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THE LECTURE PLATFORM. THERE was, when the lecturer, in swallow-tailed coat and immaculate white necktie, was a rufescent figure...

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TALL OAKS FROM ACORNS. It is a curious fact in human history that some of the greatest people have risen from very small beginnings.

PROMPTNESS IN AFFAIRS. It was the sound advice of a literary man who accomplished an incredible amount of work...

formed before breakfast; after luncheon at two o'clock in the afternoon he held himself free to receive his friends...

A PLEASANT AND USEFUL CUSTOM. It was a hobby of the late William Cullen Bryant to plant trees...

A BIT OF PARISIAN LIFE. In Paris, besides the regular bread-bakeries, there are boulangeries en vieux, or second-hand bakers...

THE HOLIDAY SEASON. TRANSGIVING Day has come and gone, with all its wealth of friendly greetings, cheerful family reunions...

AN IDYLL OF LAUGHTER. A REALLY musical laugh is perhaps more rare than a really musical voice. The giggle, the snigger, the half-croaked laugh...

GOLDEN THOUGHTS. WASTE not—want not. MAKE A VIRTUE OF NECESSITY. LEARN THE LUXURY OF DOING GOOD.

THE FUNNY SIDE. "YOU Americans," said an Englishman to a young lady, "have no ancestry which you can point with pride..."

"MARK TWAIN." THE FACETIOUS CAREER OF SAMUEL L. CLEMENS—RIVER PILOT, TRAVELLER, JOURNALIST, LECTURER, AUTHOR AND HUMORIST. BY AUGUSTUS MAVERICK.

SAMUEL LANGHORNE CLEMENS—"Mark Twain"—came into life with a bee in his bonnet. He can no more help being funny than water can help running down hill...

"Mark" is still on the sunny side of fifty, and therefore, taking the average of human life and endurance, has a good many years for observation and sharp "prods" yet before him.

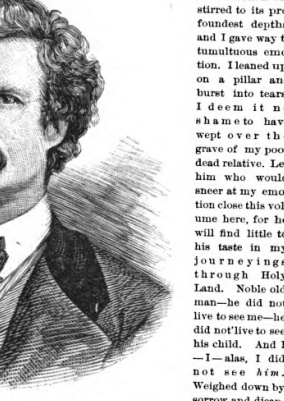
THE HOLIDAY SEASON. TRANSGIVING Day has come and gone, with all its wealth of friendly greetings, cheerful family reunions, and the inexpressible charm of human fellowship...

THE FUNNY SIDE. "YOU Americans," said an Englishman to a young lady, "have no ancestry which you can point with pride..."

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of Pompeii, lamenting that the Street Commissioners of that luckless city "never altered their business, and that if they never moved the pavements they never changed them."

"The tomb of Adam! How touching it was, here in a land of strangers, far away from home and friends, and all who cared for me, thus to discover the grave of a blood relation. True, a distant one, but still a relation. The unerring instinct of nature thrilled its recognition."



This is "exquisite foolery"—but it is of the foamy, creamy sort that runs through all of "Mark Twain's" writings; foolery, if you please, but foolery that has a twang in it.

AND JOHN T. RAYMOND has helped the laughing crowd by his inimitable personation of the character of Mulberry Sellers, which Clemens has drawn so cleverly in "The Glided Age."

THE WORLD is always debtor to him who makes men laugh.

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CONTENT.

I am content, I do not care,
Wag as it will the world for me;

With more of thanks and less of thought,
I strive to make my matters meet;

With good and gentle-humored hearts,
I choose to chat whenever I come;

With whom I feast I do not fawn,
Nor if the folks should flout me, faint;

THE GUARDIANS' TRUST.

By MARY A. DENISON.

Author of "Barbara's Triumph," "The Frenchman's Ward," "Her Mother's King," etc., etc.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SURPRISE GIFT OF DIAMONDS.

And Mrs. May, as she went to bed,
His eye grew brighter, his voice stronger,
and his strength physically more assured.

Mrs. May was called in to help
decide about the dress, and counseled
her to wear a pale pink, under
black, with black sash, black gloves
and rose-buds.

"How came you to know exactly
what I had decided upon, or almost
decided upon?" queried Beck,
laughing.

"Only don't be too much
in hope. It makes me feel, only in a
different way to be sure, as badly as when Mr.
Arty and Mr. Sep are more merry than usual.

"Yes, dear child," said the housekeeper,
looking at her sadly.

"Oh yes, and read it."

"He had a bit of his father's humor, I
suppose," continued Beck, smiling at the recollection.

"The first bar struck to their hearts,
of course," he said; "the second, they thought
of their pockets, and what fines they might
possibly have to pay;

"Either or neither," I said, laughing; "at
all events I enjoyed it."

"It was better than the theatre," he went

on, laughing all over his face. "I should like
to see it painted. Good subject, sure as you
live!—playing the *Marseillaise* under ban!

"And did you like the French people?"
asked Mrs. May, busy now in tucking some
stray gray locks under her cap before the mirror.

"Don't flatter yourself, Miss Beck, dear,
your papa will never be quite well."

"But if he should live on for years, con-
fortable, out of pain!"

"Doctors don't
always know," said Mrs. May,
sententiously.

