CHAPTER 2

HUMOR IN MARK TWAIN

An attempt to probe into artistry of this bard of America, Mark Twain, is going to be a probe into America itself as they both are indescribably attached to one another. He, in all his modesty as usual of him, an exaggerated modesty, declared that his sole ambition, was to amuse the masses and never to instruct them. His greatest pleasure was in entertaining them, though he always felt that humor, or even comedy is a low art and he was forced to be a humorist for want of no other professed interest. A reader or a critic of today, with all his added advantage of the distance, may agree without any reservation what he once said to Biegelow Paine, "... put on your diving armor and get yourself lowered away down and down till you strike the dense region, sunless region of eternal drudgery and starvation wages -- there you will find them by the million. A surface reputation, however great, is always mortal, killable. But it is a different matter
with submerged reputation - down in the deep water, once a favourite there, always a favourite; once beloved always beloved; once respected always respected, honored, and believed in. For what the reviewer says never finds its way down into those placid deeps, nor the newspaper sneers, nor any breath of the winds of slander blowing above. Down there they never hear of these things. Their idol may be painted clay up there at surface and fade and waste and crump and blow away, there being much weather there; but down below he is gold and adamant, and indestructible.\textsuperscript{1} He has reached this pinnacle by dint of his merit - humor. This self-educated genius, who never saw the gates of a University, has innate ability, great memory and built a fort of proof and experience around himself. His knowledge is boundless. He had a brain and also a heart. He is drunk with love for life. He has abundant energy. He is maddeningly frank. He fights for justice, against oppression, hypocrisy. He is fresh in his outlook. Yet he is pessimistic, hasty, ignorant. He is a bundle of puzzling contradictions.
He sympathized with slaves but enjoyed the company of aristocrats and lords. He attacked capitalism but believed in overnight millionaires and from rags to riches. He is a Christian but never believed in Christianity as practiced in those days. For all his dazzling wit, easy humor, boundless enthusiasm, ignorance and haste he is aptly, lovingly called as 'youth' by his wife and all these traits are seen in his novels. Naturally his books are loved as he is loved.

He improvised the tradition, as earlier said, by his sharp eye for fact, and his frankness. His predecessors' forte was understatement but his was overstatement. They were for truth. But he was for exaggeration. He showed the various possible, beautiful ways that were not known to them. For all his innovations and mastery "he is one of those writers, of whom there are not a great many in any literature, who have discovered a new way of writing". He is a matchless genius and he has no equal in his
craft. He, in his narrations, painted and confronted with life pretending either to be a superior or an inferior. In bouts of superiority complex he was like a gentleman, or moralist, instructor and its control made him a victim, a dull wit or a sentimentalist. He resembled his seniors in his posing as a gentleman, and the stance of superior gives rise to humour. He is at his best when he posed to be an inferior. This pretention enabled him to exaggerate, to create ridiculous situations, characters, all these resulting in great humor. This stand helped him in many ways. This mitigated the chances of Twain confronting life directly; as a direct confrontation would drive him mad with rage or excessive sentimentality. These rage and sentimenality would hamper his narration. Such a danger is avoided by this pose. It postponed the confrontation and it even diluted the effect of confrontation. With this he could achieve the needed distance from life and he became a spectator instead of an actively involved person. And as the pose results in humor, it submerges the belligerent attack on the
society, the human race itself. It was like a fort for him. It provided him a vast range in comic view which no other could get. Moreover, it prevented him from being personal, partial or even prejudiced in his evaluation. As John C. Guber says "it seemed to offer the ideal therapy, simplification, detachment, minimization".4

His life and the age he lived in add the much envied, much admired charm to his writings. He is the most contemporary and the most representative of America, nay, he can even be considered as the representative of the human race itself and his very words are apparently a joke, but true in spirit. In Arthur Petit's words "the whole human race compared and crammed into a single suit of clothes, - a man housing in his person, every quality, every defect that is findable in the mass of race".5

It shows the significant relation between his life and his works, and gives a clue to his un-rivaled
success. His description of himself as "God's fool" (another example of humorous exaggeration) speaks of his age and not just himself. He is an eccentric, philosophical but practical, a dreamer and realist, democrat, and capitalist. He was born poor but in a slave holding proud family. He was self-educated, brought up in the Calvinistic Christianity of that period. He enjoyed booming riches, was full of enterprise, scheming, believing in sudden rise in riches, ambitious, enormously energetic but crashing to failure, all true to his age. He was the product of the Gilded Age, and even today America still lives in the Gilded Age, and he inherited all those virtues and vices. He was romantic though he had nightmarish experiences. He was full of fancies, wild imagination but had regard for facts. He was a practical philosopher, had a religion of his own. He was blasphemous and sceptic of practised Christianity. He was rational but hasty in decisions and conclusions. He detested capitalists but enjoyed the luxuries and riches of capitalism. He satirized the age for its
business like attitude yet he himself was a great speculator, inventor, entrepreneur.

A legend, and a hero of his age, he was an enthusiastic participant and a detached critic too. A commoner but was seen amidst the great celebrities of his age like Roosevelt, Ulyssess Grant, Henry Ward, Beecher and others. A realist and an idealist, hardcore pragmatist and a dreaming romantic, he was much opposed to slavery but enjoyed the company of Lords. He was the rebellious son of that aristocratic Europe-hating Class but still adored Europe. He oscillated between east and west, past and present, sloth and industry, negation and acceptance of Christianity. He was boorish. Yet craving for the acceptance of the elite. He was unhappy about the course the country took but admired the individual enterprising nature. He very much wanted to be like Huck Finn, but craved for the acceptance of the society. He was sick of human race though he loved people. He raised boldly most of the burning issues of
the age but never gave his opinion as a man. He questioned the ethics of his age though he tried every business that appealed to him. He stood up to the expectations of his country by exhibiting his idiosyncrasies along with the country's mannerisms. He romanticized the past as an escape from the seething anger of the present. The sickening decay in morals of his age made him nostalgic.

