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MARK TWAIN, KING OF HUMOR

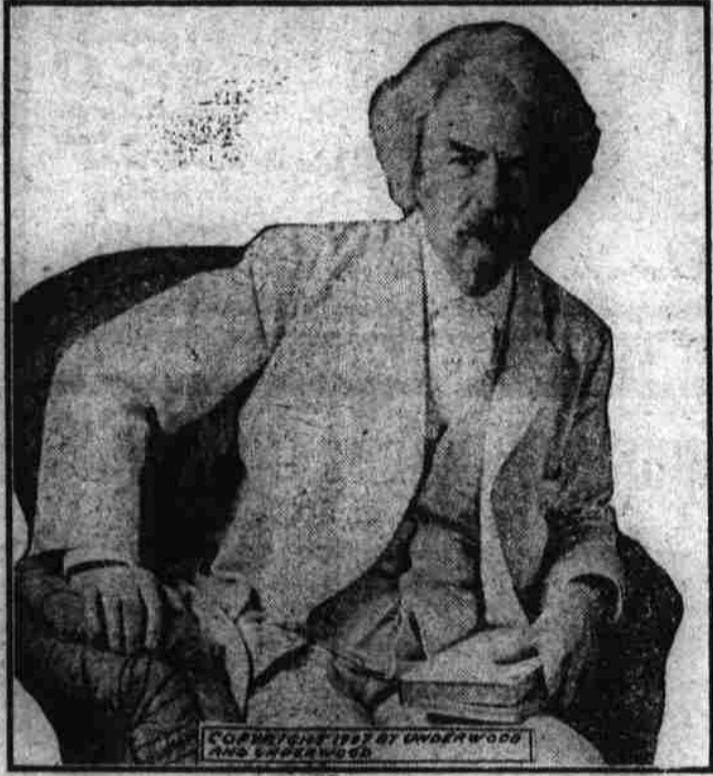
Comprehensive Estimate of America's Late Literary Genius, Whose Pen Swayed the Heart of the World.

By ROBERTUS LOVE

MARK TWAIN is dead! The king is dead—long live the king! But there is no heir, either apparent or presumptive. The throne of humor, whose kingdom was the world, is empty. The scepter that swayed the universal heart—the pen—the idle idler—the empire of laughter and also of tears which this king of the writing craft founded and which he fostered for nearly fifty years is become an whitening dust in the abyss of the things that were. Only there remains the heritage of the dead ruler's kindly philosophy,

Tribute Paid to the Ability, Kindly Philosophy, Droll Fun and Pathos of the Man Whose Optimism Cheered Millions.

rather be the author of "Tom Sawyer" than all of his own works. "The Innocents Abroad," of course, always will be associated with Mark Twain's name as one of his most characteristic books, but that may be because it was his first big work and won for him the fame and the fortune which enabled him to write what he pleased. Mark Twain's name was Samuel Langhorne Clemens, but it was used chiefly as a vessel whereon universities hung L. L. D. handles. He was "Dr. Clemens" three times over, but the distinction never spoiled him.



THE LATE MARK TWAIN. [Samuel L. Clemens.]

his droll fun, his quips and jestings and his pathos.

Mark Twain became famous before he died the most famous man on earth. He was not merely a man; he was an institution. He was a sort of neighborhood settlement of good cheer, with many brains located in the oases as in the waste places, where admission and refreshment were free to all. Millions saw many millions in beyond estimating—came and partook of his wine of optimism and stayed for supper. His fame was and is universal. Though an American born, a native of Missouri, he belonged to all lands. He had traveled in all lands and lived in most of them. He had more near-permanent homes perhaps than any other man of his day. Nearly always he was a wanderer, sometimes from necessity, more frequently from choice. The world was his plaything, and he was not content without remapping for himself the entire surface of the big ball.

Of Most Striking Appearance.

