CHAPTER V
A WORLD TO WIN

The proper study of mankind is man
--Alexander Pope, An Essay on Man

I

THE BASIC PRINCIPLES & TWAIN'S VIEWS ON CHARACTERIZATION

**Animation**

The essence of a short story consists in portraying persons in action, each according to his own character. After all, it is human nature that interests the readers as well as the listeners (of oral stories); human nature as acted upon by this and that event, not events disconnected from their surroundings. "... it is usually character that makes a story great, a single character around which the other characters move."¹ Occasionally there do appear a few stories in which the dominant character is that of someone not physically present as a person acting in the story (e.g. Barley Goodson in *The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg*). For practical purposes, however, this person can be regarded as one of the characters in the tale. Thus primarily it is the personages that make the story.
Characterization in a story should always be linked with real life. The other elements are there because in some way they are associated with life. Nature, for instance, finds its place, as it is so much a part of man's environment, stirring his aesthetic sense and also inspiring awe through its terrifying aspects. Plot, incident, and theme enter into the story because of their association with man and his destiny and also because they help in stating human problems in a proper form for concrete observation, analysis, or demonstration. From the most serious novel to the lightest skit, the final concern of the writer and the reader is man:

In fact a good deal of quality fiction contains thinly disguised real-life people and happenings that have gone through the author's process of winnowing and interpretation until they are far truer to life, for that matter, than the so-called true story.2

The story as a form of art deals with concrete instances of men and women rather than with general conceptions.

While pointing out the drawbacks of James Fenimore Cooper in his The Deerslayer, Mark Twain has given his views about personages in a tale in his work "Fenimore Cooper's Literary Offences." These thoughts of Mark Twain's are in general not at variance with the basic principles of characterization.

First of all, Twain says that "the personages in a tale
shall be alive, except in the case of corpses, and that always the reader shall be able to tell the corpses from the others. Mark Twain reiterates here that characters should be lively and lifelike. Character is basically the reflection of human life with all its pulsations of class-attributes and personal traits and mannerisms. These traits and tendencies are revealed in the behaviour and conduct of the character. If a writer presents a character showing only the basic elements of human nature, he would present an abstraction, and his story would therefore become an allegory, a mere piece of narrative exposition such as Pilgrim's Progress is. Mark Twain further says that if "corpses," that is types, are necessary, then they should be separated from lively characters. He says that to present a stock personality is not a very difficult task. But to present a thoroughly individualized person is not an easy thing. And this is the task of the story writer. It is the individual variations rather than the general human nature that produces the uncertainty and the immediate charm of life. It is only when the character portrayed is akin to life that the touch of individuality or personality is achieved—the quality so indispensable to full characterization.

From the point of view of the character development, E.M. Forster in Aspects of the Novel (1927), has divided characters into two categories—"flat" and "round". The
flat character is a "thin" two dimensional disk character. The flat character is also sometimes referred to as the "type" character. A flat character is the same sort of person from the beginning to the end, but a round character undergoes development:

The test of a round character is whether it is capable of surprising in a convincing way. If it never surprises, it is flat. If it does not convince, it is a flat pretending to be round.

The change, in a round character, which is capable of surprising the reader in the real sense should be important and fundamental. It is not simply a change in circumstances. Cinderella does not become a round character simply because she changes from a cinder girl to a princess. Uriah Heep in David Copperfield is a prominent example of a round character. His mask of humility and his full viciousness is not exposed until the fifty-seventh chapter of the novel.

In any piece of fiction, not many round characters are expected. The problem of a writer of short stories is slightly different from that of the novelist although both use the same techniques of characterization. Highlighting this problem, W.H. Hudson remarks:

... in the short story we meet people for a few minutes and see them in a few relationships and circumstances only; and while it is indeed true that concentration of attention
on a particular aspect of character may result in a very powerful impression, still, as a rule, such impression is not exactly comparable with that left by an ampler, more detailed and more varied representation.

What Hudson means is that the range of characterization in a short story is narrower as compared to full length fiction. There is not sufficient time and space at the disposal of the short story writer to portray all aspects of even the major characters. The writer is faced with a dilemma. He would like to develop a character but practical difficulties come in his way. In order to develop a character in a convincing way the author has to fulfil the demands of probabilities, circumstances, and time. Significant changes in human nature are sequential. They seldom occur all of a sudden. The problems make the skill of the short story writer all the more difficult. However, short story, being an internally of the novel, requires, like it, flat as well as round characters. A mature short story writer is able to develop a disk character into a new and memorable figure by developing its individuality through the delicate touches of his art. Thus a good short story may sometimes give one or two characters who are better developed and strongly emphasized.

Motivation

Next, Mark Twain says that "the personages in a tale, both dead and alive, shall exhibit a sufficient excuse for being there" (79). This is what is called the motivation
of characters. The reader should be able to follow the rationale of their actions and the propriety of their presence, at least at the end of the story, if not from the start. By perceiving them, he must be able to extend his vision to and formulate his views about humanity. The motivation is essential both for individualized characters and types. Every speech and action of the character should spring from a clearly perceivable and sufficient cause in the nature of the person and the situation. Every cause should be made to produce a logical sequence affecting the person. It is always expected that action should arise from a motive. There should be some convincing reason or cause for things happening or done. "It is a part of the author's duty," as Scott properly remarks, "to afford satisfactory details upon the causes of the separate events he has recorded." These causes will be in character, or in the circumstances, or (usually) in character and circumstances reacting on each other. Adequate motivation, therefore, includes the consideration of motive and character.

