

Mark Twain.

A CHARACTER SKETCH BY A FRIEND.

IN *Harper's Monthly* Mr. Joseph H. Twichell gives a character sketch of the great American humorist, which is illustrated by a portrait as frontispiece and views of his house at Hartford. Mr. Twichell worships Mr. Clemens almost as much as Mrs. Clemens, and that is saying a very great deal. He begins well by telling a story of how one of the clerical guides through Chester Cathedral as long ago as 1882 delighted the hearts of some American tourists by telling them, in reply to the modest reply of theirs that they had no Chester Cathedral in America, "But you have things we have not." When asked to specify what things they have that we have not, the answer came pat, "Well, you have Mark Twain and *Harper's Magazine*."

No other literary man of his generation, says Mr. Twichell, has enjoyed such universal favor with readers of all ranks. His home in Hartford is naturally a kind of pilgrim shrine:

which he held until 1872. "The Innocents Abroad," was issued in 1869; in 1872 it had enjoyed a sale of 125,000 copies. In 1872 he left Buffalo and established himself at Hartford. It 1880 he was asked to write a series of articles for the *Atlantic Monthly*, and was on the point of declining, as he had no faintest idea of any practical subject. Just at this time, however, he had been talking about his experience on the Mississippi, whereupon his friend suggested he should write his life on the Mississippi, which he forthwith did.

HIS WAY OF SAYING THINGS.

He married in 1870, and no more devoted couple ever existed. His father-in-law made him a present of his house, in connection with which Mr. Twichell tells the following story:—

"It was while this house was his home that, chancing to look one morning at the house opposite, into which a family had recently moved, he saw something that made him cross the street quickly and deliver this speech, in substance, to a group of the new neighbors seated on the verandah: 'My name is Clemens. My wife and I have been intending to call on you and make your acquaintance. We owe you an apology

that the story, "Personal Recollections of Jeanne d'Arc," which has been running in *Harper's*, was written by Mr. Clemens. No one would have guessed as much from internal evidence. He is positively devoted to cats, and he is very reluctant to allow the lash to be used even upon the slowest of nags.

IN PRAISE OF HIS WIFE.

Of his wife he declares that the best thing that he ever did in his life was to fall in love with her. In 1885 he wrote the following tribute of praise:—

"The mother of my children adores them—there is no milder term for it—and they worship her; they even worship anything which the touch of her hand has made sacred. They know her for the best and truest friend they have ever had, or ever shall have; they know her for one who never did them a wrong, and cannot do them a wrong; who never told them a lie nor the shadow of one; who never deceived them by even an ambiguous gesture; who never gave them an unreasonable command, nor ever contented herself with anything short of a perfect obedience; who has always treated them as politely and consider-



SALLYPORT OF THE OLD FORT, ANNAPOLIS, N. S.

Not long since a caller of that class, a big, good-natured countryman—a butcher, as he introduced himself—after a few minutes' chat, asked—

"Now tell me for a fact, are you the one that wrote all them books?"

"Truly I am," said Mark.

"Of course you are! Of course you are!" cried the honest fellow; "but, by George, I shouldn't think it from your looks!" Whereat Mark was hugely tickled.

HIS EARLY ADVENTURES.

In 1861 Mark Twain was a pilot on the Mississippi river, a calling which he had pursued for the previous ten years. The outbreak of the war destroyed the Mississippi traffic, and Mark Twain regarded the event which drove him to literature as one of the greatest misfortunes. The first thing he wrote was "The Jumping Frog," a story based on fact. It was a story he used to tell, and when he wrote it out at the urgent request of a friend, he thought it looked so flat that he pigeon-holed it for some time, and no one was more surprised than he at the immense popularity it achieved as soon as it saw the light. After seven years roughing it in California, he came East and accepted the editorship of the *Buffalo Express*, a post

for not doing it before now. I beg your pardon for intruding on you in this informal manner and at this time of day, *but your house is afire!*"

That at this point the meeting suddenly adjourned it is unnecessary to state.

For another example of his humorous way of saying a serious thing: One Sunday, when he had happened specially to like the sermon he heard in church, he lingered at the door after service, waiting for the minister to come out, in order to give him a pleasant word; which he did in this fashion: "I mean no offence, but I feel obliged to tell you that the preaching this morning has been of a kind that I can spare. I go to church to pursue my own trains of thought. But to-day I couldn't do it. You have interfered with me. You have forced me to attend to *you*—and have lost me a whole half-hour. I beg that it may not occur again."

Mr. Clemens can read both French and German with ease, and speaks them both pretty well. It is interesting to know that he does not relish Dickens, neither does he enjoy Charles Lamb, but he has a great admiration of Browning. His particular hobby is history, particularly that of England and France in the Middle Ages. Mr. Twichell states definitely

ately as she would the best and oldest in the land, and has always required of them gentle speech and courteous conduct towards all, of whatsoever degree, with whom they chanced to come in contact; they know her for one whose promise, whether of reward or punishment, is gold, and always worth its face to the uttermost farthing. In a word, they know her, and I know her, for the best and dearest mother that lives—and by a long, long way the wisest."

And he concludes thus:—

"In all my life I have never made a single reference to my wife in print before, as far as I can remember, except once in the dedication of a book; and so, after these fifteen years of silence, perhaps I may unseal my lips this one time without impropriety or indelicacy. I will institute one other novelty. I will send this manuscript to the press without her knowledge, and without asking her to edit it. This will save it from getting edited into the stove."

To be happy is not only to be freed from the pains and diseases of the body, but from anxiety and vexation of spirit; not only to enjoy the pleasures of sense, but peace of conscience and tranquillity of mind.—*Tillotson*.