

The Philosophical Research Society, Inc.

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Dear Friends:

As I am now reaching that age in which it is permissible to indulge in personal reminiscences, I would like to mention some early experiences with Santa Claus. We are told that children should not be encouraged to believe in kindly old Saint Nicholas, whose very canonization is being severely questioned. There are rumors that the belief in Kriss Kringle with his sleigh loaded with gifts, and Rudolf his red-nosed reindeer, can damage psychic integration, undermine the libido and work various hardships on the id. Having passed through what has been declared to be a frustrating disillusionment, I am happy to report that I survived without temporary or lasting damage.

In our household there was a large closet near the front door, where visitors hung their wraps. Several weeks before Christmas this door was locked and bolted for no obvious reason. I was warned to restrain my inquisitiveness or old Santa Claus might be offended. Some mysterious packages would arrive and vanish behind this locked closet door.

Children all believe in miracles, and even the infinite multiplication of the Santa Claus personality seemed no more remarkable than the multiplication of Holy Relics for which there was ample religious precedents. Santa Claus ringing a bell on the street corner was raising funds for his world-wide program of benevolences. Santa Claus in the Department Store seemed to be enthroned in the midst of his workshop of wonders. For those who have not yet attended school, there are few questions and for those who have attended school there are few answers.

Then came the great occasion. Good children went to bed early on Christmas Eve. Grandmother always had trouble preserving her composure on such occasions. She seemed filled with important secrets. Late in the evening there were many whispers and footsteps going back and forth. Then something was dragged across the floor, and by this time it seemed certain that St. Nicholas was there in person, at least superintending the work at hand.



Bright and early in the morning there was a solemn parade to the Living Room, and there a Christmas Tree, hung with bright colored balls, real candles and artificial snow, was a thing of beauty and a joy forever. The presents were all there and in an excitement such as this, who wished to doubt providence.

Growing up is attended by increasing doubts on many subjects, and the day finally comes when the terrible question is asked: "Is there a Santa Claus?" Grandmother was well prepared for this emergency, and we had a heart to heart talk that put everything in order. "Of course there is a Santa Claus" she announced firmly. And then explained the matter in her own inimitable way. St. Nicholas is actually a spirit. Perhaps very small children can see him, but as they grow older they lose faith and when faith is gone, sacred things become invisible. Because he is a spirit, Santa Claus is everywhere, and can be everywhere at one time. At the Christmas Season this spirit of giving and sharing comes to visit all parents and grandparents, who love their children or their children's children. He makes his home in the hearts of these parents and brings with him the joy of the Holy Season.

On Christmas Eve throughout the world, millions of children think about Santa Claus. In their hearts and minds they can see him flying across the sky, bringing gifts from his workshop in the Northern regions of the earth. Thoughts are things, and these children certainly fashion an image in their own thinking, which becomes ensouled with love and kindness. When these children grow up and have boys and girls of their own, the spirit of Santa Claus will come to them and the ancient way will go on, for nothing can make us more happy than to give happiness to those we love.

Grandmother would then go on to tell that in olden days Christmas was a religious holiday and a different time was set for the exchange of presents. When we find our greatest spiritual satisfaction in bringing happiness to others, we are also experiencing the mystical meaning of the Christian ministry. We are all little children and on each Winter Solstice, Universal Life bestows its blessings upon us. The gift of life is also the gift of light, and light entering our souls brings with it the blessedness of love and hope and charity. Just because we cannot prove that Santa Claus exists means nothing if we continue to keep our childlike faith in eternal good. When we disillusion others we damage the wonderful faith which gives us victory over all the sorrows and uncertainty of living. It is not the belief in Santa Claus that disturbs the psyche or leads to neurotic tendencies. Rather it is the attitude which seeks to rescue us from the mysterious world of beauty and requires that we settle down to a prosaic disbelief in the love of God and the kindness of man.



