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Is There a Santa Claus?

WE TAKE PLEASURE in answering at once and thus 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 eight 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 St.

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 of 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 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 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 imagine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world.

You may 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 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 the picture in the supernatural 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 continue to make glad the heart of childhood.

—The New York Sun, Dec. 21, 1897



THE ABOVE IS probably the most widely reprinted editorial ever written. And compared with the eloquence of this piece, anything we say about the joys of Christmas will sound like the babbling of little children.

So we wish for you and your family all the faith, fancy, poetry, love and romance that this blessed season brings.



BY JACK REICHARD
50 YEARS AGO (1907)

One of the most brutal assault cases on record in Lancaster County occurred at Ronk's Road, on the old Lancaster and Philadelphia turnpike, about seven miles east of Lancaster, near midnight Dec. 19, 1907.

The victim was Miss Mamie E. Brubaker, 21, daughter of Jacob Brubaker, blacksmith at Ronk's Station.

Miss Brubaker had spent the day in Lancaster and left for home on the 11 p. m. trolley. When the car stopped at Ronk's Road she was the only passenger to get off.

Shortly after the trolley started away the young woman was followed by two men. Both wore masks. Upon approaching her one called out: "Don't make a noise or we'll blow out your brains". With that they grabbed her, threw her down and chloroformed her. She was then dragged into the trolley station and assaulted. When the men left they took the woman's handbag in which there was a purse containing about two dollars.

After recovering, Miss Brubaker made her way to the house of Benjamin B. Beiler, about one-half mile away. She reached the Beiler residence in a disheveled and hysterical condition and fainted soon after her arrival. She was cared for by the Beilers and later taken to her home.

When the assault became known, the prevailing Christmas spirit of Good Will Toward Men in the neighborhood was turned into one of indignation and threat against the guilty brutes.

Miss Brubaker described her assailants as one being about 6 feet tall weighing 200 pounds; the other about six inches less in height and slim. The section was combed by searching parties but no trace of the men were found.

Brubaker, a man of moderate means, offered a reward of \$100 for the arrest and conviction of the criminals. The crime was brought to the attention of the County Commissioners and they offered an additional reward of \$500 for the apprehension and conviction of the guilty persons.

Constables went to work on the case and arrested two men of Soudersburg during the Christmas holidays, who were charged with criminally assaulting and robbing Miss Brubaker.

One of the men, about forty, was married; the other was much younger and unmarried. In default of bail the accused were committed to jail by Alderman Stauffer, of Lancaster.

IOWA BOY WON
160 ACRE FARM

An Iowa youth by the name of Ray Bennet exhibited ten ears of corn at the 1907 Chicago Corn Exposition. When the awards of the judges were made it was found this boy, still in his teenage years, was the winner of a 160 acre farm in Texas worth \$6,400, in addition to other prizes amounting to several hundred dollars.

The wife of a Wisconsin farmer who used a snigle on her disobedient son, incidentally exploded a dynamite cap in his hip pocket. She lost two fingers and received other injuries in the explosion. The son escaped serious injury.

YORK COUNTY LED
IN CIGAR PRODUCTION

Pennsylvania topped the nation in the production of cigars, with a total of 1,923,575,754 manufactured in 1907, according to an advance copy of the annual report of the Commissioner of internal revenue released by Revenue Collector H. L. Hershey, of the Ninth District.

York County headed the list for producing more cigars than

any other inland county in the United States.

Back in 1907 they raised large hogs in Lancaster County's Denver section. B. K. Lausch slaughtered one which dressed 550 lbs and another 505 lbs. Isaac S. Gorman had a pair which dressed 860 and one of Joseph Pennypacker's porkers tipped the beam at 521 lbs. But the hog of all hogs in the area was one to be raffled off which weighed 900 lbs. and was expected to reach 1,000 lbs. before raffle-off time.

The largest tomato patch in the United States in 1907, if not in the world, was located in Clark County, Mo., just south of the Des Moines River. It contained 170 acres and was exactly one mile in length and about one-third mile in width.

25 Years Ago

At a meeting of the Lancaster County Holstein Breeders' Assn. held in Lancaster, Earl L. Groff, of Strasburg, was re-elected president. Other officers elected were:

Harry R. Metzler, Paradise, vice president; Elvin Hess, of Strasburg, secretary; Earl Ranck, Gordonville, treasurer. The executive committee consisted of T. Don-

ald Patterson, Gap; Amos Melinger, Strasburg; George Sauer, East Earl; Abner H. Risser, Bainbridge and Jacob Houser, Lampeter.

Professor R. R. Welch, of State College, addressed the group. Several reels of motion pictures were shown.

