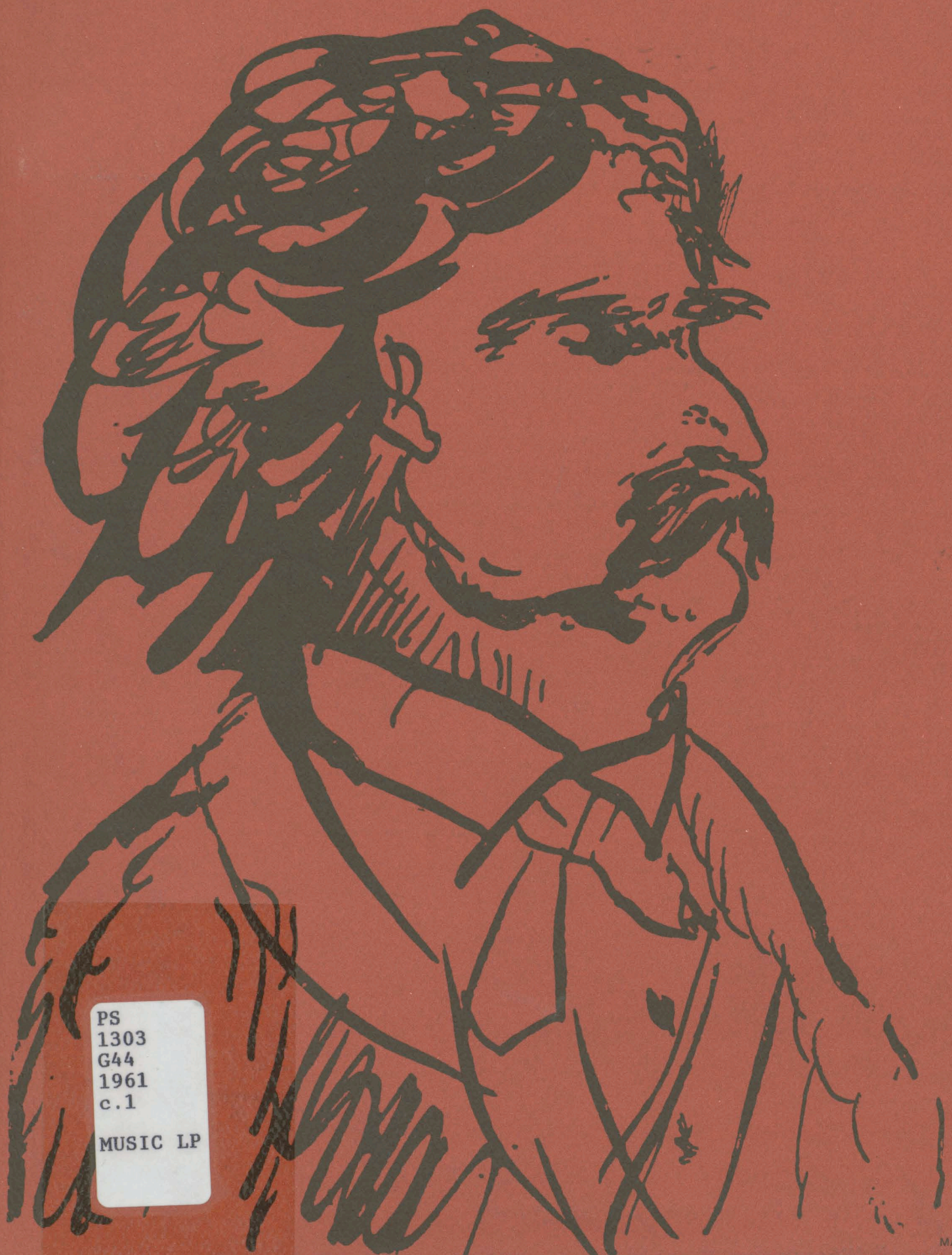
MARK TWAIN

READINGS FROM THE STORIES AND FROM "HUCKLEBERRY FINN"
AS ADAPTED AND PERFORMED BY WILL GEER
FOLKWAYS RECORDS FL 9769



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FOLKWAYS FL 9769

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CORNPONE OPINIONS
HOW I EDITED AN AGRICULTURAL PAPER

From THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN:
HUCK AND JIM RUN AWAY
HUCK DRESSES LIKE A GIRL
THE DUKE AND THE DAUPHIN COME ABOARD

Recording by Pete Seeger
Selection and Editing by S. B. Charters

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

MARK TWAIN

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MARK TWAIN
read by Will Geer

Notes by **SAMUEL B. CHARTERS**

MARK TWAIN

readings from the stories and
from "Huckleberry Finn", as adapted
and performed by

WILL GEER

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from THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FIN

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AN INTRODUCTION AND A NOTE OF AN EARLY FRIENDSHIP

Samuel Barclay Charters

In many ways it could be said that Mark Twain ended, rather than began, a literary style. His writing, in its variety and quantity, seemed to sum up a whole expression of the America from which he came, and as his writing career ended the aspect of American life that he had most completely represented seemed to end with him. Twain came from the frontier, from what was then the American west, and he took from his background a freshness of expression and an emotional directness that has given his best writing a lasting vitality. From his background, too, Twain took a method of expression, a style, and so completely filled it with his own personality that only Twain is remembered, even though the "local" writers and humorists of his own time were almost household names to people everywhere in the United States. Humorous anecdotes and tall tales, many of them to provide a source for Twain's own stories, filled the farm almanacs, and there were collections of frontier sketches like George W. Harris's A QUARTER RACE IN KENTUCKY, published in 1846, or J. G. Baldwin's FLUSH TIMES IN ALABAMA AND GEORGIA, published in 1853. Writers like these had taken the speech and the life around them, the expression of the people of the West, and given it a literary form and style. After them came Twain, and with his ADVENTURES OF TOM SAWYER published in 1876, their gusty tradition, softened and sentimentalised for a larger audience, but still with some of its odd vitality, became part of the larger American literary tradition.

When Twain was first beginning his literary career this rough frontier writing, and the local humor of writers in other sections of the United States, was regarded as something almost distasteful by the literary circles of Boston and New York. American literature was still tied to Europe, despite Melville and Whitman, and for a young writer there was often the difficult decision of writing in one of the accepted "elegant" styles or turning to the styles which more fully expressed American life. For Twain the decision was not a difficult one, but he was fortunate in his opportunities in the first years that he was trying to be a writer. Not only did he begin his writing career as a frontier newspaper reporter, but not long after he had become a reporter he met and became friends with the most important popular humorist of the day, Artemus Ward.

In the summer and fall of 1863, when Artemus Ward was touring the western states, Twain was a young reporter on the staff of a newspaper in the Nevada Territory, The Territorial Enterprise in Virginia City. He had left his home in Missouri in June of 1861 after a brief and unhappy experience in a Confederate irregular unit that called itself the Marion Rangers, and the opportunity to accompany his older brother, Orion Clemens, to Nevada, where Orion had just received an appointment as Secretary to the Territory, seemed to settle much of his confusion as to his loyalties. He left for the new gold rush territory with the usual high spirited determination to make his fortune in the Nevada mines, and except for occasional letters to his family in Missouri which were printed in a local newspaper he doesn't seem to have had any idea of becoming a writer. In the middle of the first page of a letter he sent to the family in May, 1862, was a fleck of gold, from the mine ". . .M. H. ledge", but aside from this and some over-optimistic flurriers of stock speculation he had little success, and for the first year they were in Nevada his brother regularly sent him money for his expenses. By the middle of the summer of 1862 he was discouraged enough to write to Orion, "My debts are far greater than I thought . . .for I owe about $45 or $50, and have got about $45 in my pocket. But how in the h--- I am going to live on something over $100 until October or November, is singular. The fact is, I must have something to do, and that shortly, too."[1] He thought for a time of writing as a correspondent for the larger paper, The Sacramento Union or The Carson City Age, or even for a paper a friend was

thinking of starting, writing to Orion, "I shall not refuse pay, either, although $4 or $5 a week could hardly be called extensive when you write by the "column", you know."[2]. Earlier in the year, however, he had written some humorous letters to the Enterprise under the name of "Josh", and on August 7 he wrote his brother that he had accepted a job with the paper for a salary of $25 a week.

When Mark Twain began his career as a writer he was only twenty-seven years old. In his book "Mark Twain of the Enterprise" H. N. Smith has described the life that Twain lived as a member of the Enterprise staff.

