

SELECTED EDUCATIONAL IDEAS OF
SAMUEL L. CLEMENS

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ABSTRACT

SELECTED EDUCATIONAL IDEAS OF SAMUEL L. CLEMENS

By

Mary A. Carew

Samuel L. Clemens is a significant American novelist whose reputation has broadened from popular entertainer to social critic and prophet. His writing career spanned significant developments in American society. He stood with feet planted in both Agrarian and Technological societies. His creative fiction mirrors many developments in society because his myriad interests caused him to examine them. An attempt to synthesize his educational thought and opinion did not engage the attention of researchers in the past. No expanded statement of Clemens' ideas about education is available. Therefore, it seemed necessary because of this to attempt to analyze part of his creative fiction and some of his essays so that a statement regarding Clemens' educational views could be produced. The study is not definitive nor exhaustive in nature. The selections represent the writer's biases. Also giving impetus to this research project

is the fact that its author feels that creative fiction offers additional insight into educational philosophy and consequently provides another area of historical research for students of education. This work is, then, an historical and philosophical dissertation which focuses on Clemens' educational ideas.

The methods and techniques used in the research effort are tri-partite in nature. The first approach includes the choosing of works which suggest Clemens' educational thought and philosophy. These include the The Gilded Age, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court, "English As She Is Taught," "On Training Children," "What Is Man?" and "The Curious Republic of Gondour." Also as a part of the first approach, there is an attempt to view Clemens' creative work as a vehicle for his own teaching purposes. He uses his work to affect change notably through a teaching role. The writer in the second method of approach analyzes the specific educational concerns in each work to determine the range of Clemens' educational interests and to see if he is consistent. His concerns include teacher-student relationships, the goals of education, the content of curriculum, the education of women and Negroes, and the relationships between education and society. In the third method she analyzes a recurring teacher-student motif in Clemens' work.

The major findings of the study reveal Clemens to have a consistent philosophy of education in the area of the relationship between the proper functioning of a democratic society and the educational level of its citizens. An environmentalist, Clemens sees a complementary relationship between the quality of an environment and the kinds of progress which it fosters. Clemens is less consistent in his discussion of the relative merits of training and education. He initially suggests a dichotomy which indicates that education is formal schooling which excludes training. But, later, he modulates, synthesizes and then unifies the two concepts. Training becomes a major learning concept under which education is subsumed. Education is a cumulative process from cradle to grave. He reveals a disdainful attitude toward rote-memorization as an educational method, and he subscribes to the educational theory of beginning with the child "where he is." He is not an egalitarian in some respects because he feels that education differs with individuals; some are more educable than others. His work abounds with educational ideas. Indeed, education is the basic context of many of his discussions. Clemens must be viewed as an educator as well as a social critic, prophet and entertainer.

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Mary A.^{mitt} Carew

A THESIS

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The writer also extends gratitude to her student-typist, Barbara Schroeder, a female Huckleberry Finn.

To her parents Jere J. and Madelyn V. Carew, she extends her eternal gratitude because they are the finest teachers she has had.

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CHAPTER I

THE RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to examine selected educational ideas and opinions of Samuel L. Clemens so that a statement concerning Clemens' philosophy or philosophies of education might be stated. The study is in no way a definitive, detailed, exhaustive analysis of Clemens' total work. It is, rather, an examination of selected creative fiction consisting of four novels and four essays which focus on educational matters.

Samuel Langhorne Clemens', later "Mark Twain" as he would call himself, work has been read and continues to be read by millions. Jerry Allen has written that "... he has been a favorite of the ungreat and the great--his books always on Darwin's bedside, the choice reading of Sigmund Freud. How much he meant to every country shows in the 5,500,000 copies of his books issued in America during his lifetime and the millions more abroad. Today twenty of his books are still in print and are new to readers every year. Some like Tom Sawyer are seventy-eight years old."¹

¹Jerry Allen, The Adventures of Mark Twain (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1954), p. x.

And Henry Seidel Canby states that "In the eighteen-nineties Mark Twain was undoubtedly the most popular man and name among American writers, and probably the best read among contemporary authors of literary pretensions in the English-speaking world."² Mark Twain criticism is voluminous. In 1957 E. Hudson Long observed that "More than 200 articles and a dozen books have appeared since 1920, and two journals are devoted chiefly to him."³ Viewed originally as primarily a humorist, Twain's literary value is now estimated by some to be of far greater consequence because of his role as a social critic of American society and its institutions.⁴ Bernard DeVoto writes that "No other writer of his time touched the life of America at so many places. His mind was encyclopaedic, restless, inquisitive, untiring. Criticism has said that he directed no humor against the abuses of his time: The fact is that research can find few elements of the age that Mark Twain did not burlesque, satirize, or deride."⁵ Many of his works deal with

²Henry Seidel Canby, Turn West, Turn East: Mark Twain And Henry James (New York: Biblo and Tannen, 1965), pp. 185-186.

³E. Hudson Long, Mark Twain Handbook (New York: Hendricks House, 1957), p. 4.

⁴See Louis Budd, Mark Twain Social Philosopher (Bloomington; Indiana University Press, 1962), Philip Foner, Mark Twain Social Critic (New York: International Publishers, 1958), and Maxwell Geismar, Mark Twain An American Prophet (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1970).

⁵Bernard DeVoto, Mark Twain's America (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1935), p. 267.

observations about politics, government, religion, capital and labor. Assuming significant areas of importance in much of his creative fiction are his penetrating insights into schooling and education. Indeed, his fiction abounds with ideas about the institution of school as they relate to concepts such as training, environment, curriculum, teacher-pupil relationships, methods of teaching and learning, and discipline. It is not idle speculation to theorize about Mark Twain's interest in education; there is proof. Edward Wagenknecht has written "He admired Frederick Douglas and he had a picture of Prudence Crandell, one of the early de-segregationists in American education, in his billiard room."⁶ One of the apocryphal incidents in the Mark Twain legend is that he was reading, among other things, Herbart just before he died.

There is a need for a study of Clemens' work because his creative work, his fiction, (the letters and speeches need also to be examined), is so ripe for the harvesting of his educational ideas. Yet, despite this, little has been done with sorting out and examining these ideas. Therefore, an immediate study is not only highly desirable but also

⁶Edward Wagenknecht, Mark Twain: The Man And His Work (Norman: The University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), p. 219.

extremely necessary.⁷ There is no comprehensive study of Clemens' educational ideas. Clemens' career as a significant artist of American background spanned the years 1867 to 1909. Friend and confidant to a wide spectrum of people from Presidents of the United States, to fellow members of the international literati of his time, to Prime Ministers, to actors and actresses, Samuel L. Clemens stood with feet planted in both Agrarian and Technological societies in America. He was a spokesman for a developing and changing nation with which he was at times more foe than friend. He gave a title "The Gilded Age" to an era and later "New Deal" was a catchword taken from A Connecticut Yankee by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Recent critics have argued, more than those of the past, that Clemens' literature was written for its value to the author as contemporary criticism and for the purposes of affecting changes and improvements in the society of which he was so very central and intricately vital a part. He was not a voice crying in the wilderness. He had an audience initially of middle American subscription--book purchasers and later a more general international audience. It can be assumed that his views were discussed and adopted by many. His sentiments about

⁷ Those Twain critics who do briefly summarize his educational thought are Edward Wagenknecht, also E. Hudson Long. See also R. T. Oliver, "Mark Twain's Views On Education" Education, Vol. 61 (October, 1940), 112-115.

education influenced his ballot at the Presidential level. Writing to William D. Howells from Elmira, N. Y. August 9, 1876, Twain states: "The letter of acceptance (by Rutherford B. Hayes) was amply sufficient to corral my vote" ⁸ Hayes' letter in which he accepts the Republican nomination advocates, among other things, "protection of the public schools against sectarian interference." ⁹ Critics have documented the fact that Clemens' work is an analysis and a discussion of then current social problems. He associated with Harriet Beecher Stowe, Isabella Beecher, and Charles Dudley Warner at Nook Farm from 1871 until 1891. "There," writes Henry S. Canby, "Twain lived for twenty years in more or less close communication with a group of intellectuals, all sympathetic neighbors, all vigorous, and some exceedingly vigorous minds, none of them 'stuffy', all of them vitally interested in vital movements of contemporary life." ¹⁰ It is then, for example, that in A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court Twain examines the concepts of "practicality and Yankee ingenuity" and the strengths and weaknesses inherent in "a

⁸Frederick Anderson, William M. Gibson, Henry Nash Smith, editors, Selected Mark Twain--Howells Letters (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960). p. 74.

⁹Ibid., p. 76.

¹⁰Henry S. Canby, Turn West, Turn East, p. 127.

technological society," and that the concepts of "church-state" and the nature of "curriculum" and ideas about "training" are also developed in the same work.

Further, there is a need for this study because educational theory was being written and examined by Clemens. His position regarding it and his statements about it ought to be analyzed. No history of American educational theory ought to be considered complete without investigations into all areas of possible research. Such as alternative area is creative fiction and especially the creative fiction of Samuel Langhorne Clemens. It isn't necessarily valuable to argue that all creative fiction written in America can offer insight into American educational theory because not all creative fiction can be shown, first of all, to contain ideas which are significantly educationally rooted, nor, additionally do that many American creative fiction artists have the stature of Clemens. It can be argued valuably and validly, however, that Clemens' work, in many instances, reflects an abiding and developing concern with varying educational problems, that the focus of many of his works is the school, that he was and is taken seriously as a social critic and prophet and that his creative fiction can be examined and shown to reveal his insights into the relationship between education and the proper functioning of a democratic society.

The need for a study dealing with Twain's educational ideas includes a systematic analysis of them so that ultimately Clemens' philosophy of education can be stated. The purpose is to see if Clemens maintained a single or a varying position on education. An attempt will be made to group the creative fiction selections used in the study chronologically to trace the evolution of Twain's thoughts regarding educational ideas with then current educational ideas and to determine points of both convergence and divergence. The creative fiction selections used in this study on Clemens will include the novels: The Gilded Age (1873), The Adventures Of Tom Sawyer (1876), The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn (1885), A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court (1889), and the essays "On Training Children" (1885), "English As She Is Taught" (1900), "What Is Man?" (1906), and "The Curious Republic Of Gondour" (1919). An analysis of these fiction and essay selections to determine Twain's educational ideas will offer insight into his position about the role of education in America during Agrarian and Technological eras.

An additional need for this study lies in the fact that a systematic analysis of Clemens' educational ideas would prove beneficial to students of American educational history, both graduate and undergraduate, because it would introduce them to a new realm of ideas about education in America, ideas presented through the devices of fiction.

These ideas would not have the lifelessness of pure historical data but, rather, the life of imaginary people fictionally confronting real educational problems in history. The novel The Adventures Of Tom Sawyer is in many ways a more real portrayal of the early nineteenth century than the most vivid chapter on that era in an educational history text.

One might read a text in American educational history and learn about old schoolmasters, about the applications of noxious stimuli, about summer-school terms taught by dames, about drill and memorization but the actual humanity or inhumanity of those concepts is lacking. Studying and evaluating the application of noxious stimuli ceases to be "talked about" or summarized dispassionately and comes alive in The Adventures Of Tom Sawyer; what students seek as educational alternatives through truancy is vivid in The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn, the relationship between church and state in education is presented in A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court, and, the relationship between democracy and education is analyzed in "The Curious Republic Of Gondour." Clemens' creative fiction, then, does offer broadened insight to scholars, and to students of American educational history.

The author of this study concerning Clemens' educational ideas became interested in her topic during her long graduate studies in both the areas of literature and

education. That so many Schools of Education and Liberal Arts were constantly at war with one another often dismayed her. She long viewed the discipline of the History of American Education as one which could be liberally conceived and taught and as one which was not limited strictly to American historical and educational developments to be found solely in history or educational textbooks. The field of American Literature, for instance, appeared ripe to her as an alternative, complementary area in which to find insights into developments in American educational history. A selection, "Ichabod Crane" by Washington Irving in a graduate course in the History Of American Education, cited in a book of readings convinced her that a literary selection could give life to a point to be made about school teachers in the Early National Period in American Educational History which no lecture or history text could approximate.¹¹ She considered doing research in this area of creative fiction and American educational theory initially in terms of either Henry Adams or James T. Farrell. She ultimately chose Clemens because he was so central to and very much a part of the educational scene in America. Her research has fostered a desire to pursue a book of reading which includes other significant American literary artists whose creative focus is the school.

¹¹Carl H. Gross, and Charles C. Chandler, The History Of American Education Through Readings (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1964). pp. 144-147.

Organization of the Dissertation

As both an historical and philosophical doctoral dissertation on education, a discussion and analysis of Selected Educational Ideas of Samuel L. Clemens involves three methods of approach. The first method is to view Clemens himself as an educator apart from those characters who it often can be assumed are spokesman for his points of view. Mark Twain the artist has as a goal some teaching, some instructing. His work is often written in a highly moralistic and blatantly didactic manner. Of Twain, Minnie Brashear has written "His real significance lies in his philosophical and moral teaching" ¹² Mark Twain wrote "I always preach" and about this preaching he added "Humor is only a fragrance, a decoration. There are those who say a novel should be a work of art solely, and you must not preach in it, you must not teach in it. That may be true as regards novels but it is not true as regards humor. Humor must not professedly teach, and it must not professedly preach, but it must do both if it would live forever." ¹² Many of his works were written for children, his controversial running battles and arguments with public

¹² Minnie M. Brashear, Mark Twain Son Of Missouri (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1934), p. 25.

¹³ Jerry Allen, The Adventures Of Mark Twain, p. 234.

schools, libraries and parent and teacher groups, not to mention his current disfavor amongst blacks, notwithstanding. He had principles to teach the young. His ideas regarding school-book censorship are enlightening. When a public library in Boston banned The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn from its library and advocated that local schools do the same, Twain wrote

Dear Sir:

I am greatly troubled by what you say. I wrote Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn for adults exclusively, and it always distresses me when I find that boys and girls have been allowed access to them. The mind that becomes soiled in youth can never again be washed clean. I know this by my own experience, and to this day I cherish an unappeasable bitterness against the unfaithful guardians of my young life who not only permitted but compelled me to read an unexpurgated Bible through before I was 15 years old. None can do that and ever draw a clean sweet breath again this side of the grave.

Sincerely,

S. L. Clemens¹⁴

When one reads about Huck and Tom, for instance, one is reading Twain's ideas about morality as they relate to

¹⁴ Minnie M. Brashear, Mark Twain Son Of Missouri, pp. 13-14.

honesty, forbearance, charity, love, and brotherhood. It can be argued that Clemens sought personally to instruct and to change behavior. It can be argued that there is in the fiction and essays to be examined in this study a suggested code of conduct, a code of ethical humanism which young and old ought to consider. It can be argued based on research that Clemens was vitally concerned with the nature of American society and the strengths and weaknesses of its institutions. Out of the criticism about that society, moral implications, and in many instances, educational implications can be drawn. This is a vital aspect of the study because it seeks to investigate the creator of fiction and non-fiction as himself ultimately a teacher seeking to be heard by those who come into contact with him. This approach to the study views Twain as an educator who writes purposely to preach and to teach.

A second method used in this study dealing with Twain's educational ideas will be to examine the nature of his educational ideas. The writer will seek to determine the areas of educational concern with which Twain deals in terms of curriculum, teacher-student relationships, value training, methods of teaching and teacher preparation as well as others. The study will analyze the frequency of individual concerns such as curriculum, for example. The study will seek to determine the consistency or lack of it in Twain's educational thinking. His desire for, at times

highly formalized institutionalized schooling will be contrasted with his, at other times, desire for non-formalized, unstructured education. Twain's concepts and his educational ideas, wherever possible, will be linked to parallel educational developments historically. For example, the educational phenomenon of "Land-grant acts" will be examined through a study of The Gilden Age where it becomes the focus of that book.

The third and final method of the study is to examine the recurrent educational methodological pattern used by Clemens in his work of "teachers teaching." Twain uses a teacher-student motif or methodology in his novels which is very much a microcosm of his own author-teacher-student-reader motif. In the latter the author teaches his readers; in the former, characters teach each other: teacher Tom and student Huck in Huck Finn, teacher and Tom and the other students in Tom Sawyer, the Yankee teacher and the student-king in A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court, or the teacher Senator and the student Laura in The Gilden Age, and, finally, the old-man teacher and the young-man student in "What Is Man?"

The methods of the study are tri-partite then; each fiction selection and each essay will be approached so as to determine the goals of Twain the teacher, the substance of his teaching, and, finally, the methods used by Twain to teach. Such a diverse approach should lead to a statement of Mark Twain's educational ideas.

