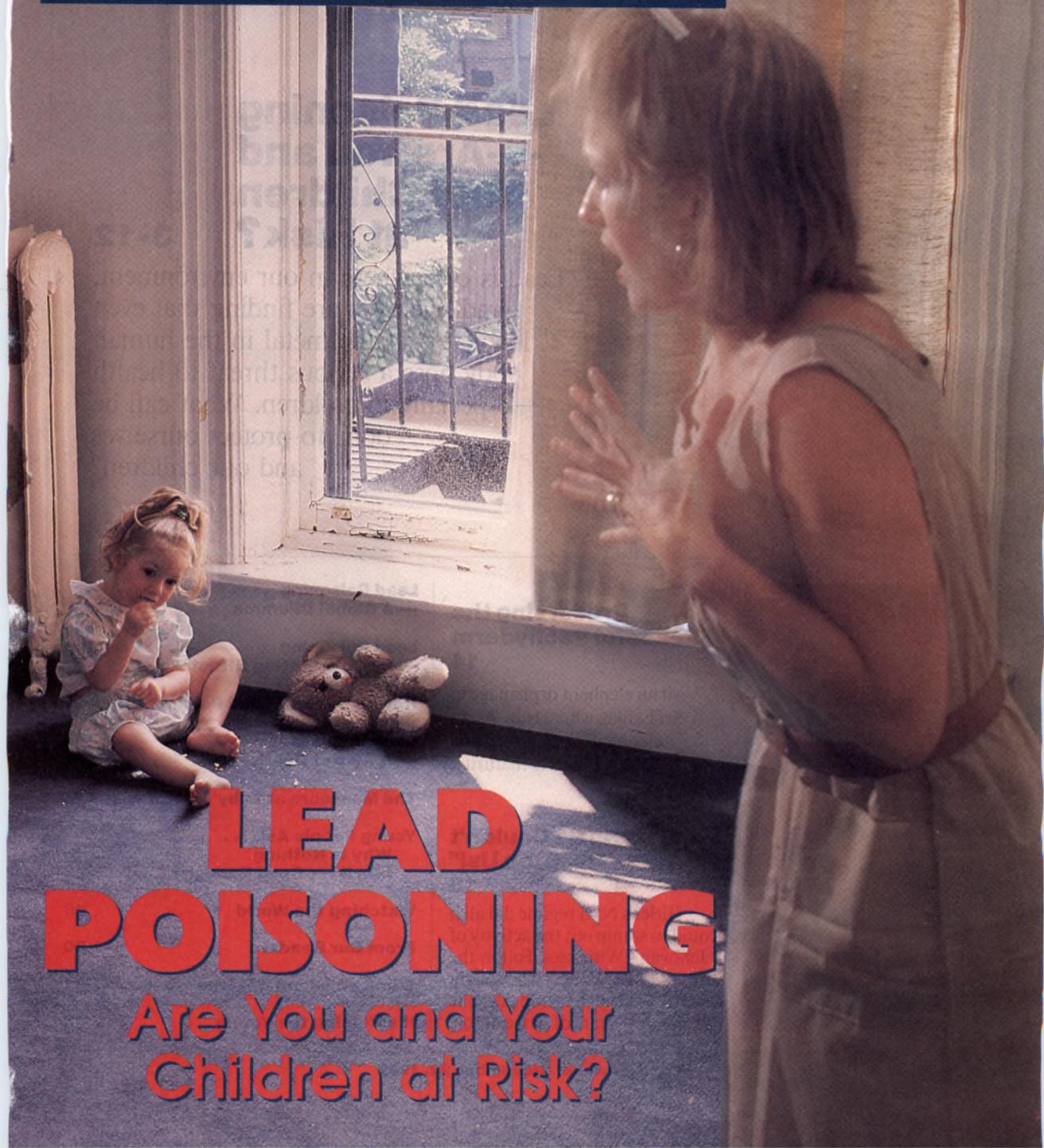


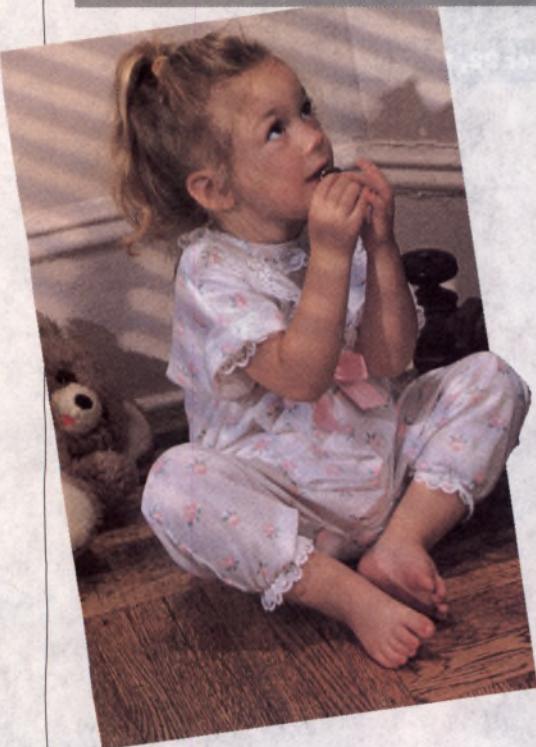
Awake!

November 22, 1992



LEAD POISONING

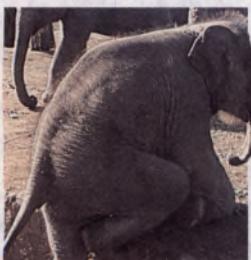
Are You and Your
Children at Risk?



Lead Poisoning —Are You and Your Children at Risk?

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Lead is everywhere in our environment, and scientists are finding that even low levels of the metal in the human body pose a serious threat to health—especially to children. What can be done to protect ourselves and our children?



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Visit an elephant orphanage in Sri Lanka, where baby Asian elephants are adopted and raised to maturity.



"The Nazis Couldn't Stop Us!"

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Hitler's Nazi regime did all it could to stamp out the activity of Jehovah's Witnesses. Follow the story of one Witness who fought to keep preaching despite years of persecution.

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Lead Poisoning A Global Dilemma



Photo: Painting by Thomas Smith, courtesy of the Maritime Museum, Greenwich, England

SIR John Franklin's expedition to find the fabled Northwest Passage was in trouble. His two ships were icebound, and the long Arctic winter had just begun. Already one seaman had died in a strange way—he had slowly grown irrational, become hysterical, and finally wasted away to death. Then the madness spread. More men died. After the toll reached two dozen deaths over the next two years, surviving members of the expedition were so determined to get away from their ships that they set out on a desperate trek southward over the frozen wasteland, hauling huge sleds laden with many unnecessary belongings, even luxury items. Not one member of the expedition survived. That was in 1848. For about 140 years, the cause of their madness was a mystery. But in the last decade, tests of hair and bone fragments revealed a key piece of the puzzle: lead. The men had eaten meat preserved in cans sealed with lead solder. They had been poisoned with lead!