The atmosphere of the Enterprise office seems to have been like that of a fraternity house without a housemother. The youngsters who put out the paper (most of them were in their twenties; Joe Goodman, the editor-in chief, was twenty-four in 1862) inhabited a kind of bachelors' paradise. They played billiards and had passes to the theatres; they smoked cigars and drank a special "reporter's cobbler"; they received presents of "feet" in mines which they could sell for enough money to finance vacation in San Francisco. It was a way of life that Mark Twain enjoyed immensely for a time, despite the seamy side of things suggested by a reporter's notation of "a woman under the influence of liquor . . . perambulating C Street . . . shaking a thousand dollars in gold coin at the passer-by" or "a notorious courtezan, known as 'Buffalo' Joe' "lying in the street dead drunk, surrounded by a crowd of spectators, her fingers and breast" bedecked with diamonds."[3].

Throughout most of the fall months of 1862 Twain worked the difficult and tedious assignment of covering the Territorial Legislature with another reporter named Andrew Marsh. Together they wrote nearly four thousand words a day, an arduous writing apprenticeship. All of this reporting appeared under Twain's own name, Sam Clemens, and he soon felt that he was a successful reporter, in the conventional style of the day. But like many other young reporters, Twain felt himself to be somewhat of a humorist. The humorous writing in American newspapers of the mid-Nineteenth century was, by 1862, a full blown and lusty form of literary art. Much of it was bitterly satirical, much of it was windy burlesque, but all of it was funny. In style the writing ranged from drawled-out frontier stories, similar to the long anecdotes that filled the farm almanacs, to the sharp invective of political catcalling. Brilliant humorists like David Ross Locke, writing under the name Petroleum V. were rallying public opinion to the Union cause in the war that was raging in the eastern states. Twain had already tried his hand at humorous pieces in the "Josh" letters early in 1862, and on January 31, 1863, the Enterprise published a communication from "Mark Twain", the first piece to appear under the pseudonym that Sam Clemens was to make his own. The letter began,

Eds. Enterprise: I feel very much as if I had just awakened out of a long sleep. I attribute it to the fact that I have slept the greater part of the time for the last two days and nights. . .[4].

The most successful of these newspaper humorists was a young man of Twain's own age named Charles Farrer Browne, who wrote under the name Artemus Ward. The writings of Artemus Ward were so popular that Browne was probably the first American writer to support himself with humor. When he began lecturing early in the 1860's his lectures soon made him one of the most sought after entertainers in the Union States. In the spring of 1863 Artemus Ward set out for California, to give his lectures in San Francisco and the gold mining areas, intending to return overland through Utah and gather material for a series of new lectures by visiting the Mormon settlements in Utah. On December 18, 1863, he arrived in Virginia City, and immediately found himself at home in the offices of the Territorial Enterprise.

Although Twain has never mentioned any influence that Artemus Ward might have had on him - he described Bret Hart as the man ". . . who trimmed and trained and schooled me . . ." - it is almost certainly true that the days he spent with the first successful American humorist and comic lecturer were a strong encouragement to his own ambitions. Everyone seemed to enjoy Ward. He arrived with the intention of staying only a few days, but he stayed until the end of the month, making the newspaper offices his headquarters. H. N. Smith describes it as "a period of continuous celebration." Between Ward and Twain there seemed to be a genuine friendship. Both were young, both were sure of themselves and their future; although neither of them would have imagined that Twain was to become a great literary figure, or that Ward was to die of tuberculosis less than four years later, and both of them had a sense of humor.

Both Twain and Ward left typical accounts of their meetings. Twain chose to put his piece in the form of a frontier anecdote that describes his difficulties with both Ward and a whiskey cocktail.

"I had never seen him "Artemus Ward) before. He brought letters of introduction from mutual friends in San Francisco, and by invitation I breakfasted with him. It was almost religion, there in the silver mines, to precede such a meal with whiskey cocktails. Artemus, with the true cosmopolitan instinct, always deferred to the customs of the country he was in, and so he ordered three of those abominations. Hingston was present. I said I would rather not drink a whiskey cocktail. I said it would go right to my head, and confuse me so that I would be in a helpless tangle in ten minutes. I did not want to act like a lunatic before strangers. But Artemus gently insisted, and I drank the treasonable mixture under protest, and felt all the time that I was doing a thing I might be sorry for. In a minute or two I began to imagine that my ideas were clouded. I waited in great anxiety for the conversation to open, with a sort of vague hope that my understanding would prove clear, after all, and my misgivings groundless.

Artemus dropped an unimportant remark or two, and then assumed a look of superhuman earnestness, and made the following astounding speech. He said:

"Now there is one thing I ought to ask you about before I forget it. You have been here in Silverland - here in Nevada - two or three years, and, of course, your position on the daily press has made it necessary for you to go down in the mines and examine them carefully in detail, and therefore you know all about the silver-mining business. Now what I want to get at is -- is, well, the way the deposits of ore are made, you know. For instance. Now, as I understand it, the vein which contains the silver is sandwiched in between casings of granite, and runs along the ground, and sticks up like a curbstone. Well, take a vein forty feet thick, for example, or eighty, for that matter, or even a hundred -- say you go down on it with a shaft, straight down, you know, or with what you call 'incline' -- maybe you go down five hundred feet, or maybe you don't go down but two hundred -- anyway, you go down, and all the time this vein grows narrower, when the casings come nearer or approach each other, you may say -- that is, when they do approach, which, of course, they do not always do, particularly in cases where the nature of the formation is such that they stand apart wider than they otherwise would, and which geology has failed to account for, although everything in that science goes to prove that, all things being equal, it would if it did not, or would not certainly if it did, and then, of course, they are. Do not you think it is?"

I said to myself:

"Now I just knew how it would be -- that whiskey cocktail has done the business for me; I don't understand any more than a clam."

And then I said aloud:

"I -- I -- that is -- if you don't mind, would you -- would you say that over again? I ought --"

"Oh, certainly, certainly! You see I am very unfamiliar with the subject, and perhaps I don't present my case clearly, but I --"

"No, no -- no, no -- you state it plain enough, but that cocktail had muddled me a little. But I will -- no, I do understand for that matter; but I would get the hang of it all the better if you went over it again -- and I'll pay better attention this time."

He said, "Why, what I was after was this. . ." 5.

Ward goes on asking Twain completely nonsensical questions about the mining industry, increasing his embarrassment and confusion, until Twain hears somebody behind him roaring with laughter and realises that Ward has been "having him on." Ward's own piece does not mention Twain by name, but he probably meant it for the amusement of his Virginia City friends, and they would have appreciated the joke. Ward wrote:

"My arrival at Virginia City was signalised by the following incident: - I had no sooner achieved my room in the garret of the International Hotel than I was called upon by an intoxicated man, who said he was an editor. Knowing how rare it was for an Editor to be under the blighting influence of either spiritous or malt liquors, I received this statement doubtfully. But I said:

"What name?"

"Wait!" he said, and went out.

I heard him pacing unsteadily up and down the hall outside. In ten minutes he returned and said:

"Pepper!"

Pepper was indeed his name. He had been out to see if he could remember it; and he was so flushed with his success that he repeated it joyously several times, and then, with a short laugh he went away. . . " 6.

After giving his lecture "Babes in the Woods" in Virginia City and in neighboring mining camps, Ward left for Utah, writing to Twain,

I hope, some time, to see you and Kettle Belly Brown in New York. My grandmother - my sweet grandmother - she, thank God, is too far advanced in life to be affected by your hellish wiles. . . 7.

A month later, on January 27, 1864, Mark Twain gave his first humorous lecture for the benefit of the First Presbyterian Church of Carson, who charged the audience a dollar apiece for the occasion. In a letter to his family on March 18 he mentions,

I got my satisfaction out of it, though - a larger audience than Artemus had - . . . 8.

Although there are occasional writers who live within their own imagination, the major figures of American literature have been men like Twain, who were part of the larger expression of their time. Their writing not only reflects the manners, the attitudes, or the prejudices of their contemporaries, but it usually reflects the way other writers wrote about the same things. Someone like Twain is a reflection of the language and the styles of the writers before them and around them. The great writer expresses something larger than himself, and Twain was one of these writers, finding himself at home with the local speech and idiomatic styles - as represented by someone like Artemus Ward - of the still young and noisy nineteenth century America. If he had learned nothing else from Ward but the confidence in this vital American expression it would have been almost enough to give him a first firm step on his own literary career. That he did learn this much from Artemus Ward is obvious in his first acknowledged comic masterprice, the story - told in a popular humorous style - of "The Notorious Jumping Frog of Calaveras County". As the story is published today it begins,

In compliance with the request of a friend of mine, who wrote me from the East, I called on . . . 9.

