CHAPTER - I

The God-Like Mark Twain
"I am persuaded that the future historian of America will find your works as indispensable to him as a French historian finds the political tracts of Voltaire" is George Bernard Shaw's comment on "Mark Twain," the pen name of the gifted and most talented American novelist Samuel Langhorne Clemens, who put the Thames on fire by creating new vistas in the American novel in particular and in the world of novel in general. This great novel maestro saw his first sun in Florida, Missouri, in the central region of the United States of America on November 30, 1935. His father was a legal practitioner from Virginia and his mother was a descendent of the original settlers in Kentucky. Mark Twain's family with the hope of enriching their mundane materialistic position moved to Hannibal which is a small town beside the river Mississippi. It is here as a small coyish boy of four years, Twain assayed his life by being inculcated so many lessons by the river Mississippi. Though Hannibal was a small town then, yet it was so busy with the steam boats coming down and going up. In fact, Twain spent a great part of his life here on the shores of the river Mississippi. He was so impressed by its beauty that he wanted to become a pilot. But at the age of 12 years, Twain received a shattering blow as his father paid nature's debt. With the demise of his father Twain was compelled to leave the river side town as he had to join as an apprentice to a local printing press. In this new job Twain worked as compositor and pressman for his older brother Orino, who managed a not completely successful newspaper in Hannibal. There was room in its pages for humorous features which young Samuel composed, set to type, and printed over the flamboyant signature of "W. Spamnodas Adrastas Blab" and for miscellaneous items which he collected for "Our Assistant Column". By the time he was seventeen he was able to think of himself as something more that a local writer. Hence Twain was given a new assignment. Because of this new duty he had to go far and wide in America and thus visited so many places on his trips. This travelling gusto provided him abundant material for his future avocation of writing. Though he did visit so many places yet they did not attract him, as Hannibal did. His
longing for the river Mississippi was cherishing and everlasting for this young
man. After completion of his apprenticeship, he worked as a journalist for
some newspapers in St. Louis, New York and Philadelphia.

At eighteen he left little Hannibal for St. Louis, the largest town in
Missouri, where he saved his wages carefully until he could strike out
beyond the limits of his western state, to discover whether a young man’s
fortunes might not be more quickly made in larger cities to the east. He
traveled first by steam boat and then by rail, through, Chicago and Buffalo,
to New York, where he worked briefly as a job printer, until he moved
southward to become a compositor in Philadelphia then he started for New
Orleans, on his first step toward fame.

Twain was a child of frontier life; the entire nation was on the move,
he too had a child like reverence for wealth, he felt that the present job could
not gratify his want of wealth. So, he left the job and travelled all over the
South. During this travel, he got the unique opportunity of meeting a steam
boat captain who was very nice, amicable and famous everywhere along the
river Mississippi. Twain did not want to lose this chance, for he had been
dreaming of becoming a steam boat pilot. At once, he gave up the thought of
going to the South in the fond hunt of treasure and with a great zeal he
joined as an apprentice pilot. Within no time, by the kindness of his preceptor
he became a licensed pilot. During the same period to his utter dismay the
Civil War broke out in 1861 and travel by the river was banned. Thus his
long cherished dream was disturbed. As a sympathizer of the South, he
joined the Confederate Forces, but this was also short living. Then he went
to Nevada, where his brother Orino was appointed its governor. The recent
discovery of Gold mines in Nevada tempted him to seek adventures. These
adventures for gold and treasures have been clearly depicted in his novel
The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, where Tom joins with Huck Finn in finding
them in deserted houses and woods. His romanticism was clearly revealed
in the portrayal of Tom and his practical wisdom was clearly depicted in
Huck: when Huck asks Tom, in The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, where
they can find treasures, Tom says:
"Oh, most anywhere"

"Why, is it hid all around?"

"No indeed of ain't.

Its hid in mighty particular places, Huck, sometimes on Islands, sometimes in rotten chests under the end of a limb of an old dead tree just where the shadow falls at midnight; but mostly under the floor in haunted houses."

After spending sometime in Nevada, Twain left the place as it was so boring, harsh and rough to lead life there. In order to escape from this profanes, Twain developed some interest in writing and reporting. Soon, he became the correspondent for some magazines in Virginia City and San Francisco. In fact, the base for all his future writings lied in, his practical life in Missouri, Hannibal and Nevada; the praise worthy quality in all his works is his humorous presentation of everything, which brought him the title of The Funny Man. His lecture tours all around the world also made him very famous; the publication of the Celebrated Jumping Frog (1865) marked the beginning of his literary career as a novelist, humourist and a man of letters. Thus Twain made his presence felt among the literary circles of that age.

