

workers. We have a great number of scientific scholars living here, and some of the best travel works are written in Washington. The National Museum has connected with it many able writers of travel. Numbers of the Congressmen and Senators do literary work, and the library of Congress is used greatly by all classes of scholars and students. On Saturday we do not have enough seats for the readers, and the library is always full of specialists who are working up some subject."

Speaking of Washington as a literary center, it is not generally known that it was here that Mark Twain wrote his "Innocents Abroad." He was at the time in the employ of Senator Stewart of Nevada, and was doing clerical work for him. He had made the trip to Europe and the Holy Land as a correspondent of the "Alta California," getting for it \$1200 in gold, and he pounded the stuff out here in an old room heated by a sheet-iron stove. After he got back he got an idea that the letters would sell if they were put into book shape, and he showed Senator Stewart his notes, and Stewart gave him a job at the Capitol which paid him \$6 a day. After several weeks of hard work he completed his book and then went to a publisher. One of his friends here at Washington was Albert D. Richardson, who had been connected with several subscription books, and who had written some very good things. Richardson introduced him to his publishers, and Mark Twain finally made a deal with them by which he was to have 5 per cent of the retail price of all the books sold. Not long ago I had some thoughts of publishing a book myself, and I called upon Mr. Clemens at his home in Hartford and asked his advice. During this call he referred to "Innocents Abroad," and said that it had netted him only a few thousand dollars, but that it had made the fortune of the publishers. Said he: "I was surprised when I was told that a good sum for the work would be 5 per cent of the retail price of the books sold. I laughed at it, but Richardson, who introduced me, told me that he was glad when he got 4 per cent, and I accepted their offer. Including the editions there were something like 200,000 copies disposed of, and the publishing company made in the neighborhood of \$75,000 out of it."

I asked him what he thought of books of travel as sellers?

He looked at me with a twinkle of the eye and said: "There is only one kind of a book that will sell by subscription better than a book of travel, and that is a pious book." He then referred to his own publishing ventures in a few words, and told me that the best possible method of arranging for the publication of a good subscription book was to accept nothing until the plates were paid for and then to take a low percentage on the first 5,000, increasing it on each 5,000, until it got as high as 8 or ten per cent, which would be a big remuneration and would make one a fortune if the book had a large sale.

Blaine wrote a great part of his book here. He began it when he was living just above the old Sickles house, on Lafayette square, and he wrote a great part of it in his mansion on Dupont circle. The second volume was written here and at Bar Harbor, and he com-

pleted it here in Senator Windom's big brick, just below where Bourke Cockran now lives, and facing Scott Circle. He was a very rapid writer, and he considered 1500 words a good morning's work. His book brought in, I understand, something like \$200,000, and it has paid the best of any book of its class ever published. Sam Cox wrote his "Political Reminiscences" here, and before he died he told me he was to receive \$12,500 on each edition sold. Mrs. Cox still lives at Washington, in the house which her husband completed just about the time that he wrote his "Divisions of a Diplomat." The work on this was done at Washington, and he turned out the manuscript composing it at the rate of several thousand words per day.

It was here that Tom Benton wrote his "Thirty Years in the United States Senate," and I have visited the old brown house on P street where he put the matter into shape and in which he died. He was working on his "Abridgment of the Debates of Congress" at the time he died, and he prayed during his last hours to be allowed to live until he had it complete. Gen. Logan wrote his volume of "War Stories" in the house in which his widow now lives, and it was here that he penned a novel which was issued under an assumed name, but which had only a meager sale. Logan left a fairly good library, and it will be a surprise to many that he was fond of religious studies. He was a great Methodist, and he had many rare editions of the Bible and famous theological works. He wrote rapidly and revised carefully, but his book, like that of Gen. Sheridan, did not have anything like the sale of the works of Grant and Blaine.

I wonder when John J. Ingalls will publish his novel. I visited him here a few days after his library was burned in Atchison, Kan. He had in this library a number of manuscripts, which were destroyed, and among them were some of the notes for this story. It was to have been a political society novel, laid in Washington, in which the true inwardness, hypocrisy and hollowness of life here would be treated of under assumed names. There is no doubt but that Ingalls could carry out this idea as well or better than any other man in the United States. He has a caustic pen and a vitriolic tongue, and though his words shine with the brightness of electricity, they burn into the souls of the people he attacks like red-hot iron. He has done considerable magazine work since he left Congress, and his lectures have taken up a great part of his time. In the meanwhile he may have had some time for fiction, and if so I predict his book will be a bright one.

I knew Bancroft quite well. His books were sold to some New Yorkers, who gave them to the Lenox Library. Congress bid within \$5,000 of the amount for which they went, but a friend of the Lenox Library got them. Among them are valuable manuscripts, which I am surprised have not yet come to the public. There is a manuscript diary of James K. Polk, which he copied at Nashville just before his death, and which, I am told, is full of interest. There are lots of original letters of Alexander Hamilton, Aaron Burr and others that ought to have been included in the collection, and I doubt not that some

good newspaper articles could be gotten out of the library by those who have access to it. It is generally supposed here that it is about as hard to go to Peking after rare books as to get into the closely guarded archives of that New York library, and so far I have not seen anything published from the Bancroft collection. Shortly before Bancroft's death I had an offer from one of his private secretaries, who treacherously said that he could get me copies of some rare letters in Mr. Bancroft's possession if I would pay for them. I wanted the letters, but I told him I could not think of stealing them, and nothing came of the matter. Bancroft was one of the slowest writers we have ever had here. He wrote and rewrote, first dictating his thoughts to a shorthand man and then revising them again and again as they were presented to him in typewritten form. He thought 250 words was a good day's work, but he kept grinding away until he was ninety, and his long life enabled him to accomplish much.

I saw Parson Brownlow's son here the other day. He was a colonel in the Union army and his father's private secretary while he was in the United States Senate. I asked him something about Parson Brownlow's book and he told me that about 50,000 copies of it were sold and that his father made in the neighborhood of \$20,000 out of it. I doubt whether Bancroft made as much in his long life of work out of his histories. Henry Ward Beecher got \$30,000 from Robert Bonner for writing the novel "Norwood," and we all know of the great fortune that came to the Grant estate from his book. I don't know just exactly what John Hay received for his life of Lincoln. One story is that the Century Company made out a contract and left the price blank and that it was finally filled in by them for \$50,000. Col. Hay talked to me about the book at the time he was writing it and he showed me his workshop. He has a magnificent house here at Washington, which is furnished with all the luxuries of a millionaire. The library in it is as big as a barn and it has a great table like desk as large as the bed of a bridal chamber. The work on the book was not done here, but in a little cubby hole of a room in the attic which had a pine table and a half dozen kitchen chairs and the floor of which was bare. I asked Col. Hay at this time as to his dialect poems. You know he wrote "Little Breeches," which closes, I think, somewhat as follows, referring to the angels:

"I think that taking a little boy  
And saving him for his own  
Is a darn sight better business  
Than loafing around the throne."

I found him not at all inclined to talk about it. He gave me to understand that he was sorry he had written it and that he hoped to do more elegant and better work. He has done since then a great deal more elegant work, but I doubt whether he has written anything which has come closer to the hearts of the American people than that poem.

Grace Greenwood is living here at the capital now. Emma D. E. N. Southworth, at eighty years of age, is writing her eightieth novel. She has been receiving, it is said, \$10,000 a year from the New York Ledger for everything she writes, and the way she grinds out books makes me think of a talk I had