

American Minute with Bill Federer

Mark Twain, *Innocents Abroad*, his visit to the Middle East & his views on life

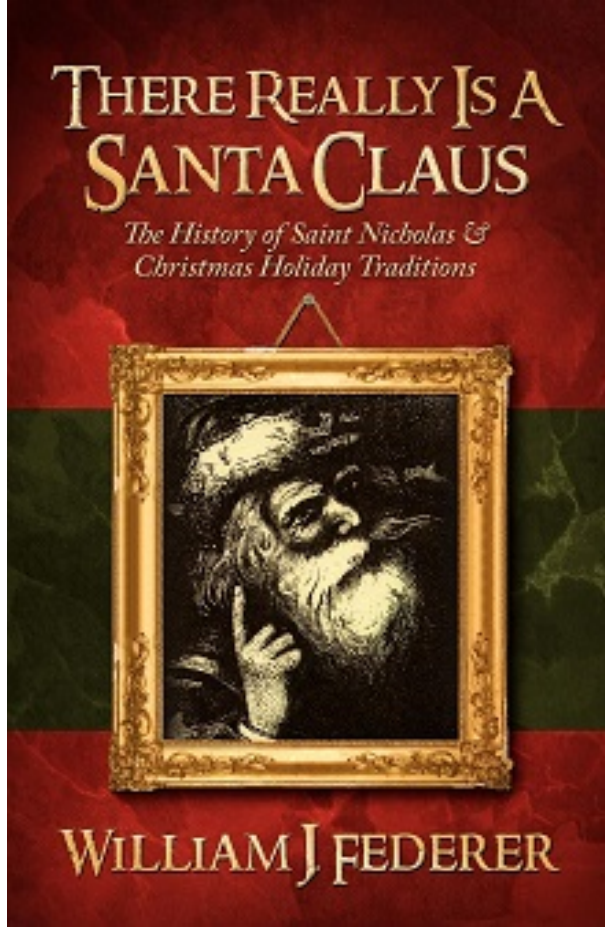
"Mark Twain" a river measurement meaning 12-feet-deep, was the pen name of **Samuel Langhorne Clemens**, who born November 30, 1835.

Growing up on the Mississippi, **Clemens** left school at age 12 when his father died.



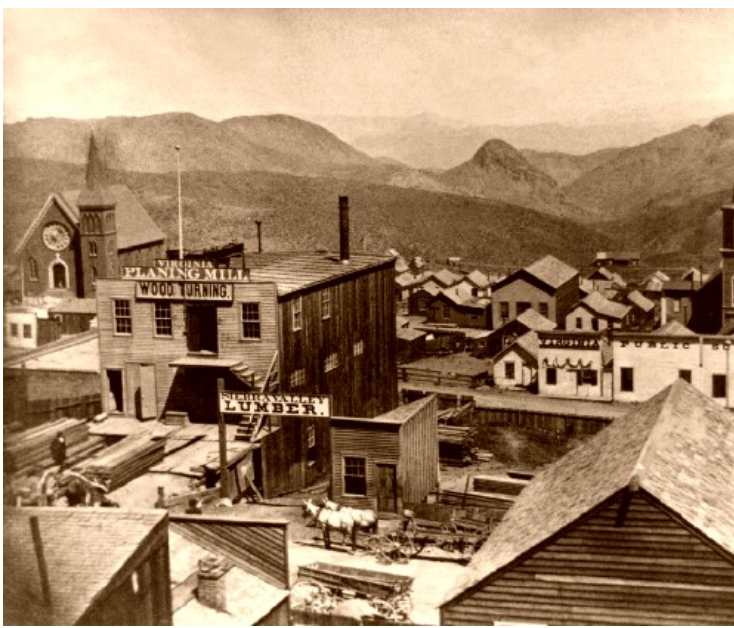
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[There Really is a Santa Claus -History of Saint Nicholas and Christmas Holiday Traditions](#)



He became a printer's apprentice, then piloted steamboats till **the War between the States** suspended river traffic.





Samuel Langhorne Clemens joined the Confederates, but after two weeks obtained a discharge to work for his brother Orion, who was secretary to **Nevada's Governor.**

In 1864, **Nevada** rejected slavery and entered the Union during the Civil War as a free state.

Nevada had been first explored by the **Franciscan friar and missionary Francisco Hermenegildo Tomás Garcés** in 1768.



It was under **Spanish control** till the **Mexican War of Independence** in 1821.

Mountain men explorers **Jedediah Smith** traveled through the **Las Vegas Valley** in 1827; **Peter Skene Ogden** traveled **Nevada's Humboldt River** in 1828; Kit Carson in 1829 as part of a small fur trapping group.

Carson led **John Charles Frémont's expedition** through the area in 1843-1844, on its way to California.

After the 1848 **Mexican-American War**, the sparsely populated land became **U.S. territory**.

In 1864, **Nevada** became the 36th U.S. State, with its original Constitution:



"Preamble. **We the people of the State of Nevada Grateful to Almighty God for our freedom** in order to secure its blessings, insure domestic tranquility, and form a more perfect Government, do establish this Constitution ...

All men are by Nature **free and equal** and have certain **inalienable rights** among which are those of enjoying and **defending life and liberty**; Acquiring, Possessing and Protecting **property** and pursuing and obtaining safety and happiness ...

All political power is inherent in **the people** ..."

Nevada's Constitution continued:



"The **free exercise** and **enjoyment of religious profession and worship** without discrimination or preference **shall forever be allowed** ...

but the **liberty of conscience** hereby secured, **shall not**

be so construed, as to **excuse acts of licentiousness** (sexual immorality) ...

