

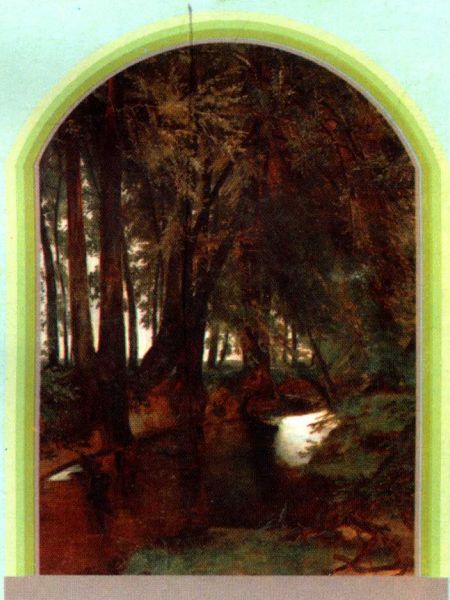
The Notorious Jumping
Frog of Calaveras County
and Other Stories

英美文学精品详注丛书

第二辑 第一册

卡拉韦拉斯县驰名的跳蛙

〔美〕马克·吐温 著



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[美] Mark Twain 著
马克·吐温



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Mark Twain

**The Notorious Jumping Frog of Calaveras County
and other stories**

notes by Enrica Caimi

language consultant Mary D' Alessandri

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《卡拉韦拉斯县著名的跳蛙》

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《卡拉韦拉斯县著名的跳蛙》

马克·吐温(1835-1920) 生于密苏里州的佛罗里达镇,逝于康涅狄格州的雷丁。真名叫作塞缪尔·朗赫恩·克莱门斯。童年在密西西比河畔度过;当时密西西比河是美国生活的大动脉。描写密西西比河的魅力,成了他创作的一个中心主题。他的笔名“马克·吐温”,是密西西比河内河船领航员,在浅滩探测最小可通航水深时,使用的一个术语,意思是“测标为两寻”;这实质上是个很幽默的笔名。

青年时期,他过着冒险的生活,到处旅行,给几家报纸投稿。

他具有双重人格,既喜欢冒险又思恋故土,既诙谐幽默又憎恨世人,既致力于民主和进步又相信宿命。

他最重要的作品包括:速写集《卡拉韦拉斯县著名的跳蛙》(1867),《天真汉在国外》(1869),《汤姆·索耶历险记》(1876),《密西西比河上的生活》(1883),《哈克贝里·费恩历险记》(1884),《亚瑟王宫中的美国康涅狄格州人》(1889),《傻瓜威尔逊的悲剧》(1889),短篇小说与速写集《败坏了哈德莱堡的人》(1906)。《哈克贝里·费恩历险记》被视为他的杰作,《傻瓜威尔逊的悲剧》也逐渐被认为是19世纪的

小说力作。马克·吐温在作品中引入了方言，使用了美国的新词，再现了美国南方人典型拖音（即说话慢慢吞吞，拖长元音）。可他的作品并不扁狭，他的人物是美国南方的典型，却具有普遍性。

人们曾一度把马克·吐温贬为一个“单纯”的幽默作家，现在则认为他是美国小说家中的泰斗。

马克·吐温作品的重要意义，由海明威作了精辟的概括；海明威说，美国的近代文学“从哈克贝里·费恩开始”。

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CONTENTS

The Californian's Tale	2
The Notorious Jumping Frog of Calaveras County ...	22
Journalism in Tennessee	38
The Story of the Old Ram	54
A Trial	66

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Mark Twain

The Californian's Tale

and other stories

Mark Twain (Florida, Missouri 1835 – Redding, Connecticut 1910), pen-name of Samuel Langhorne Clemens, spent his boyhood by the Mississippi river, which, in those years, was the great high-road of American life. The fascination of the river became one of the central themes in Twain's writing. The term he choose as his pen-name, "mark twain", means "by the mark two fathoms", an expression used by Mississippi riverboat pilots in sounding shallows for minimum navigable depths: it was essentially a humorous pseudonym.

