МАРК ТВЕН

FOLLOWING THE EQUATOR: A JOURNEY AROUND THE WORLD

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Mark Twain
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CHAPTER I

A man may have no bad habits and have worse.

– Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

The starting point of this lecturing-trip around the world was Paris, where we had been living a year or two.

We sailed for America, and there made certain preparations. This took but little time. Two members of my family elected to go with me. Also a carbuncle. The dictionary says a carbuncle is a kind of jewel. Humor is out of place in a dictionary.

We started westward from New York in midsummer, with Major Pond to manage the platform-business as far as the Pacific. It was warm work, all the way, and the last fortnight of it was suffocatingly smoky, for in Oregon and British Columbia the forest fires were raging. We had an added week of smoke at the seaboard, where we were obliged to wait awhile for our ship. She had been getting herself ashore in the smoke, and she had to be docked and repaired.

We sailed at last; and so ended a snail-paced march across the continent, which had lasted forty days.

We moved westward about mid-afternoon over a rippled and sparkling summer sea; an enticing sea, a clean and cool sea, and apparently a welcome sea to all on board; it certainly was to me, after the distressful dustings and smokings and swelterings of the past weeks. The voyage would furnish a three-weeks holiday, with hardly a break in it. We had the whole Pacific Ocean in front of us, with nothing to do but do nothing and be comfortable. The city of Victoria was twinkling dim in the deep heart of her smoke-cloud, and getting ready to vanish and now we closed the field-glasses and sat down on our steamer chairs contented and at peace. But they went to wreck and ruin under us and brought us to shame before all the passengers. They had been furnished by the largest furniture-dealing house in Victoria, and were worth a couple of farthings a dozen, though they had cost us the price of honest chairs. In the Pacific and Indian Oceans one must still bring his own deck-chair on board or go without, just as in the old forgotten Atlantic times – those Dark Ages of sea travel.

Ours was a reasonably comfortable ship, with the customary sea-going fare – plenty of good food furnished by the Deity and cooked by the devil. The discipline observable on board was perhaps as good as it is anywhere in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. The ship was not very well arranged for tropical service; but that is nothing, for this is the rule for ships which ply in the tropics. She had an over-supply of cockroaches, but this is also the rule with ships doing business in the summer seas – at least such as have been long in service. Our young captain was a very handsome man, tall and perfectly formed, the very figure to show up a smart uniform's finest effects. He was a man of the best intentions and was polite and courteous even to courtliness. There was a soft and grace and finish about his manners which made whatever place he happened to be in seem for the moment a drawing room. He avoided the smoking room. He had no vices. He did not smoke or chew tobacco or take snuff; he did not swear, or use slang or rude, or coarse, or indelicate language, or make puns, or tell anecdotes, or laugh intemperately, or raise his voice above the moderate pitch enjoined by the canons of good form. When he gave an order, his manner modified it into a request. After dinner he and his officers joined the ladies and gentlemen in the ladies' saloon, and shared in the singing and piano playing, and helped turn the music. He had a sweet and sympathetic tenor voice, and used it with taste and effect. After the music he played whist there, always with the same partner and opponents, until the ladies' bedtime. The electric lights burned there as late as the ladies and their friends might desire; but they were not allowed to burn in the smoking-room after eleven. There were many laws on the ship's statute book of course; but so far as I could see, this and one other were the only ones that were rigidly enforced. The captain explained that he enforced this one because his own cabin adjoined the smoking-room, and the smell of tobacco smoke made him sick. I did not see how our smoke could reach him, for the smoking-room and his cabin were on the upper deck, targets for all the winds that blew; and besides there was no crack of communication between them, no opening of any sort in the solid intervening bulkhead. Still, to a delicate stomach even imaginary smoke can convey damage.

The captain, with his gentle nature, his polish, his sweetness, his moral and verbal purity, seemed pathetically out of place in his rude and autocratic vocation. It seemed another instance of the irony of fate.

He was going home under a cloud. The passengers knew about his trouble, and were sorry for him. Approaching Vancouver through a narrow and difficult passage densely befogged with smoke from the forest fires, he had had the ill-luck to lose his bearings and get his ship on the rocks. A matter like this would rank merely as an error with you and me; it ranks as a crime with the directors of steamship companies. The captain had been tried by the Admiralty Court at Vancouver, and its verdict had acquitted him of blame. But that was insufficient comfort. A sterner court would examine the case in Sydney – the Court of Directors, the lords of a company in whose ships the captain had served as mate a number of years. This was his first voyage as captain.

The officers of our ship were hearty and companionable young men, and they entered into the general amusements and helped the passengers pass the time. Voyages in the Pacific and Indian Oceans are but pleasure excursions for all hands. Our purser was a young Scotchman who was equipped with a grit that was remarkable. He was an invalid, and looked it, as far as his body was concerned, but illness could not subdue his spirit. He was full of life, and had a gay and capable tongue. To all appearances he was a sick man without being aware of it, for he did not talk about his ailments, and his bearing and conduct were those of a person in robust health; yet he was the prey, at intervals, of ghastly sieges of pain in his heart. These lasted many hours, and while the attack continued he could neither sit nor lie. In one instance he stood on his feet twenty-four hours fighting for his life with these sharp agonies, and yet was as full of life and cheer and activity the next day as if nothing had happened.

The brightest passenger in the ship, and the most interesting and felicitous talker, was a young Canadian who was not able to let the whisky bottle alone. He was of a rich and powerful family, and could have had a distinguished career and abundance of effective help toward it if he could have conquered his appetite for drink; but he could not do it, so his great equipment of talent was of no use to him. He had often taken the pledge to drink no more, and was a good sample of what that sort of unwisdom can do for a man – for a man with anything short of an iron will. The system is wrong in two ways: it does not strike at the root of the trouble, for one thing, and to make a pledge of any kind is to declare war against nature; for a pledge is a chain that is always clanking and reminding the wearer of it that he is not a free man.

I have said that the system does not strike at the root of the trouble, and I venture to repeat that. The root is not the drinking, but the desire to drink. These are very different things. The one merely requires will – and a great deal of it, both as to bulk and staying capacity – the other merely requires watchfulness – and for no long time. The desire of course precedes the act, and should have one's first attention; it can do but little good to refuse the act over and over again, always leaving the desire unmolested, unconquered; the desire will continue to assert itself, and will be almost sure to win in the long run. When the desire intrudes, it should be at once banished out of the mind. One should be on the watch for it all the time – otherwise it will get in. It must be taken in time and not allowed to get a lodgment. A desire constantly repulsed for a fortnight should die, then. That should cure the drinking habit. The system of refusing the mere act of drinking, and leaving the desire in full force, is unintelligent war tactics, it seems to me. I used to take pledges – and soon violate them. My will was not strong, and I could not help it. And then, to be tied in any way naturally irks an otherwise free person and makes him chafe in his bonds and want to get his liberty. But when I finally ceased from taking definite pledges, and merely resolved that I would kill an injurious desire, but leave myself free to resume the desire and the habit whenever I should choose to do so, I had no more trouble. In five days I drove out the desire to smoke and was not obliged to keep watch after that; and I never experienced any strong desire to smoke again. At the end of a year and a quarter of idleness I began to write a book, and presently found that the pen was strangely reluctant to go. I tried a smoke to see if that would help me out of the difficulty. It did. I smoked eight or ten cigars and as many pipes a day for five months; finished the book, and did not smoke again until a year had gone by and another book had to be begun.

I can quit any of my nineteen injurious habits at any time, and without discomfort or inconvenience. I think that the Dr. Tanners and those others who go forty days without eating do it by resolutely keeping out the desire to eat, in the beginning, and that after a few hours the desire is discouraged and comes no more.

Once I tried my scheme in a large medical way. I had been confined to my bed several days with lumbago. My case refused to improve. Finally the doctor said, —

"My remedies have no fair chance. Consider what they have to fight, besides the lumbago. You smoke extravagantly, don't you?"

"Yes."

"You take coffee immoderately?"

"Yes."

"And some tea?"

"Yes."

"You eat all kinds of things that are dissatisfied with each other's company?"

"Yes."

"You drink two hot Scotches every night?"

"Yes."

"Very well, there you see what I have to contend against. We can't make progress the way the matter stands. You must make a reduction in these things; you must cut down your consumption of them considerably for some days."

"I can't, doctor."

"Why can't you."

"I lack the will-power. I can cut them off entirely, but I can't merely moderate them."

He said that that would answer, and said he would come around in twenty-four hours and begin work again. He was taken ill himself and could not come; but I did not need him. I cut off all those things for two days and nights; in fact, I cut off all kinds of food, too, and all drinks except water, and at the end of the forty-eight hours the lumbago was discouraged and left me. I was a well man; so I gave thanks and took to those delicacies again.

It seemed a valuable medical course, and I recommended it to a lady. She had run down and down and down, and had at last reached a point where medicines no longer had any helpful effect upon her. I said I knew I could put her upon her feet in a week. It brightened her up, it filled her with hope, and she said she would do everything I told her to do. So I said she must stop swearing and drinking, and smoking and eating for four days, and then she would be all right again. And it would have happened just so, I know it; but she said she could not stop swearing, and smoking, and drinking, because she had never done those things. So there it was. She had neglected her habits, and hadn't any. Now that they would have come good, there were none in stock.

She had nothing to fall back on. She was a sinking vessel, with no freight in her to throw overbpard and lighten ship withal. Why, even one or two little bad habits could have saved her, but she was just a moral pauper. When she could have acquired them she was dissuaded by her parents, who were ignorant people though reared in the best society, and it was too late to begin now. It seemed such a pity; but there was no help for it. These things ought to be attended to while a person is young; otherwise, when age and disease come, there is nothing effectual to fight them with.

When I was a youth I used to take all kinds of pledges, and do my best to keep them, but I never could, because I didn't strike at the root of the habit – the desire; I generally broke down within the month. Once I tried limiting a habit. That worked tolerably well for a while. I pledged myself to smoke but one cigar a day. I kept the cigar waiting until bedtime, then I had a luxurious time with it. But desire persecuted me every day and all day long; so, within the week I found myself hunting for larger cigars than I had been used to smoke; then larger ones still, and still larger ones. Within the fortnight I was getting cigars made for me – on a yet larger pattern. They still grew and grew in size. Within the month my cigar had grown to such proportions that I could have used it as a crutch. It now seemed to me that a one-cigar limit was no real protection to a person, so I knocked my pledge on the head and resumed my liberty.

To go back to that young Canadian. He was a "remittance man," the first one I had ever seen or heard of. Passengers explained the term to me. They said that dissipated ne'er-do-wells belonging to important families in England and Canada were not cast off by their people while there was any hope of reforming them, but when that last hope perished at last, the ne'er-do-well was sent abroad to get him out of the way. He was shipped off with just enough money in his pocket – no, in the purser's pocket – for the needs of the voyage – and when he reached his destined port he would find a remittance awaiting him there. Not a large one, but just enough to keep him a month. A similar remittance would come monthly thereafter. It was the remittance-man's custom to pay his month's board and lodging straightway – a duty which his landlord did not allow him to forget – then spree away the rest of his money in a single night, then brood and mope and grieve in idleness till the next remittance came. It is a pathetic life.

We had other remittance-men on board, it was said. At least they said they were R. M.'s. There were two. But they did not resemble the Canadian; they lacked his tidiness, and his brains, and his gentlemanly ways, and his resolute spirit, and his humanities and generosities. One of them was a lad of nineteen or twenty, and he was a good deal of a ruin, as to clothes, and morals, and general aspect. He said he was a scion of a ducal house in England, and had been shipped to Canada for the house's relief, that he had fallen into trouble there, and was now being shipped to Australia. He said he had no title. Beyond this remark he was economical of the truth. The first thing he did in Australia was to get into the lockup, and the next thing he did was to proclaim himself an earl in the police court in the morning and fail to prove it.

CHAPTER II

When in doubt, tell the truth.

– Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

About four days out from Victoria we plunged into hot weather, and all the male passengers put on white linen clothes. One or two days later we crossed the 25th parallel of north latitude, and then, by order, the officers of the ship laid away their blue uniforms and came out in white linen ones. All the ladies were in white by this time. This prevalence of snowy costumes gave the promenade deck an invitingly cool, and cheerful and picnicky aspect.

From my diary:

There are several sorts of ills in the world from which a person can never escape altogether, let him journey as far as he will. One escapes from one breed of an ill only to encounter another breed of it. We have come far from the snake liar and the fish liar, and there was rest and peace in the thought; but now we have reached the realm of the boomerang liar, and sorrow is with us once more. The first officer has seen a man try to escape from his enemy by getting behind a tree; but the enemy sent his boomerang sailing into the sky far above and beyond the tree; then it turned, descended, and killed the man. The Australian passenger has seen this thing done to two men, behind two trees – and by the one arrow. This being received with a large silence that suggested doubt, he buttressed it with the statement that his brother once saw the boomerang kill a bird away off a hundred yards and bring it to the thrower. But these are ills which must be borne. There is no other way.

The talk passed from the boomerang to dreams – usually a fruitful subject, afloat or ashore – but this time the output was poor. Then it passed to instances of extraordinary memory – with better results. Blind Tom, the negro pianist, was spoken of, and it was said that he could accurately play any piece of music, howsoever long and difficult, after hearing it once; and that six months later he could accurately play it again, without having touched it in the interval. One of the most striking of the stories told was furnished by a gentleman who had served on the staff of the Viceroy of India. He read the details from his note-book, and explained that he had written them down, right after the consummation of the incident which they described, because he thought that if he did not put them down in black and white he might presently come to think he had dreamed them or invented them.

The Viceroy was making a progress, and among the shows offered by the Maharajah of Mysore for his entertainment was a memory-exhibition. The Viceroy and thirty gentlemen of his suite sat in a row, and the memory-expert, a high-caste Brahmin, was brought in and seated on the floor in front of them. He said he knew but two languages, the English and his own, but would not exclude any foreign tongue from the tests to be applied to his memory. Then he laid before the assemblage his program – a sufficiently extraordinary one. He proposed that one gentleman should give him one word of a foreign sentence, and tell him its place in the sentence. He was furnished with the French word 'est', and was told it was second in a sentence of three words. The next gentleman gave him the German word 'verloren' and said it was the third in a sentence of four words. He asked the next gentleman for one detail in a sum in addition; another for one detail in a sum of subtraction; others for single details in mathematical problems of various kinds; he got them. Intermediates gave him single words from sentences in Greek, Latin, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, and other languages, and told him their places in the sentences. When at last everybody had furnished him a single rag from a foreign sentence or a figure from a problem, he went over the ground again, and got a second word and a second figure and was told their places in the sentences and the sums; and so on and so on. He went over the ground again and again until he had collected all the parts of the sums and all the parts of the sentences – and all in disorder, of course, not in their proper rotation. This had occupied two hours.

The Brahmin now sat silent and thinking, a while, then began and repeated all the sentences, placing the words in their proper order, and untangled the disordered arithmetical problems and gave accurate answers to them all.

In the beginning he had asked the company to throw almonds at him during the two hours, he to remember how many each gentleman had thrown; but none were thrown, for the Viceroy said that the test would be a sufficiently severe strain without adding that burden to it.

General Grant had a fine memory for all kinds of things, including even names and faces, and I could have furnished an instance of it if I had thought of it. The first time I ever saw him was early in his first term as President. I had just arrived in Washington from the Pacific coast, a stranger and wholly unknown to the public, and was passing the White House one morning when I met a friend, a Senator from Nevada. He asked me if I would like to see the President. I said I should be very glad; so we entered. I supposed that the President would be in the midst of a crowd, and that I could look at him in peace and security from a distance, as another stray cat might look at another king. But it was in the morning, and the Senator was using a privilege of his office which I had not heard of – the privilege of intruding upon the Chief Magistrate's working hours. Before I knew it, the Senator and I were in the presence, and there was none there but we three. General Grant got slowly up from his table, put his pen down, and stood before me with the iron expression of a man who had not smiled for seven years, and was not intending to smile for another seven. He looked me steadily in the eyes – mine lost confidence and fell. I had never confronted a great man before, and was in a miserable state of funk and inefficiency. The Senator said: —

"Mr. President, may I have the privilege of introducing Mr.

Clemens?"

The President gave my hand an unsympathetic wag and dropped it. He did not say a word but just stood. In my trouble I could not think of anything to say, I merely wanted to resign. There was an awkward pause, a dreary pause, a horrible pause. Then I thought of something, and looked up into that unyielding face, and said timidly: —

"Mr. President, I – I am embarrassed. Are you?"

His face broke – just a little – a wee glimmer, the momentary flicker of a summer-lightning smile, seven years ahead of time – and I was out and gone as soon as it was.

Ten years passed away before I saw him the second time. Meantime I was become better known; and was one of the people appointed to respond to toasts at the banquet given to General Grant in Chicago – by the Army of the Tennessee when he came back from his tour around the world. I arrived late at night and got up late in the morning. All the corridors of the hotel were crowded with people waiting to get a glimpse of General Grant when he should pass to the place whence he was to review the great procession. I worked my way by the suite of packed drawing-rooms, and at the corner of the house I found a window open where there was a roomy platform decorated with flags, and carpeted. I stepped out on it, and saw below me millions of people blocking all the streets, and other millions caked together in all the windows and on all the house-tops around. These masses took me for General Grant, and broke into volcanic explosions and cheers; but it was a good place to see the procession, and I stayed. Presently I heard the distant blare of military music, and far up the street I saw the procession come in sight, cleaving its way through the huzzaing multitudes, with Sheridan, the most martial figure of the War, riding at its head in the dress uniform of a Lieutenant-General.

And now General Grant, arm-in-arm with Major Carter Harrison, stepped out on the platform, followed two and two by the badged and uniformed reception committee. General Grant was looking exactly as he had looked upon that trying occasion of ten years before – all iron and bronze self-possession. Mr. Harrison came over and led me to the General and formally introduced me. Before I could put together the proper remark, General Grant said —

"Mr. Clemens, I am not embarrassed. Are you?" – and that little seven-year smile twinkled across his face again.

Seventeen years have gone by since then, and to-day, in New York, the streets are a crush of people who are there to honor the remains of the great soldier as they pass to their final resting-place under the monument; and the air is heavy with dirges and the boom of artillery, and all the millions of America are thinking of the man who restored the Union and the flag, and gave to democratic government a new lease of life, and, as we may hope and do believe, a permanent place among the beneficent institutions of men.

We had one game in the ship which was a good time-passer –

at least it was at night in the smoking-room when the men were getting freshened up from the day's monotonies and dullnesses. It was the completing of non-complete stories. That is to say, a man would tell all of a story except the finish, then the others would try to supply the ending out of their own invention. When every one who wanted a chance had had it, the man who had introduced the story would give it its original ending – then you could take your choice. Sometimes the new endings turned out to be better than the old one. But the story which called out the most persistent and determined and ambitious effort was one which had no ending, and so there was nothing to compare the new-made endings with. The man who told it said he could furnish the particulars up to a certain point only, because that was as much of the tale as he knew. He had read it in a volume of sketches twenty-five years ago, and was interrupted before the end was reached. He would give any one fifty dollars who would finish the story to the satisfaction of a jury to be appointed by ourselves. We appointed a jury and wrestled with the tale. We invented plenty of endings, but the jury voted them all down. The jury was right. It was a tale which the author of it may possibly have completed satisfactorily, and if he really had that good fortune I would like to know what the ending was. Any ordinary man will find that the story's strength is in its middle, and that there is apparently no way to transfer it to the close, where of course it ought to be. In substance the storiette was as follows:

John Brown, aged thirty-one, good, gentle, bashful, timid, lived in a quiet village in Missouri. He was superintendent of the Presbyterian Sunday-school. It was but a humble distinction; still, it was his only official one, and he was modestly proud of it and was devoted to its work and its interests. The extreme kindliness of his nature was recognized by all; in fact, people said that he was made entirely out of good impulses and bashfulness; that he could always be counted upon for help when it was needed, and for bashfulness both when it was needed and when it wasn't.

Mary Taylor, twenty-three, modest, sweet, winning, and in character and person beautiful, was all in all to him. And he was very nearly all in all to her. She was wavering, his hopes were high. Her mother had been in opposition from the first. But she was wavering, too; he could see it. She was being touched by his warm interest in her two charity-proteges and by his contributions toward their support. These were two forlorn and aged sisters who lived in a log hut in a lonely place up a cross road four miles from Mrs. Taylor's farm. One of the sisters was crazy, and sometimes a little violent, but not often.

At last the time seemed ripe for a final advance, and Brown gathered his courage together and resolved to make it. He would take along a contribution of double the usual size, and win the mother over; with her opposition annulled, the rest of the conquest would be sure and prompt.

He took to the road in the middle of a placid Sunday afternoon in the soft Missourian summer, and he was equipped properly for his mission. He was clothed all in white linen, with a blue ribbon for a necktie, and he had on dressy tight boots. His horse and buggy were the finest that the livery stable could furnish. The lap robe was of white linen, it was new, and it had a hand-worked border that could not be rivaled in that region for beauty and elaboration.

When he was four miles out on the lonely road and was walking his horse over a wooden bridge, his straw hat blew off and fell in the creek, and floated down and lodged against a bar. He did not quite know what to do. He must have the hat, that was manifest; but how was he to get it?

Then he had an idea. The roads were empty, nobody was stirring. Yes, he would risk it. He led the horse to the roadside and set it to cropping the grass; then he undressed and put his clothes in the buggy, petted the horse a moment to secure its compassion and its loyalty, then hurried to the stream. He swam out and soon had the hat. When he got to the top of the bank the horse was gone!

His legs almost gave way under him. The horse was walking leisurely along the road. Brown trotted after it, saying, “Whoa, whoa, there’s a good fellow;” but whenever he got near enough to chance a jump for the buggy, the horse quickened its pace a little and defeated him. And so this went on, the naked man perishing with anxiety, and expecting every moment to see people come in sight. He tagged on and on, imploring the horse, beseeching the horse, till he had left a mile behind him, and was closing up on the Taylor premises; then at last he was successful, and got into the buggy. He flung on his shirt, his necktie, and his coat; then reached for – but he was too late; he sat suddenly down and pulled up the lap-robe, for he saw some one coming out of the gate – a woman; he thought. He wheeled the horse to the left, and struck briskly up the cross-road. It was perfectly straight, and exposed on both sides; but there were woods and a sharp turn three miles ahead, and he was very grateful when he got there. As he passed around the turn he slowed down to a walk, and reached for his tr – too late again.

He had come upon Mrs. Enderby, Mrs. Glossop, Mrs. Taylor, and Mary. They were on foot, and seemed tired and excited. They came at once to the buggy and shook hands, and all spoke at once, and said eagerly and earnestly, how glad they were that he was come, and how fortunate it was. And Mrs. Enderby said, impressively:

"It looks like an accident, his coming at such a time; but let no one profane it with such a name; he was sent – sent from on high."

They were all moved, and Mrs. Glossop said in an awed voice:

"Sarah Enderby, you never said a truer word in your life. This is no accident, it is a special Providence. He was sent. He is an angel – an angel as truly as ever angel was – an angel of deliverance. I say angel, Sarah Enderby, and will have no other word. Don't let any one ever say to me again, that there's no such thing as special Providences; for if this isn't one, let them account for it that can."

"I know it's so," said Mrs. Taylor, fervently. "John Brown, I could worship you; I could go down on my knees to you. Didn't something tell you? – didn't you feel that you were sent? I could kiss the hem of your laprobe."

He was not able to speak; he was helpless with shame and fright. Mrs. Taylor went on:

"Why, just look at it all around, Julia Glossop. Any person can see the hand of Providence in it. Here at noon what do we see? We see the smoke rising. I speak up and say, 'That's the Old People's cabin afire.' Didn't I, Julia Glossop?"

"The very words you said, Nancy Taylor. I was as close to you as I am now, and I heard them. You may have said hut instead of cabin, but in substance it's the same. And you were looking pale, too."

"Pale? I was that pale that if – why, you just compare it with this laprobe. Then the next thing I said was, 'Mary Taylor, tell the hired man to rig up the team-we'll go to the rescue.' And she said, 'Mother, don't you know you told him he could drive to see his people, and stay over Sunday?' And it was just so. I declare for it, I had forgotten it. 'Then,' said I, 'we'll go afoot.' And go we did. And found Sarah Enderby on the road."