As the young Mark Twain wrote - and published - it in 1865 his story begins,

Mr. A. Ward,

Dear Sir: - Well, I called on good-natured garrulous old Simon Wheeler . . . 10.

FOOTNOTES

1. Mark Twain of the Enterprise, edited by Henry Nash Smith, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957. Page 5.
2. Mark Twain, Business Man, edited by Samuel Charles Webster, Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1946. Page 69.
3. Mark Twain of the Enterprise, page 5.
4. Ibid, page 49.
5. The Writings of Mark Twain, New York: Harper Brothers, 1917. Volume 19, page 334.
6. The Complete Works of Charles F. Browne, better known as "Artemus Ward," London, Chatto and Windus, 1871. Page 357.
7. Mark Twain of the Enterprise, p. 129.
8. Ibid, p. 145.
9. The Complete Short Stories of Mark Twain, edited by Charles Neider, New York: Hanover House, 1957. p. 1.
10. The Writings of Mark Twain, p. 15.

A NOTE ON THE PERFORMER AND HIS PERFORMANCE

Mr. Will Geer is a noted actor of the stage, the films, and television, and his career has included not only numerous movie appearances as a western character actor, but seasons with the Stratford Theatre in America. He has chosen to perform these Twain readings much in the way that Twain delivered his own lectures. The shorter pieces have been kept nearly in their original form, but, as Twain did, Mr. Geer has made a long reading of HUCKLEBERRY FINN, taking his material from a number of chapters in the book. His condensation gives a delightful concentration to the sections, and he has carefully kept the spirit of Twain in the occasional places where he has added a transition or an introduction of his own.

SIDE I, Band 1: THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER 7'40"

Mr. Geer opens the reading with a pretended interview between Twain and a young newspaper reporter, talking a little about the last years of his life. The story, THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER, was one of Twain's last pieces and was published posthumously in 1915. It is one of his most sombre writings, and reflects the deepening bitterness and sense of futility that marked his last years. The section which Mr. Geer reads is the 9th section of this long story. The "Mysterious Stranger" who addresses the villagers is Satan. The text from which Mr. Geer performs is given below.

One day when our people were in such awful distress because the witch commission were afraid to proceed against the astrologer and Father Peter's household, or against any, indeed, but the poor and the friendless, they lost patience and took to witch-hunting on their own score, and began to chase a born lady who was known to have the habit of curing people by devilish arts, such as bathing them, washing them, and nourishing them instead of bleeding them and purging them through the ministrations of a barber-surgeon in the proper way. She came flying down, with the howling and cursing mob after her, and tried to take refuge in houses, but the doors were shut in her face. They chased her more than half an hour, we following to see it, and at last she was exhausted and fell, and they caught her. They dragged her to a tree and threw a rope over the limb, and began to make a noose in it, some holding her, meantime, and she crying and begging, and her young daughter looking on and weeping, but afraid to say or do anything.

They hanged the lady, and I threw a stone at her, although in my heart I was sorry for her; but all were throwing stones and each was watching his neighbor, and if I had not done as the others did it would have been noticed and spoken of. Satan burst out laughing.

All that were near by turned upon him, astonished and not pleased. It was an ill time to laugh, for his free and scoffing ways and his supernatural music had brought him under suspicion all over the town and turned many privately against him. The big blacksmith called attention to him now, raising his voice so that all should hear, and said:

"What are you laughing at? Answer! Moreover, please explain to the company why you threw no stone."

"Are you sure I did not throw a stone?"

"Yes. You needn't try to get out of it; I had my eye on you."

"And I -- I noticed you!" shouted two others.

"Three witnesses," said Satan: "Mueller, the blacksmith; Klein, the butcher's man; Pfeiffer, the weaver's journeyman. Three very ordinary liars. Are there any more?"

"Never mind whether there are others or not, and never mind about what you consider us -- three's enough to settle your matter for you. You'll prove that you threw a stone, or it shall go hard with you."

"That's so!" shouted the crowd, and surged up as closely as they could to the center of interest.

"And first you will answer that other question," cried the blacksmith, pleased with himself for being mouthpiece to the public and hero of the occasion. "What are you laughing at?"

Satan smiled and answered, pleasantly: "To see three cowards stoning a dying lady when they were so near death themselves."

You could see the superstitious crowd shrink and catch their breath, under the sudden shock. The blacksmith, with a show of bravado, said:

"Pooh! What do you know about it?"

"I? Everything. By profession I am a fortune-teller, and I read the hands of you three -- and some others -- when you lifted them to stone the woman. One of you will die to-morrow week; another of you will die to-night; the third has but five minutes to live -- and yonder is the clock!"

It made a sensation. The faces of the crowd blanched, and turned mechanically toward the clock. The butcher and the weaver seemed smitten with an illness, but the blacksmith braced up and said, with spirit:

"It is not long to wait for prediction number one. If it fails, young master, you will not live a whole minute after, I promise you that."

No one said anything; all watched the clock in a deep stillness which was impressive. When four and a half minutes were gone the blacksmith gave a sudden gasp and clapped his hands upon his heart, saying, "Give me breath! Give me room!" and began to sink down. The crowd surged back, no one offering to support him, and he fell lumbering to the ground and was dead. The people stared at him, then at Satan, then at one another; and their lips moved, but no words came. Then Satan said:

"Three saw that I threw no stone. Perhaps there are others; let them speak."

It struck a kind of panic into them, and, although no one answered him, many began to violently accuse one another, saying, "You said he didn't throw," and getting for reply, "It is a lie, and I will make you eat it!" And so in a moment they were in a raging and noisy turmoil, and beating and banging one another; and in the midst was the only indifferent one -- the dead lady hanging from her rope, her troubles forgotten, her spirit at peace.

So we walked away, and I was not at ease, but was saying to myself, "He told them he was laughing at them, but it was a lie -- he was laughing at me."

That made him laugh again, and he said, "Yes, I was laughing at you, because, in fear of what others might report about you, you stoned the woman when your heart revolted at the act -- but I was laughing at the others, too."

"Why?"

"Because their case was yours."

"How is that?"

"Well, there were sixty-eight people there, and sixty-two of them had no more desire to throw a stone than you had."

"Satan!"

"Oh, it's true. I know your race. It is made up of sheep. It is governed by minorities, seldom or never by majorities. It suppresses its feelings and its beliefs and follows the handful that makes the most noise. Sometimes the noisy handful is right, sometimes wrong; but no matter, the crowd follows it. The fast majority of the race, whether savage or civilized, are secretly kind-hearted and shrink from inflicting pain, but in the presence of the aggressive and pitiless minority they don't dare to assert themselves. Think of it! One kind-hearted creature spies upon another, and sees to it that he loyally helps in iniquities which revolt both of you. Speaking as an expert, I know that ninety-nine out of a hundred of your race were strongly against the killing of witches when that foolishness was first agitated by a handful of pious lunatics in the long ago. And I know that even to-day, after ages of transmitted prejudice and silly teaching, only one person in twenty puts any real heart into the harrying of a witch. And yet apparently everybody hates witches and wants them killed. Some day a handful will rise up on the other side and make the most noise -- perhaps even a single daring man with a big voice and a determined front will do it -- and in a week all the sheep will wheel and follow him, and witch-hunting will come to a sudden end.

"Monarchies, aristocracies, and religions are all based upon that large defect in your race -- the individuals distrust of his neighbor, and his desire, for safety's or comfort's sake, to stand well in his neighbor's eye. These institutions will always remain, and always flourish, and always oppress you, affront you, and degrade you, because you will always be and remain slaves of minorities. There was never a country where the majority of the people were in their secret hearts loyal to any of these institutions."

I did not like to hear our race called sheep, and said I did not think they were.

"Still, it is true, lamb," said Satan. "Look at you in war -- what mutton you are, and how

ridiculous!"

"In war? How?"

