

ROYALTY ON THE MISSISSIPPI: AS CHRONICLED BY HUCKLEBERRY FINN.

BY MARK TWAIN.

(CONTINUED.)

By and by the duke says:
"But the histrionic muse is the darling. Have you ever trod the boards, Royalty?"

"No," says the king.
"You shall, then, before you're three days older, Fallen Grandeur," says the duke. "The first good town we come to, we'll hire a hall and do the sword-fight in 'Richard III. and the balcony scene in 'Romeo and Juliet.' How does that strike you?"

"I'm in, up to the hub, for anything that will pay, Bilgewater; but you see I don't know nothing about play-act'n, and hain't ever seen much of it. I was too small when pap used to have 'em at the palace. Do you reckon you can learn me?"

"Easy!"
"All right. I'm jist a-freez'n' for something fresh, anyway. Less commence, right away."

So the duke he told him all about who Romeo was, and who Juliet was, and said he was used to being Romeo, so the king could be Juliet.

"But if Juliet's such a young gal, Duke, my peeled head and white whiskers is goin' to look uncommon odd on her, may be."

"No, don't you worry; these country jakes won't ever think of that. Besides, you know, you'll be in costume, and that make all the difference in the world. Juliet's in a balcony enjoying the moonlight before she goes to bed, and she's got on her night-gown and her ruffled night-cap. Here are the costumes for the parts."

He got out two or three curtain-calico suits, which he said was meedyevil armor for Richard III. and t'other chap, and a long white cotton night-shirt and a ruffled night-cap to match. The king was satisfied; so the duke got out his book and read the parts over in the most splendid spread-eagle way, prancing around and acting at the same time, to show how it had got to be done; then he give the book to the king and told him to get his part by heart.

There was a little one-horse town about three mile down the bend, and after dinner the duke said he had ciphered out his idea about how to run in daylight without it being dangerous for Jim; so he allowed he would go down to the town and fix that thing. The king allowed he would go, too, and see if he couldn't strike something. We was out of coffee, so Jim said I better go along with them in the canoe and get some.

When we got there, there warn't nobody stirring; streets empty, and perfectly dead and still, like Sunday. We found a sick nigger sunning himself in a back yard, and he said everybody that warn't too young, or too sick, or too old, was gone to camp-meeting, about two mile back in the woods. The king got the directions, and allowed he'd go and work that camp-meeting for all it was worth, and I might go, too.

The duke said what he was after was a printing-office. We found it—a little bit of a concern up over a carpenter shop—carpenters and printers all gone to the meeting, and no doors locked. The duke shed his coat and said he was all right now. So me and the king lit out for the camp-meeting.

We got there in about half an hour, fairly dripping, for it was a most awful hot day. There was as much as a thousand people there, from twenty mile around. The woods was full of teams and wagons, hitched everywhere, feeding out of the wagon troughs and stamping to keep off the flies. There was sheds made out of poles and roofed over with branches, where they had lemonade and gingerbread to sell, and piles of water-melons and green corn and such-like truck.

The preaching was going on under the same kind of sheds, only they was bigger and held crowds of people. The benches was made out of outside slabs of logs, with holes bored in the round side to drive sticks into for legs. They didn't have no backs. The preachers had high platforms to stand on at one end of the sheds. The women had on sun-bonnets; and some had lincey-wooley frocks, some gingham ones, and a few of the young ones had on calico. Some of the young men was barefooted, and some of the children didn't have any clothes on

but just a tow-linen shirt. Some of the old women was knitting, and some of the young folks was courting on the sly.

The first shed we come to, the preacher was lining out a hymn. He lined out two lines, everybody sung it, and it was kind of grand to hear it, there was so many of them and they don't it in such a rousing way; then he lined out two more for them to sing—and so on. The people woke up more and more, and sang louder and louder; and towards the end some begun to groan, and some begun to shout. Then the preacher begun to preach, and begun in earnest, too; and went weaving first to one side of the platform and then the other, and then a-leanin' down over the front of it, with his arms and his body going all the time, and shouting his words out with all his might. You couldn't make out what the preacher said, any more, on account of his shouting and crying. Folks got up, overywhere in the crowd, and worked their way, just by main strength, to the mourners' bench, with tears rushing down their faces; and when all the mourners had got up there to the front benches in a crowd, they sung, and shouted, and flung themselves down on the straw, just crazy and wild.