"And we all went together," said Mrs. Enderby. "And found the cabin set fire to and burnt down by the crazy one, and the poor old things so old and feeble that they couldn't go afoot. And we got them to a shady place and made them as comfortable as we could, and began to wonder which way to turn to find some way to get them conveyed to Nancy Taylor's house. And I spoke up and said – now what did I say? Didn't I say, 'Providence will provide'?"

"Why sure as you live, so you did! I had forgotten it."

"So had I," said Mrs. Glossop and Mrs. Taylor; "but you certainly said it. Now wasn't that remarkable?"

"Yes, I said it. And then we went to Mr. Moseley's, two miles, and all of them were gone to the camp meeting over on Stony Fork; and then we came all the way back, two miles, and then here, another mile – and Providence has provided. You see it yourselves."

They gazed at each other awe-struck, and lifted their hands and said in unison:

"It's per-fectly wonderful."

"And then," said Mrs. Glossop, "what do you think we had better do-let Mr. Brown drive the Old People to Nancy Taylor's one at a time, or put both of them in the buggy, and him lead the horse?"

Brown gasped.

"Now, then, that's a question," said Mrs. Enderby. "You see, we are all tired out, and any way we fix it it's going to be difficult. For if Mr. Brown takes both of them, at least one of us must, go back to help him, for he can't load them into the buggy by himself, and they so helpless."

"That is so," said Mrs. Taylor. "It doesn't look-oh, how would this do? – one of us drive there with Mr. Brown, and the rest of you go along to my house and get things ready. I'll go with him.

He and I together can lift one of the Old People into the buggy; then drive her to my house and —

"But who will take care of the other one?" said Mrs. Enderby. "We musn't leave her there in the woods alone, you know – especially the crazy one. There and back is eight miles, you see."

They had all been sitting on the grass beside the buggy for a while, now, trying to rest their weary bodies. They fell silent a moment or two, and struggled in thought over the baffling situation; then Mrs. Enderby brightened and said:

"I think I've got the idea, now. You see, we can't walk any more. Think what we've done: four miles there, two to Moseley's, is six, then back to here – nine miles since noon, and not a bite to eat; I declare I don't see how we've done it; and as for me, I am just famishing. Now, somebody's got to go back, to help Mr. Brown – there's no getting around that; but whoever goes has got to ride, not walk. So my idea is this: one of us to ride back with Mr. Brown, then ride to Nancy Taylor's house with one of the Old People, leaving Mr. Brown to keep the other old one company, you all to go now to Nancy's and rest and wait; then one of you drive back and get the other one and drive her to Nancy's, and Mr. Brown walk."

"Splendid!" they all cried. "Oh, that will do – that will answer perfectly." And they all said that Mrs. Enderby had the best head for planning, in the company; and they said that they wondered that they hadn't thought of this simple plan themselves. They hadn't meant to take back the compliment, good simple souls, and didn't know they had done it. After a consultation it was decided that Mrs. Enderby should drive back with Brown, she being entitled to the distinction because she had invented the plan. Everything now being satisfactorily arranged and settled, the ladies rose, relieved and happy, and brushed down their gowns, and three of them started homeward; Mrs. Enderby set her foot on the buggy-step and was about to climb in, when Brown found a remnant of his voice and gasped out —

"Please Mrs. Enderby, call them back – I am very weak; I can't walk, I can't, indeed."

"Why, dear Mr. Brown! You do look pale; I am ashamed of myself that I didn't notice it sooner. Come back-all of you! Mr. Brown is not well. Is there anything I can do for you, Mr. Brown? – I'm real sorry. Are you in pain?"

"No, madam, only weak; I am not sick, but only just weak – lately; not long, but just lately."

The others came back, and poured out their sympathies and commiserations, and were full of self-reproaches for not having noticed how pale he was.

And they at once struck out a new plan, and soon agreed that it was by far the best of all. They would all go to Nancy Taylor's house and see to Brown's needs first. He could lie on the sofa in the parlor, and while Mrs. Taylor and Mary took care of him the other two ladies would take the buggy and go and get one of the Old People, and leave one of themselves with the other one, and —

By this time, without any solicitation, they were at the horse's head and were beginning to turn him around. The danger was imminent, but Brown found his voice again and saved himself. He said —

"But ladies, you are overlooking something which makes the plan impracticable. You see, if you bring one of them home, and one remains behind with the other, there will be three persons there when one of you comes back for that other, for some one must drive the buggy back, and three can't come home in it."

They all exclaimed, "Why, sure-ly, that is so!" and they were, all perplexed again.

"Dear, dear, what can we do?" said Mrs. Glossop; "it is the most mixed-up thing that ever was. The fox and the goose and the corn and things – oh, dear, they are nothing to it."

They sat wearily down once more, to further torture their tormented heads for a plan that would work. Presently Mary offered a plan; it was her first effort. She said:

"I am young and strong, and am refreshed, now. Take Mr. Brown to our house, and give him help – you see how plainly he needs it. I will go back and take care of the Old People; I can be there in twenty minutes. You can go on and do what you first started to do – wait on the main road at our house until somebody comes along with a wagon; then send and bring away the three of us. You won't have to wait long; the farmers will soon be coming back from town, now. I will keep old Polly patient and cheered up – the crazy one doesn't need it."

This plan was discussed and accepted; it seemed the best that could be done, in the circumstances, and the Old People must be getting discouraged by this time.

Brown felt relieved, and was deeply thankful. Let him once get to the main road and he would find a way to escape.

Then Mrs. Taylor said:

“The evening chill will be coming on, pretty soon, and those poor old burnt-out things will need some kind of covering. Take the lap-robe with you, dear.”

“Very well, Mother, I will.”

She stepped to the buggy and put out her hand to take it —

That was the end of the tale. The passenger who told it said that when he read the story twenty-five years ago in a train he was interrupted at that point – the train jumped off a bridge.

At first we thought we could finish the story quite easily, and we set to work with confidence; but it soon began to appear that it was not a simple thing, but difficult and baffling. This was on account of Brown’s character – great generosity and kindliness, but complicated with unusual shyness and diffidence, particularly in the presence of ladies. There was his love for Mary, in a hopeful state but not yet secure – just in a condition, indeed, where its affair must be handled with great tact, and no mistakes made, no offense given. And there was the mother wavering, half willing-by adroit and flawless diplomacy to be won over, now, or perhaps never at all. Also, there were the helpless Old People yonder in the woods waiting-their fate and

Brown's happiness to be determined by what Brown should do within the next two seconds. Mary was reaching for the lap-robe; Brown must decide-there was no time to be lost.

Of course none but a happy ending of the story would be accepted by the jury; the finish must find Brown in high credit with the ladies, his behavior without blemish, his modesty unwounded, his character for self sacrifice maintained, the Old People rescued through him, their benefactor, all the party proud of him, happy in him, his praises on all their tongues.

We tried to arrange this, but it was beset with persistent and irreconcilable difficulties. We saw that Brown's shyness would not allow him to give up the lap-robe. This would offend Mary and her mother; and it would surprise the other ladies, partly because this stinginess toward the suffering Old People would be out of character with Brown, and partly because he was a special Providence and could not properly act so. If asked to explain his conduct, his shyness would not allow him to tell the truth, and lack of invention and practice would find him incapable of contriving a lie that would wash. We worked at the troublesome problem until three in the morning.

Meantime Mary was still reaching for the lap-robe. We gave it up, and decided to let her continue to reach. It is the reader's privilege to determine for himself how the thing came out.

CHAPTER III

It is more trouble to make a maxim than it is to do right.

– Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

On the seventh day out we saw a dim vast bulk standing up out of the wastes of the Pacific and knew that that spectral promontory was Diamond Head, a piece of this world which I had not seen before for twenty-nine years. So we were nearing Honolulu, the capital city of the Sandwich Islands – those islands which to me were Paradise; a Paradise which I had been longing all those years to see again. Not any other thing in the world could have stirred me as the sight of that great rock did.

In the night we anchored a mile from shore. Through my port I could see the twinkling lights of Honolulu and the dark bulk of the mountain-range that stretched away right and left. I could not make out the beautiful Nuuana valley, but I knew where it lay, and remembered how it used to look in the old times. We used to ride up it on horseback in those days – we young people – and branch off and gather bones in a sandy region where one of the first Kamehameha's battles was fought. He was a remarkable man, for a king; and he was also a remarkable man for a savage. He was a mere kinglet and of little or no consequence at the time of Captain Cook's arrival in 1788; but about four years afterward he conceived the idea of enlarging his sphere of influence. That is a courteous modern phrase which means robbing your neighbor – for your neighbor's benefit; and the great theater of its benevolences is Africa. Kamehameha went to war, and in the course of ten years he whipped out all the other kings and made himself master of every one of the nine or ten islands that form the group. But he did more than that. He bought ships, freighted them with sandal wood and other native products, and sent them as far as South America and China; he sold to his savages the foreign stuffs and tools and utensils which came back in these ships, and started the march of civilization. It is doubtful if the match to this extraordinary thing is to be found in the history of any other savage. Savages are eager to learn from the white man any new way to kill each other, but it is not their habit to seize with avidity and apply with energy the larger and nobler ideas which he offers them. The details of Kamehameha's history show that he was always hospitably ready to examine the white man's ideas, and that he exercised a tidy discrimination in making his selections from the samples placed on view.

A shrewder discrimination than was exhibited by his son and successor, Liholiho, I think. Liholiho could have qualified as a reformer, perhaps, but as a king he was a mistake. A mistake because he tried to be both king and reformer. This is mixing fire and gunpowder together. A king has no proper business with reforming. His best policy is to keep things as they are; and if he can't do that, he ought to try to make them worse than they are. This is not guesswork; I have thought over this matter a good deal, so that if I should ever have a chance to become a king I would know how to conduct the business in the best way.

When Liholiho succeeded his father he found himself possessed of an equipment of royal tools and safeguards which a wiser king would have known how to husband, and judiciously employ, and make profitable. The entire country was under the one scepter, and his was that scepter. There was an Established Church, and he was the head of it. There was a Standing Army, and he was the head of that; an Army of 114 privates under command of 27 Generals and a Field Marshal. There was a proud and ancient Hereditary Nobility. There was still one other asset. This was the tabu – an agent endowed with a mysterious and stupendous power, an agent not found among the properties of any European monarch, a tool of inestimable value in the business. Liholiho was headmaster of the tabu. The tabu was the most ingenious and effective of all the inventions that has ever been devised for keeping a people's privileges satisfactorily restricted.

It required the sexes to live in separate houses. It did not allow people to eat in either house; they must eat in another place. It did not allow a man's woman-folk to enter his house. It did not allow the sexes to eat together; the men must eat first, and the women must wait on them. Then the women could eat what was left – if anything was left – and wait on themselves. I mean, if anything of a coarse or unpalatable sort was left, the women could have it. But not the good things, the fine things, the choice things, such as pork, poultry, bananas, cocoanuts, the choicer varieties of fish, and so on. By the tabu, all these were sacred to the men; the women spent their lives longing for them and wondering what they might taste like; and they died without finding out.

These rules, as you see, were quite simple and clear. It was easy to remember them; and useful. For the penalty for infringing any rule in the whole list was death. Those women easily learned to put up with shark and taro and dog for a diet when the other things were so expensive.

It was death for any one to walk upon tabu'd ground; or defile a tabu'd thing with his touch; or fail in due servility to a chief; or step upon the king's shadow. The nobles and the King and the priests were always suspending little rags here and there and yonder, to give notice to the people that the decorated spot or thing was tabu, and death lurking near. The struggle for life was difficult and chancy in the islands in those days.

Thus advantageously was the new king situated. Will it be believed that the first thing he did was to destroy his Established Church, root and branch? He did indeed do that. To state the case figuratively, he was a prosperous sailor who burnt his ship and took to a raft. This Church was a horrid thing. It heavily oppressed the people; it kept them always trembling in the gloom of mysterious threatenings; it slaughtered them in sacrifice before its grotesque idols of wood and stone; it cowed them, it terrorized them, it made them slaves to its priests, and through the priests to the king. It was the best friend a king could have, and the most dependable. To a professional reformer who should annihilate so frightful and so devastating a power as this Church, reverence and praise would be due; but to a king who should do it, could properly be due nothing but reproach; reproach softened by sorrow; sorrow for his unfitness for his position.

He destroyed his Established Church, and his kingdom is a republic today, in consequence of that act.

When he destroyed the Church and burned the idols he did a mighty thing for civilization and for his people's weal – but it was not "business." It was unkingly, it was inartistic. It made trouble for his line. The American missionaries arrived while the burned idols were still smoking. They found the nation without a religion, and they repaired the defect. They offered their own religion and it was gladly received. But it was no support to arbitrary kingship, and so the kingly power began to weaken from that day. Forty-seven years later, when I was in the islands, Kamehameha V. was trying to repair Liholiho's blunder, and not succeeding. He had set up an Established Church and made himself the head of it. But it was only a pinchbeck thing, an imitation, a bauble, an empty show. It had no power, no value for a king. It could not harry or burn or slay, it in no way resembled the admirable machine which Liholiho destroyed. It was an Established Church without an Establishment; all the people were Dissenters.

Long before that, the kingship had itself become but a name, a show. At an early day the missionaries had turned it into something very much like a republic; and here lately the business whites have turned it into something exactly like it.

In Captain Cook's time (1778), the native population of the islands was estimated at 400,000; in 1836 at something short of 200,000, in 1866 at 50,000; it is to-day, per census, 25,000. All intelligent people praise Kamehameha I. and Liholiho for conferring upon their people the great boon of civilization. I would do it myself, but my intelligence is out of repair, now, from over-work.

When I was in the islands nearly a generation ago, I was acquainted with a young American couple who had among their belongings an attractive little son of the age of seven – attractive but not practicably companionable with me, because he knew no English. He had played from his birth with the little Kanakas on his father's plantation, and had preferred their language and would learn no other. The family removed to America a month after I arrived in the islands, and straightway the boy began to lose his Kanaka and pick up English. By the time he was twelve he hadn't a word of Kanaka left; the language had wholly departed from his tongue and from his comprehension. Nine years later, when he was twenty-one, I came upon the family in one of the lake towns of New York, and the mother told me about an adventure which her son had been having. By trade he was now a professional diver. A passenger boat had been caught in a storm on the lake, and had gone down, carrying her people with her. A few days later the young diver descended, with his armor on, and entered the berth-saloon of the boat, and stood at the foot of the companionway, with his hand on the rail, peering through the dim water. Presently something touched him on the shoulder, and he turned and found a dead man swaying and bobbing about him and seemingly inspecting him inquiringly. He was paralyzed with fright.

His entry had disturbed the water, and now he discerned a number of dim corpses making for him and wagging their heads and swaying their bodies like sleepy people trying to dance. His senses forsook him, and in that condition he was drawn to the surface. He was put to bed at home, and was soon very ill. During some days he had seasons of delirium which lasted several hours at a time; and while they lasted he talked Kanaka incessantly and glibly; and Kanaka only. He was still very ill, and he talked to me in that tongue; but I did not understand it, of course. The doctor-books tell us that cases like this are not uncommon. Then the doctors ought to study the cases and find out how to multiply them. Many languages and things get mislaid in a person's head, and stay mislaid for lack of this remedy.

Many memories of my former visit to the islands came up in my mind while we lay at anchor in front of Honolulu that night. And pictures – pictures pictures – an enchanting procession of them! I was impatient for the morning to come.

When it came it brought disappointment, of course. Cholera had broken out in the town, and we were not allowed to have any communication with the shore. Thus suddenly did my dream of twenty-nine years go to ruin. Messages came from friends, but the friends themselves I was not to have any sight of. My lecture-hall was ready, but I was not to see that, either.

Several of our passengers belonged in Honolulu, and these were sent ashore; but nobody could go ashore and return. There were people on shore who were booked to go with us to Australia, but we could not receive them; to do it would cost us a quarantine-term in Sydney. They could have escaped the day before, by ship to San Francisco; but the bars had been put up, now, and they might have to wait weeks before any ship could venture to give them a passage any whither. And there were hardships for others. An elderly lady and her son, recreation-seekers from Massachusetts, had wandered westward, further and further from home, always intending to take the return track, but always concluding to go still a little further; and now here they were at anchor before Honolulu positively their last westward-bound indulgence – they had made up their minds to that – but where is the use in making up your mind in this world? It is usually a waste of time to do it. These two would have to stay with us as far as Australia. Then they could go on around the world, or go back the way they had come; the distance and the accommodations and outlay of time would be just the same, whichever of the two routes they might elect to take. Think of it: a projected excursion of five hundred miles gradually enlarged, without any elaborate degree of intention, to a possible twenty-four thousand. However, they were used to extensions by this time, and did not mind this new one much.

And we had with us a lawyer from Victoria, who had been sent out by the Government on an international matter, and he had brought his wife with him and left the children at home with the servants and now what was to be done? Go ashore amongst the cholera and take the risks? Most certainly not. They decided to go on, to the Fiji islands, wait there a fortnight for the next ship, and then sail for home. They couldn't foresee that they wouldn't see a homeward-bound ship again for six weeks, and that no word could come to them from the children, and no word go from them to the children in all that time. It is easy to make plans in this world; even a cat can do it; and when one is out in those remote oceans it is noticeable that a cat's plans and a man's are worth about the same. There is much the same shrinkage in both, in the matter of values.

There was nothing for us to do but sit about the decks in the shade of the awnings and look at the distant shore. We lay in luminous blue water; shoreward the water was green-green and brilliant; at the shore itself it broke in a long white ruffle, and with no crash, no sound that we could hear. The town was buried under a mat of foliage that looked like a cushion of moss. The silky mountains were clothed in soft, rich splendors of melting color, and some of the cliffs were veiled in slanting mists. I recognized it all. It was just as I had seen it long before, with nothing of its beauty lost, nothing of its charm wanting.

A change had come, but that was political, and not visible from the ship. The monarchy of my day was gone, and a republic was sitting in its seat. It was not a material change. The old imitation pomps, the fuss and feathers, have departed, and the royal trademark – that is about all that one could miss, I suppose. That imitation monarchy, was grotesque enough, in my time; if it had held on another thirty years it would have been a monarchy without subjects of the king's race.

We had a sunset of a very fine sort. The vast plain of the sea was marked off in bands of sharply-contrasted colors: great stretches of dark blue, others of purple, others of polished bronze; the billowy mountains showed all sorts of dainty browns and greens, blues and purples and blacks, and the rounded velvety backs of certain of them made one want to stroke them, as one would the sleek back of a cat. The long, sloping promontory projecting into the sea at the west turned dim and leaden and spectral, then became suffused with pink – dissolved itself in a pink dream, so to speak, it seemed so airy and unreal. Presently the cloud-rack was flooded with fiery splendors, and these were copied on the surface of the sea, and it made one drunk with delight to look upon it.

From talks with certain of our passengers whose home was Honolulu, and from a sketch by Mrs. Mary H. Krout, I was able to perceive what the Honolulu of to-day is, as compared with the Honolulu of my time. In my time it was a beautiful little town, made up of snow-white wooden cottages deliciously smothered in tropical vines and flowers and trees and shrubs; and its coral roads and streets were hard and smooth, and as white as the houses. The outside aspects of the place suggested the presence of a modest and comfortable prosperity – a general prosperity – perhaps one might strengthen the term and say universal. There were no fine houses, no fine furniture. There were no decorations. Tallow candles furnished the light for the bedrooms, a whale-oil lamp furnished it for the parlor. Native matting served as carpeting. In the parlor one would find two or three lithographs on the walls – portraits as a rule: Kamehameha IV., Louis Kossuth, Jenny Lind; and may be an engraving or two: Rebecca at the Well, Moses smiting the rock, Joseph's servants finding the cup in Benjamin's sack. There would be a center table, with books of a tranquil sort on it: The Whole Duty of Man, Baxter's Saints' Rest, Fox's Martyrs, Tupper's Proverbial Philosophy, bound copies of The Missionary Herald and of Father Damon's Seaman's Friend. A melodeon; a music stand, with 'Willie, We have Missed You', 'Star of the Evening', 'Roll on Silver Moon', 'Are We Most There', 'I Would not Live Alway', and other songs of love and sentiment, together with an assortment of hymns. A what-not with semi-globular glass paperweights, enclosing miniature pictures of ships, New England rural snowstorms, and the like; sea-shells with Bible texts carved on them in cameo style; native curios; whale's tooth with full-rigged ship carved on it. There was nothing reminiscent of foreign parts, for nobody had been abroad. Trips were made to San Francisco, but that could not be called going abroad. Comprehensively speaking, nobody traveled.

But Honolulu has grown wealthy since then, and of course wealth has introduced changes; some of the old simplicities have disappeared. Here is a modern house, as pictured by Mrs. Krout:

> "Almost every house is surrounded by extensive lawns and gardens enclosed by walls of volcanic stone or by thick hedges of the brilliant hibiscus.
>
> "The houses are most tastefully and comfortably furnished; the floors are either of hard wood covered with rugs or with fine Indian matting, while there is a preference, as in most warm countries, for rattan or bamboo furniture; there are the usual accessories of bric-a-brac, pictures, books, and curios from all parts of the world, for these island dwellers are indefatigable travelers.
>
> "Nearly every house has what is called a lanai. It is a large apartment, roofed, floored, open on three sides, with a door or a draped archway opening into the drawing-room. Frequently the roof is formed by the thick interlacing boughs of the hou tree, impervious to the sun and even to the rain, except in violent storms. Vines are trained about the sides – the stephanotis or some one of the countless fragrant and blossoming trailers which abound in the islands. There are also curtains of matting that may be drawn to exclude the sun or rain. The floor is bare for coolness, or partially covered with rugs, and the lanai is prettily furnished with comfortable chairs, sofas, and tables loaded with flowers, or wonderful ferns in pots.
>
> "The lanai is the favorite reception room, and here at any social function the musical program is given and cakes and

> ices are served; here morning callers are received, or gay riding parties, the ladies in pretty divided skirts, worn for convenience in riding astride, – the universal mode adopted by Europeans and Americans, as well as by the natives.
>
> “The comfort and luxury of such an apartment, especially at a seashore villa, can hardly be imagined. The soft breezes sweep across it, heavy with the fragrance of jasmine and gardenia, and through the swaying boughs of palm and mimosa there are glimpses of rugged mountains, their summits veiled in clouds, of purple sea with the white surf beating eternally against the reefs, whiter still in the yellow sunlight or the magical moonlight of the tropics.”

There: rugs, ices, pictures, lanais, worldly books, sinful bric-a-brac fetched from everywhere. And the ladies riding astride. These are changes, indeed. In my time the native women rode astride, but the white ones lacked the courage to adopt their wise custom. In my time ice was seldom seen in Honolulu. It sometimes came in sailing vessels from New England as ballast; and then, if there happened to be a man-of-war in port and balls and suppers raging by consequence, the ballast was worth six hundred dollars a ton, as is evidenced by reputable tradition. But the ice-machine has traveled all over the world, now, and brought ice within everybody’s reach. In Lapland and Spitzbergen no one uses native ice in our day, except the bears and the walruses.

The bicycle is not mentioned. It was not necessary. We know that it is there, without inquiring. It is everywhere. But for it, people could never have had summer homes on the summit of

Mont Blanc; before its day, property up there had but a nominal value. The ladies of the Hawaiian capital learned too late the right way to occupy a horse – too late to get much benefit from it. The riding-horse is retiring from business everywhere in the world. In Honolulu a few years from now he will be only a tradition.

We all know about Father Damien, the French priest who voluntarily forsook the world and went to the leper island of Molokai to labor among its population of sorrowful exiles who wait there, in slow-consuming misery, for death to come and release them from their troubles; and we know that the thing which he knew beforehand would happen, did happen: that he became a leper himself, and died of that horrible disease. There was still another case of self-sacrifice, it appears. I asked after "Billy" Ragsdale, interpreter to the Parliament in my time – a half-white. He was a brilliant young fellow, and very popular. As an interpreter he would have been hard to match anywhere. He used to stand up in the Parliament and turn the English speeches into Hawaiian and the Hawaiian speeches into English with a readiness and a volubility that were astonishing. I asked after him, and was told that his prosperous career was cut short in a sudden and unexpected way, just as he was about to marry a beautiful half-caste girl. He discovered, by some nearly invisible sign about his skin, that the poison of leprosy was in him. The secret was his own, and might be kept concealed for years; but he would not be treacherous to the girl that loved him; he would not marry her to a doom like his. And so he put his affairs in order, and went around to all his friends and bade them good-bye, and sailed in the leper ship to Molokai. There he died the loathsome and lingering death that all lepers die.

