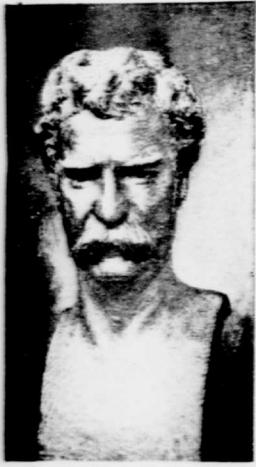


# THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MARK TWAIN



Bust by Karl Gherhardt.

## Susy Boldly Expresses Some Opinions

[Thursday,

March 28, 1927.]

**S**OME months ago I commented upon a chapter of Susy's biography wherein she very elaborately discussed an article about the training and disciplining of children, which I had published in "The Christian Union" (this

was twenty-one years ago); an article which was full of worshipful praises of Mrs. Clemens as a mother, and which little Clara and Susy and I had been hiding from this lovely and admirable mother because we knew she would disapprove of public and printed praises of herself. At the time that I was dictating these comments, several months ago, I was trying to call back to my memory some of the details of that article; but I was not able to do it, and I wished I had a copy of the article so that I could see what there was about it which gave it such large interest for Susy.

Yesterday afternoon I elected to walk home from the luncheon at the St. Regis, which is on 55th-st. and Fifth-ave.; for it was a fine spring day and I hadn't had a walk for a year or two, and felt the need of exercise. As I walked along down Fifth-ave. the desire to see that "Christian Union" article came into my head again. I had just reached the corner of 42d-st. then, and there was the usual jam of wagons, carriages, and automobiles there. I stopped to let it thin out before trying to cross the street; but a stranger, who didn't require as much room as I do, came racing by and darted into a track among the vehicles and made the crossing. But on his way past me he thrust a couple of ancient newspaper clippings into my hand, and said:

"There! You don't know me; but I have saved them in my scrapbook for twenty years, and it occurred to me this morning that perhaps you would like to see them; so I was carrying them down town to mail them, I not expecting to run across you in this accidental way, of course; but I will give them into your own hands now. Good-by!" and he disappeared among the wagons.

Those scraps which he had put into my hand were ancient newspaper copies of that "Christian Union" article! It is a handsome instance of mental telegraphy; or if it isn't that, it is a handsome case of coincidence.

### FROM THE BIOGRAPHY

March 14th, '86.

Mr. Laurence Barrette and Mr. and Mrs. Hutton were here a little while ago, and we had a very interesting visit from them. Papa said Mr. Barrette never had acted so well before when he had seen him, as he did the first night he was staying with us. And Mrs. — said she never had seen an actor on the stage, whom she more wanted to speak with.

Papa has been very much interested of late, in the "Mind Cure" theory. And in fact so have we all. A young lady in town has worked wonders, by using the "Mind Cure" upon people; she is constantly busy now curing people's diseases in this way—and curing her own even, which to me seems the most remarkable of all.

A little while past, papa was delighted with the knowledge of what he thought the best way of curing a cold, which was by starving it. This starving did work beautifully, and freed him from a great many severe colds. Now he says it wasn't the starving that helped his colds, but the trust in the starving, the mind cure connected with the starving.

I shouldn't wonder if we finally became firm believers in Mind Cure. The next time papa has a cold, I haven't a doubt, he will send for Miss H— the young lady who is doctoring in the "Mind Cure" theory, to cure him of it.

Mamma was over at Mrs. George Warner's to lunch the other day, and Miss H— was there too. Mamma asked if anything as natural as near sightedness could be cured she said oh yes just as well as other diseases.

When mamma came home, she took me into her room, and told me that perhaps my near-sightedness could be cured by the "Mind Cure" and that she was going to have me try the treatment any way, there could be no harm in it, and there might be great good. If her plan succeeds there certainly will be a great deal in "Mind Cure" to my opinion, for I am very near-sighted and so is mamma, and I never expected there could be any more cure for it than for blindness, but now I don't know but what there's a cure for that.

It was a disappointment; her near-sightedness remained with her to the end. She was born with it, no doubt; yet, strangely enough, she must have been four years old, and possibly five, before we knew of its existence. It is not easy to understand how that could have happened. I discovered the defect by accident. I was halfway up the hall

stairs one day at home, and was leading her by the hand, when I glanced back through the open door of the dining room and saw what I thought she would recognize as a pretty picture. It was "Stray Kit," the slender, the graceful, the sociable, the beautiful, the incomparable, the cat of cats, the tortoise shell, curled up as round as a wheel and sound asleep on the fire red cover of the dining table, with a brilliant stream of sunlight falling across her. I exclaimed about it; but Susy said she could see nothing there, neither cat nor tablecloth. The distance was so slight—not more than twenty feet, perhaps—that if it had been any other child I should not have credited the statement.

### FROM THE BIOGRAPHY

March 14th, '86.