Lead poisoning was a problem long before the days of that doomed expedition, and it has blossomed into a global health threat since. In recent years reams have been written about the hazards of lead poisoning. Health organizations around the world are in a dilemma as to how to cope with it. Especially in countries, such as those in Latin

Could exposure to a common metal really be so dangerous?

America and Eastern Europe, where there are only limited environmental controls, lead poisoning has become an increasing problem. Industrialized nations are concerned as well.

A decade ago, alarmed by mounting evidence that lead poisoning had become a widespread disease, health officials in Australia, Denmark, Germany, Mexico, Scotland, and the United States began studies to determine just how dangerous even very low levels of lead are to human beings, especially children.

How Dangerous?

Could exposure to a simple, common metal really be so dangerous? Dr. Richard

Wedeen, author of *Poison in the Pot: The Legacy of Lead*, believes that lead might very well contaminate every biochemical function of the human body. He therefore concludes that "lead may be linked to high blood pressure, strokes, and heart attacks as well as kidney disease." Wedeen believes that some adults who suffer from acute lead poisoning may even become alcoholics and end up in mental institutions.

The World Book Encyclopedia lists other symptoms, such as anemia, drowsiness, muscle cramps, weakness, paralysis, stomach pains, and vomiting. "Brain damage, coma, and convulsions occur in severe cases, and extreme cases of lead poisoning have caused death," the encyclopedia reports. And a significant proportion of those who recover from severe cases suffer residual brain damage, writes one noted doctor.