"Now you are
cruel, for you
must see I am
building all my
hopes on what
Dr. Emery tells
me."

"Well, don't
mind what I say
—I don't know,"



BECK ARRANGED FOR THE PARTY.

gaged a carriage for the evening. Perhaps
I'd better not stay only till twelve o'clock."

"If it's through by twelve o'clock, all the
better," said her father, "but you're not to
come till the rest do. It's a long time since
you have had a pleasant evening, and I want
you to enjoy yourself. Stop a minute—what
are your jewels, pearls?"

"Yes, papa; don't you remember the set
you bought me in Paris, of that fat old jeweler,
and how his sides shook when he laughed? I
shall never forget him."

"Yes, yes, I remember—suitable for a
child as you were then," he said. "How
would you look in diamonds, I wonder?"

"Oh, papa! the idea!" said Beck laugh-
ing.

"Why, don't you like diamonds?" he
asked.

"Now you know I think they're just
lovely! and I've almost been longing for
them, but then ought one to wear diamonds
till one comes of age?"

"That's a question that requires some
thought," said her father, "but we haven't
time to think. I believe I have seen them on
babes of six or seven, at hotel hops. Do you
remember I went out into a little back room
at that same shop, and stayed some time?"

"Yes, and I stood at the window as that
splendid company of Zouaves went marching
by with the best band I ever heard—they
were going to war, and I remember reading
afterward they were cut all to pieces. Oh
dear, yes. I couldn't help remembering
that," said Beck, thoughtfully.

"Well, dear, I bought you a modest set of
diamonds, then, to be given you at some fu-

ture time, and I think I should like to see
them on you. I have your mother's dia-
monds, but they are too pronounced."

He directed her where to go, in a little
room leading out of his, where stood her
piano, a small upright, an antique secretary,
and a couch in a Gothic recess, over which
hung heavy satin curtains, hiding a large
window that looked out upon the street.

Beck brought the dark red Turkey morocco
case, and put it into her father's hands. Her
eyes were shining with anticipation; she had
never come so near being a beauty in all her
life, and the thought crossed his mind and
illumined his pale face, as he opened the
box.

Beck uttered a cry of delight. The orna-
ments were unique and costly, yet quite
suited to her age and costume. They con-
sisted of a locket, a brooch, earrings, and
one superb solitary ring, that burned in the
dim light, a globe of white fire. But the
best of it to Beck was his sweet and thought-
ful kindness, for it had all the beauty and
novelty of an utterly unexpected gift.

"Exactly what you needed!" said her fa-
ther, when she had arranged the lovely orna-
ments, and stood before him, the
one jewel in all his heart. "You
were dressed for it, and I don't think
you will find anything like it in this
country. The little fat jeweler told
me about the design, which was got
up for him by an artist in Paris, a
very great genius, who was a little
insane and supposed he saw these
wonderful patterns in visions from the
Creator Himself. It was a cu-
rious story. This was the last of
them, he said, for the poor artist
finally went hopelessly mad, had
been carried to a public asylum, and
he had forever lost his wonderful
fancies."

"I don't know that I like to wear
them now," said Beck, whose sym-
pathy went traveling to that broken
mind.

"Nonsense," her father said, and
she noted that there seemed the same
power in his voice as of old, before
sickness had aged it. "I don't even
know as that fat, fantastic jeweler
was telling me the truth, or served
the story on me for the purpose of
winning my duets. How can one
tell? They are wonderfully imagi-
native, those French, and will do
almost anything for effect. Now kiss
me, daughter—I hear your carriage.
Enjoy yourself for us both. I wish
I could take you there, little lonely
thing! Your brothers shall hear
from me. Sweetheart or not, no
brother is half a man that neglects his
sister."

Beck could not tell him how glad
she was to go without them. Many
a time she had, as she thought, screwed her
courage up to give the version of their cold-
ness and apparent dislike, their coarseness
even, but she never had yet been able to
speak. A commoner nature would have rea-
soned that they were no kin to him, and he
could not naturally care so much for their
misdemeanors, but Beck's temperament was
not common. She was delicate even to
fastidiousness, and so, alas! her lips were sealed
for that time, never to be opened on that
subject forever more.

On the way her thoughts reverted with in-
nocent pleasure to her splendid outfit that
had come to her as if by magic, and she knew
that the eyes of many would be upon it.

"Oh, Beck! we've been expecting you so
long!" cried Elise, who looked like a close
copy of one of her favorite Greek damsels,
in her clinging white robes, brightened with
ribbons in many shades, and a few flowers
tucked in her belt. "Do you see how splen-
dently they're coming in! and now we're only
afraid of a crush! Lucky there are so many
rooms on the ground floor. We have had to
open papa's study, the *sanctum sanctorum*!

Come right up stairs—I'll be your dressing
maid. I won't let one of the hired girls
touch you. Oh, Beck!" she cried in new
astonishment, as the wraps fell off; "you
look like a burst of moonlight—you are per-
fectly adorable! Where did you get that set?
I look in Bellamy's windows almost every
day, and I never saw anything half so beau-
tiful there. Do you want me to sink down
and die of envy before you?"

"I'm not a bit afraid of it," said Beck, into
whose cheeks the words of Elise had brought