Elaborating his theory about the handling of characters in a story, Mark Twain said:

... when the personages of a tale deal in conversation, the talk shall sound like human talk, and be talk such as human beings would be likely to talk in the given circumstances, and have a discoverable meaning, also a discoverable purpose and a show of relevancy, and remain in the neighbourhood of the subject
in hand, and be interesting to the reader, and help out the tale, and stop when the people cannot think of anything more to say (79-80).

This means that the talk of a character, like his actions, should also be lifelike. For this, the writer of the tale should make the words and acts of each person spontaneously spring and reveal the character of the person. The writer must know, even to the littlest, the words that men use, the tones in which they speak them, and the gestures they employ, the decisions--instinctive and reasoned, to which they come and their manner of acting in accordance with their decisions. The characters should talk to the point and should not move away from the subject. They should not appear as superfluous. The main function of literature is to give delight. Therefore the characters must be appealable creatures. The audience must partake of their joys and sorrows. They must inspire affection and sympathy. "Generally, characterization is needed to the extent necessary to justify the individual's role and existence in the story."7 No character should be continued until it wears out its appeal. Their purpose should be to contribute towards the climax and denoument of the tale.

**Presentation**

Men as a genus, group, or class have their distinctive characteristics. This is human nature, the basis of human character. Character is nothing but the sum of the moral and intellectual aspects of the individual resulting from the
union of human nature and temperament. Hence the main concern of the writer of character stories would be to put forward a varied body of speech and action that shall clearly reveal character. He should be able to present a character that is consistent and true to life. There should be no self contradiction in a character. R.W. Jepson's remark well sums up the point:

The characterization must be lifelike; that is, the actors must have appropriate roles and must behave in consistency with their characters and in keeping with their surroundings—however improbable or fantastic they may be.

A very good example of the consistency of character elements is of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. To depict a character well, the writer should be able to observe men in their activities.

By consistency and truth to life it is not meant that the character should be an exact replica of the real life. It is not, as E.M. Forster says, expected to "coincide as a whole with daily life," but "only to parallel it," it must adapt, modify, and indeed build entirely anew. When a lifelike character is created after going through the discrimination and sifting in the author's imagination it comes very close to life. The short story, like the novel, in making the reproduction of a character from life must omit, tone down, tone up, and otherwise modify, manipulate, and idealize the facts in accordance with the requirements
of the dramatic effect or artistic impression. The writer of the story has to maintain an equilibrium between the laws of fiction and the laws of life. In order to be convincing, a character should be plausible. It should reflect the chequered texture of life. "Human nature is not often either black or white, and interpretive fiction deals usually with characters that are neither." The characters should resemble normal human beings. They should neither be saintly nor monstrous nor even a bundle of paradoxes.

There are two attitudes possible for the author to adopt towards the person he is delineating. He may assume an attitude of personal judgment and interpretation towards his creation, or may put it forth and leave it to the reader to like or dislike it. In the short story the space allowable for direct and explicit statement of the author's point of view is small indeed. The author is mostly obliged to convey, through suggestive sense, without obstrusiveness, the view he holds. This method is known as the dramatization of the character. Perrine, stressing the importance of this method says:

A story will be successful only when the characters are dramatized—shown speaking and acting, as in a drama. . . . The successful writer must therefore rely mainly upon indirect presentation, and may use it entirely.

Many acknowledged story writers resort to the interplay of the direct and indirect methods. Generally a character is
briefly introduced by the author at the outset and then the character is revealed by words and deeds and by brief comments from the author as and when necessary. This process finally establishes harmony between the character and the reader and he feels one with the character like his friends in real-life. These remarks are only of a suggestive nature. No way of characterization can be finally imposed on the writer. The method of presentation grows from within the author. It takes the personal colouring of the writer. He observes his world, reads about the life of the past, examines his own thoughts, and through all this he rears the characters of his story.

Mark Twain has no objection to the direct method of presentation if necessary. But, he cautions that there should be consistency in the description of a character and its role in the story. "When the author describes the character of a personage in his tale, the conduct and conversation of that personage shall justify said description" (80). The direct description should be like the one adopted by Henry Fielding in *Tom Jones* (1749). There should be no contradiction between the description and behaviour of the character. It should stand the test of conformity. There may be conflicting elements in the same character but there should not be any divergence of attitudes between the author and the character. Twain says further:
... when a personage talks like an illustrated, gilt-edged, tree-calf, hand-tooled, seven-dollar Friendship's Offering in the beginning of a paragraph, he shall not talk like a negro minstrel in the end of it (80).

Yet the short story writer is not entirely without means even for direct presentation of character estimates. He can make persons in the story express, both by word and deed, their judgments of their fellow-persons. By this means and by skilful suggestion, the adept writer will be fully able to embody in the narrative his personal estimate of any character without thrusting himself into the story to do it. On the whole, the facts, accurately reported, remain the best means of revealing the character. It is not generally expected that a reasonably and adequately portrayed character will be seriously misconceived by competent readers even though the author's attitude towards him be left wholly unrevealed. Sometimes the author reveals the character by showing us the impressions about it formed by other characters in the story. This is achieved in two ways. One is by making the other characters discuss the character under portrayal in his absence. The other way is that the author may convey to the reader the impact the character has made upon others.13

The methods mentioned above are, however, not like water-tight compartments. No author can all the while use one method to the exclusion of others. The author is free
to choose any method according to his convenience, but for the sake of need and variety, the direct and indirect methods of presentation may be duly intersprinkled.

