

The Daily Gazette.

ASHEVILLE, N. C.

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This Date in History—Dec. 26.

- 1716—Thomas Gray, author of the famous "Elegy," born; died 1771.
- 1776—Battle of Trenton.
- 1811—The Richmond theater burned and many lives lost; first calamity of that nature in the United States. The Richmond theater stood upon the site of the Monumental Church, GEN. LOGAN, erected as a public memorial for the victims. About 70 perished, among them the governor of the state and many people of prominence.
- 1831—Stephen Girard, eccentric millionaire and philanthropist, died in Philadelphia; born in France 1750.
- 1856—General John A. Logan died in Washington; born 1826.
- 1894—Dr. William Detmold, eminent German-American surgeon, died in New York city; born in Hanover 1818.



Christmas, the greatest festival of the civilized world, the children's day of supreme joy, has come and gone again. This day is a bright link that for nearly nineteen centuries has bound together the chain of years. Its happy memories, that connect our childhood and our old age also connect the childhood and maturity of the modern world.

The birth of the Christ-child changed the destiny not only of nations, but of humanity and the radiance of His life shined down the centuries, leading men around as the star led the wise men of old. Most of the customs of observing the day, and all of the legends that cluster around it are lost in the dim past. Most of them are beautiful and bring happiness, mirth and good cheer to all. Christmas is and should be an opening into holy land and fairy land combined.

That this is so, only heightens the horror and sadness of the ghastly catastrophe which shocked our community and brought sorrow to many hearts yesterday. We have no doubt that many who read the details of this terrible accident will ask, when the first shock of horror is passed, could it not have been prevented? Should not such accidents be guarded against? Is there anything appropriate or pleasing in the celebration of Christmas by fire-works and cannon that is worth the risk to life and property?

We can not bring back the dead, and we can only offer heartfelt sympathy to the afflicted, but have we no other duty to perform in view of the dangers of this custom, dangers which have been so terribly brought home to us?

Governor Russell's statement that the agricultural department did not require brains to run it has aroused the anxiety of many farmers who have realized the value of this department in the past by the protection it has given against fraudulent fertilizers. When this department was established some years ago its first work was to drive from the state some eighty odd different manufacturers of so-called fertilizers, an analysis of which discovered over 50 per cent. some as high as 80 per cent. of pure sand. For this stuff the farmers had been robbed yearly of hundreds of thousands of dollars. Under the intelligent and honest management of the past this evil has been corrected, and now the farmers can see plainly described on each bag the character of its contents. We can readily see how important this is when we note that the farmers, last year, spent more than \$4,000,000 for fertilizers. We say this protection existed until the present year. We do not know that it does not exist now. But that the people have grave cause for fears will be appreciated when we remember that Governor Russell put in charge of this fertilizer department, as chief inspector a negro fence-monger, whose only qualification is the amount of dirty work he has done and is capable of doing for the governor. This was the first evidence—first overt act of Governor Russell showing not only a contempt for this great department peculiarly established in

the interest of the farmers, but a determination to degrade it, and possibly bring about its abolishment, after he is through with it for his party benches. But his crowning act was taken the other day when he unceremoniously dumped John R. Smith, whom he proclaimed was "not worth a d—m" as manager of the penitentiary, and as the agricultural department "required no brains to run it" he would transfer him to that department. If the position is worthless why pay out \$1,800 a year in salary to the incumbent? Why can not the governor get Treasurer Worth to refuse to pay this salary and thus freeze the office out of an incumbent as he has refused to pay claims against the state ordered paid by the court, and also various appropriations made by the legislature? Would this course, as illegal as it would be, but no more so than the other acts of the treasurer, not be more decent than to fill the positions with men notoriously unfitted just to give them the salaries and thus bring a really useful department into uselessness and disrepute?

But what an administration this Russell-Butler combination is giving us!

IS THERE A SANTA CLAUS.

We do not pretend to decide the question, but below are two opinions that represent contrasting views of the subject, and we are inclined to think that the general sentiment, especially of those who have fond memories of childhood will side with the latter view:

I. Dr. Price in the Holston Methodist, is the skeptic. He says: "We do not think it right to make children believe that there is a veritable Santa Claus, who visits all the houses in the world on the morning of December 25, comes down the chimneys and fills the stockings with good things. If the thing is explained to them as a myth, all right. But if the children are deceived, they will after a while discover the deception and when they will believe that their parents have lied. This will either cause them to lose a portion of their confidence in the honesty of their parents or to look upon lying with allowance."

II. A few days ago a little girl wrote this letter to the New York 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'Hannon."

To this the Sun made this reply: "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 are 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 child-like 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 children nor man 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 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 all real? Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding."

TOPICS OF TODAY.

Former Congressman Thomas Settle tells the Washington Post that "the future of the republican party in North Carolina is not bright." He sees the signs of the times. The people are only waiting for a chance to wipe the whole kit and crew of them off the face of the earth.—Charlotte News.

A movement is on foot in Maryland to protect the song birds of the state, and Cardinal Gibbons, of Baltimore, has given it his endorsement. He says: "We are a nation of vandals; and our condition cannot be compared with that of England and Ireland. Birds make the choir of the heavens, and they should, by all means, be protected."

