

ropes, till they are near enough to shoot," the traveler answered.

"No," replied Baraka. "They know that you have a good weapon, and will not risk their lives. They will leave us here to starve, that is what they will do. It is our portion, and we shall die. It will be easy; for there is water, and when we are hungry we can drink our fill."

The traveler knew the people among whom he had wandered, and did not marvel at the girl's quiet tone; but it chilled his blood, for he understood that she was in earnest; and moreover she knew the place, and that there was no way out.

"You said well that I had brought you here to die," she said presently; "but I did not know it, therefore I must lose my life also. It is my portion. God be praised!"

He was shamed by her courage, for he loved life well, and he held his head down and said nothing as he thought of what was to come. He knew that with plenty of good water a man may live for weeks without food.

"You will die first," Baraka said dreamily. "You are not as we are,—you cannot live so long without food."

The traveler wondered if she was right, but he said nothing.

"If we had got out with the treasure," continued Baraka "you would have loved me for it, because you would have been the greatest man in the world through me. But now, because we must die, you hate me. I understand. If you do not kill me, you will die first; and when you are dead I shall kiss you many times, till I die also. It will be very easy. I am not afraid."

The man sat quite still and looked at the dark streak by the edge of the pool where the water had wet it when the falling boulder outside had sent in little waves. He could see it distinctly. Again there was silence for a long time.

Still the traveler sat with bent head, gazing at the edge of the pool. His hands were quite dry now, and he slowly rubbed the clinging moisture from his revolver. Some men would have been thinking, in such a plight, that if starving was too hard to bear a bullet would shorten their sufferings in the end; but this man was very full of life and the love of life, and while he lived he would hope.

THE place was very quiet. From far above a slight draft of air descended, warm from the rocks that had been heated all day in the sun. But there was no sound except when Baraka moved a little.

Presently she did not move any more, and when the traveler looked he saw that she was curled up on the sand as Eastern women lie when they sleep, and her head rested on her hand; for her garment was dry now, and she was drowsy after the walk and the effort she had made. Besides, since there was no escape from death, and as the man did not

love her, she might as well sleep if she could. He knew those people and understood; and he did not care, or perhaps also was glad. He was a man who could have only one thought at a time. When he had left the house of Baraka's father he had been thinking only of the rubies; but now that he was in danger of his life he could think only of saving it, if there was any way. A woman could never be anything but a toy to him, and he could not play with toys while death was looking over his shoulder. He was either too big for that, or too little; every man will decide which it was according to his own measure. But Baraka, who had not been taught to think of her soul nor to fear death, went quietly to sleep, now that she was quite sure that the traveler would not love her.

He had been certain of the distance between his feet and the water's edge as he sat; it had been a yard at the most. But now it was more; he was sure that it was a yard and a half at the least. He rubbed his eyes, and looked hard at the dark belt of wet sand, and it was twice as wide as it had been. The water was still running out somewhere; but it was no longer running in, and in an hour or two the pool would be dry.

The traveler was an engineer, and understood sooner than an ordinary man could have done that his enemies had intentionally stopped up the water entrance through which he had come, both to make his escape impossible, and to hasten his end by depriving him of water. The fallen boulder alone could not have kept out the overflow of the spring effectually. They must have shoveled down masses of earth, with the plants that grew in it abundantly, and filled it with twining threadlike roots, and must have skilfully forced quantities of the stuff into the openings all round the big stone, making a regular dam against the spring, which would soon run down in the opposite direction. They knew, of course, that Baraka had led him to the place and had gone in with him, for she had left all her outer garments outside, and they meant that she should die also, with her secret. In a week, or a fortnight, or a month, they would come and dig away the dam and pry the boulder aside, and could get in and find the white bones of the two on the sand, after the vultures had picked them clean; and they would take the traveler's good revolver and his money.

He thought of all these things as he sat there in the dim light, and watched the slow receding of the water line, and listened to the girl's soft and regular breathing. There was no death in her dream, as she slept away the last hours of the night, though there might not be many more nights for her. He heard her breathe; but he did not heed her, for the water was sinking before him,—sinking away into the sand, now that it was no longer fed from the opening. He sat motionless; but his thoughts ran madly from hope to despair and back again to hope. The

water was going down, beyond question. If it was merely draining itself through the sand to some subterranean channel, he was lost; but if it was flowing away through any passage like the one by which he had entered, there was still a chance of escape,—a very small chance. When death is at the gate the tiniest loophole looks wide enough to crawl through.

The surface of the pool subsided; but there was no loophole, and so the traveler watched. Hope sank in his heart, as the water in the hollow of the sand; but Baraka slept on peacefully, curled up on her side like a little wild animal. When the pool was almost dry the traveler crept down to the edge and drank his fill, that he might not begin to thirst sooner than need be; and just then day dawned suddenly, as it was in the far north, and the warm darkness gave way to a cold light in a few moments.

IMMEDIATELY, because it was day, Baraka stretched herself on the sand and then sat up; and when she saw what the traveler was doing she also went and drank as much as she could swallow, for she had understood why he was drinking as soon as she saw the pool was nearly dry. When she could drink no more she looked up at the rocks high overhead, which were already white and red and yellow in the light of the risen sun, for in that country there is no long time between dark night and broad day.