In this place let me insert a paragraph or two from "The Paradise of the Pacific" (Rev. H. H. Gowen) —

> "Poor lepers! It is easy for those who have no relatives or friends among them to enforce the decree of segregation to the letter, but who can write of the terrible, the heart-breaking scenes which that enforcement has brought about?
>
> "A man upon Hawaii was suddenly taken away after a summary arrest, leaving behind him a helpless wife about to give birth to a babe. The devoted wife with great pain and risk came the whole journey to Honolulu, and pleaded until the authorities were unable to resist her entreaty that she might go and live like a leper with her leper husband.
>
> "A woman in the prime of life and activity is condemned as an incipient leper, suddenly removed from her home, and her husband returns to find his two helpless babes moaning for their lost mother.
>
> "Imagine it! The case of the babies is hard, but its bitterness is a trifle – less than a trifle – less than nothing – compared to what the mother must suffer; and suffer minute by minute, hour by hour, day by day, month by month, year by year, without respite, relief, or any abatement of her pain till she dies.
>
> "One woman, Luka Kaaukau, has been living with her leper husband in the settlement for twelve years. The man has scarcely a joint left, his limbs are only distorted

> ulcerated stumps, for four years his wife has put every particle of food into his mouth. He wanted his wife to abandon his wretched carcass long ago, as she herself was sound and well, but Luka said that she was content to remain and wait on the man she loved till the spirit should be freed from its burden.
>
> "I myself have known hard cases enough: – of a girl, apparently in full health, decorating the church with me at Easter, who before Christmas is taken away as a confirmed leper; of a mother hiding her child in the mountains for years so that not even her dearest friends knew that she had a child alive, that he might not be taken away; of a respectable white man taken away from his wife and family, and compelled to become a dweller in the Leper Settlement, where he is counted dead, even by the insurance companies."

And one great pity of it all is, that these poor sufferers are innocent. The leprosy does not come of sins which they committed, but of sins committed by their ancestors, who escaped the curse of leprosy!

Mr. Gowan has made record of a certain very striking circumstance. Would you expect to find in that awful Leper Settlement a custom worthy to be transplanted to your own country? They have one such, and it is inexpressibly touching and beautiful. When death sets open the prison-door of life there, the band salutes the freed soul with a burst of glad music!

CHAPTER IV

A dozen direct censures are easier to bear than one morganatic compliment.

– Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

Sailed from Honolulu. – From diary:

Sept. 2. Flocks of flying fish-slim, shapely, graceful, and intensely white. With the sun on them they look like a flight of silver fruit-knives. They are able to fly a hundred yards.

Sept. 3. In 9 deg. 50' north latitude, at breakfast. Approaching the equator on a long slant. Those of us who have never seen the equator are a good deal excited. I think I would rather see it than any other thing in the world. We entered the "doldrums" last night – variable winds, bursts of rain, intervals of calm, with chopping seas and a wobbly and drunken motion to the ship – a condition of things findable in other regions sometimes, but present in the doldrums always. The globe-girdling belt called the doldrums is 20 degrees wide, and the thread called the equator lies along the middle of it.

Sept. 4. Total eclipse of the moon last night. At 7.30 it began to go off. At total – or about that – it was like a rich rosy cloud with a tumbled surface framed in the circle and projecting from it – a bulge of strawberry-ice, so to speak. At half-eclipse the moon was like a gilded acorn in its cup.

Sept. 5. Closing in on the equator this noon. A sailor explained to a young girl that the ship's speed is poor because we are climbing up the bulge toward the center of the globe; but that when we should once get over, at the equator, and start downhill, we should fly. When she asked him the other day what the fore-yard was, he said it was the front yard, the open area in the front end of the ship. That man has a good deal of learning stored up, and the girl is likely to get it all.

Afternoon. Crossed the equator. In the distance it looked like a blue ribbon stretched across the ocean. Several passengers kodak'd it. We had no fool ceremonies, no fantastics, no horse play. All that sort of thing has gone out. In old times a sailor, dressed as Neptune, used to come in over the bows, with his suite, and lather up and shave everybody who was crossing the equator for the first time, and then cleanse these unfortunates by swinging them from the yard-arm and ducking them three times in the sea. This was considered funny. Nobody knows why. No, that is not true. We do know why. Such a thing could never be funny on land; no part of the old-time grotesque performances gotten up on shipboard to celebrate the passage of the line could ever be funny on shore – they would seem dreary and witless to shore people. But the shore people would change their minds about it at sea, on a long voyage. On such a voyage, with its eternal monotonies, people's intellects deteriorate; the owners of the intellects soon reach a point where they almost seem to prefer childish things to things of a maturer degree. One is often surprised at the juvenilities which grown people indulge in at sea, and the interest they take in them, and the consuming enjoyment they get out of them. This is on long voyages only. The mind gradually becomes inert, dull, blunted; it loses its accustomed interest in intellectual things; nothing but horse-play can rouse it, nothing but wild and foolish grotesqueries can entertain it. On short voyages it makes no such exposure of itself; it hasn't time to slump down to this sorrowful level.

The short-voyage passenger gets his chief physical exercise out of "horse-billiards" – shovel-board. It is a good game. We play it in this ship. A quartermaster chalks off a diagram like this-on the deck.

The player uses a cue that is like a broom-handle with a quarter-moon of wood fastened to the end of it. With this he shoves wooden disks the size of a saucer – he gives the disk a vigorous shove and sends it fifteen or twenty feet along the deck and lands it in one of the squares if he can. If it stays there till the inning is played out, it will count as many points in the game as the figure in the square it has stopped in represents. The adversary plays to knock that disk out and leave his own in its place – particularly if it rests upon the 9 or 10 or some other of the high numbers; but if it rests in the "10off" he backs it up – lands his disk behind it a foot or two, to make it difficult for its owner to knock it out of that damaging place and improve his record. When the inning is played out it may be found that each adversary has placed his four disks where they count; it may be found that some of them are touching chalk lines and not counting; and very often it will be found that there has been a general wreckage, and that not a disk has been left within the diagram. Anyway, the result is recorded, whatever it is, and the game goes on. The game is 100 points, and it takes from twenty minutes to forty to play it, according to luck and the condition of the sea. It is an exciting game, and the crowd of spectators furnish abundance of applause for fortunate shots and plenty of laughter for the other kind. It is a game of skill, but at the same time the uneasy motion of the ship is constantly interfering with skill; this makes it a chancy game, and the element of luck comes largely in.

We had a couple of grand tournaments, to determine who should be "Champion of the Pacific"; they included among the participants nearly all the passengers, of both sexes, and the officers of the ship, and they afforded many days of stupendous interest and excitement, and murderous exercise – for horse-billiards is a physically violent game.

The figures in the following record of some of the closing games in the first tournament will show, better than any description, how very chancy the game is. The losers here represented had all been winners in the previous games of the series, some of them by fine majorities:

Chase,	102	Mrs. D.,	57	Mortimer,	105	The Surgeon,	92
Miss C.,	105	Mrs. T.,	9	Clemens,	101	Taylor,	92
Taylor,	109	Davies,	95	Miss C.,	108	Mortimer,	55
Thomas,	102	Roper,	76	Clemens,	111	Miss C.,	89
Coomber,	106	Chase,	98				

And so on; until but three couples of winners were left. Then I beat my man, young Smith beat his man, and Thomas beat his. This reduced the combatants to three. Smith and I took the deck, and I led off. At the close of the first inning I was 10 worse than nothing and Smith had scored 7. The luck continued against me. When I was 57, Smith was 97 – within 3 of out. The luck changed then. He picked up a 10-off or so, and couldn't recover. I beat him.

The next game would end tournament No. 1.

Mr. Thomas and I were the contestants. He won the lead and went to the bat – so to speak. And there he stood, with the crotch of his cue resting against his disk while the ship rose slowly up, sank slowly down, rose again, sank again. She never seemed to rise to suit him exactly. She started up once more; and when she was nearly ready for the turn, he let drive and landed his disk just within the left-hand end of the 10. (Applause). The umpire proclaimed "a good 10," and the game-keeper set it down. I played: my disk grazed the edge of Mr. Thomas's disk, and went out of the diagram. (No applause.)

Mr. Thomas played again – and landed his second disk alongside of the first, and almost touching its right-hand side. "Good 10." (Great applause.)

I played, and missed both of them. (No applause.)

Mr. Thomas delivered his third shot and landed his disk just at the right of the other two. " Good 10." (Immense applause.)

There they lay, side by side, the three in a row. It did not seem possible that anybody could miss them. Still I did it. (Immense silence.)

Mr. Thomas played his last disk. It seems incredible, but he actually landed that disk alongside of the others, and just to the right of them-a straight solid row of 4 disks. (Tumultuous and long-continued applause.)

Then I played my last disk. Again it did not seem possible that anybody could miss that row – a row which would have been 14 inches long if the disks had been clamped together; whereas, with the spaces separating them they made a longer row than that. But I did it. It may be that I was getting nervous.

I think it unlikely that that innings has ever had its parallel in the history of horse-billiards. To place the four disks side by side in the 10 was an extraordinary feat; indeed, it was a kind of miracle. To miss them was another miracle. It will take a century to produce another man who can place the four disks in the 10; and longer than that to find a man who can't knock them out. I was ashamed of my performance at the time, but now that I reflect upon it I see that it was rather fine and difficult.

Mr. Thomas kept his luck, and won the game, and later the championship.

In a minor tournament I won the prize, which was a Waterbury watch. I put it in my trunk. In Pretoria, South Africa, nine months afterward, my proper watch broke down and I took the Waterbury out, wound it, set it by the great clock on the Parliament House (8.05), then went back to my room and went to bed, tired from a long railway journey. The parliamentary clock had a peculiarity which I was not aware of at the time – a peculiarity which exists in no other clock, and would not exist in that one if it had been made by a sane person; on the half-hour it strikes the succeeding hour, then strikes the hour again, at the proper time. I lay reading and smoking awhile; then, when I could hold my eyes open no longer and was about to put out the light, the great clock began to boom, and I counted ten. I reached for the Waterbury to see how it was getting along. It was marking 9.30. It seemed rather poor speed for a three-dollar watch, but I supposed that the climate was affecting it. I shoved it half an hour ahead; and took to my book and waited to see what would happen. At 10 the great clock struck ten again. I looked – the Waterbury was marking half-past 10. This was too much speed for the money, and it troubled me. I pushed the hands back a half hour, and waited once more; I had to, for I was vexed and restless now, and my sleepiness was gone. By and by the great clock struck 11. The Waterbury was marking 10.30. I pushed it ahead half an hour, with some show of temper. By and by the great clock struck 11 again. The Waterbury showed up 11.30, now, and I beat her brains out against the bedstead. I was sorry next day, when I found out.

To return to the ship.

The average human being is a perverse creature; and when he isn't that, he is a practical joker. The result to the other person concerned is about the same: that is, he is made to suffer. The washing down of the decks begins at a very early hour in all ships; in but few ships are any measures taken to protect the passengers, either by waking or warning them, or by sending a steward to close their ports. And so the deckwashers have their opportunity, and they use it. They send a bucket of water slashing along the side of the ship and into the ports, drenching the passenger's clothes, and often the passenger himself. This good old custom prevailed in this ship, and under unusually favorable circumstances, for in the blazing tropical regions a removable zinc thing like a sugarshovel projects from the port to catch the wind and bring it in; this thing catches the wash-water and brings it in, too – and in flooding abundance. Mrs. I., an invalid, had to sleep on the locker – sofa under her port, and every time she overslept and thus failed to take care of herself, the deck-washers drowned her out.

And the painters, what a good time they had! This ship would be going into dock for a month in Sydney for repairs; but no matter, painting was going on all the time somewhere or other. The ladies' dresses were constantly getting ruined, nevertheless protests and supplications went for nothing. Sometimes a lady, taking an afternoon nap on deck near a ventilator or some other thing that didn't need painting, would wake up by and by and find that the humorous painter had been noiselessly daubing that thing and had splattered her white gown all over with little greasy yellow spots.

The blame for this untimely painting did not lie with the ship's officers, but with custom. As far back as Noah's time it became law that ships must be constantly painted and fussed at when at sea; custom grew out of the law, and at sea custom knows no death; this custom will continue until the sea goes dry.

Sept. 8. – Sunday. We are moving so nearly south that we cross only about two meridians of longitude a day. This morning we were in longitude 178 west from Greenwich, and 57 degrees west from San Francisco. To-morrow we shall be close to the center of the globe – the 180th degree of west longitude and 180th degree of east longitude.

And then we must drop out a day – lose a day out of our lives, a day never to be found again. We shall all die one day earlier than from the beginning of time we were foreordained to die. We shall be a day behindhand all through eternity. We shall always be saying to the other angels, "Fine day today," and they will be always retorting, "But it isn't to-day, it's tomorrow." We shall be in a state of confusion all the time and shall never know what true happiness is.

Next Day. Sure enough, it has happened. Yesterday it was September 8, Sunday; to-day, per the bulletin-board at the head of the companionway, it is September 10, Tuesday. There is something uncanny about it. And uncomfortable. In fact, nearly unthinkable, and wholly unrealizable, when one comes to consider it. While we were crossing the 180th meridian it was Sunday in the stern of the ship where my family were, and Tuesday in the bow where I was. They were there eating the half of a fresh apple on the 8th, and I was at the same time eating the other half of it on the 10th – and I could notice how stale it was, already. The family were the same age that they were when I had left them five minutes before, but I was a day older now than I was then. The day they were living in stretched behind them half way round the globe, across the Pacific Ocean and America and Europe; the day I was living in stretched in front of me around the other half to meet it. They were stupendous days for bulk and stretch; apparently much larger days than we had ever been in before. All previous days had been but shrunk-up little things by comparison. The difference in temperature between the two days was very marked, their day being hotter than mine because it was closer to the equator.

Along about the moment that we were crossing the Great Meridian a child was born in the steerage, and now there is no way to tell which day it was born on. The nurse thinks it was Sunday, the surgeon thinks it was Tuesday. The child will never know its own birthday. It will always be choosing first one and then the other, and will never be able to make up its mind permanently. This will breed vacillation and uncertainty in its opinions about religion, and politics, and business, and sweethearts, and everything, and will undermine its principles, and rot them away, and make the poor thing characterless, and its success in life impossible. Every one in the ship says so. And this is not all – in fact, not the worst. For there is an enormously rich brewer in the ship who said as much as ten days ago, that if the child was born on his birthday he would give it ten thousand dollars to start its little life with. His birthday was Monday, the 9th of September.

If the ships all moved in the one direction – westward, I mean – the world would suffer a prodigious loss – in the matter of valuable time, through the dumping overboard on the Great Meridian of such multitudes of days by ships crews and passengers. But fortunately the ships do not all sail west, half of them sail east. So there is no real loss. These latter pick up all the discarded days and add them to the world's stock again; and about as good as new, too; for of course the salt water preserves them.

CHAPTER V

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

– Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

WEDNESDAY, Sept. 11. In this world we often make mistakes of judgment. We do not as a rule get out of them sound and whole, but sometimes we do. At dinner yesterday evening-present, a mixture of Scotch, English, American, Canadian, and Australasian folk – a discussion broke out about the pronunciation of certain Scottish words. This was private ground, and the non-Scotch nationalities, with one exception, discreetly kept still. But I am not discreet, and I took a hand. I didn't know anything about the subject, but I took a hand just to have something to do. At that moment the word in dispute was the word three. One Scotchman was claiming that the peasantry of Scotland pronounced it three, his adversaries claimed that they didn't – that they pronounced it 'thraw'. The solitary Scot was having a sultry time of it, so I thought I would enrich him with my help. In my position I was necessarily quite impartial, and was equally as well and as ill equipped to fight on the one side as on the other. So I spoke up and said the peasantry pronounced the word three, not thraw. It was an error of judgment. There was a moment of astonished and ominous silence, then weather ensued. The storm rose and spread in a surprising way, and I was snowed under in a very few minutes. It was a bad defeat for me – a kind of Waterloo. It promised to remain so, and I wished I had had better sense than to enter upon such a forlorn enterprise. But just then I had a saving thought – at least a thought that offered a chance. While the storm was still raging, I made up a Scotch couplet, and then spoke up and said:

"Very well, don't say any more. I confess defeat. I thought I knew, but I see my mistake. I was deceived by one of your Scotch poets."

"A Scotch poet! O come! Name him."

"Robert Burns."

It is wonderful the power of that name. These men looked doubtful – but paralyzed, all the same. They were quite silent for a moment; then one of them said – with the reverence in his voice which is always present in a Scotchman's tone when he utters the name.

"Does Robbie Burns say – what does he say?"

"This is what he says:

'There were nae bairns but only three —
Ane at the breast, twa at the knee.'"

It ended the discussion. There was no man there profane enough, disloyal enough, to say any word against a thing which Robert Burns had settled. I shall always honor that great name for the salvation it brought me in this time of my sore need.

It is my belief that nearly any invented quotation, played with confidence, stands a good chance to deceive. There are people who think that honesty is always the best policy. This is a superstition; there are times when the appearance of it is worth six of it.

We are moving steadily southward-getting further and further down under the projecting paunch of the globe. Yesterday evening we saw the Big Dipper and the north star sink below the horizon and disappear from our world. No, not "we," but they. They saw it – somebody saw it – and told me about it. But it is no matter, I was not caring for those things, I am tired of them, any way. I think they are well enough, but one doesn't want them always hanging around. My interest was all in the Southern Cross. I had never seen that. I had heard about it all my life, and it was but natural that I should be burning to see it. No other constellation makes so much talk. I had nothing against the Big Dipper – and naturally couldn't have anything against it, since it is a citizen of our own sky, and the property of the United States – but I did want it to move out of the way and give this foreigner a chance. Judging by the size of the talk which the Southern Cross had made, I supposed it would need a sky all to itself.

But that was a mistake. We saw the Cross to-night, and it is not large. Not large, and not strikingly bright. But it was low down toward the horizon, and it may improve when it gets up higher in the sky. It is ingeniously named, for it looks just as a cross would look if it looked like something else. But that description does not describe; it is too vague, too general, too indefinite. It does after a fashion suggest a cross – a cross that is out of repair – or out of drawing; not correctly shaped. It is long, with a short cross-bar, and the cross-bar is canted out of the straight line.

It consists of four large stars and one little one. The little one is out of line and further damages the shape. It should have been placed at the intersection of the stem and the cross-bar. If you do not draw an imaginary line from star to star it does not suggest a cross – nor anything in particular.

One must ignore the little star, and leave it out of the combination – it confuses everything. If you leave it out, then you can make out of the four stars a sort of cross – out of true; or a sort of kite – out of true; or a sort of coffin-out of true.

Constellations have always been troublesome things to name. If you give one of them a fanciful name, it will always refuse to live up to it; it will always persist in not resembling the thing it has been named for. Ultimately, to satisfy the public, the fanciful name has to be discarded for a common-sense one, a manifestly descriptive one. The Great Bear remained the Great Bear – and unrecognizable as such – for thousands of years; and people complained about it all the time, and quite properly; but as soon as it became the property of the United States, Congress changed it to the Big Dipper, and now every body is satisfied, and there is no more talk about riots. I would not change the Southern Cross to the Southern Coffin, I would change it to the Southern Kite; for up there in the general emptiness is the proper home of a kite, but not for coffins and crosses and dippers. In a little while, now – I cannot tell exactly how long it will be – the globe will belong to the English-speaking race; and of course the skies also. Then the constellations will be re-organized, and polished up, and re-named – the most of them "Victoria," I reckon, but this one will sail thereafter as the Southern Kite, or go out of business. Several towns and things, here and there, have been named for Her Majesty already.

In these past few days we are plowing through a mighty Milky Way of islands. They are so thick on the map that one would hardly expect to find room between them for a canoe; yet we seldom glimpse one. Once we saw the dim bulk of a couple of them, far away, spectral and dreamy things; members of the Horne-Alofa and Fortuna. On the larger one are two rival native kings – and they have a time together. They are Catholics; so are their people. The missionaries there are French priests.

From the multitudinous islands in these regions the "recruits" for the Queensland plantations were formerly drawn; are still drawn from them, I believe. Vessels fitted up like old-time slavers came here and carried off the natives to serve as laborers in the great Australian province. In the beginning it was plain, simple man-stealing, as per testimony of the missionaries. This has been denied, but not disproven. Afterward it was forbidden by law to "recruit" a native without his consent, and governmental agents were sent in all recruiting vessels to see that the law was obeyed – which they did, according to the recruiting people; and which they sometimes didn't, according to the missionaries. A man could be lawfully recruited for a three-years term of service; he could volunteer for another term if he so chose; when his time was up he could return to his island. And would also have the means to do it; for the government required the employer to put money in its hands for this purpose before the recruit was delivered to him.

Captain Wawn was a recruiting ship-master during many years. From his pleasant book one gets the idea that the recruiting business was quite popular with the islanders, as a rule. And yet that did not make the business wholly dull and uninteresting; for one finds rather frequent little breaks in the monotony of it – like this, for instance:

"The afternoon of our arrival at Leper Island the schooner was lying almost becalmed under the lee of the lofty central portion of the island, about three-quarters of a mile from the shore. The boats were in sight at some distance. The recruiter-boat had run into a small nook on the rocky coast, under a high bank, above which stood a solitary hut backed by dense forest. The government agent and mate in the second boat lay about 400 yards to the westward.

"Suddenly we heard the sound of firing, followed by yells from the natives on shore, and then we saw the recruiter-boat push out with a seemingly diminished crew. The mate's boat pulled quickly up, took her in tow, and presently brought her alongside, all her own crew being more or less hurt. It seems the natives had called them into the place on pretence of friendship. A crowd gathered about the stern of the boat, and several fellows even got into her. All of a sudden our men were attacked with clubs and tomahawks. The recruiter escaped the first blows aimed at him, making play with his fists until he had an opportunity to draw his revolver. 'Tom Sayers,' a Mare man, received a tomahawk blow on the head which laid the scalp open but did not penetrate his skull, fortunately. 'Bobby Towns,' another Mare boatman, had both his thumbs cut in warding off blows, one of them being so nearly severed from the hand that the doctors had to finish the operation. Lihu, a Lifu boy, the recruiter's special attendant, was cut and pricked in various places, but nowhere seriously. Jack, an unlucky Tanna recruit, who had been engaged to act as boatman, received an arrow through his forearm, the head of which – apiece of bone seven or eight inches long – was still in the limb, protruding from both sides, when the boats returned. The recruiter himself would have got off scot-free had not an arrow pinned one of his fingers to the loom of the steering-oar just as they were getting off. The fight had been short but sharp. The enemy lost two men, both shot dead."

The truth is, Captain Wawn furnishes such a crowd of instances of fatal encounters between natives and French and English recruiting-crews (for the French are in the business for the plantations of New Caledonia), that one is almost persuaded that recruiting is not thoroughly popular among the islanders; else why this bristling string of attacks and bloodcurdling slaughter?

The captain lays it all to “Exeter Hall influence.” But for the meddling philanthropists, the native fathers and mothers would be fond of seeing their children carted into exile and now and then the grave, instead of weeping about it and trying to kill the kind recruiters.

CHAPTER VI

He was as shy as a newspaper is when referring to its own merits.

– Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

Captain Wawn is crystal-clear on one point: He does not approve of missionaries. They obstruct his business. They make "Recruiting," as he calls it ("Slave-Catching," as they call it in their frank way) a trouble when it ought to be just a picnic and a pleasure excursion. The missionaries have their opinion about the manner in which the Labor Traffic is conducted, and about the recruiter's evasions of the law of the Traffic, and about the traffic itself – and it is distinctly uncomplimentary to the Traffic and to everything connected with it, including the law for its regulation. Captain Wawn's book is of very recent date; I have by me a pamphlet of still later date – hot from the press, in fact – by Rev. Wm. Gray, a missionary; and the book and the pamphlet taken together make exceedingly interesting reading, to my mind.