CHAPTER II

THE EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF SAMUEL L. CLEMENS

Introduction

The major objective of the writer in this study is to examine the educational ideas of Samuel L. Clemens in some of his creative works. That Clemens had a pre-occupation with many aspects of education from the role of the teacher to the needs of the student is evident and will be demonstrated as this study progresses. Many of the educational ideas in Clemens' writing can be directly linked to his formal and informal educational background. He borrows from childhood school memories in some of his writing and from his non-school educational experiences as well. His attitudes about the role of experience as educative, his apparent zeal for those aspects of school which center on play and his dislike for school manifested in constant restlessness found their way into his work. These ideas have their geneses in his own life. The background of Clemens includes not only limited formal schooling but also a variety of experiences outside of school which were equally educational. The purpose of the writer in this chapter is to present part of the formal and informal

educational background of Clemens and to indicate its relevance to part of his work. Samuel Clemens' background not only produced many of the educational ideas which appear in his work but it also educated him as a writer.

The Formal Background

The formal background begins with the young Clemens in Hannibal, Missouri. In Bernard DeVoto's work, Mark Twain In Eruption, Clemens' recollections of his school-days are interestingly portrayed.

My schooldays began when I was four years and a half old. There were no public schools in Missouri in those early days, but there were two private schools, terms twenty-five cents per week per pupil and collect it if you can. Mrs. Horr taught the children in a small log house at the southern end of Main Street. Mr. Sam Cross taught the young people of larger growth in a frame schoolhouse on the hill. I was sent to Mrs. Horr's school.¹

So much of what Clemens remembers of his young schoolboy days involves play and recreational activities. Later, he said:

We have forgotten our punishments at school, and how we grieved when our marbles were lost and our kites destroyed because we have forgotten all the sorrows and privations of that cannonized epoch and remember only its orchard robberies, its wooden sword pageants, and its fishing holidays.²

¹Bernard DeVoto, ed., Mark Twain In Eruption (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1922), p. 107.

²Walter Blair, Mark Twain And Huck Finn (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962), p. 56.

The marvelous schoolyard play of Clemens' youth is drawn upon in The Adventures Of Tom Sawyer. In this work also, Clemens' attitude about the relative merits of work and play emerges in the wildly amusing fencepainting episode.

In the summer, Clemens would visit his uncle's farm away from Hannibal and attend the summer session of school there. He befriended Uncle Dan'l, his uncle's slave, who taught him many skills and counseled him wisely. Uncle Dan'l, of course, became the prototype of Jim, the good, great black man who counseled Huck in The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn. At home in Hannibal, Clemens occasionally heard stories about school at the dinner table because Miss Mary Ann Newcomb, a local spinster taught at the local school and took her meals with the Clemenses as a paying guest. Her stories contributed to his attitudes about education. He vividly remembered the teachings of his schooldays, and he later drew on them as sources for his creative fiction. An incident about the efficacy of prayer, learned from his principal Mrs. Horr, became a memorable moment in The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn when Aunt Polly implored Huck to pray and assured him that if he were contrite he would receive satisfaction. Clemens recalls the school incident in the following anecdote.

Mrs. Horr was a New England lady of middle age with New England ways and principles, and she always opened school with prayer and a chapter from the New Testament; also she explained the chapter with a brief talk. In

one of these talks, she dwelt upon the text, 'Ask And Ye Shall Receive,' and said that whosoever prayed for a thing with earnestness and strong desire need not doubt that his prayer would be answered.³

Huckleberry Finn learns more about the efficacy of prayer from life than he does from his teacher Aunt Polly.

Clemens' formal education ended at fifteen when his father died. Restless and bored with school, he begged his mother to allow him to give it up. Had he continued his formal education, he would never have experienced the variety of jobs and people he did. Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn show a similar boredom and restlessness and yearned to follow experience. Tom Sawyer would rather chase "real life" criminals such as Injun Joe than read about them, and Huckleberry Finn leaves school and profits from the experience because it forces his moral maturity.

Archibald Henderson views Clemens' early termination of his formal education as crucial.

It is fortunate that Mark Twain never subjected himself to the refinements of culture; a Harvard might well have spoiled a great author. For Mark Twain had a memorable tale to tell of rude, primitive men and barbaric circumstances, of truant resourceful boyhood exercising all its cunning in circumventing circumstance and mastering a calling.⁴

³ DeVoto, Mark Twain In Eruption, p. 108.

⁴ Archibald Henderson, Mark Twain (London: Duckworth Company, 1911), p. 167.

The Informal Background

The informal educational background of Samuel Clemens began when he became an apprenticed-printer when he left school. The skills learned in this occupation led the restless Clemens to his brother Orion's paper, The Hannibal Western Union where he became both printer and sub-editor. His interest in writing developed more at this time and he wrote satirical essays under various pseudonyms. The newspaper work was educationally valuable to Clemens. E. Hudson Long writes that "No college could have offered the curriculum of human nature furnished by Sam's job for no faculty could have educated him as did the men in that office."⁵ Quickly bored at school, printing soon bored him also, and he sought a new interest in learning how to pilot riverboats.

The piloting venture, a vital informal educational experience, was relevant to his developing skill as a writer. Complete memorization of every aspect of the Mississippi River in terms of its depths and its dangers developed Clemens' mind and eyes for detail, for particularities. Such precise memory and vision would become the necessary tools of a successful novelist. Additionally, riverboating offered the opportunity to meet a wide spectrum of personality types, potential characters in the creative fiction.

5. E. Hudson Long, Mark Twain Handbook, p. 124.

Clemens once said that in the "brief, sharp schooling, he got personally and familiarly acquainted with about all the different types of human nature that are to be found in fiction, biography or history."⁶ Huckleberry Finn would also be schooled on the Mississippi, and he too would come to meet many different types of human nature. Clemens' great teacher was Horace Bixby, the veteran steamboat pilot. Clemens began to write about his travels on the river and he sold stories about them to The New Orlean's Daily Crescent. His enthusiasm for riverboating was ended by the Civil War.

After working out West for quite a few years, Clemens returned to the East and married Olivia Langdon. The Langdons, especially Olivia, would be yet another determining informal educational force in Clemens' life. They would give him an education in the virtues of wealth and the luxurious life style it allowed. Marvelous clothing, sumptuous food, and magnificent travel would be a vital part of his relationship with Olivia. Living near the married Samuel Clemenses in Hartford, Connecticut in 1874 were significant members of the Eastern literati. Many of these notables would form lasting friendships with the Clemenses. Isabella Beecher Hooker and her sister Harriet Beecher Stowe, Joseph Twichell, and the Twain

⁶Henderson, Mark Twain, p. 163.

collaborator Charles Dudley Warner formed a closely knit group around Clemens. Out of this friendship Clemens would further his education. This was, perhaps, the most educated group of friends Clemens ever had. Twichell was a minister, Mrs. Hooker, a feminist, and Mrs. Stowe an abolitionist. Clemens found much food for thought in their many varied discussions. Out of his friendship with Warner would emerge The Gilded Age, an indictment of politics and materialism.

By this time in his life Clemens had traveled to Europe and back many times, and, perhaps, his most memorable visit was to England. Oxford honored him with a degree. It must have been a personally powerfully triumphant moment in his educational journey from the private schools in Hannibal, Missouri. Honorary degrees would later be conferred by the University of Missouri and by Yale University. The dust-laden Oxford doctoral gown hangs proudly today in the Mark Twain Museum in Hannibal.

At the time of his death in 1910 Clemens had accomplished a great deal since his early boyhood. Leaving school at fifteen and following the trail of experience, he met people in all walks of life. He rubbed shoulders with the famous and unfamous alike. His list of acquaintances forms a wished for guest list for a dinner party. Notable acquaintances included Helen Keller, Matthew Arnold, Artemus Ward, Billie Burke, Woodrow Wilson,

Ulysses S. Grant, George Bernard Shaw, Robert Louis Stevenson, Rudyard Kipling and King Edward VII. The little son of Jane Lampton Clemens and John Marshall Clemens was famous.

Many of Clemens' experiences both during and after his formal schooling can be found in his creative fiction. He vividly draws on childhood school experiences in both The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn and in The Adventures Of Tom Sawyer. The notion of the value of experience is developed in A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court, and in The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn. Clemens deals with educational ideas in many of his creative works. His concerns with education in his work reflect some of his own reactions to it throughout his life. He writes about education from personal experience with it. Specific areas of educational concern will be taken up as the writer attempts to analyze selected creative fiction by Clemens in subsequent sections.

CHAPTER III

THE GILDED AGE AND THE ADVENTURES OF TOM SAWYER

Introduction

The Gilded Age is the first work to be included in this study in which the educational ideas of Samuel L. Clemens can be found. Begun in 1873, Clemens collaborated with Charles Dudley Warner on The Gilded Age to prove to their wives that they could write as effective a novel as some of the current romances which included Harriet Beecher Stowe's Old Town Folks, (1869), and Louisa May Alcott's Little Women, (1869), and Little Men, (1871). Although both authors maintained that there was not a page in the book on which they both did not work, it is generally agreed that Clemens' portion of the story includes the futures of the Hawkins family, the Tennessee land, the Knobs Industrial University Bill, Colonel Sellers, lobbying, vote-buying, and the senate investigations.

The Gilded Age is a novel about the Hawkins family of Obedstown, Tennessee which moves to Missouri to find a better life, Squire Hawkins and his wife and children adopt two children along the way, a boy named Clay and a girl,

Laura. Hawkins regrets uprooting his family, but is comforted by the fact that he leaves land behind in Tennessee which might one day bring the family a fortune. The land, of course, becomes a significant part of the plot of the novel. The family arrives in Missouri and within ten years, Hawkins and his good friend, Beriah Sellers, have made and lost two or three moderate fortunes and begin to feel the pain of poverty. The first of many offers for the Tennessee land is made of \$3,000 and rejected by Hawkins. He later dies and the subplot of the novel is introduced. Two young engineers, Harry Brierly and Philip Sterling, meet Sellers and work with him. Laura, now a mature young woman, meets a man, marries and is jilted by him. A Washington senator whose name is Dilworthy meets Sellers and becomes interested in the Tennessee land because he espouses the education of negroes and desires to see the land used for that purpose. He attempts to sell the government the land. Notice of a bill "To Found And Incorporate The Knobs Industrial University" is given in Washington. The purchase price is three million dollars. Laura, meanwhile, murders her husband and a scandalous trial follows. Concomitantly, a vote-buying scandal develops in Washington around the educational bill. Eventually, the bill is defeated, Laura gains her freedom, and The Gilded Age is concluded.

Samuel Clemens The Teacher

Samuel L. Clemens' attitudes about education can be discovered through three approaches in analyzing The Gilded Age. The first approach is to view Clemens as a teacher. It has been established by critics that Clemens sought changes in American society. He was more than a comic writer seeking merely to entertain readers. He was a social critic who used literature as a vehicle through which to present his ideas about the wrong-doings of his society. In The Gilded Age, Clemens is best revealed as a teacher through his use of the novelistic technique of narrative voice.¹ The tone of Clemens' voice is of great interest because it illustrates his attitude toward his subject matter and reveals the purpose of The Gilded Age. Sarcasm is detected in that voice as it is initially "heard" in the prefatory comment.

It will be seen that it [The Gilded Age] deals with an entirely ideal state of society; and the chief embarrassment of the writers in this realm of the imagination has been want of illustrative examples. In a state where there is no fever of speculation, no inflamed desire for sudden wealth, where the poor are all simple-minded and contented, and the rich are all honest and generous, where society is in a condition of primitive

¹Narrative voice has to do with an author's attitude toward his material. It is his voice which is of concern and not those voices of his characters.

purity, and politics is the occupation of only the capable and the patriotic, there are necessarily no materials for such a history as we have constructed out of an ideal commonwealth.²

The sarcasm of Clemens in the prefatory comment heralds the didactic message which the author will convey in The Gilded Age. Subtitled The Gilded Age: A Tale Of Today, Clemens in the work admonishes his readers to examine the problems, to look critically at society, and to improve it. Here is Clemens the teacher, then, at his strongest.

Clemens' voice is again heard and his teaching role revealed in his characterization of Philip Sterling, a young college-graduate engineer whose training is irrelevant because it has not equipped him for a job in this era. Clemens writes:

It was not altogether Philip's fault, let us own, that he was in this position. There are many young men like him in American society, of his age, opportunities, education and abilities, who have really been educated for nothing and have let themselves drift, in the hope that they will find somehow, and by some sudden turn of good luck, the golden road to fortune. He was not idle or lazy; he had energy and a disposition to carve his own way. But he was born in a time when all young men of his age caught the fever of speculation, and expected to get on in the world by the omission of some of the regular processes which have been appointed from old. And examples were not wanting to encourage him. He saw people, all around him, poor yesterday, rich to-day, who had come into sudden opulence by some means which they could not have classified among any regular occupations of life³

²Mark Twain and Charles D. Warner, The Gilded Age (New York: The New American Library, 1969), xxi.

³Ibid., p. 349.

Clemens discusses the effects of this period in broad terms on an entire nation and also in the particular terms of an individual caught up and disoriented in a web of circumstances. Clemens, the teacher, speaks here to a loss of values during "The Gilded Age" in American history.

Additionally, one hears Clemens the teacher in the following statement:

The eight years in America from 1860 to 1869 uprooted institutions that were centuries old, changed the politics of a people, transformed the social life of half the country, and wrought so profoundly upon the entire national character that the influence cannot be measured short of two or three generations.⁴

And so it was in 1873 that those repercussions were active, and Clemens' lessons are directed at change. He does not choose complimentary adjectives to qualify his descriptions of the period; a sentiment of sorrow is easily detected in that passage. Then, too, another instance of Clemens' role as teacher is found in his characterization of the jury impaneled for Laura's trial.

It was four weary days before this jury was made up, but when it was finally complete, it did great credit to the counsel for the defence. So far as Mr. Braham knew, only two could read, one of whom was the foreman, Mr. Braham's friend, the showy contractor. Low foreheads and heavy faces they all had; some had a look of animal cunning, while the most were only stupid. The entire panel formed that boasted heritage commonly described as the 'Bulwark Of Our Liberties.'⁵

⁴Ibid., p. 138.

⁵Ibid., pp. 405-406.

The biting sarcasm of the words "low forehead," "heavy faces," "animal cunning," and "stupid" leaves little doubt as to Clemens' position concerning the undesirability of many American juries during this period. The closely-linked intimation between "Bulwark," "Bull," and "Braham" is powerful. Clemens' position that a democratic society's institutions should be linked to educated citizens is crucial, and this contention recurs in The Gilded Age.

The final instance of Clemens' teacher role is seen in a narrative voice sequence about a vote-buying scandal in Washington, D.C. It is most clear that Clemens is exhorting, is teaching, is demanding his readers to take action.

From the centre of our country to its circumference, nothing was talked of but Mr. Noble's terrible revelation, and the people were furious. Mind, they were not furious because bribery was uncommon in our public life, but merely because here was another case. Perhaps it did not occur to the nation of good and worthy people that while they continued to sit comfortably at home and leave the true source of our political power, the 'primaries', in the hands of saloon-keepers, dog-fanciers and hog carriers, they could go on expecting 'another' case of this kind, and even dozens and hundreds of them, and never be disappointed. However, they may have thought that to sit at home and grumble would someday right the evil.⁶

The Gilded Age is an object-lesson which Clemens offers to his fellow citizens. In it he is a novelist-teacher who holds up a portion of time in the development of American

⁶Ibid., pp. 405-406

history so that some of its principles, values, and practices can be ridiculed. His goal is an attempt to affect change, to improve society by causing people to think and then to act. It is in this sense that Clemens can be viewed as a teacher. An aspect of Clemens' educational philosophy emerges swiftly and forcefully when he dons the robes of a teacher in The Gilded Age. The excerpts about the society, about Philip Sterling's value disorientation, and about jurors emphasize Clemens' contention that societies are only as good or as bad as the educational backgrounds of their citizens. Good societies have enlightened citizens who deplore ignorant juries, who punish corrupt politicians, and who act in principled fashions. Ignorant juries, corrupt politicians, an unprincipled electorates are the anathemes of a democratic society. Clemens, then, supports education because on it depends the viability of the political structure. In Clemens' educational philosophy in The Gilded Age there is a carefully delineated statement which is sympathetic to popular enlightenment. An equation between the effectiveness of political systems and the educational backgrounds of those who participate in them emerges in other works such as A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court, The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn, and in "The Curious Republic Of Gondour."

The Educational Ideas In The Gilded Age

A second approach to determining Clemens' philosophy of education is to examine his discussion of educational ideas in The Gilded Age. Many critics choose to see the novel as a discussion about politics, but the fact is that the work deals more with education. Indeed, the novel is a matrix through which the issue of kinds of educational experiences during "The Gilded Age" is discussed. The verbiage and pagination dealing with the subject of education is quantitatively significant and forcefully supports the contention that the major focus of the novel is education. Marshalled in evidence of this contention are the following facts: the attempt to pass the Knobs Industrial University Bill, the characterizations of the Hawkins children, Philip Sterling, and Ruth Bolton, and the condemnations of politicians, juries, and American citizens because of their ignorance.

