



The War Prayer

Twain, Mark

Published: 1916

Categorie(s): Fiction, Short Stories, War & Military

Source: Wikipedia

About Twain:

Samuel Langhorne Clemens (November 30, 1835 — April 21, 1910), better known by the pen name Mark Twain, was an American humorist, satirist, writer, and lecturer. Twain is most noted for his novels *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, which has since been called the Great American Novel, and *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. He is also known for his quotations. During his lifetime, Clemens became a friend to presidents, artists, leading industrialists, and European royalty. Clemens enjoyed immense public popularity, and his keen wit and incisive satire earned him praise from both critics and peers. American author William Faulkner called Twain "the father of American literature." Source: Wikipedia

Also available on Feedbooks for Twain:

- *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885)
- *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876)
- *Life On The Mississippi* (1883)
- *Roughing It* (1872)
- *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889)
- *The \$30,000 Bequest and other short stories* (2004)
- *Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc* (1896)
- *Tom Sawyer, Detective* (1896)
- *Tom Sawyer Abroad* (1894)
- *The Jumping Frog* (1865)

Note: This book is brought to you by Feedbooks

<http://www.feedbooks.com>

Strictly for personal use, do not use this file for commercial purposes.

It was a time of great and exalting excitement. The country was up in arms, the war was on, in every breast burned the holy fire of patriotism; the drums were beating, the bands playing, the toy pistols popping, the bunched firecrackers hissing and spluttering; on every hand and far down the receding and fading spread of roofs and balconies a fluttering wilderness of flags flashed in the sun; daily the young volunteers marched down the wide avenue gay and fine in their new uniforms, the proud fathers and mothers and sisters and sweethearts cheering them with voices choked with happy emotion as they swung by; nightly the packed mass meetings listened, panting, to patriot oratory which stirred the deepest deeps of their hearts, and which they interrupted at briefest intervals with cyclones of applause, the tears running down their cheeks the while; in the churches the pastors preached devotion to flag and country, and invoked the God of Battles beseeching His aid in our good cause in outpourings of fervid eloquence which moved every listener. It was indeed a glad and gracious time, and the half dozen rash spirits that ventured to disapprove of the war and cast a doubt upon its righteousness straightway got such a stern and angry warning that for their personal safety's sake they quickly shrank out of sight and offended no more in that way.

Sunday morning came – next day the battalions would leave for the front; the church was filled; the volunteers were there, their young faces alight with martial dreams – visions of the stern advance, the gathering momentum, the rushing charge, the flashing sabers, the flight of the foe, the tumult, the enveloping smoke, the fierce pursuit, the surrender! Then home from the war, bronzed heroes, welcomed, adored, submerged in golden seas of glory! With the volunteers sat their dear ones, proud, happy, and envied by the neighbors and friends who had no sons and brothers to send forth to the field of honor, there to win for the flag, or, failing, die the noblest of noble deaths. The service proceeded; a war chapter from the Old Testament was read; the first prayer was said; it was followed by an organ burst that shook the building, and with one impulse the house rose, with glowing eyes and beating hearts, and poured out that tremendous invocation

God the all-terrible! Thou who ordainest! Thunder thy clarion and lightning thy sword!

Then came the "long" prayer. None could remember the like of it for passionate pleading and moving and beautiful language. The burden of its supplication was, that an ever-merciful and benignant Father of us all would watch over our noble young soldiers, and aid, comfort, and

encourage them in their patriotic work; bless them, shield them in the day of battle and the hour of peril, bear them in His mighty hand, make them strong and confident, invincible in the bloody onset; help them to crush the foe, grant to them and to their flag and country imperishable honor and glory –

An aged stranger entered and moved with slow and noiseless step up the main aisle, his eyes fixed upon the minister, his long body clothed in a robe that reached to his feet, his head bare, his white hair descending in a frothy cataract to his shoulders, his seamy face unnaturally pale, pale even to ghastliness. With all eyes following him and wondering, he made his silent way; without pausing, he ascended to the preacher's side and stood there waiting. With shut lids the preacher, unconscious of his presence, continued with his moving prayer, and at last finished it with the words, uttered in fervent appeal, "Bless our arms, grant us the victory, O Lord our God, Father and Protector of our land and flag!"