"There has never been a just one, never an honorable one -- on the part of the instigator of the war. I can see a million years ahead, and this rule will never change in so many as half a dozen instances. The loud little handful -- as usual --will shout for the war. The pulpit will -- warily and cautiously -- object -- at first; the great, big, dull bulk of the nation will rub its sleepy eyes and try to make out why there should be a war, and will say, earnestly and indignantly, "It is unjust and dishonorable, and there is no necessity for it." Then the handful will shout louder. A few fair men on the other side will argue and reason against the war with speech and pen, and at first will have a hearing and be applauded; but it will not last long; those others will outshout them, and presently the anti-war audiences will thin out and lose popularity. Before long you will see this curious thing: the speakers stoned from the platform, and free speech strangled by hordes of furious men who in their secret hearts are still at one with those stoned speakers -- as earlier -- but do not dare to say so. And now the whole nation -- pulpit and all -- will take up the war-cry, and shout itself hoarse, and mob any honest man who ventures to open his mouth; and presently such mouths will cease to open. Next the statesmen will invent cheap lies, putting the blame upon the nation that is attacked, and every man will be glad of those conscience-soothing falsities, and will diligently study them, and refuse to examine any refutations of them; and thus he will by and by convince himself that the war is just, and will thank God for the better sleep he enjoys after this process of grotesque self-deception."

. . . .

Satan was accustomed to say that our race lived a life of continuous and uninterrupted self-deception. It duped itself from cradle to grave with shams and delusions which it mistook for realities, and this made its entire life a sham. Of the score of fine qualities which it imagined it had, and was vain of, it really possessed hardly one. It regarded itself as gold, and was only brass. One day when he was in this vein he mentioned a detail --the sense of humor. I cheered up then, and took issue. I said we possessed it.

"There spoke the race!" he said; "always ready to claim what it hasn't got, and mistake its ounce of brass filings for a ton of gold-dust. You have a mongrel perception of humor, nothing more; a multitude of you possess that. This multitude see the comic side of a thousand low-grade and trivial things -- broad incongruities, mainly; grotesqueries, absurdities, evokers of the horse-laugh. The ten thousand high-grade comicalities which exist in the world are sealed from their dull vision. Will a day come when the race will detect the funniness of these juvenilities and laugh at them -- and by laughing at them destroy them? 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. Against the assault of laughter nothing can stand. You are always fussing and fighting with your other weapons. Do you ever use that one? No; you leave it lying rusting. As a race, do you ever use it at all? No; you lack sense and the courage."

. . . .

"And you are going away, and will not come back any more?"

"Yes," he said. "We have comraded long together and it has been pleasant -- pleasant for both; but I must go now, and we shall not see each other any more."

"In this life, Satan, but in another? We shall meet in another,surely?"

Then, all tranquilly and soberly, he made the strange answer, "There is no other."

A subtle influence blew upon my spirit from his, bringing with it a vague, dim, but blessed and hopeful feeling that the incredible words might be true -- even must be true.

"Have you never suspected this, Theodor?"

"No. How could I? But if it can only be true-"

"It is true."

A gust of thankfulness rose in my breast, but a doubt checked it before it could issue in words, and I said, "But - but - we have seen that future life - seen it in its actuality, and so --"

"It was a vision -- it had no existence."

I could hardly breathe for the great hope that was struggling in me. "A vision? - a vi --"

"Life itself is only a vision, a dream."

It was electrical. By God! I had had that very thought a thousand times in my musings!"

"Nothing exists; all is a dream. God - man - the world - the sun, the moon, the wilderness of stars - a dream, all a dream; they have no existence. Nothing exists save empty space -- and you!"

"I!"

"And you are not you -- you have no body, no blood, no bones, you are but a thought. I myself have no existence; I am but a dream -- your dream, creature of your imagination. In a moment you will have realized this, then you will banish me from your visions and I shall dis-solve into the nothingness out of which you made me . . . ."

SIDE I, Band 2: "MY LATE SENATORIAL SECRETARYSHIP" 4'

Political satire was one of the areas in which the humorous writers of the Nineteenth century were brilliantly successful. Beginning with the "Jack Downing" papers of Seba Smith, which attacked the administration of Andrew Jackson in the 1830's, to the comments of Mr. Dooley on Theodore Roosevelt in the 1890's there was a continuing commentary, most of it uncomplimentary, on the contemporary political scene. This piece of Twain's, written about 1867, uses the old humorous device of the ill-trained servant who doesn't know the fashionable untruths of political correspondence. The original text, from which Mr. Geer takes his performance, is given below.

I am not a private secretary to a senator any more now. I held the berth two months in security and in great cheerfulness of spirit, but my bread began to return from over the waters then -- that is to say, I judged it best to resign. The way of it was this. My employer sent for me one morning tolerably early, and, as soon as I had finished inserting some conundrums clandestinely into his last great speech upon finance, I entered the presence. There was something portentous in his appearance. His cravat was untied, his hair was in a state of disorder, and his countenance bore about it the signs of a suppressed storm. He held a package of letters in his tense grasp, and I knew that the dreaded Pacific mail was in. He said:

"I thought you were worthy of confidence."

I said, "Yes, sir."

He said, "I gave you a letter from certain of

my constituents in the State of Nevada, asking the establishment of a post-office at Baldwin's Ranch, and told you to answer it, as ingeniously as you could, with arguments which should persuade them that there was no real necessity for an office at that place."

I felt easier. "Oh, if that is all, sir, I did do that."

"Yes, you did. I will read your answer for your own humiliation:

Washington, Nov. 24

Messrs. Smith, Jones, and others.

Gentlemen: What the mischief do you suppose you want with a post-office at Baldwin's Ranch? It would not do you any good. If any letters came there, you couldn't read them, you know; and, besides, such letters as ought to pass through, with money in them, for other localities, would not be likely to get through, you must perceive at once; and that would make trouble for us all. No, don't bother about a post-office in your camp. I have your best interests at heart, and feel that it would only be an ornamental folly. What you want is a nice jail, you know -- a nice, substantial jail and a free school. These will be a lasting benefit to you. These will make you really contented and happy. I will move in the matter at once.

Very truly, etc.
MARK TWAIN,
For James W. N---, U.S. Senator.

"That is the way you answered that letter. Those people say they will hang me, if I ever enter that district again; and I am perfectly satisfied they will, too."

"Well, sir, I did not know I was doing any harm. I only wanted to convince them."

"Ah. Well, you did convince them, I make no manner of doubt. Now, here is another specimen. I gave you a petition from certain gentlemen of Nevada, praying that I would get a bill through Congress incorporating the Methodist Episcopal Church of the State of Nevada. I told you to say, in reply, that the creation of such a law came more properly within the province of the state legislature; and to endeavor to show them that, in the present feebleness of the religious element in that new commonwealth, the expediency of incorporating the church was questionable. What did you write?

Washington, Nov. 24.

Rev. John Halifax and others.

Gentlemen: You will have to go to the state legislature about that speculation of yours -- Congress don't know anything about religion. But don't you hurry to go there, either; because this thing you propose to do out in that new country isn't expedient -- in fact, it is ridiculous. Your religious people there are too feeble, in intellect, in morality, in piety -- in everything, pretty much. You had better drop this -- you can't make it work. You can't issue stock on an incorporation like that -- or, if you could, it would only keep you in trouble all the time. The other denominations would abuse it, and "bear" it, and "sell it short," and break it down. They would do with it just as they would with one of your silver-mines out there -- they would try to make all the world believe it was "wildcat." You ought not to do anything that is calculated to bring a sacred thing into disrepute. You ought to be ashamed of yourselves -- that is what I think about it. You close your petition with the words: "And we will ever pray." I think you had better-- you need to do it.

Very truly, etc.
MARK TWAIN,
For James W. N---, U.S. Senator.

"That luminous epistle finishes me with the religious element among my constituents. But that my political murder might be made sure, some evil instinct prompted me to hand you this memorial from the grave company of elders composing the board of aldermen of the city of San Francisco, to try your hand upon -- a memorial praying that the city's right to the water-lots upon the city front might be established by law of Congress. I told you this was a dangerous matter to move in. I told you to write a non-committal letter to the aldermen -- an ambiguous letter -- a letter that should avoid, as far as possible, all real consideration and discussion of the water-lot question. If there is any feeling left in you -- any shame -- surely this letter you wrote, in obedience to that order, ought to evoke it, when its words fall upon your ears:

Washington, Nov. 27.

The Honorable Board of Aldermen, etc.

Gentlemen: George Washington, the reverend Father of his country, is dead. His long and brilliant career is closed, alas! forever. He was greatly respected in this section of the country, and his untimely decease cast a gloom over the whole community. He died on the 14th day of December, 1799. He passed peacefully away from the scene of his honors and his great achievements, the most lamented hero and the best beloved that ever earth hath yielded unto Death. At such a time as this, you speak of water-lots! -- what a lot was his!