Even his life was full of contradictions. He was a wreck, losing all the dear ones and unreasonably blaming himself, when he was a celebrity, applauded by the public. His opinion was sought on every possible thing on earth, yet he was a miserable failure in his enterprises. He worked madly so that he would not go mad due to his gnawing misery. His despair affected his vision of the world and he began to perceive only miserable plight for this accursed race of Adam. He felt that this human race itself is doomed. And he tried to laugh it away.
If America is the world in miniature, Mark Twain is America in a single man. This similarity made him as divergent as his country itself or the world itself, and left its impression on his work. It is nothing amazing if his books are read all over the world; and he is acclaimed as a world humorist.

One may be surprised to know that this giant of world literature suffered from acute insecurity and uncertainty. "The sole survivor in the 'cemetry' of American literature" had the fear of not being serious, of not being thought provoking, as humor was viewed as somewhat inferior. He himself said that humorists were robbers and recipients instead of being givers. He felt a hostile relation between the humorist and the reader. As an answer to these fears he always created aggressive entertainers in his novels. Tom Sawyer, in The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Hank Morgan in Yankee At Sir Arthur's Court, the Duke and the King in Huckleberry Finn are such entertainers. Tom serves as
an agent of humor when he enlivens the boredom of St. Petersburg with his great imagination and ingenious schemes. The villagers being sentimental, hypocritical are easily fooled by him. The reader with the writer has a laugh at the much accepted, much praised European culture as well as the duplicity of the people. The Duke and the King, Huck's pap, the rivalry of the feudal families that Huck met in his journey along the river, do the same. These two books, supposed to be for children, not surprisingly became food for learned scholars, entertainment for adults due to maturity of thought, style of narration, presentation of the complex theme. Mark Twain owes this success to three major influences on him, (1) his mother, known for courage, sense of humor, baffling religious ideas, (2) his apprenticeship, (3) his vast reading. Whatever he missed due to lack of formal education, was compensated by his apprenticeship as a pilot on Mississippi. His river life being rich in experience was a permanent fountain of knowledge from which he got the material to write about. And his later profession as a lecturer
made him very alert to words and sounds. This was of great help to him when he took to writing. His immersion in his country's popular culture was another aid to him. By writing in abundance, experimenting various genres, he whetted his talent for writing novels. He described the world in jokes addressing the middle class, the vast majority of the masses. He focussed on philosophical aspects and social relations. The realist in him is at war with the romantic, and the victory of either is destruction of both. His fury from the deep within erupted in laughter. For this he used irony, satire, burlesque, tall tales, poker language and other such weapons. The narrative frame, distant narrator, and a dialect true to its colour are his innovations that made him eternal. While adopting the traditional humor, he deviated from it with an enriching vision of irony. His novels are ironical comments on the society.

A brief summing up of his novels will enable a closer look into them and a study of humor in them.
The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, a prelude to his great work The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn is the story of a boy Thomas Sawyer, a parentless child. He, with his brother Sid Sawyer is brought up by aunt Polly, under the supervision of Miss Mary, his cousin. The tiny village St. Petersburg is the scene of action. This young romantic hero, with his flair for adventures is lucky enough to have a loving but disciplinarian aunt, equally day dreaming friends like Joe Harper, Ben Rogers, and others. The pariah of the village Huckleberry Finn is much treasured friend whose castigation from the society makes him all the more precious. Tom lives in a world of his own, a world full of romance and adventure but of course true to the great books and writers. He is a great lover too. He is blessed with real adventure in his life. He gets lost in the cave along with his newly found girl friend Becky Thatcher. He, with Huck in his treasure hunt, witnesses the murder in the graveyard, with his two accomplices stays on in the Jackson island, and once again with Huck Finn saves Muff Potter from death, and
finally hits up on the treasure in the caves, sealing Injun Joe in them - all these are wonderful adventures which every one of us would love to have. Much to our immense pleasure he emerges out as a hero to be glorified and to be admired. Twain's second novel *The Adventures of Huckle Berry Finn*, as the title suggests is about the poor, uneducated motherless child Huck Finn. His father, a notorious drunk is a curse to him. The windfall of fortune makes him all the more miserable as he is forced to live as any other civilized man in the village which he wants to run away from. The normal Christian life becomes unbearable for him and right at this moment his father kidnaps him. Even there Huck could not stay for long. He runs away on a raft and gets Jim, the runaway nigger as a companion. The whole novel is a journey on the river with the towns encroaching in between. On the shore, life is equally adventurous as he meets various people like Grangerfords and Sheperdson families, father Peter's nieces, and many others.
Finally he lands up as Tom Sawyer at Tom Sawyer's uncle's farm and with the help of Tom (as Sid of course) frees Jim, his companion. The novel ends with the hero being forced to come back to the village to live there conforming to the demands made by society. But Huck had already decided to run away from the village as and when he gets the village too much into his skin.

His equally hilarious novel, *The Prince and the Pauper* is again of two boys, this time more or less identical in looks and thus living for a while with mistaken identities. It is a satire on the notorious feudal system of England, rather Europe. Tom Canty, the beggar boy, by chance takes the place of Prince Edward. The novel is about their various experiences. Tom's observations, reactions as the young prince bare, the cruel, callous aristocratic society. Prince Edward's sufferings reveal the knave, depraved, degraded poor people of the country. It brings out the various facets of life. The novel ends on a happy note when both the boys are restored to their right places.
A Connecticut Yankee in Sir Arthur's Court is another novel that is also alluded to in my thesis. The Yankee Hank Morgan, a mechanic, lands in Sir Arthur's Court due to his brain injury. There soon he becomes a prominent figure and ranks among the peers of Sir Arthur. Slowly he mechanizes Arthur's England and the American Stock Market with all its vices comes into the country. In his zeal to fortify himself against the invading nobles, he erects landmines and adopts other war techniques with which he brings calamity to the country and to himself.