The Land Grant Act

An important educational idea in the work is the attempt to gain passage of the educational bill which will provide educational opportunities for negroes. Knowledgeable about contemporary educational history, Clemens tied his bill to the realistic educational phenomenon of the land grant act. Vernon T. Thayer writes:

The year 1862 marked the passage of the Morrill Act with its generous grants of public land to the states in support of higher education in agriculture and the mechanic arts. It represented, in part, a reaction against the overly classical emphasis in higher education; in part, a realization that the national welfare now required generous provision for scientific and technical education on school and college levels⁷

In linking the educational bill in the story to the Morrill Act, Clemens was drawing from his own personal experience.

French writes:

I have not been able to find any satisfactory original for the Knobs Industrial University Bill. Still, it is not difficult to find valid reasons for Clemens' invention of such a bill as a vehicle for his satire on lobbying. Disregarding for the moment his desire to use his Clemens' family's Tennessee land in the plot of the novel, Clemens has good reason to make a land grant bill for negro education a high point of his satire. The 'Reconstruction' congresses were notorious for granting appropriations to aid all kinds of projects ostensibly designed to 'uplift' the freed slave and simultaneously manipulated for the benefit of private inventors and landowners.⁸

Clemens was aware of the purpose of the Land Grant Act because he was affiliated with the Freedman's Bureau Bill as a secretary briefly for a Senator who was a member of a Committee on Judiciary, chaired by Lyman Trumbull, the chief proponent of the Freedman's Bureau Bill.⁹ Inherent in the passage of the bill is Clemens' sympathy for the

⁷Vernon T. Thayer, Formative Ideas In American Education (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1966) pp. 82-82.

⁸Bryant M. French, Mark Twain The Gilded Age (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1957), p. 128.

⁹Ibid., p. 128.

plight of negroes. Their education is consistent with his philosophy that a democratic society's viability is subject to the continuing enlightenment of all its people. The education bill becomes the central issue around which Clemens dramatizes the corruption in politics. Education is the glue, however, which holds the novel together and gives it the thrust Clemens desires. Clemens' attitude toward negroes in this novel refutes present claims, particularly in reference to The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, that Clemens is anti-negro.

The Education of Children

Other educational ideas in the work include the education of the Hawkins children. Many of Clemens' characters go to school in his novels. Whether they like school or not is a different matter. It is interesting to note that Clemens sends the Hawkins children to school since they were poor, and frontier school attendance was highly sporadic. Clemens values education. He is, therefore, concerned a great deal with education in his work as a result of this orientation. The Hawkins children immediately begin school after arriving in Missouri:

Within a week or two, the Hawkinses were comfortably domiciled in a new loghouse, and were beginning to feel at home. The children were put to school; at least it was what passed for school in those days: a place where tender young humanity devoted itself for eight to ten hours a day to learning incomprehensible rubble

by heart out of books and reciting by rote, like parrots; so that a finished education consisted simply of a permanent headache and the ability to read without stopping to spell the words or take breath.¹⁰

Clemens finds rote and memorization deadly. He also censors them in The Adventures Of Tom Sawyer and in "English As She Is Taught," which will be discussed later. He decries the time and effort which go into learning information which is useless. Clemens denounces educational methodologies which produce learners who are automata. Also inherent in his criticism is a plea for a more "practical" and "useful" frontier-type of learning, perhaps of the later-to-be developed Huck Finn variety.

The Education of Women

The education of women, to which Clemens appears sympathetic in The Gilded Age, is another area of educational discussion. Isabella Hooker, a close friend of the Clemenses and Warners, was a feminist. Mrs. Clemens herself had her husband's respect intellectually, for, indeed, she constantly helped him with his creative work. So it is then, that Ruth Bolton, the romantic interest of one of the young engineer's in the novel, is characterized as having an identity conflict regarding her educational goals. She wishes to study medicine despite her family's feelings. She says to

¹⁰Twain and Warner, The Gilded Age, p. 54.

her father,

I wish I could go West, or South, or somewhere. What a box women are put into, measured for it, and put in young. If we go anywhere, it's in a box, veiled and pinioned and shut in by disabilities. Father, I should like to break things and get lose [sic]. I want to be something, to make myself something. Why should I rust, and be stupid, and sit in inaction because I am a girl?¹¹

And, Laura, the Hawkins' adopted daughter, seeks to improve herself also:

There were also other books--histories, biographies of distinguished people, travels in far lands, poems, especially those of Byron, Scott, Shelley, and Moore, which she eagerly absorbed, and appropriated there from was to her liking.¹²

Again, it is obvious that education is a major theme of Clemens in The Gilded Age since the results of education are an integral part of the characterizations. The plight of Philip Sterling cited earlier should be recalled at this point. Ruth's problem is gaining acceptance as an educated person, who also happens to be a woman. Clemens, again consistent, weaves another basic thread into the fiber of his educational philosophy: There is a need for a totally enlightened citizenry: men, women, whites, negroes, adults, and children.

The criticisms which Clemens makes of politicians and of juries are also part of the educational focus of the novel. It is only an educationally unenlightened society

¹¹Ibid., p. 114.

¹²Ibid., p. 141.

which allows itself to be vitiated. Implicit in his criticism is the notion that education is vital. There is a link between education as a bulwark of the institutions of a democratic society and their proper functioning. This important idea is developed at greater length and will be examined more fully in an analysis of The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn, A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court and, most notably, in "The Curious Republic Of Gondour."

The Gilded Age As An Exemplum

A third approach to sorting out Clemens' educational ideas in an attempt to isolate a philosophy is to cite the technique which he uses to present the educational ideas. Certainly the writing of a book is one way to present educational ideas, but, in addition to this, Clemens often uses a teacher-student and teacher-reader methodology which is a recurring device in many of the works which comprise this study. In The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn, one finds a student in Huck and a teacher in Jim; in A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court, one finds the yankee teacher and the student king. However, this methodology is not evident in The Gilded Age. Interestingly enough, the novel is used, this writer feels, as an "exemplum." An exemplum, it will be recalled was one section of a medieval sermon, the part which set forth examples to

illustrate the theme of the text of the sermon. If one returns to Clemens' sarcastic prefatory comment about the inapplicability of the message of the book to present society and remembers that, indeed, the work is most applicable to that society, he then sees that Clemens' citations of corruption in education and politics, and of the ignorance of juries and apathy of citizens become the examples which Clemens uses to illustrate the theme of the book. So the total work becomes the vehicle for the educational ideas.

Conclusion

In summary, it is in The Gilded Age that one finds Clemens as a teacher of a society functioning most notably through the technique of narrative voice. It is here in his attitude toward his material and readers that Clemens is best revealed as a teacher. The educational ideas in the work are centered around the land grant act, criticism of the content of elementary education, speculation about the role and education of women, and the significantly implicit concern that democratic societies must have enlightened citizenries. Finally, The Gilded Age is an exemplum in which educational and societal illustrations are presented to reinforce the general theme of education. The Gilded Age should be viewed as a novel more about education

than politics. This work is one source where many of Clemens' attitudes about education are to be found.

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer

Introduction

Mark Twain again focuses on education in The Adventures Of Tom Sawyer, written shortly after The Gilded Age in 1876. Tom Sawyer, who is as much a child of society as Huck Finn is a renegade, is both victim and benefactor of his family's concern for him. Aunt Polly sews missing buttons on his shirts, sees that he goes to school, however reluctantly, accompanies him to church and assigns him the task of white-washing the fence near their home. Constantly ambivalent in her emotions toward Tom, Aunt Polly is never certain that her attempts to train him are correct or fair. Tom's relationship to the institution of the family is a major concern of Twain in this work. Equally significant is the theme of Tom's attitude toward institutionalized religion. One sees Tom ill-at-ease in church, bored by the sermons. He exchanges odds and ends for "Bible Study" reward coupons so that he does not have to learn the verses. He is trapped, ultimately, by citing David and Goliath as the first two disciples appointed by Christ.

The major institutional relationship of Tom's explored by Twain is the school. Whenever possible, and it is

frequently, he is truant because he is bored. Twain's focus in The Adventures Of Tom Sawyer is a discussion of those alternatives to school which consume much of Tom's energy.

Samuel Clemens The Teacher

Mark Twain also assumes the role of teacher in this work as he does in The Gilded Age, through the use of narrative voice. He also draws from his childhood experiences in sections of the work.

Most of the adventures recorded in this book really occurred; one or two were experiences of my own, the rest those of boys who were schoolmates of mine Although my book is intended mainly for the entertainment of boys and girls, I hope it will not be shunned by men and women on that account, for part of my plan has been to pleasantly remind adults of what they once were themselves¹³

The work is a crucial part of this study because Twain reveals much of what can be termed an educational philosophy in it. Twain can be viewed as a teacher of children in this work. An extension of these educational ideas continues in the pivotal educational novel The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn which Twain intended as a sequel. To argue that Twain assumes the role of teacher in The Adventures Of Tom Sawyer means that those patterns of behavior, sets of attitudes and principles of conduct which he encourages his young

¹³Mark Twain, The Complete Works Of Mark Twain, The Adventures Of Tom Sawyer (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1899), Preface.

readers to consider are presented through his teaching role. At first glance, Tom appears as a belligerent child, very anti-social in his behavior. A more careful reading, however, discounts this. It is Huckleberry Finn in the novel who is the anti-social child. In this perspective, Tom is very much a typical boy whose behavior compared to Huck's is not anti-social. Tom's attitude, and Twain's attitude, toward Huck reveals this:

. . . Huckleberry Finn, son of the town drunkard. Huckleberry was cordially hated and dreaded by all the mothers of the town, because he was idle and lawless and vulgar and bad and because all their children admired him so, and he delighted in his forbidden society, and wished they dared to be like him¹⁴

Tom Sawyer is not an anti-social boy because his reactions to his predicaments are measured in terms of his obligations to others. He has a sense of duty, and he does know right from wrong. Mark Twain, as a teacher, does not encourage the young to be irresponsible. He warns about the consequences of certain actions. After witnessing the stabbing of Dr. Robinson in the graveyard, Tom feels that the crime must be made public. Huck, fearing that the criminals might retaliate, talks him out of it. Initially, Tom consents to this course of action, but the consequences of his

¹⁴Ibid., p. 54.

actions, his guilt, is revealed in this scene where a dog howls:

"Oh, Huck, it's a stray dog!"
 "Dad fetch it! This comes of playing hookey and doing everything a feller's told not to do. I might'a been good, like Sid, if I'd a'tried, but no, I wouldn't, of course. But if ever I get off this time, I lay I'll just waller in Sunday-Schools!"
 "And Tom began to snuffle a little."¹⁵

Twain encourages honesty by citing the humiliation, fear, and defeat which come from a lack of it. It may be smart to overlook responsibility, but one must learn to live with the guilt that comes as a result of that. It may be smart to trade odds and ends for Bible knowledge coupons, but one must remember, teacher Twain suggests, that one is still without knowledge. So many Americans, to wit, public librarians, in the past, found Twain's books to be corruptive of youth. While it is true that his children outmaneuver adults, skip school, smoke and swear, it must be stated in fairness that much of Twain's code of conduct for young readers is commendable. It is a code which stresses responsibility, love and respect.

Twain's admonition to children that they honor their parents is a vital focus of the work. When Tom slips out the window to take off with Huck for Jackson's Island, he is quickly homesick for Aunt Polly. He loves her despite

¹⁵Ibid., p. 93-94.

all the trouble he causes her. When he sneaks home to see what's happening, he witnesses the following:

Aunt Polly knelt down and prayed for Tom so touchingly, so appealingly, and with such measureless love in her words and her old trembling voice, that he was weltering in tears again long before she was through. He had to keep still long after she went to bed, for she kept making broken-hearted ejaculations from time to time, tossing unrestfully, and turning over. But at last she was still, only moaning a little in her sleep. Now the boy stole out, rose gradually by the bed-side, shaded the candlelight with his hand, and stood regarding her. His heart was full of pity for her He bent over and kissed the faded lips¹⁶

Tom is hardly a bad boy. Twain sees him as a typical boy wrestling with temptations, a person of compassion, integrity, and honor. What has Twain taught his youthful readers of The Adventures Of Tom Sawyer? His audience knows that even though church and Bible study are boring, they are sources from which integrity can be developed and that right and wrong can be learned from them. It learns that honesty is important and that lying and deception hurt others. It learns that it is through the attempts of their elders to discipline them and to exact goodness from them that they are loved. Indeed, it learns that some of the most loved children are the most severely disciplined. It

¹⁶Ibid., p. 133.

learns, finally, that it has commitments to society to see that criminals are brought to justice, and that responsibility can bring material rewards such as the money Huck and Tom share. This, then, is the material in the book which reveals Mark Twain as a teacher and suggests his educational philosophy.

The Educational Ideas In
The Adventures Of Tom Sawyer

The educational ideas in this work offer another approach to isolating Twain's educational philosophy. What kinds of educational ideas is he concerned with beyond those which are revealed in his role as a teacher? The subject matter of the work is education. It is interesting to note, initially, that while Tom Sawyer does manifest sentiments of remorse about his institutional attitudes toward church, government, and family, he expresses none toward school. The fact of the matter is, very simply, that Tom hates school. Twain's educational ideas are revealed piecemeal. Structurally, the novel can be divided into sections. Chapters One through Five deal with the weekend before school starts. In these chapters, Twain portrays a fun-loving Tom and characterizes him as a cunning and shrewd lad. Not dull, by any means, Tom is a leader who is inventive, imaginative, tough, and friendly. He likes girls and matches wits with Aunt Polly. His cunning

is best described in the fence-painting episode, where, by making work appear to be play, he dupes his playmates into doing the job for him. Through the device of narrative voice, Twain reacts to the fence-painting episode in the following manner:

If he had been a great and wise philosopher, like the writer of this book, he would now have comprehended that Work consists of whatever a body is obliged to do, and that Play consists of whatever a body is not obliged to do.¹⁷

Distinction Between Work And Play

It should be noted that the distinction between work and play demonstrates Twain's attitude toward school. It is precisely because one is obliged to go to school, obliged to learn, that it is work, and, therefore, it is no fun at all. The distinction between doing what one wants as opposed to doing what one has to do is a crucial aspect of Twain's educational philosophy. One remembers that most of what Twain did in his own life, once he was freed from the bonds of school, was what he wanted to do. Learners do not always have choices in school. Twain would argue that the choice not to go to school is valid if the school thwarts and bores the child.

The relative fun of Chapters One through Five contrasts

¹⁷Ibid., p. 19.

vividly with Chapter Six, the second structural division of the novel.

Monday morning found Tom Sawyer miserable. Monday morning always found him so because it began another week's slow suffering in school. He generally began that day with wishing that he had no intervening holiday; it made the going into captivity and fetters again so much more odious . . . , he wished he was sick; then he could stay home from school.¹⁸

This characterization of Tom's attitude toward school is crucial because it forces the question, "Why?" What's wrong with school? What is it about school which Twain, dislikes? It is in the answers to these questions that Twain's educational philosophy is revealed. Initially, the whole institution of the school appears repulsive. Now, Twain begins to dissect that whole.

Educational Boredom

One source of Tom's dislike for school is that he must go to it whether he likes it or not, whether it is helpful or harmful to him. He would prefer not to go. But, he does not have the kinds of options which his friend, Huck, has.

Huckleberry came and went, at his own free will. He slept on doorsteps in fine weather and in empty hogsheads in wet; he did not have to go to school or to church, or call any being master or obey anybody; he could go fishing or swimming when and where he chose, and stay as long as it

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 50.

suited him; nobody forbade him to fight; he could sit up as long as he pleased; he was always the first boy that went barefoot in the spring and the last to resume leather in the fall; he never had to wash nor put on clean clothes; he could swear wonderfully. In a word, everything that goes into making life precious, that boy had.¹⁹

Another source of Tom's dislike for school is the classroom.

Tom enters a classroom where "The master throned on high in his great splint-bottom arm chair, was dozing, lulled by the drowsy hum of study."²⁰ Twain's attitude is clear. The teacher is "above" the students. The suggestion of aloofness and distance is conveyed. Little warmth is shown between the master and his charges. The boredom and dullness of school contrast strongly with the excitement and frenzy of the weekend. The happy event in school is Becky Thatcher, Tom's first love, but the powerful schoolmaster intrudes upon that deviation from boredom. "The boy felt a slow, fateful grip closing on his ear, and a steady lifting impulse. In that vise he was borne across the house" ²¹ School is so painfully boring for Tom

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 55.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 60.

²¹ Ibid., p. 64.

that his mind wanders uncontrollably. "It seemed to him that the noon recess would never come." "Tom's heart ached to be free, or else to have something of interest to do to pass the dreary time."²² Twain's insight into education is revealing here. He seems to say that it is not that school is not necessary for the young. Rather, it's the irrelevance of schools that makes them tediously monotonous. Here is a school where a teacher does not capitalize on the enthusiasm of his students, where a teacher does not make learning fun. School is work and it could be play. The curriculum and the teacher are faulted. So Tom, for want of more stimulating educational things to do, plays with his pet tick. "A tremendous whack came down on Tom's shoulder . . .".²³ Noxious stimuli reinforce the dislike for school. Punishment is a temporary, unsatisfactory solution for Tom's deeply rooted negative educational sentiment. Tom's only recourse is to flee school. The subject of school truancy is introduced.

