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Starring Mark Twain and Hank Morgan: Performance in *A Connecticut Yankee*

Transitions, improvements, and deception characterize the United States during the nineteenth century. The public often preferred fantasy to reality in forms of entertainment. From P.T. Barnum's circus acts and shows to the figure of the trickster in literature, performance prevailed as an important theme in this era. Examples abound of characters that rely on performance such as Herman Melville's Babo and the eponymous Benito Cereno. In particular, Samuel Clemens, more commonly know by the pseudonym Mark Twain, embodies performance both through by his own identity and that of the character Hank Morgan in *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. Hank Morgan also adopts a false name in the novel and takes on the role of sorcerer instead of nineteenth-century time traveler, becoming a new and different person or character through the use of dialect, costume changes, and various settings. By using a false name, Twain had the privilege of maintaining his private identity while simultaneously performing as an author.

In terms of Twain's alternate identity, he preferred to have people think him experimental in writing and carefree about his work. In contrast, Joe Fulton, in his book, *Mark Twain in the Margins*, writes, "Twain was both the experimental writer he claimed to be and the careful craftsman his manuscript and marginalia prove him to be" (Fulton 1). Fulton studied Twain's manuscripts and noted the numerous and detailed comments he gave to his own work; Fulton is also known for transcribing both the notes Twain made in his work as well as the notes made in

books that Twain read. Maintaining the façade, Twain would cross out words in his marginal comments he felt were too controversial; however, he only crossed out the words or phrases lightly in the case that someone could easily read the old word and understand an original meaning Twain had considered. He used the crossings out as a method of pretending to cover his original writings, when he actually wanted people to be able to read his notations.

One of the books Twain read, and mostly likely added marginal comments to, is Thomas Malory's *Morte d' Arthur*, an influence on Twain's novel, *A Connecticut Yankee*. While on a book tour with fellow author George Washington Cable, Cable recommended *Morte d' Arthur* to Twain, who then used the tales of knighthood as inspiration for *A Connecticut Yankee.* Twain and Cable both appreciated the antiquated language and used it in daily speech, as if performing roles from the stories. As Futon writes, "So smitten was Twain by the language that the two men took to conversing in archaic English, hailing one another as 'Sir Mark' and 'Sir George" (Fulton 5). This playfulness serves as another instance when Twain experiments with donning different roles in his life; however, playfully speaking in archaic English can also be seen as mocking the language. In *A Connecticut Yankee,* Hank Morgan in fact dismisses the formality of the Arthurian vernacular and encourages people to speak and write in his modern, American dialect.

Beyond the book tour with Cable, Twain also took to reading Robert Browning's poetry for audiences. Many recall Twain as a great reader with memorable inflections in his voice and good pacing of the words; few knew that Twain deliberated carefully over how he read each poem, creating his own system of symbols to enhance his performance as a reader. Gretchen E. Sharlow, an accomplished oral interpreter, studied Twain's symbols and developed this translation table:

___ Elongate and go into enjambment

/ Upward voice inflection

/ (but reversed) Downward voice inflection

~~ Up and down voice; vocal variation from low to high and back

X Brief pause

_____ Longer pause, giving listeners time to imagine the scene or emotion just described

l Stop

ll More of a stop

lll Full stop

!!! Great Emphasis (Sharlow 5)

Twain created his own set of symbols potentially to prevent others from understanding his performance techniques; his secretive nature wanted to keep knowledge of the symbols from the public. As any cautious performer, Twain preferred to practice in front of smaller audiences before tackling larger cities. This led him to read in the Rhode Island towns of Pawtucket, Providence, and Newport. He considered them testing grounds for his eventual book tour with Cable, and practical as Providence was close to his hometown of Hartford, CT. Along the lines of testing new ideas, Twain also would depart from the program's listing of his readings and improvise with his own, new material. "Twain's practice of virtually dispensing with his books in his 'readings,' implicitly suggesting that for him the difference between a reading and a lecture was a matter more of structure than of method of delivery, and called attention to his departure from the printed program" (Fulton 38). Twain enjoyed maintaining full control over his lecture and performed in the ways he felt would be most entertaining, although it meant going off script.

