MARK TWAIN

[Front Flap]

It was as a humorous travel writer, in *The Innocents Abroad* and *Roughing It*, that Mark Twain first became widely known, and at the height of his career he returned to the genre in the works collected here. Like those earlier books, the frequently hilarious *A Tramp Abroad* (1880)—based on his family's 16-month sojourn in Europe from April 1878 to August 1879—blends autobiography and fiction, facts and tall tales. Twain's send-up of Old World customs as well as his critical dissections of Wagnerian opera and the German language are often interlaced with American reminiscences, whether in the form of an extended discourse on the language of blue jays or the recollection of an elaborate practical joke in Hannibal, Missouri, involving a printer's devil and a skeleton. *A Tramp Abroad* is presented here with the author's original sketches.

Written at a time of financial trouble and personal loss (the death of the author's beloved daughter Susy), *Following the Equator* (1897) is a darker and more politicized account of a lecture tour around the world, with Fiji, Australia, New Zealand, Ceylon, India, Mauritius, and South Africa among the stopovers. Using humorous but often biting anecdotes as well as keen journalist reporting, the book details bush life in Australia and the culture of the Maoris in New Zealand, while lashing out at social inequities such as the Indian caste system, and racist imperialism connected with European settlement and gold mining in southern Africa. Twain rounds out the volume with extensive historical accounts ranging from the Black Hole of Calcutta to the events in South Africa that would lead shortly to the Boer War.

This volume also includes 13 shorter pieces, most of them uncollected by the author, including a lengthy

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