When Twain was around 35 years old, he got married to Olivia and settled down at Hartford. There he lived for more than two decades and published all his famous works. Twain is a frontier child and had much hankering for wealth; he invested all his money in various ventures, but lost heavily and became a bankrupt. In nature, Twain was an arrogant, stiff necked man to subdue to fate, that's why even at this juncture, he did not give up his heart. Moreover, he swore to clear all his debts by his wits. He undertook lecture tours both in American and in alien lands. These lectures were so famous that he got enough money to clear his debts in full. In his tours he visited India too, his recollections about India and its culture is so striking and thought provoking. Twain says when he landed at Bombay on 20th, January 1896, "this indeed India, the land of dreams and romance, of fabulous wealth and fabulous poverty, of splendor and rags, of places and
novels, of famine and pestilence, of geni and Aladdin lamps, of tigers and elephants, the cobra and jungle, the country of hundred nations and hundred tongues, of a thousand religions and two million gods, cradle of the human race, birth place of human speech, mother of history, grandmother of legend, great grandmother of tradition... the one sole country under the tradition, the one sole country under the sun that is endowed with an imperishable interest for alien prince and alien peasant for lettered and ignorant, wise and fool, rich and poor, bound and free, the one land that all men desire to see, and having seen once, by even a glimpse, would not give the glimpse for the show of all the rest of the globe combined." That is how Twain beautifully put forth his feelings about India, of course his picturisation might not be up to the expectations of Indians. But in this regard we must take into consideration that he stayed in India only for three months, even in that short time he could get maximum picture of its culture, tradition, customs and its folk by just staying at the Watson's Hotel, Bombay.

With the great success of the Herculean task of clearing all his debts, Twain was jubilant and hilarious. But his high spirits were short lived, as his darling daughter passed away before his own eyes. The effect of this death was such that Twain's fertile - mind became heath land for some time. Besides the death of his beloved daughter his wife's health also deteriorated, just for a change he took his wife to Italy in 1903. By that time he was so famous and he was hailed as one of the most cosmopolitan novelists of America. Various American Universities lauded his latent capabilities. To show their respect they honored him with Hon. D.Litt., and LL.D (Hon) degrees. His reputation reached its highest water mark when he was conferred with D.Litt. (Hon) by Oxford University. Although he was in melancholic mood with the demise of his beloved wife, yet he decided to travel all the way to Oxford to receive the rare honor. The pre-matured death of his daughter and the sudden death of his wife lacerated his heart, and his health too started failing. In 1910 Twain took his last breath and was buried in Elmira. At the time of his death, his name and fame touched the highest point of glory. The whole world poured encomium and praised the yeoman
service of this great novelist, who had every right to stand with the great literary giants like Dostoyevsky, Victor Hugo and Charles Dickens.

No wonder then that Earnest Hemingway found all American literature begin with Mark Twain. His escape to adventure, to the past, to humour which moves through and beyond reality, is not unlike Hemingway's escape from thinking through the simpler pleasure of wine, women and manly exercise like Saintigo's lethat fight with the deadly sharks deep in the mid sea.

In writing the course of the novel of manners during the middle decades of the nineteenth century, it is observed that American authors failed for a long time to show much interest in depicting everyday life of their country. Writers with unusual gifts, like Hawthorne and Melville, though they used native material, had other purposes. Hawthorne revealed certain aspects of a cultural bread from Calvinism, and Melville quite incidentally gave accurate information about whaling; but neither of them were intent on picturing New England. Mrs. Stowe, when she attempted to do so, was betrayed by her incurable romanticism; while outside New England, up and down the Atlantic seaboard, there was a similar failure to look steadily at the real world. In this context W.H. Auden opines: "Most of the American novels are parables; their settings even when they pretend to be realistic, symbolic settings for a timeless and unlocated psychomachia." Authors everywhere composed sentimental legends of the present, both of the derivatives in manner and substance from English novels of the poorer sort.

Leslie A. Fiedler convicts that "to write, then, about then American novel is to write about the fate of certain European genres in a world of alien experience."

Exceptional to this conviction was Mrs. Elizabeth - Stoddard, whose first and the best story, The Morgesors (1862) had the merit of recording quite honestly the way of living and the traits of character which she had
observed as a girl in Massachusetts. Mrs. Stoddard managed her plot awkwardly and lacked any grace of style, but she had unusual independence of vision.

