseness, a lack of long careful work on the story to give it a density of insights, good descriptive passages, and a polished style. But unlike "A Medieval Romance", there are at least some redeeming elements. Early in the story there is an autobiographical allusion which indicates that the story is based on recent incidents in Twain's life. "I am new to housekeeping, have been used to hotels and boarding-houses all my life. Like anybody else of similar experience, I try to appear (to strangers) to be an old housekeeper; consequently I said in an offhand way that I had been intending for some time to have six or eight lightning-rods put up..." (p. 59). Twain had just married Livy Langdon and they had been overwhelmed by the surprise wedding gift of a private home in Buffalo. It was indeed a new experience for the rambling river pilot, typesetter, journalist, miner and European traveler. And for a man who would see a mouse-chase as worthy of fictionalization, such an event was certain to be used in his fiction. The quotation contains a confiding tone which allies the reader with the persona who narrates. We are then both disturbed and hence amused by the way he is duped into purchasing a vast number of lightning rods by the crafty canvasser. The result is a house, laden with lightning rods, which attracts lightning from all the area. He finally gets the rods off his buildings and the story ends with an advertisement to sell a huge quantity of lighting rod material.

Ending the story with an advertisement is one example of the unconcern Mark Twain felt for traditional literary forms. The story also contains an interesting use of italics and brackets to interject the bouts with the salesman between fine theoretical writing on the subject of political economy. The irony of a man writing good theory while simul-

taneously being bilked in practice is obvious. It is also extremely American in that it evidences the American folk tradition of suspicion of intellectualism, fancy theories or professionalism which is by virtue of its inflexibility incapable of coping with the dynamic flux of a young and active country.<sup>35</sup> It is an assertion of pragmatism through the use of victim's humor. On a more concrete level, it was an exact report of how Mark Twain was constantly taken in by confidence men.

"The Canvasser's Tale"(1876) is a story illustrating this same weakness. The narrator buys several echoes from a canvasser after listening to his plaintive story. One is reminded of Twain's description of James W. Paige. "What a talker he is. He could persuade a fish to come out and take a walk with him. When he is present I always believe him -- I cannot help it. When he is gone away all the belief evaporates."<sup>36</sup> Paige managed to convince Twain to give up a fortune in support of the perfection of a typesetter.

The story is not very well done and is of interest primarily as proof of Twain's use of his own experience. Technically it is simply another frame story in which the first narrator turns the telling of the body of the story over to another who then has license to exaggerate, to neglect realistic style, and to concentrate upon a light, anecdotal entertainment of the audience. If there is any serious theme in the story, it is the same one propounded in "The Legend of the Capitoline Venus" and "Is He Living or Is He Dead" which asserts that an item is valued only in terms of one's ability to obtain it and not on its own merits or defects. The canvasser has inherited a collection of echoes that is not complete, it does not have a monopoly on the market and hence is a valueless collection. This theme is hardly developed and not of importance to the story as it stands. "The Canvasser's Tale", bereft of seriousness, seeks strictly to entertain.

Mark Twain was always quite a flamboyant personality, given to impulses and eccentricities which identified him as a non-conformist. This satisfied his rebellious nature and also insured welcome attention from others. Mrs. Mary Fairbanks, whom Twain called Mother Fairbanks, was the first lady to whom Twain gave authority to censor and improve his

manners. He later gave this authority to his wife, Livy. It was a playful sort of arrangement in which she could give orders and he then obeyed them when it was not too uncomfortable to do so. He made concessions such as refraining from smoking cigars at the breakfast table, not what one would consider a major sacrifice. But he did not give up smoking altogether, which had been a further request. Twain obeyed when he felt like doing so and, in his letters and his fiction, he dramatised the occasions of his subservience to Livy.

"MRS. CLEMENS RECEIVED THE MAIL THIS MORNING AND THE NEXT MINUTE SHE LIT INTO THE STUDY WITH DANGER IN HER EYE AND THIS DEMAND ON HER TONGUE: WHERE IS THE PROFANITY MR. HOWELLS SPEAKS OF? THEN I HAD TO MISERABLY CONFESS THAT I HAD LEFT IT OUT WHEN READING THE MSS TO HER. NOTHING BUT ALMOST INSPIRED LYING GOT ME OUT OF THIS SCRAPE WITH MY SCALP. DOES YOUR WIFE GIVE YOU THE RATS, LIKE THIS, WHEN YOU GO A LITTLE ONE SIDED?"<sup>37</sup> This letter to W.D. Howells was typed on one of the first commercially produced typewriters, which had only an upper case.

Such a mock subservience and cowardice in the face of his wife's demands was the subject of three stories inspired by Twain's stay with the McWilliams family in Buffalo, New York when Twain first moved there. He notes then: "McWilliams & false case of Scarlet Fever -- ruined all metal work in the house with sulphuric acid -- nothing but a rash."<sup>38</sup> This specific experience is reflected in "The Experience of the McWilliamses with Membranous Croup"(1875) which relates the worry and badgering tactics of Mrs. McWilliams who is convinced that her child has a dangerous illness, membranous croup. She gives her husband "rats," keeping him busy the entire night doing confused and contradictory chores. When the doctor finally arrives, he discovers that the child has been chewing on something made of wood and has several slivers in her throat, nothing more. Mr. McWilliams is triumphant, for he had warned his wife as the story began that it was dangerous for the child to chew on pinewood. His wife, putting him in his place, had replied that the turpentine was good for the child. He had accepted her authority, then; but as the story ends, Mr. McWilliams is quite smug, enjoying for once a "deep and untroubled serenity"(p. 104). There is a footnote touched with irony which alludes to the immediacy

of this state of female dominance and enjoys the camaraderie of sharing submission with others, just as Twain expressed such a sentiment often to W.D. Howells. "Very few married men have such an experience as McWilliams's, and so the author of this book thought that maybe the novelty of it would give it a passing interest to the reader"(p. 104).

The story, based upon a recurring pose by Twain as the servant of his wife's will, from which he would draw his pleasant victim's humor, is not only humorous, but is also written with consistent, realistic devices. This frame story uses extensive dialogue and physical action to carry the story along, thereby enabling the author to be unimposing. The dialogue is quite believable, although a bit overdone at times to establish a tension between the imperious wife and her craven husband. The use of the first person in descriptive passages adds to the illusion of reality. The story, based on personal experiences, employing realistic devices and humor, is one of Twain's best efforts in the short story genre. Although it is too much given to simple entertaining and lacks a serious theme, it is nevertheless enjoyable and technically well done.

The fictional relationship between the McWilliamses was taken up five years later, or rather, one might say that the playful portrayal of Twain's craven fear of Livy which was ongoing, once again was borrowed from his letters to be used in the short story genre. "Mrs. McWilliams and the Lightning" (1880) employs the same methods as the previous story. The fictional persona, Mr. McWilliams, gave Twain's imagination a certain parameter, a focus that helped to control Twain's inclination to subvert realistic devices for the effect of entertaining his periodical audience. The story recounts another sleepless night for Mr. McWilliams through the use of the frame device. Mrs. McWilliams sees a flash through the blinds and hears a roar afterward. She wakes her husband and begins to try various superstitious precautions to insure their safety from the lightning. No light is allowed, for it attracts lightning. She is certain that her husband's swearing will mean their end; Livy thought that Twain's swearing was awful. She reads lightning prevention advice in muddled German; Twain had a long-standing fascination for the German language. Eventually, after much nagging and some

humorously pitiful efforts by Mr. McWilliams, they are safe. The cat is in the wash stand. Mrs. McWilliams is in the closet, and Mr. McWilliams is standing nearly naked on a chair with its legs placed in glass tumblers. He has a saber buckled on and is ringing a bell. The neighbors are attracted and roar with laughter when they see the state of the McWilliams bedroom. There was no lightning storm -- the neighbors had been firing a cannon to celebrate the good news that Garfield had been nominated.

The summer home in the story is situated exactly like that which Mark Twain took at Quarry Farm, Elmira, New York. "Our little summer establishment stands on top of a high range of hills, overlooking a valley. Several farm-houses are in our neighborhood -- the nearest some three or four hundred yards away"(p. 158). Albert Bigelow Paine describes the actual farm in similar terms. "Quarry Farm, the home of Mrs. Clemens's sister, Mrs. Theodore Crane, is a beautiful hilltop, with a wide green slope, overlooking the hazy city and the Chemung River, beyond which are the distant hills."<sup>39</sup> This situation meant that lightning, which strikes the highest point, was problematic and Twain stated: "Mrs. Clemens was afraid of lightning, and would never let me bare my head to the storm."<sup>40</sup> She actually did occasionally retreat to the closet like Mrs. McWilliams.

Mark Twain's fascination for inventions and his well known disastrous financial speculations in them included the burglar alarm. In his Autobiography he tells of the quirks of the burglar alarm. "That burglar alarm which Susy mentions led a gay and careless life and had no principles. It was generally out of order at one point or another and there was plenty of opportunity, because all the windows and doors in the house, from the cellar up to the top floor, were connected with it. However, in its seasons of being out of order it could trouble us for only a very little while: we quickly found out that it was fooling us and that it was buzzing its blood-curdling alarm merely for its own amusement."<sup>41</sup> He goes on to relate a quite unbelievable episode in which he calmly allows a burglary to occur, to the amazement of his wife. "'Are you going down to see what it is he wants now?'" "No," I said, "I am no more interested than I was before. They are experienced people -- burglars; they know what they

want. I should be no help to him. I think he is after ceramics and bric-a-brac and such things."<sup>42</sup> Twain was so innured to the ringing of the alarm that he was no longer excited by it. The alarm had been a constant irritation. Susy mentions it in her short unpublished biography of her father. "Our burglar alarm is often out of order, and papa had been obliged to take the mahogany room off from the alarm altogether for a time because the burglar alarm had been in the habit of ringing even when the mahogany-room window was closed."<sup>43</sup> Twain made a notation in 1882 which was a reminder to carry out a task relating to the burglar alarm.<sup>44</sup> He mentions in his Autobiography another false alarm. "And so, when the burglar alarm made a fierce clamor at midnight a fortnight ago, the butler, who is French and knows no German, tried in vain to interest the dog in the supposed burglar."<sup>45</sup> For all the false alarms which the family endured, there was one occasion when the home was actually burglarized. The thief was tracked through a light snow and caught. Twain was prompted to make a notation:

City of Burglars

If there is a man in Hartford who is not  
a burglar, I am not aware of it, & I am  
not acquainted with him.<sup>46</sup>

The drama of an alarm ringing was not restricted to memoirs and notebooks and not to be lost as fiction. In 1882, Mr. McWilliams once again appears by way of the frame device, to relate an anecdote concerning his experience with the burglar alarm. His anecdote begins with an allusion to an incident in Twain's experience when he built his huge home on Farmington Avenue in Hartford Connecticut. "When we were finishing our house, we found we had a little cash left over, on account of the plumber not knowing it"(p. 193). The story begins with the establishment of Mr. McWilliams as a sympathetic character, nearly penniless as a result of the building project, who is furthermore subservient to the commands of his wife. Twain uses the pleasant victim's humor. "I will explain that whenever I want a thing, and Mrs. McWilliams wants another thing, and we decide upon the thing that Mrs. McWilliams wants -- as we always do -- she calls that a compromise"(p. 193). Mr. McWilliams clearly has a relationship exactly like that in which Twain playfully posed with his wife, Livy. Another detail reflects an experience which Twain had. In the story,

burglars move in for the summer(p. 197). During the summer of 1877, while Twain was at Quarry Farm, he received reports of a stranger lurking about his home in Hartford. Upon investigating, he found that the man was "a lover of one of the house-maids, who had given him food and shelter on the premises, intending no real harm."<sup>47</sup>

The story is the best of the three McWilliams anecdotes. There is the same sort of humor as in the prior two stories, based upon the ridiculous efforts of Mr. McWilliams to cope with both his frightened wife and some catastrophe. The work has less dialogue and more descriptive passages which creates a better balance between the realistic elements of the story that serve as a foil for the outlandish elements. The story, like so many of Twain's, is clearly a lighthearted piece produced to entertain a reading audience and not to expatiate an underlying theme or meet any serious standards of literary art.

The interest that Mark Twain had in science and its practical applications was unbounded. He admired originality, particularly in the form of scientific inventions. "What is it that confers the noblest delight? What is that which swells a man's breast with pride above that which any other experience can bring to him? Discovery! To know that you are walking where none others have walked;...."<sup>48</sup> All of the discoveries which he gives as examples save one are scientific discoveries such as Morse's telegraph, Fulton's steam engine and Jenner's small pox inoculation. Twain was one of the first owners of a typewriter, a telephone and a tell-harmonium; he invested in Plasmon, a wonder substance; the Paige typesetter earned his love when mankind received it begrudgingly; and he was always buying or considering smaller patents. Twain even invented a scrapbook and a history game which he patented. He foresaw the television. "Portraits and pictures transferred by light accompany everything. The phonograph goes to church, conducts family worship, etc. teaches foreign languages. Pops the question."<sup>49</sup> And he wrote a story based on the idea of a telecommunication device "popping the question."

"The Loves of Alonzo Fitz Clarence and Rosannah Ethelton" (1878) is a terrible love story, employing maudlin sentimentality, a complicated and impossible plot and a diction which

verges on a travesty of sincere, normal conversation. One suspects or wishes that the story were a parody of the mid-Nineteenth Century ladies school. The melodramatic tale, filled with stock devices such as a compromising telltale cast in the eye of the disguised villain (p. 133) which enables the reader to avoid puzzlement or suspense. The author imposes himself upon the story twice. "While these young people chat themselves into an acquaintanceship, let us take the liberty of inspecting the sweeter and the fairer of the two"(p. 131). "All this time she had been busily chatting with Alonzo, unconscious of our inspection"(p. 132). The illusion of reality that even Mark Twain's most farcical, outlandish stories use to some small extent as a foil for humor, was completely abandoned. It cannot exist in a work which uses authorial intrusions such as those just quoted. Fortunately, the two quotations are the only instances of their kind in all of his stories. An example of the language and character depiction will suffice to condemn this story further. "Wholly, oh, wholly yours, Alonzo, now and forever! All the day long, and all through my nightly dreams, one song sings itself, and its sweet burden is, 'Alonzo Fitz Clarence, Alonzo Fitz Clarence, Eastport, state of Maine!'"(p. 134). The address is given in this heartfelt effusion because the artificial plot needs it. The villain overhears this effusion. "'Curse him, I've got his address, anyway!' roared Burley, inwardly, and rushed from the place"(p. 134, italics mine).