Clara sprained her ankle, a little while ago, by running into a tree, when coasting, and while she was unable to walk with it she played solitaire with cards a great deal. While Clara was sick and papa saw her play solitaire so much, he got very much interested in the game, and finally began to play it himself a little, then Jean took it up, and at last mamma, even played it occasionally; Jean's and papa's love for it rapidly increased, and now Jean brings the cards every night to the table and papa and mamma help her play, and before dinner is at an end, papa has gotten a separate pack of cards, and is playing alone, with great interest. Mamma and Clara next are made subject to the contagious solatar, and there are four solitaires at the table; while you hear nothing but "Fill up the place!" etc. It is dreadful! after supper Clara goes into the library, and gets a little red mahogany table, and placing it under the gas fixture seats herself and begins to play again, then papa follows, with another table of the same description, and they play solatar till bedtime.

We have just had our Prince and Pauper pictures taken; two groups and some little single ones. The group—the Interview and Lady Jane (grey scene) were pretty good; the lady Jane scene was perfect, just as pretty as it could be; the Interview was not so good; and two of the little single pictures were very good indeed, but one was very bad. Yet on the whole we think they were a success.

Papa has done a great deal in his life I think, that is good, and very remarkable, but I think if he had had the advantages with which he could have developed the gifts

and pauper are the kind of thing he mainly thinks about; but that that book, and those pictures represent the train of thought and imagination he would be likely to be thinking of to-day, to-morrow, or next day, more nearly than those given in "Tom Sawyer" or "Huckleberry Finn." [It is so yet.—M. T.]

Papa can make exceedingly bright jokes, and he enjoys funny things, and when he is with people he jokes and laughs a great deal, but still he is more interested in earnest books and earnest subjects to talk upon, than in humorous ones. [She has said it well and correctly. Humor is a subject which has never had much interest for me. This is why I have never examined it, nor written about it, nor used it as a topic for a speech. A hundred times it has been offered me as a topic in these past forty years; but in no case has it attracted me.—M. T.]

When we are all alone at home, nine times out of ten, he talks about some very earnest subjects, (with an occasional joke thrown in) and he a good deal more often talks upon such subjects than upon the other kind.

He is as much of a Philosopher as anything I think. I think he could have done a great deal in this direction if he had studied while young, for he seems to enjoy reasoning out things, no matter what; in a great many such directions he has greater ability than in the gifts which have made him famous.

**T**HUS at fourteen she had made up her mind about me, and in no timorous or uncertain terms had set down her reasons for her opinion. Fifteen years were to pass before any other critic—except Mr. Howells, I think—was to reutter that daring opinion and print it. Right or wrong, it was a brave position for that little analyzer to take. She never withdrew it afterward, nor modified it. She has spoken of herself as lacking physical courage, and has evinced her admiration of Clara's; but she had moral courage, which is the rarest of human qualities, and she kept it functional by exercising it. I think that in questions of morals and politics she was usually on my side; but when she was not she had her reasons and maintained her ground. Two years after she passed out of my life I wrote a philosophy. Of the three persons who have seen the manuscript only one understood it, and all three condemned it. If she could have read it, she also would have condemned it, possibly,—probably, in fact,—but she would have understood it. It would have had no difficulties for her on that score; also she would have found a tireless pleasure in analyzing and discussing its problems.

### FROM SUSY'S

#### BIOGRAPHY OF ME

MARCH 23, '86.

**T**HE other day was my birthday, and I had a little birthday party in the evening and papa acted some very funny charades with Mr. Gherhardt, Mr. Jesse Grant (who had come up from New York and was spending the evening with us) and Mr. Frank Warner. One of them was "on his knees," honys-sneeze. There were a good many other funny ones, all of which I don't remember. Mr. Grant was very pleasant, and began playing the charades in the most delightful way.

**S**SUSY'S spelling has defeated me, this time. I cannot make out what "honys-sneeze" stands for. Impromptu charades were almost a nightly pastime of ours, from the children's earliest days,—they played in them with me when they old. As they increased in years and practice, their love for the sport almost amounted to a passion, and they acted their parts with a steadily increasing ability. At first they required much drilling; but later they were generally ready as soon as the parts were assigned, and they acted them according to their own devices. Their stage facility and absence of constraint and self-consciousness in the "Prince and Pauper" was a result of their charading practice.

At ten and twelve Susy wrote plays, and she and Daisy Warner and Clara played them in the library or up stairs in the school room, with only themselves and the servants for audience. They were of



Jean Was Kept Busy Signing Death Warrants.

which he has made no use of in writing his books, or in any other way for other peoples pleasure and benefit outside of his own family and intimate friends, he could have done more than he has and a great deal more even. He is known to the public as a humorist, but he has much more in him that is earnest than that is humorous. He has a keen sense of the ludicrous, notices funny stories and incidents knows how to tell them, to improve upon them, and does not forget them. He has been through a great many of the funny adventures related in "Tom Sawyer" and in "Huckleberry Finn," himself and he lived among just such boys, and in just such villages all the days of his early life. His "Prince and Pauper" is his most original, and best production; it shows the most of any of his books what kind of pictures are in his mind, usually. Not that the pictures of England in the 16th Century and the adventures of a little prince