Free to roam the bloodstream, lead wreaks havoc just about wherever it goes

Just what does lead *do* to produce these symptoms? In effect, the body mistakes lead for calcium, so it makes no effort to get rid

Awake!®

Why Awake! Is Published *Awake!* is for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. It reports the news, tells about people in many lands, examines religion and science. But it does more. It probes beneath the surface and points to the real meaning behind current events, yet it always stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. Most important, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world before the generation that saw the events of 1914 passes away.

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of it. Roaming in the bloodstream, lead wreaks havoc just about wherever it goes. In blood, it inhibits the production of hemoglobin, damaging the blood's oxygen-carrying ability. In the brain and nervous system, it attaches itself to key proteins called enzymes and renders them useless. The bones gather up lead and store it, sometimes releasing it much later to do more damage.

Two attributes of lead poisoning make it especially dangerous. First, it can be a subtle, creeping sort of illness, difficult to detect. Second, largely because of the industrial revolution, lead is virtually everywhere in our environment.

A Ubiquitous Metal

Today, lead's uses are limited only by man's imagination. Since the 1920's until recently, for example, millions of tons of lead have been added to gasoline to improve engine performance. Lead has been widely used in paint, although some countries have now severely limited this use.

But even if you live in a country where lead has long been banned from use in paint or gasoline, you may not be entirely safe from exposure to lead. You may, for instance, live in a house or an apartment that was painted before such laws went into effect. Or perhaps where you live, there are many older-model cars that still burn leaded

gasoline, still pour out leaded fumes that contaminate the air and the soil around you.

Then, too, lead has been widely used in plumbing and solder. Lead shielding material is used to protect X-ray technicians and nuclear-energy workers from harmful radiation. Drinking fountains having tanks with seams of lead-based solder are still in use, as are food cans with seams joined by lead

"Lead may be linked to high blood pressure, strokes, and heart attacks as well as kidney disease"

solder. Lead crystal is popular in wine glasses and decanters. Even some baby bottles are made from lead crystal. There are lead plates in car batteries. Lead bullets and shotgun pellets are used by the countless millions. The list seems endless.

Although lead poisoning among adults is of serious concern to the medical profession, the most vulnerable victims of this malady are children. Why children? And how can you safeguard them and yourself from this physically and mentally debilitating disease?

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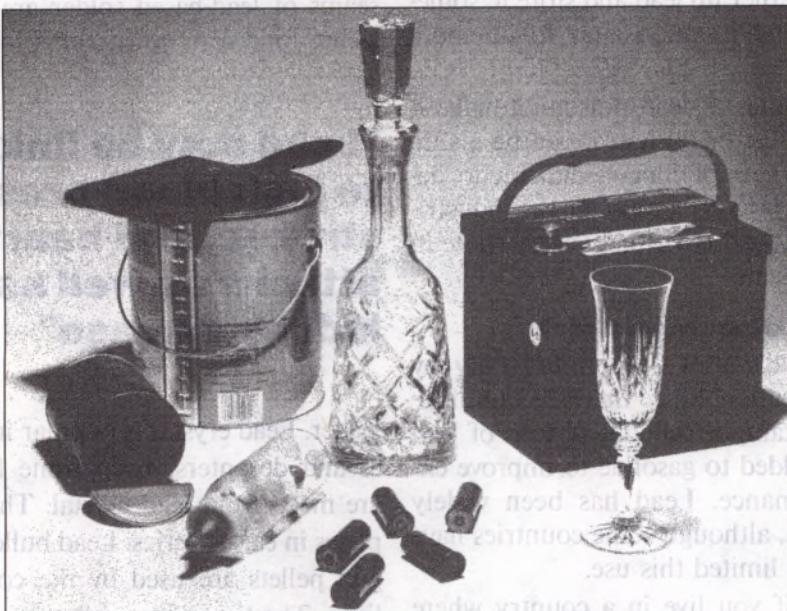
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Lead Poisoning Its Devastating Effects



THE most common serious childhood disease." "The No. 1 environmental threat to children." As you may have guessed, the threats described here are one and the same: lead poisoning.