Twain still acted the role of performer within his family, fooling his children and wife instead of an audience of strangers. According to John DeLancey Ferguson, in his book *Mark Twain: Man and Legend*, Twain purposefully inserted grammatical errors in his manuscripts for his children and wife to discover when they read them over and allowed them to give him advice. As Twain said:

> I often interlarded remarks of a studied and felicitously atrocious character purposefully to achieve the children's delight and see the pencil do its fatal work. I often joined my supplications to the children's for mercy, and strung the argument out and pretended to be in earnest. They were deceived, and so was their mother… (Ferguson 218).

This captures Twain's enjoyment of performance. He plants the mistakes in his writing, to then quibble with his children, all the while knowing that they are right and he acts the role of offended writer. Not only does Twain plant mistakes in his language, but carefully created mistakes that his children and his wife can truly believe were overlooked by him and must be corrected.

The language of *A Connecticut Yankee* combines both dialects, and is itself a sort of quilt, consisting of elements from multiple books that Twain had read, thereby resulting in the structure of the novel that depends on many other texts. Twain scholar, Clark Griffith, writes: "The most bookish of all Mark Twain's books; in ways that have never been sufficiently recognized, it is a book about waking up inside a book" (11). Twain incorporates outside literary influences to build *A Connecticut Yankee*, which could be argued is masquerading as a book on its own merit. The central character of Hank Morgan literally wakes up in sixth century England and presents his point of view on his *Morte d' Arthur* experiences. While the book is about time-traveler Hank Morgan's new life as "The Boss," the old language and outdated traditions are

prevalent throughout the book and for the reader add to the feeling of waking up inside a book; the book being a version of *Morte d' Arthur*.

This notion of feeling as if one is in a different location is part of a performer's responsibility to his audience, to take them away from their reality and place them in his concocted fantasy. Twain drew from *The History of England from the Accession of James II*. Although he gathered knowledge of history and enough information to describe Arthurian England, Twain enhances the details to heighten interest and add to the performance of the novel. As Fulton writes, "Twain was less concerned with history than with historicity, 'how it feels and seems' to be within history" (22). This is also Twain's goal in his book, he does not want to only accurately present the facts, he wants the reader to become involved with the feelings and settings of that time period. Less of a historical fiction and more of a voyaging piece, the reader experiences the journey through a field of medieval England instead of merely learning about the battles that occurred in that same field. Twain wants his readers to have the entire experience of living in Arthurian England by adding extra descriptions that may not be historically based. Twain brings elements of history and historicity to the novel, but chooses to limit the history provided; Twain shows more concern toward Hank Morgan's experiences with history and his manipulations with the society instead of factual findings. Additionally, Fulton writes, "Twain always hoped and sometimes believed that his writing could change attitudes and, ultimately, history" (33). Even here, Twain is hoping to alter the actual history and reality of his time to better conform to his own preference and ideals.

In the novel, Hank Morgan journeys to sixth-century England to enlighten Arthurian society with the advancements of his era. Although Hank intends to change the sixth century, it is the sixth century that changes Hank: he first adapts to and then adopts Arthurian society,

marrying the sixth-century maiden Sandy, and longing to return after waking again in the nineteenth century. Hank largely relies on performance including the use of clothes, gestures, words, appearance, spectacle, deceit, and existing customs and values to change Arthurian society. He often exercises duplicity to convince others of the superiority of his ideas. Despite this, Hank progressively identifies with sixth-century society as he transitions from Hank Morgan to "Sir Boss." For Hank, he embraces the role to the extent that the line between his own person and that of his sixth-century counterpart becomes indistinguishable.

By the end of the novel, the reader has observed many aspects of Hank's performance initially for the purpose of survival, but eventually for the title of Sir Boss. In the transformations undergone by Hank and the people he encounters in the sixth century, the reader sees that Hank, the actor, is simultaneously acted upon. Someone like Hank Morgan (or Samuel Clemens as Mark Twain for that matter) who depends on performance to maintain his status can never rest. Constrained by what his audience will accept, unable to voice his true thoughts, Hank ultimately loses himself as he constantly adjusts his performance to maintain his power and prestige.