What is fame! Fame is an accident. Sir Isaac Newton discovered an apple falling to the ground -- a trivial discovery, truly, and one which a million men had made before him -- but his parents were influential, and so they tortured that small circumstance into something wonderful, and lo! the simple world took up the shout and, in almost the twinkling of an eye, that man was famous. Treasure these thoughts.

Poesy, sweet poesy, who shall estimate what the world owes to thee!

"Mary had a little lamb, its fleece was white as snow --

And everywhere that Mary went, the lamb was sure to go."

"Jack and Gill went up the hill
To draw a pail of water;
Jack fell down and broke his crown,
And Gill came tumbling after."

For simplicity, elegance of diction, and freedom from immoral tendencies, I regard those two poems in the light of gems. They are suited to all grades of intelligence, to every sphere of life -- to the field, to the nursery, to the guild. Especially should no Board of Aldermen be without them.

Venerable fossils! Write again. Nothing improves one so much as friendly correspondence. Write again -- and if there is anything in this memorial of yours that refers to anything in particular, do not be backward about explaining it. We shall always be happy to hear you chirp.

Very truly, etc.
MARK TWAIN,
For James W. N---, U.S. Senator.

"That is an atrocious, a ruinous epistle! Distraction!"

"Well, sir, I am really sorry if there is anything wrong about it -- but -- it appears to me to dodge the water-lot question."

. . . .

"Leave the house! Leave it forever and forever, too."

I regarded that as a sort of covert intimation that my service could be dispensed with, and so I resigned. I never will be a private secretary to a senator again. You can't please that kind of people. They don't know anything. They can't appreciate a party's efforts.

SIDE I, Band 3: CORNPONE OPINIONS 2'25"

Throughout his life Twain was actively interested in politics, and these late pieces, contributed to newspapers a few years before his death, show his determination to try to improve the standards of public trust.

This is an honest nation in private life. An American Christian is a straight and clean and honest man, and in his private commerce with his fellows, can be trusted to stand faithfully by the principles of honor and honesty imposed upon him by his religion. But the moment he comes forward to exercise a public trust, he can be confidently counted upon to betray that trust in nine cases out of ten if party loyalty should require it. If there are two tickets in the field in his city, one composed of honest men and the other of notorious blatherskites and criminals, he will not hesitate to lay his private Christian honor aside and vote for the blatherskites if his party honor shall exact it. His Christianity is of no use to him and has no influence upon him when he is acting in a public capacity. He has sound and sturdy private morals, but he has no public ones.

I have often wondered at the condition of things which set aside morality in politics and made possible the election of men whose unfitness is apparent. A mother will teach her boy at her knee to tell the truth, to be kind, to avoid all that is immoral. She will painstakingly guide his thoughts and actions so he may grow up possessed of all the manly virtues, and the father of that boy will, when it comes time for his son to cast his first vote, take him aside and advise him to vote for a bad man who is on the Democratic ticket because he has always adhered to Democratic principles. Could anything be more absurd?

Fifty years ago, when I was a boy of fifteen in Hannibal, Missouri, I had a friend, a slave, who daily preached sermons on the top of his master's wood pile with me for sole audience. One of his texts was this: "You tell me where a man gets his corn-pone, and I'll tell you what his opinions is."

The black philosopher's idea of a man was that man is not independent and can not afford views which might interfer with his bread and butter. He would prosper, he was trained with the majority. In matters of large moment, like politics and religion, he would think and feel like the bulk of his neighbors for supper damage and his social standing and in his business prosperities. He must restrict himself to cornpone opinions, at least on the surface. He must get his opinions from other people, he must reason out none for himself, he must have no first-hand views.

Those burglars that broke into my house recently are in jail. If they keep on, they will go to Congress. When a person starts downhill, you can never tell where he's going to stop.

SIDE I, Band 4: "HOW I EDITED AN AGRICULTURAL PAPER" 6'10"

This popular short piece of Twain's is an excellent example of his ability to write the kind of light humorous pieces that were popular in the newspapers and journals of the day. It was written about 1870, and some of its comments on the art of newspaper editing are still as pertinent today as they were ninety years ago. The original text is given below.

I did not take temporary editorship of an agricultural paper without misgivings. Neither would a landsman take command of a ship without misgivings. But I was in circumstances that made the salary an object. The regular editor of the paper was going off for a holiday, and I accepted the terms he offered, and took his place.

The sensation of being at work again was luxurious, and I wrought all the week with unflagging pleasure. We went to press, and I waited a day with some solicitude to see whether my effort was going to attract any notice. As I left the office, toward sundown, a group of men and boys at the foot of the stairs dispersed with one impulse, and gave me passageway; and I heard one or two of them say: "That's him!" I was naturally pleased by this incident. The next morning I found a similar group at the foot of the stairs, and scattering couples and individuals standing here and there in the street and over the way, watching me with interest. The group separated and fell back as I approached, and I heard a man say, "Look at his eye!" I pretended not to observe the notice I was attracting, but secretly I was pleased with it, and was purposing to write an account of it to my aunt. I went up the short flight of stairs, and heard cheery voices and a ringing laugh as I drew near the door, which I opened, and caught sight of two young rural-looking men, whose faces blanched and lengthened when they saw me, and then they both plunged through the window with a great crash. I was surprised.

In about half an hour an old gentleman, with a flowing beard and a fine but rather austere face, entered, and sat down at my invitation. He seemed to have something on his mind. He took off his hat and set it on the floor, and got out of it a red silk handkerchief and a copy of our paper.

He put the paper on his lap, and while he polished his spectacles with his handkerchief he said, "Are you the new editor?"

I said I was.

"Have you ever edited an agricultural paper before?"

"No," I said; "this is my first attempt."

"Very likely. Have you had any experience in agriculture practically?"

"No; I believe I have not."

"Some instinct told me so," said the old gentleman, putting on his spectacles, and looking over them at me with asperity, while he folded his paper into a convenient shape. "I wish to read you what must have made me have that instinct. It was this editorial. Listen, and see if it was you that wrote it:

'Turnips should never be pulled, it injures them. It is much better to send a boy up and let him shake the tree.'

"Now, what do you think of that? -- for I really suppose you wrote it?"

"Think of it? Why, I think it is good. I think it is sense. I have no doubt that every year millions and millions of bushels of turnips are spoiled in this township alone by being pulled in a half-ripe condition, when, if they had sent a boy up to shake the tree -- "

"Shake your grandmother! Turnips don't grow on trees!"

"Oh, they don't, don't they? Well, who said they did? The language was intended to be figurative, wholly figurative. Anybody that knows anything will know that I meant that the boy should shake the vine."

Then this old person got up and tore his paper all into small shreds, and stamped on them, and broke several things with his cane, and said I did not know as much as a cow; and then went out and banged the door after him, and, in short, acted in such a way that I fancied he was displeased about something. But not knowing what the trouble was, I could not be any help to him.

Pretty soon after this a long, cadaverous creature, with lanky locks hanging down to his shoulders, and a week's stubble bristling from the hills and valleys of his face, darted within the door, and halted, motionless, with finger on lip, and head and body bent in listening attitude. No sound was heard. Still he listened. No sound. Then he turned the key in the door, and came elaborately tiptoeing toward me till he was within long reaching distance of me, when he stopped and, after scanning my face with intense interest for a while, drew a folded copy of our paper from his bosom, and said:

"There, you wrote that. Read it to me -- quick! Relieve me. I suffer."

I read as follows; and as the sentences fell from my lips I could see the relief come, I could see the drawn muscles relax, and the anxiety go out of the face, and rest and peace steal over the features like the merciful moonlight over a desolate landscape:

'The guano is a fine bird, but great care is necessary in rearing it. It should not be imported earlier than June or later than September. In the winter it should be kept in a warm place, where it can hatch out its young.

It is evident that we are to have a backward season for grain. Therefore it will be well for the farmer to begin setting out his corn-stalks and planting his buckwheat cakes in July instead of August.

Concerning the pumpkin. This berry is a favorite with the natives of the interior of New England, who prefer it to the gooseberry for the making of fruit-cake, and who likewise give it the preference over the raspberry for feeding cows, as being more filling and fully as satisfying. The pumpkin is the only esculent of the orange family that will thrive in the North, excepting the gourd and one or two varieties of the squash. But the custom of planting it in the front yard with the shrubbery is fast going out of vogue, for it is now generally conceded that the pumpkin as a shade tree is a failure.