Every citizen may freely speak, write and publish his sentiments on all subjects being responsible for the abuse of that right; and no law shall be passed to restrain or abridge the **liberty of speech or of the press** ...

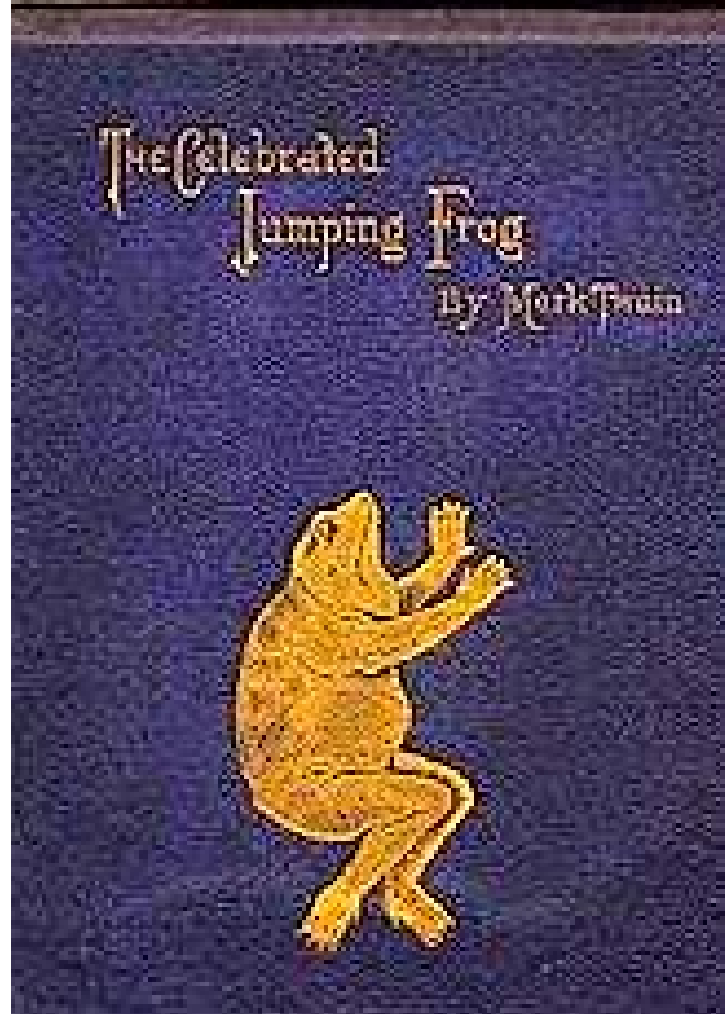
Every citizen has the right to keep and bear arms."

In Nevada,
Samuel Langhorne Clemens
attempted mining.



Unsuccessful, he then became a reporter in **Virginia City, Nevada**, using the name "**Mark Twain**" for the first time.

He moved to San Francisco, California, where, in 1865, he wrote his first popular story was "**The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County.**"



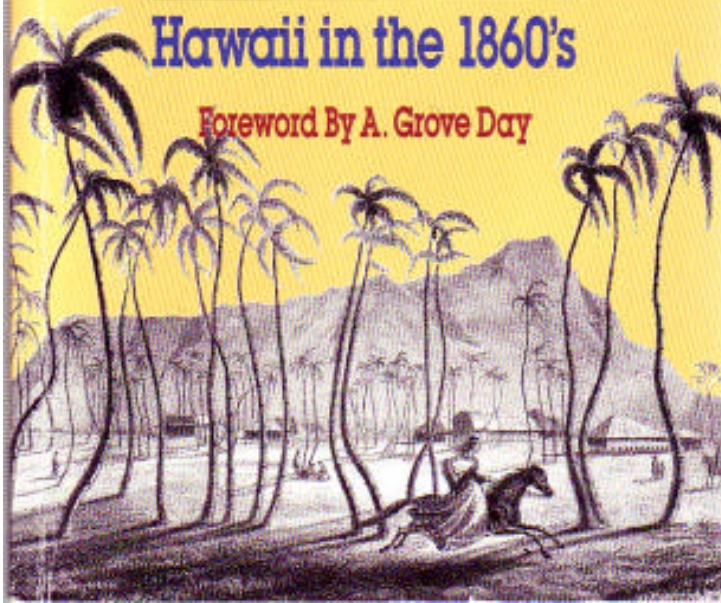
In 1866, **Mark Twain** sailed as a reporter for the *Sacramento Union* to the **Sandwich Islands (Hawaii)**.

MARK TWAIN IN HAWAII

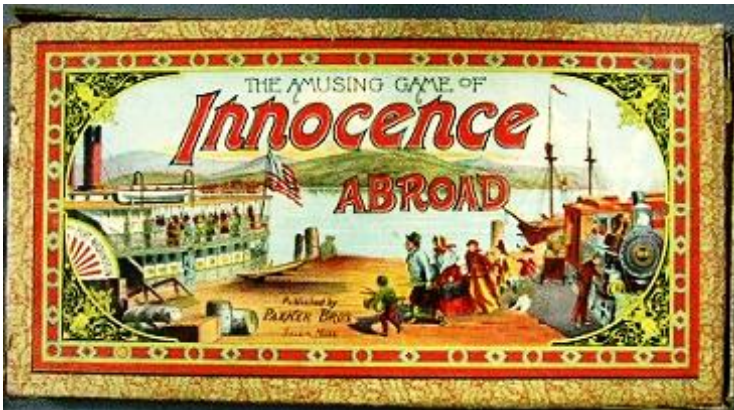
Roughing It
In The Sandwich Islands

Hawaii in the 1860's

Foreword By A. Grove Day



In 1867, a newspaper funded **Mark Twain's** voyage to the **Mediterranean**, which he recorded in his book, *The Innocents Abroad, or The New Pilgrims' Progress*, 1869.