Consistency

Character as the fictional representation of human life shows susceptibility to human influences also. There are three forces which have reciprocal influence on human life. Man comes in contact with the physical and material world, with the social surroundings, and with the moral forces. In all these dealings, it is the character of the individual that is principally involved. In a character, the nature and destiny of man are principally reflected. "The data by which we describe character," elaborates W.J. Harvey, "are the aggregate of our experience in a number of situations, relationships, contexts."¹⁴ Character is the sum of moral, intellectual, and physical instincts, qualities and habits of the individual. The study of men in the mass will disclose various divisions and subdivisions between the race and the individual. Each social rank has its peculiar class-characteristics. It follows, therefore, that characterization must take note of the individual, class, and even race-traits.

Even when character is being revealed through speech and action, consistency should be maintained. The character portrayed should be true, first to human, then to its social
background, and finally to a clearly conceived individual temperament. The class characteristics are usually instinctive or emotional, springing from the traditional customs and feelings. Therefore when class characteristics are necessary for portrayal, contradiction should never be allowed to creep in. In this connection Mark Twain says:

... crass stupidities shall not be played upon the reader as 'the craft of the woodsman, the delicate art of the forest,' by either the author or the people in the tale (80).

Twain emphasizes that the expressions used by the characters should at no stage become awkward and unpleasant. Language should be made to fit the individual who uses it, and the occasion where it is used. Frivolous characters will produce frivolous speech; religious characters, religious conversation (that is one tinged with religion); rugged characters, rugged speech. It is emphatically necessary that there should be no incongruity between the character, its situation, and dialogue. The speech should be felicitious to the type of the person that is being depicted.

Mark Twain stresses the probability of actions of characters:

... the personages of a tale shall confine themselves to possibilities and let miracles alone; or, if they venture a miracle, the author must so plausibly set it forth as to make it look possible and reasonable (80).
The implication is that the actions and speeches of characters should be reasonably believable when considered in the light of human nature and the conditions of social existence. When "miracles" are necessary, say in mythical stories, legends, and fairy tales, they should be expressed in such a manner that the conception becomes consistent with the working of the human mind. Even something inordinately fanciful can be ventured upon occasionally, provided it is presented, not as factual truth, but as an idealization of a recognized departure from the truth (as in a fairy tale), or commentary on the truth (as in a burlesque).

**Interaction**

Mark Twain wants the author to take sides with his good characters:

. . . the author shall make the reader feel a deep interest in the personages of his tale and in their fate, and that he shall make the reader love the good people in the tale and hate the bad ones (80-81).

There are likely to be two opinions on the point mentioned above. Ruskin has pointed out in *Sesame and Lillies* that great writers like Shakespeare never take sides with their characters. He criticized even Milton for taking sides with the good ones. On this account Ruskin does not include Milton among the first rank of writers. Most readers would prefer to appreciate the character on their own; certainly this is true of the more cultured reader. Of course, mature
writers can redeem the exposition of character based on personal judgment by some extrinsic quality like the genial sarcasm of Thackeray.

The last point that Mark Twain states regarding characterization is that "the characters in a tale shall be so clearly defined that the reader can tell beforehand what each will do in a given emergency" (81). Here Twain is not against the element of suspense in the story because he himself frequently employs it. Twain's view, here, is very much that of Somerset Maugham, who while enumerating the qualities of a good novel said:

The creatures of the novelist's invention should be observed with individuality, and their actions should proceed from their characters; the reader must never be allowed to say: 'so and so would never behave like that'; On the contrary, he should be obliged to say: 'That's exactly how I should have expected so and so to behave.'

Like Somerset Maugham, Twain also means that the characters should be so interesting to the reader that there should be full understanding among them. The solution of the plot of the story may be suspenseful but should not be unexpected, incredible and unnatural.

There is no attempt here to go into the validity or otherwise of Twain's attack on Cooper. Only his views on personages in a tale have been culled out and are being
examined in application to his short stories. Although Mark Twain's views on Cooper concern his novels primarily, yet they can be considered with reference to his short stories as well. It has already been pointed out above that the material used by the novelist and the short story writer is basically the same. Even Twain uses the word "tale" in his treatise on Fenimore Cooper. In the light of the aforementioned general principles of characterization, and Twain's views thereafter, it would now be appropriate to examine the development of characters in his short stories.

II

PERSONAGES IN TWAIN'S SHORT STORIES

The first general principle of characterization agreed upon by critics and also approved of by Twain is that characters should be drawn from life. This is true of Mark Twain's characters in his novels as well as in the short stories. Brashhear and Rodney set forth:

Mark Twain never took a bystander's view of life and the world: he felt such a strong affinity with all of humanity that he was receptive of all experience and absorbed into his mind a multitude of impressions that later found emotional release through his writing.16

Mark Twain was so much immersed in the life of his age that he can be called the painter of times. In his short stories he adopted the methods and techniques of the up-country story-tellers and gave them vibrance and vividity. Thus
he brought folk characters to literature along with their American vernacular speech.17

As in Dickens, many of Mark Twain's characters seem sometimes to be copies of one another; yet they are specialized, living and breathing entities. His young men are very much like the adventurers of the Frontier. Jim Smiley of the "Jumping Frog" betted "on anything that turned upon."