According to the CDC (U.S. Centers for Disease Control), "children are particularly susceptible to lead's toxic effects. Lead poisoning, for the most part, is silent: most poisoned children have no symptoms. The vast majority of cases, therefore, go undiagnosed and untreated. . . . It is not solely a problem of inner city or minority children. No socio-economic group, geographic area, or racial or ethnic population is spared." The report

adds: "Childhood lead poisoning is a problem worldwide."

How Lead Affects Children

It is estimated that from three million to four million children under six years of age in the United States alone have levels of lead in their blood high enough to impair normal development. This may mean anything from slightly diminished reading skills to full mental retardation. And if that is the case in one country, the global figures must be staggering.

In Africa, Asia, Mexico, and the Middle East, lead is still sometimes used as a medicine by those unaware of its dangers. It is used to relieve constipation, to prevent infec-

tions of the umbilical cord, and even as a teething substance for babies.

The danger is not so much that children are falling over and dying from lead poisoning. As is indicated by a 1991 issue of *FDA Consumer*, childhood deaths from lead poisoning have become very rare. But the effects are still devastating. Lead has aptly been called "a killer of intelligence." *Newsweek* magazine quoted one health official as saying: "There's a very large number of kids who find it difficult to do analytical work or even line up in the cafeteria because their brains are laden with lead."

Some other symptoms of lead-poisoned children include irritability, insomnia, colic, anemia, and impaired growth. A damaged nervous system, accompanied by chronic restlessness—like that of a caged animal, as one doctor described it—may also characterize such a child. In more severe cases, some children may suffer comas and seizures, and even

after reaching adulthood, they may continue to suffer from emotional problems. Some of these effects may be permanent, says the head of the Lead Poisoning Prevention Branch of the CDC. Until a proper diagnosis is made, parents are often beside themselves as to the cause of this insidious malady.

Why Are Children So Vulnerable?

Lead is especially dangerous to children for two reasons. First, children are affected by much lower levels of lead than those that affect adults. Since their brain and nervous system are still developing, they are particularly sensitive to the effects of lead. Second, children, because of their behavior and activity, are more likely to pick up lead from their environment.

Consider lead-based paint for example, still an important source of contamination. In countries where it is legal to use such paint in houses, the cases of lead poisoning are sure to go on mounting. And while many

How Much Lead Can the Body Take?

HOW much lead is too much? How much can the body safely absorb? While scientists still debate such questions, many countries have enacted laws to prevent lead poisoning, at least from lead paint. Australia put such a law on the books back in the early 1920's. Great Britain, Greece, Poland, and Sweden enacted similar laws later in that decade. The United States did not enact its Lead Paint Poisoning Prevention Act until 1971.

However, the United States has made increasingly stringent laws in this field since then. In 1985 the CDC (U.S. Centers for Disease Control) lowered the acceptable level of lead in blood to 25 micrograms (25 millionths of a gram) of lead per deciliter (about a fifth of a pint) of blood. That was half the amount of lead the surgeon general had pointed to

back in 1970, which was 60 micrograms per deciliter. But as the years passed, more studies suggested that children may be harmed by even lower levels of lead. So in 1991 the CDC again cut the acceptable level to less than half, lowering it to 10 micrograms per deciliter.

Although there is bitter dispute over one of the key studies that prompted this change, other studies have come up with similar results. Two studies in Scotland, for instance, linked blood lead levels as low as 11 micrograms per deciliter with reduced intelligence and behavior problems in children. And as the *Bangkok Post* noted early in 1992, laws such as the one in Thailand that protects adults from lead may not protect children—in particular the unborn.

countries have banned some uses of lead-based paint in recent years, the paint still exists in older houses. Walls, windowsills, toys, cribs, and furniture all may still have layers of it. In the United States, for example, high levels of lead remain in about 57 million homes. In the mid-1980's, some 13.6 million American children under seven years of age were living in homes with lead-based paint.

Over a million of these probably had dangerously high lead levels in their blood.

