RE A ANTA CLAUS?

eptember day in 1897, a queer ame to the editorial desk of New York Sun. It was a query from a little girl who obviously had experienced the of disillusionment in her faith ta Claus, and wished the matettled finally, positively.

e letter was turned over to Fran- Pharcellus Church to answer. nd Church," says a contemporary, bristled and pooh-poohed . . . but ook the letter and turned with an air of resignation to his desk." He did not know that, thirty years hence, his name would be remembered only for the reply he dashed off.

Church, we learn, was born in Rochester, N. Y., on February 22, 1839. He was graduated with honors from Columbia College in 1859. His study of law was soon discontinued, however, for he realized his life could be fufilled only in writing. So he wrote. He died April 11, 1906, and the following day readers of The Sun were informed that the reply to Virginia O'Hanlon's letter which they had grown to love, was from his pen.

Perhaps no newspaper article has been reprinted so many times as has this classic of sentiment. Fathers and mothers the world over have come to look for it every Christmas season, and boys and girls, who now listen to it, will doubtless some day be reading it aloud to their children. It is a part of the literature of the race.

Here it is, just as it unostentatiously oppeared in The Sun, September 21, 1897:

"We take pleasure in answering at once and this prominently the communication below, expressing at the same time our great gratification that its faithful author is numbered among the friends of The Sun.

Dear Editor—I am 8 years old.
Some of my little friends say there is no Santa Claus.
Papa says, 'if you see it in The Sun it's so.'
Please tell me the truth, is there a SANTA CLAUS?

VIRGINIA O'HANLON.
115 West Ninety-fifth street.

"Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age They do not believe except they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's are little. In this great universe of ours man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect, as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole truth and knowledge.

"Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! how dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus! It would be as dreary as if there were no Virginias. There would be childlike faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood fills the world would be extinguished.

"Not believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairness. You might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas Eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if they did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not, but that's no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imabine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world.

"You tear apart the baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, nor even the united strength of all the strongest men that ever lived could tear apart. Only faith, fancy poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernal beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

"No Santa Claus! Thank God- he lives, and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continu to make glad

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ng
den, all sorrow
mas doth carol love's

istmas is coming, is coming, is coming,
The toys chime this out in review,
And this also they seem to be huming
"We'd like to spend Christmas with you!"
O love's in the air, just everywhere,
You cannot escape it I vow;
Christmas means gladness, away with all sadness,
For sunny and sweet is life now.

ALICE MATHEWS,
414 S. 41 St., Philadelphia, Pa.

Needy Benefit Nets $65.00

The benefit concert given Monday evening by the Washington College Glee Club and College Orchestra will probably net in the neighborhood of $65, all returns are not in at this date. This money was turned over to the Chamber for the relief work and will be spent on food packages of economical but substantial items such as navy beans, canned soups, hominy, oatmeal, milk, dried friuts, flour, salt, corn meal, tea, coffee, oranges and candy.

While the last four items may be called luxuries they are included for the purpose of spreading a little Christmas cheer beyond the bare necessities. This list is given in detail so that all contributors may be assured that their money is being wisely spent and will be made to cover as much as possible.

A splendid contribution of canned tomatoes in cases was made to the Chamber by L. A. Pennington.

Used clothing is coming in quantities for adults but there is still a lack of children's wear.

Grandmother and Her Very Best Christmas

by Myrtle Koon Cherryman

"GRANDMOTHER," said young Alfred, always looking for weirdly dramatic stories, "what was the worst Christmas you ever spent?"

"Oh, dear me!" laughed Grandmother. "What's the use of trying to remember? I don't know whether it was the time your grandfather went to the city miles away and was thrown out of the sleigh and nearly killed on his way back, or the time when all the children had scarlet fever and we feared your father would die."

"Or that time we thought Martin had been kidnaped," suggested Father, unable to keep out of the reminiscences.

"Oh, we won't even talk about that!" exclaimed Grandmother.

"I'd rather hear about the best Christmas you ever had, Grandma," said gentle little Alice. "You've told me about your wedding day—that was on Christmas, wasn't it? Was it the happiest one?"

"Well, I don't know," mused Grandmother, "I remember being very well satisfied with my husband, and feeling very grand in my blue 'surah' dress and all that, but there were so many problems of living ahead of us, I hardly think that was the happiest Christmas. Let's see—"

"Well, now!" exclaimed Father. "I'm surprised you should hesitate at a ou remember that my birth- I should think rn son ten

Protected Swan Increase Rapidly

Upper Eastern Shore waters are said to be thick with swan and it is believed the ten-year protection period, legally established and which is now over, has caused the birds to lose their one-time fear of man and of close proximity to the shoreline.

Swan may be seen in almost every cove and creek and are infesting shooting grounds and game preserves consuming quantities of wildduck foods in the meantime. Swan are competing for food with shoal water ducks and the closed season will continue until regulations are definitely established allowing them to be shot.

In a number of inlets ducks and swan are feeding close to shore. Swan are said not to be molesting the feeding grounds of deep water fowl. In the coves of the Chesapeake bay and Chester river in this vicinity swan have been seen in impressive numbers.

The radio is making people so particular about their entertainment that a street band of five pieces will soon be declared a public nuisance.

The trouble with most critics is that they are as narrow-minded and mean as the people they critize.

Sore Throats and Coughs

Quickly Relieved by this Safe Prescription.

Here's a doctor's prescription called Thoxine that is really throat insurance. Its success is due to its quick double action. With the very first swallow it soothes the sore throat and stops the coughing. It goes direct to the internal cause.

The remarkable thing about Thoxine is that while it relieves almost instantly it contains nothing harmful and is pleasant tasting and safe for the whole family. Singers and speakers find Thoxine very valuable. Put up ready for use in 35c, 60c, and $1.00 bottles. Your money back if not satisfied. Sold by Toulson's Drug Store and all other good drug stores.

NOLAND

WISHING YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

We thank our customers and friends for their generous patronage during the holidays and the past year and hope we have pleased you. We thank our sales force for their loyal service, especially during the rush of holiday business when they have tried so cheerfully to ta care of their extra duties in a helpful and efficient manner. On behalf of the public, and ourselves, we say to them "WELL DONE".

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