Baraka sat down again, on the spot where she had slept; but she said nothing. The man was trying to dig a little hole in the wet sand with his hands, beyond the water that was still left, for perhaps he thought that if he could make a pit on one side some water would stay in it; but the sand ran together as soon as he moved it; and presently, as he bent over, he felt that he was sinking into it himself, and understood that it was a sort of quicksand that would suck him down. He therefore threw himself flat on his back, stretching out his arms and legs, and making movements as if he was swimming, he worked his way from the dangerous place till he was safe on the firm, white beach again. He sat up then, and bent his head till his forehead pressed on his hands, and shut his eyes to keep out the light of day. He had not slept, as Baraka had; but he was not sleepy,—perhaps he would not be able to sleep again before the end came.

Baraka watched him quietly, for she understood that he despaired of life, and she wondered what he would do; and besides he seemed to her the most beautiful man in the world, and she loved him, and was going to die with him. It comforted her to think that no other woman could get him now. It was almost worth while to die for that alone; for she could not have borne that another woman should have him, since he despised her, and if it had come to pass she would have tried to kill that other. But there was no danger of such a thing now; he would die first, and she would kiss him many times

Continued on page 14

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MARK TWAIN

The Luxury of White Raiment



Photo by VanDerweyde.
In 1882.

(Dated October 1, 1906.)

FROM *SOUR MASH*,
BIOGRAPHY BY ME

Papa says that if the cholera comes here he will take Sour Mash to the mountains.

THIS remark about the cat is followed by various entries, covering a month in which Jean, General Grant, the sculptor Gerhardt, Mrs. Candace Wheeler, Miss Dora Wheeler, Mr. Frank Stockton, Mrs. Mary Mapes Dodge, and the widow of General Carter appear and drift in procession across the page, then vanish forever from the biography; then Susy drops this remark in the wake of the vanished procession:

Sour Mash is a constant source of anxiety, care, and pleasure to papa.

I did, in truth, think a great deal of that old tortoise shell tabby; but I haven't a doubt that in order to im-

press Susy I was pretending agonies of solicitude which I didn't honestly feel. Sour Mash never gave me any real anxiety; she was always able to take care of herself; and she was ostentatiously vain of the fact,—vain of it to a degree which often made me ashamed of her, much as I esteemed her.

Many persons would like to have the society of cats during the summer vacation in the country; but they deny themselves this pleasure because they

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think they must either take the cats along when they return to the city, where they would be a trouble and an encumbrance, or leave them in the country, houseless and homeless. These people have no ingenuity, no invention, no wisdom; or it would occur to them to do as I do: rent cats by the month for the summer and return them to their good homes at the end of it. Early last May I rented a kitten of a farmer's wife, by the month; then I got a discount by taking three. They have been good company for about five months now, and are still kittens,—at least they have not grown much, and to all intents and purposes are still kittens, and as full of romping energy and enthusiasm as they were in the beginning. This is remarkable. I am an expert in cats; but I have not seen a kitten keep its kittenhood nearly so long before.

THESE are beautiful creatures, these triplets. Two of them wear the blackest and shiniest and thickest of sealskin vestments all over their bodies except the lower half of their faces and the terminations of their paws. The black masks reach down below the eyes; therefore when the eyes are closed they are not visible. The rest of the face, and the gloves and

stockings, are snow white. These markings are just the same on both cats,—so exactly the same that when you call one the other is likely to answer, because they cannot tell each other apart. Since the cats are precisely alike, and can't be told apart by any of us, they do not need two names; so they have but one between them. We call both of them Sackcloth, and we call the gray one Ashes. I believe I have never seen such intelligent cats as these be-

fore. They are full of the nicest discriminations.

When I read German aloud, they weep; you can see the tears run down. It shows what pathos there is in the German tongue. I had not noticed before that all German is pathetic, no matter what the subject is nor how it is treated. It was these humble observers that brought the knowledge to me. I have tried all kinds of German on these cats,—romance, poetry, philosophy, theology, market reports,—and the result has always been the same: the cats sob, and let the tears run down, which shows that all German is pathetic. French is not a familiar tongue to me, and the pronunciation is difficult, and comes out of me encumbered with a Missouri accent; but the cats like it, and when I make impassioned speeches in that language they sit in a row and put up their paws, palm to palm, and frantically give thanks. Hardly any cats are affected by music; but these are,—when I sing they go reverently away, showing how deeply they feel it. Sour Mash never cared for these things. She had many noble qualities; but at bottom she was not refined, and cared little or nothing for theology and the arts.

IT is a pity to say it, but these cats are not above the grade of human beings; for I know by certain signs that they are not sincere in their exhibitions of emotion, but exhibit them merely to show off and attract attention,—conduct which is distinctly human, yet with a difference: they do not know enough to conceal their desire to show off, but the grown human being does. What is ambition? It is only the desire to be conspicuous. The desire for fame is only the desire to be continuously conspicuous and attract attention and be talked about.

These cats are like human beings in another way; when Ashes began to work his fictitious emotions,