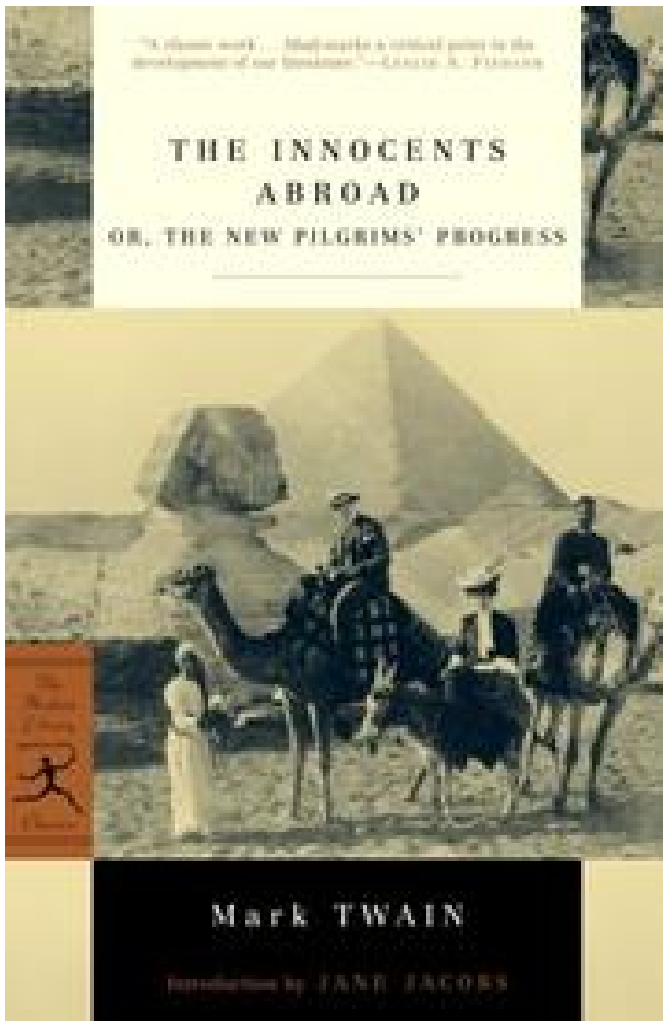
So popular was **Mark Twain's** book, that **Parker Brothers** turned it into their **very first** board game in 1888, titled "**The Amusing Game**

of Innocence Abroad."

While on this trip, **Twain** saw the picture of his friend's sister, **Olivia Langdon** of Elmira, New York, and he fell in love.

Immediately upon his return, he met and married

Olivia.



Innocents Abroad established **Twain's** reputation as a writer.

In it, he described **Syria** under the **Ottoman Turkish Empire**:

"Then we called at the tomb of Mahomet's

children and at ... the mausoleum of the **five thousand Christians who were massacred** in Damascus in 1861 by the Turks.

They say those **narrow streets ran blood for several days**, and that men, women and children were butchered indiscriminately and left to rot by hundreds all through the **Christian quarter**; they say, further, that the stench was dreadful.



... All the **Christians** who could get away fled from the city, and the **Mohammedans** would not defile their hands by burying the 'infidel dogs.'



... The thirst for blood extended to the high lands of Hermon and Anti-Lebanon,

... and in a short time **twenty-five thousand more Christians** were

massacred and their possessions laid waste ..."



Twain added:

"How they hate a **Christian** in Damascus! -- and pretty much all over Turkeydom as well.



And how they will pay for it when Russia turns her guns upon them again!

It is soothing to the heart to abuse England and France for interposing to save the Ottoman Empire from the destruction it has so richly deserved for a thousand years ..."

Twain continued:

"It hurts my vanity to see these pagans refuse to eat of food that has been cooked for us; or to eat from a dish we have eaten from; or to drink from a goatskin which we have polluted with our

Christian lips, except by filtering the water through a rag which they put over the mouth of it or through a sponge! ...

These degraded Turks and Arabs ... When Russia is ready to war with them again, I hope England and France will not find it good breeding or good judgment to interfere."



Dagton News. [U.S.A.]
"Bah, the price of Massacre is Oil!"



Twain wrote in *Innocents Abroad*, chapter 42:

"If ever an oppressed race existed, it is this one we see fettered around us under the inhuman tyranny of the

Ottoman Empire.

I wish Europe would let Russia annihilate Turkey a little--not much, but enough to make it difficult to find the place again without a divining-rod or a diving-bell."

Mark Twain wrote in *Innocents Abroad*, chapter 56:

"Palestine sits in sackcloth and ashes.

Over it broods the spell of a curse that has withered its fields and fettered its

energies ... about whose borders nothing grows but weeds, and scattering tufts of cane, and that treacherous fruit that promises refreshment to parching lips, but turns to ashes at the touch."



In *Innocents Abroad*, chapter 53, **Twain** described the condition of **Jerusalem** under Ottoman Muslim rule:



BEGGARS IN JERUSALEM.

"Palestine is desolate and unlovely ... Rags, wretchedness, poverty and dirt, those signs and symbols that indicate the presence of Moslem rule more surely than the crescent-flag itself, abound ...

Jerusalem is mournful, and dreary, and lifeless. I would not desire to live here ...

... The Moslems watch the Golden Gate with a jealous eye, and an anxious one, for they have an

honored tradition that when it falls, Islamism will fall and with it the Ottoman Empire.

It did not grieve me any to notice that the old gate was getting a little shaky."