In his youth he led an adventurous life, travelling and contributing to several newspapers.

He had a two-fold personality, he was adventurous and nostalgic, a humourist and a misanthrope, devoted to progress and democracy and a fatalist.

Mark Twain's most important works include: *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County and Other Sketches* (1867); *The Innocence Abroad, or the New Pilgrim's Progress* (1869); *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876); *Life on the Mississippi* (1883); *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), which is regarded as his masterpiece; *A Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur's Court* (1889); *The Tragedy of Pudd'nhead Wilson* (1889), which is more and more being regarded as one of the major works of fiction of the nineteenth century; *The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg and Other Stories and Sketches* (1906). Mark Twain introduced the use of dialect in his works, used new American words and expressed the typical southern American drawl (i. e. a slow way of speech, obtained prolonging the vowel sounds). However his works are not provincial, his characters, although typical of the South, are also universal.

It was once customary to denigrate Mark Twain as a "mere" humourist, but now he is regarded as a towering figure among American novelists.

The importance of Twain's work is well expressed by Hemingway, who said that modern American literature "begins with Huckleberry Finn".

La Spiga

The Californian's Tale

Thirty-five years ago I was out prospecting on the Stanislaus, tramping all day long with pick and pan and horn, and washing a hatful of dirt here and there, always expecting to make a rich strike, and never doing it. It was a lovely region, woodsy, balmy, delicious, and had once been populous, long years before, but now the people had vanished and the charming paradise was a solitude. They went away when the surface diggings gave out. In one place, where a busy little city with banks and newspapers and fire companies and a mayor and aldermen had been, was nothing but a wide expanse of emerald turf, with not even the faintest sign that human life had ever been present there. This was down toward Tuttletown. In the country neighborhood thereabouts, along the dusty roads, one found at intervals the prettiest little cottage homes, snug and cozy, and so cobwebbed with vines snowed thick with roses that the doors and windows were wholly hidden from sight — sign that these were deserted homes, forsaken years ago by defeated and disappointed families who could neither sell them nor give them away. Now and then, half an hour apart, one came across solitary log cabins of the earliest mining days, built by the first gold-miners, the predecessors of the cottage-builders. In some few cases these cabins were still occupied; and when this was so, you could depend upon it that the occupant was the very pioneer who had built the cabin; and you could depend on another thing,

tale: story.

prospecting: exploring for gold.

Stanislaus: river in North-California. **tramping:** walking. **pick**

and pan and horn: equipment used by gold prospectors. **hatful:**

quantity contained in a hat. **to make a rich strike:** (informal) to

be successful. **woody:** with woods. **balmy:** with good air.

populous: inhabited by a lot of people.

vanished: disappeared. **charming:** attractive; enchanting.

diggings: (plural noun) gold mining. **gave out:** was extinguish-

ed. **busy:** active.

fire companies: (U.S.) organized bodies of firemen. **mayor:** first

citizen. **aldermen:** members of the local council. **turf:** ground.

faintest: weakest; most feeble.

toward: in direction of.

neighborhood: surroundings. **one:** impersonal pronoun.

prettiest: nicest.

snug and cozy: warm and comfortable. **cobwebbed:** covered.

wholly: completely. **hidden from sight:** impossible to be seen.

deserted: abandoned. **forsaken:** abandoned.

defeated and disappointed: who hadn't met their expectations.

neither...nor: structure used to join together *two negative ideas*.

came across: found by chance. **log cabins:** simple houses
constructed out of trunks.

predecessors: those who came before. **In some few cases:** in
a small number of cases.

depend upon it: be sure. **the very pioneer:** exactly the pioneer.

cabin: small and poor house. **depend on:** be sure of.

too – that he was there because he had once had his opportunity to go home to the States rich, and had not done it; had rather lost his wealth, and had then in his humiliation resolved to sever all communication with his home relatives and friends, and be to them thenceforth as one dead. Round about California in that day were scattered a host of these living dead men – pride-smitten poor fellows, grizzled and old at forty, whose secret thoughts were made all of regrets and longings – regrets for their wasted lives, and longings to be out of the struggle and done with it all.