Mark Twain's contemporary, Bret Harte (1836 – 1902) had an instant success both in the United States and England with *The Luck of Roaring Camp* (1870) showing life in the mining camps of the west as a mixture of boisterous fun, swift shooting and tender sentiments. But he was also an old chip of the English traditions. All these writes failed in showing the American society and their traditions. Lionel Trailing felt that: "The American writers of genius have not turned their minds to society; the reality they sought was only tangential to society." At this critical juncture, Mark Twin's literary career started unfolding itself in stories and sketches. All his works were based mostly on his own personal experiences in various parts of the United States and his travels abroad. He might have resorted to some sort of romanticism in his, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. But in the remaining books he depicted his own land's complexities and traditions.

The American novel, at the beginning of Twain's Literary career, has to be viewed as a tensional movement between massed polarities: individual and society on the personal hopes and frustrations on the psychological, democracy and monarchy on the political, freedom and authority on the conceptual, Europe and America on the historical, the settlers and the frontier, on the existential. All these polarities are held in Twain's works. No doubt the common man looked to Mark Twain for fun, for laughter, but his seriousness was not unnoticed. In 1983 Thomas Hardy, the British Novelist of tragic love-stories, who had by then written quite a few to William Dean Howells wrote about Twain: "Mark Twin is not merely a great humorist, he is a remarkable fellow in a very different way."

Rudyard Kipling looked at Twain as a social critic, who tried to focus at the human complexities and follies of his contemporary society by pinpointing them. He writes: "to my mind mark Twain was, beyond question, the
largest man of his times both in the direct outcome of his work, and more important still, if possible, in his influence in an age of iron philistinism.”

Mark Twain was really a profound thinker and philosopher without putting forward any systematic doctrine. He meditated and reflected on the contemporary issues – both moral and ethical which seriously engaged his mind. He desired the inner reform of man, rather than outer. He advocated personal morality, the hypocrisy and priggishness of those who exploited the helpless under the honorific garb of civilization. He was shocked at the manner the people understood the idea of civilization, which in practice, was a ritualistic adherence to the dogmatic belief in the superiority of one to another. Mark Twain looked down upon ‘the deformed human race’ with contempt. He ruthlessly attacked the contemporary socio-religious and moral values; he felt indignant at the treatment of man by man which to him was the grossest above everything in the world. All his works and characters are the mouth pieces of his inner feeling that had been burning in him for a long time. When he took the pen, all came to it at a stroke and were immortalized in the print.

Twain’s career started with, The Celebrated Jumping Frog, Calaveras Country and other sketches (1867). This is a work which focused the mining operations in Nevada, because of this book Twain instantly became so – famous that among the literary circles he was a burning topic. In 1869 he published The Innocent Abroad. This book was a result of Twain’s lecture-tours abroad and it abounds in his personal experience vis-à-vis other personalities he met abroad. Here he humourously depicted the characters of his fellow tourists and the adventures which befell them and the scenes they vested. Twain’s fresh description of scenes interesting in themselves, especially those of the Holy Land, his soliciting assertion by never persisting in a topic but shifting cleverly from the present to the past; from argument to pure rumination; from location to persons – all are beautifully presented and captured the heart and mind of the reader.
The record of Mark Twain’s work from the beginning of his career to 1885 is one of the constant struggles and achievements in structure. In his Autobiography he included a passage written in Florence, 1904, which has become almost the scriptural text for all discussions of his plots; portions of it have been quoted so often in the wrong sense and that it is well to review the whole. Here he says about his career: “Within the last eight or ten years I have made several attempts to do the autobiography in one way or other with a pen, but the result was not satisfactory, it was too literary. With the pen in one’s hand, narrative is a difficult art; narrative should flow as flour down through the hills and the leafy woodlands, its course changed by ever bolder it comes across and every gross clad gravelly spur that project into its path. Its surface broken, but its course not stayed by rocks and gravel on the bottom in the shoal places; a brook that never goes straight for minute, but goes and goes briskly, sometimes ungrammatically and sometimes fetching a horse shoe three quarters of a mile around and at the end of the circuit flowing within a yard of the path it traversed an hour before,” but always going, and always following at least one lam, always loyal to that lam, the lam of narrative, which has no law. Nothing to do but make the trip; the hour of it is not important, so that the trip is made. With a pen in the hand the narrative stream is a canal; it moves slowly, smoothly, decorously, sleepily, it has no blemish except that it is all blemish. It is too literary, too prism, and too nice; the gait and style and movement are not suited to narrative. That canal stream is always reflective; it is its nature, it can’t help it. Its lick shiny surface is interested in everything it passes along the banks — comes, foliage, flowers everything. And so it wastes a lot of time in reflection.”