Interesting, and easy to understand – except in one detail, which I will mention presently. It is easy to understand why the Queensland sugar planter should want the Kanaka recruit: he is cheap. Very cheap, in fact. These are the figures paid by the planter: L20 to the recruiter for getting the Kanaka or "catching" him, as the missionary phrase goes; L3 to the Queensland government for "superintending" the importation;

L5 deposited with the Government for the Kanaka's passage home when his three years are up, in case he shall live that long; about L25 to the Kanaka himself for three years' wages and clothing; total payment for the use of a man three years, L53; or, including diet, L60. Altogether, a hundred dollars a year. One can understand why the recruiter is fond of the business; the recruit costs him a few cheap presents (given to the recruit's relatives, not to the recruit himself), and the recruit is worth L20 to the recruiter when delivered in Queensland. All this is clear enough; but the thing that is not clear is, what there is about it all to persuade the recruit. He is young and brisk; life at home in his beautiful island is one lazy, long holiday to him; or if he wants to work he can turn out a couple of bags of copra per week and sell it for four or five shillings a bag. In Queensland he must get up at dawn and work from eight to twelve hours a day in the canefields – in a much hotter climate than he is used to – and get less than four shillings a week for it.

I cannot understand his willingness to go to Queensland. It is a deep puzzle to me. Here is the explanation, from the planter's point of view; at least I gather from the missionary's pamphlet that it is the planter's:

"When he comes from his home he is a savage, pure and simple. He feels no shame at his nakedness and want of adornment. When he returns home he does so well dressed, sporting a Waterbury watch, collars, cuffs, boots, and jewelry. He takes with him one or more boxes – ["Box" is English for trunk.] – well filled with clothing, a musical instrument or two, and perfumery and other articles of luxury he has learned to appreciate."

For just one moment we have a seeming flash of comprehension of, the Kanaka's reason for exiling himself: he goes away to acquire civilization. Yes, he was naked and not ashamed, now he is clothed and knows how to be ashamed; he was unenlightened; now he has a Waterbury watch; he was unrefined, now he has jewelry, and something to make him smell good; he was a nobody, a provincial, now he has been to far countries and can show off.

It all looks plausible – for a moment. Then the missionary takes hold of this explanation and pulls it to pieces, and dances on it, and damages it beyond recognition.

> "Admitting that the foregoing description is the average one, the average sequel is this: The cuffs and collars, if used at all, are carried off by youngsters, who fasten them round the leg, just below the knee, as ornaments. The Waterbury, broken and dirty, finds its way to the trader, who gives a trifle for it; or the inside is taken out, the wheels strung on a thread and hung round the neck. Knives, axes, calico, and handkerchiefs are divided among friends, and there is hardly one of these apiece. The boxes, the keys often lost on the road home, can be bought for 2s. 6d. They are to be seen rotting outside in almost any shore village on Tanna. (I speak of what I have seen.) A returned Kanaka has been furiously angry with me because I would not buy

> his trousers, which he declared were just my fit. He sold them afterwards to one of my Aniwan teachers for 9d. worth of tobacco – a pair of trousers that probably cost him 8s. or 10s. in Queensland. A coat or shirt is handy for cold weather. The white handkerchiefs, the 'senet' (perfumery), the umbrella, and perhaps the hat, are kept. The boots have to take their chance, if they do not happen to fit the copra trader. 'Senet' on the hair, streaks of paint on the face, a dirty white handkerchief round the neck, strips of turtle shell in the ears, a belt, a sheath and knife, and an umbrella constitute the rig of returned Kanaka at home the day after landing."

A hat, an umbrella, a belt, a neckerchief. Otherwise stark naked. All in a day the hard-earned "civilization" has melted away to this. And even these perishable things must presently go. Indeed, there is but a single detail of his civilization that can be depended on to stay by him: according to the missionary, he has learned to swear. This is art, and art is long, as the poet says.

In all countries the laws throw light upon the past. The Queensland law for the regulation of the Labor Traffic is a confession. It is a confession that the evils charged by the missionaries upon the traffic had existed in the past, and that they still existed when the law was made. The missionaries make a further charge: that the law is evaded by the recruiters, and that the Government Agent sometimes helps them to do it. Regulation 31 reveals two things: that sometimes a young fool of a recruit gets his senses back, after being persuaded to sign away his liberty for three years, and dearly wants to get out of the engagement and stay at home with his own people; and that threats, intimidation, and force are used to keep him on board the recruiting-ship, and to hold him to his contract. Regulation 31 forbids these coercions. The law requires that he shall be allowed to go free; and another clause of it requires the recruiter to set him ashore – per boat, because of the prevalence of sharks. Testimony from Rev. Mr. Gray:

> "There are 'wrinkles' for taking the penitent Kanaka. My first experience of the Traffic was a case of this kind in 1884. A vessel anchored just out of sight of our station, word was brought to me that some boys were stolen, and the relatives wished me to go and get them back. The facts were, as I found, that six boys had recruited, had rushed into the boat, the Government Agent informed me. They had all 'signed'; and, said the Government Agent, 'on board they shall remain.' I was assured that the six boys were of age and willing to go. Yet on getting ready to leave the ship I found four of the lads ready to come ashore in the boat! This I forbade. One of them jumped into the water and persisted in coming ashore in my boat. When appealed to, the Government Agent suggested that we go and leave him to be picked up by the ship's boat, a quarter mile distant at the time!"

The law and the missionaries feel for the repentant recruit – and properly, one may be permitted to think, for he is only a youth and ignorant and persuadable to his hurt – but sympathy for him is not kept in stock by the recruiter. Rev. Mr. Gray says:

> "A captain many years in the traffic explained to me how a penitent could be taken. 'When a boy jumps overboard we just take a boat and pull ahead of him, then lie between him and the shore. If he has not tired himself swimming, and passes the boat, keep on heading him in this way. The dodge rarely fails. The boy generally tires of swimming, gets into the boat of his own accord, and goes quietly on board."

Yes, exhaustion is likely to make a boy quiet. If the distressed boy had been the speaker's son, and the captors savages, the speaker would have been surprised to see how differently the thing looked from the new point of view; however, it is not our custom to put ourselves in the other person's place. Somehow there is something pathetic about that disappointed young savage's resignation. I must explain, here, that in the traffic dialect, "boy" does not always mean boy; it means a youth above sixteen years of age. That is by Queensland law the age of consent, though it is held that recruiters allow themselves some latitude in guessing at ages.

Captain Wawn of the free spirit chafes under the annoyance of "cast-iron regulations." They and the missionaries have poisoned his life. He grieves for the good old days, vanished to come no more. See him weep; hear him cuss between the lines!

> "For a long time we were allowed to apprehend and detain all deserters who had signed the agreement on board ship, but the 'cast-iron' regulations of the Act of 1884 put

> a stop to that, allowing the Kanaka to sign the agreement for three years' service, travel about in the ship in receipt of the regular rations, cadge all he could, and leave when he thought fit, so long as he did not extend his pleasure trip to Queensland."

Rev. Mr. Gray calls this same restrictive cast-iron law a "farce." "There is as much cruelty and injustice done to natives by acts that are legal as by deeds unlawful. The regulations that exist are unjust and inadequate – unjust and inadequate they must ever be." He furnishes his reasons for his position, but they are too long for reproduction here.

However, if the most a Kanaka advantages himself by a three-years course in civilization in Queensland, is a necklace and an umbrella and a showy imperfection in the art of swearing, it must be that all the profit of the traffic goes to the white man. This could be twisted into a plausible argument that the traffic ought to be squarely abolished.

However, there is reason for hope that that can be left alone to achieve itself. It is claimed that the traffic will depopulate its sources of supply within the next twenty or thirty years. Queensland is a very healthy place for white people – death-rate 12 in 1,000 of the population – but the Kanaka death-rate is away above that. The vital statistics for 1893 place it at 52; for 1894 (Mackay district), 68. The first six months of the Kanaka's exile are peculiarly perilous for him because of the rigors of the new climate. The death-rate among the new men has reached as high as 180 in the 1,000. In the Kanaka's native home his death-rate is 12 in time of peace, and 15 in time of war. Thus exile to Queensland – with the opportunity to acquire civilization, an umbrella, and a pretty poor quality of profanity – is twelve times as deadly for him as war. Common Christian charity, common humanity, does seem to require, not only that these people be returned to their homes, but that war, pestilence, and famine be introduced among them for their preservation.

Concerning these Pacific isles and their peoples an eloquent prophet spoke long years ago – five and fifty years ago. In fact, he spoke a little too early. Prophecy is a good line of business, but it is full of risks. This prophet was the Right Rev. M. Russell, LL.D., D.C.L., of Edinburgh:

> "Is the tide of civilization to roll only to the foot of the Rocky Mountains, and is the sun of knowledge to set at last in the waves of the Pacific? No; the mighty day of four thousand years is drawing to its close; the sun of humanity has performed its destined course; but long ere its setting rays are extinguished in the west, its ascending beams have glittered on the isles of the eastern seas.. And now we see the race of Japhet setting forth to people the isles, and the seeds of another Europe and a second England sown in the regions of the sun. But mark the words of the prophecy: 'He shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant.' It is not said Canaan shall be his slave. To the Anglo-Saxon race is given the scepter of the globe, but there is not given either the lash of the slave-driver or the rack

> of the executioner. The East will not be stained with the same atrocities as the West; the frightful gangrene of an enthralled race is not to mar the destinies of the family of Japhet in the Oriental world; humanizing, not destroying, as they advance; uniting with, not enslaving, the inhabitants with whom they dwell, the British race may," etc., etc.

And he closes his vision with an invocation from Thomson:

> "Come, bright Improvement! on the car of Time, And rule the spacious world from clime to clime."

Very well, Bright Improvement has arrived, you see, with her civilization, and her Waterbury, and her umbrella, and her third-quality profanity, and her humanizing-not-destroying machinery, and her hundred-and-eighty death-rate, and everything is going along just as handsome!

But the prophet that speaks last has an advantage over the pioneer in the business. Rev. Mr. Gray says:

> "What I am concerned about is that we as a Christian nation should wipe out these races to enrich ourselves."

And he closes his pamphlet with a grim Indictment which is as eloquent in its flowerless straightforward English as is the hand-painted rhapsody of the early prophet:

> "My indictment of the Queensland-Kanaka Labor Traffic is this
>
> "1. It generally demoralizes and always impoverishes the Kanaka, deprives him of his citizenship, and depopulates the islands fitted to his home.

“2. It is felt to lower the dignity of the white agricultural laborer in Queensland, and beyond a doubt it lowers his wages there.

“3. The whole system is fraught with danger to Australia and the islands on the score of health.

“4. On social and political grounds the continuance of the Queensland Kanaka Labor Traffic must be a barrier to the true federation of the Australian colonies.

“5. The Regulations under which the Traffic exists in Queensland are inadequate to prevent abuses, and in the nature of things they must remain so.

“6. The whole system is contrary to the spirit and doctrine of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Gospel requires us to help the weak, but the Kanaka is fleeced and trodden down.

“7. The bed-rock of this Traffic is that the life and liberty of a black man are of less value than those of a white man. And a Traffic that has grown out of ‘slave-hunting’ will certainly remain to the end not unlike its origin.”

CHAPTER VII

Truth is the most valuable thing we have. Let us economize it.

– Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

From Diary: – For a day or two we have been plowing among an invisible vast wilderness of islands, catching now and then a shadowy glimpse of a member of it. There does seem to be a prodigious lot of islands this year; the map of this region is freckled and fly-specked all over with them. Their number would seem to be uncountable. We are moving among the Fijis now – 224 islands and islets in the group. In front of us, to the west, the wilderness stretches toward Australia, then curves upward to New Guinea, and still up and up to Japan; behind us, to the east, the wilderness stretches sixty degrees across the wastes of the Pacific; south of us is New Zealand. Somewhere or other among these myriads Samoa is concealed, and not discoverable on the map. Still, if you wish to go there, you will have no trouble about finding it if you follow the directions given by Robert Louis Stevenson to Dr. Conan Doyle and to Mr. J. M. Barrie. "You go to America, cross the continent to San Francisco, and then it's the second turning to the left." To get the full flavor of the joke one must take a glance at the map.

Wednesday, September 11. – Yesterday we passed close to an island or so, and recognized the published Fiji characteristics: a broad belt of clean white coral sand around the island; back of it a graceful fringe of leaning palms, with native huts nestling cosily among the shrubbery at their bases; back of these a stretch of level land clothed in tropic vegetation; back of that, rugged and picturesque mountains. A detail of the immediate foreground: a mouldering ship perched high up on a reef-bench. This completes the composition, and makes the picture artistically perfect.

In the afternoon we sighted Suva, the capital of the group, and threaded our way into the secluded little harbor – a placid basin of brilliant blue and green water tucked snugly in among the sheltering hills. A few ships rode at anchor in it – one of them a sailing vessel flying the American flag; and they said she came from Duluth! There's a journey! Duluth is several thousand miles from the sea, and yet she is entitled to the proud name of Mistress of the Commercial Marine of the United States of America. There is only one free, independent, unsubsidized American ship sailing the foreign seas, and Duluth owns it. All by itself that ship is the American fleet. All by itself it causes the American name and power to be respected in the far regions of the globe. All by itself it certifies to the world that the most populous civilized nation, in the earth has a just pride in her stupendous stretch of sea-front, and is determined to assert and maintain her rightful place as one of the Great Maritime Powers of the Planet. All by itself it is making foreign eyes familiar with a Flag which they have not seen before for forty years, outside of the museum. For what Duluth has done, in building, equipping, and maintaining at her sole expense the American Foreign Commercial Fleet, and in thus rescuing the American name from shame and lifting it high for the homage of the nations, we owe her a debt of gratitude which our hearts shall confess with quickened beats whenever her name is named henceforth. Many national toasts will die in the lapse of time, but while the flag flies and the Republic survives, they who live under their shelter will still drink this one, standing and uncovered: Health and prosperity to Thee, O Duluth, American Queen of the Alien Seas!

Row-boats began to flock from the shore; their crews were the first natives we had seen. These men carried no overplus of clothing, and this was wise, for the weather was hot. Handsome, great dusky men they were, muscular, clean-limbed, and with faces full of character and intelligence. It would be hard to find their superiors anywhere among the dark races, I should think.

Everybody went ashore to look around, and spy out the land, and have that luxury of luxuries to sea-voyagers – a land-dinner. And there we saw more natives: Wrinkled old women, with their flat mammals flung over their shoulders, or hanging down in front like the cold-weather drip from the molasses-faucet; plump and smily young girls, blithe and content, easy and graceful, a pleasure to look at; young matrons, tall, straight, comely, nobly built, sweeping by with chin up, and a gait incomparable for unconscious stateliness and dignity; majestic young men – athletes for build and muscle – clothed in a loose arrangement of dazzling white, with bronze breast and bronze legs naked, and the head a cannon-swab of solid hair combed straight out from the skull and dyed a rich brick-red. Only sixty years ago they were sunk in darkness; now they have the bicycle.

We strolled about the streets of the white folks' little town, and around over the hills by paths and roads among European dwellings and gardens and plantations, and past clumps of hibiscus that made a body blink, the great blossoms were so intensely red; and by and by we stopped to ask an elderly English colonist a question or two, and to sympathize with him concerning the torrid weather; but he was surprised, and said:

"This? This is not hot. You ought to be here in the summer time once."

"We supposed that this was summer; it has the ear-marks of it. You could take it to almost any country and deceive people with it. But if it isn't summer, what does it lack?"

"It lacks half a year. This is mid-winter."

I had been suffering from colds for several months, and a sudden change of season, like this, could hardly fail to do me hurt. It brought on another cold. It is odd, these sudden jumps from season to season. A fortnight ago we left America in mid-summer, now it is midwinter; about a week hence we shall arrive in Australia in the spring.

After dinner I found in the billiard-room a resident whom I had known somewhere else in the world, and presently made some new friends and drove with them out into the country to visit his Excellency the head of the State, who was occupying his country residence, to escape the rigors of the winter weather, I suppose, for it was on breezy high ground and much more comfortable than the lower regions, where the town is, and where the winter has full swing, and often sets a person's hair afire when he takes off his hat to bow. There is a noble and beautiful view of ocean and islands and castellated peaks from the governor's high-placed house, and its immediate surroundings lie drowsing in that dreamy repose and serenity which are the charm of life in the Pacific Islands.

One of the new friends who went out there with me was a large man, and I had been admiring his size all the way. I was still admiring it as he stood by the governor on the veranda, talking; then the Fijian butler stepped out there to announce tea, and dwarfed him. Maybe he did not quite dwarf him, but at any rate the contrast was quite striking. Perhaps that dark giant was a king in a condition of political suspension. I think that in the talk there on the veranda it was said that in Fiji, as in the Sandwich Islands, native kings and chiefs are of much grander size and build than the commoners. This man was clothed in flowing white vestments, and they were just the thing for him; they comported well with his great stature and his kingly port and dignity. European clothes would have degraded him and made him commonplace. I know that, because they do that with everybody that wears them.

It was said that the old-time devotion to chiefs and reverence for their persons still survive in the native commoner, and in great force. The educated young gentleman who is chief of the tribe that live in the region about the capital dresses in the fashion of high-class European gentlemen, but even his clothes cannot damn him in the reverence of his people. Their pride in his lofty rank and ancient lineage lives on, in spite of his lost authority and the evil magic of his tailor. He has no need to defile himself with work, or trouble his heart with the sordid cares of life; the tribe will see to it that he shall not want, and that he shall hold up his head and live like a gentleman. I had a glimpse of him down in the town. Perhaps he is a descendant of the last king – the king with the difficult name whose memory is preserved by a notable monument of cut-stone which one sees in the enclosure in the middle of the town. Thakombau – I remember, now; that is the name. It is easier to preserve it on a granite block than in your head.

Fiji was ceded to England by this king in 1858. One of the gentlemen present at the governor's quoted a remark made by the king at the time of the session – a neat retort, and with a touch of pathos in it, too. The English Commissioner had offered a crumb of comfort to Thakombau by saying that the transfer of the kingdom to Great Britain was merely "a sort of hermit-crab formality, you know." "Yes," said poor Thakombau, "but with this difference – the crab moves into an unoccupied shell, but mine isn't."

However, as far as I can make out from the books, the King was between the devil and the deep sea at the time, and hadn't much choice. He owed the United States a large debt – a debt which he could pay if allowed time, but time was denied him. He must pay up right away or the warships would be upon him. To protect his people from this disaster he ceded his country to Britain, with a clause in the contract providing for the ultimate payment of the American debt.

In old times the Fijians were fierce fighters; they were very religious, and worshiped idols; the big chiefs were proud and haughty, and they were men of great style in many ways; all chiefs had several wives, the biggest chiefs sometimes had as many as fifty; when a chief was dead and ready for burial, four or five of his wives were strangled and put into the grave with him. In 1804 twenty-seven British convicts escaped from Australia to Fiji, and brought guns and ammunition with them. Consider what a power they were, armed like that, and what an opportunity they had. If they had been energetic men and sober, and had had brains and known how to use them, they could have achieved the sovereignty of the archipelago twenty-seven kings and each with eight or nine islands under his scepter. But nothing came of this chance. They lived worthless lives of sin and luxury, and died without honor – in most cases by violence. Only one of them had any ambition; he was an Irishman named Connor. He tried to raise a family of fifty children, and scored forty-eight. He died lamenting his failure. It was a foolish sort of avarice. Many a father would have been rich enough with forty.

It is a fine race, the Fijians, with brains in their heads, and an inquiring turn of mind. It appears that their savage ancestors had a doctrine of immortality in their scheme of religion – with limitations. That is to say, their dead friend would go to a happy hereafter if he could be accumulated, but not otherwise. They drew the line; they thought that the missionary's doctrine was too sweeping, too comprehensive. They called his attention to certain facts. For instance, many of their friends had been devoured by sharks; the sharks, in their turn, were caught and eaten by other men; later, these men were captured in war, and eaten by the enemy. The original persons had entered into the composition of the sharks; next, they and the sharks had become part of the flesh and blood and bone of the cannibals. How, then, could the particles of the original men be searched out from the final conglomerate and put together again? The inquirers were full of doubts, and considered that the missionary had not examined the matter with the gravity and attention which so serious a thing deserved.

The missionary taught these exacting savages many valuable things, and got from them one – a very dainty and poetical idea: Those wild and ignorant poor children of Nature believed that the flowers, after they perish, rise on the winds and float away to the fair fields of heaven, and flourish there forever in immortal beauty!

CHAPTER VIII

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

– Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

When one glances at the map the members of the stupendous island wilderness of the Pacific seem to crowd upon each other; but no, there is no crowding, even in the center of a group; and between groups there are lonely wide deserts of sea. Not everything is known about the islands, their peoples and their languages. A startling reminder of this is furnished by the fact that in Fiji, twenty years ago, were living two strange and solitary beings who came from an unknown country and spoke an unknown language. "They were picked up by a passing vessel many hundreds of miles from any known land, floating in the same tiny canoe in which they had been blown out to sea. When found they were but skin and bone. No one could understand what they said, and they have never named their country; or, if they have, the name does not correspond with that of any island on any chart. They are now fat and sleek, and as happy as the day is long. In the ship's log there is an entry of the latitude and longitude in which they were found, and this is probably all the clue they will ever have to their lost homes." – [Forbes's "Two Years in Fiji."]

What a strange and romantic episode it is; and how one is tortured with curiosity to know whence those mysterious creatures came, those Men Without a Country, errant waifs who cannot name their lost home, wandering Children of Nowhere.

Indeed, the Island Wilderness is the very home of romance and dreams and mystery. The loneliness, the solemnity, the beauty, and the deep repose of this wilderness have a charm which is all their own for the bruised spirit of men who have fought and failed in the struggle for life in the great world; and for men who have been hunted out of the great world for crime; and for other men who love an easy and indolent existence; and for others who love a roving free life, and stir and change and adventure; and for yet others who love an easy and comfortable career of trading and money-getting, mixed with plenty of loose matrimony by purchase, divorce without trial or expense, and limitless spreeing thrown in to make life ideally perfect.

We sailed again, refreshed.

The most cultivated person in the ship was a young Englishman whose home was in New Zealand. He was a naturalist. His learning in his specialty was deep and thorough, his interest in his subject amounted to a passion, he had an easy gift of speech; and so, when he talked about animals it was a pleasure to listen to him. And profitable, too, though he was sometimes difficult to understand because now and then he used scientific technicalities which were above the reach of some of us. They were pretty sure to be above my reach, but as he was quite willing to explain them I always made it a point to get him to do it. I had a fair knowledge of his subject – layman's knowledge – to begin with, but it was his teachings which crystalized it into scientific form and clarity – in a word, gave it value.

His special interest was the fauna of Australasia, and his knowledge of the matter was as exhaustive as it was accurate. I already knew a good deal about the rabbits in Australasia and their marvelous fecundity, but in my talks with him I found that my estimate of the great hindrance and obstruction inflicted by the rabbit pest upon traffic and travel was far short of the facts. He told me that the first pair of rabbits imported into Australasia bred so wonderfully that within six months rabbits were so thick in the land that people had to dig trenches through them to get from town to town.

He told me a great deal about worms, and the kangaroo, and other coleoptera, and said he knew the history and ways of all such pachydermata. He said the kangaroo had pockets, and carried its young in them when it couldn't get apples. And he said that the emu was as big as an ostrich, and looked like one, and had an amorphous appetite and would eat bricks. Also, that the dingo was not a dingo at all, but just a wild dog; and that the only difference between a dingo and a dodo was that neither of them barked; otherwise they were just the same. He said that the only game-bird in Australia was the wombat, and the only song-bird the larrikin, and that both were protected by government. The most beautiful of the native birds was the bird of Paradise. Next came the two kinds of lyres; not spelt the same. He said the one kind was dying out, the other thickening up. He explained that the "Sundowner" was not a bird it was a man; sundowner was merely the Australian equivalent of our word, tramp. He is a loafer, a hard drinker, and a sponge. He tramps across the country in the sheep-shearing season, pretending to look for work; but he always times himself to arrive at a sheep-run just at sundown, when the day's labor ends; all he wants is whisky and supper and bed and breakfast; he gets them and then disappears. The naturalist spoke of the bell bird, the creature that at short intervals all day rings out its mellow and exquisite peal from the deeps of the forest. It is the favorite and best friend of the weary and thirsty sundowner; for he knows that wherever the bell bird is, there is water; and he goes somewhere else. The naturalist said that the oddest bird in Australasia was the, Laughing Jackass, and the biggest the now extinct Great Moa.