He was a man of most striking appearance—the kind that attracts attention anywhere in a crowd and causes others to take a second look. In his later years his shock—no, his crown—of hair, perfectly white and glossy like fine spun silk, became his trademark of recognition by strangers wherever he went. I have seen a woman who never before saw Mark Twain pick him out without opera glasses, though she sat in the top gallery of Carnegie hall and he occupied a lower box near the stage, and the great house was crowded. He had no doubts as to personal appearance—there was only one of him.

And there was only one of Mark Twain as a literary syndicate. It has become the fashion to describe him as the great American humorist. This undoubtedly he was, but he was more. His appreciation of Joan of Arc, first published anonymously, is accepted by critics of acumen as one of the most refined works in the serious literature of the nineteenth century. The book was his way before Mark Twain admitted its paternity. While he was writing the Joan classic he worked, time and time about, on that amazing funny masterpiece, "Pudd'nhead Wilson." He simply couldn't be serious altogether for a stated period.

Never Altogether Funny.

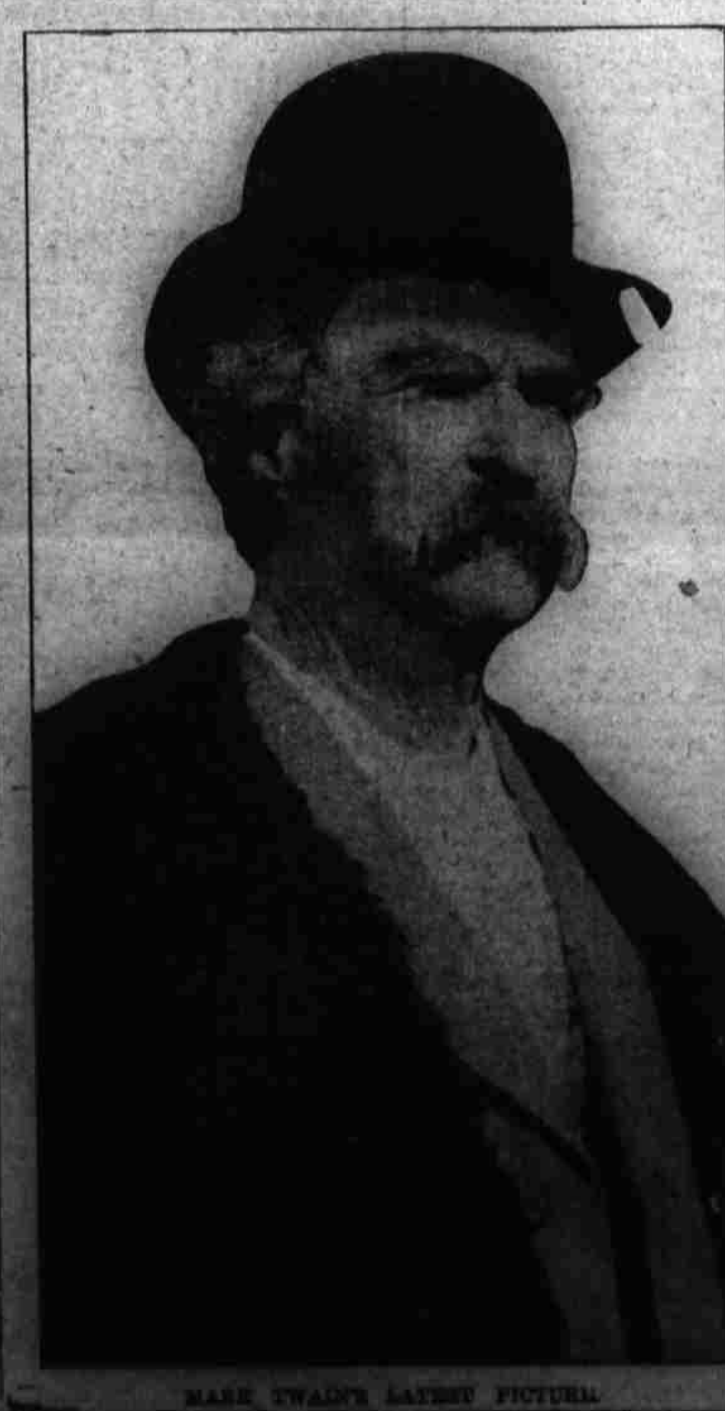
Nor must we take it for granted that Mark Twain, summing up his career as a writer, ever was altogether funny. He never was. He was one of the closest observers of human nature and institutions, places and things, that ever lived. Even to his most humorous books we find that he has made accurate transcripts of the things which impressed him. Though he exaggerated, a privilege belonging to his profession, one can read between the lines the sober truth. He was an insatiable foe to shams of every sort, and apparently knew his highest happiness when with droll sarcasm he pictured a popular fraud with his pen.