Well, the first I knowed, the king got a-going; and you could hear him over everybody; and next he went a-charging up on to the platform, and the preacher he begged him to speak to the people, and he done it. He told them he was a pirate—been a pirate for thirty years, out in the Indian Ocean, and his crew was thinned out considerable, last spring, in a fight, and he was home now, to take out some fresh men; and thanks too goodness he'd been robbed last night, and put ashore off of a steamboat without a cent, and he was glad of it, it was the blessedest thing that ever happened to him, because he was a changed man now, and happy for the first time in his life; and poor as he was, he was going to start right off and work his way back to the Indian Ocean and put in the rest of his life trying to turn the pirates into the true path; for he could do it better than anybody else, being acquainted with all the pirate crews in that ocean; and though it would take him a long time to get there without money, he would get there anyway, and every time he convinced a pirate he would say to him, "Don't you thank me, don't you give me no credit; it all belongs to them dear people in Pokeville camp-meeting, natural brothers and benefactors of the race—and that dear preacher there, the truest friend a pirate ever had!"

And then he busted into tears, and so did everybody. Then somebody sings out, "Take up a collection for him, take up a collection!" Well, a half a dozen made a jump to do it, but somebody sings out, "Let him pass the hat around!" Then everybody said it, the preacher too.

So the king went all through the crowd with his hat, swabbing his eyes, and blessing the people and praising them and thanking them for being so good to the poor pirates away off there; and he was invited to stay a week; and every body wanted him to live in their houses, and said that they'd think it was an honor; but he said as this was the last day of the camp-meeting he couldn't do no good, and besides he was in a sweat to get to the Indian Ocean right off and go to work on the pirates.

When we got back to the raft and he come to count up, he found he had collected eighty-seven dollars and seventy-five cents. And then he had fetched away a three-gallon jug of whisky, too, that he found under a wagon when we was starting home through the woods. The king said, take it all around, it laid over any day he'd ever put in in the missionarying line. He said it warn't no use talking, heathens don't amount to shucks, alongside of pirates, to work a camp-meeting with.

The duke was thinking he'd been doing pretty well, till the king come to show up, but after that he didn't think so much. He had set up and printed off two little jobs for farmers in that printing-office—horse bills—and took the money, four Jollars. And he had got in ten dollars' worth of advertisements for the paper, which he said

he would put in for four dollars if they would pay in advance—so they done it. The price of the paper was two dollars a year, but he took in three subscriptions for half a dollar apiece on condition of them paying him in advance; they were going to pay in cord-wood and onions, as usual, but he said he had just bought the concern and knocked down the price as low as he could afford it, and was going to run it for cash. He set up a little piece of poetry, which he made himself out of his own head—three verses—kind of sweet and saddish—the name of it was, "Yes, crush, cold world, this breaking heart"—and he left that all set up and ready to print in the paper, and didn't charge nothing for it. Well, he took in nine dollars and a half, and said he'd done a pretty square day's work for it.

Then he showed us another little job he'd printed and hadn't charged for, because it was for us. It had a picture of a runaway nigger, with a bundle on a stick, over his shoulder, and "\$200 reward" under it. The reading was all about Jim, and just described him to a dot. It said he run away from St. Jacques' plantation, forty mile below New Orleans, last winter, and likely went north, and whoever would catch him and send him back, he could have the reward and expenses.

"Now," says the duke, "after to-night we can run in the daytime if we want to. Whenever we see anybody coming, we can tie Jim hand and foot with a rope, and lay him in the wigwam and show this hand-bill and say we captured him up the river, and were too poor to travel on a steamboat, so we got this little raft on credit from our friends and are going down to get the reward. Handcuffs and chains would look still better on Jim, but it wouldn't go well with the story of us being so poor. Too much like jewelry. Ropes are the correct thing—we must preserve the unities, as we say on the boards."

We all said the duke was pretty smart, and there couldn't be no trouble about running daytime. We judged we could make miles enough that night to get out of the reach of the pow-wow we reckoned the duke's work in the printing-office was going to make in that little town—then we could boom right along.

We laid low and kept still, and never showed out till nearly ten o'clock; then we slid by, pretty wide away from the town, and didn't hoist our lantern till we was clear out of sight of it.

