



PREFACE.

IT IS GIVEN to understand some of my posthumous critics have intimated that I was jealous of Jules Verne—that maybe I even felt threatened by him. I have never heard such cocky popping beetle dung in my entire death.

Verne was a hack of the First Order whose publisher (engaged after he had inflicted two decades of the most unengaging whining and pleading, pining and wheedling upon all the other High Lords of Bookdom) viewed it necessary to transform his dyspeptic drivel into something within shouting distance of palatability for the reading public. Jules Verne didn't invent science fiction; his publisher, Pierre-Jules Hetzel, did,—and I'm sorry I wasn't born a couple of decades sooner to save everyone the time, trouble, and confusion.

As for this book, here I confess it's long past overdue. I buried one clue in the joined opposites of Hank Morgan, Technology-Wielder, and Morgan le Fay, Magic-Wielder. Furthermore, Mrs. le Fay was the only important character in *A Connecticut Yankee* whom I didn't kill off, of the thousands I did lasso, hang, shoot, electrocute, explode, drown, torpedo, and otherwise murder. Unfortunately, certain Weightier Matters contravened my intent, and I never put pen to parchment to commence the duologue's conclusion within my lifetime. That nobody acted upon my clues in the hundred years since my sadly *unexaggerated*

PREFACE.

demise, speaks to the fact that I've been waiting till I'm well and truly dead before whispering my words into the quick and able ear of my chosen Ghost-Writer. For the matters depicted herein, of course, are things which ought to be settled. I don't have anything else in particular to do in eternity anyway.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Twain". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line above the name.

upon the occasion of my 175th birthday
WYTHEVILLE, VA, November 30, 2010

P.S. by K.I.H. For decades I've admired Verne's ability in *Michael Strogoff* to transport the reader to nineteenth-century Tsarist Russia, especially considering the author never stepped on the steppes. Yet Twain/Clemens still selected me for this project. Go figure.