It was a lonesome land! Not a sound in all those peaceful expanses of grass and woods but the drowsy hum of insects; no glimpse of man or beast; nothing to keep up your spirits and make you glad to be alive. And so, at last, in the early part of the afternoon, when I caught sight of a human creature, I felt a most grateful uplift. This person was a man about forty-five years old, and he was standing at the gate of one of those cozy little rose-clad cottages of the sort already referred to. However, this one hadn't a deserted look; it had the look of being lived in and petted and cared for and looked after; and so had its front yard, which was a garden of flowers, abundant, gay, and flourishing. I was invited in, of course, and required to make myself at home – it was the custom of the country.

It was delightful to be in such a place, after long weeks of daily and nightly familiarity with miners' cabins – with all which this implies of dirt floor, never-made beds, tin plates and cups, bacon and beans and black coffee, and nothing of ornament but war pictures from the Eastern illustrated papers tacked to the log walls. That was all hard, cheerless, materialistic desolation, but here was a nest which had aspects to rest the tired eye and refresh that something in one's nature which, after long fasting, recognizes, when

once: in the past.

to the States: to the eastern states of America.

had rather lost: instead he had lost. **wealth:** richness.

resolved: decided. **sever:** cut; stop. **home relatives:** members of his family who were at home. **thenceforth:** from that moment.

Round about: all around. **scattered:** dispersed.

host: great number. **pride-smitten:** damaged by their sense of honour. **fellows:** men. **grizzled:** with grey hair.

regrets: sense of repentance. **longings:** desires. **wasted:** not used well. **longings:** desires. **struggle:** laboured effort.

done with it all: having finished everything.

lonesome: solitary.

expanses: extensions; uninterrupted surfaces. **drowsy hum:** sleepy sound. **glimpse:** brief view. **to keep up:** console.

glad: happy. **at last:** in the end.

caught sight of: saw.

I felt a most grateful uplift: I felt considerably happier.

gate: external door. **cozy:** nice and friendly. **rose-clad:** covered with roses. **of the sort:** of the kind. **referred to:** described.

deserted look: abandoned aspect. **lived in:** inhabited. **petted:** loved.

gay: cheerful; merry.

flourishing: full of flowers. **of course:** naturally. **required:** asked. **to make myself at home:** to feel comfortable.

delightful: very pleasant. **in such a place:** a place like that; note the *construction*. **familiarity with:** being used to. **cabins:** poor and simple houses. **tin:** metal.

black coffee: coffee without milk.

but: except.

tacked: attached. **log:** trunk. **cheerless:** gloomy.

nest: cozy place.

fasting: period in which one doesn't eat.

confronted by the belongings of art, howsoever cheap and modest they may be, that it has unconsciously been famishing and now has found nourishment. I could not have believed that a rag carpet could feast me so, and so content me; or that there could be such solace to the soul in wallpaper and framed lithographs, and bright-colored tidies and lamp-mats, and Windsor chairs, and varnished what-nots, with sea-shells and books and china vases on them, and the score of little unclassifiable tricks and touches that a woman's hand distributes about a home, which one sees without knowing he sees them, yet would miss in a moment if they were taken away. The delight that was in my heart showed in my face, and the man saw it and was pleased; saw it so plainly that he answered it as if it had been spoken.

"All her work," he said, caressingly; "she did it all herself – every bit," and he took the room in with a glance which was full of affectionate worship. One of those soft Japanese fabrics with which women drape with careful negligence the upper part of a picture-frame was out of adjustment. He noticed it, and rearranged it with cautious pains, stepping back several times to gauge the effect before he got it to suit him. Then he gave it a light finishing pat or two with his hand, and said: "She always does that. You can't tell just what it lacks, but it does lack something until you've done that – you can see it yourself after it's done, but that is all you know; you can't find out the law of it. It's like the finishing pats a mother gives the child's hair after she's got it combed and brushed, I reckon. I've seen her fix all these things so much that I can do them all just her way, though I don't know the law of any of them. But she knows the law. She knows the why, and the how both; but I don't know the why; I only know the how."