If the story is a burlesque of the fatuous, shallow love story, the author does not carry the faults far enough so that the reader is certain that they are recognized by the author as laughable. Rather than claim that the story is a burlesque, it is correct to say that Twain has copied the form and content of a ladies school melodrama for fun and entertainment, instead of exaggerating its characteristics for derision. There is not a strong enough parody of elements to conclude that Twain knew and intended his story's faults. It is undoubtedly guilty of the artificiality that Twain so hated. Only one passage strikes a note which is typical of Mark Twain's fresh view and his avoidance of the stylized and trite in magazine fiction: "...since in the course of the lover's mutual confessions they had told each other all about all the sweethearts they had ever had, and thrown no end of

mud at their failings and foibles -- for lovers always do that. It has a fascination that ranks next after billing and cooing"(p. 138). A notation by Mark Twain proves that the story itself was of little concern; his real object is to first use the telephone in fiction. "Sketch, story, farce or drama in which the telephone plays a principal part. Fellow listening around telephones to find his lost girl by hearing her play 'In the Sweet By & By' with a peculiar discord in it, she a thousand miles away."<sup>50</sup> The romance between Alonzo and Rosannah takes place over the telephone and relies heavily on the "Sweet By and By" being flattered as a means of recognition during the quest by Alonzo for his lost love. It is accurate and safe to say that Mark Twain chose farce, rather than sketch, story or drama as the means of telling his tale.

"A Curious Experience"(1881) uses the frame device to introduce an anecdote told by a Major in the U.S. Army. "This is the story which the Major told me, as nearly as I can recall it;... "(p. 163). At the end of the story there is a footnote which furthers the illusion of reality. "Note [:] I showed my manuscript to the Major, and he said: 'Your unfamiliarity with military matters has betrayed you into some little mistakes. Still, they are picturesque ones -- let them go; military men will smile at them, the rest won't detect them. You have got the main facts of the history right, and have set them down just about as they occurred. M.T." (p. 186-187, italics mine). The remarkable point is that Mark Twain had not created these devices to give the story a sense of factual history, he used the devices to properly credit the creation of the story to a Major whom he had met and from whom he had heard the story. When he was accused of plagiarizing the Major's story by an acquaintance of the Major, Twain's reply was unequivocal. "He knew there was not the shadow of a suggestion, from the beginning to the end of 'A Curious Episode,' that the story was an invention; he knew he had no warrant for trying to persuade the public that I had stolen the narrative and was endeavouring to palm it off as a piece of literary invention,...."<sup>51</sup>

Without considering the devices at the beginning and end of the story, one would conclude that it is anecdotal and fanciful in nature and chatty in style. The use of a narrator

whose life style and views were not intimately familiar to Twain caused the story to lack a narrative focus. The descriptions are neither unique nor reflective of personal insights concerning the scenes which a distinctive, familiar narrator such as Huck Finn gives to Twain's style and diction. The story fails for a reason which Twain recurrently expressed in his criticism of Sir Walter Scott. The characters cannot be respected as either types or specific individuals which act consistently throughout the story and evidence in their actions the characteristics which the narrator gives them. The kind-hearted and compassionate Major, for instance, who has taken in a forlorn boy as the story begins, later quite complacently tells of his torturing the child by hanging him from his thumbs until he provides information (p. 182). The tough troops are sentimental fools, to the reader's surprise and disgust. "The band -- well, they all cry -- every rascal of them blubbers, and don't try to hide it, either; and first you know, that very gang that's been slammin' boots at that boy will skip out of their bunks all of a sudden, and rush over in the dark and hug him! Yes, they do -- and slobber all over him, and call him pet names, and beg him to forgive them"(p. 168). The dialogue is equally staged and implausible. Either Twain's source was overbalanced with sentimentality and contrived effects in his telling of the story, or Twain took liberties with the tale which he thought would please the mass audience. In either case, Mark Twain displays a lack of critical judgement and seasoned literary taste while betraying his own literary theory as well. There is irony in his doing so in a story which ostensibly functions exactly in the tradition of the reporter telling it as he received it.

"A Curious Experience" is most noteworthy in Twain's short fiction for its attempt to use a rather elaborate, tight plot. The young boy who enters the Army fort is eventually accused of being a spy. Suspense builds as the Major seeks to identify his accomplices within the fort. Several different locations in the town and fort are portrayed during the build-up of suspense. The final discovery is that the boy has simply been playing war games to amuse himself. It is anti-climactic, but not as funny as Twain had no doubt intended. The use of a more involved plot and change of scenes stymied Twain's ability to sketch humorous and colorful

characters using appropriate language. He could not concentrate on both tasks, hence his literary success is restricted to formless short stories and picaresque novels in which he evokes the characters and situations from his own past.

An entertaining, light story based on a box of guns and limberger cheese was probably given to Mark Twain during one of his frequent sessions of story trading with friends. Being an excellent and avid raconteur, he would naturally have many opportunities to hear anecdotes. The nature of his notation concerning the anecdote which became "The Invalid's Story" (1882) is like many brief notes he made concerning stories he heard. It cannot be proved that he heard the story from someone, perhaps his notation is a reminder of an idea which he had himself for a story. However, the fact that only a mnemonic note was made, giving no details, implies that he needed only to be reminded of a story he had been told. "Limberger cheese story about box of guns."<sup>52</sup> He refers to it as a story, not an idea, implying that his acquaintance with it was as a story.

This humorous story employs an abundance of typically American humor in a tale which is written in a realistic style. The use of concrete metaphors contributes most to this realism and at the same time, it is the source of humor. Written in first person, the narrator tells how he traveled with a box of guns in a freight railroad car. He thought that the box contained the corpse of a friend which he was escorting to its burial site. The coffin box and the identical box of guns had been mis-labeled by a shipping clerk. A stranger had placed a package of Limberger cheese in the car which soon began to react to the heat of the stove by smelling awfully. The expressman, who sings "Sweet By and By" like Rosannah Ethelton, imagines that the body is responsible for the effluvia. The narrator can't help but also think this and the morbid situation lends itself to Western humor.

The humor of the West is an extreme form of the typically American, non-verbal, straightforward sort of joking which places understatement next to extravagance for comic effect. It is a ruthlessly honest, fierce brand of humor which is necessary to deflate or destroy the strong pseudo-myths of optimism and opportunity in America. The Western strain of

especially rough, outlandish, sordid or sadistic humor is used by Twain in "The Invalid's Story" which builds up a steady tension based on the horror and embarrassment created in the freight car by the increasingly active cheese. The tension one feels in the form of embarrassment is alleviated by knowing that the box contains guns and has a package of cheese sitting on it. If these facts were not disclosed at the beginning, the story would be too morbid and upsetting to be funny. As it is, one still feels tension when the expressman, after pouring out platitudes and euphemisms about death, begins to make colorful comments. The original metaphors which he used in his candor are another distinctly American form of literary fun. The expressman says that the dead friend is "ripe"(p. 189); that he would "go bail for" the fact that the dead friend is not just in a trance(p. 189); that he must be modified somehow(p. 190); the corpse's ambition is "stirred up"(p. 100) by this modification. Then as the smell grows, the expressman increases the corpse's rank from "Colonel"(p. 191), to "Gen'rul"(p. 191), and finally concludes: "The Governor wants to travel alone, and he's fixed so he can out-vote us."(p. 192). Considering the mad gasping and frantic efforts of the two, this sort of understatement is funny, or so it strikes the general reader in America.<sup>53</sup>

Opposed to this pointless sort of entertainment, Mark Twain wrote a satirical story, "The Stolen White Elephant" (1882) which makes fun of the police detective. The story is told by a "railway acquaintance"(p. 199) who is introduced by the frame device. It was originally written for A Tramp Abroad but cut out at the suggestion of W.D. Howells. It exaggerates the methodical, short sighted routine of the detective in solving an unusual crime, namely the theft of a white elephant. Like the "Beef Contract" satire of bureaucracy, forms must be completed. The detective wants to know the names of the elephant's parents, its place of birth, and a description of the lost elephant, etc.(p. 200-201); as if there will be several elephants in New Jersey being held by criminals. The foolish Detective Blunt sends out an all points bulletin and orders everyone leaving Jersey City to be searched(p. 204). A nationwide investigation begins with detectives throughout the eastern half of the continent

sending telegrams to report sightings. Deaths occur rampantly and are described with non-chalance. The victims are some of Mark Twain's favorite fictional scapegoats, a lightning rod agent, and Irishmen(p. 212). The suspected thieves, both of whom have been dead for over eighteen months, are also Irish. The elephant finally is found in the police headquarters and the unruly story ends with a satiric comment about detectives. "Great is the detective! He may be a little slow in finding a little thing like a mislaid elephant -- he may hunt him all day and sleep with his rotting carcass all night for three weeks, but he will find him at last -- if he can get the man who mislaid him to show him the place!"(p. 216).

Two passages from Mark Twain's Life on the Mississippi (1883) function as short stories. "The Professor's Yarn" (1883) is a vivid tale capturing the spirit of life on the riverboat which only a man totally familiar with that life could write. There is a flavor of the transciency in the lives of river men which Twain knew well and was able to bring into this story involving an elaborate ruse, one of Twain's old journalistic tricks. In this story, two riverboat gamblers are duped into believing that they have a rich, naive man on board the boat, whom they can easily fleece at the card table. They devise to get him into a game, but their scheme fails and they lose every cent in their possession. The sucker, the naive man of wealth, was actually a professional gambler and an excellent actor working in collusion with another gambler at the table in order to fleece the other two conspiring gamblers. The western man of the mining camps loved this sort of craftiness and was greatly entertained by such stories. It had no real purpose except to entertain and give a small insight into the world of the river.

The second story taken from Life on the Mississippi is "A Dying Man's Confession"(1883). Although far more ambitious in story line, the story is again simply a means of illustrating a point about river life which fascinated Mark Twain. The story is a long and detailed account of burglary, murder and misguided retribution that meanders from the banks of the Mississippi to Munich, Germany where Twain used his own Munich address and situation in the story. "In November I was living in Fräulein Dahlweiner's pension, 1a, Karlsrasse; but my working quarters were a mile from there, in the house

of a widow who supported herself by taking lodgers"(p. 226). This exact address and arrangement had been taken by Twain in 1878.<sup>54</sup>

It is interesting that the story begins with a long scene on the river which is actually the frame device by which the story teller in Germany is introduced. In most cases the frame device comprised only a few lines, perhaps even just one line, but in this story the scene which introduces the reader to the story teller is nearly as long as the inner story. The story told to the narrator in Germany results in the narrator's feeling compelled to fulfill an obligation by traveling to a small town along the Mississippi River where stolen money is hidden and by returning that money to a man in Germany. This elaborate plot of the inner story, which leads to quite a complicated plot in the outer frame situation resulted in a severe hampering of Twain's true skills as used effectively in the short, simple "The Professor's Yarn". The characters are vague, inconsistent and contrived personalities, their speech is humorless and melodramatic. "Oh, miserable, miserable me, to slaughter the pitying soul that stood a friend to my darlings when they were helpless and would have saved them if he could! miserable, oh, miserable, miserable me!"(p. 234).

When the narrating persona is a man not clearly a part of Twain's own intimate acquaintance, usually a frontier acquaintance, his story lacks focus and becomes lost in cliché, false diction and ridiculous characters who are simple, flat and almost allegorical personae in a story which has no other allegorical elements. When things have become sufficiently muddled and the original narrator returns to the river for questionable reasons, the story is concluded with the quirk upon which the whole story has been built: the fact that the Mississippi River is always changing its channel.<sup>55</sup> Sometimes this new channel swallows up small towns as Twain noted on a trip down the river to gather material for Life on the Mississippi. "May 8, 1882... At 5 P.M. got to where Hat Island was. It is now gone, every vestige of it. Goose Island at the graveyard below Commerce is all gone but a piece about big enough for dinner."<sup>56</sup> The cache of money learned about in Germany is lost in this way, submerged under the powerful currents of the Mississippi. The story is far

too long and rambling when its only purpose is to illustrate that the river changes constantly. Being led to the conclusion of the story by such an elaborate course creates a strongly disappointing anti-climax.

Mark Twain's literary theory of composition is based upon the validity of personal experience. In "Luck"(1891), he extends this validity to recording the personal experience of others by literally telling another's story as he had done in "A Curious Experience"(1881) and "A True Story"(1874). The title "Luck" is footnoted to document that the story was told to him. "This is not a fancy sketch. I got it from a clergyman who was an instructor at Woolwich forty years ago, and who vouched for its truth"(p. 250). Actually, Mark Twain had gotten the story from Reverend Joseph Twichell who had in turn gotten it from another. "In 1890 I had published in Harper's Monthly a sketch called 'Luck', the particulars of which had been furnished to Twichell by a visiting English army chaplain. The next year in Rome, an English gentleman introduced himself to me on the street and said, 'Do you know who the chief figure in that "Luck" sketch is?' 'No' I said, 'I don't.' 'Well,' he said, 'it is Lord Wolseley -- and don't you go to England if you value your scalp'."<sup>57</sup> In Venice Twain received another warning. Then in London at a banquet, Wolseley introduced himself, with the sole intention of making Twain's acquaintance and of getting a copy of the privately printed 1601. Twain's fears had been unfounded, but it is significant that he believed the story was clearly a transcript into fiction of actuality.

The lack of sophistication with which Mark Twain approached his writing is certainly evidenced by this episode. He was not aware of how far from actuality his story had gone until he met the man, without a nasty incident, on which it was based. The story lacks any sense of being realistic; it is the "fancy sketch" that Twain denied in the footnote. A careful reading of the story bears this out. As a proof of the uncritical, naive nature of Mark Twain's approach in practice to his theory of recording experience, of reporting facts in the creation of a minute history, it is most illuminating.

Mark Twain believed he had cut a slice of life which would be easily recognized by the source, Wolseley. This was

not so because the story is brief and sketchy. It moves from Woolwich where the hero is helped to pass his exams, to a Crimean War battlefield where the hero saves the day. There is no description of scenes or of characters, and no dialogue. A brief anecdotal sketch of whimsical generalities could be judged by Twain as a realistic story whereas a sketch of masterful realism, "A True Story," was submitted apologetically. Both claimed to record facts and report actual life. Both were considered by Mark Twain to fulfill the edicts of his literary theory, and yet, because he is above all an instinctive writer, subject to passions and an incapacity for literary self-criticism, the two stories can be so remarkably unlike.