School Truancy

School truancy is an important idea in both The Adventures Of Tom Sawyer and in The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn. It is as though Twain is saying, "Let's assume that

²²Ibid., p. 65.

²³Ibid., p. 67.

a child has the option not to go to school. What in its place could or would that child do?" Tom is not dull. He's at least twelve, and he's imaginative, shrewd, and cunning. What are viable educational alternatives to the institution of the school? Can lessons be learned from experience? In Chapter Eight, a third structural division of the book, through the initial section of Chapter Twelve, Tom's hooky-playing exploits are developed. He spends the first few hours of his truancy contemplating death.

He sat long with his elbows on his knees and his chin in his hands, meditating. It seemed to him that life was but a trouble, at best, and he more than half envied Jim Hodges, so lately released; it must be very peaceful, he thought, to lie and slumber and dream forever and ever . . .²⁴

How dreadful is the impact of his hate for school. He begins an imaginary swordfight and ends up dueling with another truant, Joe Harper. Later that day of his truancy, he is witness to the stabbing of the town doctor. Then, his imaginary thoughts of death merge with reality when Injun Joe and an accomplice dig up a body. It is after witnessing this that Huck and Tom vow not to make it public. A pact is formed, and Tom's school-skills come in handy.

Huckleberry was filled with admiration of Tom's facility in writing, and the sublimity of his language. He showed Huckleberry how to make an H and an F.²⁵

²⁴Ibid., p. 73.

²⁵Ibid., p. 92.

In Chapter Thirteen, Tom decides to continue his hooky-playing. Joining Huck Finn and Joe Harper, he climbs aboard a raft and lies on his back as they float downstream. They cook their own meals and sleep in the open air. They enjoy their freedom from school. "It seemed glorious sport to be feasting in that wild freeway in the virgin forest of an unexplored and uninhabited island, far from the haunts of men, and they said they would never return to civilization."²⁶

In this extended section of the book, in which Twain develops the truancy plot, one of the best lessons learned is the beauty of nature. Tom learns much about life from nature. He learns to relax and to love his friends. He sees worms, ants, lady-bugs, and cat-birds at work. Tom communes with nature. "He felt no longing for the little village sleeping in the distance beyond the majestic waste of water."²⁷ There is nothing "majestic" about school. Eventually, Tom is reunited with his family. In Chapter Twenty, Tom returns to school after the hooky-playing episode. It is in this chapter that Twain characterizes the schoolmaster. In his analysis of school, Twain has proceeded from the institution of the school, to the classroom, to the teacher.

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 116-117.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 123.

The master, Mr. Dobbins, had reached middle age with unsatisfied ambition. The darling of his desires was to be a doctor, but poverty had decreed that he should be nothing higher than a village schoolmaster.²⁸

Twain's characterization of this nineteenth century schoolmaster accurately captures a popular sentiment toward teachers. The idea was that if all other career aspirations failed, one could always teach. Tom's teacher's heart certainly isn't in his work. Uninspiring teachers are seldom stimulating to students. Here is Twain's philosophy of the role of the teacher. A teacher should make learning fun and not routine or dull. The contrast again between the boredom of the classroom and the fun-filled hooky-playing caper is emphasized. The atmosphere of Tom's classroom is sleep-inducing.

A whole hour drifted by; the master sat nodding in his throne; the air was drowsy with the hum of study. By and by, Mr. Dobbins straightened himself up, yawned, then unlocked his desk²⁹

In Chapter Twenty-One, Twain re-focuses on the institution of the school in general. Vacation is near and the children are preparing for their year-end examinations.

The schoolmaster, always severe, grew severer and more exacting than ever, for he wanted the school to make a good showing on 'Examination' day. His rod and his ferule were seldom idle now

²⁸ Ibid., p. 171.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 174.

at least among the smaller pupils. Only the biggest boys, and young ladies of eighteen and twenty escaped lashing.³⁰

Rote-Memorization

Twain is harsh in his attack on the rote and memorization which "Examination" day produces. His sentiment in this area is pointed out in his criticism of the memorization and drill to which the Hawkins children are subjected in The Gilded Age. One finds a further condemnation of it in "English As She Is Taught." There is a consistency in his thinking which reveals a personal antagonism toward killing the spirits of young learners through forced drill. It is no wonder then, that Huck and Tom are truants or that Mark Twain took personal leave of school at fifteen. He interjects a historical note when he says that the little girls give "Examination" day declamations on the same topics their mothers and grandmothers had years before.

The section "A Vision," presented by a young girl, contrasts vividly with Tom's actual reaction to nature outside school. Her reaction is vicarious and counterfeit; his is real and profound. Twain suggests that one needs to partake of nature not read about it.

School ends in Chapter Twenty-One, and Chapter Twenty-Two through the final chapter deals with Tom's non-school

³⁰Ibid.

activities which are pursued with more enthusiasm. It is obvious that the non-school activities are of greater concern to Twain since they contrast so strongly with the school chapters, and they get more of Twain's attention and enthusiasm.

An attempt to summarize the educational ideas, and Twain's philosophy of education, in The Adventures Of Tom Sawyer would include the following ideas. Twain is critical of schools primarily because of their artificiality and their removal from actual life. Schools are often boring because of curriculum, and because of rote and memorization. Schools can be frightening because in them students are physically punished by teachers. Schools are cold places because there is no warmth between teachers and students. Yet, despite the overwhelming condemnation of schools, Twain does see some value in them. Schools do teach valuable basic tools and skills such as writing, spelling, and reading. But Twain, it appears, favors a less structured, more natural, more realistic educational model. He appears to be a friend to education but a foe to schooling. That is, he seems to see non-school learning experiences equally valuable as school learning experiences. This idea is pursued in greater depth in The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn, yet negated in A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court. Twain's educational philosophy is not consistent.

Twain seems to say that the school fails to appropriate the curiosity, the cunning and shrewdness of the Tom Sawyers. He encourages freedom of the learner.

Teacher-Student Motif

The final aspect of this chapter is to discuss Twain's methodology for presenting his educational ideas. In this work, he uses a teacher-student model. Twain is not the only teacher in the book. Various teachers include Aunt Polly, Mr. Dobbins, Injun Joe, Joe Harper, Huckleberry Finn, and Nature. It is from all these teacher sources that Tom learns. Tom is constantly placed in a variety of learning situations. The teacher-student motif is characteristic of many works under study in this dissertation, and serves to reinforce the idea that a major focus in Twain's work is education.

From Aunt Polly, Tom learns love, responsibility and honesty; from Mr. Dobbins, he learns how to hate school and to disrespect his teachers. From Injun Joe, Tom learns what anti-social behavior is, and what lying and betrayal are. From Joe Harper and Huckleberry Finn, he learns the warmth of friendship and a comradeship necessary to learning from others. From Huck, he also learns that "book-learning" isn't all there is to know.

From nature, he learns peace and kindness and goodness.
That The Adventures of Tom Sawyer is replete with educational ideas which reveal Mark Twain's attitude about school is indisputable.

CHAPTER IV

THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN

AND

A CONNECTICUT YANKEE IN KING ARTHUR'S COURT

INTRODUCTION

Mark Twain's The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn is a sequel to The Adventures Of Tom Sawyer. Written nine years after the Tom Sawyer book, it includes a similar cast of characters, but additional notable characters are introduced in it also. Another crucial work of Twain's, it is replete with educational ideas. Reduced to the most essential plot developments, the Huck Finn educational saga opens with a recapitulation of the conclusion of the Tom Sawyer story. Huck and Tom have been awarded the recovered money, and the Widow Douglas has "adopted" Huck and is attempting to "civilize" him. Huck, however, finds wearing starched clothes, praying, and bathing offensive to his preferred "natural" state, and consequentially, periodically runs away. He is basically a lonesome, isolated lad who misses his own life style however barren it is in contrast to the ways

of life pursued by the civilized folks of St. Petersburg. Huck's running away is not permanent in the early stages of the story. He always returns home to play pirates and robbers with the other thirteen and fourteen year-olds. The second most important character in the novel is the negro slave Jim who becomes a vehicle for many of Twain's educational ideas in this work. He is both ridiculed and respected by the white children. Huck's father, Pap, a recluse and drunk is another important character in the work. He scolds Huck for his "uppity" ways which are the result of Huck's being civilized by his new family. Huck is abducted by his father and taken to Illinois where he is held prisoner in an old shack. Through an ingenious escape ploy, Huck runs away from his father. The central odyssey, Huck's voyage down the Mississippi, is commenced, and it becomes the central focus of the work.

Huck hides out on Jackson's Island where he meets Jim, who fearing he will be sold by his owner, has also escaped. The two develop a partnership and later a friendship and set out to flee St. Petersburg. They build a raft, Twain's schoolhouse, in this instance, and begin their mutual search for freedom. The central escape plot is conjoined with supporting secondary plots which consist of separate episodic incidents which include the Shepherdson-Grangerford story, the Duke and King story,

the Boggs-Sherburn incident as well as the Wilk's funeral incident. The central plot of the flight to freedom is brought to its resolution when Huck and Tom Sawyer rescue Jim who has been captured. Jim is ultimately given his freedom and noble savage Huck is viewed going off into the wilderness as the story concludes.

Samuel Clemens The Teacher

The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn is another work in which Twain assumes the role of teacher. Unlike The Gilded Age and The Adventures Of Tom Sawyer in which Twain is a critic of contemporary periods of time, the Huck Finn story is Twain's criticism of a pre-Civil War society in American history. It has been noted that in The Gilded Age, Mark Twain argues that there is a correlation between education and the proper functioning of democratic institutions. In that work, he argues that democratic societies must have enlightened citizenries who participate intelligently in juries, in politics, and in education. That work is a plea for enlightenment which Twain sees as the bulwark of free, democratic societies. The Tom Sawyer story becomes Twain's vehicle for beseeching democratically operated schools. The Huck Finn saga is a continuation of the Twain plea for just and enlightened institutions which will produce sympathetic, intelligent, and wise participants in government. In the work, Twain singles out for criticism those

institutions which perpetuate hypocrisy in relationships between men. The notion of "training" becomes crucial to an understanding of this very important work. Twain argues that institutions produce Huck Finns. These institutions are not inherently evil. It is the misconception about how these institutions should function which is evil. Twain faults those institutional arrangements designed by men to enslave other men in The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn. The institution of slavery is not necessarily the worst of these arrangements. In the work, Twain explores the ideas of "goodness" and "evil." He, as a teacher, is concerned with illusion versus reality. Who or what is good, what is real or veneer, what is a facade, and what is superficiality are all key questions which Twain seeks to answer. The work is Twain's attempt to examine the results of civilization when they are superimposed on alleged decadence. Huck is a savage by the Widow Douglas' standards. It is in what happens to Huck and Jim when they remove themselves from society, from civilization, that Twain is most interested.

Mark Twain, the teacher, exposes his readers to an instance of hypocrisy and sham very early in the book. Miss Watson, the Widow Douglas' sister, herself a slave holder, encourages the decadent uncivilized Huck to pray more and to care more about people. She tells Huck,

I must help other people, and do everything I could for other people, and look out for them all the time, and never think about myself.¹

The young Huck is introduced to the "right" way to concern himself with others. Twain, the teacher, begins his analysis of the effects of the layering up of the mind with cultural and environmental residue which are produced through training. He traces the conditioning which society produces. Huck is, in many respects, initially, that automaton who absorbs many facts, principles, and ideas but who does not mediate them with intelligence. Poor little malleable Huck is a pawn between two competing cultures in this book. Played off against the admonitions of Miss Watson and the Widow Douglas that he care for others and that he respect his elders and that he go to school is the advice of Pap, his real parent. His father scolds,

. . . you drop that school, you hear? I'll learn people to bring up a boy to put on airs over his own father and let on to be better'n he is. You lemme catch you fooling around that school again, you hear? Your mother couldn't read, and she couldn't write nuther, before she died.²

A third culture is represented by the wisdom of the slave, Jim. Huck responds best to this because he and Jim attempt to create a new society, a new institutional relationship between men which is benevolent and good. It is

¹Sculley Bradley, Richmond C. Beatty, E. Hudson Long, editors, Samuel L. Clemens, Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn (New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1961), p. 14.

²Ibid., p. 21.

one in which each prospers. It is an arrangement which is free of veneer, hypocrisy and sham.

The central role of Mark Twain as a teacher in this work, this writer feels, is to point out the Rousseauian idea that man is basically good, but that it is those institutions developed by man which corrupt him merely because those institutions are unintelligently conceived and implemented. Naturally, then, this viewpoint supports the fact that Twain is consistent in his attack on those institutions devised by societies which undermine societies. The family, the church, the school, the government must be institutions which complement the proper functioning of those societies of which they are integral parts. But institutions won't function well if intelligence, justice, and wisdom are not applied to their operation. It is a lack of justice, intelligence and wisdom which produces slave holding. Churches, schools, families, governments contribute to its support when they should not. Again, Twain is exploring notions of training and conditioning in The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn which will later assume major positions of prominence in works as Puddinhead Wilson, The Man Who Corrupted Hadleyburg, and in A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court.

The Educational Ideas In
The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn

That The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn is another work which is replete with educational ideas which constitute Mark Twain's biases toward education is easily proven through an investigation of the book's central focus. The work is an unparalleled paradigm of Twain's educational thinking. In it the formal and informal agents of education in America are explored. The education of the home has been noted in the example of prayer. Twain's ideas about the relationship between an enlightened citizenry and an enlightened society are given restatement in this work. Huck's father is fanatically upset about a free Negro, a college professor, whom he meets.

They said he could vote, when he was home. Well, that let me out. Thinks I, what is this country a coming to? It was 'lection day, and I was just about to go and vote myself, if I warn't too drunk to get there; but when they told me there was a state in this country where they'd let that Nigger vote, I drawed out. I says I'll never vote again.³

The biting irony of the drunken white father putting down the brilliant negro is Twain at his best. That societies need educated citizenries which include blacks, whites, men, and women is a point driven home in The Gilded Age and, most notably, in "The Curious Republic of Gondour." The whole pre-Civil War society in the Huck Finn story is

³Ibid., pp. 26-27.

unenlightened. It's uneducated despite its education which is merely training. It's a superficial, hollow, hyper-critical, shallow, society.

The church, another informal educational agent, is criticized by Twain especially in the Shepherdson-Grangerford episode. Reminiscent of Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" and the American Hatfield and McCoy feuds, the Shepherdson-Grangerford feud is witnessed by Huck when he becomes separated from Jim. The Grangerfords are ostensibly very civilized people.

Colonel Grangerford was a gentleman, you see. He was a gentleman all over; and so was his family. He was well-born, as the saying is, and that's worth as much in a man as it is in a horse, so the Widow Douglas said.⁴

The Grangerfords eat well and live in a perfectly splendid house. They are church-going, God-fearing people also. They are a typical aristocratic Southern family. The only defect is that they like to kill members of the Shepherdson family for reasons no one seems to remember. Huck says to fourteen year-old Buck Grangerford,

"Did you want to kill him, Buck?"
 "Well, I bet I did,"
 "What did he do to you?"
 "Him? He never done nothing to me."
 "Well, then, what did you kill him for?"
 "Why nothing - only it's on account of the feud."⁵

⁴Ibid., p. 86.

⁵Ibid., p. 88.

Buck is a product of the same society which Huck is. Both represent the young upon whom the cultural biases and prejudices of society are superimposed. The Grangerfords go to church to learn. Unfortunately, they bring their guns with them. Huck recounts the visit to the church.

Next Sunday we all went to church about three mile, everybody a horseback. The men took their guns along, so did Buck, and kept them between their knees or stood them handy against the wall. The Shepherdsons done the same. It was pretty ornery preaching all about brotherly love, and such like tiresomeness; but everybody said it was a good sermon, and they all talked it over going home, and had such a powerful lot to say about faith, and good work, and free grace, and preforeordination (sic.).⁶

Twain's marvelous use of irony again is highlighted in the suggestion that the church-going is superficial and hypocritical. Twain dwells at great length in this work on an examination of competing notions of enslavement. Jim is physically a slave. Others are mental slaves. He also pursues notions of man's inhumanity to man. What good is church, school or government if these have no positive effects on changes in attitude of men toward each other? It is areligious, apolitical, and aeducational Huck who becomes a foil to the so-called good, respectable, people in this novel.

⁶Ibid., p. 90.