The Moa stood thirteen feet high, and could step over an ordinary man's head or kick his hat off; and his head, too, for that matter. He said it was wingless, but a swift runner. The natives used to ride it. It could make forty miles an hour, and keep it up for four hundred miles and come out reasonably fresh. It was still in existence when the railway was introduced into New Zealand; still in existence, and carrying the mails. The railroad began with the same schedule it has now: two expresses a week-time, twenty miles an hour. The company exterminated the moa to get the mails.

Speaking of the indigenous coneys and bactrian camels, the naturalist said that the coniferous and bacteriological output of Australasia was remarkable for its many and curious departures from the accepted laws governing these species of tubercles, but that in his opinion Nature's fondness for dabbling in the erratic was most notably exhibited in that curious combination of bird, fish, amphibian, burrower, crawler, quadruped, and Christian called the Ornithorhynchus – grotesquest of animals, king of the animalculae of the world for versatility of character and make-up. Said he:

> "You can call it anything you want to, and be right. It is a fish, for it lives in the river half the time; it is a land animal, for it resides on the land half the time; it is an amphibian, since it likes both and does not know which it prefers; it is a hybernian, for when times are dull and nothing much going on it buries itself under the mud at the bottom of a puddle and hybernates there a couple of weeks at a time; it is a kind of duck, for it has a duck-bill and four webbed paddles; it is a fish and quadruped together, for in the water it swims with the paddles and on shore it paws itself across country with them; it is a kind of seal, for it has a seal's fur; it is carnivorous, herbivorous, insectivorous, and vermifuginous, for it eats fish and grass and butterflies, and in the season digs worms out of the mud and devours them; it is clearly a bird, for it lays eggs, and hatches them; it is clearly a mammal, for it nurses its young; and it is manifestly a kind of Christian, for it keeps the Sabbath when there is anybody around, and when there isn't, doesn't. It has all the tastes there are except refined ones, it has all the habits there are

except good ones.

"It is a survival – a survival of the fittest. Mr. Darwin invented the theory that goes by that name, but the Ornithorhynchus was the first to put it to actual experiment and prove that it could be done. Hence it should have as much of the credit as Mr. Darwin. It was never in the Ark; you will find no mention of it there; it nobly stayed out and worked the theory. Of all creatures in the world it was the only one properly equipped for the test. The Ark was thirteen months afloat, and all the globe submerged; no land visible above the flood, no vegetation, no food for a mammal to eat, nor water for a mammal to drink; for all mammal food was destroyed, and when the pure floods from heaven and the salt oceans of the earth mingled their waters and rose above the mountain tops, the result was a drink which no bird or beast of ordinary construction could use and live. But this combination was nuts for the Ornithorhynchus, if I may use a term like that without offense. Its river home had always been salted by the flood-tides of the sea. On the face of the Noachian deluge innumerable forest trees were floating. Upon these the Ornithorhynchus voyaged in peace; voyaged from clime to clime, from hemisphere to hemisphere, in contentment and comfort, in virile interest in the constant change of scene, in humble thankfulness for its privileges, in ever-increasing enthusiasm in the development of the great theory upon whose validity it had staked its life, its fortunes, and its sacred honor, if I may use such expressions without impropriety in connection with an episode of this nature.

“It lived the tranquil and luxurious life of a creature of independent means. Of things actually necessary to its existence and its happiness not a detail was wanting. When it wished to walk, it scrambled along the tree-trunk; it mused in the shade of the leaves by day, it slept in their shelter by night; when it wanted the refreshment of a swim, it had it; it ate leaves when it wanted a vegetable diet, it dug under the bark for worms and grubs; when it wanted fish it caught them, when it wanted eggs it laid them. If the grubs gave out in one tree it swam to another; and as for fish, the very opulence of the supply was an embarrassment. And finally, when it was thirsty it smacked its chops in gratitude over a blend that would have slain a crocodile.

“When at last, after thirteen months of travel and research in all the Zones it went aground on a mountain-summit, it strode ashore, saying in its heart, ‘Let them that come after me invent theories and dream dreams about the Survival of the Fittest if they like, but I am the first that has done it!

“This wonderful creature dates back like the kangaroo and many other Australian hydrocephalous invertebrates, to an age long anterior to the advent of man upon the earth; they date back, indeed, to a time when a causeway hundreds of miles wide, and thousands of miles long, joined Australia to Africa, and the animals of the two countries were alike, and all belonged to that remote geological epoch known to science as the Old Red Grindstone Post-Pleosaurian. Later the causeway sank under the sea; subterranean convulsions lifted the African continent a thousand feet higher than it

> was before, but Australia kept her old level. In Africa's new climate the animals necessarily began to develop and shade off into new forms and families and species, but the animals of Australia as necessarily remained stationary, and have so remained until this day. In the course of some millions of years the African Ornithorhynchus developed and developed and developed, and sluffed off detail after detail of its make-up until at last the creature became wholly disintegrated and scattered. Whenever you see a bird or a beast or a seal or an otter in Africa you know that he is merely a sorry surviving fragment of that sublime original of whom I have been speaking – that creature which was everything in general and nothing in particular – the opulently endowed 'e pluribus unum' of the animal world.
>
> "Such is the history of the most hoary, the most ancient, the most venerable creature that exists in the earth today – Ornithorhynchus Platypus Extraordinariensis – whom God preserve!"

When he was strongly moved he could rise and soar like that with ease. And not only in the prose form, but in the poetical as well. He had written many pieces of poetry in his time, and these manuscripts he lent around among the passengers, and was willing to let them be copied. It seemed to me that the least technical one in the series, and the one which reached the loftiest note, perhaps, was his —

INVOCATION

“Come forth from thy oozy couch,
O Ornithorhynchus dear!
And greet with a cordial claw
The stranger that longs to hear

“From thy own own lips the tale
Of thy origin all unknown:
Thy misplaced bone where flesh should be
And flesh where should be bone;

“And fishy fin where should be paw,
And beaver-trowel tail,
And snout of beast equip’d with teeth
Where gills ought to prevail.

“Come, Kangaroo, the good and true
Foreshortened as to legs,
And body tapered like a churn,
And sack marsupial, i’ fegs,

“And tells us why you linger here,
Thou relic of a vanished time,
When all your friends as fossils sleep,
Immortalized in lime!”

Perhaps no poet is a conscious plagiarist; but there seems to be warrant for suspecting that there is no poet who is not at one time or another an unconscious one. The above verses are indeed beautiful, and, in a way, touching; but there is a haunting something about them which unavoidably suggests the Sweet Singer of Michigan. It can hardly be doubted that the author had read the works of that poet and been impressed by them. It is not apparent that he has borrowed from them any word or yet any phrase, but the style and swing and mastery and melody of the Sweet Singer all are there. Compare this Invocation with "Frank Dutton" – particularly stanzas first and seventeenth – and I think the reader will feel convinced that he who wrote the one had read the other:

I

"Frank Dutton was as fine a lad
As ever you wish to see,
And he was drowned in Pine Island Lake
On earth no more will he be,
His age was near fifteen years,
And he was a motherless boy,
He was living with his grandmother
When he was drowned, poor boy."

XVII

“He was drowned on Tuesday afternoon,
On Sunday he was found,
And the tidings of that drowned boy
Was heard for miles around.
His form was laid by his mother’s side,
Beneath the cold, cold ground,
His friends for him will drop a tear
When they view his little mound."

The Sentimental Song Book.
By Mrs. Julia Moore, p. 36.

CHAPTER IX

It is your human environment that makes climate.

– Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

Sept. 15 – Night. Close to Australia now. Sydney 50 miles distant.

That note recalls an experience. The passengers were sent for, to come up in the bow and see a fine sight. It was very dark. One could not follow with the eye the surface of the sea more than fifty yards in any direction it dimmed away and became lost to sight at about that distance from us. But if you patiently gazed into the darkness a little while, there was a sure reward for you. Presently, a quarter of a mile away you would see a blinding splash or explosion of light on the water – a flash so sudden and so astonishingly brilliant that it would make you catch your breath; then that blotch of light would instantly extend itself and take the corkscrew shape and imposing length of the fabled sea-serpent, with every curve of its body and the "break" spreading away from its head, and the wake following behind its tail clothed in a fierce splendor of living fire. And my, but it was coming at a lightning gait! Almost before you could think, this monster of light, fifty feet long, would go flaming and storming by, and suddenly disappear. And out in the distance whence he came you would see another flash; and another and another and another, and see them turn into sea-serpents on the instant; and once sixteen flashed up at the same time and came tearing towards us, a swarm of wiggling curves, a moving conflagration, a vision of bewildering beauty, a spectacle of fire and energy whose equal the most of those people will not see again until after they are dead.

It was porpoises – porpoises aglow with phosphorescent light. They presently collected in a wild and magnificent jumble under the bows, and there they played for an hour, leaping and frollicking and carrying on, turning summersaults in front of the stem or across it and never getting hit, never making a miscalculation, though the stem missed them only about an inch, as a rule. They were porpoises of the ordinary length – eight or ten feet – but every twist of their bodies sent a long procession of united and glowing curves astern. That fiery jumble was an enchanting thing to look at, and we stayed out the performance; one cannot have such a show as that twice in a lifetime. The porpoise is the kitten of the sea; he never has a serious thought, he cares for nothing but fun and play. But I think I never saw him at his winsomest until that night. It was near a center of civilization, and he could have been drinking.

By and by, when we had approached to somewhere within thirty miles of Sydney Heads the great electric light that is posted on one of those lofty ramparts began to show, and in time the little spark grew to a great sun and pierced the firmament of darkness with a far-reaching sword of light.

Sydney Harbor is shut in behind a precipice that extends some miles like a wall, and exhibits no break to the ignorant stranger. It has a break in the middle, but it makes so little show that even Captain Cook sailed by it without seeing it. Near by that break is a false break which resembles it, and which used to make trouble for the mariner at night, in the early days before the place was lighted. It caused the memorable disaster to the Duncan Dunbar, one of the most pathetic tragedies in the history of that pitiless ruffian, the sea. The ship was a sailing vessel; a fine and favorite passenger packet, commanded by a popular captain of high reputation. She was due from England, and Sydney was waiting, and counting the hours; counting the hours, and making ready to give her a heart-stirring welcome; for she was bringing back a great company of mothers and daughters, the long-missed light and bloom of life of Sydney homes; daughters that had been years absent at school, and mothers that had been with them all that time watching over them. Of all the world only India and Australasia have by custom freighted ships and fleets with their hearts, and know the tremendous meaning of that phrase; only they know what the waiting is like when this freightage is entrusted to the fickle winds, not steam, and what the joy is like when the ship that is returning this treasure comes safe to port and the long dread is over.

On board the Duncan Dunbar, flying toward Sydney Heads in the waning afternoon, the happy home-comers made busy preparation, for it was not doubted that they would be in the arms of their friends before the day was done; they put away their sea-going clothes and put on clothes meeter for the meeting, their richest and their loveliest, these poor brides of the grave. But the wind lost force, or there was a miscalculation, and before the Heads were sighted the darkness came on. It was said that ordinarily the captain would have made a safe offing and waited for the morning; but this was no ordinary occasion; all about him were appealing faces, faces pathetic with disappointment. So his sympathy moved him to try the dangerous passage in the dark. He had entered the Heads seventeen times, and believed he knew the ground. So he steered straight for the false opening, mistaking it for the true one. He did not find out that he was wrong until it was too late. There was no saving the ship. The great seas swept her in and crushed her to splinters and rubbish upon the rock tushes at the base of the precipice. Not one of all that fair and gracious company was ever seen again alive. The tale is told to every stranger that passes the spot, and it will continue to be told to all that come, for generations; but it will never grow old, custom cannot stale it, the heart-break that is in it can never perish out of it.

There were two hundred persons in the ship, and but one survived the disaster. He was a sailor. A huge sea flung him up the face of the precipice and stretched him on a narrow shelf of rock midway between the top and the bottom, and there he lay all night. At any other time he would have lain there for the rest of his life, without chance of discovery; but the next morning the ghastly news swept through Sydney that the Duncan Dunbar had gone down in sight of home, and straightway the walls of the Heads were black with mourners; and one of these, stretching himself out over the precipice to spy out what might be seen below, discovered this miraculously preserved relic of the wreck. Ropes were brought and the nearly impossible feat of rescuing the man was accomplished. He was a person with a practical turn of mind, and he hired a hall in Sydney and exhibited himself at sixpence a head till he exhausted the output of the gold fields for that year.

We entered and cast anchor, and in the morning went oh-ing and ah-ing in admiration up through the crooks and turns of the spacious and beautiful harbor – a harbor which is the darling of Sydney and the wonder of the world. It is not surprising that the people are proud of it, nor that they put their enthusiasm into eloquent words. A returning citizen asked me what I thought of it, and I testified with a cordiality which I judged would be up to the market rate. I said it was beautiful – superbly beautiful. Then by a natural impulse I gave God the praise. The citizen did not seem altogether satisfied. He said:

"It is beautiful, of course it's beautiful – the Harbor; but that isn't all of it, it's only half of it; Sydney's the other half, and it takes both of them together to ring the supremacy-bell. God made the Harbor, and that's all right; but Satan made Sydney."

Of course I made an apology; and asked him to convey it to his friend. He was right about Sydney being half of it. It would be beautiful without Sydney, but not above half as beautiful as it is now, with Sydney added. It is shaped somewhat like an oak-leaf – a roomy sheet of lovely blue water, with narrow off-shoots of water running up into the country on both sides between long fingers of land, high wooden ridges with sides sloped like graves. Handsome villas are perched here and there on these ridges, snuggling amongst the foliage, and one catches alluring glimpses of them as the ship swims by toward the city. The city clothes a cluster of hills and a ruffle of neighboring ridges with its undulating masses of masonry, and out of these masses spring towers and spires and other architectural dignities and grandeurs that break the flowing lines and give picturesqueness to the general effect.

The narrow inlets which I have mentioned go wandering out into the land everywhere and hiding themselves in it, and pleasure-launches are always exploring them with picnic parties on board. It is said by trustworthy people that if you explore them all you will find that you have covered 700 miles of water passage. But there are liars everywhere this year, and they will double that when their works are in good going order. October was close at hand, spring was come. It was really spring – everybody said so; but you could have sold it for summer in Canada, and nobody would have suspected. It was the very weather that makes our home summers the perfection of climatic luxury; I mean, when you are out in the wood or by the sea. But these people said it was cool, now – a person ought to see Sydney in the summer time if he wanted to know what warm weather is; and he ought to go north ten or fifteen hundred miles if he wanted to know what hot weather is. They said that away up there toward the equator the hens laid fried eggs. Sydney is the place to go to get information about other people's climates. It seems to me that the occupation of Unbiased Traveler Seeking Information is the pleasantest and most irresponsible trade there is. The traveler can always find out anything he wants to, merely by asking. He can get at all the facts, and more. Everybody helps him, nobody hinders him. Anybody who has an old fact in stock that is no longer negotiable in the domestic market will let him have it at his own price. An accumulation of such goods is easily and quickly made. They cost almost nothing and they bring par in the foreign market. Travelers who come to America always freight up with the same old nursery tales that their predecessors selected, and they carry them back and always work them off without any trouble in the home market.

If the climates of the world were determined by parallels of latitude, then we could know a place's climate by its position on the map; and so we should know that the climate of Sydney was the counterpart of the climate of Columbia, S. C., and of Little Rock, Arkansas, since Sydney is about the same distance south of the equator that those other towns are north of it – thirty-four degrees. But no, climate disregards the parallels of latitude. In Arkansas they have a winter; in Sydney they have the name of it, but not the thing itself. I have seen the ice in the Mississippi floating past the mouth of the Arkansas river; and at Memphis, but a little way above, the Mississippi has been frozen over, from bank to bank. But they have never had a cold spell in Sydney which brought the mercury down to freezing point. Once in a mid-winter day there, in the month of July, the mercury went down to 36 deg., and that remains the memorable "cold day" in the history of the town. No doubt Little Rock has seen it below zero. Once, in Sydney, in mid-summer, about New Year's Day, the mercury went up to 106 deg. in the shade, and that is Sydney's memorable hot day. That would about tally with Little Rock's hottest day also, I imagine. My Sydney figures are taken from a government report, and are trustworthy. In the matter of summer weather Arkansas has no advantage over Sydney, perhaps, but when it comes to winter weather, that is another affair. You could cut up an Arkansas winter into a hundred Sydney winters and have enough left for Arkansas and the poor.

The whole narrow, hilly belt of the Pacific side of New South Wales has the climate of its capital – a mean winter temperature of 54 deg. and a mean summer one of 71 deg. It is a climate which cannot be improved upon for healthfulness. But the experts say that 90 deg. in New South Wales is harder to bear than 112 deg. in the neighboring colony of Victoria, because the atmosphere of the former is humid, and of the latter dry. The mean temperature of the southernmost point of New South Wales is the same as that of Nice – 60 deg. – yet Nice is further from the equator by 460 miles than is the former.

But Nature is always stingy of perfect climates; stingier in the case of Australia than usual. Apparently this vast continent has a really good climate nowhere but around the edges.

If we look at a map of the world we are surprised to see how big Australia is. It is about two-thirds as large as the United States was before we added Alaska.

But where as one finds a sufficiently good climate and fertile land almost everywhere in the United States, it seems settled that inside of the Australian border-belt one finds many deserts and in spots a climate which nothing can stand except a few of the hardier kinds of rocks. In effect, Australia is as yet unoccupied. If you take a map of the United States and leave the Atlantic seaboard States in their places; also the fringe of Southern States from Florida west to the Mouth of the Mississippi; also a narrow, inhabited streak up the Mississippi half-way to its head waters; also a narrow, inhabited border along the Pacific coast: then take a brushful of paint and obliterate the whole remaining mighty stretch of country that lies between the Atlantic States and the Pacific-coast strip, your map will look like the latest map of Australia.

This stupendous blank is hot, not to say torrid; a part of it is fertile, the rest is desert; it is not liberally watered; it has no towns. One has only to cross the mountains of New South Wales and descend into the westward-lying regions to find that he has left the choice climate behind him, and found a new one of a quite different character. In fact, he would not know by the thermometer that he was not in the blistering Plains of India.

Captain Sturt, the great explorer, gives us a sample of the heat.

> "The wind, which had been blowing all the morning from the N.E., increased to a heavy gale, and I shall never forget its withering effect. I sought shelter behind a large gum-tree, but the blasts of heat were so terrific that I wondered the very grass did not take fire. This really was nothing ideal: everything both animate and inanimate gave way before it; the horses stood with their backs to the wind and their noses to the ground, without the muscular strength to raise their heads; the birds were mute, and the leaves of the trees under which we were sitting fell like a snow shower around us. At noon I took a thermometer graded to 127 deg., out of my box, and observed that the mercury was up to 125. Thinking that it had been unduly influenced, I put it in the fork of a tree close to me, sheltered alike from the wind and the sun. I went to examine it about an hour afterwards, when I found the mercury had risen to the-top of the instrument and had burst the bulb, a circumstance that I believe no traveler has ever before had to record. I cannot find language to convey to the reader's mind an idea of the intense and oppressive nature of the heat that prevailed."

That hot wind sweeps over Sydney sometimes, and brings with it what is called a "dust-storm." It is said that most Australian towns are acquainted with the dust-storm. I think I know what it is like, for the following description by Mr. Gape tallies very well with the alkali duststorm of Nevada, if you leave out the "shovel" part. Still the shovel part is a pretty important part, and seems to indicate that my Nevada storm is but a poor thing, after all.

> "As we proceeded the altitude became less, and the heat proportionately greater until we reached Dubbo, which is only 600 feet above sea-level. It is a pretty town, built on an extensive plain.. After the effects of a shower of rain have passed away the surface of the ground crumbles into a thick layer of dust, and occasionally, when the wind is in a particular quarter, it is lifted bodily from the ground in one long opaque cloud. In the midst of such a storm nothing can be seen a few yards ahead, and the unlucky person who happens to be out at the time is compelled to seek the nearest retreat at hand. When the thrifty housewife sees in the distance the dark column advancing in a steady whirl towards her house, she closes the doors and windows with all expedition. A drawing-room, the window of which has been carelessly left open during a dust-storm, is indeed an extraordinary sight. A lady who has resided in Dubbo for some years says that the dust lies so thick on the carpet that it is necessary to use a shovel to remove it."

And probably a wagon. I was mistaken; I have not seen a proper duststorm. To my mind the exterior aspects and character of Australia are fascinating things to look at and think about, they are so strange, so weird, so new, so uncommonplace, such a startling and interesting contrast to the other sections of the planet, the sections that are known to us all, familiar to us all. In the matter of particulars – a detail here, a detail there – we have had the choice climate of New South Wales' seacoast; we have had the Australian heat as furnished by Captain Sturt; we have had the wonderful dust-storm; and we have considered the phenomenon of an almost empty hot wilderness half as big as the United States, with a narrow belt of civilization, population, and good climate around it.

CHAPTER X

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

– Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

Captain Cook found Australia in 1770, and eighteen years later the British Government began to transport convicts to it. Altogether, New South Wales received 83,000 in 53 years. The convicts wore heavy chains; they were ill-fed and badly treated by the officers set over them; they were heavily punished for even slight infractions of the rules; "the cruelest discipline ever known" is one historian's description of their life. – [The Story of Australasia. J. S. Laurie.]

English law was hard-hearted in those days. For trifling offenses which in our day would be punished by a small fine or a few days' confinement, men, women, and boys were sent to this other end of the earth to serve terms of seven and fourteen years; and for serious crimes they were transported for life. Children were sent to the penal colonies for seven years for stealing a rabbit!

When I was in London twenty-three years ago there was a new penalty in force for diminishing garroting and wife-beating – 25 lashes on the bare back with the cat-o'-nine-tails. It was said that this terrible punishment was able to bring the stubbornest ruffians to terms; and that no man had been found with grit enough to keep his emotions to himself beyond the ninth blow; as a rule the man shrieked earlier. That penalty had a great and wholesome effect upon the garroters and wife-beaters; but humane modern London could not endure it; it got its law rescinded. Many a bruised and battered English wife has since had occasion to deplore that cruel achievement of sentimental "humanity."

Twenty-five lashes! In Australia and Tasmania they gave a convict fifty for almost any little offense; and sometimes a brutal officer would add fifty, and then another fifty, and so on, as long as the sufferer could endure the torture and live. In Tasmania I read the entry, in an old manuscript official record, of a case where a convict was given three hundred lashes – for stealing some silver spoons. And men got more than that, sometimes. Who handled the cat? Often it was another convict; sometimes it was the culprit's dearest comrade; and he had to lay on with all his might; otherwise he would get a flogging himself for his mercy – for he was under watch – and yet not do his friend any good: the friend would be attended to by another hand and suffer no lack in the matter of full punishment.

The convict life in Tasmania was so unendurable, and suicide so difficult to accomplish that once or twice despairing men got together and drew straws to determine which of them should kill another of the group – this murder to secure death to the perpetrator and to the witnesses of it by the hand of the hangman!

The incidents quoted above are mere hints, mere suggestions of what convict life was like – they are but a couple of details tossed into view out of a shoreless sea of such; or, to change the figure, they are but a pair of flaming steeples photographed from a point which hides from sight the burning city which stretches away from their bases on every hand.

Some of the convicts – indeed, a good many of them – were very bad people, even for that day; but the most of them were probably not noticeably worse than the average of the people they left behind them at home. We must believe this; we cannot avoid it. We are obliged to believe that a nation that could look on, unmoved, and see starving or freezing women hanged for stealing twenty-six cents' worth of bacon or rags, and boys snatched from their mothers, and men from their families, and sent to the other side of the world for long terms of years for similar trifling offenses, was a nation to whom the term "civilized" could not in any large way be applied. And we must also believe that a nation that knew, during more than forty years, what was happening to those exiles and was still content with it, was not advancing in any showy way toward a higher grade of civilization.

If we look into the characters and conduct of the officers and gentlemen who had charge of the convicts and attended to their backs and stomachs, we must grant again that as between the convict and his masters, and between both and the nation at home, there was a quite noticeable monotony of sameness.

Four years had gone by, and many convicts had come. Respectable settlers were beginning to arrive. These two classes of colonists had to be protected, in case of trouble among themselves or with the natives. It is proper to mention the natives, though they could hardly count they were so scarce. At a time when they had not as yet begun to be much disturbed – not as yet being in the way – it was estimated that in New South Wales there was but one native to 45,000 acres of territory.