Using a tried and true method from his early literary career when he made the slow, hesitant and partial move from journalist to author, Mark Twain was successful in "Playing Courier" (1891). The method to which I refer is the practice of taking notes while traveling, to be used later as travel letter-articles and ultimately, for use in travel books such as The Innocents Abroad, Life on the Mississippi, Following the Equator and A Tramp Abroad. "Playing Courier" was written while traveling in Europe as one of a series of six travel letters contracted with the McClure Syndicate and the New York Sun.<sup>58</sup> The story benefits from the immediacy of the events which it reports and the intimate knowledge Twain had of the subject of travel arrangements. This interest in the functions of a courier was recorded in his notebooks. "Left at 10:45 for Bologna, and tried being a courier for the first time...Am a shining success as a courier, so far, by the use of francs."<sup>59</sup> "It is questionable if it pays to have a courier. Perhaps better have an intelligent servant & pay his way specially -- with a courier they put him indirectly (& largely) in your bills."<sup>60</sup> In some later notes, he continued: "1860-2 [...] Englishmen & their guide perished in crossing the Col du Géant [...]"

However, there is no question about it. To travel with even the stupidest & most expensive courier is inexpressibly pleasanter than to go without.

Pay nothing through a courier. The first week's wash bill at Interlaken was \$14 (70f). The washerwoman said 'Don't the courier pay the bill?' This excited suspicion. The second

week she wanted the former bill to make out the bill by."<sup>61</sup> Further evidence of Twain's fascination for the vocation of courier is shown in the great extent to which The Innocents Abroad, written twenty-two years earlier, dwells upon the courier-guides that accompanied their travel party under the generic title of Ferguson.

The story reflects extensive touring experience in the accurate portrayal of complications which fluster a traveler, especially one such as Mark Twain who abhorred frustrating mundane details. Being a story based on a travel letter, the details of the trip's itinerary accurately describe the party as traveling from Aix-les-Bains, to Bayreuth, via Geneva (p. 254). The tasks that Mark Twain took on as courier in the story for his party cannot be documented as completely faithful to the actual, but they are plausible, if somewhat exaggerated for a humorous effect. Twain goes about them in a manner which evokes the humor of a sympathetic victim of his own disorganization. Chaos results: he loses his rubbers and his letter of reference for financial purposes, he fails to send a telegram for a member of the party, sends all the trunks to a destination where the party will not arrive, loses two members of the party, buys train tickets to Bayreuth from a con-man who sold him used lottery tickets and he leaves an array of cabs waiting in various parts of Geneva while he wanders from place to place. Worst of all, he leaves the party at the hotel, angrily waiting for him. His often interrupted explanation to the "Head of the Expedition"(p. 257), his wife, is very well done and brings the reader's laughter and sympathy to a head. The story is meant for the papers, so it is primarily an entertaining piece, but it does provide an element of realism in the careful presentation of facts, the creation of the distinct, complex personality of the narrator and the plausibility of the situation. This realism is tempered by humor, a characteristic of the Nineteenth Century realists which is generally lacking after the turn of the Century.

"The Esquimau Maiden's Romance"(1893). was published at a time when Mark Twain was seeing his financial well-being deteriorate rapidly. He had invested most of his money in the Paige typesetter and his publishing house, Webster Publishing. The typesetter failed to work properly after years of financial

and emotional devotion to it by Twain, and the publishing house suffered from poor management. Mark Twain felt the need to make some immediate cash, but resisted the urge to publish sub-par material by destroying a large amount of it. This story must have been considered acceptable in a desperate year in which eight articles were published by Twain in magazines. Nevertheless, it appears to the reader as a pot-boiler. There is an attempt at humor by establishing ironical differences between Eskimo culture and American capitalist culture. The maiden tells the first narrator a story through the use of the frame device. Her tale rambles along telling of a falsely accused lover who is executed for supposedly stealing a steel fish hook which is almost priceless in an Eskimo economy. It is later found in the Eskimo maiden's hair. The story is silly and rather pointless. Only one significant element is worthy of examination. The story indicates Twain's plutocratic nature is becoming explicit in his light fiction. "So ended the poor maid's humble little tale -- whereby we learn that, since a hundred million dollars in New York and twenty-two fish-hooks on the border of the Arctic Circle represent the same financial supremacy, a man in straitened circumstances is a fool to stay in New York when he can buy ten cents' worth of fish-hooks and emigrate" (p. 308). The story was appreciated by Twain, himself "in straitened circumstances," by providing a half-serious escape from his troubles.

Another story written in 1893, on the verge of financial collapse, expresses Twain's desire to gain vast wealth. It was a story which had been "planned many years before."<sup>62</sup> "The £1,000,000 Bank-Note" (1893), completed one year before Twain's bankruptcy, contains a surprising note of optimism and confidence in the efficacy of speculation as a means of gaining vast financial wealth. The story portrays a young, penurious man in London who becomes the object of a wager between two wealthy brothers. One says that a £1,000,000 Bank-Note given to the fellow will be useless because only two such notes were ever issued and a poor man possessing one of them would cause suspicion. He could not cash it for fear of being accused of thievery and hence, would not gain by it. The other man disagrees and a bet is made. The poor youth makes his way to vast wealth by showing the note as his capital while never having to use it. His credit is established

by it and he soon gains terrific success and by chance, falls in love with the older brother's daughter. They live happily ever after.

The story lacks convincing characters or dialogue and the plot is fantastic. It is a modern allegory of success with elements of wish fulfillment. The young man is given the daughter's hand in marriage in spite of his questionable background and total lack of recommendations (p. 333). Mark Twain had asked for the hand of the daughter of an extremely wealthy man and had been given it in spite of his doubtful Western background and the complete failure of all of his proposed recommenders to give him a good account. He had also begun to gain wealth and showed good prospects drawn from literally no tangible source.

The story reflects Mark Twain's own experience of amazing success and his need to accrue wealth. He was the son of a foolish speculator and knew that it was his own lot to follow his father's example. "But I was born with a speculative instinct and I did not want that temptation put in my way."<sup>63</sup> His lust for gold and silver in the West, his plans for diamonds from Africa through J.H. Riley, his investments in gadgets, all evidence this instinct at work. Even the publishing house, a respectable and steady sort of enterprise, was a source of wild financial musings. Mark Twain computed that U.S. Grant's royalty from his memoirs would weigh seventeen tons, if paid in silver. "The £1,000,000 Bank-Note" captures this sanguine experience of the accrual of wealth, but it also sounds a note of foreboding. "It scared me broad awake, and made me comprehend that I was standing on a half-inch crust, with a crater underneath. I didn't know I had been dreaming -- that is, I hadn't been allowing myself to know it for a while back,..." (p. 329).

The optimism that this allegory of success embodies was not again expressed in Mark Twain's fiction until he had recouped his terrible debts. Two stories incorporated into Following the Equator, relating financial success, are celebrations of Mark Twain's own reacquisition of wealth. "Cecil Rhodes and the Shark" (1897) was inspired by an anecdote which Mark Twain heard while traveling throughout the world on his lecture tour.

Presently the Scot told how he caught a shark down on the frozen shores of the Antarctic Continent, and the natives took the shark away from him and cut it open, and began to take out cigars and hair brushes and hymn books and cork screws and revolvers and other things belonging to a missionary who had been missed from the Friendly Island three years before; and when he demanded a share of the find the natives laughed in his face and would give him no part of it except a sodden wad of crumpled paper. But this paper turned out to be a lottery ticket, and with it the Scot afterward collected a prize of 500,000 francs in Paris.<sup>64</sup>

Mark Twain modified this anecdote by having the fortunate Cecil Rhodes, whose personal diamond success story had captured the attention of Mark Twain and J.H. Riley, discover a notebook and newspaper in Sydney, Australia which prove to him that war has broken out in the world and that wool prices will skyrocket. The news has traveled in the shark from London in ten days and Australia will not get it by boat for another fifty days. This enables him to capture the market and make his fortune. The story is brief and anecdotal, like its source.

"The Joke That Made Ed's Fortune"(1897) uses the same theme and is again a brief story which is entertaining but not of real consequence. It is the whimsical portrayal of a practical joke, a form of humor prevalent in the West, and much despised by Twain, which backfires and leads to a young man's business success. Ed is sent to the business magnate, Vanderbilt, with a letter of introduction which his fellow workers created. It purports to be from an old friend, reminiscing about happy times with Vanderbilt and ending with a recommendation of the young man. Vanderbilt, taken in by the letter, recognizes in the young man a raw ability and grooms him to take charge of his Memphis business concerns. Ed pays a visit to the wharf in Memphis where he was a worker and amazes everyone with his success resulting from their practical joke. They are incredulous. "Did you deliver it? And they looked at each other as people might who thought that maybe they were dreaming"(p. 344). Mark Twain had gone through a period of trauma after his business failure and the death of his daughter, Susy, which caused him to view

dreams and reality as interchangeable. This is a prevalent theme in his later moralistic short stories in which dreams and reality become nightmarish, far different from the sanguine ending of "The Joke."

In a letter to H.H. Rogers sent from Rouen, France, October 7, 1894,<sup>65</sup> Twain describes a most embarrassing situation to his financial guide and friend. In Twain's hotel there were water closets on every other floor. Being on the second floor, Twain had to go up to the third floor in his bed shirt during the night. In returning to his room, he went upstairs instead of down and became lost, uncertain of the floor numbers. Not amply dressed, he was wandering the halls of the hotel in which a large group of young girls were staying. The only solution was to walk to the bottom floor and count up one flight to his proper place. This was impossible, for the young girls were attending a ball on the first floor. Twain was forced to hide in a water closet on one of the floors, he knew not which, and wait until all was quiet before he could make his way back to his room. Once there, he feverishly wrote the episode down.

In "A Story Without an End" (1897), a young man takes a swim in a stream. When he returns to his buggy to get dressed, he finds that the horse has begun to wander down the road. Being naked, he runs quickly to stop the buggy and retrieve his clothing. The horse runs as he approaches, increasing his panic to retrieve his clothing. Once in the buggy he frantically begins to dress and has his shirt on when he encounters several women. Since he has only his shirt on, he is forced to cover himself with the lap robe. In the group of ladies is the bashful young man's sweetheart and her mother. They require his assistance, which means uncovering himself. The story is left open-ended with several possibilities for the reader to imagine, none of them good for the young man.

Perhaps Twain did not write this story as a direct result of his experience in Rouen, especially since that letter has a fictional air which implies that it too was mainly a story. "A Story Without an End" is introduced through the frame device which establishes the story as one told aboard a ship. This, rather than the Rouen incident, may well be the source. The interesting point is that of

all the stories which Twain heard aboard ships, this would be one that he would choose to write-up. It has a strong similarity to the Rouen episode and to a recurring nightmare which Twain had. He would dream that he came on the speaking platform dressed only in his shirt-tails and worst of all, would have nothing to say. Twain's story was a publicly acceptable form of expressing a situation which held his personal fascination and came from his own experience.

I have indicated in this chapter the large part that Twain's audience played in determining the lack of seriousness of his short stories. It is remarkable that as late as the last decade of his life, he was still able to write stories which were intended primarily to entertain. They are based on events in Twain's life, although they lack an adherence to his experience such as is found in his masterpiece, Huckleberry Finn. The despair and pessimism which imbues short stories such as "The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg" (1899) to be discussed in Chapter Three stands coeval with the light anecdotal pieces which appeared in Following the Equator. The final three stories to be analyzed in this chapter were written during the heat of Twain's pessimism, and yet do not reflect it. The reason two of them, "Two Little Tales"(1901) and "The Belated Russian Passport"(1902) do not reflect this pessimism is that they maintain a strict adherence to experience and do not enter the quasi-philosophical, nihilistic area of their contemporary stories in Twain's moralistic branch of short fiction. The third story, "A Double-Barreled Detective Story"(1902) was conceived many years earlier and was simply completed in 1902. Its publication in 1902 appears anachronistic and, indeed, is just that.

"Two Little Tales"(1901), published in Century Magazine uses a modified form of the frame device in which the introductory scene and the inner story are of equal importance. In the outer story, a man who has invented a light, dry and cheap boot cannot get into the war office to sell it. His applications for an interview and letters sent directly to the Director-General of the Shoe-Leather Department fail. The second persona considers the inventor to be a fool and tells the second story or fable to explain why he thinks so. In the second story, a fairy tale of ancient monarchical times, a peasant boy knows the cure for a plague and manages

to get the news to the Emperor by sending it indirectly through acquaintances. The second narrator finishes the second story and the first or frame device is concluded by the government's adopting of the boots which have come to their attention by indirect means.

The piece is pleasant and clever, unlike the general atmosphere of Mark Twain's later thought and work. It avoids the sad nihilism and serious moralism of this era by staying close to the source of the story in Twain's experience. Mark Twain had seen President Cleveland concerning copyright laws in 1885 through the machinations of friends on the staff of the Century Magazine and members of the Author's League.<sup>66</sup> He had helped the father of W.D. Howells keep his Consulate in Toronto, Canada through the influence of Twain's friend, U.S. Grant, on President Arthur.<sup>67</sup> The closure of the Chinese mission operated by Reverend Joseph Twichell was prevented by Twain's requesting that President Grant speak to Li Hung Chang.<sup>68</sup> Mark Twain received requests from the general public for help of this sort but did not feel compelled to act. These experiences lay behind his wisdom in suggesting to a man named MacAlister how to present a food supplement called Plasmon to the British Army for use in armed forces diets. Twain explained that instead of approaching the Director-General, he must use his friends to relay the news. "Then he [MacAlister's friend] is the man for you to approach. Convince him that plasmon is what the army needs, that the military hospitals are suffering for it. Let him understand that what you want is to get this to the Director-General, and in due time it will get to him in the proper way. You'll see."<sup>69</sup>

"The Belated Russian Passport"(1902), published in Harper's, is based on the long experience of Mark Twain as a world traveler. He had made a notation concerning one aspect of travel that bothered him. "Give specimen of conversation made up of utterly inane stuff -- such as the tourist has to endure from the chance acquaintance."<sup>70</sup> The story is a long analysis of another sort of traveler, the person who had connections everywhere and is impossible to shirk as a companion. In this story the type is exaggerated for effect, but not greatly. A young, homesick American boy is taken under the power of a forceful personality called the Major. He is persuaded to enter Russia without a passport, knowing

full well that the penalty is ten years in Siberia. He escapes the penalty by a contrived twist in the plot, whereby the secretary of the American legation was a prior resident of the boy's home in America and grants him a new passport on the proof of his identification of a painting in the house.