The passage, in part or in whole, has been cited time and again as proof that Mark Twain preferred a loss, rambling form for everything he wrote. Twain has left very few statements about his own methods in writing novels, but one of the most revealing is recorded by Brander Matthews. In the summer of 1890 he described to Matthews his method of work in the writing to Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn as recollections of his bygone memories. In the novels prior to Huckleberry Finn, it is a plot or idea gained
from one of his condensed burlesques. In *Huckleberry Finn* it is once again the conjunction of two characters on a journey. The use of burlesque plots as the basis of *Tom Sawyer* and *The Prince and the Pauper* is another instance of that dependence upon ideas in other works of fiction to which Twain confessed on several occasions. To account for some of this dependence, he evolved a theory of "Unconscious Plagiarism." In a letter to Howells in 1875 he wrote, "I would not wonder if I am the worst literary thief in the world, without knowing it."

Twain was a man with a retentive memory who read widely on all levels of fiction. But that borrowing which is rooted in his burlesques was, of necessity and conscious one. From the beginning of his career, Twain strove for an alternation between comic and serious material in the arrangement of the episodes, relying to a large extent upon burlesques to furnish the comedy. Gradually he refined his use of the burlesque material to the point where it not only furnished an alternation with the serious material but in conjunction with it furnished foreshadowing and, as a consequence, thematic unity. Thus in *Roughing It*, the burlesque constitutes the tenderfoots provision of the West and a foreshadowing of the disillusioning experiences which are to follow *Roughing It*, is uneven in tone and in excellence, the exposition falls below the description, which is often florid, and neither can equal the narration, particularly when it runs lustily across the plains with the rocking stage coach or when it carries the narrator through his tender foot adventures in the mining camps. Although he frequently falls into the burlesquing habits which still clung to him from his days of Nevada and California Journalism, he also raises decisively above them, and above all his predecessors in popular humor, with chapters of genuine poetry of an epic breadth and largeness, commemorating free, masculine, heroic days.

In 1874 Mark Twain authored *The Gilded Age* in collaboration with C.D. Warner. The main plot of this book deals with the adventures of a beautiful belle Laura, who after being seduced by a Colonel is taken to Washington under the patronage of another hypocritical Senator and there
she becomes a hardened and effective agent in his many dirty deals. Later when her seducer reappears, she kills him, and she is acquitted of the murder charges, she tries to exploit her notoriety on the lecture platform and dies of the shock of her cruel public reception. The Gilded Age has more conventional elements in the book, the Easterners and their loves and fortunes, are Warner's the more original, the sections portraying western life and satirizing Congress and Washington, are Mark Twain's. From the collaboration of two such different nothing unified could come. Warner's chapters are usually tame; Mark Twain's are often noisy and busy with his old burlesque. Neither man shrank from melodrama or hesitated to set it side by side with the most scrupulous realism. But the materials of The Gilded Age are better than its art.

A Tramp Abroad (1880) is more or less a travelogue like the earlier The Innocent Abroad. Mark Twain wrote this book, on the event of his long stay in Europe with his family. This book is a treatise of his walking trip which Twain made in 1878 through the Black Forest and to the Alps with his friend the Rev. Joseph H. Twitchell. In this book certain episodes and certain descriptive passages emerge from the general level; but even they only emphasize the debt of his imagination owed to memory. Writing too close to his facts he could never be at his richest. In 1882 he published his first historical novel, The Prince and The Pauper, purely for children yet it was packed with adult satire in its account of how by a change of clothes Price Edward, later Edward VI of England, and Tom Canty, a London beggar boy, undergo also a change of station and for an instructive period each taste the others fare. By some – such dramatic contrast Mark Twain, the radical American, preferred always to express his option of monarchial societies; like the old republican patriots, he set hatred for kings as the first in his political creed. Of this important side of his nature the most characteristic utterances are to be found in A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court (1889), which deserves also to be considered one of the most thoroughly typical books yet produced by the American democracy. It is typical in method and typical in conclusion. With the branch irresponsibility of
frontier vaudeville it catches up a hard dry, obstreperous Yankee, hurries him back through thirteen centuries, and dumps him, with all his wits about him, into Camelot. Speaking in terms of literary history, the Yankee is an anti romance, it indicates a reaction from the sentimentalism about the Middle Ages which had recently been feeding on Tennyson's Idylls of the King, the Pre- Raphaelites, and Pater, and now was languishing in the sun flower cult of Oscar Wilde. However it was said to be a disturbing book. Routledge and Kegan Paul severely satirized it: They criticize, "Mark Twain behaves as the devil's advocate in the Yankee.""10