The character M.T., who shares Mark Twain's initials, appears briefly at the beginning and end of the novel to frame the narrative and provide a layered perspective. While touring Warwick Castle, M.T. meets Hank Morgan, who tells his fantastical story of time travel. In *The Final P.S. by M.T.*, he describes Hank mistaking M.T. for Sandy, his sixth-century wife, "His glassy eyes and his ashy face were alight in an instant with pleasure, gratitude, gladness, welcome" (Twain 466). Despite his initial scoffing at the ancient customs and outmoded methods, the superior feelings he originally holds about the nineteenth-century's progress transform into nostalgia for the sixth century. During Hank's performance as the mighty Sir

Boss, he leaves his nineteenth-century self behind in an early scene and becomes the powerful wizard that he invents by the time the curtain falls.

Twain also gives his characters the knowledge of the importance of performance. Within this process, he frequently uses the word, "face," as a noun, to illustrate how to achieve forms of duplicity and to convey an underlying sense of a struggle between the characters in the story. As a noun, face often refers to "the front part of the head, from the forehead to the chin; the visage, countenance," as defined by the online *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*). A "loss of face" refers to losing one's good name or reputation; therefore, face broadens its meaning from the physical trait of a person to the moral characteristic of a person. Another definition of face is an "outward show; assumed or factitious appearance; disguise, pretense; an instance of this; a pretext." Face no longer possesses only factual truth, but has the potential to refer to a false persona or appearance.

When Hank pretends to have magical abilities to fix a holy well, he utilizes his performance skills and organizes a male chorus of Latin chants before turning his face to the sky. He narrates, "When it was finished I stood up on the platform and extended my hands abroad, for two minutes, with my *face* uplifted—that always produces a dead hush…" (Twain 237). Hank appears as a sorcerer from the music surrounding him to his face looking toward the sky, but it is all based on deception. His face is one of the most powerful tools he has to disguise the truth and the phrase "that produces a dead hush" is equivalent to producing a gasp from a frightened audience; in both cases, the audiences rely on the performers to feel particular emotions, allowing themselves to be pulled into the fantasy.

Another moment when *face* occurs in the text is when Sandy realizes that the rescued princesses are enchanted to appear as pigs to Hank while she can see them clearly. Twain writes,

"She looked surprised and distressed. The animation faded out of her *face*; and during many moments she was lost in thought and silent" (Twain 198). Face both refers to Sandy's physical face as well as her intended appearance. She wants to appear excited that they rescued the princesses together, but she struggles with Hank's belief that the princesses are actually pigs.

There are many phrases that use the word face as a noun. For example, "to look a person in the face" means "to confront, meet with a steady gaze that implies courage, confidence or (sometimes) defiance." In addition to this definition, to figuratively *"shew one's face*" means "to put in an appearance, to appear: *lit* and *fig*." Both of these definitions address putting up a front that may include a show of bravado or standing up for oneself. In several face phrases, they are not actually referring to the face "with reference to its position in the front of the body, or as the part presented to encounter. [There are] many phrases, some of which merely express the notion of confronting or opposition, without any reference to the literal sense."

Face is also used in commands, such as "face right," "face left," or "turn about face." The word, "face," has power struggle between people or direct order connotations. Another phrase is "to set one's face," meaning "to give a settled bearing or expression to the countenance." While setting one's face may portray a calm expression, there could be contrasting emotions and thoughts beneath the countenance.

When Hank directs King Arthur how to act like a peasant, enabling both to travel incognito, Hank focuses much of his attention on the king's face and hiding his royal demeanor. Hank tells the king, "Chin a little lower, please—there, very good Eyes too high; pray don't look at the horizon, look at the ground, ten steps in front of you" (Twain 294). In order to fool fellow travelers, the King must learn how a peasant behaves and holds his head. Hank recognizes the importance of facial positioning and urges the King to adopt a more humble position. Hank is

also telling the king to angle his face in a downward direction, warning against making direct eye contact. The King attempts to set his face, in order to hide his anger at receiving no respect from his subjects while in disguise.

At the start of Twain's novel, he foreshadows the struggles, terror and ruin that Hank will bring to King Arthur's subjects. While riding into town, the lost Hank and his guide, a knight in armor, encounter a young girl who is simultaneously amazed and frightened at the sight of Hank dressed in his nineteenth-century garb. "Up went her hands, and she was turned to stone; her mouth dropped open, her eyes stared wide and timorously, she was the picture of astonished curiosity touched with fear" (Twain 24). The girl's facial reaction foretells future reactions to Hank, her expression and gestures are in response to his strange clothing. His attire forebodes the strange changes he will impose on medieval England throughout the novel.