It is a silly story with no theme or purpose, other than to sketch dramatically the type of character who will not accept no for an answer when he offers his company in travel. The story is like the Western character sketches from Roughing It which lead to a "nub" or surprise ending and earn respect as keen insights and portrayals of human personalities. In 1902, the last year in which Twain published a story not overwhelmed by shallow philosophical arguments, he returned to his early story formula, the accurate rendering of dialogue and character in a formless and themeless tale, and created one of his best stories by so doing.

"A Double-Barreled Detective Story" (Dec. 1901-Jan.1902) was conceived of when Mark Twain first read a Sherlock Holmes story. "How long it takes a literary seed to sprout sometimes! This seed was planted in your house [Joseph Twichell's] many years ago when you sent me to bed with a book not heard of by me until then -- Sherlock Holmes...."<sup>71</sup> It was planned as a burlesque of the detective story which Twain disliked. "What a curious thing a detective story is. And was there ever one that the author needn't be ashamed of, except the 'Murders in the Rue Morgue'?"<sup>72</sup> Mark Twain had tried to write a play called "Simon Wheeler: The Amateur Detective" in 1877 but could not bring it to completion. Drama required more understanding of plot than Mark Twain was ever able to gain and the detective story, derided by Twain, could not be done seriously. It was inevitable that his effort would be a burlesque.

In San Francisco, Mark Twain had made fun of the police and in "The Stolen White Elephant"(1882) he satirized the police detective in a farcical situation. "A Double-Barreled Detective Story" is consistent with these works in that the successful detective is a native American, not a professional. He does not rely on ratiocination and trained techniques, but instead uses his instincts and his keen sense of smell. "Spin a wonderful yarn (detective?) of a man with a scent like a hunting dog."<sup>73</sup> W.H. Auden observed that Americans

face each situation as being unique and incapable of answering to natural rules or laws. This causes them to suspect the professional who uses past experience and to glorify the fresh viewpoint of the amateur.<sup>74</sup> Mark Twain, the essentially American author, has glorified the amateur in the story. The dogma of detective examination and the stock devices of detective stories are made to appear foolish. "But the signs are here, and they are reinforced by a fact which you must have often noticed in the great detective narratives -- that all assassins are left-handed"(p. 460).

The plot of the story is intentionally so complicated that it becomes silly and difficult to describe. The key to the story is the contest between the American amateur detective with the "gift of the bloodhound"(p. 428) and the great Sherlock Holmes to determine the person guilty of blowing up a miner's house and its inhabitant. It is proved that Holmes' theory is wrong and that, in fact, Holmes is an unwilling accomplice in the bombing of the house, by his loaning a match to the guilty person near the bombing site (p. 464). As the story ends, Sherlock Holmes is saved from a lynching by a lawman, but it is obvious that he is unsuccessful and unwelcome in the American West. Mark Twain has parodied the detective story form and made a burlesque of one of its most famous heroes.

This final story of the chapter is a formless, rambling burlesque in which rules of literary construction go entirely unheeded. Burlesque and parody require this to a certain extent, but Mark Twain was inclined to go too far. He often reverted to his early style, used in Western newspapers, which lacked subtlety and control in a headlong attempt to entertain. This atavism was not accounted for in his literary theory of composition which had the more serious intention of capturing the history of a time and place. Mark Twain's low estimation of the short magazine or newspaper piece, partly due to years of high output in this form, is the cause for any deviation in the short stories from his literary theory. Not being a self-conscious artist to the extent of contemporaries such as Henry James or William Dean Howells meant an erratic career that did not produce a consistent body of short fiction, but did create a tremendously exciting and varied output of entertaining short stories. Underlying

the variety is a use of his experience, which fact I have documented. The unpredictable degree of fun and fantasy which colored that experience in his fiction is responsible for the variety. A final illustration of this lawlessness comes from his last whimsical short story, "A Double-Barreled Detective Story."

In the last paragraph of the first installment of this two part story, he incorporates a passage of purple prose that ends with a tip-off to the reader that the passage is all nonsense. "...for in the empty sky a solitary esophagus slept upon motionless wing...."(p. 439). He includes in the second installment as part of the story several quizzical and outraged letters in response to the passage. The point of mentioning this passage is to illustrate the extent of Twain's willingness to experiment. He often moulded his experience into hardly recognizable forms, using freely his humor and imagination, but seldom did he give himself up to false posing and to fiction which is infatuated with its own language and brilliance. Mark Twain was a sincere writer, if also a playful one. This playful element in the short stories camouflaged Mark Twain's realism, but it by no means prevented him from being a candid reporter of his time in America.

### Chapter III

The short stories which will be discussed in this chapter are not as clearly autobiographical as those discussed in the previous chapter. Being much more didactic and moralistic, they are made up of imaginary characters and situations that are clearly intended, above all, to prove a point. The quasi-philosophical and psychological speculations in the stories are crude and not cogent, making the stories hard to appreciate. Their value is not high as examples of artistic excellence in the short story and this perhaps explains their general neglect. However, they do help to clarify the nature, extent and development of Mark Twain's failure of nerve, his loss of faith in man and the universe as a benign creation of a benevolent God. The stories are especially salient as proof of the argument that Mark Twain's psychic collapse and subsequent inability to regain his full creative abilities was not due to his bankruptcy and the death of his daughter Susy; but rather, these traumatic events which took away two of his greatest loves -- his wealth and his daughter, simply precipitated a collapse that Mark Twain's sense of melancholy and his acute critical faculties in a time of vast social change and corruption presupposed.

Two of Mark Twain's earliest mature literary productions, "The Story of the Bad Little Boy" (1865) and "The Story of the Good Little Boy" (written in 1865, published in 1870 in Galaxy Magazine) are graphic evidence of his critical faculty and his use of it as a means of analyzing his culture. The stories prove a statement made by Mark Twain in later life to be true. "I am a revolutionist -- by birth, breeding, principle and everything else,..."<sup>1</sup> The stories are a parody of Sunday-school books which portray life as being morally unequivocal and just. Good boys prosper and bad boys fail miserably. This sort of parody was being done by others whom Twain knew at this time, including B.P. Shillaber with his "Ike" and "Mrs. Partington" and Thomas Bailey Aldrich. Mark Twain perhaps took his cue from the prevailing sentiment against the Sunday-school books, but it can be proved that in these early stories, Twain was drawing from his own experiences, a technique which he progressively abandoned in this

branch of his fiction.

In recalling the Youth's Magazine that came to Hannibal, Missouri every week and the Sunday-school books obtained from the library in his childhood, Twain pointed out their major fault. "They were pretty dreary books, for there was not a bad boy in the entire bookcase. They were all good boys and good girls and drearily uninteresting but they were better society than none and I was glad to have their company and disapprove of it."<sup>2</sup> As he put it rhetorically in his notebook, the problem with the pious religious bastions of his society, as exemplified on board the Quaker City, like the books of his youth, was their lack of zest. "No -- I'll tell you what's the matter with you -- you have no conception of a joke -- of anything but awful Puritan long-facedness and petrified facts."<sup>3</sup> For a man who had lived on the West Coast surrounded by pranksters and hard living for five years and who had been a mischievous boy on the frontier, the urge to revolt against what he considered to be arbitrary mores of conduct was irresistible. Many of Twain's more flamboyant habits of dress and comportment were intended as rebellions against the conventional; they play a large part in the legend of Mark Twain.

In addition to Twain's general opposition to the conventions of a dogmatic society which emerges in the two stories, there is a specific autobiographical element in the stories that must be pointed out. In his Autobiography, Twain discusses his relationship with his brother Henry, who like Orion was an extremely well-mannered boy, unlike Twain who was always in trouble for his pranks.<sup>4</sup> Twain made a notation in his notebook which briefly describes a similar situation that he planned to use in his fiction. "Bad Boy -- Mother had two good sons -- didn't see why she couldn't be satisfied."<sup>5</sup>

The stories are undisguised parodies of the Sunday-school books as the first sentence of "The Story of the Bad Little Boy" shows. "Once there was a bad little boy whose name was Jim -- though, if you will notice, you will find that bad little boys are nearly always called James in your Sunday-school books"(p. 6). This explicit difference between the books and the story establishes the contrast between them. The remainder of the story follows the same lines of contradiction. The bad boy in the story does not receive punishment

and misfortune for his evil ways, he prospers. "The Story of the Good Little Boy" controverts all of the Sunday-school teachings which stated that a good boy would be prosperous and happy for his trouble in doing good and proper deeds. It is ironical that Mark Twain wrote parodies of a type of literature that was overly dogmatic and moralistic, only to let his concern with true moral insight overpower his own stories and make them so parabolic as to lend themselves to the same sort of parody.

"Edward Mills and George Benton: A Tale"(1880), appeared in the Atlantic Monthly fifteen years after the "Boy" stories, returning to the subject of justice in the world for those who follow strict moral laws. Like the "Boy" stories, it is done in a light vein of fun-making, but unlike the earlier stories, it is not a parody of a literary story type. The story is a statement of Mark Twain's opinion concerning the problem of pain in human existence and the question of ultimate justice. It is significant that the story is not prompted by a desire to parody, but is instead, Twain's own dogmatic judgement concerning moral issues and is clearly as propagandistic as the Sunday-school tracts. In 1880, long before his trauma in the early 1890's, Mark Twain was beginning to proclaim his disillusionment born of a deterministic philosophy which took man's will from him while heaping abuse on man for his fallibility. The story does not reflect the specific occurrences of Twain's time nor does it report experiences that Mark Twain had absorbed. It is a heavily contrived, transparently moralistic story condemning man's faith in the power of goodness.

Mark Twain made a note of the idea for the story in the latter part of 1878 which places the famous failure of Twain's nerve in the 1890's even further from its real sources in Twain's nature. "Write the history of two young men -- one modest, diligent, temperate [.]"<sup>6</sup> The other man was evidently well pictured in Twain's mind and didn't need to be described. He is devious, lazy and profligate. The two young men's parents raise them with the following adage as a rule of conduct. "Be pure, honest, sober, industrious, and considerate of others, and success in life is assured"(p. 143). This adage, Twain's formulation of the Sunday-school teaching, is mocked by the story in which Edward Mills follows the advice

and George Benton does not. The result is poverty and early death for Edward and a lavishing of attention upon George as an object of reform. The story presses hard in its condemnation of "various moral organizations"(p. 146) which help the reprobate, but ignore the good, struggling citizen. Edward is refused aid at one point in the story because he had not been a prisoner and hence does not qualify. Edward is killed by burglars for his heroic refusal to open the safe of his employer for them. It is discovered by detectives that the murderer is his own brother, George Benton. Benton goes to the gallows "before a wailing audience of the sweetest and best that the region could produce"(p. 148). Edward's family receives a pittance from the employer for compensation and forty thousand dollars is raised in remembrance of Edward while his family falls into "stringent circumstances"(p. 148). The money passes them by to be used in building a Memorial Church (p. 148). This brief sketch of only a few incidents will indicate the ridiculous lengths to which the story goes to portray an unjust world.

Unfortunately, these combinations of incidents are not intended as humor. They simply mount up in a strong rant against the concept of universal justice and the do-gooder. Using the same subject as the "Boy" stories, Twain has cast off any attempts to be funny, or to create an illusion of reality. The story forcefully illustrates several of Mark Twain's attitudes toward life through the use of a contrived plot and flat characters.

The two purposes of "Edward Mills and George Benton: A Tale" are to criticize the concept of just rewards for goodness in human existence and to condemn the dramatic, but misdirected, efforts of altruists who are suspected of the selfish drives that Twain attributed to all men. "No man that ever lived has ever done a thing to please God -- primarily. It was done to please himself, then God next."<sup>7</sup> In "A Burning Brand"(1883), Twain pursues the theme of selfish altruism which he broached in the earlier story. The style is epistolary, the letters being the fabrications of a penitentiary inmate who is trying to develop sympathy for himself by creating a hoax. He smuggles letters out of the prison which are then sent back to him as effusions of thanks from a former inmate whom he has supposedly converted to Christianity.

Many people are taken in by the ruse and there is a movement to obtain freedom for the prisoner. His devious scheme is discovered in the end and causes great embarrassment to the philanthropic enthusiasts.

The story is made to seem a recording of actual occurrences by the use of actual persons. Twain's friend and literary collaborator in writing The Gilded Age, Charles Dudley Warner is the first to suspect a ruse (p. 222). Twain's enemy, J.G. Holland, who had criticized the levity of Twain's lecture material, is completely taken in by the hoax (p. 221). The only element of a truly autobiographical nature is the heroic deed of the reformed ex-inmate. The man stops a runaway team of horses in the same manner as Mark Twain's butler, Lewis, had done to save Livy and the children from serious injury.<sup>8</sup> The illusion of reality is further developed by a masterful simulation of the nearly illiterate style of letter writing that the ex-inmate uses. "I used to think at nite what you said, & for it i nocked off swearing 5 months before my time was up, for i saw it want no good, nohow -- the day my time was up you told me if i would shake the cross (quit stealing), & live on the square for 3 months, it would be the best job i ever done in my life"(p. 218).

These realistic elements serve to make the story a convincing exposure of how the good intentions of the philanthropist are often taken in by a clever scheme and more importantly, by his own readiness to do a self-satisfying good deed. The story is one of Twain's better moralistic efforts because it maintains a control through the use of accurately created letters and realistic elements. Like all of Twain's moralistic stories, there is no humor in it, a remarkable point in view of the headlong entertainer's humor which filled and overbalanced Twain's stories that were discussed in the previous chapter. That he could create stories based upon such diametric positions as light, silly entertainment and moralistic rant is an indication of his divided state of mind.

Mark Twain's final effort to dishonor the pious do-gooder was also his most strident and uncontrolled attempt. "Was It Heaven? Or Hell?" (1902) appeared in Harper's as a transcript of actual experience, or so Twain believed. "Howells and I sat on the veranda overlooking the river and chatting and presently he drifted into the history of a

pathetic episode in the life of a friend of his, one or two of whose most moving features were soon to find strange duplication in Mrs. Clemens's case.