Another Jim, the 'Bad Boy' who, in defiance of the Sunday-school books, lived a reckless life, never repented, yet prospered. George and John in "Legend of Capitoline Venus," Alonzo Fitz Clarence Loving Rosannah Ethelton, and Ed making a fortune through a joke "("The Joke That Made Ed's Fortune!" in Following the Equator)" are all adventurers. His young men are alive with all the virtues and vices. They come with hopes and little ambitions (like that of "Cecil Rhodes and the Shark") and tricks of costumes and manners like the canvasser with his "humble men, his tired look, his decayed-gentility of clothes" ("The Canvasser's Tale"), they show eccentricities and follies like those of Mr. and Mrs. Mac-Williams. They act in the vascillating, provisional way in which young men have a habit of acting. But they make their history, instead of merely illustrating a ready-made one. Whether the reader likes them or not, he has interest in them, and is sorry when no more is heard of them. One regrets for example as to how the mystery of Jim Blain's
grandfather's old Ram "is a dark mystery to this day, . . ." 18

The characters in Mark Twain's short Stories effectively correspond to real life. They are drawn from the world in which human beings suffer and enjoy. The faces of his motley Company are those of familiar friends. He plays deftly on those chords which are common to the fastidious aesthete (Oliver Cromwell in "The Death Disk"), and the half civilized squatter (in "Jumping Frog"). Although, in his short fiction Twain's characters often get verbose and garrulous as befits their environment, they are always picturesque and seasonable. In lifelike portrayal of characters, Mark Twain comes nearer to Shakespeare. Dr. Samuel Johnson, discussing the scenes in Shakespeare says:

It is the great excellence of Shakespeare that he drew his scenes from nature and from life. He copied the manners of the world then passing before him and has more allusions than other poets to the traditions and superstition of the vulgar; which must therefore be traced before he can be understood. 19

The pioneer life of the West has similarly to be traced in the case of Mark Twain, in order to understand him.

In his stories Mark Twain gives social characterization. They are the sort that one meets, for example, in Maupassant's "A Piece of String" and Stevenson's "A Lodging for the Night." Just as the characters in many of J. M. Barrie's stories represent Scottish conditions, or Mrs. Freeman's story -
personages reflect New England, so Mark Twain's figures reflect the frontier conditions of the West.

Twain longed to promote human progress. This is a power that is seemingly denied to humorous authors. Inevitably many of his short stories reflected these attitudes. In stories like "The story of the Bad Little Boy," "The Facts in the Great Beef Contract" and "The Story of the Good Little boy," he explores the nature of the practical man of the world and continuously tests his characters against the ideal of worldly wisdom. "Was It Heaven? or Hell?" implicitly defines honest style of leadership as that of one who acts upon the spirit of values and not merely in letter.

The protagonists of his stories are often shown in conflict with the confidence men. Various types of confidence men are introduced. The editor in "Journalism in Tennessee" appoints the author as the associate editor, then quietly leaves and exposes the associate to face all the violence for the deeds of the editor. The author learns the lesson of Southern violence very bitterly and announces his plan to return North. "The Canvasser's Tale," pictures a canvasser becoming successful in swindling the narrator through the tricks of importunity. "The stolen White Elephant" unfolds how the narrator,--an official in the Indian Civil Service, loses the white elephant that he was
accompanying from Jiam to England. The hired detectives exploited him and gave him the corpse of the elephant and felt proud of their detective skill. It is really strange how Henry Adams escapes confidence men in England while carrying "The £100,000 Bank Note." Perhaps the two eccentric men in the story are also confidence men, though with a difference. The timorous Alfred Parrish in "The Delated Russian Passport," comes to regard his well-meaning friend, Major Jackson as either "a sharper or a lunatic."

The Man that corrupted Hadleyburg shows how the nineteen principal citizens of the village, who had hitherto been acknowledged patrons of the village, in an evil hour, gave way to temptation from "a mysterious big stranger," and finally become more dangerous than their neighbours.

The stories also bring before us a panorama of dreamers. First, there are those who live in a reverie and are brought into the actual world occasionally, and, like the ancient Mariner, they narrate their tale. There is Simon Wheeler with his "tranquil countenance" in "The Notorious Jumping Frog." Jim Flaine will narrate the story of his grandfather's Old Ram only when "he was tranquilly, serenely, symmetrically drunk" (78). The monomaniac in "Cannibalism in the Cars," tells his harrowing tale at the mention of the word "Harris." The middle-aged crazy man of "The Trials of Simon Erikson" (Roughing It), would wake up at the word "Circumstance" and
narrate his own tale. In "The Man Who Put Up at Gadsby's" (A Tramp Abroad), Riley:

proceeded to unfold his narrative as placidly and peacefully as if we were all stretched comfortably in a blossomy summer meadow instead of being persecuted by a wintry midnight tempest: . . . (150).

There are other dreamers like the affable and voluble Major Jackson ("The Related Russian Passport"), who, like Mr. Micawber, waits for something to turn up and something does turn up in his case too. The nineteen principal citizens of Hadleyburg, and Saladin Foster and his wife Lectra in "$30,000 Bequest," dream of the promised wealth which ultimately fades like a dream. Mark Twain, thus, gradually transforms his characters from explorers to revealers. Adventurer-figures develop superhuman powers which enable them to control their environment. The final version of the Mysterious Stranger integrates the dual vision of the dual protagonist of Twain by positing that the adventurer and observer are not two different entities. The adventurer or the leader is only a function of the observer's imagination.

While giving general facts about society in his stories, Mark Twain was not blind to social evils. The figures in his stories, from Simon Wheeler to Satan illustrate it. They are up against aggression, egotism, moralism, and hypocrisy. In creating his stories, Mark Twain is alternately drawn to and repelled by these characteristics, and it is
this movement which constitutes much of the dynamics of interrelationships among his characters. These characters equally express the dynamics of Mark Twain's attitude towards humour and satire. It was his perception of human nature that made him present characters satirizing it. The singularity of Mark Twain's genius is that with the same characteristics, he makes the personality of the satirist; and it is precisely these characteristics which the perspective of his humour controls and prevents. The history of such humorous—satirical characters of his stories is also the history of Mark Twain's attitude towards the art and aims of story-writing. It is this attitude which ultimately gives rise to equivocation in his characters.

