## The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County

### Personal Observation

Written by Mark Twain, the story is a representation of people that we encounter every day in our society. There are two major themes and a satire on society that is reflected in the society. There are other symbolic illustrations however characters' resemblance, setting, and themes are the primary visible literary devices implied (Ref-DJ79X2). In the story, the narrator in the story has been traveling from an Eastern state to a village in the Western state of California. His encounter with an unusual man, Simon Wheeler, is very unusual when the narrator enquires him about a man with the last name Wiley.

The most interesting section is at the end where Wheeler confuses him with another man and narrates a story about his devious gambling. Gambler, Wiley, follows a pattern to win over bets yet his crookedness bounces back when he is encountered with a stranger. The stranger himself is very tricky and a schemer. At the end “he belched out a double handful of shots. And then he sees how it was, and he was the maddest man--he set the frog down and took out after that feller, but he never ketched him” (Ref-DJ72KL). When Wiley lost his bet against the stranger and later learn that he has been created, it was a very astonishing moment. Wiley had been deceiving the town's people urging them for betting and schematically making them loose. However, when it has happened to him, he is not ready to accept that fact and sets out in search of the stranger.

It is not a new situation for anyone but a crystal reflection of people we encounter in our communities and life as well. People are not hesitant to take advantage of others however when the same thing happens to them, they fell victim to the situation like Wiley. He goes seeking answers or to retrieve his money from the stranger but it is not mentioned in the story that anyone comes running asking for the money back (Ref-DJ74KL). Loss is a part of the game and must be accepted unless it is you on the other side. Besides, it is a satirical reflection on society, people's resentment towards others' actions and completely neglecting their own is a primary takeaway from the story narrated within the story.

## Interpretation

Twain’s story has been under criticism for many reasons however for few it is just a story and treated thusly. It might seem simple for a story but it indeed has several literary implications. First, the setting of the play is very significant to consider as it coincides with the era when the story was written. The story starts with the author narrating the geographical setting “In compliance with the request of a friend of mine, who wrote me from the East” (Ref-DJ49F2). Following that begins the search and it shows that he is a stranger in the town. In the end, he leaves by saying “Oh! hang Smiley and his afflicted cow!” that shows that there is not just a regional but a cultural difference as well (Ref-G7H2J9). It was the era of the industrial revolution and East and West were divided in terms of economic and social progression. Both regions had cultural, educational, and social differences and it is observed in the narrator's and Wheeler’s conversation.

Second, there are several themes that are discussed in society. As discussed above, the story is a satire on society but it is also an implication of social values integrity, and maintaining a social image. Wiley is a devious and cunning gambler but he has never been questioned which means he has a reputation for integrity in his community (Ref-DJ49KL). When a stranger comes and cheats on him in gambling, he is reminded of the community values which are ironic. Lastly, there is a great resemblance between the narrator and Simon Wheeler and Jim Wiley. Both spurted out departing remarks as strangers pointing out the worthlessness of the frog while the narrator finds insignificance in Wheeler's story which confirms differences in cultural values (Ref-7G92H5). The narrator and the stranger are from different regions hence they reflect different values than the natives Whiley and Wheeler.