He took me into a bedroom so that I might wash my hands;

belongings: possessions.

famishing: suffering from hunger.

rag carpet: not precious carpet. **feast me:** make me so happy.

solace: relief.

wallpaper: paper stuck to the wall. **framed:** put into frames.

tidies: small containers in which various articles are kept. **lamp-**

mats: pieces of cloth kept under lamps. **what-nots:** things whose names are not important. **score:** great number.

tricks and touches: small details. **about:** around.

would miss: would feel their absence.

showed: was to be seen.

pleased: happy; satisfied. **plainly:** clearly.

spoken: said.

caressingly: with affection. **herself:** personally.

bit: small piece. **took the room in:** looked all about the room.

glance: look. **worship:** adoration.

fabrics: cloth. **drape:** cover.

out of adjustment: out of place. **pains:** cares.

stepping: walking. **several:** a lot of. **gauge:** measure.

to suit him: to be good for him. **light:** not hard. **pat:** slap; touch.

lacks: is missing.

yourself: personally.

law: rule.

pats: touches.

she's got it combed and brushed: she has combed and brushed it. **I reckon:** I think. **just:** exactly.

law: rule.

the why: the reason. **the how:** the system; the way.

such a bedroom as I had not seen for years: white counterpane, white pillows, carpeted floor, papered walls, pictures, dressing-table, with mirror and pin-cushion and dainty toilet things; and in the corner a wash-stand, with real china-ware bowl and pitcher, and with soap in a china dish, and on a rack more than a dozen towels – towels too clean and white for one out of practice to use without some vague sense of profanation. So my face spoke again, and he answered with gratified words:

“All her work; she did it all herself – every bit. Nothing here that hasn’t felt the touch of her hand. Now you would think – But I mustn’t talk so much.”

By this time I was wiping my hands and glancing from detail to detail of the room’s belongings, as one is apt to do when he is in a new place, where everything he sees is a comfort to his eye and his spirit; and I became conscious, in one of those unaccountable ways, you know, that there was something there somewhere that the man wanted me to discover for myself. I knew it perfectly, and I knew he was trying to help me by furtive indications with his eye, so I tried hard to get on the right track, being eager to gratify him. I failed several times, as I could see out of the corner of my eye without being told; but at last I knew I must be looking straight at the thing – knew it from the pleasure issuing in invisible waves from him. He broke into a happy laugh, and rubbed his hands together, and cried out:

“That’s it! You’ve found it. I knew you would. It’s her picture.”

I went to the little black-walnut bracket on the farther wall, and did find there what I had not yet noticed – a daguerr-eotype-case. It contained the sweetest girlish face, and the most beautiful, as it seemed to me, that I had ever seen. The man drank the admiration from my face, and was fully

such a bedroom: note the construction with *such*.
counterpane: top cover on the bed.
dressing-table: small table with a mirror for cosmetics. **pin-cushion:** small cushion for pins and needles. **dainty:** elegant.
china-ware: article of porcelain. **bowl:** round container. **pitcher:** container with a handle. **rack:** framework. **a dozen:** twelve. **tow-els:** pieces of cloth used for drying. **out of practice:** no more used.
gratified: satisfied.
herself: personally. **bit:** small piece.
wiping: rubbing; drying. **glancing:** looking.
detail: particular. **belongings:** properties; objects. **apt:** likely.
spirit: soul. **I became conscious:** I realized; I understood.
unaccountable: unexplainable.
somewhere: in some place. **wanted me to discover:** note the infinitive construction after *want*. **for myself:** alone.
hard: with great energy. **to get on:** to find. **eager:** anxious.
failed: was wrong. **several:** a lot of.
at last: in the end.
I must be looking: supposition in the past. **straight:** directly.
issuing: coming.
broke into a happy laugh: laughed suddenly. **rubbed:** moved one against the other.
picture: portrait.
black-walnut bracket: shelves of black wood.
daguerreotype: old form of photography. **girlish:** of a girl.