In 1894 Pudd'nhead Wilson was written by Twain. The locale of this book is Hannibal, his boyhood town, called this time Dawson's Landing and not St. Petersburg as in The adventures of Huckleberry Finn. The interest of the book lies in the vivid picture that it presents of the life in Hannibal, the surroundings, the treatment meted out to the slaves by the whites. The miring up of two kids, one a son of Negro slave who is equally white but carries the penalty of being slave and the other truly child of a true white. After a lot of cruel happenings, the true identity of the white child is revealed through the use of the modern device, the comparison of finger prints.

In The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg (1900), Twain produced a corrosive apologue on the effects of greed, which here overthrows all the respectable reputations in a smug provincial town. Only one of them wins pity; the others appear not as moral automatons but as responsible thieves and hypocrites. The main plot of story revolves round the appearance of a stranger in Hadleyburg. The stranger leaves a sack which is supposed to be filled with gold to be given to a man who might prove that he met a stranger a year or two before. All people of the town start showing interest and try to prove their friendship with that stranger. Thus the village becomes a laughing stock. It is a pungent satire on human greed which can become limitless and corrupt a man howsoever good he might be. The Mysterious Stranger was written during the dark night of Mark Twain's spirit in 1898, but it was published in 1916 the scenes lie ostensibly in the sixteenth century Austria but actually, to all intents, in the Hannibal of Tom and Huck. This
book deals with the mysterious stranger who is none other than Satan himself against whom are the pitted the young boys by the satanic stranger make the book a sort of morality with parallels from Satan – Adam – Eve story. The next book from Twain’s pen is his autobiography; it was published after a prolonged unwillingness on the part of Twain’s daughter, Clara. This autobiography (1924) had a preface as from the Grave in which he said”?
I speak from the grave rather than with my living tongue, for a good reason. I can speak thence freely...it has seemed to me that I could be as frank and free and unembarrassed as a love letter if I know that what I was writing would be exposed to no eye till I was dead, and unaware and indifferent.”  

In 1876 Mark Twain wrote, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, which is a boy's book. It is full of rich native humour and shrewd observation of human character which make it one of the greatest boy's books ever written. The analysis of the boy’s character throughout the novel is of main interest. The boy named Tom Sawyer performs various adventures along with his chum Huckleberry Finn along the river Mississippi. Being an orphan child, he was brought up by his aunt, Polly. Vexed with the routine life in St., Petersburg he escapes to the Jackson Island along with his cronies Huckleberry Finn and Joe Harper. There, on the river Mississippi they enjoy themselves for some time and return to the civilization when they were fed up with the lonely life if the Jackson – Island. In writing *Tom Sawyer*, Twain faced some problems. They are clear here: *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* took Mark Twain from epic to comedy. He first planned to write a play and when he decided up on another from he had in mind a story of boyhood which, like Aldrich’ story of Bad boy, should emphatically depart from the customary type of Sunday school fiction. But its departure from a type is one of the least memorable aspects of Tom Sawyer.

In composing *Tom Sawyer*, Twain particularly faced and solved two problems. First, when he was about half way through his manuscript, he paused at a crucial point and determined to keep his story centered in youth in St. Petersburg. An early scheme had included taking Tom on a Battle of life in many lands, and the moment for his departure was reached on
manuscript page 403. Even though he altered the structure of the novel then, the author was nevertheless progressing through several stages of childhood mentioned in his outline, a progression which would be as Blair observed, "a working out in fictional form ... of a boys' maturing." Even after the book was finished, Twain was uncertain about the wisdom of having stopped with Tom's Youth. "I have finished the story and didn't take the chap beyond boyhood," he told Howells. "See if you don't really decide that I am right in clopping with him as a boy."13

To enter the world of Tom Sawyer is, to step into a world in which bare foot boys go fishing on midsummer days, while prepubescent girls plan picnics on middle class lawns and adults look beneficially on dispensing ice cream, and advice that need not be taken seriously. The book offers us a dream vision of American childhood. To be an American is to live on the edge of the frontier – but safely, behind a white picket fence in a town where everyone knows his neighbors and the sub beams down "like a benediction to be a child to have adventures flavored with just enough anxiety to be genuinely exciting before returning, at will, to well-laden dinner tables and Sunday school socials, rightly recognized as the most amiable of all Mark Twain's novels. The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, has been so thoroughly absorbed into the mainstream of American culture that such incidents as the white washing of the fence are, like a familiar landscape, so intimate to our experience that their importance is easily forgotten.

