

Chapter 1 : C. H. Spurgeon Autobiography, Volume 2 by Charles Haddon Spurgeon

I have read all three volumes of Mark Twain's autobiography and, while it was a monumental task, it was incredibly enjoyable. It really was like getting to sit and listen to the man talk. He is extremely sharp and funny.

The former president bragged to friends that he was worth two and a half million dollars, and family members and friends poured money into the firm. That fall, the former president was diagnosed with terminal throat cancer. Facing his mortality, Grant struck a publishing deal with his friend Mark Twain for his memoirs, hoping that they would provide for his family after his death. In the early stages of his work, he had the assistance of Adam Badeau, an author who had served on his staff during the war. Badeau left before the project was complete, having disputed with Grant and his family concerning how much he would be paid and how he would be credited for his research, editing, and fact-checking. He was in constant pain from his illness and sometimes had the feeling that he was choking. Despite his condition, he wrote at a furious pace, sometimes finishing 25 to 50 pages a day. He worked at finishing the book, propped up on chairs and too weak to walk. Friends, admirers, and even a few former Confederate opponents made their way to Mount MacGregor to pay their respects. Grant finished the manuscript on July 18; he died five days later. The Memoirs are divided into two volumes. With regard to the Mexican-American War, Grant recorded his belief that it had been waged unjustly: Generally, the officers of the army were indifferent whether the annexation was consummated or not; but not so all of them. For myself, I was bitterly opposed to the measure, and to this day regard the war, which resulted, as one of the most unjust ever waged by a stronger against a weaker nation. It was an instance of a republic following the bad example of European monarchies, in not considering justice in their desire to acquire additional territory. When I had left camp that morning I had not expected so soon the result that was then taking place, and consequently was in rough garb. When I went into the house I found General Lee. We greeted each other, and after shaking hands took our seats. I had my staff with me, a good portion of whom were in the room during the whole of the interview. As he was a man of much dignity, with an impassible face, it was impossible to say whether he felt inwardly glad that the end had finally come, or felt sad over the result, and was too manly to show it. Whatever his feelings, they were entirely concealed from my observation; but my own feelings, which had been quite jubilant on the receipt of his letter, were sad and depressed. I felt like anything rather than rejoicing at the downfall of a foe who had fought so long and valiantly, and had suffered so much for a cause, though that cause was, I believe, one of the worst for which a people ever fought, and one for which there was the least excuse. I do not question, however, the sincerity of the great mass of those who were opposed to us. We soon fell into a conversation about old army times. Our conversation grew so pleasant that I almost forgot the object of our meeting. After the conversation had run on in this style for some time, General Lee called my attention to the object of our meeting, and said that he had asked for this interview for the purpose of getting from me the terms I proposed to give his army. After dismissing one tale, Grant wrote "Like many other stories, it would be very good if it were only true. Grant deliberately avoids comment on Reconstruction, apart from saying that he favored black suffrage. The final chapter, "Conclusion," is a reflection on the war and its effects, the actions of foreign countries during it, and the reconciliation of North and South. In the final paragraphs, Grant makes note of his own condition and expresses optimism that "Federal and Confederate" can live together. I cannot stay to be a living witness to the correctness of this prophecy; but I feel it within me that it is to be so. The universally kind feeling expressed for me at a time when it was supposed that each day would prove my last, seemed to me the beginning of the answer to "Let us have peace. They came from individual citizens of all nationalities; from all denominations—the Protestant, the Catholic, and the Jew; and from the various societies of the land—scientific, educational, religious or otherwise. Politics did not enter into the matter at all. I am not egotist enough to suppose all this significance should be given because I was the object of it. But the war between the States was a very bloody and a very costly war. One side or the other had to yield principles they deemed dearer than life before it could be brought to an end. I commanded the whole of the mighty host engaged on the victorious side. I was, no matter whether deservedly so or not, a representative of that side of