The stranger touched his arm, motioned him to step aside – which the startled minister did – and took his place. During some moments he surveyed the spellbound audience with solemn eyes, in which burned an uncanny light; then in a deep voice he said:

"I come from the Throne – bearing a message from Almighty God!" The words smote the house with a shock; if the stranger perceived it he gave no attention. "He has heard the prayer of His servant your shepherd, and will grant it if such shall be your desire after I, His messenger, shall have explained to you its import – that is to say, its full import. For it is like unto many of the prayers of men, in that it asks for more than he who utters it is aware of – except he pause and think.

"God's servant and yours has prayed his prayer. Has he paused and taken thought? Is it one prayer? No, it is two – one uttered, the other not. Both have reached the ear of Him Who heareth all supplications, the spoken and the unspoken. Ponder this – keep it in mind. If you would beseech a blessing upon yourself, beware! lest without intent you invoke a curse upon a neighbor at the same time. If you pray for the blessing of rain upon your crop which needs it, by that act you are possibly praying for a curse upon some neighbor's crop which may not need rain and can be injured by it.

"You have heard your servant's prayer – the uttered part of it. I am commissioned of God to put into words the other part of it – that part which the pastor – and also you in your hearts – fervently prayed silently. And ignorantly and unthinkingly? God grant that it was so! You heard these words: 'Grant us the victory, O Lord our God!' That is

sufficient. the whole of the uttered prayer is compact into those pregnant words. Elaborations were not necessary. When you have prayed for victory you have prayed for many unmentioned results which follow victory – must follow it, cannot help but follow it. Upon the listening spirit of God fell also the unspoken part of the prayer. He commandeth me to put it into words. Listen!

"O Lord our Father, our young patriots, idols of our hearts, go forth to battle – be Thou near them! With them – in spirit – we also go forth from the sweet peace of our beloved firesides to smite the foe. O Lord our God, help us to tear their soldiers to bloody shreds with our shells; help us to cover their smiling fields with the pale forms of their patriot dead; help us to drown the thunder of the guns with the shrieks of their wounded, writhing in pain; help us to lay waste their humble homes with a hurricane of fire; help us to wring the hearts of their unoffending widows with unavailing grief; help us to turn them out roofless with little children to wander unfriended the wastes of their desolated land in rags and hunger and thirst, sports of the sun flames of summer and the icy winds of winter, broken in spirit, worn with travail, imploring Thee for the refuge of the grave and denied it – for our sakes who adore Thee, Lord, blast their hopes, blight their lives, protract their bitter pilgrimage, make heavy their steps, water their way with their tears, stain the white snow with the blood of their wounded feet! We ask it, in the spirit of love, of Him Who is the Source of Love, and Who is the ever-faithful refuge and friend of all that are sore beset and seek His aid with humble and contrite hearts. Amen.

(After a pause.) "Ye have prayed it; if ye still desire it, speak! The messenger of the Most High waits!"

It was believed afterward that the man was a lunatic, because there was no sense in what he said.

Loved this book ?
Similar users also downloaded

Mark Twain

The Jumping Frog

Mark Twain's "The Jumping Frog : In English, then in French, then clawed back into the civilized language once more by patient unremunerated toil" (1865), also known as "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County", "The Notorious Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" and "Jim Smiley and His Jumping Frog."

Containing the original story (in english), a french translation which was published in la Revue des Deux Mondes and which Twain finds to be a travesty of the original text, and Twain's re-translation of the french back into english, word for word (this is where things degenerate). A masterpiece of babelfishien nonsense dating from well before babelfish was even a gleam in the binary code of its creator (1903). Best appreciated if you can read both French and English, but even if you skip the french version it's truly brilliant. If you have ever translated random text using babelfish just because it's funny, don't miss this book.

As good old Samuel Clemens himself put it in his foreword "I cannot speak the French language, but I can translate very well, though not fast, I being self-educated."

Mark Twain

The \$30,000 Bequest and other short stories

Mark Twain

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, by Mark Twain, is a popular 1876 novel about a young boy growing up in the antebellum South on the Mississippi River in the fictional town of St. Petersburg, Missouri.