The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn is a novel about the education of a young boy into manhood; it is, then, a rite de passage. It has been suggested that Twain faults the misconceptions about the role of institutions in society as corruptive of the natural goodness of people. Huck's formalized education by his family, school, and the church is quasi-corruptive of his inherently good feelings about people. It is his informal education on the raft which produces his great act of brotherhood and humanitarianism toward his friend Jim.

Jim As A Teacher

It is this writer's contention that Twain chose the negro slave Jim not only to be Huck's surrogate father but also, more importantly, to be Huck's teacher in this work. Seen in this perspective, it is very difficult to understand why so many Negro organizations have branded Twain's work racist. While it is true that in one sense Huck never flees society in this work, it is also true that he does flee it. He does this because he is repulsed by the trappings of civilization. These are foreign to him because he is very much nature's child. Mark Hopkins postulated that education could take place with teacher on one end of a log, a learner on the other. Mark Twain postulates that education can consist of a teacher and a student sharing a raft on a hugh river. Recall that Huck is truant from school. To

complement his postulation, he chooses a student and a teacher whose backgrounds, except for race, are highly similar. Both Huck and Jim are not integrated members of society. Both live apart from it, the one by choice, the other by legislation. Ostensibly, and this is the supreme irony and brilliance of the work, Huck had little to learn from Jim. After all, Jim never went to school, shared little esteem from society, could not read nor write.

He was a human being, however, who had a heart and a disposition which was conducive to sharing with Huck some very important precepts of Christianity as charity, kindness, and love. Twain's postulation, then, was that Huck could learn a great many things from Jim which society would never teach him. And so, the work is an educational odyssey. It is Huck's and Jim's voyage together, and it is out of their growing relationship that Huck learns his most important lessons. It would be advantageous to analyze their relationship and to discuss the educational ideas implicit in it.

It is on Jackson's Island where teacher Jim and student Huck meet as fellow escapees. Huck has fled the "civilization" represented by his father and the Widow Douglas, and Jim has fled the same society because he feared the threat of being sold. Both characters, then, flee a similar society to escape different kinds of enslavement. Jim's

body is enslaved; Huck's mind and spirit are enslaved. They need each other initially because they distrust each other. One might tell on the other. In the early stage of their relationship, neither is viewed as superior to the other. Huck has the foresight to bring food to the island, Jim the wisdom to suggest cover from the rain. Despite the fact that Huck has played cruel jokes on Jim before this meeting, Huck has also relied on Jim's soothsaying ability. Jim predicts that Huck will have considerable trouble in his life and considerable joy. What neither realizes at the time is his respective role in that prediction.

The new role of Jim as Huck's surrogate father is introduced when Jim finds Huck's father dead in an old house carried in the flood tide down the river. Jim will not allow Huck to see the face of the dead man. Jim's compassion for his young charge is developed nicely in this incident, and the change in the status of their relationship is hinted at in Jim's use of the term of endearment "honey" immediately after his discovery of Huck's father. Jim assumes responsibility for Huck; he isn't stupid or incapable of getting things done. It is he who builds the wigwam on the raft so that shelter and warmth will be available. Jim is not necessarily to be viewed as inferior to Huck. In the new society which they create on the raft,

Jim gets to share his opinions. Seeing a shipwrecked steam-boat, Huck wishes to board her:

Let's land on her, Jim,
But Jim is dead against it at first. He says:
"I don't want to go fool'n 'long en no wrack.
We's doin' blame well, en we better let blame
well alone, as de good book says. Like as not
dey's a watchman on dat wrack."⁷

Huck, however, wins the argument, but it is important to note that Jim has opinions which differ from Huck's.

The relationship between the two subtly grows in intensity as the story progresses. In the first of several separations, Huck is alarmed that in the fog he cannot find Jim. It is Jim, however, who reveals his sentiments more. Huck attempts to deceive Jim into thinking that they were never separated.

"Hello, Jim, have I been asleep?
"Why didn't you stir me up?"
"Goodness gracious, is dat you, Huck?
En you ain't dead--you ain't drowned--you's back
again? It's too good for true, honey, it's too
good for true. Lemme look at you, chile, lemme
feel o' you. No, you ain't dead! You's back
agin, a'live en soun', jis de same old Huck--de
same ole Huck, thanks to goodness!"⁸

Jim is infuriated when he learns that Huck has played a joke on him.

When I got all wore out wid work, en wid de callin'
for you, en went to sleep, my heart wuz mos' broke

⁷ Ibid., p. 21.

⁸ Ibid., p. 70.

bekase you wuz los; en I didn't kiyer no mo' what
 became er me en de raf; and when I wake up 'n
 find you back agin; all safe en soun' de tears
 come en I could a got down on my knees en kiss'
 yo foot I's so thankful. En all you wuz thinkin'
 'bout wuz how you could make a fool uv ole Jim
 wid a lie.⁹

Huck, of course, is startled by Jim's reaction. Their relationship reaches a peak of intensity when Huck declares:

Then he Jim got up slow, and walked to the wigwam,
 and went in there, without saying anything but that.
 But that was enough. It made me feel so mean I
 could almost kissed his foot to get him to take it
 back.

It was fifteen minutes before I could work myself
 up to go and humble myself to a Nigger, but I done
 it, and I warn't ever sorry for it afterwards,
 neither. I didn't do him no more mean tricks, and
 I wouldn't done that one if I'd a knowed it would
 make him feel that way.¹⁰

Some choose to see Huck as cruel in this episode. This writer chooses to see Twain as using the cruelty of Huck's pretending they were not separated to force the relationship to this development. What is lovely about the incident is that Huck learns from Jim what it means to show concern for others. The same advice from Miss Watson, cited earlier, lacked meaning and relevance. Her teaching was ineffective; Jim's is not. As a result of this lesson learned, there is a change in Huck's attitude and, consequently, in the relationship between the two.

⁹Ibid., p. 71.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 72-72.

Jim and Huck have a good society now based on love, understanding trust, and respect. The greater society does not. And to emphasize the fact that the greater society does not, Twain introduces the Shepherdson-Grangerford episode when Huck and Jim are separated again. The feud content of that episode has been noted as well as Twain's criticism of the minister's sermon. What is of interest here is the fact that the raft society of Huck and Jim is ultimately more civilized than the society of the Shepherdsons and Grangerfords. The theme of man's inhumanity to man is reinforced in the Shepherdson-Grangerford society. Huck is inhumane to Jim, and he learns a valuable lesson. The others with all their church-going do not.

The raft society is pure. It is based on concern and need. The land society is used to contrast this purity with its decadence. It is in going ashore that Huck sees the evil of society and its corruption. Huck prefers the purity, goodness, and serenity of the raft society to the land society.

Kill them, kill them! It made me so sick I most fell out of the tree. I ain't agoing to tell all that happened, it would make me sick again if I was to do that. I wished I hadn't ever come ashore that night, to see such things. I ain't ever going to get shut of them. Lots of times I dream about them.¹¹

¹¹Ibid., p. 94.

The purity of the raft's society is contaminated when the King and Duke come aboard. These two characters serve the function of allowing Twain to show what happens to a society when it has members who will not cooperate with its rules. It's a restatement about the same kind of behavioral attitudes which Huck's father reflects when he will not go along with the notion of freed Negroes voting. While it is true that Huck does not go along with the rules of the greater society which demands the enslavement of Jim, Twain is arguing for the support of humane, good charitable and enlightened rules of a society and not the inhumane, bad uncharitable and unenlightened ones.

Land-corrupted society is also noted in Twain's treatment of the Boggs-Sherburn incident. Here is another episode where Huck views contamination, hypocrisy and crime. Twain depicts mob psychology by describing an ignorant group of townspeople who are thwarted in an attempt to lynch a town renegade. There is an absence of law and order. It's just another example of decadence shown by Twain in the society which Huck and Jim have fled.

The return to the raft from the Boggs-Sherburn incident allows the relationship between Huck and Jim to resume and to develop in greater depth.

I (Huck) went to sleep, and Jim didn't call me when it was by turn to keep watch. He often done that.¹²

¹²Ibid., p. 124.

Jim looks out for Huck and allows him, because he is a boy, to rest more. Huck learns much about Jim's family.

When I waked up, just at day-break, he was setting there with his head down betwixt his knees, moaning and mourning to himself. I didn't take notice nor let on. I knowed what it was about. He was thinking about his wife and his children, away up yonder, and he was low and homesick, because he hadn't ever been away from home before in his life; and I do believe he cared just as much for his people as white folks does for their'n. It don't seem natural, but I reckon it's so.¹³

Jim shares the story about the beating he gave his, unknown to him, deaf daughter when she was very young. This beating contrasts with Huck's beating by his father. Huck sees similarities in men and in families in both these episodes. The greater society has emphasized differences in men and, consequently, slavery has come about. It takes Huck a while to rid himself of his attitudes about "Niggers." Society has spent years contaminating his psyche with a cultural and environmental overlay. His love for Jim is miraculous and satisfies the scope of a novel, but one knows that in real life it would take some time for his new attitude to take root.

The central concern of Twain in the novel and the essence of the educational transformation brought about by teacher Jim takes place when Huck has to reach down beneath the cultural and environmental overlay to get at his conscience. He must decide whether to free or not to free

¹³Ibid.

Jim. He must adjudicate fairly and non-emotionally the competing ideologies to which he has been exposed. One ideology has come from the greater society of the Widow Douglas, Pap, and Miss Watson and from his peers like Tom Sawyer. The other ideology is more current and its source has been a Negro. His attempt to judge, to weigh, is responsible citizenship. It is the ideal behavior of all just men.

I went to the raft, and set down in the wigwam to think. But I couldn't come to nothing. I thought till I wore my head sore, but I couldn't see no way out of the trouble. After all this long journey, and after all we'd done for them scoundrels, here it was all come to nothing, everything all busted up and ruined, because they could have the heart to serve Jim such a trick as that, and make him a slave again all his life, and amongst strangers, too, for forty dirty dollars.

Once I said to myself it would be a thousand times better for Jim to be a slave at home where his family was, as long as he'd got to be a slave, and so I'd better write a letter to Tom Sawyer and tell him to tell Miss Watson where he was. But I soon give up that notion, for two things: she'd be mad and disgusted at his rascality and ungratefulness for leaving her, and so she'd sell him straight down the river again; and if she didn't, everybody naturally despises an ungrateful nigger, and they'd make Jim feel it all the time, and so he'd feel ornery and disgraced. And then think of me! It would get all around, that Huck Finn helped a nigger to get his freedom; and if I was to ever see anybody from that town again, I'd be ready to get down and lick his boots for shame. That's just the way: a person does a low-down thing, and then he don't want to take no consequences of it. Thinks as long as he can hide it, it ain't no disgrace. That was my fix exactly. The more I studied about this, the more my conscience went to grinding me, and the more wicked and low-down and ornery I got to feeling. And at last, when it hit me all of a sudden that here was the plain hand of Providence slapping me in the face and letting me know my wickedness was being watched all the time from up there in heaven, whilst I was stealing a poor old woman's nigger that hadn't ever done me no harm, and

now was showing me there's One that's always on the lookout, and ain't agoing to allow no such miserable doings to go only just so far and no further. I most dropped in my tracks I was so scared. Well, I tried the best I could to kinder soften it up somehow for myself, by saying I was brung up wicked, and so I warn't so much to blame; but something inside of me kept saying, 'There was the Sunday school, you could a gone to it; and if you'd a done it they'd a learnt you, there, that people that acts as I'd been acting about that nigger goes to everlasting fire.'

It made me shiver. And I about made up my mind to pray; and see if I couldn't try to quit being the kind of boy I was, and be better. So I kneeled down. But the words wouldn't come. Why wouldn't they? It warn't no use to try and hide it from Him. Nor from me, neither. I knowed very well why they wouldn't come. It was because my heart warn't right; it was because I warn't square; it was because I was playing double. I was letting on to give up sin, but away inside of me I was holding on to the biggest one of all. I was trying to make my mouth say I would do the right thing and the clean thing, and go and write to that nigger's owner and tell where he was; but deep down in me I knowed it was a lie--and He knowed it. You can't pray a lie--I found that out.

So I was full of trouble, full as I could be; and didn't know what to do. At last I had an idea; and I says, I'll go and write the letter--and then see if I can pray. Why, it was astonishing, the way I felt as light as a feather, right straight off, and my troubles all gone. So I got a piece of paper and a pencil, all glad and excited, and set down and wrote:

Miss Watson your runaway nigger Jim is down here two mile below Pikesville and Mr. Phelps has got him and he will give him up for the reward if you send.

HUCK FINN

I felt good and all washed clean of sin for the first time I had ever felt so in my life, and I knowed I could pray now. But I didn't do it straight off, but laid the paper down and set there thinking--thinking how good it was all this happened so, and how near I come to being lost and going to hell. And went on thinking. And got to thinking over our trip down the river; and I see Jim before me, all the time, in the day, and in the night-time, sometimes moonlight, sometimes storms, and we a floating along, talking, and singing, and laughing. But somehow I couldn't seem to strike no places to harden me against him, but only the other kind. I'd see him standing my watch on top of his'n, stead of calling me, so I could go on sleeping;

and see him how glad he was when I come back out of the fog; and when I come to him again in the swamp, up there were the feud was; and suchlike times; and would always call me honey, and pet me, and do everything he could think of for me, and how good he always was; and at last I struck the time I saved him by telling the men we had smallpox aboard, and he was so grateful, and said I was the best friend old Jim ever had in the world, and the only one he's got now; and then I happened to look around, and see that paper.

It was a close place. I took it up, and held it in my hand. I was a trembling, because I'd got to decide, forever, betwixt two things, and I knowed it. I studied a minute, sort of holding my breath, and then says to myself:

'All right, then, I'll go to hell'--and tore it up.¹⁴

And so Huck opts for the teachings of Jim because Jim has reached what is decent, good, and kind in him. Jim is a great teacher, a masterful man whose own existence on the raft serves as an object lesson for an adolescent boy. If it is true that Tom Sawyer is society's child and that Huckleberry Finn is anti-social, one must applaud Huck and condemn Tom. Certainly Tom is smarter but Huck is more humane. Twain's concept of enlightenment includes humanness. To be civilized is to be humane. It is in that sense that civilization is the absence of decadence. The educational odyssey is finished. The boy becomes a man. He has learned many things at first hand.

Teacher-Student Motif

Experience has been the educational medium, Jim the mediator between the student and experience. Jim, in the

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 166-168.

most tradition-ridden teacher-student relationship becomes a model to emulate. It is through the use of a student-teacher relationship that Twain has communicated his educational ideas.

It is in The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn that Mark Twain becomes a teacher alerting his readers about the ills of unenlightened societies. It is in this work that he deals with the educational ideas of training and environment. It is here that Mark Twain suggests that just men cannot perpetuate unjust institutions. The democratic experiment is only viable if there is enlightenment. People are not to be viewed as automata programmed to perpetuate injustice. It is in the intellect and heart at work in Huck's attempt to adjudicate what justice is that one sees Twain's democratic, enlightened, humane citizen. The work abounds with Twain's educational ideas, and, as with the other works studied, there is a student-teacher motif used to convey Twain's educational biases. Mark Twain does not offer solutions to the problems posed in The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn. It is his intention merely to call attention to society's ills. On the other hand, the relationship between Huck and Jim is a solution to the problem of man's inhumanity to man. A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court is a work in which Twain advances more solutions which are of a specific educational nature.

Mark Twain's reading interests included literature written during the Medieval Period, and his absorption with this period is reflected in A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court written in 1889, another work replete with Twain's educational ideas. In it, Twain uses the device, characteristic of much medieval literature, of telling a story based on a protagonist who is in a dream-like state. Twain refers to Chaucer and his pilgrims in the text, but it is Sir Thomas Malory's knights of Arthur's court who inspire Twain most significantly and guide him in this work.

A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court

Introduction

A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court is the wildly improbably story about a Connecticut arms factory foreman who is knocked on the head and imaginatively transposed from the nineteenth century of America to the sixth century of England. Once there, the American pragmatist, superman finds himself in a position of mental superiority because his Yankee ingenuity and practicality enable him to deal handily with the superstitions of the sixth century. His first challenge is to unseat the magician Merlin in a bid for control over the minds of the aristocracy and feudal slaves.

Disgusted with conditions in the kingdom of Camelot, the Yankee instigates a "New Deal" program aimed at

humanizing existence. As a reward for outshining Merlin in magical resources, the Yankee becomes the "Boss" of the kingdom, second in power only to King Arthur himself. He is amazed at the differences in his abilities compared to the people of the sixth century.