But Mark Twain often wrote books just because he had the story to tell. The tale of "Tom Sawyer" is one of these, and the "Huckleberry Finn" book is another. Each of these is true to life—by its author's definition. It is not to be wondered that he should

With no school learning save such as he gained from a few years' attendance at the village school in Hannibal, Mo., his scholastic titles were earned by literary work which the whole world accepted.

He Was Intensely Democratic.

Mark Twain was intensely democratic. He was easily approachable, and he never emitted any bear's growl or lion's roar. Even the humblest person was made to feel at ease in his presence. Shrinking reporters sent to interview him quit their slinking and puffed up when they found him as easy to interview as the aspiring author of the poem published in the lower corner of the town weekly. He could talk on any topic, even the weather, and glorify it with his humor, and if the insistent attention bestowed upon him was distasteful to him he did not permit the fact to be known. Mark Twain was one of the politest men I ever knew. He was considerate of the feelings of others,



MARK TWAIN'S LATEST PICTURE

and therein lies the soul of politeness. Those obsessed by the notion that it was impossible for Mark Twain to open his mouth without saying something funny should revise their impressions of him. In the course of his last visit to his boyhood home at Hannibal in the summer of 1902 he said solemn things in the most dignified manner possible. Several times he was so deeply touched by the pathos of the occasion, his meeting with boyhood friends then grown old like himself, his visit to the graves of his parents, that his voice quavered and broke, and the inevitable tears trickled down his face. He was overcome with emotion, conquered by tender sentiment, and those of us whose privilege it was to observe him upon these occasions went away with a new notion as to Mark Twain. He was not the mere jester, not the buffoon who sees in life only the guffaws and works assiduously to evoke them in boisterous riot of laughter. He was the man of feeling, the tender hearted old fellow, the owner of a heart as gentle as any that ever beat.

His Many Personal Sorrows.

Mark Twain's life was not a rose bed. He walked no primrose path. He encountered stumbling places and had steep hills of difficulty to climb. And he had sorrows that bit and griefs that bludgeoned. At the close of his life, so far as relatives were concerned, he was almost alone in the world. His best loved daughter, Susy, died in America when he was in Europe. His story of her death in his autobiography is a piece of pathos seldom surpassed. His wife, who was Miss Olivia Langdon of Elmira, N. Y., his companion for many years, died in Italy after vain wanderings for the restoration of her health. He built a big country home near Redding, Conn., and settled down to continue growing old as gracefully as he could with his two remaining daughters, Clara and Jean. In November of 1909 Clara married a foreigner and went abroad to live. Jean was left with him. On the day before Christmas, with a Christmas tree for her father trimmed by her own hands in one of the rooms, Jean Clemens was found dead in her bathtub, having been seized with an epileptic fit and drowned.

When Mark Twain was fifty years old and worth about \$1,000,000 a publishing firm in which he was a partner became bankrupt. He lost his fortune and was involved heavily in debt. He set to work, made a lecturing and writing tour around the world and in ten years had paid off his indebtedness and again was ahead of the wolf. By that time he had become so universally famous that his work commanded its own price. Thereafter he could write or rest as he chose, and he chose to write much.

Mark Twain's writing life began to his pilot days and continued up to his death—half a century of devotion to the art of making people happy. For several years he was simply a hard working newspaper reporter and special correspondent, searching for gold in Nevada and California between jobs at journalism which gratified him for prospecting. But he found his parent and most paying streak of ore when in 1867 he wrote "The Jumping Frog of Calaveras County." That story, picked up in a mining camp, was his first promising literary prospect. He had struck the mother lode. Printer, pilot, reporter, humorist, novelist, philosopher—he is safely entitled to enduring fame.