A smooth painted surface may not pose any danger. But as paint ages, it begins to crack and peel. Since lead has a sweet taste, children are likely to eat the paint chips. Babies have ingested lead from flaking windowsills. And when the paint eventually turns to dust, children pick it up on their fingers from

Lead Poisoning—An Ancient Problem

LEAD may have been in use as early as 3000 B.C.E. The ancient Egyptians used it for sculpture and pottery, the Phoenicians and Chaldeans trafficked in it, and the Greeks of Athens mined it for some seven centuries. But it was the Romans, during the reign of the Caesars, who first discovered the industrial potential of lead—and they paid a high price for that discovery.

The Romans called it *plumbum*. (The English word "plumbing" is derived from that Latin word.) Skilled workers rolled large sheets

of lead into 15 standard lengths of pipe for use in their extensive water conveyance systems. Both the Romans and the Greeks set the pattern for modern-day plumbers by fitting lead pipes one into the other. Thus miles of pipes could be joined together to carry water long distances. The Romans also formed lead into drinking vessels, containers for wine, and cooking utensils. Weatherproof membrane made of lead sheets was developed for roofing.

But just as the use of lead is not new, the fact that it makes people sick is hardly a recent discovery either. "For at least 2,000 years," writes *Science News* magazine, "soci-

ties have recognized lead as a potent toxicant while remaining mystified as to how it poisons." Be that as it may, the ancient Romans seemed fairly oblivious to the real dangers of lead. According to Jerome Nriagu of the Canadian National Water Research Institute, they commonly added to their wine a grape syrup that had been boiled in lead containers. *Newsweek* magazine quotes Nriagu as saying: "One teaspoon of such syrup would have been more than enough to cause chronic lead poisoning."

And Roman leaders were big wine drinkers. Nriagu estimates that the Roman elite drank anywhere from one to five quarts of it every day!

"It's postulated that one of the reasons the Romans went the way they did," reports *The Medical Post* of Canada, "was their penchant for sweetening their wines with lead." One report says: "Poisoning from extensive use of the metal in utensils, weapons, cosmetics, wine vessels, and water pipes may have been responsible for [Rome's] imperial madness and for infertility and miscarriage rates that kept the ruling classes from replacing themselves."



toys, floors, and carpeting—inevitably it goes from there into their mouth, gastrointestinal tract, and bloodstream. Particularly are children between the ages of six months and six years susceptible.

"It takes strikingly little lead to cause lead poisoning," writes *Newsweek* magazine. "A child can become severely lead poisoned (60-80 microgram/dl) by eating one milligram of lead-paint dust—equivalent to about three granules of sugar—each day during childhood." For the child to be merely at risk, his intake of paint dust would be the equivalent of just one granule of sugar a day. "That's why a child can become ill merely by regularly touching a windowsill and then sucking his thumb," reports *Newsweek*, adding that many parents "simply don't realize—or can't believe—that the dust on their windowsill might be quietly stealing part of their child's potential."

Lead and the Fetus

The problem extends even into the wombs of pregnant women, where the developing brains and nervous systems of unborn children may suffer harm as well. When an expectant mother takes lead into her body, whether by eating or by breathing, it works its way into her bloodstream. Then it is passed on to the fetus through the umbilical cord. The child may suffer neurological damage or a reduced IQ. "If a pregnant woman ingests even a small amount of lead," says one health writer, "it can pass through her placenta to the fetus." And *Science News* reported: "Studies have documented that women who work with lead in factories suffer higher rates of sterility, miscarriage, premature birth and birth defects."

Fathers too may contribute to such dangers. Lead in the bloodstream of men may

cause sperm to be malformed and sluggish, which could prevent conception or cause deformed fetuses. An estimated 400,000 fetuses in American women are so contaminated by lead that they will suffer developmental impairment. Since lead poisoning is a worldwide epidemic, the number of affected unborn children must indeed be monumental.

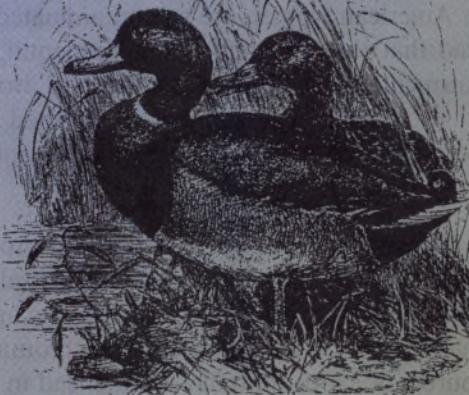
Not Just Children

Clearly, adults are at risk too. To protect their children, they must protect themselves. How are they exposed to lead? Experts agree that besides house paint, the most common sources of exposure today are the lead in water due to plumbing (as even copper pipes may have been joined by lead solder) and leaded gasoline. In schools and offices, the water fountains have water tanks with lead-soldered seams. One EPA (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency) official estimates: "About 20 percent of exposure to lead comes from drinking water." The federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry reported that the level of lead "from electric water coolers can be very high, and can pose quite high toxicity risk for all individuals, not just children."