While I cannot be considered a "rock hound", I have become much intrigued with a variety of stones, mostly of the agate family which are found in Eastern Oregon and many other parts of our country. When these stones are sawed into thin slabs and polished, they present a remarkable diversity of truly beautiful forms and colors. One cannot examine such specimens without developing a special admiration for nature's artistry. No palette could provide such color harmonies as occur in stones scattered about the surface of the earth. One enthusiast recently discovered stalks of fossilized prehistoric ferns. Cross sections of these were unbelievably beautiful, and are comparatively rare. Occasionally, the slicing and polishing of an agate

reveals a splendid landscape with mountains, trees, rivers and valleys. Not long ago a stone discovered in Australia showed, when polished, the perfect figure of a kneeling Japanese geisha girl, in a brightly colored kimono, and with what appeared to be authentic hair ornaments. This stone passed quickly to a Japanese collector.

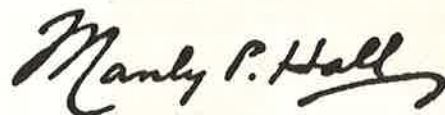
It occurred to me that some of these agates and geodes would make splendid meditation mandalas. They are small, from three to eight or ten inches in diameter, and many show concentric rings and even geometrical forms. Crystallization moves out from a center, with an explosion of light and color. Where else could we find a stronger testimony to the wonders of universal law? One of the purposes of the mandala is to increase man's admiration for the magnificence of the Divine Plan. We are reproducing herewith an example of polished agate. It is approximately seven inches in diameter and provides all the elements necessary to strengthen man's faith in the exactitude of cosmic geometry and color vibration. The dominant tones of this example are shades of brownish rose, suggesting the beauty of an autumn leaf. There are bands of off-white and all the patterns are enclosed in darker shades of brown and brownish gray. Incidentally, specimens of this quality are now difficult to secure.

Our December and January Exhibits feature great works of Christian Art, as these are found on modern postage stamps of various nations. The Exhibit will continue through January and we hope that those living in the area will be able to attend this really beautiful display. It indicates clearly a strong revival of religious interest among most of the nations of the world. This in itself strengthens our hopes for the future of mankind.

It is most appropriate at this time that I should express to all of you my deep and enduring gratitude for your many kindly services and friendly help. It is your assistance and inspiration that have made possible the expansion of our endeavors, and at this time it becomes most evident that we are performing a necessary function in modern society. The labors in which you have played so large a part are bringing a constructive message to thousands of men and women who need guidance at this time.

May your Christmas be a blessed one. May the Spirit of Jolly Kriss Kringle abide in your hearts, and may the New Year bring with it the richest of all gifts, which is the privilege of bringing joy and insight to other folks.

Always most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Manly P. Hall". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name "Manly P. Hall".

SPECIAL NOTICE
FROM OUR BOOK DEPARTMENT

A number of important and scholarly volumes in our fields of interest are now available in attractive and accurate reprints. Most of those listed here are included in Mr. Hall's list of recommended reading and have long been rare and out of print. To these have been added selected works by outstanding modern authors. The Contributors' Bulletin will list additional works in future issues. Be sure to read this page carefully:

<u>Titles</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Retail</u>
Brother of the Third Degree	W.L. Garver	7.50
The Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross	A. Waite	10.00
Bulfinch's Mythology		3.95
Book of Tea	O. Kakuzo	2.75
Bug Haiku	J.W. Hackett	2.95
The Candle of Vision	(A.E.) Geo Russell	5.00
The Canon of Reason and Virtue	Paul Carus	2.00
Casting the Horoscope	Alan Leo	7.50
Chinese Religions	Smith	7.00
Cheiro's Complete Palmistry	L. Hamon	7.50
Christian Philosophy of St. Augustine	P. Gilson	2.45
Christianity a Mystical Fact	Rudolf Steiner	5.75
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Distilled Wisdom	Montapert	5.00
Divining Rod	Barrett & Besterman	7.50
Doctrine of the Subtle Body	Mead	2.75

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