While he sat there that afternoon telling the curious story, neither of us suspected that it was prophetic, yet it was. I at once wrote it out in the form of a tale -- using fictitious names, of course -- and sent it to Harper's Monthly."<sup>9</sup> Twain repeated his wonder that his story should so strangely predict and coincide with events in his own home, then filled with serious illness. "For six days now my story in the Christmas Harper has been enacted in this house: every day Clara and the nurses have lied about Jean to her mother -- describing the fine time she is having out of doors in the winter sports."<sup>10</sup> "[A good deal of the rest of the week, Joe, can be found in my Christmas story (Harper's) entitled 'Was it Heaven? Or Hell?' which is largely a true story and was written in York Harbor in August or September.]"<sup>11</sup> "I was merely telling a true story just as it had been told to me by one who well knew the mother and the daughter & all the beautiful & pathetic details. I was living in the house where it had happened, three years before, & I put it on paper at once while it was fresh in my mind, & its pathos still straining at my heartstrings."<sup>12</sup>

In fact, the story is far from being true to details, to complex characters, to anything from actual experience. The basic idea of the story is the only element drawn from experience, the rest of it is a violent attack of the pious belief that forbids lying, even to save loved ones from unhappiness. Twain's literary self-critical abilities were inadequate to give him insight. He was so carried away by anguish, disillusionment and puzzlement at life's mysteries that he could not write true to his experiences or create an illusion of reality based on elements of actuality. His literary inspiration was completely dominated by a need to preach, to philosophize. "Franklin is not the only American humorist who was a minister manqué, a Puritan in reverse, whose humor was at once irreverent and more serious than the churches. At the heart of the laughter of Mark Twain, Ring Lardner, and Sinclair Lewis, there is a raging Puritanical didacticism that few Contemporary sermons could match."<sup>13</sup>

"Was it Heaven? Or Hell?" introduces the reader to a

recurring figure in Twain's later stories, the stranger who sees through shams, who knows what actions are morally good and what are false moral conventions of man. Mark Twain's scrupulous honesty led him to a fascination for the subject of lying and in this story, his fascination is combined with his hatred of the blind adherence to arbitrary conventions, a hatred expressed through the wise doctor, an outsider who knows and speaks the truth. He influences the situation into which he has come like the stranger, his literary clone, does in several subsequent stories. "He knew nothing about etiquette, and cared nothing about it; in speech, manner, carriage, and conduct he was the reverse of conventional. He was frank to the limit;..."(p. 476). This fresh outlook is what enables him to be truly good and to deserve the title, "The Christian"(p. 476) or sometimes, "The Only Christian" (p. 477). This moral guide forces two aged Aunts to lie to a niece and her daughter who are both dying of typhoid. They tell each that the other is well and happy, thereby comforting them in their last days and protecting the patients from excitement. This was always the case when Livy was ill. Twain's visits were even restricted to five minutes each day during times of serious illness.

The story is not well done because the attack upon a blind, methodical, and uncompromising adherence to convention is blatant and dogmatic. Further, the anxiety that Twain felt concerning his own wife's serious illness was carried into the story. It is filled with overwrought language, stagelike dialogue and excessive sentimentality, as the following passages will show. "Hester gathered her to her heart, with a grateful 'God bless you, Hannah!' and poured out her thankfulness in an inundation of worshipping sic praises" (p. 485). "...[A]nd a passionate desire rose in their hearts to go to the help of the sufferer and comfort her with their love, and minister to her, and labor for her the best they could with their weak hands, and joyfully and affectionately wear out their poor old bodies in her dear service if only they might have the privilege"(p. 481).

As the story nears an end to the feverish sufferings of the niece and her daughter, death is described as "that kindly friend who brings healing and peace to all"(p. 488). This sentiment, long held by Twain was first expressed in

his short stories in the early story, "A Curious Dream"(1870) which he wrote for the Buffalo Express. The story reflects Twain's interest in death as he traveled to Europe on the Quaker City. It is based on an observation that he made on the island of Fayal, June 22, 1867. "Saw no graveyards. They say they do not reverence their dead very highly; only a few graves well cared for."<sup>14</sup> This notation was discovered while Twain was combing his notebooks for material to use in the editing of his travel letters for publication as The Innocents Abroad. Coming from very early in Twain's career, it is a whimsical story, far from being moribund, and yet it reflects the underlying tendency of Twain's personality and fiction to dwell upon the serious question of death. The story is simply an interview with a disgruntled skeleton who inhabits a rundown cemetery. The conversation is mildly humorous because of the implausibility of the situation in a typical Western and American use of extravagance for humorous effect. "Ah, it was worth ten years of a man's life to be dead then! Everything was pleasant. I was in a good neighborhood, for all the dead people that lived near me belonged to the best families in the city"(p. 34). It is significant that the story is a dream and that it is subtitled, "Containing a Moral"(p. 32), since we shall see that many of his later stories developed moralistic concerns and posited the impossibility of distinguishing between dream and reality.

Mark Twain's fascination with death and envy of the dead became explicit in the "Five Boons of Life"(1902). This outburst resulted after a suppression in the short stories of his opinion that death was the only true boon of life. From an early inclination to honestly consider suicide and to accept death, Mark Twain grew to consider death as the only thing in this world that one could sensibly want. In this fable, a man can choose one of five gifts from a fairy: "Fame, Love, Riches, Pleasure, Death"(p. 472). After the disappointment that comes from choosing all the gifts but Death, he bitterly states the case for nihilism. "Curse all the world's gifts, for mockeries and gilded lies! And mis-called, every one. They are not gifts, but merely lendings. Pleasure, Love, Fame, Riches: they are but temporary disguises for lasting realities -- Pain, Grief, Shame,

Poverty"(p. 474). He discovers that Death has been given to another and he must accept the wanton insult of Old Age (p. 474).

This final situation in the story, written in 1902 when Twain was sixty-seven years old, might be considered as autobiographical. In fact, it is a part of the tradition of moralistic, quasi-philosophical stories that do not take their basis from Twain's own life. Certainly, he had experienced his share of suffering in life, but not unusual or insurmountable blows. His personal life in the latter years was quite happy, filled with recognition and companionship. Only in his darker moments, moments of gloom and contemplation, did he take up his pen and hence we receive only a picture of the musings of an unhappy, untrained philosopher. Albert Bigelow Paine's Biography shows without a doubt that the final era of Mark Twain's life was not terribly unhappy. His yearning for death and disgust for life were theoretical positions, just as his misanthropy was strictly speculative while his personal relationships were loving and kind. "The Five Boons of Life" is a final and passionate expression of despair from a man who was always prepared to face death openly and without fear in his existential agonies about man and God. It should not be taken as a reflection of Mark Twain's prevailing state of existence, but rather as the prevailing state of his anguished thought.

In order to understand all of the stories, one must be aware of the dichotomy between Mark Twain's stories written in accordance with his literary theory of reporting and the stories which reflect a dark, philosophy of gloom that developed into a rejection of life. One can then appreciate the stories as at least partially successful within their respective types. Twain's quasi-philosophical stories, including to a lesser extent the first stories in this chapter which are more moralistic than philosophical, do not record his time and place in America, but they do predict and begin a crisis in American literature based on a loss of faith in God due to the theories of Darwin and Comte in an age increasingly given over to science, and a loss of faith in America based upon the painful changes of rapid industrialization and ruthless profit-seeking. Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville and Henry James are rightfully

given credit as the authors who first recognized the loss of American innocence and used it as a recurring theme in their writing. Mark Twain's contribution is restricted to A Yankee in the Court of King Arthur, The Tragedy of Pudd'nhead Wilson and the Comedy of Those Extraordinary Twins (1894), and the remaining stories in this chapter. It is unfortunate that the realization was too sophisticated for Mark Twain to handle successfully. His real ability lay in writing which follows his reportorial literary theory. Nevertheless, the stories to be discussed are important as representing Twain's attempt to move into the literature of ideas, now so prevalent in the United States.

One of the life-long interests of Mark Twain was his fellow man with all of his foibles and quirks. His close observation of dialect, character and humor reflect this interest in man. It is unfortunate that Twain ultimately judged man to be cruel, selfish and despicable, the lowest of animals, the evolutionary failure as Macfarlane put it to him in 1856-57 in Cincinnati, Ohio. In his notebooks, he recurrently expressed such sentiments. "Twichell sends me a vast newspaper heading, the breadth of five columns 'Close of a Great Career' in which it is said that I am living in penury in London and that my family has forsaken me. This would enrage and disgust me if it came from a dog or a cow, or an elephant or any other of the higher animals, but it comes from a man, and much allowance must be made for man."<sup>15</sup> The idea that man is a lower animal is first treated in "Some Learned Fables for Good Old Boys and Girls"(1875), in which an expedition of pretentious but inaccurate scientist-explorers from the animal world discover that man imagined he had a soul and believed there to be lower animals than his own species. The scientists translate one of man's statements. "'In truth it is believed by many that the lower animals reason and talk together'"(p. 121). This creates a great sensation. "Then there are lower animals than Man! This remarkable passage can mean nothing else. Man himself is extinct, but they may still exist"(p. 121).

The fantasy does not elaborate reasons for the animal's belief that man is a lower species of life than themselves; this was taken up years later in full and tortured detail. The main thrust of the story is to make fun of the professional,

methodical means of understanding nature. American pragmatism and common sense are glorified in the story. An example of the Professor Snail's professional, scientific analysis of a hill compared with the assessment of the laborer, the Tumble-Bug, will clearly show that the deck is stacked in favor of anti-intellectual common sense.<sup>16</sup> Professor Snail says: "The fact that it is not diaphanous convinces me that it is a dense vapor formed by the calorification of ascending moisture dephlogisticated by refraction"(p. 106). "The Tumble-Bug said he believed it was simply land tilted up on its edge, because he could see trees on it"(p. 105), which makes sense. In the end of the story the Tumble-Bug is given the last word. "There were vulgar, ignorant carpers, of course, as there always will be; and naturally one of these was the obscene Tumble-Bug. He said that all he had learned by his travels was that science only needed a spoonful of supposition to build a mountain of demonstrated fact out of; and that for the future he meant to be content with the knowledge that nature had made free to all creatures and not go prying into the august secrets of the Deity"(p. 121).

"The Dog's Tale"(1903) is the first story to appear with criticism of mankind as the main theme of the story. It fulfills the implication of "Some Learned Fables" concerning man's base nature. The first person narrator of the story is a dog who is mistreated by his master when she is in the act of saving the family's child from a fire. The dog is dragging the child from the danger when the master of the house beats her with a cane, mistakenly believing that the dog is mad. Later, the master takes the dog's pup and performs a painful and fatal brain experiment on it. The mother lies over the pup's grave, unable to comprehend this wanton destruction, and eventually wastes away to death.

The story structure is fragmented by an opening passage of whimsy to do with the showy and incorrect use of large words -- a practice which Twain rejected summarily. Then the action begins with the heartless separation of the narrator-dog from her mother. They are both sad and crestfallen by the breakup of the family. This action abruptly ends after one and a half sentences and the philosophizing begins. The mother dog comforts her offspring and counsels her to accept the ways of the world. This humble advice is

cynically placed by Twain beside the mother's apparently blind belief that man is a superior animal, exclusively blessed by God. "She said men who did like this would have a noble and beautiful reward by and by in another world, and although we animals would not go there, to do well and right without reward would give to our brief lives a worthiness and dignity which in itself would be a reward"(p. 493). Twain is biasing the reader against an insensitive human who would split a family and then consider himself worthy of heaven while the humble and truly good animals cannot hope for anything at all after death. The crude, almost hysterical way that Mark Twain makes his points causes this story to fail completely.

The idea that lies behind the story is worthy of fictional presentation. The animal world is perhaps underestimated and is definitely abused by man, but Twain's blatant propaganda and philosophizing ruins his story. His frank portrayal of the dog's sufferings, as they pile up at the hand of man, may be true to actuality, but in the context of the story the candor is incongruous. It is mixed with gross sentimentality to create a wholly unsatisfactory effect in the story of transparent philosophizing, shocking candor and sham sentimentality all together.

"The Horse's Tale"(1906, Harper's) inflicts the same painful formula on the reader, with an even greater degree of false emotionality or sentimentality in a much longer story. The original plan for the story was suggested by an official of the movement to prohibit bull-fighting in Spain. Mark Twain agreed to write the story, but warned that it might take years for him to produce a satisfactory result. It was done in a month, flowing forth because he had strong and readily available opinions on the subject of human cruelty to animals. Twain also explained his inspiration in writing a story so quickly which at least in his judgement was a fine work. "This strong interest is natural, for the heroine is my small daughter Susy, whom we lost. It was not intentional -- it was a good while before I found it out...."<sup>17</sup> Twain had remembered and commemorated various points in Susy's final months for years as a means of not forgetting her, but the anxiety he felt had never been completely allayed. "The Horse's Tale" suffers greatly from an uncontrolled

pouring forth of worship by the author for the heroine. This lack of control was always a problem in Twain's fictive process, whether in overly silly humorous works or overly pathetic sentiment.

To list the impossible incidents in which the heroine, a young girl named Cathy, displays her bravery and her loving nature, and in which the entire U.S. Army fort of tough Indian-fighters on the frontier is swept away by a gushy love and admiration for the girl would be too long. Part of the scene in which the girl departs to return to Spain, her homeland, is more than enough: "...and there was a special squad from the Seventh, with the oldest veteran at its head, to speed the Seventh's Child with grand honors and impressive ceremonies; and the veteran had a touching speech by heart, and put up his hand in salute and tried to say it, but his lips trembled and his voice broke, but Cathy bent down from the saddle and kissed him on the mouth and turned his defeat to victory, and a cheer went up"(p. 560).

The majority of the story takes place on the frontier with Susy's exploits intended to develop her as a sympathetic and lovable character. At the same time, the animals of the frontier are given sentience and communicative powers so that their talk and feelings will develop the reader's sympathy for them and disgust for man. Buffalo Bill's horse, Soldier Boy, is given to Cathy and soon becomes the hero of the story. The animals carry on conversations much like that between the mother dog and her pup, blatantly yet inadvertently condemning man while maintaining their own innocence.

'I've seen a good many human beings in my time. They are created as they are; they cannot help it. They are only brutal because that is their make; brutes would be brutal if it was their make.'

'To me, Sage-Brush, man is most strange and unaccountable. Why should he treat dumb animals that way when they are not doing any harm?'

'Man is not always like that, Mongrel; he is kind enough when he is not excited by religion.'

'Is the bull fight a religious service?'

'I think so. I have heard so. It is held on Sunday.'

(A reflective pause, lasting some moments.) Then: 'When we die, Sage-Brush, do we go to heaven and dwell with

man?'

'My father thought not. He believed we do not have to go there unless we deserve it' (p. 558-9).