Now, as the warm weather approaches, and the ganders begin to spawn - - '

The excited listener sprang toward me to shake hands, and said:

"There - there - that will do. I know I am all right now, because you have read it just as I did, word for word. But, stranger, when I first read it this morning, I said to myself, I never, never believed it before, notwithstanding my friends kept me under watch so strict, but now I believe I <u>am</u> crazy; and with that I fetched a howl that you might have heard two miles, and started out to kill somebody -- because, you know, I knew it would come to that sooner or later, and so I might as well begin. I read one of them paragraphs over again, so as to be certain, and then I burned my house down and started. I have crippled several people, and have got one fellow up a tree, where I can get him if I want him. But I thought I would call in here as I passed along and make the thing perfectly certain; and now it <u>is</u> certain, and I tell you it is lucky for the chap that is in the tree. I should have killed him sure, as I went back. Good-by, sir, good-by; you have taken a great load off my mind. My reason has stood the strain of one of your agricultural articles, and I know that nothing can ever unseat it now. Good-by, sir."

I felt a little uncomfortable about the cripplings and arsons this person had been entertaining himself with, for I could not help feeling remotely accessory to them. But these thoughts were quickly banished, for the regular editor walked in! (I thought to myself, Now if you had gone to Egypt as I recommended you to, I might have had a chance to get my hand in; but you wouldn't do it, and here you are. I sort of expected you.)

The editor was looking sad and perplexed and dejected.

He surveyed the wreck which the old rioter and those two young farmers had made, and then said: "This is a sad business -- a very sad business. There is the mucilage-bottle broken, and six panes of glass, and a spittoon, and two candlesticks. But that is not the worst. The reputation of the paper is injured -- and permanently, I fear. True, there never was such a call for the paper before, and it never sold such a large edition or soared to such celebrity; -- but does one want to be famous for lunacy, and prosper upon the infirmities of his mind? My friend, as I am an honest man, the street out there is full of people, and others are roosting on the fences, waiting to get a glimpse of you, because they think you are crazy. And well they might after reading your editorials. They are a disgrace to journalism. Why, what put it into your head that you could edit a paper of this nature? You do not seem to know the first rudiments of agriculture. You speak of a furrow and a harrow as being the same thing; you talk of the moulting season for cows; and you recommend the domestication of the pole-cat on account of its playfulness and its excellence as a ratter! Your remark that clams will lie quiet if music be played to them was superfluous -- entirely superfluous. Nothing disturbs clams. Clams always lie quiet. Clams care nothing whatever about music. Ah, heavens and earth, friend! if you had made the acquiring of ignorance the study of your life, you could not have graduated with higher honor than you could to-day. I never saw anything like it. Your observation that the horse-chestnut as an article of commerce is steadily gaining in favor is simply calculated to destroy this journal. I want you to throw up your situation and go. I want no more holiday -- I could not enjoy it if I had it. Certainly not with you in my chair. I would always stand in dread of what you might be going to recommend next. It makes me lose all patience every time I think of your discussing oyster-beds under the title of "Landscape Gardening." I want you to go. Nothing on earth could persuade me to take another holiday. Oh! why didn't you tell me you didn't know anything about agriculture?"

"<u>Tell</u> you, you corn-stalk, you cabbage, you son of a cauliflower? It's the first time I ever heard such an unfeeling remark. I tell you I have been in the editorial business going on fourteen years, and it is the first time I ever heard of a man's having to know anything in order to edit a newspaper. You turnip! Who write the drama critiques for the second-rate papers? Why, a parcel of promoted shoemakers and apprentice apothecaries, who know just as much about good acting as I do about good farming and no more. Who review the books? People who never wrote one. Who do up the heavy leaders on finance? Parties who have had the largest opportunities for knowing nothing about it. Who criticize the Indian campaigns? Gentlemen who do not know a war-whoop from a wig-wam, and who never have had to run a foot-race

with a tomahawk, or pluck arrows out of the several members of their families to build the evening campfire with. Who write the temperance appeals, and clamor about the flowing bowl? Folks who will never draw another sober breath till they do it in the grave. Who edit the agricultural papers, you -- yam? Men,as a general thing, who fail in the poetry line, yellow-colored novel line, sensation-drama line, city-editor line, and finally fall back on agriculture as a temporary reprieve from the poorhouse. You try to tell me anything about the newspaper business! Sir, I have been through it from Alpha to Omaha, and I tell you that the less a man knows the bigger the noise he makes and the higher the salary he commands. Heaven knows if I had but been ignorant instead of cultivated and impudent instead of diffident, I could have made a name for myself in this cold, selfish world. I take my leave, sir. Since I have been treated as you have treated me, I am perfectly willing to go. But I have done my duty. I have fulfilled my contract as far as I was permitted to do it. I said I could make your paper of interest to all classes -- and I have. I said I could run your circulation up to twenty thousand copies, and if I had had two more weeks I'd have done it. And I'd have given you the best class of readers that ever an agricultural paper had -- not a farmer in it, nor a solitary individual who could tell a watermelon-tree from a peach-vine to save his life. You are the loser by this rupture, not me. Pie-plant. Adios."

I then left.

SIDE TWO

From "THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN"

HUCKLEBERRY FINN was projected by Twain as early as 1876, and was intended as a sequel to the very successful ADVENTURES OF TOM SAWYER. Unlike the usual sequel, however, the second book carried its theme to even greater heights than had the first, and HUCKLEBERRY FINN is usually regarded as Twain's masterpiece. Nearly eight years passed between the first sketches of HUCKLEBERRY FINN and its final publication, and during this period Twain was able to relive a little of his own boyhood on the Mississippi. In 1882, with a stenographer, he took an extended excursion on the river, and in 1883 published his well known "LIFE ON THE MISSISSIPPI". The next year, 1884, HUCKLEBERRY FINN was published. The only serious critical disagreement over the book is concerned with its strongest qualities. Some writers feel that it is a masterpiece because of the sustained romance in Twain's presentation of Huck's dreamy voyage down the great river. Others feel that it is primarily a masterpiece for the colorful panorama of life on the Mississippi that the book contains. There is considerable justification for either point of view. Twain was in his late forties when he took his Mississippi excursion, and the trip seemed to not only to give him a renewed interest in the river and the people living along it, but to give him a feeling of sentimentality for his own boyhood. HUCKLEBERRY FINN is filled with both the colorful excitement of the river life, and Huck Finn's growth to sensitive maturity.

Mr. Geer has adapted sections of the novel for his performance and the transcription below is from his own adaptation. He begins roughly at Chapter 5 in the original text. The second section is largely taken from Chapter 11, and the third from Chapters 19, 20, and 21.

SIDE II, Band 1: HUCK AND JIM RUN AWAY 4'45"

"Oh hello, Huckleberry!

"Hello yourself."

"What's that you got there?"

"A dead cat."

"What's a dead cat good for?"

"To cure warts with, you ninny."

"You, Huck, come here."

"Hello, pap."

"You think you're a good deal of a big-bug, don't you?

"Maybe I am, maybe I ain't."

"Don't you give me none o' your lip. You've put on considerable many frills since I been away. You're educated, too, they say -- can read and write. You think you're better'n your father, now, don't you, because he can't? I'll take it out of you. Who told you you might meddle with such hifalut'n foolishness, hey? -- who told you?"

"The widow."

"The widow, hey? -- and who told the widow she could put her shovel about a thing that ain't none of her business?"

"Nobody never told her."

"Well, I'll learn her how to meddle. And looky here -- you drop that school, you hear? Your mother couldn't read, and she couldn't write nuther, before she died. I can't; and here you're a-swelling yourself up like this. I ain't the man to stand it -- you hear? Say, lemme hear you read."

"George Washington was born on February 22, 1732 in Virginia. If his father had lived he might have had the opportunity to complete his education ..."

"Ugh! It's so. You can do it. I had my doubts when you told me. Now looky here; if I catch you about that school I'll tan you good. First thing you know you'll get religion, too. I never see such a son.Why, there ain't no end to your airs -- they say you're rich. Hey? -- how's that?Now don't gimme no sass. I heard about you being rich. You and Tom Sawyer. I heard about it down the river, too. That's why I come. You git me that money.

"I hain't got no money."

"It's a lie. Judge Thatcher's got it. You call this a govment! Just look at it and see what it's like. Here's the law a-standing ready to take a man's son away from him -- a man's own son, which he has had all the trouble and all the anxiety and all the expense of raising. Yes, just as that man has got that son raised at last, and ready to go to work and begin to do suthin' for him and give him a rest, the law up and goes for him. And they call that govment! A man can't get his rights in a govment like this. Sometimes I've a mighty notion to just leave this country for good and all. For two cents I'd leave the blamed country. Say, how much you got in your pocket? I want it."

