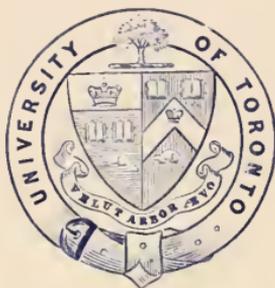


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EARLY PORTRAITS, 1853-1868

1869

# THE INNOCENTS ABROAD

OR

## THE NEW PILGRIMS' PROGRESS

BEING SOME ACCOUNT OF THE STEAMSHIP QUAKER CITY'S  
PLEASURE EXCURSION TO EUROPE AND THE HOLY LAND

BY MARK TWAIN  
(Samuel L. Clemens)

IN TWO VOLUMES  
VOL. I



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1300  
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TO my most patient reader and most charitable  
critic, my aged Mother, this volume is  
affectionately inscribed.



# BIOGRAPHICAL CRITICISM

By BRANDER MATTHEWS

*Professor of Literature in Columbia University*

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IT is a common delusion of those who discuss contemporary literature that there is such an entity as the "reading public," possessed of a certain uniformity of taste. There is not one public; there are many publics,—as many in fact as there are different kinds of taste; and the extent of an author's popularity is in proportion to the number of these separate publics he may chance to please. Scott, for example, appealed not only to those who relished romance and enjoyed excitement, but also to those who appreciated his honest portrayal of sturdy characters. Thackeray is preferred by ambitious youth who are insidiously flattered by his tacit compliments to their knowledge of the world, by the disenchanted who cannot help seeing the petty meannesses of society, and by the less sophisticated in whom sentiment

has not gone to seed in sentimentality. Dickens in his own day bid for the approval of those who liked broad caricature (and were therefore pleased with Stiggins and Chadband), of those who fed greedily on plentiful pathos (and were therefore delighted with the deathbeds of Smike and Paul Dombey and Little Nell) and also of those who asked for unexpected adventure (and were therefore glad to disentangle the melodramatic intrigues of Ralph Nickleby).

In like manner the American author who has chosen to call himself Mark Twain has attained to an immense popularity because the qualities he possesses in a high degree appeal to so many and so widely varied publics,— first of all, no doubt, to the public that revels in hearty and robust fun, but also to the public which is glad to be swept along by the full current of adventure, which is sincerely touched by manly pathos, which is satisfied by vigorous and exact portrayal of character, and which respects shrewdness and wisdom and sanity and a healthy hatred of pretense and affectation and sham. Perhaps no one book of Mark Twain's — with the possible exception of 'Huckleberry Finn' — is equally a favorite with all his readers; and perhaps some of his best characteristics are absent from his earlier

books or but doubtfully latent in them. Mark Twain is many-sided; and he has ripened in knowledge and in power since he first attracted attention as a wild Western funny man. As he has grown older he has reflected more; he has both broadened and deepened. The writer of "comic copy" for a mining-camp newspaper has developed into a liberal humorist, handling life seriously and making his readers think as he makes them laugh, until to-day Mark Twain has perhaps the largest audience of any author now using the English language. To trace the stages of this evolution and to count the steps whereby the sage-brush reporter has risen to the rank of a writer of world-wide celebrity, is as interesting as it is instructive.

## I.

Samuel Langhorne Clemens was born November 30, 1835, at Florida, Missouri. His father was a merchant who had come from Tennessee and who removed soon after his son's birth to Hannibal, a little town on the Mississippi. What Hannibal was like and what were the circumstances of Mr. Clemens's boyhood we can see for ourselves in the convincing pages of 'Tom Sawyer.' Mr. Howells has called Hannibal "a loafing, out-at-elbows, down-at-the-heels, slave-holding Mississippi town;" and

Mr. Clemens was himself a slave owner, who silently abhorred slavery.

When the future author was but twelve his father died, and the son had to get his education as best he could. Of actual schooling he got little and of book-learning still less; but life itself is not a bad teacher for a boy who wants to study, and young Clemens did not waste his chances. He spent three years in the printing office of the little local paper, — for, like not a few others on the list of American authors that stretches from Benjamin Franklin to William Dean Howells, he began his connection with literature by setting type. As a journeyman printer the lad wandered from town to town and rambled even as far east as New York.

When he was seventeen he went back to the home of his boyhood resolved to become a pilot on the Mississippi. How he learnt the river he has told us in 'Life on the Mississippi,' wherein his adventures, his experiences, and his impressions while he was a cub-pilot are recorded with a combination of precise veracity and abundant humor which makes the earlier chapters of that marvelous book a most masterly fragment of autobiography. The life of a pilot was full of interest and excitement and opportunity, and what young Clemens saw and heard and

divined during the years when he was going up and down the mighty river we may read in the pages of 'Huckleberry Finn' and 'Pudd'nhead Wilson.' But toward the end of the fifties the railroads began to rob the river of its supremacy as a carrier; and in the beginning of the sixties the civil war broke out and the Mississippi no longer went unvexed to the sea. The skill, slowly and laboriously acquired, was suddenly rendered useless, and at twenty-five the young man found himself bereft of his calling. As a border state, Missouri was sending her sons into the armies of the Union and into the armies of the Confederacy, while many a man stood doubting, not knowing which way to turn. The ex-pilot has given us the record of his very brief and inglorious service as a soldier of the South. When this escapade was swiftly ended, he went to the Northwest with his brother, who had been appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Nevada. Thus the man who had been born on the borderland of North and South, who had gone East as a jour-printer, who had been again and again up and down the Mississippi, now went West while he was still plastic and impressionable; and he had thus another chance to increase that intimate knowledge of American life and American character which is one of the most precious of his possessions.

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