

**ENGLISH AS SHE IS  
TAUGHT, WITH  
BIOGRAPHICAL  
SKETCH OF AUTHOR**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649013418

English As She Is Taught, with biographical sketch of author by Mark Twain & Matthew  
Irving Lans

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**MARK TWAIN & MATTHEW IRVING LANS**

**ENGLISH AS SHE IS  
TAUGHT, WITH  
BIOGRAPHICAL  
SKETCH OF AUTHOR**



# ENGLISH AS SHE IS TAUGHT

by

MARK TWAIN,

with

Biographical Sketch

OF AUTHOR

by

MATTHEW IRVING LANS.



MUTUAL BOOK COMPANY,  
BOSTON, MASS.

This One



100-107-0000

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

---

Samuel Langhorne Clemens (Mark Twain), the greatest living humorist, was born in Florida, Mo., November 30, 1835, and educated in the public schools of Hannibal, Mo., where the family moved soon after his birth. Apprenticed to a printer at the age of thirteen, his first attempt at writing was as assistant editor of the Hannibal Courier. His adventurous ambition soon outgrew the frontier town of his boyhood, and when about eighteen years old, he set out on the famous wanderings that were to make him a distinguished citizen of the world. At this time he journeyed to New York, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, and St. Louis, in each city working for a while at his trade as a printer. Roving westward again in 1857, he became a licensed pilot on the Mississippi river, following this arduous occupation for three years and, unconsciously, perhaps, storing up the rich material used years afterwards in the very successful book, "Life on the Mississippi." The experience as a pilot undoubtedly suggested his famous nom de plume "Mark Twain," this being the leadsman's call for two fathoms.

At the outbreak of the war he served a few weeks in the Confederate army under General Harris, and upon resigning, he explained that he had become "incapacitated by fatigue caused by persistent retreating."

His next important efforts were in 1861 as territorial secretary of Nevada, and in 1862 as editor of the Virginia City (Nev.) Enterprise, where he remained two years, resigning to accept a position on the San Francisco Morning Call. In 1865 he engaged for a time in mining in California.

Mark Twain scored his first considerable success in a series of brilliant letters written during a visit to the Hawaiian Islands in 1866. These letters, later incorporated in "Roughing It," were so favorably received that on his return he lectured with marked success in California, Nevada, and Eastern states. The passion for travel spurring him on, in 1867, with a party, he visited France, Italy, and Palestine, and published "Innocents Abroad," an account of the trip, which at once gained for him an international reputation which has never waned. In 1870 he married Miss Langdon of Elmira, N. Y., and assumed the editorship of the Buffalo Express, of which he was part proprietor. Soon after he retired from journalism to devote

.

## WORKS OF MARK TWAIN.

The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County, 1867.

The Innocents Abroad, 1869.

Roughing It, 1872.

Sketches New and Old, 1873.

The Gilded Age, (with Charles Dudley Warner,) 1873.

Adventures of Tom Sawyer, 1876.

A Tramp Abroad, 1880.

The Prince and the Pauper, 1882.

The Stolen White Elephant, 1882.

Life on the Mississippi, 1883.

Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, 1885.

A Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur's Court, 1889.

Merry Tales, 1892.

The American Clalmant, 1892.

The £1,000,000 Bank Note and Other New Sketches, 1893.

Tom Sawyer Abroad, 1894.

The Tragedy of Pudd'nhead Wilson, 1894.

Joan of Arc, 1896.

More Tramps Abroad, 1897; and The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg and other Stories and Essays, 1900.

This list excludes several minor publications.

## ENGLISH AS SHE IS TAUGHT.

---

In the appendix to Crocker's Boswell's Johnson, one finds this anecdote :

*Cato's Soliloquy.*—One day Mrs. Gastrel set a little girl to repeat to him (Doctor Samuel Johnson) Cato's Soliloquy, which she went through very correctly.

The Doctor, after a pause, asked the child—

“What was to bring Cato to an end?”

She said it was a knife.

“No, my dear, it was not so.”

“My aunt Polly said it was a knife.”

“Why, Aunt Polly's knife *may do*, but it was a *dagger* my dear.”

He then asked her the meaning of “bane and antidote,” which she was unable to give. Mrs. Gastrel said—

“You cannot expect so young a child to know the meaning of such words.”

He then said—

“My dear, how many pence are there in *sixpence*?”

“I cannot tell, sir,” was the half-terrified reply. On this, addressing himself to Mrs. Gastrel, he said—

“Now, my dear lady, can anything be more ridiculous than to teach a child Cato's Soliloquy, who does not know how many pence there are in sixpence?”

In a lecture before the Royal Geographical Society, Professor Ravenstein quoted the following list of frantic questions, and said that they had been asked in an examination :

Mention all the names of places in the world derived from Julius Cæsar or Augustus Cæsar.

Where are the following rivers: Pisuerga, Sakaria, Guadalete, Jalon. Mulde?

All you know of the following: Machacha, Pilmo, Sobebulos, Crivoscia, Basecs, Mancikert, Taxhen, Citeaux, Meloria, Zutphen.

The highest peaks of the Karakorum range.

The number of universities in Prussia.

Why are the tops of mountains continually covered with snow (*sic*)?

Name the length and breadth of the streams of lava which issued from the Skaptar Jokul in the eruption of 1783.

That list would oversize nearly anybody's geographical knowledge. Isn't it reasonably possible that in our schools many of the questions in all studies are several miles ahead of where the pupil is? — that he is set to struggle with things that are ludicrously beyond his present reach, hopelessly beyond his present strength? This remark in passing, and by way of text; now I come to what I was going to say.

I have just now fallen upon a darling literary curiosity. It is a little book, a manuscript compilation, and the compiler sent it to me with the request that I say whether I think it ought to be published or not. I said, Yes; but as I slowly grow wise, I briskly grow cautious; and so, now that the publication is imminent, it has seemed to me that I should feel more comfortable if I could divide up this responsibility with the public by adding them to the court. Therefore I will print some extracts from the book, in the hope that they may make converts to my judgment that the volume has merit which entitles it to publication.

As to its character: Every one has sampled "English as She is Spoke," and "English as She is Wrote"; this little volume furnishes us an instructive array of examples of "English as She is Taught"—in the public schools of—well, this country. The collection is made by a teacher in those schools, and all the examples in it are genuine; none of them have been tampered with, or doctored in any way. From time to time, during several years, whenever a pupil has delivered himself of anything