"I hain't got only a dollar, and I want that to -- "

"It don't make no difference what you want it for -- you just shell it out."

Well, pap took it and bit it to see if it was good, and left to get some whiskey; said he hadn't had a drink all day. After a few days of him laying around drunk with delirium tremens and chasing me around with a knife, I got up and killed me a pig,and I smeared the blood around good to make everybody think I was murdered and I took off for Jackson's Island with a runaway slave named Jim. And we holed up on a raft.

"In that great gettin' up day morning, fare ye well, fare ye well, There's a better day a-comin', fare ye well, fare ye well."

"This is nice. I don't want to be nowhere else but here on this raft. It's so peaceful on a raft. Kings and dukes and emperors couldn't have any finer."

"How much do kings get?

"Why, they get a thousand dollars a month if they want it; everything belongs to them."

"Ain' dat gay? En what dey got to do, Huck?"

"They don't do nothing! They just set around."

"No; is dat so?"

"Course maybe when there's a war, but otherwise they just lazy around. They go hawking, they call each other Your Majesty and Your Grace and Your Lordship and such, and when things is dull they fuss with the Parliament and they whack their heads off. Course that French King, Louis the Sixteenth, got his head cut off; left a little boy called the Dauphin, who would have been King, but they took and shut him up and some say he died there."

"Poor little chap."

"Some says he got away and come to America."

"That's good. But he'd be pretty lonesome. There ain't no Kings here in America, is there,Huck?"

"No."

"Then he can't get no situation; what's he going to do?"

"I don't know. Some of them gets on the police, and some of them learns people how to talk French."

"Why, Huck, doan' de French people talk de same way we does?"

"No, Jim; you couldn't understand a word they said."

"Well, now, I be ding-busted! How do dat come?"

"I don't know; but it's so. I got some of their jabber out of a book. S'pose a man was to come to you and say Polly-voo-franzy -- what would you think?"

"I wouldn' think nuffin; I'd take en bust him over de head. I wouldn't 'low no one to call me dat."

"Shucks, it ain't calling you anything. It's only saying, do you know how to talk French?"

"Well, den, why couldn't he say it?"

"Why, he is a-saying it. That's a Frenchman's way of saying it."

"Well, it's a blame ridicklous way, en I doan' want to hear no mo' 'bout it. Dey ain' no sense in it."

"Looky here, Jim; does a cat talk like we do?"

"No, a cat can't."

"Well, does a cow?"

"No, a cow don't nuther."

"Does a cat talk like a cow, or a cow like a cat?"

"No, dey don't."

"And ain't it natural and right for a cat and a cow to talk different from us?"

"Why, mos' sholy it is."

"Well, then, why ain't it natural and right for a Frenchman to talk different from us? You answer me that."

"Is a cat a man, Huck?"

"No."

"Well, den, dey ain't no sense in a cat talkin' like a man. Is a cow a man? -- er is a cow a cat?"

"No, she ain't."

"Well, den, she ain't got no business to talk like either one er the yuther of 'em. Is a Frenchman a man?"

"Yes."

"Well, den! Dad blame it, why doan't he talk like a man!"

BAND 2. HUCK DRESSES LIKE A GIRL.

BOOM! BOOM!

"They're dynamiting the river for my body. Jim, I'm goin' to slip over to that riverboat house and find out what's goin' on."

"Well, you'll have to look sharp, even if it's dark. Why don't you put on some of these old things and dress up like a girl? Nobody would know you. You get into this calico dress. Heh, heh, you don't walk like no girl. You quit pulling up your dress to get at your briches and don't splash water on yourself while you're paddling over. Ha, ha, ha, ha."

The light comes up over the shack at Judith Loftus. Sittin' knittin', and the table with two chairs. Judith Loftus is one of my favorite characters. One of my favorite women in all the books I ever wrote. Humph, Judith Loftus.

"Come in. My land, take a chair. What might your name be?"

"Sarah Williams."

"Where do you live?"

"Seven miles below. I've walked all the way and I'm tired out."

"Hungry, too, I bet. You better stay here, honey, and take off your bonnet."

"No, I'll rest awhile and go on. I ain't afraid of the dark."

"Now, you ain't goin' out there in the dark by yourself with the murderer of the little boy loose along the river."

"Who done it? Why have they found out who killed Huck Finn?"

"Some think old man Finn done it himself, and some think a runaway slave named Jim done it."

"Why he -- ugh!"

"There's a reward for him -- three hundred dollars. And there's a reward for old man Finn, too -- two hundred dollars, and I seen smoke over there at Jackson Island and the murderer may be hiding over there. My husband's up river, but soon as he gets back, we're going over to see. An huh, that's right, honey; you go right ahead with that needle and thread. There's a great big tear in your skirt. You just sew it up while you're restin'."

"Is your husband goin' over there tonight?"

"After midnight. What did you say your name was, Honey?"

"M-M-Mary Williams."

"Honey, I thought you said it was Sarah when you first came in."

"Oh yes, mam, I did. Sarah Mary Williams. Some calls me Sarah, some calls me Mary."

"Oh, that's the way of it?"

"Yes'm."

"Now you look out for the rats around here, honey. This is an old river house, and they're all around the floors. There's one right now. Now honey, you better take this lump of lead ready to throw at him. Now hold it in your lap. Heh, heh. Look out, here's a rat now! Heh, heh. Come now, what's your real name?"

"Wh-hat, mum?"

"What's your real name? Is it Bill, or Tom, or Bob? -- or what is it?"

"Please to don't poke fun at a poor girl like me, mum. If I'm in the way here, I'll --

"Eh, eh, no, you won't. Set down and stay where you are. I ain't going to tell on you, neither. You're a run-away apprentice, that's all. Bless you, child, I won't tell on you."

"I'd better be goin', mam."

"Hold on, I'll put you up a snack. You're from the country, you say. When a cow's laying down, which end of her gets up first? Answer up prompt now -- don't stop to study over it. Which

end gets up first?"
"The hind end, mum."
"Well then, a horse?"
"The for-rard end, mum."
"Which side of a tree does the moss grow on?"
"North side."
"How many toes does a chicken have?"
"Four, mum."
"Are cow's horns above or below its ears? Oh, go along, I reckon you have lived in the country. I thought maybe you was trying to hocus pocus me again. What's your real name, now?"
"George Peters, mum."
"Well, try to remember it, George. Don't forget and tell me it's Elexander before you go, and then get out by saying it's George Elexander when I catch you. And don't go about in that old calico. You do a girl tolerable poor, but you might fool men, maybe. And bless you, child, when you set out to thread a needle, hold the needle still and poke the thread at it; that's the way a woman does it, and a man always does it the other way. And when you throw at a rat or anything, hitch yourself up a-tiptoe and fetch your hand up over your head as awkward as you can, and miss your rat about six or seven feet. And mind you, when a girl tries to catch anything in her lap, she throws her knees apart; she don't clap them together, the way you did when you catched the lump of lead. Ah ha, why I spotted you for a boy when you was threading the needle and I contrived the other things to make certain. Now you trot along, Sarah Mary Williams George Elexander Peters, all whatever, and if you get in trouble, send word to Mrs. Judith Loftus, which is me, and I'll do what I can to get you out of it. Take the river road -- and next time, take some shoes and sox with you. You're a boy, all right. You won't even let me kiss ya. Ha, ha, oh I'll bake a cherry pie, Billy Boy, Billy Boy, oh I'll bake a cherry pie, Billy Boy."

Band 3. <u>THE DUKE AND THE DAUPHIN COME ABOARD</u>

"Jim, Jim, get up and stir yourself. They've spotted our campfire smoke and will be after us. Cut the raft loose."
"But Huck, we'll float South. That's slave country."
"No place as safe as a raft. Shush, I hear dogs barkin'."
"They're after us! This way, fella, over here by the cat-tails."
"There's a raft in here, and somebody on it."
"Gentlemen!! Help, give us a hand! Let us get aboard. They're chasing us. Thanks. Pole away. Pole the raft away."
"Thank you, gentlemen, for saving our lives. They was a-chasing us."
"We hadn't done anything."
"They was a-chasing us, men and dogs."
"I think we lost 'em now. Well, there ain't nobody here but a Negro and a boy."
"Well, darn if it ain't so."
"What's your name?"
"Huckleberry."
"And yours?"
"Jim."
"What are you doin' floatin' down the river this way, in the dead of night? You're a runaway slave, ain't ya?"
"Who, Jim? Why would a slave float South? My father died and didn't leave nothin' but four dollars and this raft and Jim here. We're headin' down to New Orleans to see my uncle."
"Well ain't that too bad. Well, fella, what got you into trouble?"