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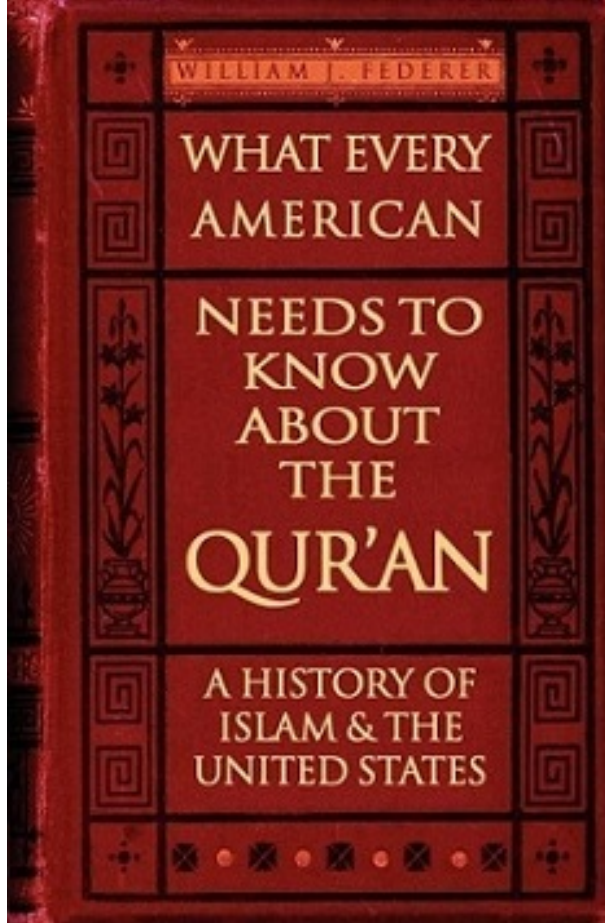
Twain wrote in *Innocents Abroad*, chapter 56:

"Renowned **Jerusalem** itself, the stateliest name in history, has lost all its ancient

grandeur ... the wonderful temple which was the pride and the glory of Israel, is gone,

and the Ottoman crescent is lifted above the spot where, on **that most memorable day in the annals of the world, they reared the Holy Cross.**"

[What Every American Needs to Know About the Qur'an-A History of Islam & the United States](#)



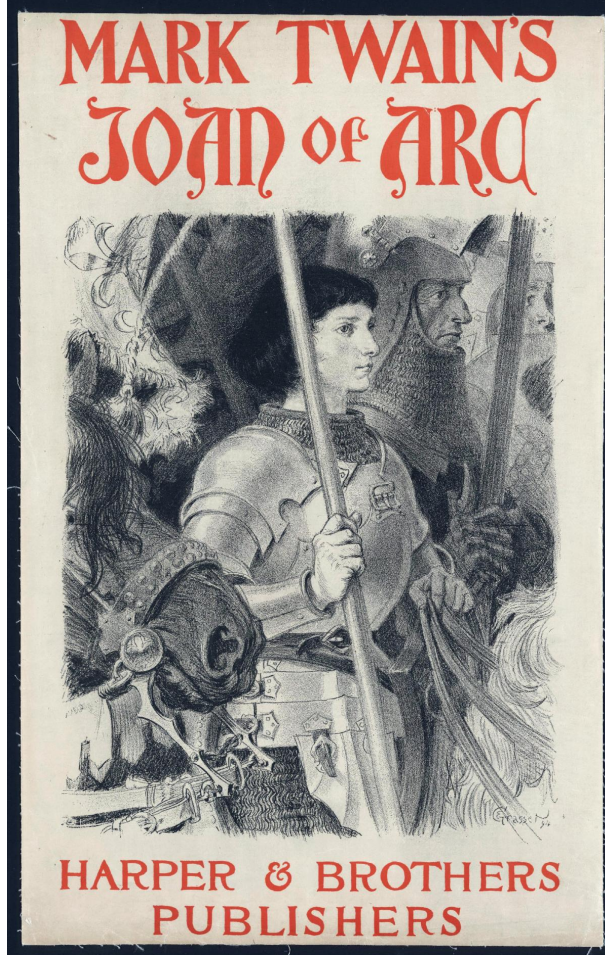
Mark Twain wrote the best-selling books:

- *Tom Sawyer* (1876);
- *Prince and the Pauper* (1882);
- *Life on the Mississippi* (1883);
- *Huckleberry Finn* (1884);
- *Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur's Court* (1889); and
- *Joan of Arc* (1896).



Of his reverent portrayal of Joan of Arc, **Twain** stated in 1908:

"I like *Joan of Arc* best of



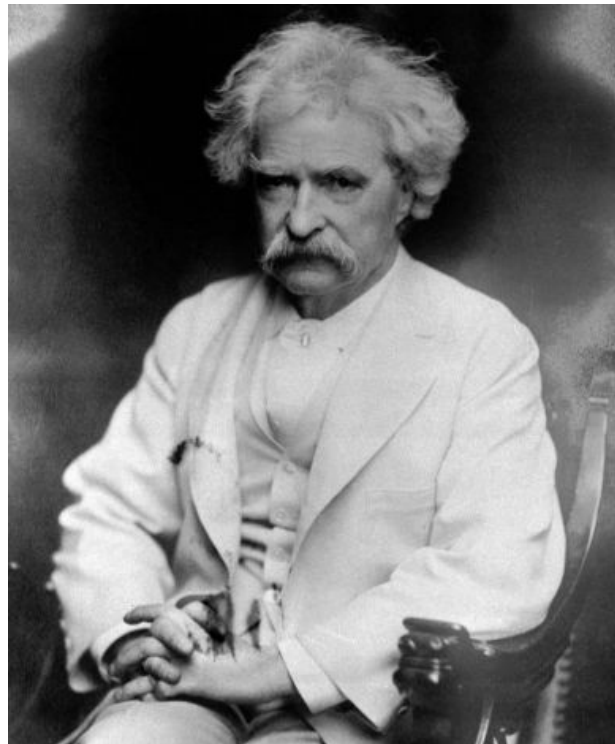
all my books, it is the best."