Look at the opportunities here for a man of knowledge, brains, pluck, and enterprise to sail in and grow up with the country. The grandest field that ever was; and all my own; not a competitor; not a man who wasn't a baby to me in acquirements and capacities; whereas, what would I amount to in the twentieth? I should be foreman of a factory, that is about all; and I could drag a seine down-street any day and catch a hundred better men than myself.¹⁵

So, whereas the knights of the kingdom have their armor, the Yankee, girded with intelligence, sallies forth to re-make Camelot:

The first thing you want in a new country, is a patent office; then work up your school system; and after that, out with your paper.¹⁶

He attempts to educate the people through mass education; schools abound in the kingdom. He separates his schools from the church. He undertakes a hygiene program to promote cleanliness, and he starts a newspaper as another attempt to educate the people. He even attempts to educate the king by taking him on a tour of the kingdom. He tries to eradicate superstition and caste. He fights hard to eliminate chivalry. While in Camelot, he marries and

¹⁵Mark Twain, A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1899), pp. 60-61.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 70.

becomes a father. A total of seven years passes. The kingdom is changing and, as far as the Yankee is concerned, progressing. During the seventh year, his child grows ill and he sails for France. While he is absent from Camelot, Arthur dies and the Roman Catholic Church regains control of the kingdom through an interdict. The Yankee marshals the support of fifty-two men to go against the legions of the Church. In the holocaust which comes about, schools, factories, and lives are destroyed. The Yankee is stabbed and triumphed over in the end by Merlin.

Samuel Clemens The Teacher

Mark Twain, himself, may be viewed as a teacher in this work. His focus in A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court is a critical investigation of the effects of a society in which various institutional arrangements such as monarchical systems of government and church control hold people in various states of moral, intellectual, and physical enslavement. Always critical of monarchies, Twain touts the advantages of democratic arrangements. Twain assumes the role of teacher as he attempts to analyze and criticize a life style he finds inimical to growth and freedom. The work allows him not only to criticize a malevolent form of government but also to praise the benevolence of democratic principles. In this work he seeks to show the virtues of education as a possible way to

disenslave humanity. It is another work, very much in the tradition of The Gilded Age, in which he attempts to make an equation between enlightenment and progress. As a teacher, Twain is prepared to document his charge that too strong an alliance between church and state is dangerous for the growth of humanity. Indeed, the entire plot is an object-lesson about the dangers that such a union produces. Additionally, Twain grapples with ideas relating to environment, conditioning, and training. He sees the common folk of Camelot not as products of education, as thinking, questioning, deliberating men, but as automata, the products of conditioning and training. These are people held in check, in blind states of obedience. He views the people of the South similarly in The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn.

The Educational Ideas In A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court

It might be well at this point to examine some of the specific educational ideas advanced by Twain in A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court. The Yankee casts himself in the role as educator of the kingdom. His initial response is that he is the mental superior of practically everyone. This superiority consists mostly of the fact that he is more practical and ingenious and also that he can get things done. He is, after all, a foreman in an

arms factory in Bridgeport, Connecticut so he has a leadership background. His initial survey of the people of Camelot leads him to believe that their ignorance is simplistic and childlike:

As a rule, the speech and behavior of these people were gracious and courtly; and I noticed that they were good and serious listeners when anybody was telling anything--I mean in a dog-fightless interval. And plainly, too, they were a childlike and innocent lot; telling lies of the stateliest pattern with a most gentle and winning naivete, and ready and willing to listen to anybody else's lie, and believe it too.¹⁷

It is this naivete, this childlike innocence which the Roman Catholic church has produced and which it capitalizes on. These are enslaved people, argues Twain, who have believed the lies of the church. A prison experience confirms this when the Yankee studies the other prisoners who appear emotionless. They don't scream, or cry out in anguish. The Yankee concludes:

... their philosophical bearing is not an outcome of mental training, intellectual fortitude, reasoning; it is mere animal training . . .¹⁸

The Yankee also concludes that as startling as the innocence and ignorance of the people are, the kingdom would not be the kingdom without it.

There did not seem to be brains enough in the entire nursery, so to speak, to bait a fishhook with; but you didn't seem to mind, after a little, because

¹⁷Ibid., p. 19.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 20.

you soon saw that brains were not needed in a society like that, and indeed would have marred it, hindered it, spoiled its symmetry--perhaps rendered its existence impossible.¹⁹

In this kingdom, where church and state are intertwined, the ecclesiastical members of society are the only "educated" ones.

. . . Nobody in the kingdom could read or write but a dozen priests. Land! Think of that.²⁰

The ignorance of the people annoys the Yankee. He faults the church and then scorns the government.

. . . Any kind of royalty, howsoever modified, any kind of aristocracy, howsoever pruned, is rightly an insult; but if you are born and brought up under that sort of arrangement you probably never find it out for yourself, and don't believe it when someone else tells you. It is enough to make a body ashamed of his race to think of the sort of froth that has always occupied the thrones without shadow of right or reason, and the seventh-rate people that have always figured as its aristocracies . . . ²¹

So because of the comparative ignorance of the members of the kingdom, the Yankee is elevated to the position of "Boss".

He immediately decides to remake the sixth century Camelot over in the image of nineteenth century Bridgeport. To upgrade the people, he initiates schools, patent offices and newspapers. He proceeds to resurrect a dead nation.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 22.

²⁰Ibid., p. 54.

²¹Ibid., p. 62.

He recruits the brightest young talent he can for his future civilization. He has the beginnings of all sorts of industries operating. He tries to train a crowd of ignorant people into experts. He shares his practicality. The key item in the Yankee's "New Deal" is education:

I had started a teacher-factory and a lot of Sunday Schools the first thing; as a result, I now had an admirable system of graded schools in full blast in those places, and also a complete variety of Protestant congregations all in a prosperous and growing condition. Everybody could be any kind of a Christian he wanted to; there was perfect freedom in that matter. But I confined public religious teaching to the churches and Sunday-schools, permitting nothing of it in my other educational buildings.²²

Separation Church and State

Twain's attitude about the dangers of joining education with religious instruction is clear here. He does not want the school used to reinforce what ecclesiastics decree. He fights an established church by encouraging heterogeneous religious sects. He warns against the dangers of convergent thinking as an obstacle to progress and enlightenment. Recall that he supported Rutherford B. Hayes as a Presidential candidate because Hayes advocated protection of the public schools against sectarian interference, thirteen years before A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court was written. The Yankee also scatters some branch schools secretly about the kingdom. He

²²Ibid., p. 77.

initiates, also, both naval and military academies. King Arthur sends the Yankee off with a damsel named Sandy to help her rid her land of demons. In his travels, the Yankee sees the condition of the kingdom at first-hand. The Yankee is angered by the blind ignorance of the people and of the monarchy which holds them in check:

I was from Connecticut, whose constitution declares that all political power is inherent in the people, and all free governments are founded on their authority and instituted for their benefit; and that they have at all times an undeniable and indefeasible right to alter their form of government in such a manner as they may think expedient.²³

On the quest for the demons, the Yankee and his party meet some knights tutored by the Yankee himself. These knights wear signs which read "Persimmon's Soap--All The Prime-Donne Use It." Earlier, having acted in a teaching capacity, the Yankee attempts to educate the people of the kingdom about hygiene. He says of the soap advertisements:

That was a little idea of my own, and had several wholesome purposes in view toward the civilizing and uplifting this nation . . . ; these missionaries would gradually, and without creating suspicion or exciting alarm, introduce a rudimentary cleanliness among the nobility, and from them it would work down to the people if the priests could be kept quiet. This would undermine the church. I mean would be a step toward that. Next, education--next freedom--and then she would crumble.²⁴

²³Ibid., p. 107.

²⁴Ibid., p. 128.

Training

On the same expedition to capture the demons which plague Sandy, the Boss stays at the castle of Morgan LeFay, sister of King Arthur. The Boss is appalled at her callousness toward her prisoners. As much as the Boss finds fault with her indifferent attitude toward her prisoners, he decides that she cannot help herself. She is, after all, a product of training. She has been made to be what she is.

. . . It was no use to waste sense on her. Training-training is everything; Training is all there is to a person. We speak of nature; it is folly; There is no such thing as nature; what we call by that misleading name is merely heredity and training. We have no thoughts of our own; no opinions of our own; they are transmitted to us, trained into us. All that is original in us, and therefore fairly creditable or discreditable to us, can be covered up or hidden by the point of a cambric needle, all the rest being atoms contributed by and inherited from, a procession of ancestors that stretches back a billion years to the adam-clam or grasshopper or monkey from whom our race has been so tediously and ostentatiously and unprofitably developed. And as for me, all that I think about in this plodding sad pilgrimage, this pathetic drift between the eternities, is to look out and humbly live a pure and high and blameless life, and save that one microscopic atom in me that is truly me . . .

No, confound her, her intellect was good, she had brains enough, but her training made her an ass—that is, from a many-centuries later point of view. To kill the page her prisoner was no crime—it was her right; and upon her right she stood, serenely and unconscious of offense. She was a result of generations of training . . .²⁵

What a notable passage! Here is Twain eloquently addressing himself to the effects of conditioning and of indoctrination. Morgan Le Fay's predicament is Huck's.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 150-151.

Both have psyches overladen with environmental and cultured residue. Twain's position should not be construed to mean that he is totally cynical about the possibility of man's enlightenment. That one tiny cell, the Me he refers to, represents his optimism. It is the Me in Huck which triumphs. Despite the training, despite the conditioning, man can break free; the intellect can triumph. The sixth century citizen doesn't realize this; the nineteenth century citizen does. Democracy frees the Me; monarchy does not. Democracy and enlightenment include respect for the dignity, the Me, of the individual. The freedom, the nurturing of the Me is a long and tedious pursuit. Huck makes a momentary correct decision. One cannot be sure he will continue to make right decisions. The Me has been so long neglected, has so long lain dormant. And so one finds a crucial educational idea in this work. It is that training and education are dissimilar concepts to Twain. The one is constraining the other emancipating. Morgan Le Fay has a "good intellect"; it is merely inoperative in this particular society at this particular time. It is that aspect of her personality which hasn't been developed. If it were developed she wouldn't do the things she does. Man's inhumanity to man comes about through training. It disappears when one is enlightened, when one is educated.

Having reconciled the problem of the demon to his satisfaction, the Yankee decides to investigate the life-style of the sixth century people more by disguising himself as a freeman. He pretends that he is a peasant and sets out on foot to explore the country for a week or two. The king wishes to join him so he insists that King Arthur also strip himself of his true identity and pose as a pilgrim the better to know the country and to get the feel of it. He teaches the King how to be lowly:

You must learn the trick; you must imitate the trademarks of poverty, misery, oppression, insult, and the other several and common inhumanities that sap the manliness out of a man and make him a loyal and proper and approved subject and a satisfaction to his masters . . . ²⁶

The Yankee and the King are sold as slaves. The King without his regal garb is very much like any other man. Only training and conditioning allow certain men to assume status. The King does not bring a very high price.

Yes, we were sold at auction, like swine. In a big town and active market we should have brought a good price; but this place was utterly stagnant and sold at a figure which makes me ashamed, every time I think of it. The King of England brought seven dollars.²⁷

The King learns a great deal from his enslavement and decides that slavery must be abolished.

²⁶Ibid., pp. 274-275.

²⁷Ibid., pp. 351-352.

We had a rough time for a month, tramping to and fro in the earth, and suffering. And what English man was the most interested in the slavery question by that time? His grace the King! Yes; from being the most indifferent, he was become the most interested. He was become the bitterest hater of the institution I had ever heard talk.²⁸

The King and Boss need help. The Yankee gets word back to Camelot that he and the King are in trouble, and Sir Launcelot and the knights come to their rescue.

The Yankee returns to Camelot and openly exposes his secret schools and factories to the kingdom. In the fifth, sixth, and seventh year of his stay in this kingdom, he feels that he has made progress. Not only has he apprised the citizenry, from the King down, of its ignorance but also he has attempted to combat it with his "New Deal", a program of noteworthy educational substance.

Now look around on England. A happy and prosperous country, and strangely altered. Schools everywhere, and several colleges; a number of pretty good newspapers Slavery was dead and gone; all men were equal before the law; taxation had been equalized.²⁹

So on a great, buoyant note, the Yankee feels rewarded:

I was very happy. Things were working steadily toward a secretly longed-for point. You see, I had two schemes in my head which were the vastest of all my projects. The one was to overthrow the Catholic church and set up the Protestant faith on its ruins-not as an established Church, but a go-as-you-please one; and the other project was to get a decree issued by and by, commanding that upon Arthur's death unlimited suffrage should be introduced, and given to men and women alike

²⁸Ibid., pp. 355-356.

²⁹Ibid., p. 398.

Arthur was good for thirty years yet . . . and I believed that in that time I could easily have the active part of the population of that day ready and eager for an event which should be the first of its kind in the history of the world--the result would be a republic.³⁰

Universal Suffrage

Here again is Twain's plea for universal suffrage, an idea developed at great length in The Gilded Age and in The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn. A republic must be based on involved, enlightened citizens. A monarchy legislates against such involvement. Such a concept as a republic, Twain argues, involves education. A society must have schools which operate freely. The church and school cannot become intertwined if either is to operate effectively. Education must begin formally when children are young to offset the societal conditioning which very often enslaves.

The Yankee, of course, as knowledgeable as he is, does not know that his dream will never be realized. His child ill, the Yankee sails to France. He returns to England to find Arthur dead and the country under an interdiction:

The church was going to keep the upper hand now, and snuff out all my beautiful civilization just like that . . . I groped my way with a heavy heart.³¹

³⁰Ibid., pp. 399-400.

³¹Ibid., p. 412.

The Yankee's faithful friend Clarence is frightened.

The church is master now. The Interdict included you [the Yankee] with Mordred [a Knight]; it is not to be removed while you remain alive. The clans are gathering. The church has gathered all the knights that are left alive, and as soon as you are discovered we shall have business on our hands.³²

The Yankee, of course, isn't concerned. After all, he has educated a new breed of young men who will follow him.

He replies:

Stuff! with our deadly scientific war material; with our hosts of trained-
[and Clarence interjects]
Save your breath--we haven't sixty faithful left.
[The Yankee responds:]
What are you saying? Our schools, our colleges, our vast workshops . . .
[Clarence answers:]
When those knights come, those establishments will empty themselves and go over to the enemy. Did you think you had educated the superstition out of these people?
[The Yankee concludes:]
I certainly did think it.³³

Clarence, however, has been able to assemble a group of young boys. In the group of fifty two, none is younger than fourteen and none is older than seventeen. The Yankee wants to know why such young boys were selected. Clarence responds:

Because all the others were born in an atmosphere of superstition and reared in it. It is in their blood and bones. We imagined that we had educated it out of them [the others]; they thought so, too; The interdict woke them up like a thunderclap! It revealed

³²Ibid., pp. 419-420.

³³Ibid., p. 420.

them to themselves, and it revealed them to me, too. With boys it was different. Such as have been under our training from seven to ten years have had no acquaintance with the Church's terrors, and it was among these that I found my fifty two.³⁴

And so the fifty two go against insurmountable odds. When the battle ends, the kingdom is destroyed and twenty five thousand lay dead. The Yankee is stabbed in the back and Merlin gets his revenge. Those originally conquered are now the conquerors. What went wrong with the Yankee's scheme? What is the point of Twain's work? It is simply this. The times were wrong for the Yankee's educational ideas. It doesn't mean that his ideas were wrong, however. He conceded that more time would be needed to affect his two fold plan. He never got his time.

Twain is making the point that it takes a great deal of time to un-do training. Again, one cannot count on Huck to make the right decision again anymore than one can expect the people of the kingdom to change their long-developed sentiments in the short space of seven years. Education, the freeing of the Me, takes time. In American society today the racial problem is a paradigm. The freeing of the Me, the digging out of the Me from the layers of cultural conditioning and training is a long, arduous task. So long as man is not solely the victim of

³⁴Ibid., p. 422.

conditioning and training, so long as there is that atom of individuality which will respond to education and resist training, there is hope. It's worth the fight.

Education and Democratic Societies

Mark Twain, this writer feels, is dedicated to the notion that education can be liberating. Enlightened men, Twain argues in The Gilded Age, The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn, and in A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court, denounce injustice, decry ignorance, and deplore evil. The ideal society is a republic which functions democratically. Democracy is absent when men cease to be men and become automata, victims of insidious training and of false political cant. Twain argues that education takes time, that it is a cradle to grave undertaking. Further, he argues that a republic cannot endure an unenlightened citizenry. The one out-cancels the other. In the Huck Finn saga he explores the dangers of training and shows us what happens positively to Huck as a result of his educational experience. He does not, however, offer concrete solutions as to how education might best operate in Southern society. In A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court, he isolates a system of government he rejects, and argues for a democratic republic. Additionally, he suggests that education and a republic are synonymous. The central focus of the Connecticut Yankee story is education. Inherent

in that discussion of education, one finds a consistent restatement of Twain's educational philosophy. The supreme statement of his viewpoint regarding education and politics is in his "The Curious Republic of Gondour" which will be examined in this study of Mark Twain's educational ideas.

Teacher-Student Motif

The method used to convey the educational matter in A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court is again a teacher-student motif. The Yankee is best viewed as a teacher. That is his only role in the work. He seeks to change the kingdom by teaching its inhabitants another life-style and so he establishes schools to reach the masses. On a more personal basis, he teaches Clarence, his manservant, how to read and write, how to organize and how to lead. He teaches King Arthur, too. Arthur becomes a student who is taught not only by the Yankee but also by his subjects. Arthur learns some very valuable lessons from experience.