To add to the dilemma, parents may bring lead home on the clothes they wear in the workplace and further expose their children. It has been estimated that nearly eight million workers in the United States alone are exposed to lead in their working environment. A large percentage of these are women.

Those who store alcoholic beverages or other liquids in lead-crystal decanters are also taking some risk, since lead from the crystal may leech into the beverage. Similarly, ceramicware that has not been fired at high enough temperatures may diffuse lead particles from the glaze into food. One couple, for

Lead in the Wild



IF YOU are a lover of wildlife, it may disturb you to know that up to three million waterfowl die each year from lead poisoning. Here, too, lead poisoning is called an "invisible disease" since it often takes place unnoticed. The U.S. Department of the Interior reports that for every bird that hunters manage to kill, a half pound of lead pellets from shotguns ends up in the environment. Biologists sampling the top few inches of the bottoms of wetlands, ponds, and lakes have found in some areas more than 100,000 lead pellets per acre! Lost lead fishing weights also litter the bottom.

After the hunting season is over, ducks and other waterfowl in search of food swallow these pellets. Three to ten days later, poison reaches the bloodstream and is carried to major organs—the heart, the liver, and the kidneys. By days 17 to 21, the bird falls into a coma and dies. Bald eagles can get lead poisoning from swallowing the lead shot that lurks in the bodies of the waterfowl they eat. Since 1966, more than 120 of these rare birds of prey have been found dead from lead contamination—over half of these since 1980. Of course, this number represents only those eagles whose bodies were examined and the cause of death determined; it is probably a mere fraction of the actual total.



instance, bought a set of coffee mugs while traveling in a foreign country. It turned out that the mugs released 300 times more lead than health standards in their own country permit. The couple became severely ill after using the mugs for a short time. Additionally, solder in food cans, still used in some countries, accounts for a percentage of low-level lead poisoning.

Gun buffs also are at risk of lead poisoning. Why? Well, recent studies have shown that those who frequent indoor firing ranges have high levels of lead from inhaling leaded dust. The explosion and the mi-

croscopic shearing of lead bullets as they travel down gun barrels send lead particles into the air, and the shooter draws them into his lungs, reports *Science News* magazine. Some of the symptoms listed are chronic metallic taste and neurological hand twitching. Other studies indicated that family members may also risk high lead exposure from handgun users who bring home lead dust on their clothes.

With lead poisoning so common and so dangerous to children and adults alike, the next question is obvious: What can be done to prevent it?

How to Prevent Lead Poisoning

DESPITE all the bad news about lead poisoning, the picture is not entirely gloomy. Unlike so many of the diseases over which we have no control, this is one health threat about which health officials say we can actually do something.

"Lead poisoning is entirely preventable," *Newsweek* reports the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services as saying. The risk of lead toxicity "could be wiped out forever," declared one noted university toxicologist. "Enough is now known about the sources and pathways of lead exposure and about ways of preventing this exposure to begin the efforts to eradicate permanently this disease," notes the CDC (U.S. Centers for Disease Control). And finally, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services adds its opinion: "We understand the causes of childhood lead poisoning and, most importantly, how to eliminate them. A concerted societal effort could virtually eliminate this disease in 20 years."

What You Can Do

How can this be accomplished? To begin with, experts agree that paint and water are the primary targets. For example, the toxicologist mentioned above contends that a prime requisite for eliminating lead toxicity is for homeowners and landlords to take aggressive steps to replace old paint and plumbing. Homeowners, therefore, might want to deter-



mine if their homes are safe from contamination.