But careful reading of Tom Sawyer reveals that childhood is not free of threats, nor small towns free of fear for all of its Norman Rockwell sort of charm, St. Petersburg, Missouri, is not as idyllic as it may seem at first glance. The Temperance Tavern serves liquor in a back room. The graveyard is in poor repair. And there are caves, nearby, in which one can be easily lost. Moreover as Bernard – De Votto observed many years ago, the episodes at the core of the book revolve around body snatching, murder, robbery, and revenge. In short, St. Petersburg is not only a garden of American innocence, but also a garden in which a serpent lurks.
First published in 1883, *Life on the Mississippi* provides an ideal vehicle for commencing the study of Twain’s work. After a lapse of many years, Twain returns to his favorite and beloved river Mississippi. The river is in fact the primary subject matter of the book. The action is the training of a pilot and this unerringly directs the readers’ interest from the beginning to the end. The remarkable thing about this book is the vivid portrayal of the river, on-shore life, anecdotes and descriptions which are of gripping interest within its pages are to be found Twain as a novelist, autobiographer, and reporter offering up to us a strange combination of memoir, travelogue, tall tale, and literary manifesto, a potpourri into which indigestible hunks of ram statistics are haphazardly thrown in beside some of the most evocative passages in American literature. Why because Mark Twain had such a unique opportunity, according to Roultedge and Kegan Paul, “He had now a point of vantage from which he could look down on the whole pageant of the Mississippi. That was a spectacle such as modern life has afforded at only a few times and in a few places, an enormous commerce flowed up and down the river, attended by every hue and condition of mankind. The United States field by under the pilot’s observation about their business, planters on their occasional visited to the towns, laborers’ looking for work, immigrants on the way to new homes, curiosity – seekers and pleasure – hunters, slaves and salve traders, stowaways and nobleman and sports men.”

*Life on the Mississippi* originated in a series of articles Twain wrote for the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1875 under the Title *Old Times on the Mississippi*. They describe life aboard the great paddle-wheel steamboats that made their way up and down the river in the decade before the Civil War; in particular, they focus upon the art of piloting the ships through treacherous currents and constantly shifting sandbars. This was a subject that Twain knew well; moreover, it was both original and well – suited to popular taste. The rapid industrialization of the late nineteenth century America brought with it one of the first of many waves of nostalgia for a simpler past that continues to characterize American culture. The artless
proved to be successful and it was clear that there was a market for more material of this sort.

Mark Twain had an opportunity to observe at an age when most future authors are still at their books. He absorbed them as thoroughly as the love of his credit. "In that brief sharp schooling," he later wrote "I got personally and familiarly acquainted with all the different types of human nature that are to be found in fiction, biography, or history."15

**Life on the Mississippi** can be divided into two parts: the river remembered and the river re-encountered. The first part is dominated by the material that had already been published in the *Atlantic*; the second which can be said to begin at chapter twenty two, tells the story of Twain's return to the river as a successful writer who is recognized and feted wherever he goes. Only on the pesterling of his publisher, he reluctantly wrote this book. After finishing the book Twain wrote to his business manager, "I never want anything more to do with this wretched God-dammed book."16 Of course this book might not have brought him into limelight; even then it is counted by Routledge and Kegan Paul as **Life on the Mississippi** belongs with the most precious American books."17 **The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn** did get name and fame to Mark Twain, but the **Life on the Mississippi** despite its blemishes won laurels for its author. In the words of Robert Keith Miller, "But despite its short comings, Life on the Mississippi heralded Mark Twain's emergence as a great modern writer."18

In 1885, Mark Twain wrote his master-piece, **The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn**. The Concord Library Committee branded it as "Variest trash", but later on the same novel shot the novelist to dizzy heights of fame and popularity. In 1899 the *London Times* described Twain as: "Ambassador at large of the U.S.A."19 So many degrees have been conferred on him. At the turn of the 20th century Mark Twain's reputation grew almost phenomenally. Tributes came from abroad. George Bernard Shaw came out with unstinted praise. In his opinion Twain is "by for the greatest American writer."20
The novel *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* enacts the drama of great human experience of Huck and Jim, on their great Journey to freedom. The two run ways use the river as their only escape route. Thus the river Mississippi becomes the central to theme as well as the experience of the novel. The novel begins at St. Petersburg, a small village in Missouri, on the western part of the river: in the East was Illinois on the eastern side were Tennessee, both touching Kentucky the east. The states called the New England had abolished slavery; but it persisted vigorously in Deep South and West. For a slave the Deep South was equivalent to Hell. The only hope of the Negro slave was to escape into the eastern states. Jim, who is the runaway nigger of the novel, plans to escape to the East, into the Free states. Both Huck and Joe hope to discard their raft at Cairo and from there via the Ohio River, sail into the Free states. The river Ohio issued form from the East and Joined the Mississippi near Cairo. The run always however over shoot Cairo in the mist, and are once again in the world of slave states. But with the help of Tom Sawyer the corny of Huckleberry Finn, they try to escape, but this escaped also ends in fiasco. Eventually they become free people in slave owning states itself by the charity of Aunt Sally and Uncle Silas, who were foster parents of Tom.