the controversy. It is a significant and gratifying fact that Confederates should have joined heartily in this spontaneous move. I hope the good feeling inaugurated may continue to the end. While interest in his memoirs would have been high had Grant not been ill, his struggle to finish it before his death gave it even more attention. On release, the book received universal critical praise. Matthew Arnold praised Grant and his book in an essay. Gertrude Stein also admired the book, saying she could not think of Grant without weeping. Grant sought to deliver his moral, political, economic and social argument for waging the war against the South in his Personal Memoirs. As the commander of the Union army and a two-term president, he had a unique perspective on the war that interested both the public and historical scholars, as they wanted to hear his side of the story. Although he was a clear figure in the public eye, Grant was unknown to many people. After the war, famous general William T. Sherman remarked that, although he had known Grant for decades, "to me he is a mystery, and I believe he is a mystery to himself. In volume 1, he describes his family background and points to his simple upbringing as the reason for his solid, restrained virtues of a normal Northerner. Grant stated that he did not even want to attend West Point, only going because his father thought it would be best, as Grant believed "a military life had no charms for me. Grant believed it was very unjust for the larger, stronger United States to pick on a weaker country as they were doing. The two leading generals of the Union army at Shiloh were Grant and General Don Carlos Buell and they had very differing accounts of the battle. Many criticized Grant for being tremendously unprepared and Buell goes as far to credit himself for the victory, while Grant proclaims the opposite story, stating the Union win was inevitable. Grant also used his Personal Memoirs to explain his battlefield action and his motives for the way he led. After the war, Grant was portrayed as a ruthless leader who stopped at nothing to make sure the South was destroyed. However, Grant felt this was a harsh evaluation and sought to improve the public opinion of himself and defend the fact he believed he was a simple and fair man. Grant felt he was being abused by newspaper coverage that he believed was shoddy, inaccurate and defeatist. He stated, "Up to the Battle of Shiloh, I, as well as thousands of other citizens, believed that the rebellion against the Government would collapse suddenly and soon, if decisive victory could be gained over any of its armies. Perret backs these accusations with the fact Grant, while appointed the General-in-Chief, "evolved the future of the United States Army" by applying "maximum firepower, maximum mobility" while relying on "the wide envelopment" as his principal form of maneuver. I placed the two books side by side upon the same high level, and I still think that they belonged there. Executive Director of the Ulysses S. Grant Association John F. Marszalek , Associate Editor David S. Nolen, and Assistant Editor Louie P. Gallo completed the project in order to contextualize the memoirs for the modern reader.

Chapter 2 : MARK TWAIN'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY--VOLUME 2

The Autobiography comprises a rambling collection of anecdotes and ruminations rather than a conventional autobiography. Twain himself had published 'Chapters from My Autobiography' in twenty-five installments in the North American Review in [9].

Choate presided, and was received with a grand welcome when he marched in upon the stage. He is fresh from his long stay in England, as our Ambassador, where he won the English people by the gifts of his heart, and won the royalties and the Government by his able diplomatic service, and captured the whole nation with his fine and finished oratory. For thirty-five years Choate has been the handsomest man in America. Last night he seemed to me to be just as handsome as he was thirty-five years ago, when I first knew him. And when I used to see him in England, five or six years ago, I thought him the handsomest man in that country. It was at a Fourth of July reception in Mr. I have met him a number of times since, and he always impresses me pleasantly. Last night he was a mulatto. It was a great surprise to me to see that he was a mulatto and had blue eyes. How unobservant a dull person can be! Always, before, he was black, to me, and I had never noticed whether he had eyes at all, or not. He has accomplished a wonderful work in this quarter of a century. But by the persuasions of his carriage and address and the sincerity and honesty that look out of his eyes he has been enabled to gather money by the hatful here in the North, and with it he has built up and firmly established his great school for the colored people of the two sexes in the South. In that school the students are not merely furnished a book education, but are taught thirty-seven useful trades. Booker Washington has scraped together many hundreds of thousands of dollars, in the twenty-five years, and with this money he has taught and sent forth into Southern fields among the colored people six thousand trained colored men and women; and his student roll now numbers fifteen hundred names. A most remarkable man is Booker Washington. And he is a fervent and effective speaker on the platform. When the affair was over and the people began to climb up on the stage and pass along and shake hands, the usual thing happened. I shake hands with people who used to know my mother intimately in Arkansas, in New Jersey, in California, in Jericho--and I have to seem so glad and so happy to meet these persons who knew in this intimate way one who was so near and dear to me. And this is the kind of thing that gradually turns a person into a polite liar and deceiver, for my mother was never in any of those places. Now she was mistaking herself for somebody else. But I was very cordial, because she was very pretty. There was one young fellow, brisk, but not bright, overpoweringly pleasant and cordial, in his way. He said his mother used to teach school in Elmira, New York, where he was born and bred and where the family continued to reside, and that she would be very glad to know that he had met me and shaken hands, for he said: She holds you in high esteem, although, as she says, she has to confess that of all the boys that ever she had in her school, you were the most troublesome. These episodes used to vex me, years and years ago. If a person thinks that he has known me at some time or other, all I require of him is that he shall consider it a distinction to have known me; and then, as a rule, I am perfectly willing to remember all about it and add some things that he has forgotten. Twichell came down from Hartford to be present at that meeting, and we chatted and smoked after we got back home. And I said, "No," I had given that up--which was true. Because I have examined that speech a couple of times since, and have changed my notion about it--changed it entirely. I found it always offensive and detestable. How do I account for this change of view? I am the person concerned. If I could put myself outside of myself and examine it from the point of view of a person not personally concerned in it, then no doubt I could analyze it and explain to my satisfaction the change which has taken place. As it is, I am merely moved by instinct. My instinct said, formerly, that it was an innocent speech, and funny. The same instinct, sitting cold and judicial, as a court of last resort, has reversed that verdict. I expect this latest verdict to remain. Joe entered the army as chaplain in the very beginning of the Civil War. He was a young chap, and had just been graduated from Yale and the Yale Theological Seminary. He made all the campaigns of the Army of the Potomac. When he was mustered out, that congregation I am speaking of called him, and he has served them ever since, and always to their satisfaction--except once. I have found among my old MSS. It has a heading and looks as if I had meant it to serve as a magazine article.