Mark Twain started a publishing business, but it failed.

He paid off his debts by lecturing across America and England.

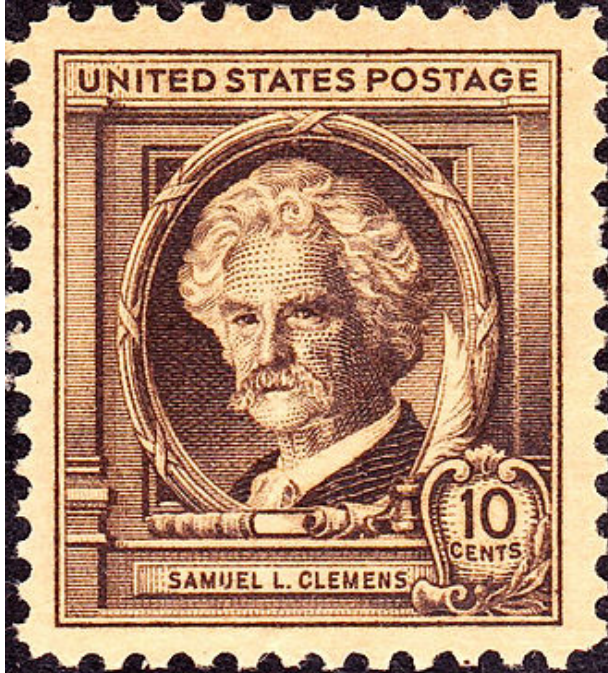
While in London, May of 1897, a rumor circulated that he had died.

Mark Twain quipped to a reporter for the New York Journal, Frank Marshall White, May 31, 1897:



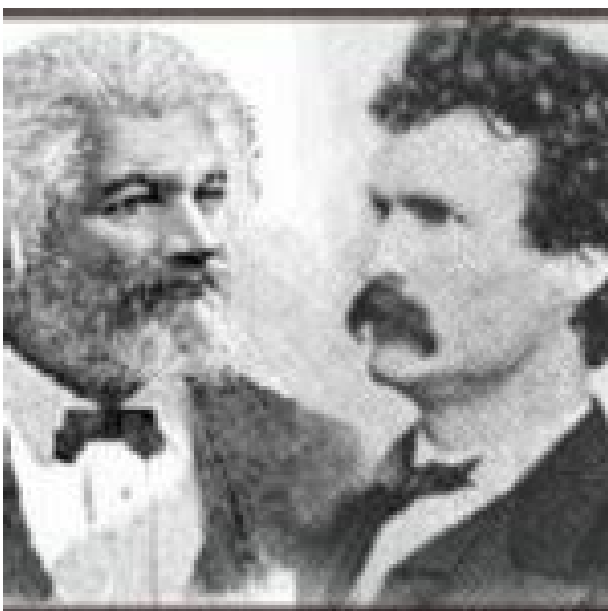
"The report of my death was an exaggeration."

Twain persuaded former President **Ulysses S.**



Grant to write his Civil War memoirs, which, after Grant's death, provided support for his widow, Julia Grant.

He met **Harriet Beecher Stowe** and **Frederick Douglass**.



Twain wrote to President-elect James Garfield requesting a favor, that **Frederick Douglass** be kept on as **Marshal of the District of Columbia**:

"I offer this petition with peculiar pleasure and strong desire, because I

so honor this man's high and blemishless character and so admire his brave, long crusade for the liberties and elevation of his race.

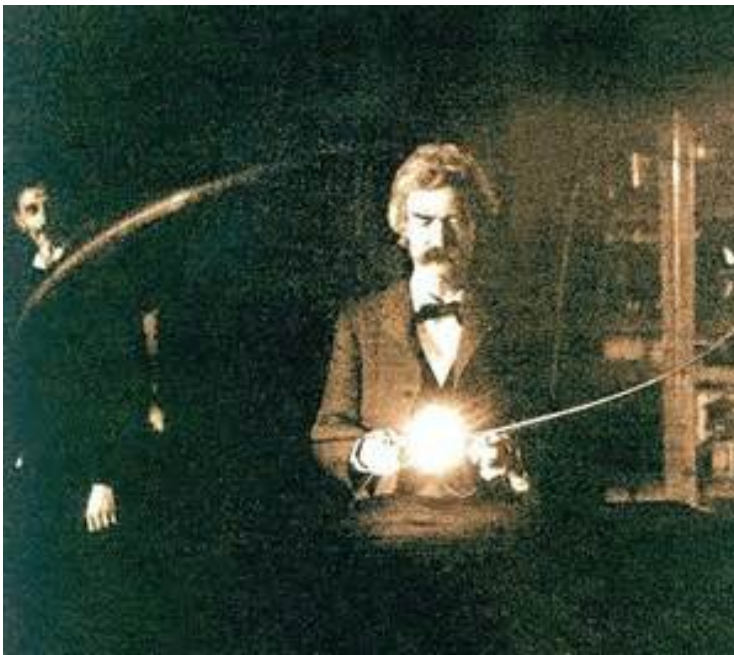
He is a personal friend of mine, but that is nothing to the point; his history would move me to say these things without that, and I feel them too."

Twain personally supported **African American students**, and in 1906, co-chaired a major fundraising effort for **Booker T. Washington and Tuskegee University**.