The Mysterious Stranger is the last in my discussion. This is again a story of three young village lads whom Satan befriends. The whole novel is replete with the incidents that are made to occur due to the interference of Satan. The boys have a wonderful experience but are baffled at the callousness of their friend towards human beings and their lot.
Satan's solutions and remedies turn out to be disasters for the villagers. The boys could not understand why Satan fails to look at things as they do. For him death, madness, sickness are happy solutions whereas for the boys, (for the humans as such) they turn out to be disasters. Still they love Satan and they want to be with him. But Satan deserts them saying that the human race does not matter much to him. The damned human race does not deserve his grace. And so he leaves those boys, though he loves them.

His novels are ironical. The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, suggested that life on the river and in the wilds of nature is civilized and the civilized world outside is really uncivilized. A Connecticut Yankee is a journey into past but only to look at the present and estimate the future. Tom Sawyer does not laugh at the hypocrisy but the sentimentality and readiness of men to be duped. The Prince and the Pauper, not contrary to common belief laughs at the European feudal system but laughs at the pretentions, the -stupidity
of the masses. *Mysterious Stranger*, where the devil is the hero, exposes the meaningless ideas regarding happiness, pleasure, and torture.

His works are masterpieces because of his innate talent to use and improvise every technique in writing that was available at the time along with an abundant sense of humor, deep insight into human nature, and boundless compassion. The various devices of humor he used are analysed here. One of Twain’s devices is vernacular. This realistic, true to local colour dialect, though denounced as low, is best suited for humor. It enabled him to dramatize with a perception into psychological aspects of the characters. It is vernacular when he allowed the language to take him over. It helped him to portray a childhood which mirrored the century he lived in. This usage of vernacular brings the touch of reality and makes the character really lifelike and even amiable and enables him to establish a convention. Examples are given below:
"say, Jim: I'II fetch the water, if you will
white wash some"-

"Can't, Ma'rs Tom. Ole missis, she tole me I
got to go an' git dis water an' not stop
foolin' roun' wid anybody. She say she spec'
Mars Tom gwyne to ax me to white wash, an' so
she tole me go 'long an' tend to my own
business - she 'lowed she'd tend to de
whitewashin"®.

(Tom Sawyer, pp.27)

"Why, you take your cat and go and get in the
grey yard 'long about midnight when somebody
that was wicked has been buried ---- may be
hear 'em talk; and when They're taking that
feller away, you heave your cat after 'em and
say " Devil follow corpse cat follow devil
warts follow cat, I'm done with ye!"

"Say! Why, Tom, I know she is. She witched
pap. Pap says so his own self. He came along one day and he see she was a witching him so he took up a rock, and if she hadn't dodged he'd a got her. Well that very night he rolled off'n a shed wher' he was a-layin' drunk, and broke his arm." (pp.54-55)

"He said there was a spirit inside of it and it knewed everything. So I went to him that night and told him pap was here again, for I found his tracks in the snow." (P.125 - The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn). Such passages, and others in the book (ex: pp.205-206, 210-211, 213, 219-220, 237, 268) can be cited as examples. The argument between Huck and Jim about king Solomon, French man's greetings (pp.268, 269) is the best example where Twain could exploit vernacular to the full. It befits to recall Douglas Grant's words about Mark Twain, "Huckleberry Finn is the triumphant - demonstration of his command of the vernacular which he acquired from
ganging from the platform how to make each word tell -- He was almost alone in turning what he learnt to more than immediate ends."\(^9\)

'Is a cat a man, Huck?'

'No'

'Is a cow a man? - er is a cow a cat?'

No, she an't either of them.'

Well, den, she ain't got no business to talk like either one er the yuther of 'em. Is a French man a man?

'Yes'.

Well, den, Dad blame it, why doan' he talk like a man? You answer me dat?

--- You can't learn a nigger to argue. So I quit'. (p.269).
Such examples illustrate his mastery over vernacular which results in high humor. This also gives the needed local colour to his humor making it brilliant and incisive while helping him to preserve his identity. The difference between the vernacular and the learned language creates humor. He himself said: "In this book a number of dialects are used, to wit, the Missouri Negro dialect, the extremest form of the blackwoods, South western dialect; the ordinary Pike-country' dialect; and four modified varieties of this last."10

Straight forward exaggeration is another tool of his humor. Tom Sawyer abounds in this. Tom's musings of turning to crime or rather being forced to turn to crime by the unsympathetic world around, his humiliation due to the scorn of his new lady love Becky, and Joe Harper's endorsement to it are examples of this. Their midnight venture along with Huck Finn reverberates with exaggerations:

"Who goes there?"
"Tom Sawyer, the Black Avenger of the Spanish Main. Name your names.

"Huck Finn, the Red Handed, Joe Harper the terror of the seas."

'Tis well. Give the counter sign' (p.88) and then their talk on the raft,

"Luff, and bring her to the wind!"
Ay, ay Sir!

'Steady, steady y-y!

'Steady, it is Sir!"

"Let her go off a point!"
"Point it is sir"

"... what sail's she carrying?"

Courses, topsls and flying jib, sir!
'Send the r'yls up! lay out aloft there, half a dozen of ye, foreto-mast-stuns! Lively, vow!
and again the description of their feelings when they were mistaken to be drowned by the villagers,

"They felt like heroes in an instant. Here was a gorgeous triumph, they were missed; they were honoured; hearts were breaking on their account, tears were being shed; accusing memories of unkindness to these poor lost lads were rising up, - It was worthwhile to be a pirate, after all (p.98).\textsuperscript{12}

And Sunday School when the eminent quest turns up (p.41) and game of Robinhood (pp.66-67) are another unforgettable passages of exaggeration. The writer's notice : "Persons attempting to find a motive in this narrative will be persecuted; persons attempting to find a moral in it will be banished, persons attempting to find a plot will be shot,"\textsuperscript{13} at the very beginning of the novel \textit{Huckleberry Finn}, is the best example for his art of exaggeration.
Besides the humorous warning the author gives, he makes Huckleberry Finn say that "The Adventures of Sawyer was made by Mr. Mark Twain, and he told truth mainly. --- that book which is mostly a true book: with some stretchers,"\textsuperscript{14} is a straightforward exaggeration and his masterpiece Huckleberry Finn is nonetheless in this 'stretchers'. The novel begins with a game invented by great dreamer boy Tom. The very oath he asks the boys to take (p.208) and their lively discussion about the conduct of pirates never fails to tickle us. The romantic Tom lives only in exaggeration. His account of coming across Spanish merchants and rich Arabs (p.212), and Huck's description of the kings of yester years, Henry the Eighth and his beheading of wives each a day, his having tea in Boston harbour, drowning the Duke of Wellington (p.345), Miss Mary Janes' eager assurance (p.338) for the sake of her niggers, and Tom's sudden appearance at uncle Sila's farm and his aunt's reaction for kissing her are examples for humor out of exaggeration. The outstanding of all these is
the elaborate planning of Tom to release the nigger Jim from uncles's farm, knowing that he is already a free nigger. Actions such as making the pie, rope ladder, filling Jim's room with spiders, garter snakes, rats, disguising himself as Jim's mother and Huck as maid servant, confusing aunt Sally and scaring the whole family out of their wits, alarming the whole villagers with written-in-blood letters of warning, the whole of last section from page 410 onwards to 425 is the best example for exaggeration.

Witty understatements are yet another source of his humor.

"To be good is noble; but to show others to be good is nobler and less trouble."¹⁵(Puddenhead Wilson's New Calender) (p.55).

"No, Tom's life went along well enough especially in summer. He only begged just enough to save himself."¹⁶ (p.5, Prince and Paper).
The exchange between Prince and Pauper

"Look you," do thy sisters forbid their servants to smile lest the sin destroy their souls." (P.13)

'garment! Have they but one?'

Ah, good your worship, what would they do with more? Truly they have not two bodies each". (P.14)

The first sentence of introduction to Tom Sawyer, "Don't part with your illusions. When they are gone, you may still exist, but you have ceased to live." (p.10) "Although my book is intended mainly for the entertainment of boys and girls I hope it will not be shunned by men and women on that account....." (p.18).17

"Mary gave him a brand-new Barlow knife worth twelve and a half cents, and the convulsion of delight that swept his system shook him to his foundations."18 (p.37)
"Then Mary got out a suit of his clothing that had been used only on Sundays during two years - they were simply called his other clothes - and so by that we know the size of his wardrobe."¹⁹ (p.37)

"The crowd filed up the aisles; the aged and the needy postmaster, who had seen better days; the mayor and his wife - for they had a mayor there among other unnecessaries"²⁰ (p.43).

"Tom had no handkerchief and he looked upon boys who had as snobs -- the choir always tittered and whispered all through service. There was once a choir that was not illbred but I have forgotten where it is now. It was a great many years ago and I can scarcely remember anything about it, but I think it was in some foreign country"²¹ (p.44).

..... 'poor Huck stood abashed and uncomfortable, not knowing exactly what to do or where to hide from so many unwelcoming eyes"²² (p.112).
'Aunt Polly, it ain't fair. Somebody's got to be glad to see Huck.'23 (p.112).

He ain't no account; but then he ain't everdone anything to hurt anybody. Just fishes a little to get money to get drunk on -- and loafs around considerable but, Lord, we all do that -- least ways most of us, -- preachers and such like"24 (p.135).

'As usual, the fickle unreasoning world took Muff Potter to its bosom, and fondled him as lavishly as it had abused him before'25 (p.141).

And in *Huckleberry Finn*,

'that is just the way with some people. They get down on a thing when they don't know nothing about it.
--- And she took snuff too; ofcourse that was all right, because she done it herself'26 (p.204).

'I says to myself, if a body can get anything they pray for, why don't Deacon Winn get back the money he lost on pork? Why can't the widow get back her silver
snuff-box that was stole? Why can't Miss. Watson fat up? No says I to myself, there ain't nothing in it.' 27 (p.211).

'a feud is this way. A, man has a quarrel with another man and kills him; then that other man's brother kills him; then the other brothers, on both sides, goes for one another, then the cousins chip in - and by and by, every body's killed off, and there ain't no more feud 28 (p.291).

'If you notice, most folks don't go to church only when they've got to; but a hog is different.' 29 (p.293).

'But Huck, dese kings O' oURN is regular rapscallions dat's jist what dey is; dey's regular rapscallions' 30 (p.329).

and the concluding line 'Aunt Sally she's going to adopt me and civilize me and I can't stand of. I been there before' 31 (p.445) -- such under statements along with exaggeration result in creating laughter making the novels unforgettable.
Another equally potential device he uses is repetitions. Tom's meeting with a well dressed stranger of his age in *Adventures of Tom Sawyer* is one such:

'Tom: 'I can lick you!''

'I'd like to see you try it'.'

'Well, I can do it'.

'No, you can't, either'.

'Yes, I can'.

'No, you can't'.

'I can'.

'You can't'.

'Can'.

'Can't'.

.... It's because you're afraid'.
'I ain't afraid'.

'You are'.

'I ain't'.

'Yor are'.

'Get away from here!'

'Get away yourself!'

'I won't'.

'I won't either'32 (p.22, 25).

and the hilarious passage where Tom faces an ordeal in reciting the prayer,

'Blessed are the --a--a--'

'Poor----'

'Yes---poor; blessed are the poor ---a---a-----'

'In spirit ----
'In spirit; blessed are the poor in spirit, for they ---they----'

'Theirs ----'

'For theirs. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs--is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn, for they ---they----'

'Sh ----'

'For they ---a----'

'S, H, A----'

'For they S, H---- Oh, I don't know what it is !'

'Shall !'

'Oh, shall ! for they shall for they shall --a--a-- shall mourn ---a--a--blessed are they that shall -- they that --a--they that shall mourn, for they shall --a--shall what? Why don't you tell me, Mary? What do you want to be so mean for?'33 (p.36) is another
example and he uses just one word showing off' to load
the passage with wanted meaning, while describing the
ostentacious show in the Church. (p.41)

and Huck's answer to the question by Tom "Who told
you so"?