Mark Twain

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (often shortened to Huck Finn) is a novel written by American humorist Mark Twain. It is commonly used and accounted as one of the first Great American Novels. It is also one of the first major American novels written using Local Color Regionalism, or vernacular, told in the first person by the eponymous Huckleberry "Huck" Finn, best friend of Tom Sawyer and hero of three other Mark Twain books.

The book is noted for its colorful description of people and places along the Mississippi River. By satirizing Southern antebellum society that was already a quarter-century in the past by the time of publication, the book is an often scathing look at entrenched attitudes, particularly racism. The drifting journey of Huck and his friend Jim, a runaway slave, down the Mississippi River on their raft may be one of the most enduring images of escape and freedom in all of American literature.

Mark Twain

Tom Sawyer, Detective

Tom Sawyer, Detective is an 1896 novel by Mark Twain. It is a sequel to *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876), *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), and *Tom Sawyer Abroad* (1894). Tom Sawyer attempts to solve a mysterious murder in this burlesque of the immensely popular detective novels of the time. Like the two preceding novels, the story is told using the first-person narrative voice of Huck Finn.

Mark Twain

Tom Sawyer Abroad

Tom Sawyer Abroad is a novel by Mark Twain published in 1894. It features Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn in a parody of Jules Verne-esque adventure stories. In the story, Tom, Huck, and Jim set sail to Africa in a futuristic hot air balloon, where they survive encounters with lions, robbers, and fleas to see some of the world's greatest wonders, including the Pyramids and the Sphinx. Like *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and *Tom Sawyer, Detective*, the story is told using the first-person narrative voice of Huck Finn.

Mark Twain

Life On The Mississippi

Life on the Mississippi is a memoir by Mark Twain detailing his days as a steamboat pilot on the Mississippi River before and after the American Civil War. The book begins with a brief history of the river. It continues with anecdotes of Twain's training as a steamboat pilot, as the 'cub' of an experienced pilot. He describes, with great affection, the science of navigating the ever-changing Mississippi River. In the second half, the book describes Twain's return, many years later, to travel on a steamboat from St. Louis to New Orleans. He describes the competition from railroads, the new, large cities, and his observations on greed, gullibility, tragedy, and bad architecture. He also tells some stories that are

most likely tall tales. Simultaneously published in 1883 in the U.S. and in England, it is said to be the first book composed on a typewriter. (Source: Wikipedia)

Mark Twain

Roughing It

Roughing It follows the travels of young Mark Twain through the Wild West during the years 1861–1867. After a brief stint as a Confederate cavalry militiaman, he joined his brother Orion Clemens, who had been appointed Secretary of the Nevada Territory, on a stagecoach journey west. Twain consulted his brother's diary to refresh his memory and borrowed heavily from his active imagination for many stories in the novel.

Roughing It illustrates many of Twain's early adventures, including a visit to Salt Lake City, gold and silver prospecting, real-estate speculation, and his beginnings as a writer.

In this memoir, readers can see examples of Twain's rough-hewn humor, which would become a staple of his writing in his later books, such as *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, and *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*.

(Source: Wikipedia)

Mark Twain

A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court

This is the tale of a 19th-century citizen of Hartford, Connecticut who awakens to find himself inexplicably transported back in time to early medieval England at the time of the legendary King Arthur in AD 528.

Mark Twain

Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc

Mark Twain's work on Joan of Arc is titled in full *Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc*, by the Sieur Louis de Conte who is identified further as Joan's page and secretary. The work is fictionally presented as a translation from the manuscript by Jean Francois Alden, or, in the words of the published book, "Freely Translated out of the Ancient French into Modern English from the Original Unpublished Manuscript in the National Archives of France".

De Conte is a fictionalized version of Joan of Arc's page Louis de Contes, and provides narrative unity to the story. He is presented as an individual who was with Joan during the three major phases of her life - as a youth in Domremy, as the commander of Charles'

army on military campaign, and as a defendant at the trial in Rouen. The book is presented as a translation by Alden of de Conte's memoirs, written in his later years for the benefit of his descendants.



www.feedbooks.com
Food for the mind