When Jim called me to take the watch at four in the morning he says:

"Huck, does you reckon we gwine to run most any mo' kings on dis trip?"

"No," I says, "I reckon not."
"Well," says he, "dat's all right den. I doan' mine one er two kings, but dat's enough. Dis one's powerful drunk, en de duke ain't much better."

It was after sun-up now, but we went right on, and didn't tie up. The king and the duke turned out by and by, looking pretty rusty; but after they'd jumped overboard and took a swim, it chipped them up a good deal. After breakfast the king he took a seat on a corner of the raft, and pulled off his boots and rolled up his britches, and let his legs dangle in the water, so as to be comfortable, and lit his pipe, and went to getting his "Romeo and Juliet" by heart. When he had got it pretty good, him and the duke begun to practice it. The duke made him sigh, and put his hand on his heart, and after a while he said he done it pretty well; "only," he says, "you mustn't bellow out *Romeo*! that way, like a bull—you must say it soft, and sick, and languishy, so—R-o-o-m-e-o! that is the idea; for Juliet's a dear sweet mere child of a girl, you know, and she don't bray like a jackass."

Well, next they got out a couple of long swords that the duke made out of oak laths, and begun to practice the sword-fight—the duke called himself Richard III.; and the way they laid on and pranced around the raft was grand to see. But by and by the king tripped and fell overboard, and after that they took a rest.

The first chance we got, the duke he had some show-bills printed; and after that, for two or three days, as we floated along, the raft was a most uncommon lively place, for there warn't nothing but sword-fighting and rehearsing—as the duke called it—going on all the time. One morning, when we was pretty well down the State of Arkansas, we came in sight of a little one-horse town in a big bend; so we tied up about three-quarters of a mile above it, in

the mouth of a crick which was shut in like a tunnel by the cypress-trees, and all of us but Jim took the canoe and went down there to see if there was any chance in that place for our show.

We struck it mighty lucky; there was going to be a circus there that afternoon, and the country people was already beginning there to come in, in all kinds of old shabby wagons and on horses. The circus would leave before night, so our show would have a pretty good chance. The duke he hired the court house, and we went around and stuck up our bills. They read like this:

'Shakspearean Revival' !!
Wonderful Attraction!
For One Night Only!
The world-renowned tragedians,
David Garrick the Younger, of Drury Lane
Theater, London, and
Edmund Kean the Elder, of the Royal Hay
market Theater, Whitechapel, Pudding
Lane, Piccadilly, London, and the
Royal Continental Theaters, in
their sublime Shakspear
can Spectacle,
entitled
The Balcony Scene
in
Romeo and Juliet !!!

Romeo.....Mr. Garrick.
Juliet.....Mr. Kean.
Assisted by the whole strength of the
company!

Now costumes, new scenery, new appointments!
Also:

The thrilling, masterly, and blood curdling
Broad-sword conflict
In Richard III. !!!

Richard III.....Mr. Garrick.
Richmond.....Mr. Kean.

Also
(by special request):
Hamlet's Immortal Soliloquy !!
By the Illustrious Kean!
Done by him 300 consecutive nights in Paris!
For One Night Only,
On account of imperative European engagements!
Admission 25c; children and servants, 10c.

Then we went loafing around the town. The stores and houses were most all old shabby, dried-up frame concerns that hadn't ever been painted; they were set up three or four foot above ground on stilts, so as to be out of reach of the water when the river was overflowed.

All the stores was along one street. They had white domestic awnings in front, and the country people hitched their horses to the awning-posts. There was empty dry-goods boxes under the awnings, and loafers rooting on them all day long, whittling them with their Barlow knives, and chawing tobacco, and gaping and yawning and stretching—i mighty ornery lot.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Eclipses.
During 1855 there will be four eclipses, two of the sun and two of the moon. The first will be an annular eclipse of the sun on March 10. The moon will come between us and the sun and will cut off all its light except a narrow ring, which will appear about the circumference of the dark face of the moon. In Pittsburg the eclipse will be visible as a partial one. The second eclipse will be a partial one of the moon on March 20, but will be invisible at Pittsburg. The event of the year will be a total eclipse of the sun, visible only in the South Pacific ocean. On the 23rd of September there will be a partial eclipse of the moon.

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