CHILD WATCHES MOTHER KILLED

Four Year Old Girl Sees Man Blow Out Parent's Brains.

North Plainfield, N. J., April 22.—Information conveyed by a four year old child led to the discovery of the murder of Mrs. Fredrick Coverly in the dining room of her boarding house No. 17 Somerset Place, shortly before noon today. The woman was found stretched upon the floor and the wall of the room were spotted with her blood.

Chief of Police Wise, of this place and Chief Kicley, of Plainfield, with about a hundred men are making a search of this vicinity and toward the Watchung mountains in automobiles, hoping to run down John Grant, who boarded with Mrs. Coverly and whom the children accuse of slaying their mother.

Chief Wise was in his office when four-year-old Marion Coverly walked in and cried: "Will you please come and see my mamma? She is sick on the floor and won't get up."

Brief questioning convinced the chief that something serious had occurred and he hurried with the little girl to her home. On the floor of the dining room was the prostrate body of Mrs. Coverly with her brains spattered about on carpet and wall.

According to the story related to Chief Wise, Marion said Grant and her mother were "talking loud." She said she and her sister stood in one corner when Grant drew a revolver and blew out the woman's brains.

Prompt relief in all cases of throat and lung trouble, if you use Chamberlain's Cough Remedy. Pleasant to take, soothing and healing in effect. Sold by all dealers.

Bit Off His Ear.

At the last term of Pamlico county Superior Court for the trial of criminal cases Ben. Carber, a degenerate colored man, was sentenced to a term of 3 years in the penitentiary for biting another negro's ear off. Last Wednesday morning sheriff George R. Brinson took him from the jail preparatory to taking him to Raleigh, and in some way the prisoner broke loose from the sheriff and jumped the fence enclosing the jail yard, and after swimming a narrow creek succeeded in making good his escape and at the present time is still at large.

Make Your Carriage or Buggy New.

Get about one dollar worth of L. & M. Carriage Varnish Paint in any color. You can make a buggy look as fresh and new as when just from the maker. Get it from Gaskill Hdw. & Mill Supply Co., New Bern.

TOBACCO PRICES UNCHANGED

Advance in New Tax Revenue Law Not to Affect Smokers

New York April 21.—An advance of 2 cents a pound on tobacco is made in the new tax revenue law which will go into effect on July 1, but it will not mean any increased prices for smokers. The announcement was made that no change whatsoever will be made to weight, size, or price of plug and loose tobacco following the new, and that instead of its affecting the consumers or dealers, the manufacturers will stand the loss.

Such a change in the law generally has a widespread effect and causes considerable demoralization of trade, but in this case there will be no change of prices and its effect will not be felt.

College and School.

The University of Cincinnati through Dean Herman Schneider has organized a plan of co-operative industrial education whereby a student studies one week in the university and then works one week in shop or factory.

SWANSBORO HAS PARK

Philanthropic Citizen Presents the Town With Beautiful Located Grounds For Park.

A letter from Swansboro conveys the information that Mr. John A. Pittman, a leading merchant and citizen had presented that town with a tract of land to be converted into a park. Mr. Pittman is one of the wealthiest and most liberal men in that section and this gift is not the first instance of his generosity. The letter referred to has the following to say about the opening of the grounds which was made the occasion for quite a celebration.

Last Saturday was a red letter day in the history of Swansboro, when a new public recreation ground named "Oak Grove" was opened for use. The ground is the gift of Mr. John Pittman, the leading citizen of the town, and chairman of the board of commissioners of Onslow county. The proceedings took the form of a basket picnic in which the school children and members of the local Temperance Legion took prominent part. There was music and singing, led by Miss Sarah Johnson, of Northampton, Mass., who together with Miss Lucy Fessenden, of Philadelphia, who has been teaching school here during the past winter.