After we are given sufficient time to adore Cathy and Soldier Boy, the story abruptly moves to Spain where the horse is stolen, abused and finally in a ruinous state, used in a bull-fight. Cathy is in the audience for some undisclosed reason. She sees Soldier Boy and rushes into the ring "toward the riderless horse, who staggered forward towards the remembered sound; but his strength failed, and he fell at her feet, she lavishing kisses upon him and sobbing, the house rising with one impulse, and white with horror! Before help could reach her the bull was back again --" (p. 563). She dies after a pathetic scene in which she is semi-conscious.

The combination of Twain's loving memory of his daughter and his unusually strong love and compassion for animals packs the story with powerful emotion but little else. Apart from the fact that the subject is a tragic one, the reader can not cope with the story as art or literature. A less contrived story, using the same conceivable events, would have been evocative and effective. It could have perhaps succeeded as both literary art and propaganda, but it is doubtful. Alfred Kazin, writing about Van Wyck Brooks, summarizes the problem with writing that tries to function as propaganda, particularly when the writer has invested heavily in the emotional aspects of the cause. "The pressure of the times was too great for him; it made for so confused a sense of urgency that he forgot that writers are never of any use to themselves, or to society, when they are beaten into shape."<sup>18</sup>

It is interesting to note that Twain was given to abstract musings on the nature of God, the world and morality. Although he did not profess to believe in any way in the Christian dogma, his imagination dwelt quite often upon the subject of heaven and hell, a subject that is part of more conventional religious thought. "I think if one of them were to slide into Paradise with their style of Christianity, St. Peter would start him out again with a ⟨h⟩ ⟨e⟩ promptness that would be in the last degree surprising to him [.]"<sup>19</sup> We can attribute this paradoxical interest in Christian

traditions and thought to Twain's early experiences in life. His constant society with negroes and Tom Blankenship meant that he would absorb their superstitious belief in spirits, charms and a concrete conception of heaven and hell which would not disappear with his loss of Christian faith. He did not doubt the existence of God and His powers as much as he simply modified dogmatic conceptions of Him and His happy, benign world.

In the short story form, he made three attempts at such a modification or embellishment of dogma. The first was an account of Noah's daily experiences during the flood which Twain began in 1870, but never finished.<sup>20</sup> Another is "The Diary of Adam and Eve" (1893, 1905), a playful work of extravagant imagination. The life in the Garden of Eden is so trouble-free for Adam that he is somewhat taken aback by the supposed boon of having a female companion appear. Eve reminds the reader immediately of the earlier fictional female life-mate, Mrs. McWilliams, a woman who has her own peculiar ideas about certain matters and inflicts them upon a not altogether opposing husband. This is the sort of marital relationship that Twain portrayed to Howells in his letters. Since Van Wyck Brooks asserted that Twain's creative efforts were stifled by his wife, Howells and the East, it has been debated whether Twain was henpecked and what effect this had on his fiction. It is now generally conceded that all three factors contributed to the polishing of his literary techniques, not the stunting of them. Further, it is recognized that he exaggerated his wife's influence for humorous effect and used this same technique in "The Diary of Adam and Eve", a fictional documentary of his own relationship with Livy in a modified Biblical or at least traditional Christian setting of the Garden of Eden.

We must recognize how honest Twain was in the story. Indeed, Eve does complicate Adam's life; it does become a struggle because she makes everything more important and by some new force which she compels, she prevents his rebelling against a responsibility to her. Although life becomes more difficult, in the final analysis Adam and Eve's existence outside Eden is portrayed as a happy one. It is obvious that Adam's falling in love, with its ensuing responsibilities is parallel to Twain's falling in love with Livy and the

required rejection of his ambling, bachelor ways. Twain wrote Livy before their marriage, foreseeing the influence she would have upon him. "But you will break up all my irregularities when we are married, and civilize me, and make of me a model husband and an adornment to society -- won't you...?"<sup>21</sup> The rejection of "irregularities" is not always easy to maintain for a man free for thirty-five years, as he confided to Mrs. Fairbanks, whom he called mother. "I feel a sort of itching in my feet mother, and if my life were as aimless as of old, my trunk would be packed, now."<sup>22</sup> But in the final analysis, giving up these old ways was always considered worthwhile by Twain, as was Adam's domestication by Eve. Even after revision in 1905, the work did not inherit Twain's horrible cynicism, because he never became cynical or resentful concerning his long marriage to his beloved Livy. The story ends with a veiled dedication to his parted wife. "Adam: Wheresoever she was, there was Eden"(p. 295).

"Extract from Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven"(1907), was also free from despair and pessimism even though it too was completed late in Twain's life as his third attempt to modify Christian traditions of thought. The reason for its even-balanced temper is that it is based upon a character whom Twain admired without decrease throughout his life, Captain Ned Wakeman. Twain first met him in 1866 and commented upon him then in his notebook. "I'd rather travel with that old portly, hearty, jolly, boisterous, good-natured sailor, Capt. Ned Wakeman, than with any other man I ever came across. He never drinks and never plays cards; he never swears except in the privacy of his own quarters, with a friend or so, and then his feats of fancy blasphemy are calculated to fill the hearer with awe and admiration."<sup>23</sup> The "Extract" remained longer than any other work as simply an idea, and later an unfinished work. In 1877, Twain made several notations that concerned Wakeman and heaven. In his preface to one such notation, Albert Bigelow Paine describes the source of the story.

He was preparing at this time to rewrite Captain Ned Wakeman's Visit to Heaven, based, as he always said, on a dream told him by Captain Wakeman.... He had met Wakeman again in 1868, on the

way to San Francisco, and had written then a rough draft of the story. 'Have all sorts of heavens -- have a gate for each sort.

One gate where they receive a bar-keeper with artillery salutes, swarms of angels in the sky and a noble torchlight procession. He thinks he is the lion of Heaven. Procession over, he drops at once into awful obscurity, but the roughest part of it is that he has to do 3 weeks penance -- day and night he must carry a torch and shout himself hoarse, to do honor to some poor scrub that he wishes had gone to hell.

Wakeman is years and years in darkness between solar systems.'<sup>24</sup>

In the notebooks there are several further notations at this time which Paine overlooked. "An awkward new arrival brushes Wakeman in the eye with his wing.... Wakeman comes across Ollendorff & proceeds to learn the language of a near-lying district of Heaven -- people of Jupiter?... Have some people <an> dissatisfied because Heaven is an absolute Monarchy, with many viceroys, when they expected a leatherheaded Republic with the damnation of unrestricted suffrage."<sup>25</sup>

In 1878 he made the following notation. "Dreamed all bad foreigners went to German heaven, couldn't speak the language, and wished they'd gone to the other place."<sup>26</sup> In 1883 these notations were added to the ferment of the idea into a maturing story. "Captain Stormfield finds that hell was originally instituted in deference to an early Christian sentiment. In modern time the halls of heaven are warmed by radiators connected with hell, and the idea is greatly applauded by Jonathan Edwards, Calvin, Baxter and Co. because it adds a new pang to the sinner's suffering to know that the very fire which tortures him is the means of making the righteous comfortable."<sup>27</sup> "Stormfield must hear of the man who worked hard all his life to acquire heaven and when he got there the first person he met was a man he had been hoping all the time was in hell -- so disappointed and outraged that he inquired the way to hell and took up his satchel and left."<sup>28</sup> Again Paine overlooked two notations. "Wakeman -- You talk about happy creatures -- did you ever notice a porpoise? -- well there ain't anything in heaven here superior to that happiness."<sup>29</sup> "Wakeman says -- it seemed an odd thing to me that we never received spirit

communications from spirits born in the other stars."<sup>30</sup>

In 1895, he added another idea to those unorthodox ones which would eventually all be found in the story after thirty years of musing over it. "Bob Ingersoll's tale of the Presbyterian saint who went from heaven to hell on a cheap excursion ticket -- and couldn't sell his return ticket."<sup>31</sup> We see Twain using an actual conversation as a fictional source. The idea of the story was always present in his mind, awaiting further developments.

In 1906, Twain made the final notations that pertain to Captain Stormfield. The notations became Letters from the Earth (1962) which discusses the earth and its inhabitants from the point of view of an angel. The angel is amazed that man forsees heaven as being a place of constant singing and prayer and perpetual Sunday, all of these being things not universally appreciated on earth. The greatest amazement is elicited by the observation that man's supremely prized pleasure, sex, is not to exist in man's conception of heaven.<sup>32</sup>

The result of this long development of ideas concerning heaven is one of Twain's best stories. The reader is captivated by his fanciful and unorthodox conception of heaven as seen by a character, Ned Wakeman, who held Twain's interest for nearly three decades. There is a positive and happy tone to this work that was missing from his other philosophical stories published in the Twentieth Century. They came more completely from his period of consummate pessimism and did not have their roots in a happier period of Twain's life and thought.

The basic point of the story is that pleasures cannot exist without their opposites, even in heaven. "Just so -- just so. You've earned a good sleep, and you'll get it. You've earned a good appetite, and you'll enjoy your dinner. It's the same here as it is on earth -- you've got to earn a thing, square and honest, before you enjoy it" (p. 578). The difference from earth is that if you try, you will succeed. "Now that's all reasonable and right," says I. 'Plenty of work, and the kind you hanker after; no more pain, no more suffering --'

'Oh, hold on; there's plenty of pain here -- but it don't kill" (p. 578-9). This tension enables heaven to be a blessed

place because it is not boring. "That is the main charm of heaven -- there's all kinds here -- which wouldn't be the case if you let the preachers tell it"(p. 587).

Mark Twain's quest for wealth has been attributed to a reaction against his impecunious upbringing, to his identification with the age of greed which he dubbed the Gilded Age, and to the speculative nature of his father. Twain sought wealth in South America in cacao before he was attracted to piloting; he frantically searched for a fortune in West Coast gold and silver; he hoped for riches from a diamond mine in Africa and invested a large fortune in various speculations, mainly the imperfectible Paige typesetter. When this last scheme was finally realized to be a total loss and bankruptcy followed in 1894, Mark Twain's dalliance with speculation was shattered, but only temporarily. "There are two times a man should not speculate, he [Twain] soon noted privately: 'When he can afford it, and when he can't.'"<sup>33</sup> As soon as his finances were again in good order, Twain dropped this sentiment and began to speculate again.

In direct contradiction to the "£1,000,000 Bank-Note" (1893), "The Joke That Made Ed's Fortune"(1897) and "Cecil Rhodes and the Shark"(1897) which supported the quest for wealth as a worthy and entirely feasible goal in life, Mark Twain wrote two stories that can be described as part of Twain's "pornography of the dollar."<sup>34</sup> The two stories portray money lust as a horrible evil. "The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg"(1899) is a story in which a "mysterious big stranger"(p. 353) enters a situation and is aware of the perverted, while conventional, state of moral piety and succeeds in exposing this perversion. He does so by placing temptation before a town which enjoys a great reputation for moral probity, when the townspeople are in fact mean and selfish persons who do good deeds perfunctorily, if at all, in an environment bereft of real temptation. They are quick to censure others for not conforming, as is shown by their relieving a minister of his call and ostracizing Jack Halliday for his outspoken ways.

Twain made a notation which serves as the gist of the story. "Buried Treasure in a Missouri village -- supposed by worn figures to be \$980, corrupts the village, causes quarrels and murder, and when found at last is \$9.80 [.]"<sup>35</sup>

In the final form, the sack of money is offered as a reward to a Hadleyburg resident who is supposed to have generously helped the stranger in need. Jack Halliday, deceased, is considered the likely candidate, for he alone was not careful in following only the letter of charitable conventions, but was actually capable of generosity. His death leaves opportunity for residents of the town to lay claim to the money without valid grounds. The finest men in town do so, are exposed as greedy schemers, all wanting the bag of money which turns out to be only gilded lead. The question of lying and honesty is forced before the people. "Was it such a great matter? Aren't we always acting lies? Then why not tell them?"(p. 366). In the end the people realize that a stranger, actually bent upon revenging the cold, unfriendly treatment that he received in Hadleyburg, has exposed the corruption latent in their town. "Edward, it is my belief that this town's honesty is as rotten as mine is; as rotten as yours is. It is a mean town, a hard, stingy town and hasn't a virtue in the world but this honesty it is so celebrated for and so conceited about; and so help me, I do believe that if ever the day comes that its honesty falls under great temptation, its grand reputation will go to ruin like a house of cards"(p. 360-1).

The story is an extensive parable, with typecast characters, didactic dialogues, and a contrived moralistic plot which actually expresses the Christian belief that pharisaical complacency and self-satisfaction will effect damnation more surely than any other human frailty. The omniscient author does not create a new religion or contradict a Christian teaching; instead, he attempts to clean up the corruption which is prevalent in the peoples of the Christian society. Twain venomously attacks the conventional, pious, self-satisfied type with which he had always clashed. And he uses the devastating, corrupting force whose power he knew so well himself -- money.

Some of the Hadleyburg citizens, so certain of getting the reward, speculate and purchase on credit (p. 369-70). This frailty is the ruination of Twain's next victims of the dollar lust. A married couple who had built up a small, solid savings and a good life receive news of a windfall. "Tilbury now wrote to Sally, saying he should shortly die, and should

leave him thirty thousand dollars, cash; not for love, but because money had given him most of his troubles and exasperations, and he wished to place it where there was good hope that it would continue its malignant work"(p. 501). The couple is instructed not to inquire about his health or about the money. In anticipation of the inheritance, the two begin to lose contact with reality. "The castle-building habit, the day-dreaming habit -- how it grows! What a luxury it becomes; how we fly to its enchantments at every idle moment, how we revel in them, steep our souls in them, intoxicate ourselves with their beguiling fantasies -- oh yes, and how soon and how easily our dream life and our material life become so intermingled and so fused together that we can't quite tell which is which, any more"(p. 510). Soon they come to believe that their children must marry into high society or the British peerage because the thirty thousand dollars has become a fortune in their imaginary business world. The wife nicknamed Aleck and her husband called Sally, begin to lose their affectations and habits of goodness. "Aleck was a Christian from the cradle, and duty and the force of habit required her to go through the motions... 'Let us be humbly thankful that he has been spared; and --' 'Damn his treacherous hide, I wish --' 'Sally! For shame!'

'I don't care!' retorted the angry man. 'It's the way you feel, and if you weren't so immorally pious you'd be honest and say so"(p. 506). Mark Twain is resuming his attack on the conventional manners of society in the story and is suggesting that an honest, forthright way of behaving should replace "immoral piety." However, he does not pursue this point because the couple is not fated to clear away false conventions, but to be consumed by their lust for wealth. They give up Church, preferring to stay home on leisurely Sundays and devote full time to dreaming. The "Wall Street Pointer" replaces the Bible. Instead of clearing their lives of "immoral piety," they have cleared their lives of everything but their dreams of power and wealth.