Clothing can convey power and give the wearer a particular identity. Hank feels intense discomfort when forced to remove his clothing in complying with Merlin's command to disarm him. Hank narrates, "In half a minute I was as naked as a pair of tongs! And dear, dear, to think of it: I was the only embarrassed person there" (Twain 48). The repetition of "dear" illustrates Hank's anxiety as the nobles observe him naked; his embarrassment grows when people act naturally, impassively analyzing his body. Hank never feels comfortable when physically exposing himself in any manner; he wears clothing beneath his armor, but feels that removing his armor is akin to taking off his clothing. "But I was obliged to remain in my armor, because I could not get it off by myself and yet could not allow Alisande to help, because it would have seemed so like undressing before folk" (Twain 123). Hank's clothing is synonymous with his performances. Just as he relies on his miracles and the pretense of having magic, he needs his garments to disguise his natural and authentic self, and feels most comfortable in costume.

Hank begins to believe that he achieves nobility by dressing in aristocratic attire; correspondingly, serfdom when clad in plainer apparel. Hank asks King Arthur to appoint him as his minister and King Arthur agrees, "Do him homage, high and low, rich and poor, for he has become the king's right hand, is clothed with power and authority" (Twain 63). King Arthur literally and figuratively clothes Hank and demands his servants to "clothe him like a prince," thereby fostering the idea that Hank is worthy of noble attention (Twain 64). In clothing Hank in this manner, rather than complying with Hank's request for his nineteenth-century clothes, the King, almost intuitively, recognizes that clothes and power synergistically enhance each other. Hank's nakedness when powerless parallels his fine raiment when appointed to the King's court.

At Hank's suggestion, he and King Arthur dress as peasants so that the King will experience poverty and slavery, in order to persuade him to make reforms in the kingdom. King Arthur wears rags and shaves his beard to attain the appropriate physical appearance of a peasant. They both "dressed and barbered alike, and could pass for small farmers, or farm bailiffs, or shepherds, or carters" (Twain 283). They could now also pass for each other, enabling each to claim to be King Arthur and meet with the same disbelief of the people. Twain illustrates how dressing plays a part in projecting the power of nobility. Yet although King Arthur wears peasant rags, he is still the rightful king. Hank, the only person to know that the man beneath the rags is King Arthur, comes to recognize the very few, but real differences between the King and a peasant when each is dressed similarly.

Hank develops a more nuanced view of the qualities the King possesses independent of his attire. Hank watches the King fail to adopt the customs of the peasants, such as exhibiting humility when knights ride past them. As Marie Nelson, author of "The Authority of the Spoken Word: Speech Acts in Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*," writes, "the

Yankee persists in his effort to teach him how to play the role he has persuaded him to take on" (Nelson 6). The King begins to act more like a peasant, but never entirely abandons his identity as King. Hank acknowledges the immutability and true authority of nobility when Sir Lancelot reveals King Arthur to the public in his disguise. Hank says, "…I thought to myself, well really there *is* something peculiarly grand about the gait and bearing of a King, after all" (Twain 400). Originally intending to prove that the only difference between a King and a servant is their clothing, Hank converts to the sixth-century idea that nobles are inherently different from peasants.

When Merlin disguises himself as an old woman to gain access to Hank, the old wizard's performance plays a part in Hank's undoing. Clarence writes, "He was disguised as a woman, and appeared to be a simple old peasant goodwife" (Twain 463). Merlin learns from Hank Morgan; how important appearance is in fooling others, employing disguise to trick Hank into drinking the sleeping potion. In disguise, Merlin is able to use his real magical potion to send Hank back to his rightful century through a deep sleep. However, there is now confusion as to which century is Hank's rightful century. Although he is originally from the nineteenth century, his extended role as The Boss in the sixth century has given him a best friend, wife and child. Emotionally connected to his stint in the sixth century, he feels more important in that era than his own.

