

**IS THERE A SANTA CLAUS?**

As long as there are children in the world, so long there will be a Santa Claus to gladden their young hearts. Every year there are queries and discussion about this patron saint of childhood and he was so ably defended by Francis P. Clureh, a late editorial writer on the New York Sun, that all future questions have been answered. The letter that brought forth his beautiful and convincing reply was from little Virginia O'Hanlon of New York, which is given below together with his answer.

"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 95th St."

"Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe what they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible to their little minds. All minds, Virginia, are little minds. In this great universe of ours man is a mere insect, an ant in his intellect as compared with the boundless worlds 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 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 all the chimneys on Christmas Eve to catch Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees 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 your lawn? Of course not; but that's no proof that they are not there. No-

**MEBANE NEAR DEATH**

Nemton, Dec. 14—C. H. Mebane editor of the *Catawba News-Enterprise* is critically ill, and his physician states that it is but a matter of hours with him. He has been confined to his home for more than four months and has been suffering with the dreaded disease pernicious anemia, for more than three years. All that has kept him alive for the last three or four weeks have been his remarkable constitution and strong heart.

Mr. Mebane is well known throughout the state, having served at one time as State Superintendent of Public Instruction and later as Superintendent of Catawba county schools. He has for more than thirty years served as a director of North Carolina College for Women and has always taken a great interest in public education. About twenty-four years ago he entered the field of newspaper work and since that time he has edited the *Catawba County News*, later consolidated with the *Newton Enterprise* and now known as the *Catawba News-Enterprise*.

body can conceive or imagine all the wonders that are 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 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—may ten times ten thousand years from now he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood!"

**DILLSBORO LODGE  
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Regular communication on First and third Thursdays at 8 p. m. Visiting Brethren welcome.  
-R. G. Queen, W. M.  
F. I. Watson, Sec'y.

**S. C. CELEBRATES HER  
REDEMPTION IN 1876**

Columbia S. C. Dec. 14—A handful of red shirted gray figures were the central figures in South Carolina's celebration of the 50th anniversary of the redemption of the State from reconstruction rule by the inauguration of Wade Hampton as Governor. They were the survivors of the thousands of red shirts who a half century ago rode with the gallant Confederate cavalry leader in the bloody and bitter campaign of 1876 that ousted the carpetbagger and scalawag from control of the government.

Tribute to Hampton as "the savior of South Carolina" and to the men who stood shoulder to shoulder with him was paid by Major J. C. Hemphill of Abbeville veteran newspaper editor who himself received words of praise from Governor McLeod for his own part in 1876.

The streets of Columbia draped with United States flags were lined by thousands as the "red shirt" parade moved from Elmwood Avenue down Main Gervais and Sumpter streets to the athletic field of the University of South Carolina where Major Hemphill delivered his address. From time to time a cheer broke from the ranks of massed spectators as the main figures in the parade passed.

Gray haired women who had prayed in their homes for Hampton while their husbands fathers and sons followed his banner were among those who made up the parade and there were also a few negroes who voted the Democratic ticket in the Hampton campaign.

Escorting the red shirts were Governor McLeod and other high officials of the State of South Carolina including members of the Supreme Court; Governor-Elect John G. Richards who as a boy of 12 rode with the red shirts-occupied the automobile with the Governor. Then came boys and girls of Columbia's public schools the student body of the University of South Carolina children from several orphanages, boy and girl scouts nurses from local hospitals and civilians from every walk of life. All wore red sashes while many wore badges bearing the portraits of Hampton and M.C. Butler and Mart W Gary sometimes described as "the great triumvirate of 1876."

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