"Well, I'd been selling an article to take the tartar off the teeth -- and it does take it off, too, and generly the enamel along with it -- seems like I stayed in town about one night longer than I ought to, and then that's when I ran across you in such a hurry. That's the whole story -- what's yours?"
"Well, I've been conducting a little act down the river called a Royal Nonesuch, which is mostly me, without no clothes on, stripes painted around, and yokels got real enjoyment watching me caper around the stage in my nakedness with my white whiskers; when I took to conducting a temperance revival in that last town. Was getting along real fine, givin' them rummies plenty of hell, collectin' as much as five dollars a night at ten cents a head, and word got around that I was keepin' a private jug on the sly. This mornin' a feller roused me out of bed and said some roughs was planning to run me out of town on a rail,and maybe apply a little tar and feathers. I didn't wait for no breakfast. What did you say your line was?"
"Well, I do a little in patent medicines; theatre-acting -- tragedy, you know; take a turn in mesmerism and phrenology when there's a chance; phrenology -- the science of bumps. I also teach a little singing -- geography, most anything that comes handy, just so it ain't work. What did you say your line was?"
"Well, like I say, play acting, comedy and tragedy, and I tell a pretty good fortune, if somebody gives me a few facts ahead of time. And I've done considerable doctoring in my time, layin' on my hands is one of my best hopes; curing cancer and paralysis and such; camp-meetin's, revivals, missionaryin' around. That's about all."
"Won't you fellows make yourself comfortable?"
"We'll try. What you fellows got to sleep on?"
"Cornshuck beds."
"No apologies are necessary, I guess. Have to make 'em do."
"Alas!"
"What are you alassin' about?"
"To think that I should have lived to be degraded down in such company."
"Dern your skin, ain't the company good enough for you here?"
"Yes, it's good enough; it's as good as I deserve; no matter, I deserve it all. Let the cold world do its worst; one thing I know -- there's a grave for me somewhere. Some day I'll lie down in it and forget it all. Maybe then my poor broken heart will be at rest."
"Drat your poor broken heart. What you heaving your poor broken heart at us for? We ain't done nothin'."
"I'm not blamin' you, I brought myself down."
"Where was you brought down from?"
"No matter. You wouldn't believe me. The world never believes. Just let it pass -- the secret of my birth."
"The secret of your birth? You mean --"
"Gentlemen, I will reveal it to you, for I feel I may have confidence in you. You see, by rights I am a duke!"
"Na, you don't mean it."
"Yes, it's true. My great-grandfather, the eldest son of the Duke of Bridgewater, fled to this country at the turn of the century to breathe the pure air of freedom; he married and died here, leaving an infant son. I, sir, am the lineal descendant of that tiny enfant, but the second son of the late Duke usurped the titles and estates -- and here I am, the rightful Duke of Bridgewater, lost in the wilderness, torn from my estate, hunted of men, despised, ragged, worn, heartbroken, and now de-

graded down to the companionship of felons on a raft!"

"Don't cry, Mr. Duke. Is there anything we can do?"

"No, not really. Just call me "Your Grace" and bow down when you speak to me."

"Yes, your Grace."

"And wait on me for dinner and get me whatever I may need."

"Yes, your Grace."

"Heh, heh, heh, looky here, Bilgewater or what ever. I'm nation sorry for you, but you ain't the only person that's had troubles like that."

"No?"

"You ain't the only person that's been snaked down wrongfully out'n a high place."

"Alas!"

"You ain't the only person that's had a secret of his birth."

"What do you mean?"

"Bilgewater, kin I trust you?"

"To the bitter death. You may speak."

"Bilgewater, I am the late Dauphin!"

"You're what?"

"Yes, my friend, it is too true -- your eyes is lookin' at this very moment on the pore disappeared Dauphin, Looy the Seventeenth, son of Looy the Sixteenth and Marry Antonette."

"You! At your age! You must be the late Charlemagne; you must be six or seven hundred years old."

"Trouble has done it, Bilgewater. Trouble has brung these gray hairs and this premature balditude. Yes, gentlemen, you see before you in misery, the wanderin', exiled trampled-on, and sufferin' rightful King of France."

"We're sorry. If there's something we can do for you and make you feel better. . ."

"It's too late for that. But I have noticed it makes me feel easier if people treat me according to my rights and get down on one knee to speak to me and call me "Your Majesty" and wait on me first at meals, and don't set down in my presence till I ask you to."

"Yes, your Majesty."

"You may sit down now."

"Ah, your great-grandfather Duke and all the other Dukes of Bilgewater was a good deal thought of by my father and Marry Antonette. They was allowed to come to the palace considerable."

"Cheer up, it ain't my fault I wasn't born a Duke, and it ain't your fault you weren't born a King."

"No, it ain't."

"Like as not we got to be together a blamed long time in this raft in the wilderness, so what's the of bein' so sour."

"Give me your hand, Duke, and let's be friends. And these two here will do their best to make up to us for all we've suffered."

"Make the best of things as you find them is my motto. Anyway, when this raft hits the first big river town we'll hire a hall and trod the boards in the histrionic muse. We'll do the sword scene from Richard the Second, the balcony scene from Romeo and Juliet. I'm used to playin' Romeo, and we'll get you up in the words of Juliet . . ."

"Ah heh, hold on there. Juliet's just a young gal, no more'n fourteen or so. My whiskers is goin' to look uncommon odd on her."

"Country Jakes along the river won't even think of that. You'll be in costume, that'll make all the difference in the world. Juliet's on the balcony, before she goes to bed, drinkin' up the moonlight, in her nightgown and cap. 'But soft, what light through yonder window breaks? It is the East, and Juliet is the sun. She how she leans her cheek upon her hand. Oh, that I were a glove on that hand.'"

"My, my."

"'She speaks, oh speak again, bright angel.'"

"Romeo, Romeo. . ."

"Don't bellow it at me like a bull. Say it soft and languishin' and sick, so."

"Romeo. . ."

"That's the idea. Your Juliet's a sweet child of a girl, you know. She don't bray like a jackass."

"What could be sweeter than this lily hand? Out, damned spot. All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this hand. A rose by any other name would smell so sweet. Adieu, adieu, adieu. . ."

"Well, sounds like a first-class show. Kind of short, though. We'll have to add a little more to it. Have to have somethin' to answer the encores with."

"What encores?"

"Well, you have to answer by doing the Highland fling or the sailor's hornpipe or somethin' to do . 'Blow the man down, Billy, blow the man down.'"

"How about this one? 'What shall we do with a drunken sailor, what shall we do with a drunken sailor, what shall we do with a drunken sailor early in the mornin'. Pull out the scubboards and wet him all over, pull out the scubboards and wet him all over, pull out the scubboards and wet him all over early in the mornin'. Hi hi up tiddy rye, hi hi up tiddy rye, hi hi up tiddy rye' . ."

"Look out, we're tippin' the raft. That's pretty good for royalty . We ought to end our proceedings in a somewhat dignified manner. I got it, I could do Hamlet's soliloquy."

"Hamlet's which?"

"Soliloquy. The most celebrated thing in Shakespeare. It's sublime. Always fetches the house down. I haven't got the prompt book, but I reckon I could piece it out from memory. I'll see if I can call it back from recollection's vaults. Hamlet's soliloquy --

To be, or not to be; that is the bare bodkin
That makes calamity of so long life;
For who would fardels bear, till Birnam Wood
do come to Dunsinane,
But that the fear of something after death
Murders our innocent sleep,
Great nature's second course,
And makes us rather sling the arrows of
outrageous fortune
Than fly to others that we know not of.
That's the respect must give us pause:
Wake Duncan with thy knocking! Knock, knock,
I wish thou couldst;
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
In the dead waste and middle of the night, when
churchyards yawn
In customary suits of solemn black,
But that the undiscovered country from whose
bourne no traveler returns,
Breathes forth contagion on the world,
And thus the native hue or resolution, like the
poor cat i' the adage,
Is sicklied o'er with care,
And lose the name of action.
But soft you, the fair Ophelia:
Open not thy ponderous and marble jaws,
But get thee to a nunnery -- go, go!

"I'll bill myself as Edmund Kean the Elder from Drury Lane. You can be David Garrick the Younger from Pudding Lane. Now we best practise the sword fight from Richard the Second."

"Look out, look out there, the raft's tippin'."