, he told Jeff Thatcher, and Jeff told Johnny
Baker, and Johnny told Hollis, and Jim told Ben Rogers,
and Ben told a nigger, and the nigger told me. There,
now !'.34 (p.53).

Tom's efforts to impress his new found lady love
Becky Thatcher; (p.58)

Young hero's talk with his heroine;

'Yes-yes'.

'What was it?'

'I shan't tell you'.

'Shall I tell you ?'

'Ye-yes -- but some other time'.
'No, not now -- to-morrow'.

'Oh, no, now, please, Becky'.

This same device is used, of course, sparingly in Huckleberry Finn too. Huck Finn's talk with the hare lip, the niece of Peter Wilks is another example.

And when Huck and Tom thoroughly confuse uncle Silas, the old man grumbles. "I reely don't know, Sally, he says, kind of apologizing, or you know I would tell. I was a-studying over my text in acts seventeen, before breakfast and I reckon I put it in there, not noticing, meaning to put my testament in, and it must be so, because my Testament ain't in, but I'll go and see and if the testament is where I had it, I'll know I didn't put it in, and that will show that laid the Testament down and took up the spoon and -----

35 (p.61) have the same device.

36 (p.412), can serve as the examples for this device of repetition.
Lies, blatant lies are another device and almost all his characters do tell lies either for good or for bad but making it humorous. The Prince and Pauper, and the twin novels Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn have plenty of these lies. Of The Prince and Pauper, the first such evidence comes where Tom Canty, as the king graces the court.

The under sheriff's accusations of the supposed to be criminals can be an example of such naked lies of malice. (p.122)

For Tom's querry he says that they sold themselves to the devil,

'On a midnight, in December in a ruined church, your majesty.'

"Who was there present?"

"Only these two, your grace and that The other"

"Then Prithee how was it known?"
"Certain witnesses did see them wending thither good your majesty, this bred the suspicion, and dire effects have since confirmed, and justified it. In particular, it is in evidence that through the wicked power so obtained they did invoke and bring about a storm that wasted all these region round about. Above forty witnesses have proved the storm; and sooth one might have had a thousand, for all had reason to remember it sith all had suffered by it.\(^{37}\) (p.125).

And to Tom Canty's enquiry "How wrought they to bring the storm?" the answer by the civil officer was

"By pulling off their stockings, sire"\(^{38}\) (p.126) and the scenes where the Prince Edward was with the beggars, where the priest fools Henderson (p.177) are full of lies.

\textit{The Mysterious Stranger} is another novel where Mark Twain exposes the base human nature through these naked
lies. Theodor's innocent report about father Adolf, who confronted the devil, and also the scene where the astrologer, who is a great cheat, claims the money as his own, (p.103), serve as example for naked lies told unashamedly.

And the height of deception and lies is seen when Ursula, the maid servant of the poverty stricken Margret was offered money as a way of help. She takes it but was afraid of offending her mistress Margret. So she decides to say to her mistress that it was found on the road. So she makes the boy drop the money on the road while she watches and goes and takes it as if it was found exclaiming with surprise and joy. Both the boys Theodor and Seppi visit their friend Nikolas who is doomed to die. They could not reveal it nor could they bear it. When they talk to his mother, Seppi just tells lies, of course good heartedly. The trial scene where the astrologer comes as a witness is another example. (p.151-152)
No need to say that Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn are full of such lively lies that bring out laughter. Tom being a great liar there is no dearth of lies. He very easily bluffs his friends and everybody else around him. Washing the fence is the first in the line of lies. (p.29, 30). Then the next scene is that where Tom tries to impress Sid with his sickness (p.49,50). The chapter where the village lads try to impress one another about their intimacy with Tom and Huck who became heroes all of a sudden, (p.111) and Tom's successful fooling of his aunt Polly about his visit to her in the night (p.114) are the best examples of innocent lies originating laughter or rather humor.

Tom's friend Huck is no less in this art of lying, Huck, together with Tom discovers that the deaf and dumb Spaniard was none but Injun Joe and saves the lonely rich widow Douglas with the help of the Welshman and his sons. When the Welshman questiones how he came
across Injun Joe, Huck immediately weaves out a story (p.168).

Huck was in a fix when the Welshman enquires of him about his strange reaction on hearing about the burglars. But quickly he escapes once again by telling a lie.

"Yes, burglars' tools. That appears to relieve you a good deal. But what did give you that turn? What were you expecting we'd found?"

Huck was in a close place; the enquiring eye was upon him--he would have given anything for material for a plausible answer. Nothing suggested itself; the inquiring eye was boring deeper and deeper -- a senseless reply offered -- there was no time to weight it, so at a venture, he uttered it, feebly:

'Sunday school books, maybe." 39 (p.169)
Mark Twain’s major novel ‘The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn’ does not lag and it uses lies as one device of laughter extensively. Huck is forced to be a liar by his drunken selfish father. He ambushes Huck and locks him up in a deserted cabin. Huck plans to run away from this as he is afraid of the tyrannous father. He is caught napping with a gun beside him. He immediately spins a story. (p.228)

Later on in the novel the whole of his adventures along with Jim is enlivened by this device only. Huck goes into the country to gather the information and he talks to a lady pretending to be a girl, (p.252) and he weaves a heart rending story to escape robbers. (p.264). Huck never finds it difficult to spin a story with all his fertile imagination. Huck goes in the canoe and comes across a skiff. The men in the skiff are easily fooled by Huck’s lies. (p.277-78). Fooling Nigger Jim is easier than winking Huck fools him always and the best example is the scene where he makes Jim believe that there was no storm. Jim says "Well, den,
I reck'n I did dream it, Huck^40(p.273).