Later in *A Connecticut Yankee,* Hank exchanges customs as a consequence of a costume change. Hank enters a jousting tournament dressed in regal sixth-century attire while the people cheer him on with nineteenth-century phrases. Hank wears "flesh-colored tights from neck to heel, with blue silk puffings about my loins" while the crowd shouts, "Go it, Slim Jim!" and "Encore! Encore!" (Twain 405-408). Through costume and language respectively, both Hank

and the people pretend to be from different eras. The spectators of the tournament value noble dress, as Seth Lerer, author of "Hello, Dude: Philology, Performance, and Technology in Twain's *Connecticut Yankee*", writes, "His [Twain's] dudes and dudesses are themselves performers on a stage of aristocratic pretension" (Lerer 11). Before Hank entered the Arthurian era, the nobles were the leads in society commanding respect from those beneath them; now, Hank receives attention from both peasants and nobles as evidenced from the crowd at the tournament.

Entering the sixth century from a different time and culture, Hank possesses a perspective apart from the circumstances and events of the sixth century, albeit tinged with his unquestioning acceptance of nineteenth-century technological progress. For example, Hank and the people both see and admire the gorgeous castles and landscape of the country, but Hank sees the future possibilities that can be imposed on the sixth century. Hank begins as practical and helpful, seeking to improve the lives of Arthur's citizens, but becomes political and self-serving, aiming to improve his own position in society.

Hank's nineteenth-century innovations must comply with the practices and prejudices of the sixth century. Hank is initially transported to the sixth century via a violent fight with a subordinate who strikes Hank with a crowbar. A cataclysmic use of force transports Hank back to the nineteenth century after he and his followers kill twenty-five thousand men. When Hank no longer has the means to impose his will by violence, which bookends the beginning and end of his sixth-century experience, he must resort to strategies of deceit accomplished by clothes, gestures, words, and appearance.

Possessing an inclination for supremacy achieved through the use of violence, Hank identifies with Arthur's sister Morgan le Fay. The shared *Morgan* in each of their names subtlety

suggests their similarity. Hank initially takes a passive role when he observes Morgan le Fay's strength in her demand that several servants be killed. Initially Hank feels pity for the first servant's quick death, but then admires Morgan le Fay's commanding presence. He remarks, "And what a glance she had: when it fell in reproof upon those servants, they shrunk and quailed as timid people do when the lightening flashes out of a cloud. I could have got the habit myself" (160). Neither Hank nor Morgan le Fey are not monarchs by birth, but motivated by their desire for sovereignty, both use performance to project a substitute monarchical power. Hank endeavors to gain Morgan le Fay's respect through demanding that the band leader be hanged for his poor performance. Hank is willing to conform to Morgan le Fey expectations, compromising his beliefs and suppressing his emotions.

Another example of Hank's different viewpoint occurs when King Arthur appoints Hank to accompany Sandy on her request to rescue 45 captured princesses. Sandy, raised in a culture of enchantment and sorcery, sees a group of pigs as the lost princesses. Hank, however, sees them as pigs (which are how they are depicted in the illustration for the reader) but humors Sandy's misperception: "It would be wasted time to try to argue her out of her delusion, it couldn't be done; I must just humor it" (Twain 199). To prevent the stigma of lunacy, Hank pragmatically agrees with Sandy. Hank uses this episode of returning the pigs to the castle to illustrate the difference between Sandy's and his own beliefs regarding royalty. Sandy begs Hank to treat the pigs as princesses and to respect their rank by not pulling their tails. Hank indulges the concept of the purported nobility as pigs, herds them as such, and says, "The troublesomest old sow of the lot had to be called my Lady, and your Highness, like the rest" (Twain 200). Although Hank humors Sandy, he dispenses with the pigs by secretly giving them away.

Similarly, Hank performs to save himself from being burned at the stake. In order to win over King Arthur and his subjects, Hank makes use of Merlin's technique of displaying magic. Threatened with execution, Hank vows to make the sun disappear if King Arthur does not untie him from the stake. Once the eclipse begins, King Arthur begs Hank to have mercy on the people and to use his magic to make the sun reappear. Hank agrees, the eclipse ends, and the people hail him as a famous magician. All the while, Merlin attempts to show people the truth by spreading whispers that Hank is a liar, but nobody listens to him. The magic of Hank's eclipse erases the authority Merlin held for so many years. In beating Merlin at his own game of magical bluff, Hank both demotes Merlin and elevates his own status, despite his internal conviction that magic does not exist. Playing to his audience, Hank uses science in order to appear to be performing magic; Hank plants gunpowder in Merlin's tower to be triggered with a lightening rod to destroy the structure. This destruction of Merlin's tower foreshadows Hank's intension of supplanting Merlin. Hank counters Merlin's magic with his science to overtake Merlin in society and gain King Arthur's allegiance.