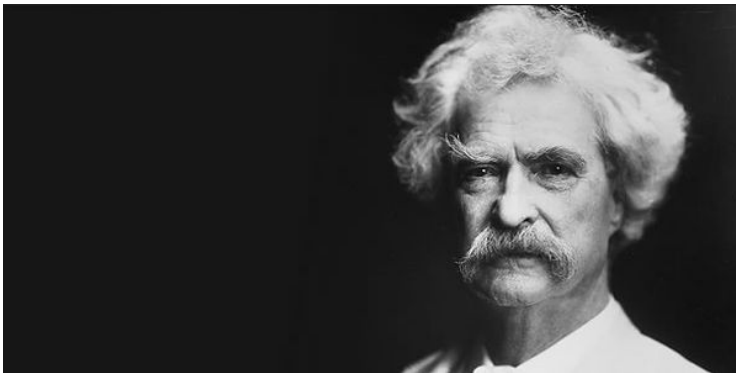
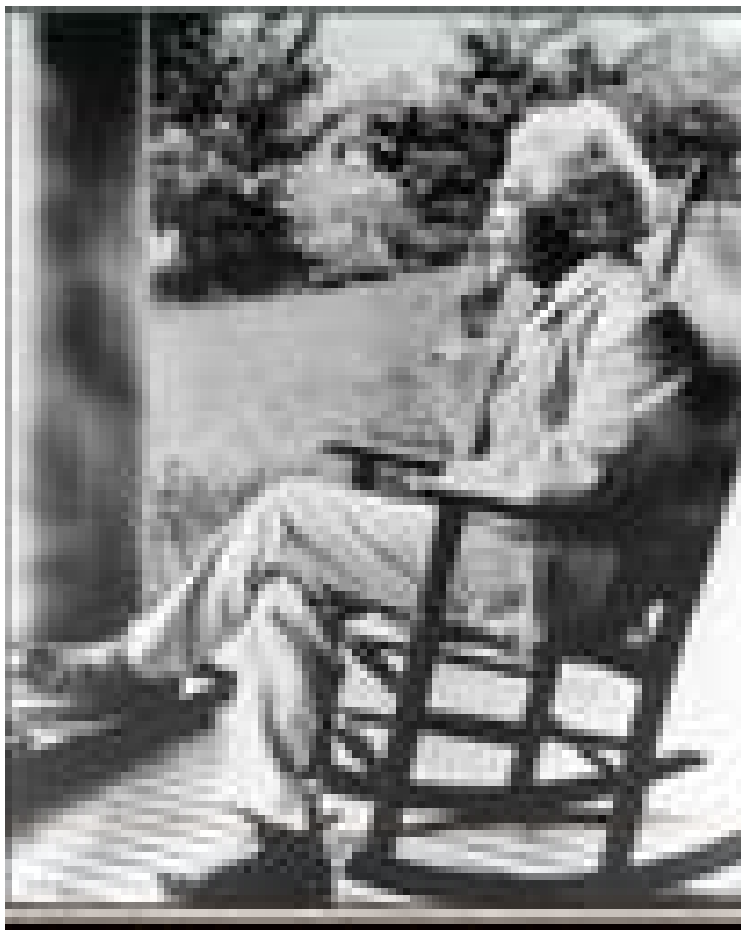
His admiration of gospel music led him to support **Fisk University Jubilee singers** in their efforts to raise money to keep the school open.

He was vice-president of the American Chapter of the **Congo Reform Association**.



Twain was friends with **Nikola Tesla** and spent time in his science laboratory.

Thomas Edison visited **Twain** at his home in Redding, Connecticut, in 1909, and even filmed him.

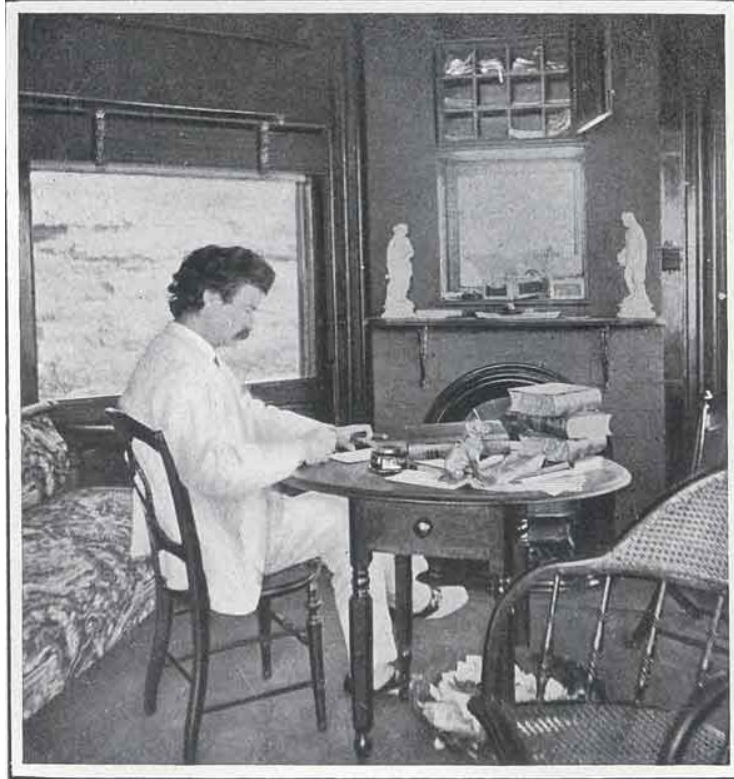


Twain was awarded an honorary doctorate from **Oxford University** in 1907.