People had to be protected. Officers of the regular army did not want this service – away off there where neither honor nor distinction was to be gained. So England recruited and officered a kind of militia force of 1,000 uniformed civilians called the "New South Wales Corps" and shipped it.

This was the worst blow of all. The colony fairly staggered under it. The Corps was an object-lesson of the moral condition of England outside of the jails. The colonists trembled. It was feared that next there would be an importation of the nobility.

In those early days the colony was non-supporting. All the necessaries of life – food, clothing, and all – were sent out from England, and kept in great government store-houses, and given to the convicts and sold to the settlers – sold at a trifling advance upon cost. The Corps saw its opportunity. Its officers went into commerce, and in a most lawless way. They went to importing rum, and also to manufacturing it in private stills, in defiance of the government's commands and protests. They leagued themselves together and ruled the market; they boycotted the government and the other dealers; they established a close monopoly and kept it strictly in their own hands. When a vessel arrived with spirits, they allowed nobody to buy but themselves, and they forced the owner to sell to them at a price named by themselves – and it was always low enough. They bought rum at an average of two dollars a gallon and sold it at an average of ten. They made rum the currency of the country – for there was little or no money – and they maintained their devastating hold and kept the colony under their heel for eighteen or twenty years before they were finally conquered and routed by the government.

Meantime, they had spread intemperance everywhere. And they had squeezed farm after farm out of the settlers hands for rum, and thus had bountifully enriched themselves. When a farmer was caught in the last agonies of thirst they took advantage of him and sweated him for a drink. In one instance they sold a man a gallon of rum worth two dollars for a piece of property which was sold some years later for $100,000. When the colony was about eighteen or twenty years old it was discovered that the land was specially fitted for the wool-culture. Prosperity followed, commerce with the world began, by and by rich mines of the noble metals were opened, immigrants flowed in, capital likewise. The result is the great and wealthy and enlightened commonwealth of New South Wales.

It is a country that is rich in mines, wool ranches, trams, railways, steamship lines, schools, newspapers, botanical gardens, art galleries, libraries, museums, hospitals, learned societies; it is the hospitable home of every species of culture and of every species of material enterprise, and there is a, church at every man’s door, and a race-track over the way.

CHAPTER XI

We should be careful to get out of an experience only the wisdom that is in it – and stop there; lest we be like the cat that sits down on a hot stove-lid. She will never sit down on a hot stove-lid again – and that is well; but also she will never sit down on a cold one any more.

– Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

All English-speaking colonies are made up of lavishly hospitable people, and New South Wales and its capital are like the rest in this. The English-speaking colony of the United States of America is always called lavishly hospitable by the English traveler. As to the other English-speaking colonies throughout the world from Canada all around, I know by experience that the description fits them. I will not go more particularly into this matter, for I find that when writers try to distribute their gratitude here and there and yonder by detail they run across difficulties and do some ungraceful stumbling.

Mr. Gape ("New South Wales and Victoria in 1885 "), tried to distribute his gratitude, and was not lucky:

> "The inhabitants of Sydney are renowned for their hospitality. The treatment which we experienced at the hands of this generous-hearted people will help more than anything else to make us recollect with pleasure our stay amongst them. In the character of hosts and hostesses they

> excel. The 'new chum' needs only the acquaintanceship of one of their number, and he becomes at once the happy recipient of numerous complimentary invitations and thoughtful kindnesses. Of the towns it has been our good fortune to visit, none have portrayed home so faithfully as Sydney."

Nobody could say it finer than that. If he had put in his cork then, and stayed away from Dubbo – but no; heedless man, he pulled it again. Pulled it when he was away along in his book, and his memory of what he had said about Sydney had grown dim:

> "We cannot quit the promising town of Dubbo without testifying, in warm praise, to the kind-hearted and hospitable usages of its inhabitants. Sydney, though well deserving the character it bears of its kindly treatment of strangers, possesses a little formality and reserve. In Dubbo, on the contrary, though the same congenial manners prevail, there is a pleasing degree of respectful familiarity which gives the town a homely comfort not often met with elsewhere. In laying on one side our pen we feel contented in having been able, though so late in this work, to bestow a panegyric, however unpretentious, on a town which, though possessing no picturesque natural surroundings, nor interesting architectural productions, has yet a body of citizens whose hearts cannot but obtain for their town a reputation for benevolence and kind-heartedness."

I wonder what soured him on Sydney. It seems strange that a pleasing degree of three or four fingers of respectful familiarity should fill a man up and give him the panegyrics so bad. For he has them, the worst way – any one can see that. A man who is perfectly at himself does not throw cold detraction at people's architectural productions and picturesque surroundings, and let on that what he prefers is a Dubbonese dust-storm and a pleasing degree of respectful familiarity. No, these are old, old symptoms; and when they appear we know that the man has got the panegyrics.

Sydney has a population of 400,000. When a stranger from America steps ashore there, the first thing that strikes him is that the place is eight or nine times as large as he was expecting it to be; and the next thing that strikes him is that it is an English city with American trimmings. Later on, in Melbourne, he will find the American trimmings still more in evidence; there, even the architecture will often suggest America; a photograph of its stateliest business street might be passed upon him for a picture of the finest street in a large American city. I was told that the most of the fine residences were the city residences of squatters. The name seemed out of focus somehow. When the explanation came, it offered a new instance of the curious changes which words, as well as animals, undergo through change of habitat and climate. With us, when you speak of a squatter you are always supposed to be speaking of a poor man, but in Australia when you speak of a squatter you are supposed to be speaking of a millionaire; in America the word indicates the possessor of a few acres and a doubtful title, in Australia it indicates a man whose landfront is as long as a railroad, and whose title has been perfected in one way or another; in America the word indicates a man who owns a dozen head of live stock, in Australia a man who owns anywhere from fifty thousand up to half a million head; in America the word indicates a man who is obscure and not important, in Australia a man who is prominent and of the first importance; in America you take off your hat to no squatter, in Australia you do; in America if your uncle is a squatter you keep it dark, in Australia you advertise it; in America if your friend is a squatter nothing comes of it, but with a squatter for your friend in Australia you may sup with kings if there are any around.

In Australia it takes about two acres and a half of pastureland (some people say twice as many), to support a sheep; and when the squatter has half a million sheep his private domain is about as large as Rhode Island, to speak in general terms. His annual wool crop may be worth a quarter or a half million dollars.

He will live in a palace in Melbourne or Sydney or some other of the large cities, and make occasional trips to his sheep-kingdom several hundred miles away in the great plains to look after his battalions of riders and shepherds and other hands. He has a commodious dwelling out there, and if he approve of you he will invite you to spend a week in it, and will make you at home and comfortable, and let you see the great industry in all its details, and feed you and slake you and smoke you with the best that money can buy.

On at least one of these vast estates there is a considerable town, with all the various businesses and occupations that go to make an important town; and the town and the land it stands upon are the property of the squatters. I have seen that town, and it is not unlikely that there are other squatter-owned towns in Australia.

Australia supplies the world not only with fine wool, but with mutton also. The modern invention of cold storage and its application in ships has created this great trade. In Sydney I visited a huge establishment where they kill and clean and solidly freeze a thousand sheep a day, for shipment to England.

The Australians did not seem to me to differ noticeably from Americans, either in dress, carriage, ways, pronunciation, inflections, or general appearance. There were fleeting and subtle suggestions of their English origin, but these were not pronounced enough, as a rule, to catch one's attention. The people have easy and cordial manners from the beginning – from the moment that the introduction is completed. This is American. To put it in another way, it is English friendliness with the English shyness and self-consciousness left out.

Now and then – but this is rare – one hears such words as piper for paper, lydy for lady, and tyble for table fall from lips whence one would not expect such pronunciations to come. There is a superstition prevalent in Sydney that this pronunciation is an Australianism, but people who have been "home" – as the native reverently and lovingly calls England – know better. It is "costermonger." All over Australasia this pronunciation is nearly as common among servants as it is in London among the uneducated and the partially educated of all sorts and conditions of people. That mislaid 'y' is rather striking when a person gets enough of it into a short sentence to enable it to show up. In the hotel in Sydney the chambermaid said, one morning:

"The tyble is set, and here is the piper; and if the lydy is ready I'll tell the wyter to bring up the breakfast."

I have made passing mention, a moment ago, of the native Australasian's custom of speaking of England as "home." It was always pretty to hear it, and often it was said in an unconsciously caressing way that made it touching; in a way which transmuted a sentiment into an embodiment, and made one seem to see Australasia as a young girl stroking mother England's old gray head.

In the Australasian home the table-talk is vivacious and unembarrassed; it is without stiffness or restraint. This does not remind one of England so much as it does of America. But Australasia is strictly democratic, and reserves and restraints are things that are bred by differences of rank.

English and colonial audiences are phenomenally alert and responsive. Where masses of people are gathered together in England, caste is submerged, and with it the English reserve; equality exists for the moment, and every individual is free; so free from any consciousness of fetters, indeed, that the Englishman's habit of watching himself and guarding himself against any injudicious exposure of his feelings is forgotten, and falls into abeyance – and to such a degree indeed, that he will bravely applaud all by himself if he wants to – an exhibition of daring which is unusual elsewhere in the world.

But it is hard to move a new English acquaintance when he is by himself, or when the company present is small and new to him. He is on his guard then, and his natural reserve is to the fore. This has given him the false reputation of being without humor and without the appreciation of humor.

Americans are not Englishmen, and American humor is not English humor; but both the American and his humor had their origin in England, and have merely undergone changes brought about by changed conditions and a new environment. About the best humorous speeches I have yet heard were a couple that were made in Australia at club suppers – one of them by an Englishman, the other by an Australian.

CHAPTER XII

There are those who scoff at the schoolboy, calling him frivolous and shallow: Yet it was the schoolboy who said "Faith is believing what you know ain't so."

– Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

In Sydney I had a large dream, and in the course of talk I told it to a missionary from India who was on his way to visit some relatives in New Zealand. I dreamed that the visible universe is the physical person of God; that the vast worlds that we see twinkling millions of miles apart in the fields of space are the blood corpuscles in His veins; and that we and the other creatures are the microbes that charge with multitudinous life the corpuscles.

Mr. X., the missionary, considered the dream awhile, then said:

> "It is not surpassable for magnitude, since its metes and bounds are the metes and bounds of the universe itself; and it seems to me that it almost accounts for a thing which is otherwise nearly unaccountable – the origin of the sacred legends of the Hindoos. Perhaps they dream them, and then honestly believe them to be divine revelations of fact. It looks like that, for the legends are built on so vast a scale that it does not seem reasonable that plodding priests would happen upon such colossal fancies when awake."

He told some of the legends, and said that they were implicitly believed by all classes of Hindoos, including those of high social position and intelligence; and he said that this universal credulity was a great hindrance to the missionary in his work. Then he said something like this:

> "At home, people wonder why Christianity does not make faster progress in India. They hear that the Indians believe easily, and that they have a natural trust in miracles and give them a hospitable reception. Then they argue like this: since the Indian believes easily, place Christianity before them and they must believe; confirm its truths by the biblical miracles, and they will no longer doubt. The natural deduction is, that as Christianity makes but indifferent progress in India, the fault is with us: we are not fortunate in presenting the doctrines and the miracles.
>
> "But the truth is, we are not by any means so well equipped as they think. We have not the easy task that they imagine. To use a military figure, we are sent against the enemy with good powder in our guns, but only wads for bullets; that is to say, our miracles are not effective; the Hindoos do not care for them; they have more extraordinary ones of their own. All the details of their own religion are proven and established by miracles; the details of ours must be proven in the same way. When I first began my work in India I greatly underestimated the difficulties thus put upon my task. A correction was not long in coming. I thought as our friends think at home – that to prepare my childlike wonder-lovers to listen with favor to my grave message I

only needed to charm the way to it with wonders, marvels, miracles. With full confidence I told the wonders performed by Samson, the strongest man that had ever lived – for so I called him.

“At first I saw lively anticipation and strong interest in the faces of my people, but as I moved along from incident to incident of the great story, I was distressed to see that I was steadily losing the sympathy of my audience. I could not understand it. It was a surprise to me, and a disappointment. Before I was through, the fading sympathy had paled to indifference. Thence to the end the indifference remained; I was not able to make any impression upon it.

“A good old Hindoo gentleman told me where my trouble lay. He said ‘We Hindoos recognize a god by the work of his hands – we accept no other testimony. Apparently, this is also the rule with you Christians. And we know when a man has his power from a god by the fact that he does things which he could not do, as a man, with the mere powers of a man. Plainly, this is the Christian’s way also, of knowing when a man is working by a god’s power and not by his own. You saw that there was a supernatural property in the hair of Samson; for you perceived that when his hair was gone he was as other men. It is our way, as I have said. There are many nations in the world, and each group of nations has its own gods, and will pay no worship to the gods of the others. Each group believes its own gods to be strongest, and it will not exchange them except for gods that shall be proven to be their superiors in power. Man is but a weak creature, and needs the help of gods – he cannot do without it. Shall he place his fate in the hands of weak gods when there may be stronger ones to be found? That would be foolish. No, if he hear of gods that are stronger than his own, he should not turn a deaf ear, for it is not a light matter that is at stake. How then shall he determine which gods are the stronger, his own or those that preside over the concerns of other nations? By comparing the known works of his own gods with the works of those others; there is no other way. Now, when we make this comparison, we are not drawn towards the gods of any other nation. Our gods are shown by their works to be the strongest, the most powerful. The Christians have but few gods, and they are new – new, and not strong; as it seems to us. They will increase in number, it is true, for this has happened with all gods, but that time is far away, many ages and decades of ages away, for gods multiply slowly, as is meet for beings to whom a thousand years is but a single moment. Our own gods have been born millions of years apart. The process is slow, the gathering of strength and power is similarly slow. In the slow lapse of the ages the steadily accumulating power of our gods has at last become prodigious. We have a thousand proofs of this in the colossal character of their personal acts and the acts of ordinary men to whom they have given supernatural qualities. To your Samson was given supernatural power, and when he broke the withes, and slew the thousands with the jawbone of an ass, and carried away the gate's of the city upon his shoulders, you were amazed – and also awed, for you recognized the divine source of his strength. But it could not profit to place these things before your Hindoo congregation and invite their wonder; for they would compare them with the deed done by Hanuman, when our gods infused their divine strength into his muscles; and they would be indifferent to them – as you saw. In the old, old times, ages and ages gone by, when our god Rama was warring with the demon god of Ceylon, Rama bethought him to bridge the sea and connect Ceylon with India, so that his armies might pass easily over; and he sent his general, Hanuman, inspired like your own Samson with divine strength, to bring the materials for the bridge. In two days Hanuman strode fifteen hundred miles, to the Himalayas, and took upon his shoulder a range of those lofty mountains two hundred miles long, and started with it toward Ceylon. It was in the night; and, as he passed along the plain, the people of Govardhun heard the thunder of his tread and felt the earth rocking under it, and they ran out, and there, with their snowy summits piled to heaven, they saw the Himalayas passing by. And as this huge continent swept along overshadowing the earth, upon its slopes they discerned the twinkling lights of a thousand sleeping villages, and it was as if the constellations were filing in procession through the sky.

While they were looking, Hanuman stumbled, and a small ridge of red sandstone twenty miles long was jolted loose and fell. Half of its length has wasted away in the course of the ages, but the other ten miles of it remain in the plain by Govardhun to this day as proof of the might of the inspiration of our gods. You must know, yourself, that Hanuman could not have carried those mountains to

Ceylon except by the strength of the gods. You know that it was not done by his own strength, therefore, you know that it was done by the strength of the gods, just as you know that Samson carried the gates by the divine strength and not by his own. I think you must concede two things: First, That in carrying the gates of the city upon his shoulders, Samson did not establish the superiority of his gods over ours; secondly, That his feat is not supported by any but verbal evidence, while Hanuman's is not only supported by verbal evidence, but this evidence is confirmed, established, proven, by visible, tangible evidence, which is the strongest of all testimony. We have the sandstone ridge, and while it remains we cannot doubt, and shall not. Have you the gates?'"

CHAPTER XIII

The timid man yearns for full value and asks a tenth. The bold man strikes for double value and compromises on par.

– Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

One is sure to be struck by the liberal way in which Australasia spends money upon public works – such as legislative buildings, town halls, hospitals, asylums, parks, and botanical gardens. I should say that where minor towns in America spend a hundred dollars on the town hall and on public parks and gardens, the like towns in Australasia spend a thousand. And I think that this ratio will hold good in the matter of hospitals, also. I have seen a costly and well-equipped, and architecturally handsome hospital in an Australian village of fifteen hundred inhabitants. It was built by private funds furnished by the villagers and the neighboring planters, and its running expenses were drawn from the same sources. I suppose it would be hard to match this in any country. This village was about to close a contract for lighting its streets with the electric light, when I was there. That is ahead of London. London is still obscured by gas – gas pretty widely scattered, too, in some of the districts; so widely indeed, that except on moonlight nights it is difficult to find the gas lamps.

The botanical garden of Sydney covers thirty-eight acres, beautifully laid out and rich with the spoil of all the lands and all the climes of the world. The garden is on high ground in the middle of the town, overlooking the great harbor, and it adjoins the spacious grounds of Government House – fifty-six acres; and at hand also, is a recreation ground containing eighty-two acres. In addition, there are the zoological gardens, the race-course, and the great cricket-grounds where the international matches are played. Therefore there is plenty of room for reposeful lazying and lounging, and for exercise too, for such as like that kind of work.

There are four specialties attainable in the way of social pleasure. If you enter your name on the Visitor's Book at Government House you will receive an invitation to the next ball that takes place there, if nothing can be proven against you. And it will be very pleasant; for you will see everybody except the Governor, and add a number of acquaintances and several friends to your list. The Governor will be in England. He always is. The continent has four or five governors, and I do not know how many it takes to govern the outlying archipelago; but anyway you will not see them. When they are appointed they come out from England and get inaugurated, and give a ball, and help pray for rain, and get aboard ship and go back home. And so the Lieutenant-Governor has to do all the work. I was in Australasia three months and a half, and saw only one Governor. The others were at home.

The Australasian Governor would not be so restless, perhaps, if he had a war, or a veto, or something like that to call for his reserve-energies, but he hasn't. There isn't any war, and there isn't any veto in his hands. And so there is really little or nothing doing in his line. The country governs itself, and prefers to do it; and is so strenuous about it and so jealous of its independence that it grows restive if even the Imperial Government at home proposes to help; and so the Imperial veto, while a fact, is yet mainly a name.

Thus the Governor's functions are much more limited than are a Governor's functions with us. And therefore more fatiguing. He is the apparent head of the State, he is the real head of Society. He represents culture, refinement, elevated sentiment, polite life, religion; and by his example he propagates these, and they spread and flourish and bear good fruit. He creates the fashion, and leads it. His ball is the ball of balls, and his countenance makes the horse-race thrive.

He is usually a lord, and this is well; for his position compels him to lead an expensive life, and an English lord is generally well equipped for that.

Another of Sydney's social pleasures is the visit to the Admiralty House; which is nobly situated on high ground overlooking the water. The trim boats of the service convey the guests thither; and there, or on board the flag-ship, they have the duplicate of the hospitalities of Government House. The Admiral commanding a station in British waters is a magnate of the first degree, and he is sumptuously housed, as becomes the dignity of his office.

Third in the list of special pleasures is the tour of the harbor in a fine steam pleasure-launch. Your richer friends own boats of this kind, and they will invite you, and the joys of the trip will make a long day seem short.

And finally comes the shark-fishing. Sydney Harbor is populous with the finest breeds of man-eating sharks in the world. Some people make their living catching them; for the Government pays a cash bounty on them. The larger the shark the larger the bounty, and some of the sharks are twenty feet long. You not only get the bounty, but everything that is in the shark belongs to you. Sometimes the contents are quite valuable.

The shark is the swiftest fish that swims. The speed of the fastest steamer afloat is poor compared to his. And he is a great gad-about, and roams far and wide in the oceans, and visits the shores of all of them, ultimately, in the course of his restless excursions. I have a tale to tell now, which has not as yet been in print. In 1870 a young stranger arrived in Sydney, and set about finding something to do; but he knew no one, and brought no recommendations, and the result was that he got no employment. He had aimed high, at first, but as time and his money wasted away he grew less and less exacting, until at last he was willing to serve in the humblest capacities if so he might get bread and shelter. But luck was still against him; he could find no opening of any sort. Finally his money was all gone. He walked the streets all day, thinking; he walked them all night, thinking, thinking, and growing hungrier and hungrier. At dawn he found himself well away from the town and drifting aimlessly along the harbor shore.

As he was passing by a nodding shark-fisher the man looked up and said —

"Say, young fellow, take my line a spell, and change my luck for me."

"How do you know I won't make it worse?"

"Because you can't. It has been at its worst all night. If you can't change it, no harm's done; if you do change it, it's for the better, of course. Come."

"All right, what will you give?"

"I'll give you the shark, if you catch one."

"And I will eat it, bones and all. Give me the line."

"Here you are. I will get away, now, for awhile, so that my luck won't spoil yours; for many and many a time I've noticed that if – there, pull in, pull in, man, you've got a bite! I knew how it would be. Why, I knew you for a born son of luck the minute I saw you. All right – he's landed."

It was an unusually large shark – "a full nineteen-footer," the fisherman said, as he laid the creature open with his knife.

"Now you rob him, young man, while I step to my hamper for a fresh bait. There's generally something in them worth going for. You've changed my luck, you see. But my goodness, I hope you haven't changed your own."

"Oh, it wouldn't matter; don't worry about that. Get your bait. I'll rob him."

When the fisherman got back the young man had just finished washing his hands in the bay, and was starting away.

“What, you are not going?”

“Yes. Good-bye.”

“But what about your shark?”

“The shark? Why, what use is he to me?”

“What use is he? I like that. Don’t you know that we can go and report him to Government, and you’ll get a clean solid eighty shillings bounty? Hard cash, you know. What do you think about it now?”

“Oh, well, you can collect it.”

“And keep it? Is that what you mean?”

“Yes.”

“Well, this is odd. You’re one of those sort they call eccentrics, I judge. The saying is, you mustn’t judge a man by his clothes, and I’m believing it now. Why yours are looking just ratty, don’t you know; and yet you must be rich.”

“I am.”

The young man walked slowly back to the town, deeply musing as he went. He halted a moment in front of the best restaurant, then glanced at his clothes and passed on, and got his breakfast at a “stand-up.” There was a good deal of it, and it cost five shillings. He tendered a sovereign, got his change, glanced at his silver, muttered to himself, “There isn’t enough to buy clothes with,” and went his way.

At half-past nine the richest wool-broker in Sydney was sitting in his morning-room at home, settling his breakfast with the morning paper. A servant put his head in and said:

"There's a sundowner at the door wants to see you, sir."

"What do you bring that kind of a message here for? Send him about his business."

"He won't go, sir. I've tried."

"He won't go? That's – why, that's unusual. He's one of two things, then: he's a remarkable person, or he's crazy. Is he crazy?"

"No, sir. He don't look it."

"Then he's remarkable. What does he say he wants?"

"He won't tell, sir; only says it's very important."

"And won't go. Does he say he won't go?"

"Says he'll stand there till he sees you, sir, if it's all day."

"And yet isn't crazy. Show him up."

The sundowner was shown in. The broker said to himself, "No, he's not crazy; that is easy to see; so he must be the other thing."

Then aloud, "Well, my good fellow, be quick about it; don't waste any words; what is it you want?"

"I want to borrow a hundred thousand pounds."

"Scott! (It's a mistake; he is crazy.. No – he can't be – not with that eye.) Why, you take my breath away. Come, who are you?"

"Nobody that you know."

"What is your name?"

"Cecil Rhodes."

"No, I don't remember hearing the name before. Now then – just for curiosity's sake – what has sent you to me on this extraordinary errand?"

"The intention to make a hundred thousand pounds for you and as much for myself within the next sixty days."

"Well, well, well. It is the most extraordinary idea that – sit down – you interest me. And somehow you – well, you fascinate me; I think that that is about the word. And it isn't your proposition – no, that doesn't fascinate me; it's something else, I don't quite know what; something that's born in you and oozes out of you, I suppose. Now then just for curiosity's sake again, nothing more: as I understand it, it is your desire to bor – "

"I said intention."

