*MARK TWAIN'S GOD\**

The Being who to me is the real God is the One who created this majestic universe and rules it. He is the only Originator, the only originator of thoughts; thoughts suggested from within not from with­out; the originator of colors and of all their possible combinations; of forces and the laws that govern them; of forms and shapes of *all* forms. Man has never invented a new one; He is the only Originator. He made the materials of all things; He made the laws by which and by which only, man may combine them into machines and other things which outside influence may suggest to him. He made character--man can portray it but not "create" it, for He is the only Creator.

He is the perfect artisan, the perfect artist. Everything which he has made is fine, everything which he has made is beautiful; nothing coarse, nothing ugly has ever come from His hand. Even His materials are all delicate, none of them is coarse. The materials of the leaf, the flower, the fruit; of the insect, the elephant, the man; of the earth, the crags and the ocean; of the snow, the hoarfrost and the ice--may be reduced to infinitesimal particles and they are still delicate, still fault­less; whether He makes a gnat, a bird, a horse, a plain, a forest, a mountain range, a planet, a constellation, or a diatom whose form the keenest eye in the world cannot perceive, it is all one--He makes it utterly and minutely perfect in form, and construction. The diatom which is invisible to the eye on the point of a needle is graceful and beautiful in form and in the minute exquisite elaboration of its parts it is a wonder. The contemplation of it moves one to something of the same awe and reverence which the march of the comets through their billion mile orbits compels.

This is indeed a God! He is not jealous, trivial, ignorant, revenge­ful--it is impossible. He has personal dignity--dignity answerable to his grandeur, his greatness, his might, his sublimity. He cares nothing for men's flatteries, compliments, praises, prayers; it is impossible that he should value them, impossible that he should listen to them, these mouthings of microbes. He is not ignorant. He does not mistake His myriad great suns, swimming in the measureless ocean of space for tallow candles hung in the roof to light this forgotten potato which we call the Earth, and name His footstool. He cannot see it except under His microscope. The shadow does not go back on His dial--it is against His law; His sun does not stand still on Gibeon to accommo­date a worm out on a raid against other worms--it is against His law.   
 His real character is written in plain words in His real Bible, which is Nature and her history; we read it every day, and we could understand it and trust in it if we would burn the spurious one and dig the remains of our insignificant reasoning faculties out of the grave where that and other man-made Bibles have buried them for 2,000 years and more.

The Bible of Nature tells us no word about any future life, but only about this present one. It does not promise a future life; it does not even vaguely indicate one. It is not intended as a message to us, any more than the scientist intends a message to surviving microbes when he boils the life out of a billion of them in a thimble. The microbes discover a message in it; this is certain--if they have a pulpit.

The Book of Nature tells us distinctly that God cares not a rap for us--nor for any living creature. It tells us that His laws inflict pain and suffering and sorrow, but it does not say that this is done in order that He may get pleasure out of this misery. We do not know what the object is, for the Book is not able to tell us. It may be mere indiffer­ence. Without a doubt He had an object, but we have no way of discovering what it was. The scientist has an object, but it is not the joy of inflicting pain upon the microbe.

*from \* Mark Twain's Notebook.*