



As an old man, Mark Twain visited his boyhood home in Hannibal, Mo., where he first saw the Mississippi steamboats he later piloted and wrote about, preferably lying in bed.

Huck Finn's house in Hannibal. Twain shared fame with his wife and daughter.

# MARK TWAIN LIVES ON

Fifty years ago, America lost its greatest humorist, but his writings will endure always, as you'll see in this sampling of

**T**HERE ARE COUNTLESS wonderful quotations in the works of Mark Twain, sometimes serious, sometimes funny, and often a heavenly mixture of both. Everyone knows this, and everyone has his favorites. I have selected a number that have particularly refreshed me, or have made me pause and think; most of them have made me grin, and some have made me guffaw. It is remarkable what a store of wisdom and humor this one man had in him, and what a marvelously fresh sense of the English language he retained until the very day of his death 50 years ago, on April 21, 1910.

## On Himself

"The proverb says that Providence protects children and idiots. This is really true. I know it because I have tested it."

"In my early manhood and in middle life, I used to vex myself with reforms every now and then. And I never had occasion to regret these divergencies for, whether the resulting deprivations were long or short, the rewarding pleasure which I got out of the vice when I returned to it always paid me for all that it cost."

"I thoroughly disapprove of duels. I consider them unwise, and I know they are dangerous. Also, sinful. If a man should challenge me now I would go to that man and take him kindly and forgivingly by the hand and lead him to a quiet retired spot and kill him."

"Yes, take it all around, there is quite a good deal of information in the book. I regret this very much; but really it could not be helped: information appears to stew out of me naturally, like the precious otter of roses out of the otter. Sometimes it has seemed to me that I would give worlds if I could retain my facts; but it cannot be. The more I calk up the sources, and the tighter I get, the more I leak wisdom."

## On the Nature of Man

"I believe that our Heavenly Father invented man because he was disappointed in the monkey. I believe that whenever a human being, of even

the highest intelligence and culture, delivers an opinion upon a matter apart from his particular and especial line of interest, training, and experience, it will always be an opinion of so foolish and so valueless a sort that it can be depended upon to suggest to our Heavenly Father that the human being is another disappointment and that he is no considerable improvement upon the monkey."

"If I had the remaking of man, he wouldn't have any conscience. It is one of the most disagreeable things connected with a person; and although it certainly does a great deal of good, it cannot be said to pay, in the long run; it would be much better to have less good and more comfort. Still, this is only my opinion, and I am only one man; others, with less experience, may think differently. They have a right to their view. I only stand to this: I have noticed my conscience for many years, and I know it is more trouble and bother to me than anything else I started with."

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

"Adam was but human—this explains it all. He did not want the apple for the apple's sake, he wanted it only because it was forbidden. The mistake was in not forbidding the serpent; then he would have eaten the serpent."

"Everything human is pathetic. The secret source of humor itself is not joy but sorrow. There is no humor in heaven."

"Man is the only animal that blushes. Or needs to."

## On Vice and Virtue

"Once there was a good little boy by the name of Jacob Blivens. He always obeyed his parents, no matter how absurd and unreasonable their demands were; and he always learned his book, and never was late at Sabbath school. He would not play hookey, even when his sober judgment told him it was the most profitable thing he could

do. None of the other boys could ever make that boy out, he acted so strangely."

"Nothing so needs reforming as other people's habits."

"To be good is noble; but to show others how to be good is nobler and no trouble."

"Few things are harder to put up with than the annoyance of a good example."

"It seems a pity that the world should throw away so many good things merely because they are unwholesome. I doubt if God has given us any refreshment which, taken in moderation, is unwholesome, except microbes. Yet there are people who strictly deprive themselves of each and every eatable, drinkable, and smokable which has in any way acquired a shady reputation. They pay this price for health. And health is all they get for it. How strange it is! It is like paying out your whole fortune for a cow that has gone dry."

## On Politics and Government

"An earthly despotism would be the absolutely perfect earthly government, if the conditions were the same, namely, the despot the perfectest individual of the human race, and his lease of life perpetual. But as a perishable perfect man must die and leave his despotism in the hands of an imperfect successor, an earthly despotism is not merely a bad form of government, it is the worst form that is possible."

"It is by the goodness of God that in our country we have those three unspeakably precious things: freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and the prudence never to practice either of them."

"It could probably be shown by figures that there is no distinctly native American criminal class except Congress."

"In statesmanship, get the formalities right, never mind about the moralities."

# ON

his wit and wisdom

By CHARLES NEIDER

Editor of "The Autobiography of Mark Twain"

Charles Neider, who made these selections for Family Weekly, is a novelist and Mark Twain authority. He compiled and edited Twain's autobiographical writings for the recently published Harper & Brothers book, "The Autobiography of Mark Twain." His latest novel, "The Authentic Death of Hendry Jones," is from the same publisher.

"A man is a man, at bottom. Whole ages of abuse and oppression cannot crush the manhood clear out of him. Whoever thinks it a mistake is himself mistaken. Yes, there is plenty good enough material for a republic in the most degraded people that ever existed—even the Russians; plenty of manhood in them—even in the Germans—if one could but force it out of its timid and suspicious privacy, to overthrow and trample in the mud any throne that ever was set up and any nobility that ever supported it."

## On Nature

"We know all about the habits of the ant, we know all about the habits of the bee, but we know nothing at all about the habits of the oyster. It seems almost certain that we have been choosing the wrong time for studying the oyster."

"Training is everything. The peach was once a bitter almond; cauliflower is nothing but cabbage with a college education."

"One of the striking differences between a cat and a lie is that a cat has only nine lives."

"Consider well the proportions of things. It is better to be a young June-bug than an old bird of paradise."

## Observations and Advice

"It takes your enemy and your friend, working together, to hurt you to the heart; the one to slander you and the other to get the news to you."

"Noise proves nothing. Often a hen who has merely laid an egg cackles as if she had laid an asteroid."

"It were not best that we should all think alike; it is difference of opinion that makes horse-races."

"Wrinkles should merely indicate where smiles have been."

"There are two times in a man's life when he should not speculate: when he can't afford it, and when he can."

"When angry, count four; when very angry, swear."

"Even popularity can be overdone. In Rome, at first you are full of regrets that Michelangelo died; but by and by you only regret that you didn't see him do it."

"My father was a St. Bernard, my mother was a collie, but I am a Presbyterian."

"She was not quite what you would call refined. She was not quite what you would call unrefined. She was the kind of person that keeps a parrot."



(The above quotations are from the following works of Mark Twain: "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court," "Pudd'nhead Wilson," "Following the Equator," and "Roughing It"; also, "The Complete Short Stories of Mark Twain" and "The Autobiography of Mark Twain"; all copyright by Harper & Brothers. Photos courtesy NBC's "Life and Times of Mark Twain.")



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