Thus, it is again that one of Twain's works is concerned with education. That education is a preoccupying concern of Twain's and that it becomes the major thrust of A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court is obvious. Twain returns again and again to the role, function and importance of education in society. He labors to show correlations between degrees of enlightenment and education

and humaneness. The undergirding of just and humane societies is the education of the citizens. In those societies where education is absent men are enslaved, but in some societies education does not necessarily produce unenslaved men. Those societies must work harder at education. Those societies may not be educating but merely training. Twain would argue that there is a vital distinction.

CHAPTER V

"ON TRAINING CHILDREN," "ENGLISH AS
SHE IS TAUGHT," "WHAT IS MAN?" "THE
CURIOUS REPUBLIC OF GONDOUR"

Introduction

In previous chapters, this writer has argues that Mark Twain in four major novels deals with recurring trid-ical motifs. He assumes the role of teacher, which is the first motif, to exhort his readers, both children and adults alike, to consider their relationships to society, to their family, and to their friends. It is important to understand the teaching function which Twain assumes in some of his works because this orientation enables a reader to see additional merit in the man and his work. Such an insight moves Twain out of the purely entertainment realm as a writer and into one of moral, social and intellectual significance. Such an insight, too, suggests the ever increasing multiplicity of levels at which Twain can be read, a mark, this reader feels, of his literary genius. Not to see Twain acting in some of his works as a teacher, not to view some of the works didactically, is to miss a very important aspect of Twain's contribution to American letters.

The second motif involves variations on the theme of education. That education, schooling, and training are key concepts in the Twain novels studied and analyzed is obvious.

The man had a significant preoccupation with the theme of education; it is his idee fixe. It has been demonstrated that the ideological context of at least four novels by Twain is education. The third motif which Twain employs is that of a teacher-student relationship. A character is always teaching another character as the author Twain teaches his readers. Additional research shows that Twain is concerned with similar motifs in his shorter works, in some of his short stories, for example, and in certain of his essays.

"On Training Children"

Summarized

The short essay "On Training Children" was written in 1885, the same year that Twain wrote The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn.¹ The genesis of the short essay was Twain's reaction to the disciplinary mishandling, he felt, of a child who had been rude to his parents. Very briefly summarized, the essay is an account which appeared in The Christian Union newspaper about a young boy who entered his

¹Charles Neider, editor, Mark Twain Life As I Find It, "On Training Children" (New York: Hanover House, 1961).

father's library, snatched a letter out of his father's hand and threw it on the floor. The child was severely punished by his parents. To the newspaper's query of what ought to have been done, Twain responded that both he and his wife would be grieved and surprised that the patient training of one of their children never to insult anyone would so suddenly fall to ruin.

Child Punishment

Twain remarks that he is a fortunate parent who for a number of years has been accustomed to having well-behaved children. He initially had four children, but his son died at a very early age. Twain loved his girls, especially his daughter, Jean. His response to the case of the rude little boy is that the father should keep still and not make any stupid remarks. He feels that the mother is able to deal with the case. He suggests that the mother take the child to a private area of the home, take him up into her lap and love him out of his wrong mood so that eventually he will apologize to the father. He suggests that the child be reasoned with and if reasoning doesn't work, a whipping should be forthcoming. The whipping, however, should not be administered until the sting of the original difficulty is out of the parents' minds. The whipping should then be administered on purely business principles, discipline principles, with the parents' hearts

free of rancor and ill-will. Significant to the child, is Twain's attitude that he never go from the scene of punishment until he is loved back into "happy-heartedness" and a "joyful spirit."² Twain's sympathies are with the child who is a victim of a weak mother and father.

Thus, this short essay is another example of Twain's concern with concepts of training and education. He sees the external environment of an individual as crucial to his formation and development. His attitude about children presented in this essay is interesting when it is compared with the attitude toward Huck which he reveals in The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. Huck, it will be recalled, is severely beaten by his father. Jim also beats his daughter. Twain is alarmed and saddened by these child-beatings. A consistent projection of his attitudes in this area is found in The Adventures Of Tom Sawyer. There, Tom is administered repeated doses of noxious stimuli by his teacher. So it is, then, that one finds a consistency in attitude and philosophy by Twain toward positive means of training and education. Additionally, one detects his horror toward varying modes of inhumanity, a horror identified in The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn, The Adventures Of Tom Sawyer, and in A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court. His stress on reason is consistent with his

²Ibid., p. 210.

characterization of just men. The parents he criticizes are stupid and weak. Their reactions are automatic and passionate. Twain argues for cool, intellectual, mature reasoned solutions to problems. The essay exhibits the triadical Twain motifs in miniature. Twain teaches the readers how to train children; the essay has an educational-ideological context. Its content is epistemological. It deals with how children learn. And, the essay suggests a teacher-student motif of parents and child.

"English As She is Taught"

Summarized

"English As She Is Taught" is an amusing short essay which Twain wrote in 1900.³ It is abundant in invectives against that educational philosophy which views children as insensitive automata. The impetus for this clever essay was a request by a friend that Twain judge a book, a volume containing an array of examples of English as it was then being taught in the public schools of America, to see if it were worthy of publication. While scanning it, Twain recalls a reference in the appendix to Croker's Boswell's Johnson to a child who knew Cato's soliloquy but who did not know the number of pence in

³Charles Neider, editor, The Complete Essays Of Mark Twain, "English As She Is Taught" (Garden City: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1963).

sixpence. Boswell, he recalls, queried if anything could be more ridiculous than to teach a child Cato's soliloquy who does not know how many pence in a sixpence. Twain, it will be recalled, shares Boswell's disdain for rote-memorization. The Hawkins children, Twain writes, are subjected to similar dreadful school experiences in The Gilded Age:

Within a week or two, the Hawkinses were comfortably domiciled in a new loghouse, and were beginning to feel at home. The children were put to school; at least it was what passed for school in those days: a place where tender young humanity devoted itself for eight to ten hours a day to learning incomprehensible rubble by heart out of books and reciting by rote, like parrots; so that a finished education consisted simply of a permanent headache and the ability to read without stopping to spell the words or take breath.⁴

Rote-Memorization

In The Adventures Of Tom Sawyer, the "year-end examination" invites Twain's scorn for rote also. The children, as automata, parade forward to recite insensitively their various declamations, presented, Twain ventures, by their mothers and fathers many years before them. The dramatization by Twain of The Adventures Of Tom Sawyer entitled "Tom Sawyer: A Play" is a strong illustration of Twain's contempt for school memorization exercises. Disregarding the answers of the children, consider the kinds of questions asked by Mr. Dobbins, the schoolmaster:

⁴Mark Twain, Charles C. Warner, The Gilded Age, p. 54.

William, who discovered America?
 Where was he born?
 What was the date of the discovery?
 What countryman was he?
 What was his religion?
 What did he say when the new world burst upon him in
 the early dawn?⁵

The college professor of a History of American Education course would do well to direct his students to Twain's play and to have his students role-play this part of rote memorization by early schoolmasters in America. The insight gained is invaluable.

Twain samples the kinds of questions asked in classrooms as these are summarized in "English As She Is Taught." For instance, the following questions are asked in school exams:

Mention all the names of places in the world derived from Julius Caesar or Augustus Caesar.
 Where are the following rivers? Pisuerge, Sakaria, Gradalete, Jalon, Mulde?⁶

Twain's response to the sampling of questions is educationally provocative:

Isn't it reasonably possible that in our schools many of the questions in all studies are several miles ahead of where the pupil is? --that he is set to struggle with things that are ludicrously beyond his present reach, hopelessly beyond his present strength?⁷

⁵Walter Blair, Mark Twain And Huck Finn (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960), pp. 300-301.

⁶Neider, The Complete Essays of Mark Twain, p. 37.

⁷Ibid., p. 37.

Mark Twain obviously subscribed to the start where the child is educational philosophy. It should be recalled that his characterization of Huckleberry Finn is equally Rousseuian in orientation. He removes Huckleberry from society in "Emile-like" fashion. Twain is incensed by the schools' preoccupation with rote-memorization, but he faults the overseers of schools not teachers:

Not the struggling child, nor the unintelligent teacher--or rather the unintelligent boards, committees, trustees--are the proper target for it [criticism].⁸ Twain continues his criticism of this type of educational methodology.

Pupils in our public schools are not merely loaded up with those showy facts about geography, mathematics, and so on, and left in that incomplete state: no, there's machinery for clarifying and expanding their minds. They are required to take poems and analyze them, dig out their common sense, reduce them to statistics, and reproduce them in a luminous prose translation which shall tell you at a glance what the poet was trying to get at.⁹

Function of Intellect

Twain's belief that education should produce practical pragmatic men is evident in his reaction to "English As She Is Taught." He does not view intellect as passive or dormant. The mind is not a storehouse to be filled with

⁸Ibid., p. 47.

⁹Ibid., p. 41.

insignificant trivia. Functional men get things done. They bring ingenuity to bear on particular problems. A clever man is the Connecticut Yankee. He's a doer, a man of action. His intellect is creative not imitative. Intelligent men are practical men whose intellects are instruments used to their advantages. Twain holds no stock in ornamental knowledge for its own sake:

A large part of the pupil's "instruction" consists of cramming him with obscure and wordy "rules" which he does not understand and has no time to understand. It would be useful to cram him with brickbats; they would at least stay. Some students are as glib as parrots with the "rules" but cannot reason out a single rule or explain the principle underlying it. Their memories have been stocked, but not their understandings. It is a case of brickbat culture, pure and simple.¹⁰

And so it is, then, that Huck Finn, for example, is liberated from a brickbat pre Civil War culture where he knows the rules but is unable to reason or to understand. So, too, Tom Sawyer is freed from the hum-drum of a brickbat culture school where little is of relevance to his needs and interests. Again, Twain is consistent in his educational philosophy in his biases toward specific kinds of content and method.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 47.

"What is Man?"

"What Is Man?" is a longer essay written in 1906. It is a curious piece of writing because in it, in some ways, Twain both refutes and supports many of the ideas which have been cited as central to an understanding of his educational philosophy. One can read and analyze "What Is Man?" in at least three contexts.

Three Interpretations

The first context includes viewing the essay as a reflection of Twain's evolving despair and cynicism which came about as the result of the deaths of his wife, and daughter, and his business failures.¹¹ In this sense, it is thought that Twain views man as a product and victim of fate, a prisoner in a cold, insensitive, mechanistic universe. A second context includes analyzing "What Is Man?" as Twain's most notorious work which is "actually not so much dark and desperate as it is a kind of deliberately cynical refutation of the genteel Victorian taboos about life."¹² The third approach, which this writer advances, is to view the piece as another statement of Mark Twain's educational philosophy in which he synthesizes, modulates,

¹¹Bernard DeVoto, Mark Twain At Work (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press) 1942.

¹²Maxwell Geismar, Mark Twain An American Prophet (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1970), p. 259.

and, finally, harmonizes various ideas presented in many of his other works. "What Is Man?" is another selection by Twain replete with notions about training, conditioning, education, and man's relationship to society. The structure of the piece is educational for in it a Socratic dialogue takes place between an "old-man" and a "young-man." There is an initial hint of a relationship between form and content which is borne out as the reader progresses through the ideas. It would be significant to isolate central educational concepts in "What Is Man?" and then attempt to relate these to other Twain works.

Concept of Limitation

One concept which Twain advances is that of "limitation." That is, educationally, there is a point beyond which one cannot grow:

There are gold men, and tin men, and copper men, and leaden men, and steel men, and so on--and each has the limitations of his nature, his heredities, his training, and his environment.¹³

This writer does not find this educational idea repulsive. It is most realistic. Certainly it is not an egalitarian orientation, but it is consistent with Twain's ideas in "The Curious Republic Of Gondour" wherein the most educationally qualified members of society cast votes which count the most. This writer also finds this viewpoint

¹³Neider, The Complete Essays Of Mark Twain, p. 337.

consistent with the one expressed in "English As She Is Taught." People are different, children are different. Expectations, therefore, about people and children ought to be different. The idea is also consistent with the viewpoint expressed about environment in A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court. Men, Twain argues, in that work, have the limitations of their environments. A monarchical environment is not liberating. That a democratic environment does produce gold, tin, copper, leaden, and steel men is a sine qua non. Democratic environments produce individuals of varying aptitudes and abilities. This writer, the, does not choose to see the Twain statement as nihilistic or pessimistic; it's most realistic and honest.

A more controversial statement from Twain's "What Is Man?" deals with his analysis and consequent denial of man's capacity for originality.

Whatsoever a man is, is due to his make, and to the influences brought to bear upon it by his heredities, his habitat, his associations. He is moved, directed, commanded, by exterior influences solely. He originates nothing, not even a thought.¹⁴

Because this writer has demonstrated that Twain has an abiding compelling interest in education which shapes the scope of many of his works, she chooses to see this statement as another reflection of Twain's educational philosophical position. Certain it is that he is a realist.

¹⁴Ibid.

This writer does not find this Twain predisposition to be frightening. Viewed another way, it is conceivable that Twain appropriates the pose of the old man and his responses to satirize erroneous notions about the capabilities of men. It is a viewpoint which could be construed to mean that Twain, in the last analysis, does feel that man can never transcend the automaton level. However, since "What Is Man?" is best understood in its totality, this writer chooses to see the statement as reflective of a realistic educational position. Subsequent sections provide the necessary evidence to make this writer's interpretation coherent. This is a point vital to a discussion of "What Is Man?" Not only is there evidence which is in coherence with ideas in other Twain works but also corresponding evidence abounds also. So the writer's argument obtains on at least two counts of evidence.

Notice what Twain writes about Shakespeare. Remember what the Yankee feels about Morgan Le Fay. Think about Huckleberry Finn had he been born and reared in Maine.

If Shakespeare had been born and bred on a barren and unvisited rock in the ocean his mighty intellect would have no outside material to work with and could have invented none; and no outside influences, teachings, moldings, persuasions, inspirations, of a valuable sort, and could have invented none; and so Shakespeare would have produced nothing.¹⁵

¹⁵Ibid., p. 339.

This writer does not support the interpretation of "What Is Man?" which views Twain in it as cynical, pessimistic, or negativistic--The preceding quotation is another statement of Twain's central intellectual concerns, the concerns of environment, training, education, and enculturation--"What Is Man?" is not a departure by Twain from the central posture he assumes in his earlier works cited in this study. It is, rather, a consistent restatement, a variant, perhaps, and a synthesis of his earlier educational ideas.

Training

Twain's focus on the concept of "training" has been noted. It is a basic intellectual concern in The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn, A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court, "On Training Children" and, most importantly, in "What Is Man?" Since Twain feels that all of the stimuli acting on man are external, he concludes that the correct environment is crucial. This, of course, is obvious in his reference to Shakespeare. He suggests that there is value in training people in the right direction.

Inestimably valuable is training, influence, education, in right directions--training one's self--approbation to elevate its ideals.¹⁶

¹⁶Ibid., p. 340.

The last part of his statement refers to the fact that he feels people do most of the things they do in life to gain personal approval. He sees self-approbation as a basic drive behind man's motivations. Getting people to channel their self-approbation needs into more socially oriented realms as opposed to purely personal ones can improve the society. Take, for instance, the king in A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court. The Yankee gets the king to see that for himself approbation is still possible without slavery and, consequently, the kingdom is better. That is, a king can still be respected with or without slavery but no slavery is a higher social good.

It is interesting to note that Twain's definition of "training" shifts slightly in "What Is Man?" when compared to his use of it in, say, A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court. In the latter work, he chooses not to fault Morgan Le Fay in her attitude toward her prisoner because he feels that she is a product of training. He chooses to see her training as a habituated activity. That is, her training within a monarchical environment does not enable her to function intelligently in the sense that the Yankee functions intelligently. The Roman Catholic Church imprisons her intellect and causes her to function at a "trained" behavioral level. Huck Finn, on the other hand, once removed from his enculturated training environment, serves as an example of the intellect functioning

properly when he makes the rational decision to free Jim. So prior to "What Is Man?" Twain dichotomizes training and education. Now, in "What Is Man?", education becomes a kind of training. To the young man's query of what is "training," the old man responds:

Stuffy, instruction, lectures, sermons? That is part of it--but not a large part. I mean all the outside influences. There are a million of them. From the cradle to the grave, during all his waking hours, the human being is under training The influences about him create his preferences, his aversions, his politics, his tastes, his morals, his religion.¹⁷

Mark Twain's educational philosophy is most obvious. He sees education as an on-going process which includes all of the experiences which an individual participates in from the cradle to the grave. Life itself is educational. Thus it is that Tom and Huck are truant. Thus it is that what Tom and Huck do outside of school is as educational as what they do in school. And thus it is that Mark Twain left school and learned so many great, important lessons as a printer, a journalist, a miner, a politician, a riverboat captain, a soldier, a businessman, and a writer. Writing "What Is Man?" in 1906 and dying shortly thereafter in 1910, Twain may be viewed, again, not as a pessimist, a cynic, a negativist, but, rather, as a man who is summing up his various thoughts, who is looking back at his life and drawing educational conclusions which are consistent with his earlier educational

¹⁷Ibid., p. 360.

ideas. In a Herbartian--like manner, Twain describes himself best in a closing section of "What Is Man?".