In the third chapter, (of this dissertation), it has been stated that Mark Twain had a fancy for romantic ideas though he was averse to romance. Familiar with the works of Goethe, Byron, Carlyle, Shelley, and Darwin, Mark Twain presents romantic characters to express his despair and disillusionment with the course that the native culture was taking in his time. The romantic characters stand for revolt against rules, authority, and tradition. In his stories, he creates a fictional persona embodying the essential hopes and prejudices of the American people; self-reliant, irreverent, modest yet proudly aware of his role. Yet the protagonist is generally a hero in search of a cultural and
spiritual identity and as such bears relation to romantic heroes. His dissatisfaction with many Americans and the spiritual void that exists within him makes Mark Twain's persona an embodiment of latent misgivings about the society of his time. These misgivings are strongly expressed in Mark Twain's later stories like *The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg* and *The Mysterious Stranger*.

Another romantic trait that one finds in Mark Twain's characters in his short stories and longer fiction is a rejection of conventions. To achieve this purpose, Twain gives his characters the burlesque pose of a scoundrel. His persona as a scoundrel or a picaroon functions as an antagonist to conventional and orthodox attitudes and views of the late nineteenth century. Throughout the arena of Twain's creative activity, burlesque played a central part in both his humour and satire. The essential function of Mark Twain's use of a scoundrel is the disorientation of his readers or audience through the use of various hoaxes. In such a capacity Twain's protagonist challenges the authority and value of originally accepted standards. The narrators in stories like "Political Economy," "A Burning Brand" and "A Dying Man's Confession," expose the myths of benevolence, hypocritical piety, and the reward of virtue. His bad boy stories were largely a reaction against the sentimental, pious images of children in contemporary novels and Sunday school stories.
Pathos and Pathetic Personality

While dealing with characterization one cannot overlook the special effects of humour and pathos exploited by an author. The proper handling of these elements is a delicate matter though it may appear simple on the surface. Acknowledging the intricacy of their management, W.H. Hudson states: "simple as it may at first seem, the question of quality involves the large and in some respects difficult problem of the use and abuse of the emotional elements in fiction." Humour, if misdirected, gets indecent and the abuse of pathos results in sentimentalism. Therefore, it is the gift of a skilled author that is required to gain the desired effect. Mark Twain believed in the inter-relation of humour and pathos in human life, "wrinkles should merely indicate where smiles have been." Twain's characters display humour tinged with pathos.

The traditional hero, whether comic or tragic, has had moments of impenetrable solitude, dark nights of complete abandonment before the test which establishes his transcendence. But the emphasis of the heroic cycle as a whole is on the community to which the hero returns; his ideal reaffirms the shared values of a particular ethos. In tragedy the hero accomplishes a purgation which is self-consuming, while in comedy he may survive to share in the transformed and regenerated communities he has been at odds with.
The dark loneliness of the American hero presents a different perspective, however; his solitude is not a fragment of his experience but the enduring quality of his very existence. He separates from his community in a repudiation of values, unwilling to enter into and sustain meaningful relationships with his fellow citizens. His mere existence questions the quality of the community from which he separates; if he is of a sterner stuff, his narrative concludes in a final solitude permanently encapsulating from his fellows. Mark Twain's stories of Adam and Eve, "The Californian's Tale," "The Five Boons of Life," and The Mysterious Stranger depict simple, innocent, and often pathetic figures struggling unsuccessfully to establish an identity which at once combines the simple humanity of boyhood with the conscious isolation of adulthood. The story, "Five Boons of Life," pathetically contrasts the vain fervour of youth with the frustrations of old age. The youth, after enjoying short-lived spells of pleasure, love, fame, wealth, "sat shivering in a mean garret; and he was gaunt and wan and hollow-eyed, and clothed in rags; and he was gnawing a dirty crust and mumbling: . . ." (471). The only precious gift of death has flitted and death now eludes him.

Robert A. Wiggins, in his book, Mark Twain: A Jackleg Novelist, points out that in his early work, Mark Twain shows skillful "blending humor and pathos." 23 It is often
seen in his writings that Twain reveals his character's sense of humour as a means to express the uncongenial relationships existing between protagonists and the world which they live in. Often a character's sense of humour serves as a kind of moral fingerprint, enabling the reader to identify and categorize himself with certainty. Usually there is a very clear separation between a character's sense of humour and that of those he encounters on his journey through the story. A good illustration is provided by Aunt Rachel in "A True Story." Aunt Rachel is sixty years old and is always laughing. When the author asks her, how it is that she has never experienced any trouble, she sobers down and tells him about her forced separation from her old husband and her seven children. Six of them, she never could see again and had an accidental reunion with the seventh, the youngest, Then she concludes with a philosopher's detachment "Oh no, Misto C--, I hain't no trouble. An' no joy!" (98). Aunt Rachel encountered so many miseries that she learnt to live with them.

Henry in "The Californian's Tale" has been estranged from his beloved wife. At the time of her expected return, he falls into a fit of melancholia and is drugged to sleep by neighbours; "then he's all right for another year--thinks she's with him..." (272).

Margaret Lester, a thirty-six year old widow in "Was
It Heaven? or Hell? "calmly undergoes the tortures of false morality and dies continuing her unfaltering affection toward her sixteen year old daughter Miss Hannah Gray who dies earlier than her ailing mother; but it has purposely not been revealed to Margaret.