The publication of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is a great event in literary history. It shocked the sensibilities of the intellectuals who had tolerated Twain's hoarse fun in earlier novels. They pounced upon the book in the name of safe guarding the nation's taste and culture for the members of Concord Library Committee; it was "rough, course an inelegant... more suited to the slums than to the intelligent respectable people." A reviewer writing in Century could not check his exasperation and regard Huckleberry Finn as "an incarnation of the better side of the ruffianism that is one result of the independence of Americans."21

For the first time we come across better marshalling of evidence and fact in support of specific argument in Bernard De Votto's 'Mark Twain's America'. Where he says: "There is more of America in Mark Twain's book that in any others...... it is their immortality."22 The year 1935 the century of
the great novelists and many tributes appeared in various literary magazines and books. In *The Green Hills of America*, Ernest Hemmingway wrote about Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called *Huckleberry Finn*... It's the best book we've had. All American writing comes from that there was nothing before. There has been nothing as good since."²³ Mark Twain's, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* despite being subjected to vehement criticism, at once gives us a panoramic view of the entire American social life. Mark Twain's greatness is now an accepted fact: his reputation has endorsed and survived a number of scathing critical assaults which began during his life-time and continued till recently. At no time, during all these years, was Twain's acceptance as great literary figure unanimous, especially among the intellectual highbrows, the so-called men of taste and culture. On the other hand, his astonishing hold on the unliterary public baffled the professional critics fed on the state, static fiction modes, and they explicated this phenomenon one way or the other, but certainly not as a mark of genius. The fact that the writings of Mark Twain found their champions in our age of radical changes in literary tastes and out links, compelled critics to look deeper into them; and it was ultimately realized that the frontier humorist was not after all lacking in richness of experience and human values.

Not only Twain's writings, even his dinny speeches and platform lectures made him very famous. This fact was well attested by Lewis Leary when he puts it as "Mark Twain's laconic, soft speech, whimsical understatements, and outrageous exaggerations made him a plat form favorite and pampered after dinner speaker."²⁴ Besides the above features his humour and witticism which were faithfully recorded in newspapers brought him good fame. Twain saw to that, for he was in every best sense a show man who kept himself and his books effectively before the public. His heavy shock of hair, once red, but soon an eye catching white, made him seen larger than he was an illusion which it pleased him later in life to reinforce by dressing summer and winter in white serge of flannel. He learned early how to attract and hold attention, and he used to knowledge
One way or another, he was the best known and most successfully published author of his generation.

There are very many reasons for it amongst all those reason the most important one is, Twain, within a few limits was the canny businessman, he liked to think himself for he had already tasted the sore fruits of money making. Hence he took all the meticulous cares in getting published his books. This fact was well attested by Lweis Leanes when he says, "His lectures sold his books, and his books helped pack his lectures. As a publisher, he took pride in gauging the public taste so well that each book supplied a popular demand. Many were not issued until subscription agents throughout the country had sold in advance enough copies to make them surely profitable. And subscription books in the late nineteenth century were gaudily attractive books, usually handsomely bound and illustrated the kind almost anyone would be proud to have on his table particularly when the author had just been or would soon be in town for a lecture."25

For those reasons though not only for these, Mark Twain’s books found themselves in a preferred position in thousands of American homes. At the end of the century he offered a twenty two volume autograph edition of his works, which found its way into thousands more, and into libraries, even small town and country libraries which could not afford to buy it but received it as a gift when house shelves become crowded.