Although Hank feels compelled to use performance for himself, he is engaged by the simple-hearted, attractive, and loveable qualities of the knights: "Because you soon saw that brains were not needed in a society like that, and, indeed would have marred it, hindered it, spoiled its symmetry-perhaps rendered its existence impossible" (37). Hank's insight leads him to implement his plans, compelling the sixth-century society to conform to his nineteenth-century ideals. Hank also looks at the crowds at the jousting tournaments fondly: "…very characteristic of the country and the time, in the way of high animal spirits, innocent indecencies of language, and happy-hearted indifference to morals" (87). Although Hank admires the crowd enjoying themselves at the tournament, he also seeks to change the people to become more

productive, educated, and civilized. Hank appreciates the innocence of the citizens, but simultaneously wants to change them.

An example of Hank's successful use of language in performance occurs before his burning at the stake. As he is about to be burned, he demonstrates the ability to employ commands, threats, and elaborate introductions, instilling fear in the King and Merlin to accomplish his release. Hank's threats are empty as they are built on weak foundations and lack validity. Nelson writes about how Merlin, the King, and Hank each issue a command when Hank is tied to the stake during the eclipse, but Hank attaches a threat to his command as well; Merlin says, "Apply the torch," the King says, "I forbid it," and Hank says, "Stay where you are, If any man moves—even the king—before I give him leave, I will blast him with thunder, I will consume him with lightnings" (Twain 62). Of the three men, everyone obeys Hank because of his claim to have power over nature. Merlin hesitates and Hank says, "Then he sat down, and I took a good breath; for I knew I was master of the situation now" (Twain 62). Or, since Hank's threats are components of his performance as a mighty wizard, he is now master of ceremonies. Hank's entire survival in the sixth century rests on his ability to act well and for people to believe him.

Nelson also describes how Hank goes beyond using words to incite amazement; he combines language with physical movements when he points to the eclipse as he predicts it. "I was in one of the most grand attitudes I ever struck, with my arm stretched up pointing to the sun. It was a noble effect" (62). The effects of Hank's performance are depicted by the Arthurian citizens' reaction, validating his success. Lerer also writes of Hank's performance with the eclipse: "There is an electric theater to Hank's Arthurian sojourn, a kind of Edisonian performativity, the working out of the 'Wizard of Menlo Park'" (4). Hank also gains his first and

most loyal follower, Clarence, by enlisting his help. Clarence agrees to deliver Hank's threat of plunging the world into darkness if not released. Hank believes that the more elaborate the performance, the stronger the response it will receive. Hank survives his sentence of burning at the stake combining language, physical movements, and allies.

Hank succumbs to the sixth century-tradition of magic with his own preference of creating an entertaining spectacle to earn the people's admiration. Lerer writes, "Hank's ability to beat Merlin at his own game hinges not so much on his knowledge of things (for example, when an eclipse will be coming) but on his stagecraft" (3-4). In embracing his new, magical role, he says, "I am a magician myself—and the Supreme Grand High-Yu-Muckamuck" (Twain 65). This proclamation of Hank as a magician, but with a mocking phrase reflects his indecision between truly considering himself a magician and pretending to be a magician. Hank's magic showmanship bests the wizard Merlin's actual magic. As Derek Parker Royal writes, "Hank is a one-man show of political emancipation, a living advertisement that promises to free the masses with a grand spectacle of staged effects" in his article, "Eruptions of Performance: Hank Morgan and the Business of Politics" (Royal 13). Hank needs the staged effects to make a strong impact on the people to increase his status.

Hank's unceasing competition with Merlin for the title of best magician continues even when Merlin is not present. When Hank and King Arthur walk through the country, dressed as peasants, King Arthur questions Hank's powers when he is unable to read the King's mind. King Arthur says, "I believed thou wert greater than Merlin; and truly in magic thou art. But prophecy is greater than magic. Merlin is a prophet" (Twain 237). Ironically, Hank is more of a prophet than a magician because he can predict the upcoming events of history, rather than perform any truly magical spells. Hank again defeats Merlin as he tells of the old wizard having the ability to

see a few years into the future whereas Hank can see centuries into the future. With Hank, more is often more impressive: more special effects during miracles, longer introductions to his miracles, and the ability to see more years into the future.

