

...Is There A Real Santa Claus?...

(Ed. Note—This editorial appeared in the New York Sun in 1879 in response to a query from an 8-year-old child. It has been reprinted every year by The Sun and is reprinted here due to its deep human interest.)

Dear Editor:

I am eight years old. Some of my 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
New York City

Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except what 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 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 no 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 fairies! 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 men nor children 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 imagine 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, not 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 supernatural beauty and glory beyond. Is it 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 continue to make glad the heart of childhood.

Calvary Church Plans Cantata

The annual Christmas cantata, "The Music of Christmas," of Calvary Baptist Church will be given by the adult choir Sunday evening, December 19 at 7:30 at the church under the direction of Mrs. Eva Land.

The program is as follows:
The Music of Christmas, By Ira B. Wilson.

Prelude.
Processional, Joy To The World by Handel, The Choir.
Prayer, Rev. J. W. Spillers.
Holy Night, The Choir.

This Is Bethlehem Town, The Choir and Woman's Chorus.

Christ Is Born of Mary, The Choir. Mezzo-soprano solo, Mrs. Alvin Bagwell.

The Angels Keep Their Watch, The Choir.

Good Tidings, The Choir. Soprano solo, Mrs. Al Lancaster.

The Dear Christ Enters In, Alto solo, Mrs. Nellie Osborne.

Offeratory.
The Magi, The Choir and Men's Chorus.

Oh, Little Town of Bethlehem, The Choir.
Benediction.

A speech choir will render appropriate scripture reader in connection with the cantata.

The organist will be Miss Catherine Dunaway and the pianist, Mrs. Vernon Trammell.



Melissa Braswell is the 3-months-old daughter of the Jimmy Braswells, Clinton Mills, and the granddaughter of the Earl Braswells.



Contest Winners Receive Cash Awards



LYDIA ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS—J. D. Hairston, Secretary of Lydia Cotton Mills, is shown above presenting awards to the Lydia Winners of the recent safety essay contest. The winners and the prizes they received are Diann Hawkins, center, winner of the Grand Prize of a \$25.00 Savings Bond; Sue Willard, \$5.00 cash award; Florence Revis, \$2.50 award; Charlie Harris, \$10.00 cash award; Bruce Mills and Mack Gaffney, \$1.00 awards.



CLINTON MILLS CONTEST WINNERS—George Huguley, Superintendent of Clinton Cotton Mills, is shown above presenting safety essay awards to children of Clinton Mills employees. The winners were Sandra Ivester, \$10.00 award; Tony Hooper, \$5.00 award; Betty Ott and Jerry Campbell, Silver Dollar awards.

The Tree Decoration

In the deep forest a man kind and good, says a French legend of the thirteenth century, found on Christmas Eve a tree whose branches bore lighted candles, some of which stood erect while others hung upside down. Crowning the three was the vision of the haloed head of a child. The tree, according to the legend, represented mankind; the child image represented Jesus, and the candles good and bad humans.

As early as 1604 a German manuscript mentioned fir trees decorated at Christmas with flowers made of colored paper, ornaments of gold foil, and apples.

Kindergarten Mothers Meet

With Mrs. Calvin Cooper, presiding, the Kindergarten Mother's Club met in the Kindergarten Rooms in late November. The Tom Thumb Wedding to be presented December 10th was discussed, and final plans were made.

A report of the Kindergarten Queen contest was made, naming Pat Osborne as Queen, Vicki Pearson and Kathy Moore as maids of honor.

Definite plans for the annual Christmas party were completed.

The hostesses, Mrs. Cooper, Mrs. Sam Williams and Mrs. D. D. Ficklin served homemade cookies and drinks.



CONTEST WINNER—Walter O'Shields, stepson of Milford Wright, Clinton Mills, won a \$2.50 cash award in the recent safety essay contest.