In "A Double Barreled Detective Story," the tale begins with a controversial marriage in which the wife is maltreated by her violent and vindictive husband, Jacob Fuller. Jacob's cruelty to his wife is to torture her father who had offended him. The brutality of Jacob Fuller surpasses that of Heathcliff in Emily Bronte's Wuthering Heights. Subsequently, Fuller's son Archibald Stillman's mad but futile chase of his father to avenge the injury to his mother reminds one of Ahab's frenzied pursuit of Moby Dick. The search lingers on for years and takes Archy to all parts of the world. After many adventures, including a confrontation with the famous detective character Sherlock Holmes, Archy learns of Jacob Fuller's death and the story ends.

Abby the little seven year old daughter of Colonel Mayfair in "The Death Disk" illustrates the words of George Eliot in her Proem to Romola: "the little children are still the symbol of the eternal marriage between love and duty; . . ." In Oliver Cromwell's time, Colonel Mayfair and his two colleagues have been condemned to death for exceeding the orders. The next morning Mrs. Mayfair takes ill. Abby
goes to the tower to fetch her father. She is brought to Cromwell. He caresses Abby and tells her that what his daughter commanded he obeyed. Soon Abby is asked to place a disk in the hands of each of the three colonels. She places the red one (the death disk) in her unseeing father's hands as the red one appears prettiest to her. The doomed man turns, sees his daughter and embraces her fervently. The guards weep and begin to take colonel Mayfair away. Suddenly Abby darts out, returns with Oliver Cromwell, and asks him to send her father home. The grim dictator does not move until she reminds him of his promise to do as she commands. Seeing it all as God's will, Cromwell obeys by freeing the prisoner.

It is at times as these, or as in "The Californian's Tale" that Twain, while presenting his pathetic characters, gets sentimental and melodramatic. The remarks of DeVoto regarding Joan of Arc find echo, on such occasions. DeVoto said that Twain "was uncomfortable in the demands of tragedy, formalizing whatever could not be sentimentalized." However, on the whole, the pathetic figures of Mark Twain maintain their stature and they do not become commonplace or bathetic. In this respect, Mark Twain scores a march over Dickens.

Dickens and Mark Twain both have portrayed boys. The representative children of Dickens' novels are little creatures, pale and thin, bruised and twisted either in body or soul, and all of them are victims in one sense or another. In Mark
Twain, even when waif element is presented, the freedom of boy's life is emphasized. In the presentation of the psychology of the waif, Mark Twain certainly does better. By and large he maintains the sublimity of pathos. Mark Twain could bring about in his characters the subtle union of humour and pathos. Cox explained this trait of Mark Twain in the following manner:

Indeed, all the pathos, hostility, and tragedy which Samuel Clemens could possibly feel were to be converted under the sign of his genius into the form of humor.27

Mark Twain's development of humorous characters with an undertone of pathos and vice versa is also in keeping with his conception that "humor should take its outings in grave company."28

Coleridge remarked in his lecture on Hamlet and Lear that laughter "is equally the expression of the extreme anguish and horror as of joy."29 While Mark Twain gives us a variety of humour from the genial laughter of the story of "Old Ram" to the volleys of "Cruel Laughter" of esquimaux in "An Esquimaux Maiden's Romance;" there is always the presence of pathos in his humour. In the story "A Curious Experience," the Major remarked about young Robert Wicklow's singing:

Lord, the pathos of it, the enchantment of it! Nothing in the world was ever so sweet, so gracious, so tender, so holy, so moving (169).
The boy who could enact the role of spy for fun was also capable of displaying tender pathos.

Walter Fuller ranks Mark Twain with Shakespeare in his "broad human sympathy." He regards Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Mark Twain as the three most sympathetic writers in English language. F.O. Matthiessen considers the element of pathos as "the greatest artistic asset" of Walt Whitman; it can be as well extended to Twain. Mark Twain's humour sprang out of his love for humanity and so naturally his humorous characters also display pathos blended with humour as Mark Twain himself said in *The Mysterious Stranger*, "Every man is a suffering-machine and a happiness-machine combined" (640). Achieving the proper effect of pathos through fictional characterization is a task in itself as it easily slips into maudlin sentimentality or mawkish emotion.

III

RECURRENT FIGURES

Mark Twain's creative method usually led him to take his character through a different environment. This is specially noticeable in the comparatively more developed and more dominant figures in his stories like the Bad Boy, Captain Stormfield, and The Mysterious Stranger.

The Bad Boy

Mark Twain's "Bad Boy" character is in the long tradition
of picaresque story relating to rogues, knaves, and vagabonds. F.W. Chandler, in *The Literature of Roguery* (1907), has given a detailed account of the growth of this kind of fiction. He has shown how the picaroon satirizes the society he has exploited. The character of the knave has been very frequent in the field of story from the earliest times. The picaresque fiction as a movement started in Spain in the sixteenth century. It was at first a reaction against the conventional romances of chivalry. This type of character underwent many variations. In the American fiction of the nineteenth century "Picaro" was introduced as "The Bad Boy." In brief, the Bad Boy Stories of the nineteenth century—American fiction are mainly a reaction against the unduly tender and unconvincingly pious images of children in the Sunday School Stories. Mark Twain has brought the Bad Boy in his novels and short stories. In the short stories the Bad Boy appears in "The Story of the Bad Little Boy,""The tale of "Edward Mills and George Benton," "Is He Living or Is He Dead?", "A Double-Barrelled Detective Story," and "Hunting The Deceitful Turkey" etc. In his stories, Twain's Bad Boy displays the inherent picaresque quality. He is the jolly knave wandering through different social levels into a series of adventures and escapades.