"Pardon, so you did. I thought it was an unheedful use of the word – an unheedful valuing of its strength, you know."

"I knew its strength."

"Well, I must say – but look here, let me walk the floor a little, my mind is getting into a sort of whirl, though you don't seem disturbed any. (Plainly this young fellow isn't crazy; but as to his being remarkable – well, really he amounts to that, and something over.) Now then, I believe I am beyond the reach of further astonishment. Strike, and spare not. What is your scheme?"

"To buy the wool crop – deliverable in sixty days."

"What, the whole of it?"

"The whole of it."

"No, I was not quite out of the reach of surprises, after all. Why, how you talk! Do you know what our crop is going to foot up?"

“Two and a half million sterling – maybe a little more.”

“Well, you’ve got your statistics right, any way. Now, then, do you know what the margins would foot up, to buy it at sixty days?”

“The hundred thousand pounds I came here to get.”

“Right, once more. Well, dear me, just to see what would happen, I wish you had the money. And if you had it, what would you do with it?”

“I shall make two hundred thousand pounds out of it in sixty days.”

“You mean, of course, that you might make it if – ”

“I said ‘shall’.”

“Yes, by George, you did say ‘shall’! You are the most definite devil I ever saw, in the matter of language. Dear, dear, dear, look here! Definite speech means clarity of mind. Upon my word I believe you’ve got what you believe to be a rational reason, for venturing into this house, an entire stranger, on this wild scheme of buying the wool crop of an entire colony on speculation. Bring it out – I am prepared – acclimatized, if I may use the word. Why would you buy the crop, and why would you make that sum out of it? That is to say, what makes you think you – ”

“I don’t think – I know.”

“Definite again. How do you know?”

“Because France has declared war against Germany, and wool has gone up fourteen per cent. in London and is still rising.”

“Oh, in-deed? Now then, I’ve got you! Such a thunderbolt as you have just let fly ought to have made me jump out of my chair, but it didn't stir me the least little bit, you see. And for a very simple reason: I have read the morning paper. You can look at it if you want to. The fastest ship in the service arrived at eleven o'clock last night, fifty days out from London. All her news is printed here. There are no war-clouds anywhere; and as for wool, why, it is the low-spiritedest commodity in the English market. It is your turn to jump, now.. Well, why, don't you jump? Why do you sit there in that placid fashion, when – "

"Because I have later news."

"Later news? Oh, come – later news than fifty days, brought steaming hot from London by the – "

"My news is only ten days old."

"Oh, Mun-chausen, hear the maniac talk! Where did you get it?"

"Got it out of a shark."

"Oh, oh, oh, this is too much! Front! call the police bring the gun – raise the town! All the asylums in Christendom have broken loose in the single person of – "

"Sit down! And collect yourself. Where is the use in getting excited? Am I excited? There is nothing to get excited about. When I make a statement which I cannot prove, it will be time enough for you to begin to offer hospitality to damaging fancies about me and my sanity."

"Oh, a thousand, thousand pardons! I ought to be ashamed of myself, and I am ashamed of myself for thinking that a little bit of a circumstance like sending a shark to England to fetch back a market report – "

"What does your middle initial stand for, sir?"

"Andrew. What are you writing?"

"Wait a moment. Proof about the shark – and another matter. Only ten lines. There – now it is done. Sign it."

"Many thanks – many. Let me see; it says – it says oh, come, this is interesting! Why – why – look here! prove what you say here, and I'll put up the money, and double as much, if necessary, and divide the winnings with you, half and half. There, now – I've signed; make your promise good if you can. Show me a copy of the London Times only ten days old."

"Here it is – and with it these buttons and a memorandum book that belonged to the man the shark swallowed. Swallowed him in the Thames, without a doubt; for you will notice that the last entry in the book is dated 'London,' and is of the same date as the Times, and says, 'Ber confequentz der Kreigeseflarun, reife ich heute nach Deutchland ab, aur bak ich mein leben auf dem Ultar meines Landes legen mag' – , as clean native German as anybody can put upon paper, and means that in consequence of the declaration of war, this loyal soul is leaving for home to-day, to fight. And he did leave, too, but the shark had him before the day was done, poor fellow."

"And a pity, too. But there are times for mourning, and we will attend to this case further on; other matters are pressing, now. I will go down and set the machinery in motion in a quiet way and buy the crop. It will cheer the drooping spirits of the boys, in a transitory way. Everything is transitory in this world. Sixty days hence, when they are called to deliver the goods, they will think they've been struck by lightning. But there is a time for mourning, and we will attend to that case along with the other one. Come along, I'll take you to my tailor. What did you say your name is?"

"Cecil Rhodes."

"It is hard to remember. However, I think you will make it easier by and by, if you live. There are three kinds of people – Commonplace Men, Remarkable Men, and Lunatics. I'll classify you with the Remarkables, and take the chances."

The deal went through, and secured to the young stranger the first fortune he ever pocketed.

The people of Sydney ought to be afraid of the sharks, but for some reason they do not seem to be. On Saturdays the young men go out in their boats, and sometimes the water is fairly covered with the little sails. A boat upsets now and then, by accident, a result of tumultuous skylarking; sometimes the boys upset their boat for fun – such as it is with sharks visibly waiting around for just such an occurrence. The young fellows scramble aboard whole – sometimes – not always. Tragedies have happened more than once. While I was in Sydney it was reported that a boy fell out of a boat in the mouth of the Paramatta river and screamed for help and a boy jumped overboard from another boat to save him from the assembling sharks; but the sharks made swift work with the lives of both.

The government pays a bounty for the shark; to get the bounty the fishermen bait the hook or the seine with agreeable mutton; the news spreads and the sharks come from all over the Pacific Ocean to get the free board. In time the shark culture will be one of the most successful things in the colony.

CHAPTER XIV

We can secure other people's approval, if we do right and try hard; but our own is worth a hundred of it, and no way has been found out of securing that.

– Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

My health had broken down in New York in May; it had remained in a doubtful but fairish condition during a succeeding period of 82 days; it broke again on the Pacific. It broke again in Sydney, but not until after I had had a good outing, and had also filled my lecture engagements. This latest break lost me the chance of seeing Queensland. In the circumstances, to go north toward hotter weather was not advisable.

So we moved south with a westward slant, 17 hours by rail to the capital of the colony of Victoria, Melbourne – that juvenile city of sixty years, and half a million inhabitants. On the map the distance looked small; but that is a trouble with all divisions of distance in such a vast country as Australia. The colony of Victoria itself looks small on the map – looks like a county, in fact – yet it is about as large as England, Scotland, and Wales combined. Or, to get another focus upon it, it is just 80 times as large as the state of Rhode Island, and one-third as large as the State of Texas.

Outside of Melbourne, Victoria seems to be owned by a handful of squatters, each with a Rhode Island for a sheep farm.

That is the impression which one gathers from common talk, yet the wool industry of Victoria is by no means so great as that of New South Wales. The climate of Victoria is favorable to other great industries – among others, wheat-growing and the making of wine.

We took the train at Sydney at about four in the afternoon. It was American in one way, for we had a most rational sleeping car; also the car was clean and fine and new – nothing about it to suggest the rolling stock of the continent of Europe. But our baggage was weighed, and extra weight charged for. That was continental. Continental and troublesome. Any detail of railroading that is not troublesome cannot honorably be described as continental.

The tickets were round-trip ones – to Melbourne, and clear to Adelaide in South Australia, and then all the way back to Sydney. Twelve hundred more miles than we really expected to make; but then as the round trip wouldn't cost much more than the single trip, it seemed well enough to buy as many miles as one could afford, even if one was not likely to need them. A human being has a natural desire to have more of a good thing than he needs.

Now comes a singular thing: the oddest thing, the strangest thing, the most baffling and unaccountable marvel that Australasia can show. At the frontier between New South Wales and Victoria our multitude of passengers were routed out of their snug beds by lantern-light in the morning in the biting-cold of a high altitude to change cars on a road that has no break in it from Sydney to Melbourne! Think of the paralysis of intellect that gave that idea birth; imagine the boulder it emerged from on some petrified legislator's shoulders.

It is a narrow-gage road to the frontier, and a broader gauge thence to Melbourne. The two governments were the builders of the road and are the owners of it. One or two reasons are given for this curious state of things. One is, that it represents the jealousy existing between the colonies – the two most important colonies of Australasia. What the other one is, I have forgotten. But it is of no consequence. It could be but another effort to explain the inexplicable.

All passengers fret at the double-gauge; all shippers of freight must of course fret at it; unnecessary expense, delay, and annoyance are imposed upon everybody concerned, and no one is benefitted.

Each Australian colony fences itself off from its neighbor with a custom-house. Personally, I have no objection, but it must be a good deal of inconvenience to the people. We have something resembling it here and there in America, but it goes by another name. The large empire of the Pacific coast requires a world of iron machinery, and could manufacture it economically on the spot if the imposts on foreign iron were removed. But they are not. Protection to Pennsylvania and Alabama forbids it. The result to the Pacific coast is the same as if there were several rows of custom-fences between the coast and the East. Iron carted across the American continent at luxurious railway rates would be valuable enough to be coined when it arrived.

We changed cars. This was at Albury. And it was there, I think, that the growing day and the early sun exposed the distant range called the Blue Mountains. Accurately named. "My word!" as the Australians say, but it was a stunning color, that blue. Deep, strong, rich, exquisite; towering and majestic masses of blue – a softly luminous blue, a smouldering blue, as if vaguely lit by fires within. It extinguished the blue of the sky – made it pallid and unwholesome, whitey and washed-out. A wonderful color – just divine.

A resident told me that those were not mountains; he said they were rabbit-piles. And explained that long exposure and the over-ripe condition of the rabbits was what made them look so blue. This man may have been right, but much reading of books of travel has made me distrustful of gratis information furnished by unofficial residents of a country. The facts which such people give to travelers are usually erroneous, and often intemperately so. The rabbit-plague has indeed been very bad in Australia, and it could account for one mountain, but not for a mountain range, it seems to me. It is too large an order.

We breakfasted at the station. A good breakfast, except the coffee; and cheap. The Government establishes the prices and placards them. The waiters were men, I think; but that is not usual in Australasia. The usual thing is to have girls. No, not girls, young ladies – generally duchesses. Dress? They would attract attention at any royal levee in Europe. Even empresses and queens do not dress as they do. Not that they could not afford it, perhaps, but they would not know how.

All the pleasant morning we slid smoothly along over the plains, through thin – not thick – forests of great melancholy gum trees, with trunks rugged with curled sheets of flaking bark – erysipelas convalescents, so to speak, shedding their dead skins. And all along were tiny cabins, built sometimes of wood, sometimes of gray-blue corrugated iron; and the doorsteps and fences were clogged with children – rugged little simply-clad chaps that looked as if they had been imported from the banks of the Mississippi without breaking bulk.

And there were little villages, with neat stations well placarded with showy advertisements – mainly of almost too self-righteous brands of "sheepdip." If that is the name – and I think it is. It is a stuff like tar, and is dabbed on to places where the shearer clips a piece out of the sheep. It bars out the flies, and has healing properties, and a nip to it which makes the sheep skip like the cattle on a thousand hills. It is not good to eat. That is, it is not good to eat except when mixed with railroad coffee. It improves railroad coffee. Without it railroad coffee is too vague. But with it, it is quite assertive and enthusiastic. By itself, railroad coffee is too passive; but sheep-dip makes it wake up and get down to business. I wonder where they get railroad coffee?

We saw birds, but not a kangaroo, not an emu, not an ornithorhynchus, not a lecturer, not a native. Indeed, the land seemed quite destitute of game. But I have misused the word native. In Australia it is applied to Australian-born whites only. I should have said that we saw no Aboriginals – no "blackfellows." And to this day I have never seen one. In the great museums you will find all the other curiosities, but in the curio of chiefest interest to the stranger all of them are lacking. We have at home an abundance of museums, and not an American Indian in them. It is clearly an absurdity, but it never struck me before.

CHAPTER XV

Truth is stranger than fiction – to some people, but I am measurably familiar with it.

– Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

Truth is stranger than fiction, but it is because Fiction is obliged to stick to possibilities; Truth isn't.

Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

The air was balmy and delicious, the sunshine radiant; it was a charming excursion. In the course of it we came to a town whose odd name was famous all over the world a quarter of a century ago – Wagga-Wagga. This was because the Tichborne Claimant had kept a butcher-shop there. It was out of the midst of his humble collection of sausages and tripe that he soared up into the zenith of notoriety and hung there in the wastes of space a time, with the telescopes of all nations leveled at him in unappeasable curiosity – curiosity as to which of the two long-missing persons he was: Arthur Orton, the mislaid roustabout of Wapping, or Sir Roger Tichborne, the lost heir of a name and estates as old as English history. We all know now, but not a dozen people knew then; and the dozen kept the mystery to themselves and allowed the most intricate and fascinating and marvelous real-life romance that has ever been played upon the world's stage to unfold itself serenely, act by act, in a British court by the long and laborious processes of judicial development.

When we recall the details of that great romance we marvel to see what daring chances truth may freely take in constructing a tale, as compared with the poor little conservative risks permitted to fiction. The fiction-artist could achieve no success with the materials of this splendid Tichborne romance.

He would have to drop out the chief characters; the public would say such people are impossible. He would have to drop out a number of the most picturesque incidents; the public would say such things could never happen. And yet the chief characters did exist, and the incidents did happen.

It cost the Tichborne estates $400,000 to unmask the Claimant and drive him out; and even after the exposure multitudes of Englishmen still believed in him. It cost the British Government another $400,000 to convict him of perjury; and after the conviction the same old multitudes still believed in him; and among these believers were many educated and intelligent men; and some of them had personally known the real Sir Roger. The Claimant was sentenced to 14 years' imprisonment. When he got out of prison he went to New York and kept a whisky saloon in the Bowery for a time, then disappeared from view.

He always claimed to be Sir Roger Tichborne until death called for him. This was but a few months ago – not very much short of a generation since he left Wagga-Wagga to go and possess himself of his estates. On his death-bed he yielded up his secret, and confessed in writing that he was only Arthur Orton of Wapping, able seaman and butcher – that and nothing more. But it is scarcely to be doubted that there are people whom even his dying confession will not convince. The old habit of assimilating incredibilities must have made strong food a necessity in their case; a weaker article would probably disagree with them.

I was in London when the Claimant stood his trial for perjury. I attended one of his showy evenings in the sumptuous quarters provided for him from the purses of his adherents and well-wishers. He was in evening dress, and I thought him a rather fine and stately creature. There were about twenty-five gentlemen present; educated men, men moving in good society, none of them commonplace; some of them were men of distinction, none of them were obscurities. They were his cordial friends and admirers. It was "Sir Roger," always "Sir Roger," on all hands; no one withheld the title, all turned it from the tongue with unction, and as if it tasted good.

For many years I had had a mystery in stock. Melbourne, and only Melbourne, could unriddle it for me. In 1873 I arrived in London with my wife and young child, and presently received a note from Naples signed by a name not familiar to me. It was not Bascom, and it was not Henry; but I will call it Henry Bascom for convenience's sake. This note, of about six lines, was written on a strip of white paper whose end-edges were ragged. I came to be familiar with those strips in later years. Their size and pattern were always the same. Their contents were usually to the same effect: would I and mine come to the writer's country-place in England on such and such a date, by such and such a train, and stay twelve days and depart by such and such a train at the end of the specified time? A carriage would meet us at the station.

These invitations were always for a long time ahead; if we were in Europe, three months ahead; if we were in America, six to twelve months ahead. They always named the exact date and train for the beginning and also for the end of the visit.

This first note invited us for a date three months in the future. It asked us to arrive by the 4.10 p.m. train from London, August 6th. The carriage would be waiting. The carriage would take us away seven days later-train specified. And there were these words: “Speak to Tom Hughes.”

I showed the note to the author of “Tom Brown at Rugby,” and he said: “Accept, and be thankful.”

He described Mr. Bascom as being a man of genius, a man of fine attainments, a choice man in every way, a rare and beautiful character. He said that Bascom Hall was a particularly fine example of the stately manorial mansion of Elizabeth’s days, and that it was a house worth going a long way to see – like Knowle; that Mr. B. was of a social disposition; liked the company of agreeable people, and always had samples of the sort coming and going.

We paid the visit. We paid others, in later years – the last one in 1879. Soon after that Mr. Bascom started on a voyage around the world in a steam yacht – a long and leisurely trip, for he was making collections, in all lands, of birds, butterflies, and such things.

The day that President Garfield was shot by the assassin Guiteau, we were at a little watering place on Long Island Sound; and in the mail matter of that day came a letter with the Melbourne post-mark on it. It was for my wife, but I recognized Mr. Bascom's handwriting on the envelope, and opened it. It was the usual note – as to paucity of lines – and was written on the customary strip of paper; but there was nothing usual about the contents. The note informed my wife that if it would be any assuagement of her grief to know that her husband's lecture-tour in Australia was a satisfactory venture from the beginning to the end, he, the writer, could testify that such was the case; also, that her husband's untimely death had been mourned by all classes, as she would already know by the press telegrams, long before the reception of this note; that the funeral was attended by the officials of the colonial and city governments; and that while he, the writer, her friend and mine, had not reached Melbourne in time to see the body, he had at least had the sad privilege of acting as one of the pall-bearers. Signed, "Henry Bascom."

My first thought was, why didn't he have the coffin opened? He would have seen that the corpse was an imposter, and he could have gone right ahead and dried up the most of those tears, and comforted those sorrowing governments, and sold the remains and sent me the money.

I did nothing about the matter. I had set the law after living lecture doubles of mine a couple of times in America, and the law had not been able to catch them; others in my trade had tried to catch their impostor-doubles and had failed. Then where was the use in harrying a ghost? None – and so I did not disturb it. I had a curiosity to know about that man's lecture-tour and last moments, but that could wait. When I should see Mr. Bascom he would tell me all about it. But he passed from life, and I never saw him again.. My curiosity faded away.

However, when I found that I was going to Australia it revived. And naturally: for if the people should say that I was a dull, poor thing compared to what I was before I died, it would have a bad effect on business. Well, to my surprise the Sydney journalists had never heard of that impostor! I pressed them, but they were firm – they had never heard of him, and didn't believe in him.

I could not understand it; still, I thought it would all come right in Melbourne. The government would remember; and the other mourners. At the supper of the Institute of Journalists I should find out all about the matter. But no – it turned out that they had never heard of it.

So my mystery was a mystery still. It was a great disappointment. I believed it would never be cleared up – in this life – so I dropped it out of my mind.

But at last! just when I was least expecting it —

However, this is not the place for the rest of it; I shall come to the matter again, in a far-distant chapter.

CHAPTER XVI

There is a Moral sense, and there is an Immoral Sense. History shows us that the Moral Sense enables us to perceive morality and how to avoid it, and that the Immoral Sense enables us to perceive immorality and how to enjoy it.

– Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

Melbourne spreads around over an immense area of ground. It is a stately city architecturally as well as in magnitude. It has an elaborate system of cable-car service; it has museums, and colleges, and schools, and public gardens, and electricity, and gas, and libraries, and theaters, and mining centers, and wool centers, and centers of the arts and sciences, and boards of trade, and ships, and railroads, and a harbor, and social clubs, and journalistic clubs, and racing clubs, and a squatter club sumptuously housed and appointed, and as many churches and banks as can make a living. In a word, it is equipped with everything that goes to make the modern great city. It is the largest city of Australasia, and fills the post with honor and credit. It has one specialty; this must not be jumbled in with those other things. It is the mitred Metropolitan of the Horse-Racing Cult. Its race-ground is the Mecca of Australasia. On the great annual day of sacrifice – the 5th of November, Guy Fawkes's Day – business is suspended over a stretch of land and sea as wide as from New York to San Francisco, and deeper than from the northern lakes to the Gulf of Mexico; and every man and woman, of high degree or low, who can afford the expense, put away their other duties and come. They begin to swarm in by ship and rail a fortnight before the day, and they swarm thicker and thicker day after day, until all the vehicles of transportation are taxed to their uttermost to meet the demands of the occasion, and all hotels and lodgings are bulging outward because of the pressure from within. They come a hundred thousand strong, as all the best authorities say, and they pack the spacious grounds and grandstands and make a spectacle such as is never to be seen in Australasia elsewhere.

It is the "Melbourne Cup" that brings this multitude together. Their clothes have been ordered long ago, at unlimited cost, and without bounds as to beauty and magnificence, and have been kept in concealment until now, for unto this day are they consecrate. I am speaking of the ladies' clothes; but one might know that.

And so the grand-stands make a brilliant and wonderful spectacle, a delirium of color, a vision of beauty. The champagne flows, everybody is vivacious, excited, happy; everybody bets, and gloves and fortunes change hands right along, all the time. Day after day the races go on, and the fun and the excitement are kept at white heat; and when each day is done, the people dance all night so as to be fresh for the race in the morning. And at the end of the great week the swarms secure lodgings and transportation for next year, then flock away to their remote homes and count their gains and losses, and order next year's Cup-clothes, and then lie down and sleep two weeks, and get up sorry to reflect that a whole year must be put in somehow or other before they can be wholly happy again.

The Melbourne Cup is the Australasian National Day. It would be difficult to overstate its importance. It overshadows all other holidays and specialized days of whatever sort in that congeries of colonies. Overshadows them? I might almost say it blots them out. Each of them gets attention, but not everybody's; each of them evokes interest, but not everybody's; each of them rouses enthusiasm, but not everybody's; in each case a part of the attention, interest, and enthusiasm is a matter of habit and custom, and another part of it is official and perfunctory. Cup Day, and Cup Day only, commands an attention, an interest, and an enthusiasm which are universal – and spontaneous, not perfunctory. Cup Day is supreme – it has no rival. I can call to mind no specialized annual day, in any country, which can be named by that large name – Supreme. I can call to mind no specialized annual day, in any country, whose approach fires the whole land with a conflagration of conversation and preparation and anticipation and jubilation. No day save this one; but this one does it.

In America we have no annual supreme day; no day whose approach makes the whole nation glad. We have the Fourth of July, and Christmas, and Thanksgiving. Neither of them can claim the primacy; neither of them can arouse an enthusiasm which comes near to being universal. Eight grown Americans out of ten dread the coming of the Fourth, with its pandemonium and its perils, and they rejoice when it is gone – if still alive. The approach of Christmas brings harassment and dread to many excellent people. They have to buy a cart-load of presents, and they never know what to buy to hit the various tastes; they put in three weeks of hard and anxious work, and when Christmas morning comes they are so dissatisfied with the result, and so disappointed that they want to sit down and cry. Then they give thanks that Christmas comes but once a year. The observance of Thanksgiving Day – as a function – has become general of late years. The Thankfulness is not so general. This is natural. Two-thirds of the nation have always had hard luck and a hard time during the year, and this has a calming effect upon their enthusiasm.

We have a supreme day – a sweeping and tremendous and tumultuous day, a day which commands an absolute universality of interest and excitement; but it is not annual. It comes but once in four years; therefore it cannot count as a rival of the Melbourne Cup.

In Great Britain and Ireland they have two great days – Christmas and the Queen's birthday. But they are equally popular; there is no supremacy.

I think it must be conceded that the position of the Australasian Day is unique, solitary, unfellowed; and likely to hold that high place a long time.

The next things which interest us when we travel are, first, the people; next, the novelties; and finally the history of the places and countries visited. Novelties are rare in cities which represent the most advanced civilization of the modern day. When one is familiar with such cities in the other parts of the world he is in effect familiar with the cities of Australasia. The outside aspects will furnish little that is new. There will be new names, but the things which they represent will sometimes be found to be less new than their names. There may be shades of difference, but these can easily be too fine for detection by the incompetent eye of the passing stranger. In the larrikin he will not be able to discover a new species, but only an old one met elsewhere, and variously called loafer, rough, tough, bummer, or blatherskite, according to his geographical distribution. The larrikin differs by a shade from those others, in that he is more sociable toward the stranger than they, more kindly disposed, more hospitable, more hearty, more friendly. At least it seemed so to me, and I had opportunity to observe. In Sydney, at least. In Melbourne I had to drive to and from the lecture-theater, but in Sydney I was able to walk both ways, and did it. Every night, on my way home at ten, or a quarter past, I found the larrikin grouped in considerable force at several of the street corners, and he always gave me this pleasant salutation:

"Hello, Mark!"