The couple suffers terrible imaginary losses on the stock market in which they have invested the prospective bequest. The market fails, they are devastated, but recover when they realize they still have the bequest coming to them.

When they discover that their beneficent uncle has died a cruel and penniless man who had effected their destruction, the shock completes their flight from reality and they spend two years in "mental night"(p. 525) before they die. Almost their last words are reserved for the moral of the story. "Vast wealth, acquired by sudden and unwholesome means, is a snare. It did us no good, transient were its feverish pleasures; yet for its sake we threw away our sweet and simple and happy life -- let others take warning by us"(p. 525).

Their yearning for and slipping into a dream state were both symptoms of Twain's personal anguish when he became bankrupt and then lost his daughter, Susy. The story also reflects his hatred of Christian missionary activity which he considered cultural and religious imperialism.<sup>36</sup> "It was a cold day when she didn't ship a cargo of missionaries to persuade unreflecting Chinamen to trade off twenty-four carat Confucianism for counterfeit Christianity"(p. 517). In spite of these autobiographical elements, Twain did not attempt to create a realistic story. The pure fantasy succeeds better than stories in which it is compromised by elements of realism. In "The \$30,000 Bequest," Mark Twain finally succeeded in creating a parabolic fantasy that would not crudely bludgeon the reader with moral philosophy, nor function as a mixture of sordid realism, fantasy and sentimentality. The story, written as an apologue, has a grace and purity of method which make it the only successful story written by Mark Twain outside his self-proclaimed reportorial tradition.

"The Death Disk"(1901) is another example of Twain's uncritical literary self-judgement which results in the odd mixtures of methods in his moralistic stories. He described the story as being completely within his sanctioned reportorial tradition. "The inclosed is not fancy, it is history; except that the little girl was a passing stranger, and not kin to any of the parties. I read the incident in Carlyle's Cromwell a year ago, and made a note in my note-book; stumbled on the note to-day, and wrote up the closing scene of a possible tragedy, to see how it might work."<sup>37</sup> In fact, the story is based on an historical passage from which Twain went off into a maudlin fictional portrayal of the girl heroine whom he recognized belatedly in "The Horse's Tale" to be his deceased daughter, Susy. He did not realize that

the heroine of "A Death Disk" was a similar psychic discharge. The story is filled with ridiculously impossible dialogue and characterization which centers around the outrageously loving and lovable little girl, as in the later story, "A Horse's Tale."

"The Mysterious Stranger"(1916), published posthumously has been the subject of much discussion. Although it has been considered a masterpiece, it clearly lies in the line of Twain's moralistic stories, burdened by heavy didacticism and an inconsistent philosophy. The stranger who had been wise in his function as the discoverer of "immoral piety" is finally given the opportunity to say all that he wants on the subject. The stranger, a young angel this time, was first mentioned on September 21, 1898. "Story of Little Satan Jr. who came to Hannibal, went to school, was popular and greatly liked by those who knew his secret. The others were jealous and the girls didn't like him because he smelled of brimstone. He was always doing miracles -- his pals knew they were miracles, and others thought they were mysteries."<sup>38</sup> From this idea, Mark Twain developed a catch-all story which voices his grievances and ideas concerning mankind. It is less a work of art and a story, than it is a full proclamation.

Mankind, armed with a moral sense, persecutes others. A Priest is suspended from duties for uttering the heresy that God is "all goodness and would find a way to save all his poor human children"(p. 603). Satan, an angel, is to show the reader that man's moral sense is wrong, that the animals alone are truly good (p. 628), that man is a lowly part of the behavioristic system of life. "Among you boys you have a game: you stand a row of bricks on end a few inches apart; you push a brick, it knocks its neighbor over, the neighbor knocks over the next brick -- and so on till all the row is prostrate. That is human life. A child's first act knocks over the initial brick, and the rest will follow inexorably"(p. 646). It is apparent that man is quite an inconsequential part of the universal existence. "Once he even said, in so many words, that our people down here were quite interesting to him, notwithstanding they were so dull and ignorant and trivial and conceited, and so diseased and rickety, and such a shabby, poor, worthless lot

all around"(p. 611). He observes that man's boon is death or insanity. "What an ass you are! he [Satan] said. Are you so unobservant as not to have found out that sanity and happiness are an impossible combination?"(p. 673).

The major failure of the story is the inconsistency of Twain's thinking. Satan has proven himself properly amoral, capable of casually wiping out life, but then he harshly judges the cruelties of mankind. He asserts that man is not responsible. And yet, a non-chalant, unquestioned killing (such as vivisection in "A Dog's Tale" and bull-fighting in "A Horse's Tale") done with no reference to this corrupting moral sense, is treated with hysterical fury in Twain's fiction. Man, even though made by his circumstance, is still to be blamed. If he uses self-judgement, he is mean and niggling; if he does not, he is guilty of butchery.

It is impossible to accept the assertion that the story is a masterpiece. These inconsistencies indicate only a ranting misanthropy, a "scoffing at the pitiful world." Satan suggests reform (an odd wish from a disinterested, amoral being) by the use of humor. "For your race, in its poverty, has unquestionably one really effective weapon -- laughter. Power, money, persuasion, supplication, persecution -- these can lift at a colossal humbug -- push it a little -- weaken it a little, century by century; but only laughter can blow it to rags and atoms at a blast"(p. 674). Mark Twain could have well heeded the recommendation of his own persona and lifted some of the gloom from the story by specific attacks on man's foibles and failings in a humorous derision and perhaps left the generalities of philosophy to a more qualified mind. The story is finally ended by the assertion that all life is a dream. The crude attempt to present solipsism in fiction as the key to reality only reflects the degree to which Mark Twain had adopted the idea for himself in his escape to dream worlds.

"The Mysterious Stranger" is an appropriate finish to this chapter because it represents Twain's most blunt, inept attempt to moralize in fiction. It is the consummation of the branch of Twain's short stories which derived from his melancholic temperament and his unfelicitous attempts to seek and express absolute truths. In it we see forty years of Mark Twain's thought arrested by anguished and confused conclusions.

## Appendix

A List of Mark Twain's Principal Works and Short Stories  
with Dates of Original Publication

- The Notorious Jumping Frog of Calaveras County, 1865  
 The Story of the Bad Little Boy, 1865  
 Cannibalism in the Cars, 1868  
The Innocents Abroad, 1869  
 A Day at Niagara, 1869  
 Legend of the Capitoline Venus, 1869  
 Journalism in Tennessee, 1869  
 A Curious Dream, 1870  
 The Facts in the Great Beef Contract, 1870  
 How I Edited an Agricultural Paper, 1870  
 A Medieval Romance, 1870  
 Political Economy, 1870  
 The Story of the Good Little Boy, 1870  
Roughing It, 1872  
 Buck Fanshaw's Funeral, 1872  
 The Story of the Old Ram, 1872  
 Tom Quartz, 1872  
 A Trial, 1872  
 The Trials of Simon Erickson, 1872  
The Gilded Age, 1873  
 A True Story, 1874  
 Experience of the McWilliamses with Membraneous Croup, 1875  
 Some Learned Fables for Good Old Boys and Girls, 1875  
The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, 1876  
 The Canvasser's Tale, 1876  
 The Loves of Alonzo Fitz Clarence and Rosannah Ethelton, 1878  
A Tramp Abroad, 1880  
 Edward Mills and George Benton: A Tale, 1880  
 The Man Who Put Up at Gadsby's, 1880  
 Mrs. McWilliams and the Lightning, 1880  
 What Stumped the Bluejays, 1880  
 A Curious Experience, 1881  
The Prince and the Pauper, 1882  
 The Invalid's Story, 1882  
 The McWilliamses and the Burglar Alarm, 1882  
 The Stolen White Elephant, 1882

- Life on the Mississippi, 1883  
 A Burning Brand, 1883  
 A Dying Man's Confession, 1883  
 The Professor's Yarn, 1883  
The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, 1885  
 A Ghost Story, 1888  
A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur, 1889  
 Luck, 1891  
 Playing Courier, 1891  
 The Californian's Tale, 1893  
 The Diary of Adam and Eve, 1893, 1905 with revisions and additions  
 The Esquimau Maiden's Romance, 1893  
 Is He Living or Is He Dead?, 1893  
 The £1,000,000 Bank-Note, 1893  
Tom Sawyer Abroad, 1894  
The Tragedy of Pudd'nhead Wilson and the Comedy of Those Extraordinary Twins, 1894  
Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc, 1896  
Following the Equator, 1897  
 Cecil Rhodes and the Shark, 1897  
 The Joke That Made Ed's Fortune, 1897  
 A Story Without an End, 1897  
 The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg, 1899  
 The Death Disk, 1901  
 Two Little Tales, 1901  
 The Belated Russian Passport, 1902  
 A Double-Barreled Detective Story, 1902  
 The Five Boons of Life, 1902  
 Was It Heaven? Or Hell?, 1902  
 A Dog's Tale, 1903  
 The \$30,000 Bequest, 1904  
 A Horse's Tale, 1906  
 Extract From Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven, 1907  
 The Mysterious Stranger, 1916  
What is Man and Other Essays, 1917  
Europe and Elsewhere, 1923

## Notes

## Introduction.

1. Alfred Kazin, On Native Grounds (N.Y.: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1942), p. xi.

## Chapter One.

1. Walter Blair, Mark Twain and Huck Finn (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1960), p. 371.

2. Maurice Le Breton, "Mark Twain: An Appreciation," from Mark Twain: A Collection of Critical Essays, edited by Henry Nash Smith (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), pp. 38-39. Le Breton describes the value of Twain's fictional content which is the element most pertinent to my present work. Recognition of Twain as a major contributor to the technical development of the novel should also be briefly noted. Eminent literary critics such as Lionel Trilling and T.S. Eliot have praised Twain's use of the American vernacular. T.S. Eliot stated that Twain had "discovered a new way of writing,.... I [Eliot] should place him, in this respect, even with Dryden and Swift, as one of those rare writers who have brought their language up to date and in so doing, 'purified the dialect of the tribe'. In this respect I should place him above Hawthorne." ("American Literature and American Language," Washington University Studies in Language and Literature, XXIII, 1935, pp. 16-17.)

3. See Van Wyck Brooks, The Ordeal of Mark Twain (N.Y.: E.P. Dutton, 1970, reprint of revised edition, 1933. Original edition, 1920.) and Bernard De Voto, Mark Twain's America (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1932) and Lewis Leary, ed. A Casebook on Mark Twain's Wound (N.Y.: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1962).

4. See Warner Berthoff, The Ferment of Realism: American Literature, 1880-1919 (N.Y.: Free Press, 1956), p. 103 for a discussion of the lack of interest in the East and the city as fictional material in Nineteenth Century American literature.

5. Quoted by Justin Kaplan, Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain (N.Y.: Simon and Schuster, 1966), pp. 518-19. Also, see F.L. Pattee, The Development of the American Short Story (N.Y.: Harper and Bros., 1923), Chapter Two, for a discussion of the background of the subscription book in the literary annual which preceded it in popularity in the first half of the Nineteenth Century.

6. Quoted by Albert Bigelow Paine, Mark Twain: A Biography, 3 vols. (N.Y.: Harper and Bros., 1912), II, 895.

7. Quoted by DeLancey Ferguson, Mark Twain: Man and Legend (Indianapolis, Indiana: Bobbs-Merrill, 1943), p. 196.

8. Albert Bigelow Paine, ed., Europe and Elsewhere (N.Y.: Harper and Bros., 1923), p. 341.

9. Mark Twain, A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur (London: Chatto and Windus, 1916), p. 278.

10. Quoted by Kaplan, Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain, pp. 547-48.

11. Dixon Wecter, ed., The Love Letters of Mark Twain (N.Y.: Harper and Bros., 1949), p. 26.

12. Charles Neider, ed., The Autobiography of Mark Twain (N.Y.: Harper and Bros., 1959), p. 83.
13. There is contention as to whether Mark Twain remembered accurately the date when he left school and began work for Ament. In Dixon Wecter's Sam Clemens of Hannibal (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1952), p. 131, convincing proof shows that he remained in school until 1849, working part time for Ament for two years before leaving school. Twain had recalled quitting school at the age of twelve, soon after his father's death.
14. Quoted by Edgar Marquess Branch, The Literary Apprenticeship of Mark Twain: With Selections from his Apprentice Writing (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1950), p. 11.
15. Quoted by Branch, The Literary Apprenticeship, p. 12.
16. Neider, ed., Autobiography, p. 118.
17. Quoted by Paine, Biography, II, 840.
18. Quoted by Paine, Biography, I, 351.
19. Albert Bigelow Paine, ed., Mark Twain's Letters, 2 vols. (N.Y.: Harper and Bros., 1917), I, 101.
20. Paine, ed., Letters, I, 102.
21. Neider, ed., Autobiography, p. 46.
22. Paine, Biography, I, 398.
23. Neider, ed., Autobiography, p. 228.
24. Samuel C. Webster, ed., Mark Twain, Business Man (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1946), p. 112.
25. John C. Gerber, "The Relation between Point of View and Style in the Works of Mark Twain" from Style in Prose Fiction: English Institute Essays, ed. Harold C. Martin (N.Y.: Columbia Univ. Press, 1958), p. 146.
26. Ferguson, Mark Twain: Man and Legend, p. 200.
27. See Robert A. Wiggins, Mark Twain: Jackleg Novelist (Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 1964), for a discussion of Twain's common sense, his faith in practicality as a measure of worth and his belief in the superiority of the Western American.
28. Quoted by Sydney J. Krause, Mark Twain as Critic (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins Press, 1967), p. 74.
29. Neider, ed., Autobiography, p. 59.
30. Kaplan, Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain, p. 479.
31. Quoted by Paine, Biography, II, 641.
32. Quoted by Paine, Biography, II, 922.
33. Quoted by Paine, Biography, III, 1120.
34. This assessment is made by Harold Aspiz, "Mark Twain's Reading -- A Critical Study," Ph.D. Thesis, Univ. of California, Los Angeles, 1949; and Minnie M. Brashear, Mark Twain: Son of Missouri (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1934).
35. Quoted by Kaplan, Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain, p. 387.
36. Quoted by Paine, Biography, I, 512.
37. Bernard De Voto, ed., The Portable Mark Twain (N.Y.: Viking

Press, 1946), pp. 750-51.

38. Henry Nash Smith, William M. Gibson and Frederick Anderson, eds., Mark Twain - Howells Letters: The Correspondence of Samuel L. Clemens and William Dean Howells, 2 vols. (Boston: Harvard Univ. Press, 1960), II, 534.

