

Mark Twain's Old Stories.

The motive that prompts men and women to attend an entertainment in which Mark Twain figures as a star attraction is not to be misconstrued. They want to be amused. Their minds are made up for an evening of laughter. Having set themselves in that purpose, nothing can turn them from it—not even Mark Twain. Last night's audience at the concert hall of the Madison Square Garden turned out to look, hear, and laugh. It executed that intention thoroughly, while Mark Twain loitered through several of his back numbers. He prefaced his story of "The Jumping Frog" by saying that it was twenty-nine years old, while "Oudinot," his second number, was aged but twenty-seven years. The audience listened to him with as close attention and was convulsed with determined merriment as completely as if the frog's handicap of five pounds of shot snugly stuffed into its interior, and the story of the man who led a blast skyward for half an hour, and was docked his wages for time lost, had come off the humorist's reel for the first time. He responded to the demands for more with his Washington's Birthday speech at Farmington and the stammering story.

The evening bill was evidently arranged with reference to calls for more. Its seven numbers were accordingly doubled. James Whitcomb Riley contributed three of them, each multiplied by an encore. His skill in Hoosier dialect was first shown in "Hodden Grey" and "Jim," which were followed by "Real Life People," "The Little Man in the Tinsnop," "The Child Genuine," and "Goblins," all well rendered. Gaps in the bill left by the two stars were filled by Douglass Sherley, described as "The Kentucky Story Teller," whose pen seems to have abjured blue-grass fertility for unrealities across the ocean. The trio will appear again to-night.

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