

## <<马克·吐温>>

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### 内容概要

本书的作者彼得·梅森特是研究现代美国文学的著名学者，他在书中简洁精要地介绍了吐温的生平，勾勒出吐温生活的时代，涉及到读者最为关心的一些基本议题，如吐温对内战和奴隶制的态度、吐温晚年对帝国主义的激烈批评、他的创作手法的主要特点、如何理解和把握吐温式幽默。

他还重点评介了吐温最有影响的几部代表作，如我国读者都很熟悉的《汤姆·索耶历险记》和《哈克贝里·费恩历险记》。

最后，本书辑选了部分精要的评论以及吐温后期的写作。

本书对马克·吐温脍炙人口的作品作了既深刻又通俗的解读，其中包括《汤姆·索亚历险记》和《哈克贝里·费恩历险记》。

作者倾力向读者展示吐温式幽默，着重说明这种幽默的效果是如何产生的以及这种独特的幽默手法是如何成功烘托吐温的小说风格的。

本书对初次接触吐温的读者非常有价值。

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书籍目录

Preface Note on referencing1 Mark Twain's life The early life River boating, the Civil War, the West Early success, marriage, the Hartford years Expatriation, financial loss, family tragedy The final years2 Contexts Samuel Langhorne Clemens and 'Mark Twain'3 Works Twain's humour Travel and travel writing: Innocents Abroad, A Tramp Abroad, Roughing It, Life on the Mississippi Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn A Connecticut Yankee and Pudd'nhead Wilson4 Critical reception and the late worksNotesGuide to further readingIndex

## 章节摘录

Despite his reputation as one of the most 'American' of writers, Twain is a key figure in any account of the cultural connections and exchanges across national and international borders in his period. If his humour first came out of the American frontier, it proved immediately popular with a British audience. When Twain first visited England in August 1872, he was widely fêted, and found himself already well-known: 'a lion', 'by long odds the most widely known & popular American author among the English' (L5, 184, 197). Very much at home there, he wrote home to wife Olivia: 'Too much company- too much dining - too much sociability. (But I would rather live in England than America -which is treason.)' (L5, 155). He made his visit in the first place in part to gather material for a book provisionally titled *Upon the Oddities and Eccentricities of the English*. But the genuine warmth of his reception in the country helped persuade him to abandon this project. And by the end of 1873 he had visited England three times, thoroughly enjoying his reputation there as author, lecturer and wit. Indeed, it would seem that the British public recognised Twain's exceptional comic talents and gave him celebrity status, more quickly than his native audience. Albert Bigelow Paine, his biographer, spoke of him being treated as 'little less than royalty' (LS, 372) on his second English visit in May-October 1873. Twain quickly followed this up with a third trip (November 1873-January 1874) to deliver a further series of lectures. After photographs were taken of him, apparently to go on sale to the general public, he wrote to Olivia that: 'it seems as if 3 out of every 5 I meet on the street recognize me. This in London! It seems incredible' (L5, 532). What is noteworthy here is just how appreciative a nineteenth-century British audience was of a form of humour that one might assume was culturally alien to it. Contemporary British reports of Twain's new lecture on 'Roughing It on the Silver Frontier' spoke of the audience's initial ignorance of the 'locality to which he intended to introduce them' ('Mexico was generally suggested'). But they nonetheless described both the success of Twain's comic material and his distinctive way of delivering it. As Moncure Daniel Conway wrote (around the turn of 1873-4): 'The talk of literary London just now is Mark Twain's account, in his new lecture of the "bucking" horse which he purchased in Nevada. ....

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