Jeanne Bugliari is of opinion that the value of Twain's novels is diminished because of the picaresque element.
Due to the picaresque content, Twain fails to make his characters fully rounded and the themes are not purposefully directed. In his short stories, however, the picaresque does not become much of an impediment to Twain. The limited range of the short story does not allow the picaresque to enmesh the author. In stories like "The Bad Little Boy," and "The Good Little Boy," the character is not fully delineated (as Albert Stone, Jr. has pointed out), and the humour is forced. Still it stands to the credit of Twain that, following the picaresque tradition, he recognized the similarity of the American social condition of his time with those of Spain that produced the Picaro. Twain's bad boy belongs to a literary tradition reacting against the "model boy," unfortunately, because of the pressure for adjustment and conformity. It is what Robert Charles Regan has called "the unpromising hero motif." But Regan fails to acknowledge sufficiently the sovereignty of character over plot in Mark Twain. 31

**Captain Stormfield**

Captain Stormfield is another character that appears a number of times in the published and unpublished works of Mark Twain either in that name or under some other name. Right from the time when Twain sailed from San Francisco to Panama with Stormfield's original, Captain Edgar (Ned) Wakeman, until 1909, the year when he published *Extracts from Captain*
Stormfield's Visit to Heaven, he is preoccupied with this important character. The Stormfield character appears in such diverse works as Roughing It (1872), the "Simon Wheeler Sequence" (c.1870), "Simon Wheeler: Amateur Detective" (1878-1898), "The Great Dark" (1897), and another posthumous work "Refuge of the Derelicts" (1905-6). These characters represent their creator's uncertainty of mind towards theological and philosophical questions of existence.

There were many sources for the origin of the character, Captain Stormfield. Twain explained the origin of Captain Stormfield and his dream adventure as having come from an encounter with Captain Wakeman and from Elizabeth Stuart Phelps's novel The Gates Ajar (1868). Other sources may have been Twain's calvinistic heritage, his interest in astronomy and his experiences with tyrannical pilots on the Mississippi. Bernard DeVoto has suggested parallels for Captain Stormfield in the humorous literature of Mark Twain's day. Wester cited George Weedward's The Cities of the Sun (1901) as a possible source. Twain's mature attitudes towards blacks, Jews, extra-terrestrial beings, and humanity as a whole find their way into "Captain Stormfield's visit to Heaven." The final source is the most nebulous yet the most significant of them all--a combination of Mark Twain's deep-seated fear of death and his strain of indomitable optimism.

The character of Captain Stormfield culminated in
"Extracts from Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven." In this work, Twain uses Captain Stormfield's progress through the celestial regions as an opportunity to attack systematically those traditional beliefs about the nature of heaven which, he thought, deserved censure. At the same time the story demonstrates Twain's affirmation of the power in man to achieve true freedom.

The demonstrated presence of Ned Wakeman as an archetypal figure in Twain's writings from 1870's onward and, specially the important role he plays in Captain Stormfield Story, Changes the conventional perspectives in which his work of that troubled period has been seen.

The Mysterious Stranger

The character of the Mysterious Stranger like that of the Bad Boy is again a common feature in American fiction of the nineteenth century. He is usually an abstracted, well informed, sophisticated figure who thrusts himself upon a conventional society, causes a conflict, and through the conflict reveals the evil behind the society's superficial image. In his simplest function, creating an atmosphere of gloom and foreboding, the character of the Mysterious Stranger is used by Washington Irving ("Rip Van Winkle"); Nathaniel Hawthorne ("The Grey Champion"); Bret Harte ("The Luck of Roaring Camp"); and William Dean Howells ("A Traveller from Altrusia"). A more complex use of the stranger combines his
capacity to create mystery with his ability to convulse other characters so that they reveal their true or hidden nature. Such use is made by Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, William Dean Howells, and Mark Twain. In the fall of man, the stranger often plays the role of the devil. However, in American literature, the stranger-devil does not cause the fall; he simply lets man fall and reveals what has happened.

Mark Twain makes the fullest use of this character. His portrayal differs from that of the earlier authors in that he eliminates the stranger's mystery. His stranger is generally a palpable character who is distinguished by four characteristics; he is an outsider to the society in which he appears; his true identity or true self is never fully understood by the people he visits; he forms no full, honest, or lasting relationship with other characters; he always reveals something about those with whom he interreacts. In most cases this revelation will be of human weaknesses.

Throughout Twain's career, the stranger and his relations change. In early stranger stories, "The Celebrated Jumping Frog," "Political Economy," "A Mysterious Visit" and "The Canvasser's Tale" the stranger is usually a trickster, an adventurer, a joker, or a petty confidence man who uncovers minor foibles or stupidities of his victims. His motive is generally material and he does not condemn his victims for
their shortcomings. Here, Mark Twain often portrays himself as the victim. In the boy-novels, The Prince and the Pauper, and Huckleberry Finn, the main characters temporarily become strangers to protect themselves from an alien community. Thus Twain, by implication, condemns the society which threatens his heroes. Three stories of Twain's later period depict strangers—A Connecticut Yankee, Pudd'nhead Wilson, and The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg. In these stories the motivation is not material, nor is it self-protective; this stranger is a bitter revealer who wants to make his victims see themselves as he sees them and as they are. His target is not a minor foible, but the evil of self-complacency. Twain's final portraits of strangers are Satan of The Mysterious Stranger, and Satan, the Biblical character who figures in his numerous late essays. This stranger extends the target to the question whether man is predestined towards evil. James D. Wilson has traced a significant relationship between Hank Margan of A Connecticut Yankee, Philip Traum of The Mysterious Stranger, and Satan in Milton's Paradise Lost. In the opinion of Wilson, Mark Twain, through the stranger, reveals the cruel and dark aspects of the Western Civilization.32

The question arises as to why, Twain in his later period, adopts the stranger as his spokesman. The primary reason may be that Mark in the autumn of his life had some gloomy experiences which find expression in his writings. This
sense of despair was in discord with Twain's nature and with his public image as a beloved literary figure—a stance which he enjoyed. Seriously believing that his frank expression would be received with a shock, Twain preferred to speak incognito through an anonymous and mysterious stranger.