It is full of indications that its inspiration was what happened to Twichell about that time, and which produced a situation for him which he will not forget until he is dead, if he even forgets it then. I think I can see, all through this artful article, that I was trying to hint at Twichell, and the episode of that preacher whom I met on the street, and hint at various things that were exasperating me. I desire to contemplate him from this point of view--this premise: For his history, in all climes, all ages and all circumstances, furnishes oceans and continents of proof that of all the creatures that were made he is the most detestable. Of the entire brood he is the only one--the solitary one--that possesses malice. That is the basest of all instincts, passions, vices--the most hateful. That one thing puts him below the rats, the grubs, the trichinae. He is the only creature that inflicts pain for sport, knowing it to be pain. But if the cat knows she is inflicting pain when she plays with the frightened mouse, then we must make an exception here; we must grant that in one detail man is the moral peer of the cat. All creatures kill--there seems to be no exception; but of the whole list, man is the only one that kills for fun; he is the only one that kills in malice, the only one that kills for revenge. Also--in all the list he is the only creature that has a nasty mind. Shall he be extolled for his noble qualities, for his gentleness, his sweetness, his amiability, his lovingness, his courage, his devotion, his patience, his fortitude, his prudence, the various charms and graces of his spirit? The other animals share all these with him, yet are free from the blacknesses and rottennesses of his character. There are certain sweet-smelling sugar-coated lies current in the world which all politic men have apparently tacitly conspired together to support and perpetuate. One of these is, that there is such a thing in the world as independence: Another is, that the world loves to see independence--admires it, applauds it. Another is, that there is such a thing in the world as toleration--in religion, in politics, and such matters; and with it trains that already mentioned auxiliary lie that toleration is admired and applauded. Out of these trunk-lies spring many branch ones: And yet other branch lies: And these other branch lies, to wit: And yet one other branch lie: This makes well-nigh fantastic the suggestion that there can be such a thing as a personal, original, and responsible nature in a man, separable from that in him which is not original, and findable in such quantity as to enable the observer to say, This is a man, not a procession. Consider the first-mentioned lie: Surely if anything is proven, by whole oceans and continents of evidence, it is that the quality of independence was almost wholly left out of the human race. The scattering exceptions to the rule only emphasize it, light it up, make it glare. The whole population of New England meekly took their turns, for years, in standing up in the railway trains, without so much as a complaint above their breath, till at last these uncounted millions were able to produce exactly one single independent man, who stood to his rights and made the railroad give him a seat. Statistics and the law of probabilities warrant the assumption that it will take New England forty years to breed his fellow. There is a law, with a penalty attached, forbidding trains to occupy the Asylum Street crossing more than five minutes at a time. For years people and carriages used to wait there nightly as much as twenty minutes on a stretch while New England trains monopolized that crossing. I used to hear men use vigorous language about that insolent wrong--but they waited, just the same. We are discreet sheep; we wait to see how the drove is going, and then go with the drove. We have two opinions: Grundy, until habit makes us comfortable in it, and the custom of defending it presently makes us love it, adore it, and forget how pitifully we came by it. Look at it in politics. Look at the tyranny of party--at what is called party allegiance, party loyalty--a snare invented by designing men for selfish purposes--and which turns voters into chattels, slaves, rabbits, and all the while their masters, and they themselves are shouting rubbish about liberty, independence, freedom of opinion, freedom of speech, honestly unconscious of the fantastic contradiction; and forgetting or ignoring that their fathers and the churches shouted the same blasphemies a generation earlier when they were closing their doors against the hunted slave, beating his handful of humane defenders with Bible texts and billies, and pocketing the insults and licking the shoes of his Southern master. If we would learn what the human race really is at bottom, we need only observe it in election times. A Hartford clergyman met me in the street and spoke of a new nominee--denounced the nomination, in strong, earnest words--words that were refreshing for their independence, their manliness. You would have supposed he was describing the Cid, and Greatheart, and Sir Galahad, and Bayard the Spotless all rolled into one. Yes--by that time; and therein lies the pathos of it all, the hopelessness of it all. It shows at what trivial cost of effort a man can teach himself to lie, and learn to believe it, when he perceives, by the

