Cantankerous authors never die...

By David F. Nolan
Mark Twain was at Kresge Auditorium last Thursday night. Resurrected from the past by Hal Hollonk, for over two hours, he entertained the audience with wit and wisdom which made him one of the great figures of American literature and endeared him to the American people.

Much of the humor was topical, dealing with politics, religion and other institutions ripe with human folly. The remainder drew on such reliable standards as Mark Twain.

After a marvelous series of introductory jokes, there was a long monologue concerning the fate of Mr. Twain's grandfather, who had once had the misfortune to head the design of a front in a high-spirited man. The outcome of this situation was never revealed, but through numerous digressions, he managed to relate several other entertaining stories.

One of these tales, concerning the rulers of Providence in selecting victims for accidents, involved a running game by a British worker falling off a building. This, Mr. Twain said, was an example of Providence—"the first man being there to break the second man's fall." He then continued that one of his more religious friends had inquired why the man, rather than the dog, who was also present, had been selected. Mr. Twain then explained he had told his friend that the man rather than the dog had been selected because the dog would have seen the falling man and gotten out of the way.

For, he concluded, "you couldn't just let a dog with an intelligence.

Next, after a few random sayings, including describing Congress as "that grand old beaver hat asylum for the helpless," he proceeded to give "raps" from Innocence and Huck.

The concluding line, as the evening ended, was a fascinating rendering of a portrayal of the role of providence—"the man, rather than his dog, who was also present, had inquired why the man, rather than his dog, had been selected. Mr. Twain then explained he had told his friend that the man rather than the dog had been selected because the dog would have seen the falling man and gotten out of the way.

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