The Rev. W. S. Key gave a brief address in which he congratulated the town on the gift of the new grounds and expressed the earnest hope that every one would regard it as their duty to protect the beautiful oak trees which adorn the park. Seats and tables for permanent use have been provided through the kindly and generous help of Mr. Claude Frazelle, a well known local merchant.

Pic Nic at Ernul's.

There will be a picnic at Ernul Station, on Saturday, May 7th, at which there will be music and dancing all day. Every one invited.

Managers.

United States Seals.

There have been three great seals of the United States—one in 1812, a second in 1841 and that of 1885, which is used at the present day by the secretary of state. He affixes it to communications signed by the president.

Bairds Creek Items.

April 24.—The warm dry weather still continues and the crops are needing rain very badly.

Most people here are through planting corn and some have planted cotton. The frost that came a few nights ago did not do much damage to crops in our vicinity.

The prospect at present is very encouraging for a large fruit crop, we hope it will continue so.

There has been some fine weather for farm work this spring and the farmers are pretty well up with their work.

There seems to be an epidemic of mumps in our community.

HALLEY'S COMET MEASURED

Seven Million Miles Long is Comet's Tail.

San Francisco April 23.—A photograph of head and inner part of the tail of Halley's comet, in which the length of so much of the tail as was recorded was 1,100,000 miles, has been taken at the Lick Observatory by astronomer Curtis. The photograph was made with the Crossley reflectory of the observatory. The plate was exposed for thirty-five minutes.

The extreme diameter of the head, as shown in the photograph, is 196,000 miles. A photograph, showing the tail on a smaller scale, recorded the total length of nearly three, corresponding to a length in space of more than 7,000,000 miles.

Foley's Kidney Remedy will cure any case of kidney and bladder trouble not beyond the reach of medicine. No medicine can do more. Davis Pharmacy.

Closing Exercises of Thurman School.

Thurman, N. C., April 20th.—The Thurman school closed last Tuesday, April 19th with some of the best exercises the writer has ever witnessed on such an occasion. Under almost unsurmountable difficulties, teachers and pupils worked early and late and triumphed in the splendid exhibition of last night. The house was full to overflowing and every one present seemed highly pleased.

In the play Cabbage Hill School, which was so ably presented, all the actors deserve great credit, and also the young men who presented the negro minstrel, Annie Conner as Martha Morrison in Cabbage Hill School was irresistible, and Pauline Boyd as Mary Augusta Jones was in such good humor and bubbling over with laughter that it would have been a dull person indeed who could not have laughed with her. Will Boyd as Martha's granny kept on all wondering if the teacher and supervisor were not really afraid that her tongue would cost them their places. Mary Conner as Posie Smith, the cry baby did her part to perfection.

The drills were very good, showing that much time and careful training had been bestowed upon them.

The Topsy Turvy Drill was the most laughable, but nothing could have been more beautiful and angelic than the 8 beautiful white clad little "mothers" in the doll drill, who rocked their babies to sleep and sang the sweetest lullaby imaginable.

Madie Taylor, who recited the "New Church Organ" in suitable costume was very amusing.

The program was as follows: Welcome—Song by school. Address of welcome—Mary Conner. America—Song by school. A good little boy—John Boyd Jr. When we are Men—Recitation—Henry Riggs, Amos Conner, Wm. Moore, Guy Boys, Ernest Moore, Duguid Fisher.

CLOSING DAY.

Silas Bacon—Supervisor—Bachelor—Mr. A. R. Conner. Ike Henderson, Miss Day's beau. Manly Conner, Miss Caroline Day, Miss Madie Taylor, Mrs. Donahue, Miss Carrie Harrison, Miss Jerusha Jones, Mrs. Smith, Miss Claris Smith, Mrs. Morrison, William Boyd.—Doily you must go to bed.

Recitation and song. Minnie Riggs, Ida Conner, Elizabeth T. Fisher, Daisy Boyd, Mary Conner, Mary G. Moore, Pauline Boyd, Brauliah Riggs—Entertaining Sister's Beau. Recitation—Annie Conner. Song by the school. Little Blossom—Recitation—Daisy Conner.