IV

Resume

The copious diversity of characters, seen above, indicates Twain's interest in human life, as is Shakespeare's, whose characters have been called "a map of life."33

In his short stories, Twain uses both the direct and indirect methods of delineation. Sometimes he describes a character, or the character is revealed by other characters. Generally, the character is revealed through speech and action. When he describes a character, the character justifies the author's introduction. In the story—"A Trial" (from Roughing It-1872), Twain describes Captain Ned Blakely as "a man who would fight at the dropping of a handkerchief, when imposed upon, and would stand no nonsense" (88). Captain Blakely does not belie this description. Mr. Mac William's henpeckedness is well hinted at the beginning of "The Mac Williamses and the Burglar Alarm." All MacWilliams stories support this description. Thus Twain's direct method of characterization, when used, does not fail him. Mark Twain's
stories exhibit the complex nature of the pioneer society. They are of varied social status, different in their occupations, training, education, and family backgrounds. Twain is, on the whole, successful in giving his characters their proper setting, appropriate conversation, demeanour, habits, advantages and handicaps. Consistency in style is also maintained.

The question of normalcy is a little challenging. Twain is against the use of miracles by the characters, yet Satan in The Mysterious Stranger performs miracles. The modifying condition in this regard has, however, been fulfilled. The aura of plausibility is maintained by giving people in the story a dream-existence. By this means, Twain tries to make unreal things real to the imagination. Poe's tales deal with an "unreal world," and accordingly have an atmosphere of unreality. But while the reader is under the spell of Poe's narrative, this "world of unreality," becomes a semblance of the real world. Twain takes a step further in the direction of verisimilitude by giving the events in the story the habiliments of a dream.

Mark Twain, usually, though not always, sided with the protagonist in the stories, yet he was never so committed to his hero that he would refrain from making him a fool. His protagonists are always, in some sense, fools in the judgment of the world through which they pass, and the author seldom avoided the opportunity for exploiting the comic
potential of his wanderers. A special feature of Twain's is that his process of siding with the "Unpromising hero" has an unconventional way. He does not arouse the combative-ness of the reader by preaching. He shows in a subtle manner the folly and ridiculousness of the hypocritical world and the reader comes to an understanding with them without any unwholesomeness. The prototypal theme of the triumph of the folk has a special appeal for Twain.

This survey shows that Twain's views on characterization are broadly in agreement with the views of other critics. The general principles in this regard have been beautifully summed up by a modern critic in the following words:

Not every one has the same idea as to what makes a character lifelike, but perhaps we may say that in lifelike characters we find some complexity, a credible consistency, and either some normality in relation to the society in which they move, or some explanation of the deviance. 34

Twain explains the deviance by keeping a close parallel between the life of the folk and the character. He leaves intact the natural frailties in his good characters and the redeeming features in his bad ones. Thus his characters do not become insipid.

It has also been shown that unlike the novel, the short story is only a snapshot. It can present only the highlights of the characters. Yet Twain, being a writer of stories with
an effect of the oral tale, gives the suggestion of full
details in his personages. This prevents his characters
from becoming mere skeleton outlines. The talent of Twain,
in this respect is like that of Dickens and H.G. Wells. In
his short tales he takes the lights and shades of the folk
life in his characters "and yet achieves effects that are not
mechanical and a vision of humanity that is not shallow."35
The personages of Twain's short stories, inspite of the
narrow range at their disposal, surprise the reader at the
end. Mark Twain's stories are interesting because they
show us people from real life exhibiting traits common to
mankind. It is this immediacy of characterization that
contributes ultimately to the general organization of his
stories.
REFERENCES

2. Ibid., p. 42.
11. Ibid., p. 87.
13. Ibid.

18. Charles Neider, The Complete Short Stories of Mark Twain (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co. Inc., 1957), p. 81. All further references to the text of the stories of Mark Twain in this edition will be indicated by page number in parentheses.


26. Cf. Edgar H. Hemminghaus, Mark Twain in Germany (New York: AMS Press Inc., 1966), p. 104; Albert E. Stone, Jr., The Innocent Eye (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1961), p. 17. Stone, Jr. says that Twain "depreciated the pathos and melodrama," which "produced tears from Dickens' audience everywhere." Though Twain also utilizes "childhood at bay situation," yet, according to Stone, Jr., Twain's children have more of similarity with rogues in Dickens' works rather than with "saccharine and sickly children of The Old Curiosity Shop, or Dombey and Son.


30 Cf. Bellamy, p. 60.


35 Forster, p. 69.
CHAPTER VI

THE WIDE NET

An Idea, to be suggestive, must come to the individual with the force of a revelation.

--William James: The Varieties of Religious Experience

I

THE STORY STRUCTURE

Ernest Hemingway's famous remark that "all modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called Huckleberry Finn," may not be literally true but it states a good deal of truth. It illustrates that Mark Twain was making a new approach to literature along with writers like Bret Harte, Nelson Page, Washington Cable, and Joe Chandler Harris. In the works of these writers one gets fresh air to breathe and feels free from the restraints of tradition. Spontaneity takes the place of artificiality and the inner causal connection is maintained beneath extemporaneousness in writing.

Spelling out his methods of work, Mark Twain replied to the questions of a journalist during his visit to India. He said that in the beginning he took the help of his memory and his notes for the preparation of his books but