"Here's to you, old chap!

"Say – Mark! – is he dead?" – a reference to a passage in some book of mine, though I did not detect, at that time, that that was its source. And I didn't detect it afterward in Melbourne, when I came on the stage for the first time, and the same question was dropped down upon me from the dizzy height of the gallery. It is always difficult to answer a sudden inquiry like that, when you have come unprepared and don't know what it means. I will remark here – if it is not an indecorum – that the welcome which an American lecturer gets from a British colonial audience is a thing which will move him to his deepest deeps, and veil his sight and break his voice. And from Winnipeg to Africa, experience will teach him nothing; he will never learn to expect it, it will catch him as a surprise each time. The war-cloud hanging black over England and America made no trouble for me. I was a prospective prisoner of war, but at dinners, suppers, on the platform, and elsewhere, there was never anything to remind me of it. This was hospitality of the right metal, and would have been prominently lacking in some countries, in the circumstances.

And speaking of the war-flurry, it seemed to me to bring to light the unexpected, in a detail or two. It seemed to relegate the war-talk to the politicians on both sides of the water; whereas whenever a prospective war between two nations had been in the air theretofore, the public had done most of the talking and the bitterest. The attitude of the newspapers was new also. I speak of those of Australasia and India, for I had access to those only. They treated the subject argumentatively and with dignity, not with spite and anger. That was a new spirit, too, and not learned of the French and German press, either before Sedan or since. I heard many public speeches, and they reflected the moderation of the journals. The outlook is that the English-speaking race will dominate the earth a hundred years from now, if its sections do not get to fighting each other. It would be a pity to spoil that prospect by baffling and retarding wars when arbitration would settle their differences so much better and also so much more definitely.

No, as I have suggested, novelties are rare in the great capitals of modern times. Even the wool exchange in Melbourne could not be told from the familiar stock exchange of other countries. Wool brokers are just like stockbrokers; they all bounce from their seats and put up their hands and yell in unison – no stranger can tell what – and the president calmly says "Sold to Smith & Co., threpence farthing – next!" – when probably nothing of the kind happened; for how should he know?

In the museums you will find acres of the most strange and fascinating things; but all museums are fascinating, and they do so tire your eyes, and break your back, and burn out your vitalities with their consuming interest. You always say you will never go again, but you do go. The palaces of the rich, in Melbourne, are much like the palaces of the rich in America, and the life in them is the same; but there the resemblance ends. The grounds surrounding the American palace are not often large, and not often beautiful, but in the Melbourne case the grounds are often ducally spacious, and the climate and the gardeners together make them as beautiful as a dream. It is said that some of the country seats have grounds – domains – about them which rival in charm and magnitude those which surround the country mansion of an English lord; but I was not out in the country; I had my hands full in town.

And what was the origin of this majestic city and its efflorescence of palatial town houses and country seats? Its first brick was laid and its first house built by a passing convict. Australian history is almost always picturesque; indeed, it is so curious and strange, that it is itself the chiefest novelty the country has to offer, and so it pushes the other novelties into second and third place. It does not read like history, but like the most beautiful lies. And all of a fresh new sort, no mouldy old stale ones. It is full of surprises, and adventures, and incongruities, and contradictions, and incredibilities; but they are all true, they all happened.

CHAPTER XVII

The English are mentioned in the Bible: Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

– Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

When we consider the immensity of the British Empire in territory, population, and trade, it requires a stern exercise of faith to believe in the figures which represent Australasia's contribution to the Empire's commercial grandeur. As compared with the landed estate of the British Empire, the landed estate dominated by any other Power except one – Russia – is not very impressive for size. My authorities make the British Empire not much short of a fourth larger than the Russian Empire. Roughly proportioned, if you will allow your entire hand to represent the British Empire, you may then cut off the fingers a trifle above the middle joint of the middle finger, and what is left of the hand will represent Russia. The populations ruled by Great Britain and China are about the same – 400,000,000 each. No other Power approaches these figures. Even Russia is left far behind.

The population of Australasia – 4,000,000 – sinks into nothingness, and is lost from sight in that British ocean of 400,000,000. Yet the statistics indicate that it rises again and shows up very conspicuously when its share of the Empire's commerce is the matter under consideration. The value of England's annual exports and imports is stated at three billions of dollars, – [New South Wales Blue Book.] – and it is claimed that more than one-tenth of this great aggregate is represented by Australasia's exports to England and imports from England. In addition to this, Australasia does a trade with countries other than England, amounting to a hundred million dollars a year, and a domestic intercolonial trade amounting to a hundred and fifty millions.

In round numbers the 4,000,000 buy and sell about $600,000,000 worth of goods a year. It is claimed that about half of this represents commodities of Australasian production. The products exported annually by India are worth a trifle over $500,000,000.1 Now, here are some faith-straining figures:

Indian production (300,000,000 population),	$500,000,000.
Australasian production (4,000,000 population),	$300,000,000.

That is to say, the product of the individual Indian, annually (for export some whither), is worth $1.75; that of the individual Australasian (for export some whither), $75! Or, to put it in another way, the Indian family of man and wife and three children sends away an annual result worth $8.75, while the Australasian family sends away $375 worth.

There are trustworthy statistics furnished by Sir Richard Temple and others, which show that the individual Indian's whole annual product, both for export and home use, is worth in gold only $7.50; or, $37.50 for the family-aggregate. Ciphered out on a like ratio of multiplication, the Australasian family's aggregate production would be nearly $1,600. Truly, nothing is so astonishing as figures, if they once get started.

We left Melbourne by rail for Adelaide, the capital of the vast Province of South Australia – a seventeen-hour excursion. On the train we found several Sydney friends; among them a Judge who was going out on circuit, and was going to hold court at Broken Hill, where the celebrated silver mine is. It seemed a curious road to take to get to that region. Broken Hill is close to the western border of New South Wales, and Sydney is on the eastern border. A fairly straight line, 700 miles long, drawn westward from Sydney, would strike Broken Hill, just as a somewhat shorter one drawn west from Boston would strike Buffalo. The way the Judge was traveling would carry him over 2,000 miles by rail, he said; southwest from Sydney down to Melbourne, then northward up to Adelaide, then a cant back northeastward and over the border into New South Wales once more – to Broken Hill. It was like going from Boston southwest to Richmond, Virginia, then northwest up to Erie, Pennsylvania, then a cant back northeast and over the border – to Buffalo, New York.

But the explanation was simple. Years ago the fabulously rich silver discovery at Broken Hill burst suddenly upon an unexpectant world. Its stocks started at shillings, and went by leaps and bounds to the most fanciful figures. It was one of those cases where the cook puts a month's wages into shares, and comes next month and buys your house at your own price, and moves into it herself; where the coachman takes a few shares, and next month sets up a bank; and where the common sailor invests the price of a spree, and the next month buys out the steamship company and goes into business on his own hook. In a word, it was one of those excitements which bring multitudes of people to a common center with a rush, and whose needs must be supplied, and at once. Adelaide was close by, Sydney was far away. Adelaide threw a short railway across the border before Sydney had time to arrange for a long one; it was not worth while for Sydney to arrange at all. The whole vast trade-profit of Broken Hill fell into Adelaide's hands, irrevocably. New South Wales law furnishes for Broken Hill and sends her Judges 2,000 miles – mainly through alien countries – to administer it, but Adelaide takes the dividends and makes no moan.

We started at 4.20 in the afternoon, and moved across level plains until night. In the morning we had a stretch of "scrub" country – the kind of thing which is so useful to the Australian novelist. In the scrub the hostile aboriginal lurks, and flits mysteriously about, slipping out from time to time to surprise and slaughter the settler; then slipping back again, and leaving no track that the white man can follow. In the scrub the novelist's heroine gets lost, search fails of result; she wanders here and there, and finally sinks down exhausted and unconscious, and the searchers pass within a yard or two of her, not suspecting that she is near, and by and by some rambler finds her bones and the pathetic diary which she had scribbled with her failing hand and left behind. Nobody can find a lost heroine in the scrub but the aboriginal "tracker," and he will not lend himself to the scheme if it will interfere with the novelist's plot. The scrub stretches miles and miles in all directions, and looks like a level roof of bush-tops without a break or a crack in it – as seamless as a blanket, to all appearance. One might as well walk under water and hope to guess out a route and stick to it, I should think. Yet it is claimed that the aboriginal "tracker" was able to hunt out people lost in the scrub. Also in the "bush"; also in the desert; and even follow them over patches of bare rocks and over alluvial ground which had to all appearance been washed clear of footprints.

From reading Australian books and talking with the people, I became convinced that the aboriginal tracker's performances evince a craft, a penetration, a luminous sagacity, and a minuteness and accuracy of observation in the matter of detective-work not found in nearly so remarkable a degree in any other people, white or colored. In an official account of the blacks of Australia published by the government of Victoria, one reads that the aboriginal not only notices the faint marks left on the bark of a tree by the claws of a climbing opossum, but knows in some way or other whether the marks were made to-day or yesterday.

And there is the case, on record where A., a settler, makes a bet with B., that B. may lose a cow as effectually as he can, and A. will produce an aboriginal who will find her. B. selects a cow and lets the tracker see the cow's footprint, then be put under guard. B. then drives the cow a few miles over a course which drifts in all directions, and frequently doubles back upon itself; and he selects difficult ground all the time, and once or twice even drives the cow through herds of other cows, and mingles her tracks in the wide confusion of theirs. He finally brings his cow home; the aboriginal is set at liberty, and at once moves around in a great circle, examining all cow-tracks until he finds the one he is after; then sets off and follows it throughout its erratic course, and ultimately tracks it to the stable where B. has hidden the cow. Now wherein does one cow-track differ from another? There must be a difference, or the tracker could not have performed the feat; a difference minute, shadowy, and not detectible by you or me, or by the late Sherlock Holmes, and yet discernible by a member of a race charged by some people with occupying the bottom place in the gradations of human intelligence.

CHAPTER XVIII

It is easier to stay out than get out.

– Pudd’nhead Wilson’s New Calendar.

The train was now exploring a beautiful hill country, and went twisting in and out through lovely little green valleys. There were several varieties of gum trees; among them many giants. Some of them were bodied and barked like the sycamore; some were of fantastic aspect, and reminded one of the quaint apple trees in Japanese pictures. And there was one peculiarly beautiful tree whose name and breed I did not know. The foliage seemed to consist of big bunches of pine-spines, the lower half of each bunch a rich brown or old-gold color, the upper half a most vivid and strenuous and shouting green. The effect was altogether bewitching. The tree was apparently rare. I should say that the first and last samples of it seen by us were not more than half an hour apart. There was another tree of striking aspect, a kind of pine, we were told. Its foliage was as fine as hair, apparently, and its mass sphered itself above the naked straight stem like an explosion of misty smoke. It was not a sociable sort; it did not gather in groups or couples, but each individual stood far away from its nearest neighbor. It scattered itself in this spacious and exclusive fashion about the slopes of swelling grassy great knolls, and stood in the full flood of the wonderful sunshine; and as far as you could see the tree itself you could also see the ink-black blot of its shadow on the shining green carpet at its feet.

On some part of this railway journey we saw gorse and broom – importations from England – and a gentleman who came into our compartment on a visit tried to tell me which – was which; but as he didn't know, he had difficulty. He said he was ashamed of his ignorance, but that he had never been confronted with the question before during the fifty years and more that he had spent in Australia, and so he had never happened to get interested in the matter. But there was no need to be ashamed. The most of us have his defect. We take a natural interest in novelties, but it is against nature to take an interest in familiar things. The gorse and the broom were a fine accent in the landscape. Here and there they burst out in sudden conflagrations of vivid yellow against a background of sober or sombre color, with a so startling effect as to make a body catch his breath with the happy surprise of it. And then there was the wattle, a native bush or tree, an inspiring cloud of sumptuous yellow bloom. It is a favorite with the Australians, and has a fine fragrance, a quality usually wanting in Australian blossoms.

The gentleman who enriched me with the poverty of his information about the gorse and the broom told me that he came out from England a youth of twenty and entered the Province of South Australia with thirty-six shillings in his pocket – an adventurer without trade, profession, or friends, but with a clearly-defined purpose in his head: he would stay until he was worth L200, then go back home. He would allow himself five years for the accumulation of this fortune.

“That was more than fifty years ago,” said he. “And here I am, yet.”

As he went out at the door he met a friend, and turned and introduced him to me, and the friend and I had a talk and a smoke. I spoke of the previous conversation and said there was something very pathetic about this half century of exile, and that I wished the L200 scheme had succeeded.

“With him? Oh, it did. It’s not so sad a case. He is modest, and he left out some of the particulars. The lad reached South Australia just in time to help discover the Burra-Burra copper mines. They turned out L700,000 in the first three years. Up to now they have yielded L20,000,000. He has had his share. Before that boy had been in the country two years he could have gone home and bought a village; he could go now and buy a city, I think. No, there is nothing very pathetic about his case. He and his copper arrived at just a handy time to save South Australia. It had got mashed pretty flat under the collapse of a land boom a while before.” There it is again; picturesque history – Australia’s specialty. In 1829 South Australia hadn’t a white man in it. In 1836 the British Parliament erected it – still a solitude – into a Province, and gave it a governor and other governmental machinery. Speculators took hold, now, and inaugurated a vast land scheme, and invited immigration, encouraging it with lurid promises of sudden wealth. It was well worked in London; and bishops, statesmen, and all sorts of people made a rush for the land company's shares. Immigrants soon began to pour into the region of Adelaide and select town lots and farms in the sand and the mangrove swamps by the sea. The crowds continued to come, prices of land rose high, then higher and still higher, everybody was prosperous and happy, the boom swelled into gigantic proportions. A village of sheet iron huts and clapboard sheds sprang up in the sand, and in these wigwams fashion made display; richly-dressed ladies played on costly pianos, London swells in evening dress and patent-leather boots were abundant, and this fine society drank champagne, and in other ways conducted itself in this capital of humble sheds as it had been accustomed to do in the aristocratic quarters of the metropolis of the world. The provincial government put up expensive buildings for its own use, and a palace with gardens for the use of its governor. The governor had a guard, and maintained a court. Roads, wharves, and hospitals were built. All this on credit, on paper, on wind, on inflated and fictitious values – on the boom's moonshine, in fact. This went on handsomely during four or five years. Then all of a sudden came a smash. Bills for a huge amount drawn by the governor upon the Treasury were dishonored, the land company's credit went up in smoke, a panic followed, values fell with a rush, the frightened immigrants seized their gripsacks and fled to other lands, leaving behind them a good imitation of a solitude, where lately had been a buzzing and populous hive of men.

Adelaide was indeed almost empty; its population had fallen to 3,000. During two years or more the death-trance continued. Prospect of revival there was none; hope of it ceased. Then, as suddenly as the paralysis had come, came the resurrection from it. Those astonishingly rich copper mines were discovered, and the corpse got up and danced.

The wool production began to grow; grain-raising followed – followed so vigorously, too, that four or five years after the copper discovery, this little colony, which had had to import its breadstuffs formerly, and pay hard prices for them – once $50 a barrel for flour – had become an exporter of grain.

The prosperities continued. After many years Providence, desiring to show especial regard for New South Wales and exhibit loving interest in its welfare which should certify to all nations the recognition of that colony's conspicuous righteousness and distinguished well-deserving, conferred upon it that treasury of inconceivable riches, Broken Hill; and South Australia went over the border and took it, giving thanks.

Among our passengers was an American with a unique vocation. Unique is a strong word, but I use it justifiably if I did not misconceive what the American told me; for I understood him to say that in the world there was not another man engaged in the business which he was following. He was buying the kangaroo-skin crop; buying all of it, both the Australian crop and the Tasmanian; and buying it for an American house in New York. The prices were not high, as there was no competition, but the year's aggregate of skins would cost him L30,000. I had had the idea that the kangaroo was about extinct in Tasmania and well thinned out on the continent. In America the skins are tanned and made into shoes. After the tanning, the leather takes a new name – which I have forgotten – I only remember that the new name does not indicate that the kangaroo furnishes the leather. There was a German competition for a while, some years ago, but that has ceased. The Germans failed to arrive at the secret of tanning the skins successfully, and they withdrew from the business. Now then, I suppose that I have seen a man whose occupation is really entitled to bear that high epithet – unique. And I suppose that there is not another occupation in the world that is restricted to the hands of a sole person. I can think of no instance of it. There is more than one Pope, there is more than one Emperor, there is even more than one living god, walking upon the earth and worshiped in all sincerity by large populations of men. I have seen and talked with two of these Beings myself in India, and I have the autograph of one of them. It can come good, by and by, I reckon, if I attach it to a "permit."

Approaching Adelaide we dismounted from the train, as the French say, and were driven in an open carriage over the hills and along their slopes to the city. It was an excursion of an hour or two, and the charm of it could not be overstated, I think. The road wound around gaps and gorges, and offered all varieties of scenery and prospect – mountains, crags, country homes, gardens, forests – color, color, color everywhere, and the air fine and fresh, the skies blue, and not a shred of cloud to mar the downpour of the brilliant sunshine. And finally the mountain gateway opened, and the immense plain lay spread out below and stretching away into dim distances on every hand, soft and delicate and dainty and beautiful. On its near edge reposed the city.

We descended and entered. There was nothing to remind one of the humble capital, of huts and sheds of the long-vanished day of the land-boom. No, this was a modern city, with wide streets, compactly built; with fine homes everywhere, embowered in foliage and flowers, and with imposing masses of public buildings nobly grouped and architecturally beautiful.

There was prosperity, in the air; for another boom was on. Providence, desiring to show especial regard for the neighboring colony on the west called Western Australia – and exhibit loving interest in its welfare which should certify to all nations the recognition of that colony's conspicuous righteousness and distinguished well-deserving, had recently conferred upon it that majestic treasury of golden riches, Coolgardie; and now South Australia had gone around the corner and taken it, giving thanks. Everything comes to him who is patient and good, and waits.

But South Australia deserves much, for apparently she is a hospitable home for every alien who chooses to come; and for his religion, too. She has a population, as per the latest census, of only 320,000-odd, and yet her varieties of religion indicate the presence within her borders of samples of people from pretty nearly every part of the globe you can think of. Tabulated, these varieties of religion make a remarkable show. One would have to go far to find its match. I copy here this cosmopolitan curiosity, and it comes from the published census:

Church of England,	89,271
Roman Catholic,	47,179
Wesleyan,	49,159
Lutheran,	23,328
Presbyterian,	18,206
Congregationalist,	11,882
Bible Christian,	15,762
Primitive Methodist,	11,654
Baptist,	17,547
Christian Brethren,	465
Methodist New Connexion,	39
Unitarian,	688
Church of Christ,	3,367
Society of Friends,	100
Salvation Army,	4,356
New Jerusalem Church,	168
Jews,	840
Protestants (undefined),	5,532
Mohammedans,	299
Confucians, etc,	3,884
Other religions,	1,719
Object,	6,940
Not stated,	8,046
Total,	320,431

The item in the above list "Other religions" includes the following as returned:

Agnostics, Atheists, Believers in Christ, Buddhists, Calvinists, Christadelphians, Christians, Christ's Chapel, Christian Israelites, Christian Socialists, Church of God, Cosmopolitans, Deists, Evangelists, Exclusive Brethren, Free Church, Free Methodists, Freethinkers, Followers of Christ, Gospel Meetings, Greek Church, Infidels, Maronites, Memnonists, Moravians, Mormons, Naturalists, Orthodox, Others (indefinite), Pagans, Pantheists, Plymouth Brethren, Rationalists, Reformers, Secularists, Seventh-day Adventists, Shaker, Shintoists, Spiritualists, Theosophists, Town (City) Mission, Welsh Church, Huguenot, Hussite, Zoroastrians, Zwinglian,

About 64 roads to the other world. You see how healthy the religious atmosphere is. Anything can live in it. Agnostics, Atheists, Freethinkers, Infidels, Mormons, Pagans, Indefinites they are all there. And all the big sects of the world can do more than merely live in it: they can spread, flourish, prosper. All except the Spiritualists and the Theosophists. That is the most curious feature of this curious table. What is the matter with the specter? Why do they puff him away? He is a welcome toy everywhere else in the world.

CHAPTER XIX

Pity is for the living, Envy is for the dead.

– Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar.

The successor of the sheet-iron hamlet of the mangrove marshes has that other Australian specialty, the Botanical Gardens. We cannot have these paradises. The best we could do would be to cover a vast acreage under glass and apply steam heat. But it would be inadequate, the lacks would still be so great: the confined sense, the sense of suffocation, the atmospheric dimness, the sweaty heat – these would all be there, in place of the Australian openness to the sky, the sunshine and the breeze. Whatever will grow under glass with us will flourish rampantly out of doors in Australia. – [The greatest heat in Victoria, that there is an authoritative record of, was at Sandhurst, in January, 1862. The thermometer then registered 117 degrees in the shade. In January, 1880, the heat at Adelaide, South Australia, was 172 degrees in the sun.]

When the white man came the continent was nearly as poor, in variety of vegetation, as the desert of Sahara; now it has everything that grows on the earth. In fact, not Australia only, but all Australasia has levied tribute upon the flora of the rest of the world; and wherever one goes the results appear, in gardens private and public, in the woodsy walls of the highways, and in even the forests. If you see a curious or beautiful tree or bush or flower, and ask about it, the people, answering, usually name a foreign country as the place of its origin – India, Africa, Japan, China, England, America, Java, Sumatra, New Guinea, Polynesia, and so on.

In the Zoological Gardens of Adelaide I saw the only laughing jackass that ever showed any disposition to be courteous to me. This one opened his head wide and laughed like a demon; or like a maniac who was consumed with humorous scorn over a cheap and degraded pun. It was a very human laugh. If he had been out of sight I could have believed that the laughter came from a man. It is an odd-looking bird, with a head and beak that are much too large for its body. In time man will exterminate the rest of the wild creatures of Australia, but this one will probably survive, for man is his friend and lets him alone. Man always has a good reason for his charities towards wild things, human or animal when he has any. In this case the bird is spared because he kills snakes. If L. J. will take my advice he will not kill all of them.

In that garden I also saw the wild Australian dog – the dingo. He was a beautiful creature – shapely, graceful, a little wolfish in some of his aspects, but with a most friendly eye and sociable disposition. The dingo is not an importation; he was present in great force when the whites first came to the continent. It may be that he is the oldest dog in the universe; his origin, his descent, the place where his ancestors first appeared, are as unknown and as untraceable as are the camel's. He is the most precious dog in the world, for he does not bark. But in an evil hour he got to raiding the sheep-runs to appease his hunger, and that sealed his doom. He is hunted, now, just as if he were a wolf. He has been sentenced to extermination, and the sentence will be carried out. This is all right, and not objectionable. The world was made for man – the white man.

South Australia is confusingly named. All of the colonies have a southern exposure except one – Queensland. Properly speaking, South Australia is middle Australia. It extends straight up through the center of the continent like the middle board in a center-table. It is 2,000 miles high, from south to north, and about a third as wide. A wee little spot down in its southeastern corner contains eight or nine-tenths of its population; the other one or two-tenths are elsewhere – as elsewhere as they could be in the United States with all the country between Denver and Chicago, and Canada and the Gulf of Mexico to scatter over. There is plenty of room.

A telegraph line stretches straight up north through that 2,000 miles of wilderness and desert from Adelaide to Port Darwin on the edge of the upper ocean. South Australia built the line; and did it in 1871-2 when her population numbered only 185,000. It was a great work; for there were no roads, no paths; 1,300 miles of the route had been traversed but once before by white men; provisions, wire, and poles had to be carried over immense stretches of desert; wells had to be dug along the route to supply the men and cattle with water.

A cable had been previously laid from Port Darwin to Java and thence to India, and there was telegraphic communication with England from India. And so, if Adelaide could make connection with Port Darwin it meant connection with the whole world. The enterprise succeeded. One could watch the London markets daily, now; the profit to the wool-growers of Australia was instant and enormous.

A telegram from Melbourne to San Francisco covers approximately 20,000 miles – the equivalent of five-sixths of the way around the globe. It has to halt along the way a good many times and be repeated; still, but little time is lost. These halts, and the distances between them, are here tabulated. – [From “Round the Empire.” (George R. Parkin), all but the last two.]

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.