Huck always very readily tells the lies but its only to go scot free from the unwanted, unhappy circumstances. But others, especially Duke and King are the ones who tell lies only to cheat and gain. The moment they turn up the charming innocence of lies is robbed away and the crooked cunning grown ups face us in all their naked reality. One of the 'rapscallions' claims to be Duke of Bridge water and the other claims to be king and shamelessly demand the services of Huck and Jim, putting on airs all the time being shallow and mean to the core. The king makes the money at the mourner's gathering posing to be a reformed pirate. "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, - 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 Indian Ocean and put in the rest of his life
trying to turn the pirates into the true path. ----
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 then, the truest friend a pirate
ever had."41 (p.310) The whole of the gathering was so
moved that it parted with its money generously to help
a reformed pirate. The Duke is no less a liar. His
canvassing about the drama troup is the liveliest
example. The Duke and Huck go round pasting the bills.
They read like this:

"Shakespearean Revival!!!

Wonderful Attraction!

for one Night only!

The World renowned tragedians,

David Garrick the younger of Drury Lane
theatre, London,
Edmund Kean the elder of the Royal Haymarket Theatre, White Chapel Pudding Lane, Picadilly, London and the Royal Continental Theatres in their Sublime Shakespearean spectacle entitled

The Balcony Scene

in

Romeo and Juliet"!! 42 (p.315)

and it was all lies all through the king's pretention as brother to dead Peter and as uncle to the innocent girls. The charm returns when Huck as usual bluffs the girl over there and often he is in fix as his lies are almost detected. When he poses as the attendant of the rascal uncle one of the girls tries to pin him down but of course in vain. (p.344)

and he plays the same game with the Duke and the king and safely hides away the gold that belongs to the girls. The last chapter where Huck stays at Silas Phelps's place posing to be Tom Sawyer is replete with
lies. When aunt Sally enquires the reason for the delay, Huck says its because of blowing of a cylinder head and that leads on to further lies. Tom Sawyer visits the place and he fools his aunt first pretending to be a stranger and then as Sid. He, still pretending to be a stranger, kisses his aunt and the ensuing dialogue, is full of lies, but of course results in a gloriously rewarding recognition. (p.390)

'I don't mean nothing ma'm. I didn't mean 'no harm. I - I - thought you'd like it' - 'why, you born fool! What made you think I'd like it?'

'I'm sorry, and I war n't expecting it. They all said kiss her and she'll like it. --- I won't do it again, till you ask me'.

Till I ask you !

Well! I can't make it out. They said you would.

I thought you would

--- then he looks around the same way to me and
says: Tom did not you think Aunt Sally open out her arms and say Sid Sawyer".43 (p.390) and poor Aunt Sally was immensely impressed.

Another device is parody and Mark Twain being an expert at parodying, taps it to full potentiality whenever occasion demands it. Earlier, romantic sentiments are parodied by the great showman of success, Tom Sawyer, and highly imaginative, intelligent Huckleberry Finn, and through the baffled observations or remarks of Tom Canty. Tom plays Robin Hood, true to the textbook and the writer parodies the notion of heroism and chivalry (p.89).

Tom and Huck see Injun Joe killing the doctor and they get their lives' shock. They are afraid that Injun Joe would take revenge on them if they let the secret out. To ensure that it won't be revealed, Tom makes Huck sign a blood written bond, a hillarious dig at earlier romances.

"He picked up a clean pine shingle that lay in the moon light, took a little fragment of 'red keel' out of
his pocket, got the moon on his work, and painfully scrawled these lines.

Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer swears they will keep mum about this and they wish they may Drop down dead in their Tracks if They ever Tell and Rot." 44 (p.76) Even the names he has given to him and his friends and their way of talking among themselves are parodies.

"Who goes there?"

'Tom Sawyer, the Black Avenger of the Spanish Main. Name your names'.

'Huck Finn the Redhanded and Joe Harper the Terror of the seas." 45 (p.89)

Tom enlightens his two friends about Pirates and its his unintended parody that enlivens the scene.

'What does pirates have to do?'

Oh they have just a bully time-take ships and
burns them and get the money and bury it in awful places in their island where there's ghosts and things to watch it and kill every body in the ships - make 'em walk a plank.

'And they carry the women to the island! said Joe; they don't kill the women'.

'No' assented Tom, they don't kill the women - they're too noble. And the women's always beautiful too.

'And don't they wear the bulliest clothes! Oh, no! All gold and silver and diamonds, said Joe with 'enthusiasm'\textsuperscript{46} (p.92). Tom explains Huck how great it is to be a robber.

`Looky here, Huck, being rich ain't going to keep me back from turning robber.

--- you would not shet me out, would you, Tom?"

'Huck, I wouldn't want to and I don't want to but
what would people say? Why they’d say, "Mph! Tom Sawyer’s Gang! pretty low characters in it! They’d mean you, Huck." (p.197).

_The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn_ begins again with a game where Tom asks other boys to take an oath; sign their names in blood. (pp.208-209) ‘It swore every boy to stick to the band and never tell any of the secrets and if anybody done any thing to any body in the bond, whichever boy was ordered to kill that person and his family must do it and he mustn’t eat and he must not ‘sleep till he had killed them and hacked across in their breasts which was the sign of the band." (p.208)

The young girl’s poems and her paintings of Grangerford family are excellent examples of parody. Huck observes that all her pictures and poems are loaded with unwarranted misery. The writing underneath a painting ‘And Art Thou Gone! Yes Thou Art Gone Alas!" (p.286), and her ode on the boy drowned, (p.288), parody romance and pathos.
And Huck's meeting with Duke and king again makes use of parody: Duke of Bridgewater demands these innocent drifters Huck and Jim that they should bow to him when speaking to him and address him as 'Your Grace', 'My Lord'. Or your Lordship. Huck and Jim realised that both king and Duke are liars but still they humour them. In one of the villages the king poses to be a reformed soul to get some fast bucks. Here the mourners group is parodied. (p.310)

The king and Duke learn the soliloquy of Hamlet for a show in the village, which serves as the beautiful example of parodying.

'To be, or not to be, that is the bare bodkin that makes calamity of so long life:

For who would fardels bear, till Birnam Wood do come to Dunsianne

But that fear of something after death

Murders the innocent sleep.
But soft you, the fair Ophelia Ope not they ponderous and marble jaws. But get thee to a nunnery -- go"51 (p.314)

and even their advertising bills are excellent sours of fun.

One of the bills says:

At the Court House!

For 3 Nights only!