With memory to help, man preserves his observations and reasonings, reflects upon them, adds to them, recombines, and so proceeds, stage by stage to form results.¹⁸

"What Is Man?" must be viewed within Twain's educational field of vision. It is another work rich with educational ideas for it abounds with Twain's epistemological considerations. It is a work which falls very nicely into place within the scheme of this writer's interpretation, which postulates Twain as an educator of no mean proportions.

"The Curious Republic Of Gondour"

"The Curious Republic Of Gondour," published in 1919, had originally appeared in the October, 1875 Atlantic as an unsigned article.¹⁹ Mark Twain and his life-long, great friend, William Dean Howells, had exchanged lengthy letters and prolonged discussions in which they endeavored to reform the ways of the democracy, in this case the question of voting rights.²⁰ Twain "proposed his solution to the problem of democracy: turn it into an aristocracy;

¹⁸Ibid., p. 386.

¹⁹Justin Kaplan, Mr. Clemens And Mark Twain (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1966), p. 168.

²⁰Frederick Anderson, William Gibson, Henry Nash Smith, Selected Mark Twain-Howells Letters.

instead of constricting the vote, which would be unconstitutional, why not expand it by rewarding men of education, property, and achievement with five or even ten votes each.²¹ His friends reported that Twain had lost all faith in the American government and wanted to see it overthrown.²²

He inveighed against this wicked, ungodly, suffrage . . . where the vote of a man who knew nothing was as good as the vote of a man of education and industry; this endeavor to equalize what God had made unequal was a wrong and a shame.²³

Significant to this study is the fact that the focus of Twain in "The Curious Republic Of Gondour" is education. It doesn't matter whether the document is analyzed in chronological sequence with the other works in this study or whether it is looked at out of sequence when it was made available for a more broadened public. The conclusions drawn are comparable. In chronological sequence as an Atlantic article, it comes between The Gilded Age, published in 1873 and The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn, published in 1885.

²¹Kaplan, Mr. Clemens And Mark Twain, p. 168.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid.

Education and Democracy

Recalling that "The Curious Republic Of Gondour" is Twain's statement about his disenchantment with the voting requirements in America at the time, the following exerpts from the literary selections which precede and succeed it become significantly interesting. From The Gilded Age, one reads:

From the centre of our country to its circumference, nothing was talked of but Mr. Noble's terrible revelation, and the people were furious. Mind, they were not furious because bribery was uncommon in our public life, but merely because here was another case. Perhaps it did not occur to the nation of good and worthy people that while they continued to sit comfortably at home and leave the true source of our political power, the "primaries," in the hands of saloon-keepers, dog-fanciers and hog-carriers, they could go on expecting "another" case of this kind, and even dozens and hundreds of them, and never be disappointed. However, they may have thought that to sit at home and grumble would someday right the evil.²⁴

And, in The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn, Pap says,

They said he [a Negro college professor] could vote, when he was home. Well, that let me out. Thinks I, what is this country a coming to? It was 'lection day, and I was just too drunk to get there; but when they told me there was a state in this country where they'd let that nigger vote, I drawed out. I says I'll never vote again.²⁵

²⁴Mark Twain, Charles D. Warner, The Gilded Age, pp. 405-406.

²⁵Mark Twain, The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn, pp. 26-27.

A twelve year span separates The Gilded Age and The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn yet Twain's sustained interest in the correlation between education and democracy, documented in this dissertation in considerable detail, is obvious. That interest reaches its greatest intensity in "The Curious Republic Of Gondour." Viewed out of chronological sequence and approached as a posthumous publication directed at a wider audience in 1919, the article is, nevertheless, a convincingly argued selection in which Twain is consistent with the variety of educational ideas analyzed in this study. In or out of sequential chronological perspective, the work is crucial to an understanding of Mark Twain's educational philosophy.

Educational Ideas

It is important at this point to analyze the specific educational ideas in this significant article by Twain. An unidentified visitor, presumably Twain, visits the Republic of Gondour, a nation which has dispensed with universal suffrage because its results are unsatisfactory. In this republic, the defect of universal suffrage is that the power has gone into the hands of the ignorant who also fill all political offices. A remedy is sought whereby the concept of universal suffrage can be preserved yet altered in both theory and practice. The solution is to enlarge the concept of universal suffrage. The constitution, after

all, gives each man a vote. It does not say that each man cannot have two votes or ten. So new laws are passed. Each citizen, no matter how poor or ignorant, gets one vote. However, the following new rules are drawn up:

1. If a man has a common school education and no money, he gets two votes.
2. If a man has a high school education, he gets four votes.
3. If a man has property of the value of 3,000 sacos, he gets one more.²⁶
4. For every 50,000 sacos, a man adds to his property he gets another vote.
5. If a man has a university education, he gets nine votes even though no property is owned.²⁷

Twain engages a citizen of the republic in a conversation, and he is told that under this new provision, learning is more prevalent and more easily acquired than riches. Educated men are wholesale, and they check upon wealthy men since they can out-vote them. The citizen tells Twain:

Learning goes usually with uprightness, broad views, and humanity; so the learned voters, possessing the balance of power, become the vigilant and efficient protectors of the great lower rank of society.²⁸

So far, it is easy to see that Twain perceives education as the crucial dimension of an enlightened, just, democratic

²⁶"Sacos" are equivalent to currency.

²⁷Samuel L. Clemens, The Curious Republic Of Gondour and Other Whimsical Sketches (New York: Boni and Liver-right, 1919), p. 3.

²⁸Ibid., pp. 3-4.

society. This theme is his abiding concern in many of his works, and it is in "The Curious Republic Of Gondour" that the theme is given restatement. Twain is assured by his guide in the visit to Gondour that education is the bulwark without which there would be little justice or little morality. An aspect of Gondour which strikes Twain as most curious is that no compulsory education laws exist. His guide explains the phenomenon to him.

When a man's child is able to make himself powerful and honored according to the amount of education he requires, don't you suppose that that parent will apply the compulsion himself? Our free schools and free colleges require no law to fill them.²⁹

Again, one sees Twain's attitudes about environment. That society which enculturates its people to equate political competency with educational background will value education more than that society which sees no relationship between educational background and political leadership. It is important, however, to recall that Twain is arguing for the education not merely of political leaders but of the electorate as well. No function would be served by simply having intelligent politicians. A just, effectively functioning democratic society is committed to education as a pervasive characteristic of its corporate life.

²⁹Ibid., p. 11.

Mark Twain's discussions of education, as far as the selections within the scope of this study are concerned, are cast within the context of societies.

Personal and Social Implications

He is concerned with the effects of education on a particular society. His discussion of education as a value is mostly social in consequences, rarely personal. Education to him is not a tool of personal self aggrandizement. Education is always pursued as a method of improving the society. One notable exception in this study is the Tom Sawyer story. But, The Gilded Age, The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn, A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court, "What Is Man?" and "The Curious Republic Of Gondour" have broader social implications. The relationship between society and the need for education is the central thrust to the story--line of The Gilded Age. It is even the focus of the subplot which involves Ruth Bolton. How can she as a woman be properly educated so that she can function intelligently as a female member of a democratic society? In The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn, the social consequences of excluding or including a racial minority are examined. The relationship between education and society is the most intelligible thematic level at which the Connecticut Yankee story can be read.

The triadical motifs of author-teacher, educational ideological content, and of teacher-student context also can be found in "The Curious Republic Of Gondour." Accepting the fact that Twain was disenchanted with how the democratic state was failing to function in 1875, it is logical to view the article as his attempt to use literature through which to teach and to moralize. The technique of narrative voice, referred to, most especially, in the discussion of The Gilded Age becomes a favored approach in Gondour. Note the sarcasm in Twain's voice as he describes his leave-taking of Gondour:

There was a loving pride of country about this person's [his guide] way of speaking which annoyed me. I had long been unused to the sound of it in my own. The Gondour national airs were forever dinning in my ears; therefore I was glad to leave that country and come back to my dear native land, where one never hears that sort of music.³⁰

Mark Twain again mounts the platform in the public arena of literature and attempts to exhort his fellow citizens to consider a plan of action beneficial to the society. Again he uses the concept of society to further his discussion. He could have written an unembellished essay in which he proposed an alteration in the voting procedure. Instead, he works within the context of education and its proper relationship to society by creating an imaginary society in which that relationship functions under optimum conditions.

³⁰Ibid.

The piece is abundant with educational content. Indeed, it is the only content. Again his educational concern is methodological. He is caught up in the "how" of things. The teacher-student motif is realized through his use of guide and spectator. The guide teaches the spectator important facts about the machinery needed to engineer a democratic state in which education is the major contributing factor to the viability of that state.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this philosophical and historical dissertation was to attempt to ferret out some of the educational thought and philosophy of Samuel L. Clemens. Research shows that very little of Clemens' thoughts about education have been systematically analyzed. Clemens was a man who in his writing, embraced a myriad of subjects. His interests were wide and his publication prolific. Viewed at one time merely as a writer of humorous stories, Clemens' modern day reputation is as a social critic. His writing, in many instances, is polemical. The tone of his work is moralistic and didactic. The focus of the works included in this study is largely education. Indeed, education is the subject context in which Clemens pursues his themes, his characterizations, and his plots. Additionally, it has been shown that many of Clemens' predilections about education were personally rooted. He took leave of the formal educational process as a very young man, but his education continued as he matriculated in the great school of life and experience.

The highest summit of his educational climb was realized when he received an honorary doctorate from Oxford. It is obvious that some creative literature reveals its author's educational philosophy. It is possible to gain insight into the proper role and function of education as Clemens envisions them through an analysis and study of some of his creative works. The fact that his work reveals so many educational biases reaffirms the claim by some critics that he was a serious critic and prophet and not merely a clown. What then is the educational thought and philosophy of Samuel Clemens based on a critical investigation of his work? Is he consistent in his educational thinking or not? Is there contemporaneity in any of his educational thoughts? What were his areas of greatest educational concern?

Statement of Consistent Philosophy

Clemens does offer a consistent philosophy of education. There is a thread which in color and tone permeates the fabric of each of his creative attempts in this study. That thread deals with the necessary relationship between a system of government and the educational levels of its citizens. Examine his works and it can be found that if a democratic society experiences difficulties, Clemens feels that it is because the citizens do not operate efficiently or productively. In The Gilded Age, the post-Civil War

society flounders because of the lack of political expertise of its citizens. Clemens equates education with political expertise. Corrupt juries, decadent politicians, unethical businessmen exploit ignorance. Clemens exhorts his reading audience to elevate itself educationally. He argues that education is the necessary bulwark of a properly functioning democratic state. This theme is reinforced in his discussions of suffrage which include females, males, Negroes, and whites. He expresses his belief in the competence of Negro voters in his characterization of the Negro professor in The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. He supports the role of women in making the society operate at peak efficiency in his discussion of Ruth Bolton's plight in The Gilded Age. His condemnation of the pre-Civil War society in The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn is educationally rooted. There, again, his field of vision includes the relationship between just, humane societies and decadent, inhumane ones. Education is the key. Slavery is an outgrowth of ignorance. It is abhorrent to him for it is antithetical to the notion of democracy. It is in criticizing the dysfunction of improperly applied institutional purposes that Clemens again pleads for education of the kind which will free the whole society. Huck Finn is a victim of a society which functions at an ignorant level just as The Gilded Age is a society which functions at an ignorant

level. Remove Huck from that society in order to show the relationship which should exist between men in a democratic society, and Clemens' message will be clear. Clemens' strongest position on the need for education in a democratic state is presented in "The Curious Republic of Gondour." Here Clemens increases the number of votes given to educated members of society from one to as high as fifteen. He argues that only so long as the electorate is educated will there be a society in which man's inhumanity to man is minimized. So it is clear, then, that one plank in Clemens' educational platform is the need for education in a democratic society. He is perfectly consistent in this area of educational thought and opinion.

Education and The Democratic State

Clemens is less consistent in the areas of training and education. These, nevertheless, comprise another area of focus in the works analyzed in this study. In The Gilded Age and in A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court, Clemens discusses the virtues of education. By that, one understands him to mean formal schooling which excludes training. The citizens of a democracy should help to uplift their society through formal schooling. This is the main idea in "The Curious Republic of Gondour" also. So it is then that the Hawkins children in The

Gilded Age are sent to school on the frontier, a school which lacks relevance to life on that frontier. So too, the Yankee introduces schools to the kingdom of Camelot. Morgan Le Fay is criticized because she is a victim of training; Huck Finn is confused because he has been trained. Yet, despite the obvious bias in some of the work for formal schooling, Clemens himself left school, Tom Sawyer is chronically truant, Huckleberry Finn's "education" is "outside" a formal school. Initially Clemens dichotomizes training and education. Later, in "What Is Man?" education becomes a kind of training. Clemens' position, then, becomes one of seeing educational value in both training and formal schooling. What he does reject is that formal schooling or training which imprisons man's individuality or which enslaves him. Training includes education. Training is that mass of stimuli which can be labeled experience, the educational diet of Tom and Huck.

Concept of Society

Additionally, the concept of society permeates Clemens' educational discussions. With the exception of the Tom Sawyer story, which is not as broad in terms of societal implications as the other works, Clemens addresses himself to the problem of society and the individual's responsibility to it and his role in it. Tom Sawyer is educated

for Tom Sawyer but Huck, the citizens of Camelot, the people in The Gilded Age, the people in "A Curious Republic of Gondour," are all discussed with emphasis placed on their proper contributions to the societies of which they are vital parts. So, Clemens' educational thoughts and ideas in this area have social rather than personal relevance. He conceives the purpose of education, here again, to be the training of wise, humane citizens. Clemens is an environmentalist in educational philosophy. He sees the environment as a shaper of man. Improve the environment, notably, through education and training, and the society is improved.

Educational Methodology

A major educational concern of Clemens is methodology. The "how" of the educational process consumes much of his energy. How do you improve society? The method is education. What method of education do you pursue? You start where the child is, for one thing. In "English As She Is Taught" Clemens argues that too much of the school curriculum is beyond the grasp of the students. Don't make the child learn material which is too difficult for him. Not all children have similar learning capacities. How do you teach a child to learn? It is not done through coercion nor through the use of noxious stimuli. You reason with a

child as a mother would in "On Training Children." It is not done through rote-memorization. This receives repeated condemnation from Clemens in "English As She Is Taught," "Tom Sawyer: A Play" and in The Adventures of Tom Sawyer. One learns through experience from the cradle to the grave. Learning is an on-going process which is both formal and informal in nature. Teachers vary. A Negro can teach a white child, a parent can teach children, a yankee can teach a king. A novelist can teach his readers.

Clemens The Teacher

Samuel Clemens, himself, was a teacher. The teaching function which he assumes in his creative work is a major aspect of this study. He assumed the role of teacher in most of the works dealt with in this study. It is necessary to the increased respect with which Clemens must be held to understand his teaching role. Such a perspective lifts him merely out of the entertainment realm and reinforces the claim that he is foremost a social critic and prophet. The motif of Clemens as a teacher permeates his work. He scolded "The Gilded Age" society, he scorned the pre-Civil War society, he chastized teachers in The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, and he touted democracy as opposed to monarchy in A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court. So intrigued

with the notion of teaching was Clemens, that a teacher-student motif appears in many of the works included in this study. It is important to remember, also, the many virtues which Clemens taught all those young readers, today some of them are beyond middle-age, who picked up his books.

Samuel Clemens stood with feet planted in both Agrarian and Technological societies. He was critical of both of them. He was both friend and foe of America. Basically, he loved this country, but the more he studied it and thought about it, the more things became clearer to him. The democracy was not functioning as it was conceived. Something was wrong. A breakdown seemed inevitable. The problem seemed to rest with the citizens. They were passive. They passed the buck. Consequently, there was decadence and corruption. The solution was education. Without it, the democratic experience was doomed to failure. So Clemens took pen in hand and proceeded to work out a solution. The basic context of his thought was society and education. As he worked on making clear the necessary relationship between the two, he digressed to talk about teaching and method. But his central framework was mostly environment. It is out of his discussions centrally focusing on the relationship between society and education that one finds his educational thought and philosophy. Other works remain in which this context is equally important. It remains for someone to

do an exhaustive analysis of the total literary output of Samuel L. Clemens to find additional educational ideas. That he cared very much about education is obvious. Indeed, Samuel L. Clemens was an educator. It is hoped that this orientation to his work will contribute to a more broadened bases from which to examine educational philosophy in America.

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