

“Mark Twain”

Mark Twain lived in a house at 21 Fifth Avenue in New York City in the winter-time, and in a cottage at Dublin, New Hampshire, in the summer.

He was almost seventy, and very dignified. His hair was snow-white and as bushy as ever. He had to be careful of his strength. He simply couldn't accept all the invitations that came in. They came in stacks, because everybody loved him, and everybody wanted to know his opinion on everything that was going on in the world.

He did accept some of the invitations, especially one for his seventieth birthday. A great party was given for him at Delmonico's restaurant in New York. It was given by Harper and Brothers, the company that was publishing his books.

A great crowd of America's most important writers and editors were there. All came to honor Mark Twain, the greatest of them all.

Many made speeches at the banquet and paid him great compliments. But the high point of the glorious evening was when Mark Twain himself stood up to speak.

“I have had a great many birthdays in my time,” he began.

“I remember the first one very well, and I always think of it with anger. Nothing like this at all. No proper preparation made; nothing really ready... I hadn't any hair, I hadn't any teeth, I hadn't any clothes. I had to go to my first banquet just like that...”

Mark Twain the cheerful, the gay, the humorous. His audience laughed and applauded and even shed happy tears all through his speech. They knew he had had great sorrows in his life.

He was so great that he didn't let his sorrows show at a party. He knew the guests wanted to laugh, and he could always find the happy side of anything.

He lived quietly during his last few years sometimes playing billiards with his favorite friends.

He made one other visit to England to receive an honorary degree from Oxford University.

He bought property and arranged to have a summer home built at Redding, Connecticut. He called it Storm field.

“Don't forget the billiard room,” he told the builders. They didn't. Mark Twain had a large room with a billiard table where he and his closest friend could play. Clara came to visit him at Storm field, whenever she came home from a concert tour.

As time went by he lived more and more quietly and spent more and more time in bed. He walked about in the afternoon air or sat in a rocker on the front porch.

The happiest event that ever happened at Storm field was Clara's wedding. The saddest event was the sudden death of his youngest daughter Jean. One evening she was looking as fine as ever.

She said she felt a little tired and would lie down. The next evening she was gone.

Mark Twain had been dictating the story of his own life. When Jean died, he said, “It is the end of my autobiography. I shall never write any more.”

He himself grew weaker and weaker, until at last he couldn't get up at all. He began to have difficulty breathing.

Doctors and friends took turns watching at his bedside, all night and all day. Clara and her husband hurried home.

The end came on April 21, 1910, when he was almost seventy-five years old. Samuel Clemens just slept peacefully. His travels and adventures were ended.

Mark Twain once called Joan of Arts “that wonderful child, that sublime personality...” Those same words can be written by Mark Twain.

Задания к тексту.

1. Какое утверждение выражает содержание текста?

- a) This text is about Mark Twain’s last years of life.
- b) This text is about 70th anniversary of Mark Twain’s birthday.
- c) This text is about Mark Twain’s speech of his birthday party.
- d) This text is about the happiest and the saddest events in Mark Twain’s life

2. Укажите логический порядок следование событий.

- a) Mark Twain stood up to speak at the party.
- b) Mark Twain lived in a house at 21 Fifth Avenue in New York City in the winter-time, and in a cottage at Dublin, New Hampshire, in the summer.
- c) As time went by he lived more and more quietly and spent more and more time in bed.
- d) A great party was given to Mark Twain’s 70th birthday.

3. Подберите правильный конец предложения.

The birthday party of Mark Twain was given ...

- a) by the people of the city Ney York.
- b) by Harper and Brothers, the company that was publishing his books.
- c) by his family.
- d) by important writers and editors.

4. Укажите логический порядок следования событий текста.

- a) The happiest and the saddest events in M. Twain’s life.
- b) His last few years.
- c) Mark Twain’s 70th birthday party.
- d) The speeches at the party. The most humorous speech.
- e) The death of Mark Twain.

5. Подберите правильный ответ на вопрос.

Why did Mark Twain try to find the happy side of everything?

- a. M. Twain was cheerful, gay and humorous.
- b. M. Twain knew he had had great sorrows in his life.
- c. M. Twain knew the people wanted to laugh.
- d. M. Twain had the first banquet just like that.