The world-Renowned Tragedians.

David Garrick the younger!

and

Edmund Kean the Elder!

of London and continental Theatres

In their Thrilling Tragedy of
THE KING'S CAMELOPARD

OR

THE ROYAL NONESUCH!!!

then at the bottom was the biggest line of all - that said: LADIES AND CHILDREN NOT ADMITTED.52 (p.327)

and his stay as Tom at Aunt Sally's farm is sprinkled with parodies. Tom Sawyer comes there as Sid and they try to free Jim. Tom indulges in elaborate arrangements all futile but as he read and all the time knowing pretty well that Jim is no more a slave. He writes a mournful inscription on behalf of the run away nigger Jim: an excellent parody of warrior heroes.

(1) Here a captive heart busted.

(2) Here a poor prisoner forsook by the world and friends fretted out his sorrowful life.
(3) Here a lonely heart broke, and a worn spirit went to its rest after thirty seven years of solitary captivity.

(4) Here, homeless, friendless, after thirty seven years of bitter captivity, perished a noble stranger, natural son of Louis XIV.53

(p.416)

His Warning letter to his aunt Sally is another marvellous parody.

'Don't betray me, I wish to be your friend. There is a desperate gang of cut-throats from over in the Ingean Territory going to steal your run away nigger to-night, and they have been trying to scare you so as you will stay in the house and not bother them. I am one of the gang but have got religgion and wish to quit it and lead a honest life again and will betray the helish design. They will sneak down from northwards along the fence at midnight exact, with a false key and
go in the nigger's cabin to get him. I am to be off a piece and blow a tin horn if I see any danger, but stead of that I will BA like a sheep as soon as they get in and not blow at all; then whilst they are getting his chains loose, you slip there and lock them in and can kill them at your leasure. Don't do any thing but just the way I am telling you, if you do they will suspicion something and raise whoop-jamboreehoo. I do not wish any reward but to know I have done the right thing, unknown friend.\(^5\) (p.425)

The novel 'Prince and The Pauper' itself is a parody like 'A Yankee At King Aurthur's Court', though at a deeper level the latter is a comment on the disappointing American race as such.

Here are a few passages from The Prince and The Pauper. The dressing of the prince is an example. 'In the beginning, a shirt was taken up by the Chief Equerry - in - waiting, who passed it to the First Lord of the Buckhounds, who passed it to the second
Gentleman of the Bed Chamber, who passed it to the Head Ranger of Windsor Forest, who passed it to the Third Groom of the stole, who passed it to the chancellor Royal of the Duchy of Lancaster who passed it to the Norroy King at Arms, who passed it to the Constable of the Tower who passed it to the Chief Steward of the Household, who passed it to the Hereditary Grand Diaperer, who passed it to the Lord High Admiral of England who passed it to the Archbishop of Canterbury who took what was left of it and put it on Tom. Poor Little wondering chap it reminded him of passing buckets at fire.\textsuperscript{55} (p.101).

And the same lengthy procedure is repeated when the first lord of the bedchamber notices the hose without a tag. Each officer exclaims and passes it to the other as if it's a hot brick and finally Chief Equerry-in-Waiting orders the 'Head Keeper of the King's Hose' to Tower.\textsuperscript{56} (p.103).
Tom's dinner as the prince can be another example. Toms is baffled at the ceremonious dinner procedure and the august gathering over there. There are Hereditary Diaperer, Lord Great Steward, King's Taster, and many more attendants. Throughout the dinner he was attended by the servants and he is not allowed to touch any thing or eat, all by himself. Poor Tom is so puzzled that he thinks that there will be an attendant even to scratch his nose. So he says with utmost innocence, "I crave your indulgence, my nose itcheth cruelly. What is the custom and usage in the emergence? Prithee, speed, for its but a little time that I can bear it." (p. 47).

A Yankee At the Court of King Arthur parodies contemporary society rather than Sir Arthur's period. An exchange between yankee the Boss and Clarence about the disaster is a beautiful parody of stock market as
well as the earlier plays. (p.189) The description of war between Sir Arthur and Lancelot by Clarence:

Gawaine appeared to Arthur in a dream, at least his ghost did, and warned him to refrain from conflict for a month, let the delay cost what it might. But battle was precipitated by an accident. Arthur had given order that if a sword was raised during the consultation over the proposed treaty with Mordred, sound the trumpet and fall on for he had no confidence in Mordred, well, by and by an adder bit a knight's heel, the knight forgot all about order and made a slash at the adder with his sword. Inside for half-a-minute those two prodigious hosts came together with a crash! -- we have started something fresh since you left - our paper has.

No? what is that?

War correspondence!'58 (p.191)

Later on he says that the Boss could not educate
the masses out of superstition and the Church had gained a hold on them. It passed an interdict and as they are afraid of it they left the Boss and joined the Church. He says,

"Our navy had suddenly and mysteriously disappeared! Also as suddenly and as mysteriously, the railway and telegraph and telephone service ceased, the men all deserted, poles were cut down, the church laid a ban upon electric light."\(^59\) (p.193).

Such parodies show us Twain's love and aversion at the human race. The more he loves the more he raves.

The other two devices are anticlimax and burlesque. His humor reaches the zenith in anticlimaxes. Aunt Polly's rapture at Tom's white washing the fence is vanquished with one single sentence. "She was so overcome by the splendour of his achievement that she took him, in to the closet and sentenced a choice apple, and delivered it to him along with an improving lecture upon the added value and flavour a treat took to itself when it came without sin
through virtuous effort. And while she closed with a happy scriptural flourish, he 'hooked' a doughnut."\(^{60}\) (p.31).

Tom was in ecstasies when Sid slipped the sugar bowl and broke it. "He even controlled his tongue and was silent. He said to himself that he would not speak a word, even when his aunt came in, but would sit perfectly still till she asked who did the mischief, and then he would tell and there would be nothing so good in the world as to see the pet model catch it'. -- He said to himself, 'Now its coming'. And the next instant he was sprawling on the floor! The potent palm was uplifted to strike again when Tom cried out" ...\(^{61}\) (p.34).