Originally, Hank opposes the titles and aristocracy of the sixth century, favoring the democratic ideals of the nineteenth century. After creating a powerful and threatening image with the combined eclipse and explosion of Merlin's tower, Hank receives the title of "The Boss." He considers, "Elected by the nation. That suited me. And it was a pretty high title. There were very few 'The's' and I was one of them" (Twain 83). He reasons his assigned name of "The Boss" through the nation's decision to voluntarily give him the title; but Hank attempts to evade the fact that the name is still a title. As Royal writes, "This recognition feeds into his need to 'boss' the population into a productive collection of subordinates" (19-20). Being known as "The Boss" places Hank above the citizens and among the ranks of aristocracy. According to Rust, author of the article, "Americanisms in *A Connecticut Yankee*," the title of "The Boss" conveys both superiority and negativity; in Twain's time, slaves used this title in referring to their masters as well as the American public to refer to corrupt politicians (Rust 13). Later in the novel, society moves from calling Hank "The Boss" to "Sir Boss." The very nobility system that Hank scorns now supports his identity.

With Hank's elevation to Sir Boss, he schemes to stabilize his position by usurping Merlin. When a holy well ceases to produce water, Hank and Merlin compete to repair the well first. Merlin fails to revive the well through magic and Hank succeeds through technology. Hank portrays the technology as magic in secretly repairing the well and subsequently coordinating a show to demonstrate his magical abilities to publicly repair the well. Hank says, "My idea was, doors open at 10:30, performance to begin at 11:25 sharp" (Twain 236). Hank himself refers to

his portrayal of a powerful magician as a "performance," parodying Twain's own handbills that advertised his performance, "Doors open at 7:30; the trouble begins at 8" (xxix Railton). Nelson writes, "The stage is set, and Hank rises to the occasion. As the Yankee describes his performance, his body language can be seen as suitable preparation for the speech act that will show that Merlin is wrong" (5). Hank continually enjoys receiving the people's attention and schedules his miracle, treating it as a performance. As people travel from different parts of the country to bear witness to Hank's fireworks and listen to his gibberish words with wonder, they hail him as mightier than Merlin. Hank's greater performance skills increase his status above Merlin's.

Hank renames two sixth-century people with shorter nineteenth-century names. Offhandedly, Hank gives the young boy who will grow to be his second-in-command the name Clarence. Hank says, "Now, Clarence, my boy—if that might happen to be your name" (Twain 30). Clarence gained usage as a first name in the nineteenth century, negating the possibility that Clarence was his name before Hank met him. Hank then renames the maiden Demoiselle Alisande la Carteloise with the name, Sandy, another name of the nineteenth century. Concentrated on the efficiency of society, this name shortening is another example of Hank's goal to reshape customs.

In addition to giving these characters modern names, Hank creates a closer connection to them as well; Clarence becomes Hank's best friend and Sandy becomes Hank's wife. Hank trains Clarence in the nineteenth-century technology such as the telephone and places him in charge of the training schools for the young men. Clarence also adopts Hank's style of speech, such as when he says of the knights, "They shall start in half an hour" (Twain 390). Hank trains Sandy in nineteenth-century customs in condemning her descriptive and tedious stories and

encouraging her to be succinct in her speech. He also takes her from the role of maiden with long and flowing hair and recasts her as his wife in a domestic world with her hair pulled back into a bun.

While Hank has implemented several reforms over the years, including the institution of schools and the production of the newspaper, King Arthur and his court still believe Hank must embark on a quest to prove his valor. Hank must still follow the traditions of the sixth century, but initially sees this quest as another performance he must successfully complete. When Hank and Sandy meet a few unfamiliar knights during their journey, Hank fears for their safety and does not understand the customs. Sandy then explains that the knights respect The Boss and will become his followers after appearing at King Arthur's Court. Hank says, "How much better she managed that thing than I should have done it myself" (Twain 139). He learns that knowledge of the current era's customs proves of additional value in novel situations, rather than simply pretending to have knowledge.