Mark Twain wrote:

- "When in doubt, tell the truth";
- "Always do right. That will gratify some of the people, and astonish the rest";

- "Patriotism is supporting your country all the time and your government when it deserves it";



- "Love seems the swiftest, but it is the slowest of all growths. No man or

woman really knows what perfect love is until they have been married a quarter of a century."

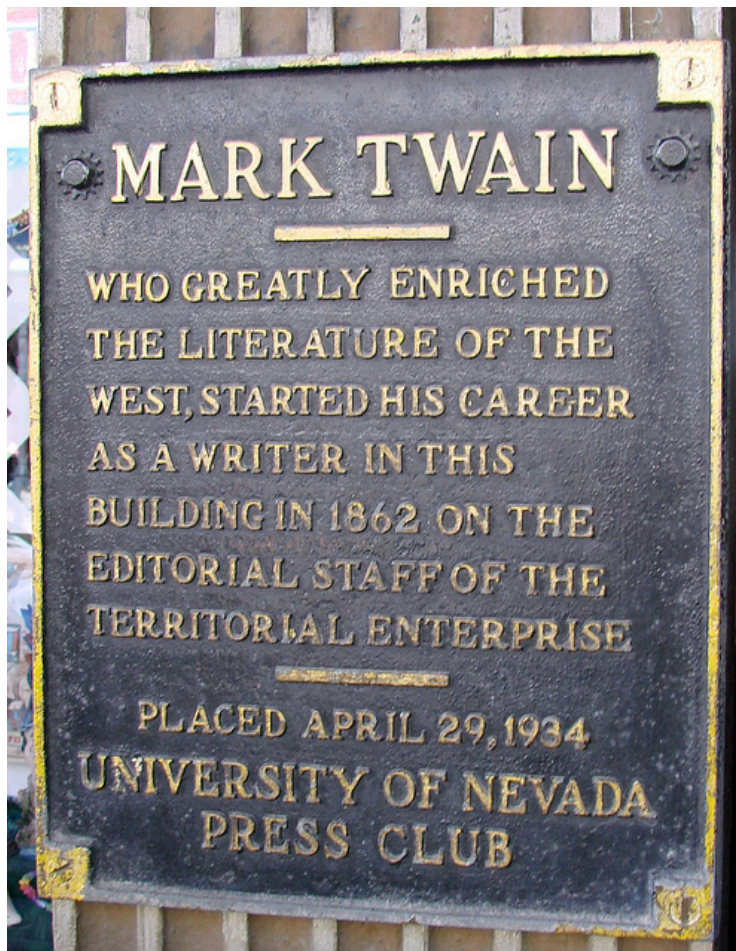
Twain's religious views fluctuated:

from being sarcastically irreligious, ridiculing organized religion;

to declaring "the universe is governed by strict and immutable laws";

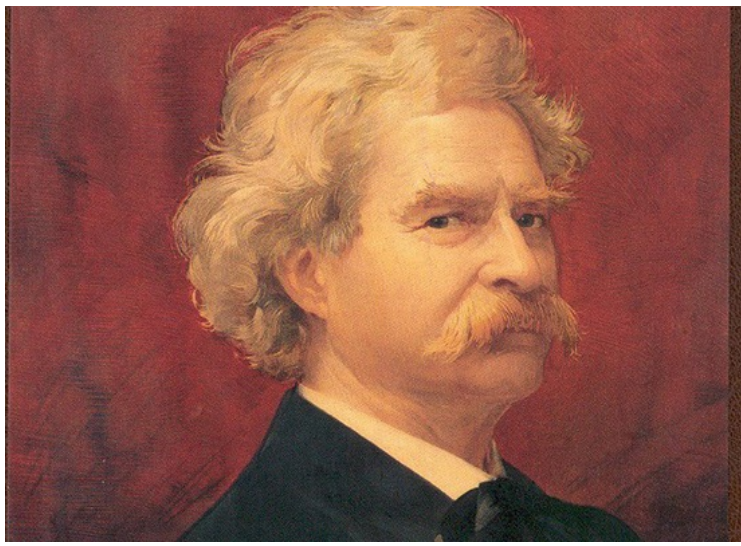
to raising money to help build a Presbyterian Church and stating

"the goodness, the justice, and the mercy of God are manifested in His works."



His daughter Clara related:

"Sometimes he believed death ended everything, but most of the time he felt sure of a life beyond."



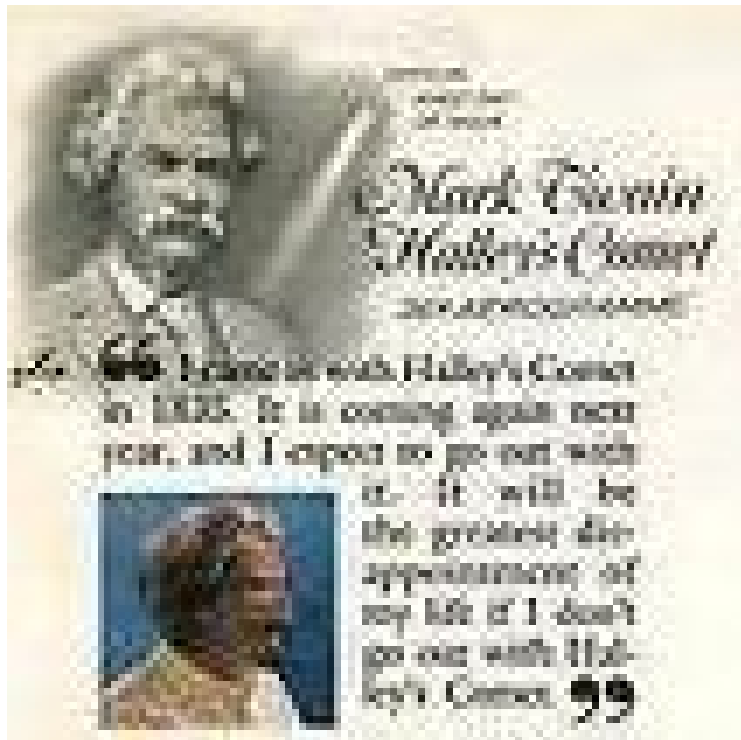
Answering Bible skeptics, **Mark Twain** said:

"If the Ten Commandments were not written by Moses, then they were written by another fellow of the same name."