Tom muses about his new lady love and he is so rudely jolted back to this world. (p.35). The great scene in the Church. Tom could manage to get all the precious tickets from other children and he is to be honoured by the august guest judge Thatcher. He gives
an inspiring lecture about how Tom would grow into a hero. 'Fine, manly little fellow. Two thousand verses is a great many - very, very great many. And you never can be sorry for the trouble you took to learn them. For knowledge is worth more than anything there is in the world. It's what makes great men and good men. You'll be a great man and a good man yourself some day Thomas and then you'll look back and say, it's all owing to precious Sunday School Privileges of my boy hood. It's all owing to my good teachers that taught me to learn, it's all owing to the good Superintendent who encouraged me and watched me over and gave me a beautiful Bible, a splendid elegant Bible. It's all owing to right bringing up! --- Now won't you tell us the names of first two that were appointed?

Answer the gentleman, Thomas, don't be afraid'

Tom still hung fire.

Now I know you'll tell me, said the lady- 'The names of the first two disciples were -

"David and Goliath!"62 (p.43)
Huck’s trial to convince Jim that a French man does not talk like an American ends with the answer of Jim that serves as an anticlimax.

‘Well, den! Dad blame it, why doan’ he talk like a man? You answer me dat!’ and Huck’s comment ‘I see it wasn’t no use wasting words - you can’t learn a nigger to argue - so I quit’⁶³ (p.269), are the examples of this superb technique.

The other two novels ‘The Prince and The Pauper’, ‘A Yankee At King Arthur’s Court’ are more of burlesques rather an anti-climaxes. The scenes where the prince is mistaken to be Tom Canty and where he is mocked by other beggers and robbers are full of burlesque. The prince wakes up from the slumber and finds the beggars dancing around. He see the ‘gutter Scum ruffians of all ages and both sexes attired in splendid rags. One of the blind men got up and made ready by casting aside the patches that sheltered his excellent eyes. “Dot-and-Go-One disencumbered himself
of his timber leg and took place on sound and healthy limbs, beside his fellow rascal, then they roared out a rollicking ditty and were reinforced by the whole crew at the end of each stanza in a rousing chorus. Everybody joined in and sang it clear through from the beginning producing a volume of villainous sound that made rafters quake.\textsuperscript{64} (p.138). The burlesque continues through out and reaches its peak when they celebrate the king’s presence among them. (p.145)

The prince meets the mad hermit who calls himself an archangel. He welcomes him and his demeanour, his reception all tend to be burlesque. The young king is once again caught by Tom’s father and he is forced to go stealing with Hugo. He gets caught and people are ready to blow him but he is luckily saved by Henderson, these can be examples for burlesque (pp.170-172, 185-187).

The final scene where Prince Edward appears at the coronation and Tom Canty endorses the prince’s right to be the king is partly burlesque. The court is confused
and the lords are totally baffled. When Edward orders Lord Saint John to fetch the seal, he makes a deep 'obeisance' which is cautiously delivered not before either king but on neutral ground. When he comes without the seal the mob left the real king and the Lord Protector calls out for casting away the Pretender. When officers jump to do so Tom Canty orders them back and the Lord Protector is perplexed. Tom suddenly realizes and says, 'Hold, that is enough. was it round? And thick? And had it letters and devices graved up on it. Yes?"65 (p.260), and he urges the prince to remember the place where he had it and much to everybody's relief the prince recollects it. The prince is accepted and he is enthroned. At once the Lord Protector orders the pretender, Tom Canty to be thrown out, but is rescued by the new king. (p.260-264).

Yankee's duel with the knights for the first time in the presence of king Arthur, his war against the remaining knights after the king's death are excellent scenes of burlesque. (pp.183-188, 202-206).
Most often Mark Twain indulges in mistaken identity, like Huck being Tom, Tom Canty to be the Prince that originates humor. Misquotations of classics, or Bible, wrong spellings are also great sources of his humor. His style itself is a greater source of humour as it makes his humor splendid, and incisive. Whether it is exaggeration or understatement, whether it is parody or burlesque, or some other device, it changes into most adorned, embellished device, gaining a new vigour and colour and becoming strikingly humorous and appealing. It looks as if it were invented by him alone. Whatever is the device, whatever is the technique, the novel in his hands, becomes an unforgettable novel of humor. If it is to be agreed that "general impulse of humor is to enjoy life's conquest overall particular systems and pleasure is the miracle of humor," then Mark Twain is a humorist to the hilt. Any amount of analysis will not suffice to answer the question: Why is he a great humorist?
NOTES


All the subsequent passages from Tom Sawyer are from the same edition. Hence page numbers are mentioned.


Other quotations are from the same publication. Hence only page numbers are given.

11. Ibid page 89.

12. Ibid page 98


17. Ibid pp.13-18


19. Ibid.

20. Ibid p.43

21. Ibid p.44

22. Ibid p.112.

23. Ibid

24. Ibid p.135

25. Ibid p.145
26. The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn p.204

27. Ibid p.211

28. Ibid p.291

29. Ibid p.293

30. Ibid p.329

31. Ibid p.445

32. The Adventures of Tom Sawyer p.25

33. Ibid p.36

34. Ibid p.53

35. Ibid p.61

36. The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn p.412

37. The Prince and The Panper p.122

38. Ibid p.126

39. The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, p.169

41. Ibid p.310

42. Ibid p.315

43. Ibid p.319

44. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* p.76

45. Ibid p.89

46. Ibid p.92

47. Ibid p.197


49. Ibid p.286

50. Ibid p.303

51. Ibid p.314

52. Ibid p.327

53. Ibid p.416
54. Ibid p.425

55. The Prince and the Pauper p.101

56. Ibid p.103

57. Ibid p.47

58. A Yankee At the Court of King Arthur p.191

59. Ibid p.193

60. The Adventures of Tom Sawyer p.31

61. Ibid p.34

62. Ibid p.43

63. The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn p.269

64. The Prince and the Pauper p.138

65. Ibid p.260