Such success has seemed appropriate, for it fit precisely to patterns which Americans have thought peculiarly their own. Mark Twain was a poor boy who by reason of native skill rose to wealth and fame. He was kin to Daniel Boone or Andrew Jackson because he had known the regors of the American frontier. There, beside the river Mississippi, Twain grew throughout his boyhood much as Tom Sawyer did, fascinated by the life which swarmed over its mile-wide

The world painted in his novels, is thus the world which Twain saw and experienced. He recreates not only his boyhood period, but also the scenes, characters and events which are from his boyhood and youth. Mark
Twain once remarked, "I confine myself to life with which I am familiar, when pretending to portray life. But I confine myself to the boy life on the Mississippi because that had a peculiar charm for me and not because I was not familiar with other phases of life."26

So it is explicit that the world of Twain's novels is the world around the Mississippi. We evidently see this in, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *Life on the Mississippi* and in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Almost all incidents in these three novels take place either on the river or in its Islands or on its banks. Where, huge forms, with hundreds of slaves working; river-side towns and the rafts and steamers going up and down the Mississippi. The river provided not only the general means of communication and transportation. It also helped the gangs of robbers and cut-throats to escape into the woods and thickets around its banks throughout its length, Twain had the experience of this life because he had worked as a steam-boat pilot for some time. Thus he knew the river thoroughly.

Indeed, it is against the backdrop of the flows and flux and infinitum, that the three novels unfold themselves. The choice of the river Mississippi and the society on its shores is really the master-stroke of Mark Twain's genius. He wanted to focus our eyes at the vast expanse of the frontier life; and he knew that the river, confluence of all roots of activity, would be the most appropriate subject matter for his novels.

So it is crystal clear from the above statement that Mark Twain could carve a niche for himself through his effort and toil. In the other select novel of his *The Price and the Pauper*, he creates a different world that is entirely different from the Mississippi milieu which Twain, was at home. For this purpose he read various historical works to create the realistic portrayal of the 16th century language and other traditions. This is confessed by himself when he says in his autobiography, "I had been diligently reading up for a story which I was minded to write *The Prince and the Pauper*. I was reading ancient English books with the purpose of saturating myself with
archaic English to a degree which would enable me to do plausible imitation of it in a fairly easy and unlabored way."27

It is a novel written by Mark Twain in 1882, originally for the entertainment purpose of his two young daughters Suzy and Clara, "those good mannered and agreeable children," as he described them in his dedication of the book. The book represents an affectionate tale told by a father to his young children. In this regard Mark Twain says in the preface to the novel, "I will set down a tale as it was told to me by one who had it of his father, which latter had it of his father, this last having in like manner had it of his father and so on back and still back, three hundred years and more, the farthers transmuting it to the sons and so preserving it."28 But the novel was addressed also to adults as an expression of its author's continuing assurance that, for all its short comings, democracy as practiced in the United States was superior to any other manner of living anywhere. It is the kind of melodramatic story which Tom Sawyer might have told, of a poor boy who became heir to a king and of a prince who learned humility through mixing with common men. The other reason for writing The Prince and Pauper was to afford a realistic sense of the severity of the laws of that day by inflicting some of their penalties upon the kind himself.

This relates that Mark Twain was a successful writer in every literary aspect, especially his humor, adventure, satire are fantastic and laudable. Besides that he touched slavery, ruffianism and humanism, in his short stories, novels and travelogues. He was a profound thinker and philosopher without putting forward any systematic doctrine. He desired the inner reform of man, rather the outer. He advocated personal morality rather than institutional and conventional one with irony, paradox and boisterous humor. In using all these he was very political, he never pained anybody with scathing attack but crept into their hearts through his writings like a nocturnal thief and thus reformed them. That's why he was always good with crowds and he was very popular during his own days alike others. This fact was well said by Kurt Vonnegur, Jr. When he says, "Twain was so good with crowds that he become in competition with singers, and dancers and actors and
acrobats, one of the most popular performers of his times. It is so unusual, and so psychologically unlikely for a great writer to be a great performer too, that I can think of only two similar cases – Homer’s, perhaps, and Molier’s.\textsuperscript{29}

Thus, Mark Twain was not only put on the highest literary pedestal on par with Homer, Molier and Voltaire, but also he was believed to be “god like” by the Noble laureate, Rudyard Kipling, when he praises Twain stepping a foot ahead “I love to think of the great and godlike Clemens.”\textsuperscript{30}

So it is a great pleasure and pride for any researcher to do research on such a great writer like Mark Twain, who had gained laurels from the literary giants like, Rudyard Kipling, T. S. Eliot, Hemingway, William Dean Howell, De Votto and Lionel Trilling. That’s why the researcher chose his god like Mark Twain for his research. In the succeeding chapters the different themes and techniques of Mark Twain are discussed in detail.
REFERENCES


4. Ibid. P.1.


16. Ibid. P. 140.