39. Notebook Number 13, Mark Twain Papers, Univ. of California, Berkeley.

40. Mark Twain, Following the Equator (London: Chatto and Windus, 1916), II, 312.

41. Albert Bigelow Paine, ed., Mark Twain's Notebook (N.Y.: Harper and Bros., 1935), p. 262.

42. The literary movement known as New Journalism, prominent in the 1960's in America, claims to be reporting actual situations, conversations and persons to the reader while using every novelistic device available. Like Twain, the main proponent believes that the true value of prose literature is its reporting of specific and unique information about a limited time and place to all posterity. Tom Wolfe, the most noted New Journalist, recognizes Mark Twain as a pioneer who nearly qualifies as a New Journalist. See Tom Wolfe in the Bibliography for references to New Journalist literature and dogma.

43. Quoted by Paine, Biography, III, 1500-01.

44. Paine, ed., Letters, II, 737-39.

45. Twain hated Harte's inaccurate rendering of dialect, his disregard of details, his sentimental and implausible characters and his general insincerity. He stated in a letter that Harte knew the exteriors of mining and the miner's life while he knew the interiors as well as the exteriors (Paine, ed., Letters, II, 541). Harte was just one of the numerous authors who fell under Twain's critical eye. Krause, Mark Twain as Critic examines each case closely with copious documentation.

46. Henry Nash Smith and Frederick Anderson, eds., Mark Twain of the Enterprise: Newspaper Articles and Other Documents, 1862-1864 (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1957), p. 136.

47. Quoted by Paine, Biography, II, 640.

48. William Dean Howells, My Mark Twain (N.Y.: Harper and Bros., 1910), pp. 15-16.

49. Quoted by Krause, Mark Twain as Critic, p. 14.

50. Paine, ed., Letters, I, 181.

51. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 67.

52. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 156.

53. Aspiz, "Mark Twain's Reading," p. 44.

54. R.B. West, The Short Story in America: 1900-1950 (1952; rpt. Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Libraries Press, 1968), p. 25.

55. Paine, ed., Notebook, pp. 192-93.

56. Wecter, ed., Love Letters, pp. 227-28.

57. Notebook Number 12, Mark Twain Papers.

58. Paine, ed., Letters, II, 541.

59. Mark Twain, What is Man? and Other Essays (N.Y.: Harper and Bros., 1917), p. 70.

60. Mark Twain, Life on the Mississippi (London: Chatto and Windus, 1914), p. 184.
61. Neider, ed., Autobiography, p. 68.
62. Mark Twain, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer (London: Chatto and Windus, 1920), Preface.
63. Neider, ed., Autobiography, p. 3.
64. Quoted by Paine, Biography, II, 720.
65. Neider, ed., Autobiography, p. 19.
66. Mark Twain, What is Man?, p. 70.
67. Smith, Gibson and Anderson, eds., Mark Twain - Howells Letters, I, 81-82.
68. Quoted by Wiggins, Mark Twain: Jacklog Novelist, p. 30.
69. Aspiz, "Mark Twain's Reading," p. 76.
70. Quoted by Roger B. Salomon, Twain and the Image of History (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale Univ. Press, 1961), p. 21.
71. Smith, Gibson and Anderson, eds., Mark Twain - Howells Letters, I, 106-07.
72. Smith, Gibson and Anderson, eds., Mark Twain - Howells Letters, I, 46.
73. Smith, Gibson and Anderson, eds., Mark Twain - Howells Letters, I, 55.
74. Quoted by Krause, Mark Twain as Critic, p. 220.
75. Neider, ed., Autobiography, p. 72.
76. Quoted by Paine, Biography, III, 1370.
77. Neider, ed., Autobiography, p. 264.
78. Neider, ed., Autobiography, p. 265.
79. Wiggins, Mark Twain: Jackleg Novelist, p. 47.
80. Quoted by Paine, Biography, I, 421.
81. Quoted by Paine, Biography, I, 470.
82. Letter to Livy Clemens, Oct. 24, 1874, Mark Twain Papers.
83. Paine, Biography, I, 496.
84. Kaplan, Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain, pp. 191-98.
85. Quoted by Paine, Biography, II, 707.
86. Notebook Number 16, September, 1878, Mark Twain Papers.
87. Paine, Biography, I, 715.
88. Paine, Biography, I, 639 mentions the incident. Its fictional counterpart is found in Mark Twain, A Tramp Abroad (London: Chatto and Windus, 1912), pp. 96-103.
89. Brashear, Mark Twain: Son of Missouri, p. 96.
90. Neider, ed., Autobiography, p. 226.
91. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 237.
92. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 240.
93. Quoted by Paine, Biography, Prefatory Note.
94. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 261.

95. Some of the many instances of this humorous pose as the hen-pecked husband may be found in: Smith, Gibson and Anderson, ed., Mark Twain - Howells Letters, I, 54, 61, 62, 65-66.
96. Mark Twain, "My First Lie and How I Got Out of It" from The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg, etc. (London: Chatto and Windus, 1917), p. 63.
97. Mark Twain, "My First Lie....," p. 71.
98. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 181.
99. Mark Twain, What is Man?, p. 369.
100. Mark Twain, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (London: Chatto and Windus, 1916), p. 1.
101. Neider, ed., Autobiography, pp. 223-24.
102. Frederick Anderson with Kenneth M. Sanderson, eds., Mark Twain: A Critical Heritage (N.Y.: Barnes and Noble, 1971), p. 6.
103. Jesse Bier, The Rise and Fall of American Humor (N.Y.: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1968), p. 11.
104. Wiggins, Mark Twain: Jackleg Novelist, p. 120.
105. Quoted by Paine, Biography, II, 786.
106. Albert Bigelow Paine, Mark Twain's Autobiography, 2 vols. (N.Y.: Harper and Bros., 1924), I, 272-73.
107. Quoted by Kaplan, Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain, p. 190.
108. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 151.
109. Neider, ed., Autobiography, p. 266.
110. Quoted by Kaplan, Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain, p. 225.
111. Bier, The Rise and Fall of American Humor, p. 10.
112. Smith, Gibson and Anderson, eds., Mark Twain - Howells Letters, I, 248-49.
113. Paine, Biography, I, 150.
114. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 256.
115. Quoted by Paine, Biography, II, 744.
116. Quoted by Paine, Biography, I, 115.
117. Brashear, Mark Twain: Son of Missouri, p. 252.
118. See Vernon Parrington, Main Currents in American Thought, 3 vols. (N.Y.: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1930), Vol. III.
119. Paine, Biography, I, 144.
120. Neider, ed., Autobiography, p. 192.
121. Quoted by Paine, Biography, III, 1583.
122. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 153.
123. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 81.
124. Quoted by Kaplan, Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain, p. 20.
125. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 236.
126. Quoted by Kaplan, Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain, p. 514.
127. Quoted by Paine, Biography, III, 1337.
128. Quoted by Paine, Biography, III, 1529.

129. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 368.
130. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 398.
131. Quoted by Paine, Biography, III, 1548-49.
132. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 21.
133. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 23.
134. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 25.
135. Notebook Number 6, March-April, 1866, Mark Twain Papers.
136. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 130.
137. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 131.
138. Dixon Wecter, ed., Mark Twain to Mrs. Fairbanks (San Marino, California: Huntington Library, 1949), pp. 208-09.
139. Quoted by Kaplan, Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain, p. 241.
140. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 195.
141. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 394.
142. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 385.
143. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 379.
144. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 289 and p. 364.
145. Neider, ed., Autobiography, p. 133.
146. Quoted by Paine, Biography, III, 1540.
147. Quoted by Kaplan, Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain, p. 472.
148. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 255.

#### Chapter Two.

1. Wayne Booth, The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago: Chicago Univ. Press, 1961), p. 20.
2. Guy de Maupassant, "Le Roman" from Pierre et Jeanne (Paris: Louis Conard, Libraire-Editeur, 1909), p. xv.
3. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 7.
4. Paine, ed., Letters, I, 101.
5. The term "frame device" has also been chosen by Kenneth S. Lynn, The Comic Tradition in America (London: Victor Gollancy, Ltd., 1958), p. 213 and Walter Blair, Native American Humor (1937, rpt. San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co., Inc., 1960), p. 156 to describe the interview technique employed by Mark Twain.
6. Charles Neider, ed., The Complete Short Stories of Mark Twain (N.Y.: Bantam Books, 1958), p. 4. Hereinafter parenthetically cited in the text by page number.
7. Quoted by Paine, Biography, I, 393.
8. Paine, Biography, I, 214.
9. Notebook Number 4, January-February 1865, Mark Twain Papers.
10. Notebook Number 8, Mark Twain Papers.
11. Neider, ed., Autobiography, p. 139.
12. Neider, ed., Autobiography, p. 139-40.
13. Notebook Number 14, Mark Twain Papers.
14. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 7.

15. Notebook Number 20, January, 1882-January, 1883, Mark Twain Papers.
16. Smith, Gibson and Anderson, eds., Mark Twain - Howells Letters, I, 22-23.
17. Quoted by Paine, Biography, I, 509.
18. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 271.
19. Paine, ed., Biography, II, 777.
20. Quoted by Kaplan, Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain, p. 91.
21. Notebook Number 14, November 1877-July 1878, Mark Twain Papers.
22. Quoted by Paine, Biography, I, 361.
23. Quoted by Paine, Biography, II, 724.
24. Quoted by Paine, Biography, I, 361.
25. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 31.
26. Kaplan, Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain, pp. 91-92.
27. Paine, Biography, II, 629.
28. Notebook Number 13, Mark Twain Papers.
29. Notebook Number 15, July-August, 1878, Mark Twain Papers.
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31. Anderson with Sanderson, eds., Mark Twain: The Critical Heritage, p. 16.
32. Quoted by E.H. Cady, The Road to Realism: The Early Years, 1837-1885 (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse Press, 1956), p. 168.
33. Cited by Merle Johnson, A Bibliography of the Works of Mark Twain, Samuel L. Clemens (1935, rpt. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1972), p. 165.
34. Quoted by Kaplan, Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain, pp. 204-05.
35. W.H. Auden, "Huck and Oliver", The Listener, L, No. 1283 (October 1, 1953), 540-41.
36. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 232.
37. Smith, Gibson and Anderson, eds., Mark Twain - Howells Letters, I, 54.
38. Notebook Number 20, January, 1882-January, 1883, Mark Twain Papers.
39. Paine, Biography, I, 434.
40. Neider, ed., Autobiography, p. 206.
41. Neider, ed., Autobiography, p. 208.
42. Neider, ed., Autobiography, p. 208.
43. Neider, ed., Autobiography, p. 204.
44. Notebook Number 20, January 1882-January 1883, Mark Twain Papers.
45. Neider, ed., Autobiography, p. 376.
46. Notebook Number 19, July, 1880-January, 1882, Mark Twain Papers.
47. Paine, Biography, II, 600-01.

48. Mark Twain, Innocents Abroad, p. 235.
49. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 193.
50. Notebook Number 14, November 23, 1877, Mark Twain Papers.
51. Quoted by Paine, Biography, II, 720.
52. Notebook Number 14, November, 1877-July, 1878, Mark Twain Papers.
53. My statements concerning the effectiveness of Twain's humor are based on teaching experiences in the United States as an extension class instructor. My students were all adults with very little formal education who are typical of the majority of readers who continue to read Twain's fiction for recreation.
54. Paine, Biography, II, 635-36.
55. Mark Twain, Life on the Mississippi (London: Chatto and Windus, 1914), pp. 65-66.
56. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 162.
57. Neider, ed., Autobiography, p. 270.
58. Paine, Biography, II, 919.
59. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 147.
60. Notebook Number 16, September, 1878, Mark Twain Papers.
61. Notebook Number 16, September, 1878, Mark Twain Papers.
62. Paine, Biography, II, 957.
63. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 358.
64. Paine, ed., Notebook, pp. 282-83.
65. Lewis Leary, ed., Mark Twain's Correspondence with Henry Huttleston Rogers: 1893-1909 (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1970), pp. 81-82.
66. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 189.
67. Paine, Biography, II, 711-12.
68. Paine, Biography, II, 694.
69. Quoted by Paine, Biography, II, 1098.
70. Notebook Number 16, September, 1878, Mark Twain Papers.
71. Quoted by Paine, Biography, III, 1139.
72. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 296.
73. Notebook Number 25, Mark Twain Papers.
74. W.H. Auden, "Huck and Oliver".

### Chapter Three.

1. Quoted by Kaplan, Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain, p. 565.
2. Neider, ed., Autobiography, p. 75.
3. Notebook Number 5, March-June-September, 1866, Mark Twain Papers.
4. Neider, ed., Autobiography, pp. 92-93.
5. Notebook Number 11, Mark Twain Papers.
6. Notebook Number 17, October, 1878-February, 1879, Mark Twain Papers.

7. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 365.
8. Paine, ed., Biography, II, 599-600.
9. Neider, ed., Autobiography, p. 328.
10. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 378.
11. Neider, ed., Autobiography, p. 337.
12. Quoted by Paine, Biography, III, 1189-90.
13. Lynn, The Comic Tradition in America, p. 4.
14. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 62.
15. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 327.
16. See Louis D. Rubin, "The Barber Kept On Shaving: The Two Perspectives of American Humor," Sewanee Review, LXXXI, #4, Autumn, 1973.
17. Quoted by Paine, Biography, III, 1246.
18. Kazin, On Native Grounds, p. 517.
19. Notebook Number 5, March-June-September, 1866, Mark Twain Papers.
20. Paine, Biography, I, 419.
21. Quoted by Walter Blair, Mark Twain and Huck Finn (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1960), p. 57.
22. Wector, ed., Mark Twain to Mrs. Fairbanks, p. 108.
23. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 35.
24. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 130.
25. Notebook Number 14, November, 1877-July, 1878, Mark Twain Papers.
26. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 138.
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29. Notebook Number 17, October, 1878-February, 1879, Mark Twain Papers.
30. Notebook Number 18, February-September, 1879, Mark Twain Papers.
31. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 241.
32. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 397.
33. Kaplan, Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain, p. 443.
34. Kaplan, Mr. Clemens and Mark Twain, p. 148.
35. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 342.
36. See Mark Twain, "To the Person Sitting in Darkness" from The Portable Mark Twain, ed. Bernard DeVoto (N.Y.: The Viking Press, 1946), p. 594.
37. Quoted by Paine, Biography, II, 763.
38. Paine, ed., Notebook, p. 369.

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