Hank wants to educate the people of King Arthur and sends many people to the Factory for training in nineteenth-century ideas. This method inverts the practice of sending a knight on a quest in order to become a true and valiant knight. Instead of knights developing their individuality and making their own decisions on the quest, the Factory teaches the knights the rules of nineteenth-century conduct and molds them to become proper citizens. The quest is now the factory and the valiant knight is a member of the nineteenth century. Hank relies on this previously established technique of the sixth century in order to create more modern citizens, adopting nineteenth-century ideals and language. The sixth century influences Hank's decisions, despite his goal to steer people away from the traditions of King Arthur's era in having them pretend to live in the nineteenth century.

From the start of the novel, Hank opposes the structure, dogma, and power of the Church. Other than Merlin, the Church is Hank's main competitor for the people's attention and loyalty. While the Church depends on the power of conformity to keep followers and Merlin employs his established reputation as a powerful wizard to influence others, Hank relies on revolutionary ideas to sway the people toward his control. He wants to abolish the Church, introduce leniency in religious practices, and awaken people to the possibility that the Church is not the final authority. In a bit of humor, he undermines the Church when the old abbot begs Hank to use his powers to repair the holy well: "And see that thou do it with enchantments that be holy, for the Church will not endure that work in her cause be done by devil's magic" (Twain 220). Despite the abbot's admonition, Hank uses nineteenth-century tools rather than the requested holy enchantment to cover the hole in the well. Using this deceit, he lulls the people into believing that he uses magic. Hank recognizes the stabilizing force of the Church, although he detests the institution itself. Hank says, "Although I was no friend to that Catholic Church, I was obliged to admit this. And often, in spite of me, I found myself saying, 'What would this country be without the Church?'" (Twain 164). The Church's illustration of power over the common people forces Hank to respect the Church as a competitor for the people's loyalty. He realizes the extent to which the Church influences the traditions of society, and acknowledges the strength of the institutional Church.

In addition to realizing the Church's influence, Hank also accepts the sixth century's low tolerance for lunacy. He decides to hide his knowledge of locomotives and hot air balloons in keeping with his outward identity as a sane member of the kingdom. To avoid the risk of being shunned as a madman, Hank must never allude to such modern day inventions. He quietly acquiesces to the norms of the sixth century in choosing to withhold particular knowledge about

future travel vehicles. Ironically, Hank would be deemed a lunatic by claiming that a train and a hot air balloon are based on scientific technology, not magic. In contrast, if Hank portrayed these inventions as mystical, he would actually earn the trust of sixth-century society. The people place more faith in the accomplishments of miracles than the accomplishments of man alone.

In repairing the holy well and building a new bath, the exposure to the inclement weather causes Hank to catch a cold and aggravates his rheumatism. Hank then depends on the people at the Church to restore his health; they encourage him to grow stronger. Hank says, "But everyone was full of attentions and kindnesses… the right medicine to help a convalescent swiftly up toward health and strength again" (Twain 245). He now depends on the comfort provided by the citizens to regain his health; he has become linked to society and needs their support to continue living. As a performer, he gains energy from the attentions of the people.

Clarence becomes more like Hank as time passes in the novel. At the same moment of Hank's revelation about the inherent bearing of the king, Clarence speaks in nineteenth-century language and his pride matches that of Hank's: "I knew you'd like it. I've had the boys practicing, this long time, privately; and just hungry for a chance to show off" (Twain 400). Clarence focuses on matching the role of Hank as he once was, while Hank aspires to take the role of Merlin. Hank wants the respect and fear that the people have of Merlin, rather than the initial awe that any newcomer would have garnered. Clarence writes the letter to accompany Hank when he sleeps for several centuries, representing his sixth-century counterpart and surviving imprint on society that is similar to a devoted fan's memory of an excellent performer. Clarence's postscript that memorializes the sixth-century Boss is found on Hank Morgan as he dies in the nineteenth century. Through Clarence, The Boss is forever remembered while Hank Morgan is simultaneously forgotten.

The created character has taken on a life of its own, a possibility when performance is powerful enough. Likewise, many people are still more familiar with the name of Mark Twain than of Samuel Clemens. On Twain's tombstone, both names are inscribed; however, "Mark Twain" is in a larger font. Performance may be enticing to audiences, but the performer often must decide between constantly exchanging identities or altogether abandoning one for the sake of a memorable show.

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