



YES, VIRGINIA

"Yes, indeed!

"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 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.



It was only September, and 1897's Christmas was three months in the future. But Virginia O'Hanlon's concern was with an important problem that, to her, knew no season. That was why she wrote her letter to the New York Sun.

The answer to Virginia's question, written in a moment of deep spiritual insight by Francis B. Church, stands even today as a testament expressing two thousand years of faith. It has been reprinted here because it always will deserve to be read again.

"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 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 that 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 or even the united strength of all the strongest men, that ever lived, could tear apart. Only faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance, can push aside the 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 thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood."