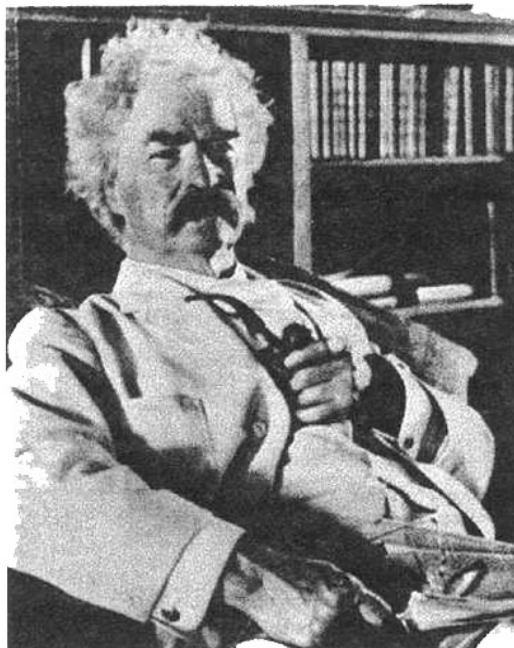


becomes a personification, and stands for India in trouble. And for untold ages India in trouble has been pursued with the very remark which I was going to utter but didn't, because its meaning had slipped me: 'jeldy jow!'"

Twain blends whimsical anecdotes, sharp-eyed commentary and serious social critique. The Taj Mahal induces an interesting reverie. Twain notes, "I had read a great deal too much about it. I saw it in the daytime, I saw it in the moonlight, I saw it near at hand, I saw it from a distance; and I know all the time, that of its kind it was the wonder of the world, with no competitor now and no possible future competitor; and yet, it was not *my* Taj. My Taj had been built by excitable literary

people; it was solidly lodged in my head, and I could not blast it out.



"The Taj represented man's supremest possibility in the creation of grace and

beauty and exquisiteness and splendor, just as the ice-storm represents the Nature's supremest possibility in the combination of those same qualities. I do not know how long ago that idea was bred into me, but I know that I cannot remember back to a time when the thought of either of these symbols of gracious and unapproachable perfection did not at once suggest the other. If I thought of the ice-storm, the Taj rose before me divinely beautiful; if I thought of the Taj, with its encrustings and inlayings of jewels, the vision of the ice-storm rose. And so, to me, all these years, the Taj has had no rival among the temples and palaces of men, none that even remotely approached it - it was man's architectural ice-storm." ☉

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