

EXPLAINING SANTA CLAUS AND CHRISTMAS SYMBOLISM

It isn't long until Christmas and now the question has to be decided in many families.

Shall the myth of Santa Claus be kept up with the children. There is so much talk today about it being silly and even wicked to let children go on believing that a fat jolly fellow in red gets in somewhere and turns the house into a veritable store.

Why have to lie and invent new ways of admission now that chimneys are thinning and even disappearing? Why cook up all the nonsense about reindeer and a sleigh—what's a sleigh anyway?—or an airplane and all the rest of it?

After all, Christmas is a holy day, say many mothers. Isn't it better just to accent this side of it, tell the children that on Christ's Birthday people feel kind of generous and give gifts to their friends, bury old hates and rejoice?

Explaining Santa

This part of it, we agree, far and away the most part of Christmas. The loveliness of it all is too often overlooked or completely forgotten even in the mad scramble of buying wrapping and giving presents. Children should be impressed with the sweetness of the season and a sympathetic reverence for the day and the event it symbolizes.

But we cannot see, on the other

hand, that any figure as mysteriously kind and exciting as Santa Claus needs to be left out. He too is moved by the general happiness of the times, we may say and wants to do something for everybody. Just another friend, the great friend of all children.

The other argument against the poor fellow is that we upset the good sense and intelligence of children by stuffing one more fairy down their throats. Why fairies at all? Why anything unreal and fantastic? Why deliberately lie against our own better judgement?

Well—for one thing, there is less danger of a child's intelligence than we think. Little people just growing into a great and wonderful world would have difficulty in separating the real from the unreal. An airplane, even a sleigh in the air is no miracle to a child, for him there is nothing impossible. If the park fountain were to raise itself aloft and spout gold pieces it would be no more wonderful to a small child than an airplane dropping cards.

Symbol of Love

If we refute Santa Clause, we could have refuted people flying for instance, thirty years ago. The only difference is that one could and did come true and the other could not—or couldn't if we set our minds to it? Our ideas of miracles change with our age and with the times.

A child's imagination stabilizes later on. He himself separates the mythical

from the realism. He measures chimneys with his eyes, learns that Santa's mole corresponds with the chauffeur's and says, "Ho, ho, I knew it all the time and is satisfied.

If Santa Claus is worrying any mother on these two scores I should let him rest. The children need him, we all need him, he is a tradition in the flesh, our hopes encased in whiskers and a tunic, an old love for everybody. We all tie to him and we interpret him as we need. What the world needs today for twelve months a year is a great and good Santa Claus to make us children again and believe in things without too much questioning.

BATHTUB MUD BACKS A WATER BOND ISSUE PLEA

Indianapolis, Dec. 20—Use of bathtubs in Petersburg, Indiana, has fallen at such an alarming rate that Mayor W. R. Berridge has appealed to the Public Service Commission for assistance.

Anyone taking a bath, he said, is confronted with a sixteenth of an inch of mud in the tub to start with and also never knows when a fish may be found in the tub.

"Our plant is in such bad shape", he said in asking the commission to approve a \$50,000 stock issue for a Federal Public Works loan, "that one user found a ten inch eel lodged in the water pipes in his home."

SUGGESTS REVISIONS OF THE RULES FOR AUCTION BRIDGE

(Philadelphia Bulletin)

One of the leading authorities on the clubs might be removed from the auction bridge recently suggested a revision of the rules for the purpose of injecting a little uncertainty into that otherwise excellent game. He would have the last four cards of the pack dealt to the middle of the table, not to be faced until the players had completed the bidding on the strength of the play a little less cut and dried. The contract having been agreed upon, the successful declarant would then examine the cards in the widow," select one for his own use, and assign the other three to dummy and his opponents. This the expect thinks would make the results of the play a little less cut and dried.

The present trouble with auction is that with a four year bridge college course and two years of post-graduate work plus an infallible memory for all the conventions anybody can become a perfect player; an dwhen four perfect players get together there is no fun. One might as well toss pennies as deal cards upon an inspection of which, with the exchange of a few words of bidding, the outcome of the play is pre-determined. We have already a mechanical dealing device; the play (among the proficient) was long ago mechanized; the bidding is all conducted according to rote. It is true that no play is permitted to say: "I hold five clubs to the Ace-Queen, the King of diamonds once guarded, King-Jack-Ten of spades and three measly spots in hearts"—that would be talking across the board. But an elaborate signal code permits him to heliograph this information, and to take in through his receiving set a full description of his partner's and opponent's hands; so the need for a smack of the element of chance is obvious.

What auction really needs is a representative assembly to meet at least once a year and freshen up the game with new laws. If it were not for Congress and State Legislatures constantly performing this function for the body of general law the legal profession would soon be on its uppers. Keep the old laws concerning life, property and citizens' rights standing unchanged, long enough and everybody would become familiar with them, and there would be none but intentional violators. The profitable litigation is not made by people who set out to fracture the statutes but by persons who do not know what the law is, or have forgotten it, or have broken some fresh-made prohibition. So it is with auction—keep the old laws in force long enough and the game ceases to be a game; it become a rite, interesting perhaps to the novice, but to others boring.

To brighten up auction and confound those who now know it all it might be wise to provide that in 1934 it shall be played "deuces wild," but with a penalty of 300 points on each play-

er holding one. The following year all the clubs might be removed from the auction bridge recently suggested a revision of the rules for the purpose of injecting a little uncertainty into that otherwise excellent game. He would have the last four cards of the pack dealt to the middle of the table, not to be faced until the players had completed the bidding on the strength of the play a little less cut and dried. The contract having been agreed upon, the successful declarant would then examine the cards in the widow," select one for his own use, and assign the other three to dummy and his opponents. This the expect thinks would make the results of the play a little less cut and dried.

Euclre we believe went out because primary school children could play it proficiently. It will not do to let auction bridge go stale because of its simplicity.

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Modern Symphony To Be Presented By Kostelanetz

"Manhattan Nocturnette", a modern symphonic study by Clark Harrington, will be a highlight of the musical review, "Andre Kostelanetz Presents", to be heard over the WABC-Columbia network on Tuesday, December 26, from 10:30 to 11:00 P. M., A. S. T. Soloists will be Evan Evans, baritone, singing a ballad by Wolf, "Betsy's Boy"; and Evelyn MacGregor, contralto, offering the currently popular tune, "Let's Fall in Love".

The remainder of the program will be presented by the orchestra and vocal chorus, and will include the selections, "Echoes of Spain"—a specially arranged medley of "La Rosita" and "Who'll Buy My Violets?"; the Peasant Chorus from Borodin's colorful opera, "Prince Igor"; another medley, including "Blue Prelude", "Stormy Weather" and "Some of These Days"; a gay and delicate Debussy work, "Golliwog's Cakewalk"; and the Bridal March from the opera, "Le Coq d'Or" by Rimsky-Korsakoff.

DIFFERENCE IN WIVES

"My wife's first words on getting back from her vacation were: 'Home, sweet home'."

"My wife's were: 'What a filthy house!'"—Boston Transcript.