general drift, that that is the popular thing to do. Does he believe his lie yet? Oh, probably not; he has no further use for it. It was but a passing incident; he spared to it the moment that was its due, then hastened back to the serious business of his life. It began with K, I think. He was one of the American revisers of the New Testament, and was nearly as great a scholar as Hammond Trumbull. And what a paltry poor lie is that one which teaches that independence of action and opinion is prized in men, admired, honored, rewarded. When a man leaves a political party, he is treated as if the party owned him--as if he were its bond slave, as most party men plainly are--and had stolen himself, gone off with what was not his own. And he is traduced, derided, despised, held up to public obloquy and loathing. His character is remorselessly assassinated; no means, however vile, are spared to injure his property and his business. And is rightly served, for he has been teaching a falsity--that men respect and honor independence of thought and action. Take the editor so charged--take--take anybody. All the talk about tolerance, in anything or anywhere, is plainly a gentle lie. It does not exist. Intolerance is everything for oneself, and nothing for the other person. To consider them would prove nothing, except that man is what he is--loving toward his own, lovable to his own--his family, his friends--and otherwise the buzzing, busy, trivial enemy of his race--who tarries his little day, does his little dirt, commends himself to God, and then goes out into the darkness, to return no more, and send no messages back--selfish even in death.

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MARK TWAIN AUTOBIOGRAPHY 2 Volume Set 1st Edition Very Good - \$ Mark Twain's Autobiography 2 Volume Set - first edition published in - in very good condition

For my part, I enjoyed the second volume even more than the first. It was a joy and delight to read and has encouraged and challenged me both as a pastor and as a Christian. Here you will find faith worthy of imitation, untiring labor for the Lord, and unflagging zeal for the kingdom of God. There are a few downsides to the book, but none significant enough to persuade me to give it anything less than five stars. This volume opens with a chapter on the construction of the Metropolitan Tabernacle which seemed like the most boring subject possible to begin a book with, but even this chapter turned out to be interesting. The information on the Downgrade Controversy is rather sparse for so significant an event in his life, but the editors do point the reader to an outside source. None of these weaknesses were overwhelming, but still seemed worth mentioning. Without doubt I would highly recommend this book, especially for those in ministry. Spurgeon, even through this work, has the measure and manner of faith that tends to bouy your own just from having been near him. Volume 2 was better than the first which was already astoundingly great. Spurgeon loved the Lord with a vigorous zeal and dedicated his life to evangelization and proclamation of the good news that Jesus Christ saves lost men. This work provides a wonderful mixture of autobiographical fragments and complementary editorials. His defense of a proper use for ridicule and sarcasm should demand the attention of any rhetoric student. We read about his own immense pains, sorrows, crippling disease, forced sabbaticals, and an untimely death. There is a devastatingly poignant chapter where he discloses how he begged and pleaded that his merciful heavenly Father would bring him relief from the agony of his afflictions. Although his tribulations are stout in the later half, CHS remains an affable and personable genius. Apr 16, Tim rated it it was amazing One of my favorite books to listen to. Jun 21, Hank Pharis rated it liked it See review of the first volume. Just gets better in the second. Apr 21, Jerry Bousard rated it it was amazing Wow! What can I say. This is such a good autobiography. It is in 2 volumes, I want to read it again. Just a great story. It goes through and shortly past his death. Aside from the statistics, which flip-flopped between dry and jawdropping "Quick, rewind! To focus - "set" - our eyes, minds, hearts, mouths, and feet on "things above" rather than on earthly things, but simultaneously caring for the "least of these.

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