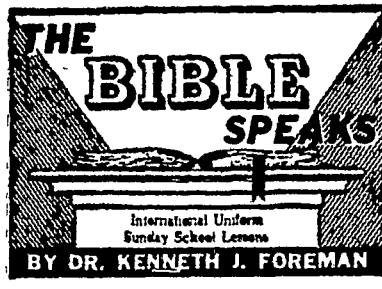
A realistic picture in figures of how two and a half years of depression had affected the pocketbooks of American citizens when they filed their income tax returns for 1931 was released in a report by the Internal Revenue Bureau in December, 1932.

Of the "super-millionaires" with incomes of one million and over, there were 75 of them who filed returns compared to 150 who managed to keep in this class in 1930.

The National Department of Agriculture reported that Pennsylvania farmers and dairymen slaughtered 26,399 cattle in 1931 in the drive to eliminate tuberculosis from state herds.

For the cattle slaughtered, the state paid indemnities in the amount of \$972,899 and the Federal Government, \$610,762. The average Federal indemnity was \$23. The state averaged \$36.

In disposing of a number of criminal cases, 25 years ago this week, Judge Atlee, at Lancaster, refused to send a single defendant to jail for the holidays, and in several cases granted indefinite suspensions and postponements of sentences to prisoners pleading guilty to serious offenses.



Background Scripture: Philippians 2; Luke 2:1-20.
Devotional Reading: Colossians 1:12-23.

To Share Our Life

Lesson for December 22, 1957

THE baby Jesus we have been seeing everywhere these days. His picture is on the greeting cards, songs about him are sung (mechanically for the most part) on every street. Fresh candles are

lighted in front of his statue in many churches. Luke 2 is memorized in a thousand Sunday schools. Now that is about all some people ever see or think about Jesus. He is the baby we have to hear about once a year.



Dr. Foreman

Christians know better than this. Indeed Christians, from very early times, never saw only a baby in the manger at Bethlehem. Here is no ordinary child, made romantic by the hardships of his birth. He is more than a symbol and example of the sweetness and helplessness of all babies in the world.

"Who for Us Men-Became Man"

The Child of Bethlehem is the Event of all time. For this child is the Son of God made man. What men have often longed for, what poets have dreamed, what every man needs, here it is... only not as we expected. What we want is a God who is near us, nearer than heaven, nearer than Mount Olympus, yes nearer than the nearest temple. If possible—and who dared it could be?—we want God in human form. But what we might have expected is a very grand human figure, some super-man, born to power and majesty. What God has sent us is quite different: just a baby. A baby who cannot talk nor walk nor live without help, a baby born to displaced persons in the poorest of circumstances, with no very bright future likely. Yes, this is He. When God became man he came all the way. He came to share our life.

Sharing Struggle

Theologians say that Christ had a human "nature" and a divine

"nature." The Bible seldom if ever uses such language. The New Testament just calls Jesus "He." Jesus himself called himself Son of God; he also called himself a man. (John 8:40.) The Nicene Creed, one of the most ancient and widely used creeds of the church universal, says that the Son of God "was made" (i.e. became) man. We can make this clearer to our minds if we simply say that Jesus shared our life. He shared it to the full, he identified himself with mankind. He shared the circumstances and the conditions under which all men live. We said just now that a baby born as Jesus would have no rosy future; and this was true of Jesus. His life was one of constant struggle. In his boyhood it must have been a struggle with poverty; as he grew older he had to wrestle with temptation, with misunderstanding and hatred.

Sharing Suffering

Possibly not all human life is a struggle; but there is no man with lifelong exemption from suffering. We know Jesus suffered on the cross; we often forget that he was always a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." We do not read that he wept on Calvary; we do know that he wept at the death of a friend. We know the Pharisees hounded him to his death. We forget the times when he was nearly lynched by angry mobs. He knew a kind of suffering which is harder for a sensitive soul than physical pain: suffering of the mind and heart. That his mother misunderstood him, that his brothers did not believe in him, that he "could do no mighty work" at Nazareth, his own home town, because of their stubborn unbelief.

Bearing Sin

One thing Jesus did not share with us: sin. And yet even this he shared in two ways. He always sided with the sinner, so much so that his critics called him "friend of sinners;" and in the end he suffered because of sin. Paul in one place writes, "For our sake he (God) made him to be sin who knew no sin" (II Cor. 5:21). This brings us face to face with the awesome mystery of the Atonement; but as a Scottish minister once said, the reason we do not understand the Cross is not because our minds are dull but because our hearts are too poor to understand love. If the baby in the manger had died then and there, it would have been sad. But only if that baby lived, and grew, and suffered, could the child become Man, giving his matured life a ransom for many.

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