In this estimate the Cardinal is quite right. The Charlotte Observer comments on his utterances: "In North Carolina, for instance an illustrious legislature passed a law to protect possums, but left the song-

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sters, the choristers of the heavens, to the mercy of men and boys who carry shot-guns in their hands and slaughter in their hearts. It is a good sign when great minds and kind hearts like Cardinal Gibbons become interested in this work, and may the day may not be far distant when we will no longer be a nation of vandals."

POSTSCRIPTS.

—The value of real estate in Brooklyn, New York, is now \$70,170,724, and personal property \$33,688,721. The increase in valuation over 1896 in real estate was \$14,796,745, and in personal property, \$8,152,035 and the total increase in both real and personal property \$20,948,830.

—Miss L. Miller, a well-known dress-maker of Atlanta, has been imprisoned for refusing to be vaccinated. She is patronized by the fashionable people of the South and is well known over this region. The city is undergoing the rigors of compulsory vaccination, and when the physician reached Miss Miller's residence she refused to let him apply the vaccine. He called again with the same result. She was fined, and in default was sent to jail. That brought her to terms and she paid her fine and submitted to the operation.

—A New York special of Wednesday says: "Workmen today began to install a heating plant in Grant's tomb. This is rendered necessary as a measure of comfort for the caretakers and also because the preservation of the structure depends upon its being kept at a proper temperature. Experts recently discovered that the walls were 'sweating' badly, and declared that if this condition were allowed to continue the marble of which they are constituted would begin to disintegrate. An ordinary building for dwelling or commercial purposes is dried out in a few months after being put in use, but this is not the case with Grant's tomb. There are still tons of water in the walls."

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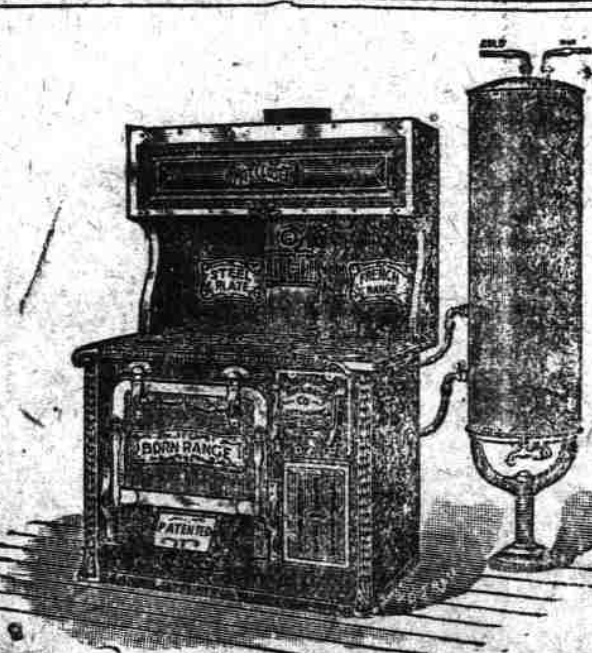
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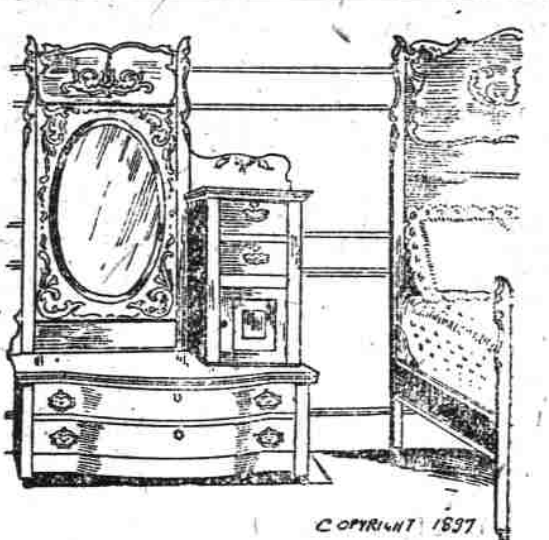
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HIS NAME A WARNING.

A negro boy by the name of Gollitely was convicted of larceny in the Criminal court yesterday and sent to the road for three months. Since this trial the grand jury has returned two other bills against the same defendant for stealing.

MUSICALS NEXT WEEK.

The musicals which was to have been given at the residence of Capt. J. P. Sawyer's Monday evening will take place next week, the date to be announced later.

Racket Store

News.

30 SOUTH MAIN ST.

People are so much alike that the thing that catches you will catch me. Now the thing that catches me is the lowest cash price on all I buy. I just don't like to pay a big profit on anything. I don't care if it is Christmas goods, novelties or what not. If you are like I am this will catch you, because we have marked only one very short profit on all our Christmas goods. Of course you don't know this, but I can't help that. I do my part when I buy right, mark them right and then tell you about it; and if you don't believe it it is not my fault.
Sterling Silver Thimbles 23c.
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HAULING.

Any one wanting to get J M Lorick to do hauling will please call at 34 Patton Ave., the old stand. No change except the phone, which is 141.

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The Daily Meats for Today:

For Breakfast,

Breakfast Bacon and a Steak.

For Dinner,

Rib Roast and Smoked Tongue.

For Supper,

Lamb Chops. We Have It.

F. Zimmermann.

\$4.00 WONDER!

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