READING-ROOM OPENING

On October 13, 1900, Mr. Clemens made his last address preceding his departure for America at Kensal Rise, London.

I FORMALLY declare this reading-room open, and I think that the legislature should not compel a community to provide itself with intelligent food, but give it the privilege of providing it if the community so desires.

If the community is anxious to have a reading-room it would put its hand in its pocket and bring out the penny tax. I think it a proof of the healthy, moral, financial, and mental condition of the community if it taxes itself for its mental food.

A reading-room is the proper introduction to a library, leading up through the newspapers and magazines to other literature. What would we do without newspapers?

Look at the rapid manner in which the news of the Galveston disaster was made known to the entire world. This reminds me of an episode which occurred fifteen years ago when I was at church in Hartford, Connecticut.

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MARK TWAIN'S SPEECHES

The clergyman decided to make a collection for the survivors, if any. He did not include me among the leading citizens who took the plates around for collection. I complained to the governor of his lack of financial trust in me, and he replied: "I would trust you myself—if you had a bell-punch."

You have paid me many compliments, and I like to listen to compliments. I indorse all your chairman has said to you about the union of England and America. He also alluded to my name, of which I am rather fond.

A little girl wrote me from New Zealand in a letter I received yesterday, stating that her father said my proper name was not Mark Twain but Samuel Clemens, but that she knew better, because Clemens was the name of the man who sold the patent medicine, and his name was not Mark. She was sure it was Mark Twain, because Mark is in the Bible and Twain is in the Bible.

I was very glad to get that expression of confidence in my origin, and as I now know my name to be a scriptural one, I am not without hopes of making it worthy.