Drill and Old Time Plays—Janis Conner, Madie Taylor, Ellis Conner, Daisy Conner, Pauline Boyd, Ida Conner, Mary Conner, Bettie Fisher.

The New Church Organ—Recitation—Madie Taylor. Topsy Turvy Drill—Annie Conner, Henry Riggs, Minnie Riggs, William Moore, Pauline Boyd, Mary Conner, Ernest Moore, Clara Fisher. The Dispelling of Big Jim—A negro minstrel. Song—"The Old North State"—by school. "Good Bye"—Daisy Boyd, Dewey Conner, Duguid Fisher, John Boyd, Brauliah Riggs, Mary Conner, Bettie Fisher.

HOLD UP TRAIN SEEKING SLAYER

Engineer Forced to Stop by Armed Quartette Who Searched Cars.

Berkeley Heights, N. J., April 23.—While one man pointed a gun at Engineer William Blazius on a Lackawanna mail train this morning, threatening to shoot if an attempt was made to start the engine three men went through the cars searching for John Grant, the twenty-four-year-old fugitive from North Plainfield, where he is wanted on a charge of being the murderer of Mrs. Frederick Coverly.

"We're after the man who killed Mrs. Coverly at North Plainfield," the man with the gun declared, "and we mean to get him if he's here. We're been searching all night and don't mean to let him get away now."

When the armed quartette became convinced that Grant was not on the train they withdrew. The most direct clue to the whereabouts of Grant was furnished at Smidletown last night, when a twelve-year-old girl, on a farm adjoining the Mermaugh farm, where Grant once had worked, said she saw Grant yesterday afternoon. He was riding on a bicycle, she said, and got off his wheel to talk to her. She said he went in the direction of Stirling.

Chief of Police Wise, of North Plainfield, and a posse searched the swamps about Stirling today. Chief Kicley, of Plainfield, with several detectives, also scoured the surrounding country today in automobiles in search of the fugitive.

Married Last Night.

Married at the residence of Mr. Wm. Smith 124 Pollock street New Bern N. C. Mr. Edward Parsons, of New Bern, and Miss Nannie Davenport, of Pamlico Co. N. C. Rev. J. V. Williams officiating.

STRIKES MATCH; TWO ARE KILLED

Quantity of Gasoline Explodes on Boat Blowing Occupants to Atoms.

Warsaw, Va., April 25.—A gasoline launch of the Henrico Lumber Company which was towing a barge loaded with excelsior wood from Tuttsville bridge to Rappahannock river, exploded Friday evening, blowing up the boat and instantly killing George Meekins, of Sharpe, and L. J. Brann, of Wyndale.

Meekins and Brann were engaged in filling the gasoline tank on the launch from a large tank on the lighter, containing one hundred gallons. Some of the gasoline was wasted on the creek when Meekins, wishing to see it burn lighted a match and applied it. Immediately there was a terrific explosion and Meekins' body was blown to pieces. Though a search was made all night and continued this morning but no trace of the body has been found. Brann's body was blown into the air and fell in a snuff, where it was recovered.

A negro employed on the barge was seated on the lighter. He was also blown high into the air and fell into the hold of the barge. He was badly burned about the face, and his eye-sight impaired. He will recover.

The launch and lighter were completely wrecked and the doors and windows of the barge were blown out.

WILLIAM HEARST PRAISES TAFT

By Contrasting Present Administration With Roosevelt.

Washington D. C., April 27.—William R. Hearst called at the White House yesterday afternoon and talked with President Taft for half an hour. In the evening he set political Washington expressing by handing out a characteristic statement, in which he praised Roosevelt and heaped a large measure of praise upon the present incumbent of the White House. Hearst declared that Taft has accomplished more in one year than Roosevelt accomplished in seven; that he has pulled the country out of the slough of adversity in which Roosevelt left it, and has started it on the high road of progress. It was the first time that Mr. Hearst has called at the White House since President Roosevelt announced that there just before the Taft campaign. The man in the news today is a bighead when he's full.