Mark Twain stated in 1909:

"I came in with **Halley's Comet** in 1835. It is coming again next year, and I expect to go out with it.

It will be the greatest disappointment of my life if I don't go out with **Halley's Comet**.



The **Almighty** has said, no doubt: 'Now here are these two unaccountable freaks; they came in together, **they must go out together.**'"

The day after

Halley's Comet made its **nearest approach** to the Earth, **Mark Twain** died April 21, 1910.



His funeral was in New York's "Old Brick" Presbyterian Church.

Twain stated:

"Twenty years from now, you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do ... Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover."



Of the Bible, **Twain** wrote in *Innocents Abroad*, 1869:

"It is hard to make a choice of the most beautiful passage in a book which is so gemmed with beautiful passages as **the Bible**; but it is certain that not many things within

its lids may take rank above the exquisite **story of Joseph**.

Who taught those **ancient writers** their simplicity of language, their felicity of expression, their pathos, and

above all, their faculty of sinking themselves entirely out of sight of the reader and making the narrative stand out alone and seem to tell itself?

Shakespeare is always present when one reads his book; Macaulay is present when we follow the march of his stately sentences; but the **Old Testament writers are hidden from view.**"



In *Innocents Abroad*, chapter 47, **Mark Twain** gave a further description of **the land of Israel:**

"We dismounted on those shores

which the feet of **the Saviour** had made holy ground ...

We left Capernaum behind us. It was only a shapeless ruin. It bore no semblance to a town. But, all desolate and unpeopled as it was, it was illustrious ground.

From it sprang that tree of Christianity whose broad arms overshadow so many distant lands today. **Christ** visited his old home at Nazareth, and saw His brothers Joses, Judas, James, and Simon ...

... Who wonders what passed in their minds when they saw this brother (who was only a brother to them, however He might be to others a mysterious



stranger; who was a **God**, and had stood face to face with **God** above the clouds) doing miracles, with crowds

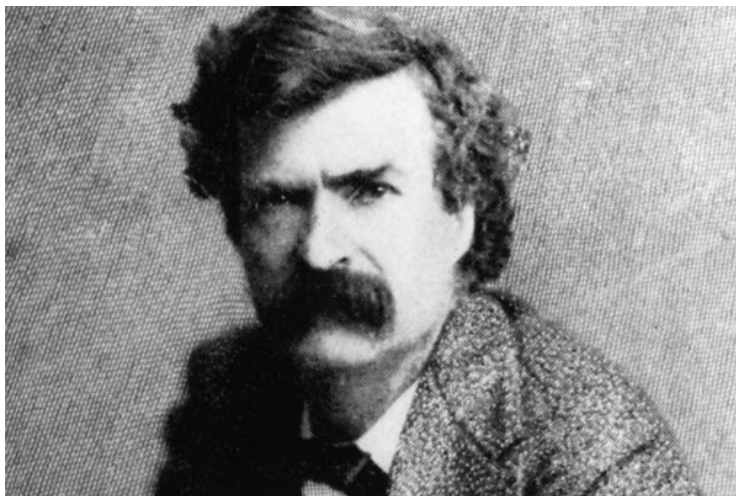
of astonished people for witnesses? ...

One of the most astonishing things that has yet fallen under our observation is the exceedingly small portion of the earth from which **sprang the new flourishing plant of Christianity.**

... The longest journey **our Saviour** ever performed was from here to **Jerusalem** - about one hundred to one hundred and twenty miles ...



Leaving out two or three short journeys, **He spent His life, preaching His Gospel, and performing His miracles,** within a compass no larger than an ordinary county of the United States."



Mark Twain wrote in *Innocents Abroad*, 1869:

"In the starlight, Galilee has no boundaries but the broad compass of the heavens, and is a theatre meet

for great events; meet for the birth of a religion able to save the world."

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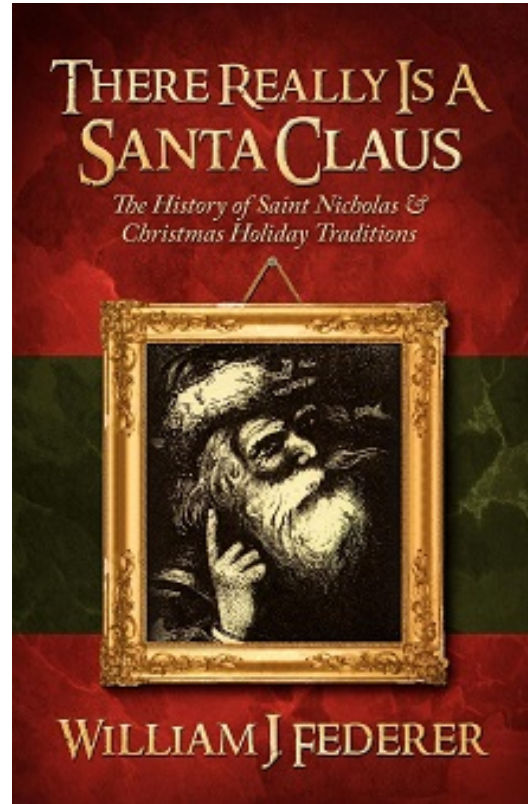
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