"But don't panic," writes the magazine *In Health*. "Intact paint isn't a danger, though peeling paint and paint dust are.... Check your home inside and out for peeling, looking especially around wooden door and window frames, where weather and friction tend to grind and chip painted surfaces." Your national or state health department may be able to assist you in determining if your home is at risk, perhaps directing you to laboratories trained in lead inspection and removal. A word of caution: Do not attempt removal yourself. Children may be lead poisoned when their parents scrape and sand old paint from walls and trim, filling the air with lead-laden dust.

Water, Water Everywhere

For households in which water is the culprit, the problem may originate in the pipes that link the house to the water main. An old house may contain lead pipes, an obvious source of contamination. Even copper or steel pipes may be joined with lead solder. In some countries it may be helpful to check building codes to learn about the plumbing standards in your area. If you have reason to believe that your water is contaminated, you may decide to have it checked. In most countries there are laboratories equipped to do this for a reasonable fee.

What if your water has an unsafe level of lead? What can you do about it? After all, not everyone may be able to take drastic action, such as overhauling the plumbing. Health officials offer a few simple procedures to reduce the lead level. Before you draw water from the tap, allow the cold water to run for a minute or two, especially if the tap has been turned off for more than six hours. This will help flush out any contaminated water. And never use hot tap water for drinking and cooking. There will likely be more lead in hot tap water than in cold tap water.

If you drink from school, office, or factory electric fountains, the water should be allowed to run for a few seconds before each use. Some fountains contain tubing joined by lead solder.

Lead in Food and Drink

America's Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has offered recommendations on the use of lead crystal glassware. *Good Housekeeping* magazine reported: "While no one is suggesting that you stop using it completely, the FDA suggests avoiding the use of lead crystalware to store foods and beverages for extended periods of time, especially when storing acidic foods (tomato sauce; orange, tomato, and other fruit juices; wine; and vinegar) . . . The FDA also recommends that infants and children never be fed from lead crystal baby bottles . . . or any other lead crystalware."

What about those wine bottles enclosed at the top with lead foil? Some health experts recommend removing the foil completely and, after pulling the cork, moistening a cloth with a few drops of wine and then wiping the rim of the bottle with it.

Mothers and housewives, do you routinely reuse plastic bread bags for food storage? Researchers have detected high levels of lead in the ink used to print the bags, which can leach into other foods. The lead does not mi-

grate through plastic and contaminate the bread inside; however, when a consumer turns the bag inside out, the leaded ink can cause contamination. If the bag is reused, make sure the print never comes in contact with the food.

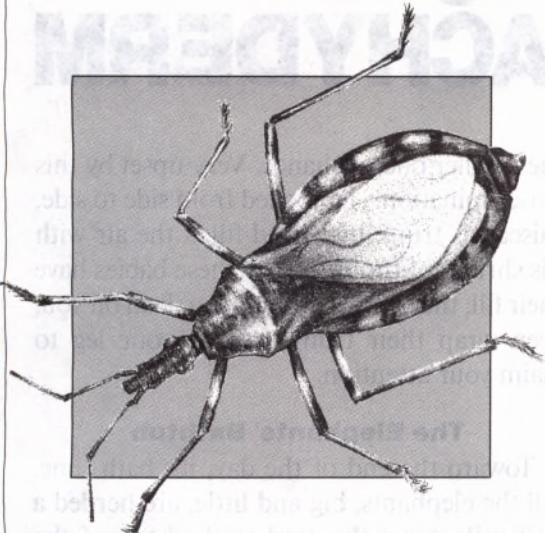
Finally, *Discover* magazine offers these words of caution: "Overseas travelers, especially in Third World countries, should beware of ceramic dinnerware; its lead glaze may not be fired at the high temperatures required to prevent chipping, flaking, and leaching of lead particles into food."

Keep Your Balance

One important guideline to remember when considering this or almost any of today's disturbing environmental problems: Keep your balance. It is all too easy to panic, and panic never helps. The sad fact is that our environment is contaminated with countless pollutants besides lead. To live a life relatively free from contamination, we would probably have to move somewhere extremely remote. But who wants to live as a recluse just to avoid pollution? The only balanced approach to such problems is to take whatever reasonable precautions are necessary to protect ourselves and our children from serious danger. Full protection from man's misuse of this earth's resources must come later.

And come it will! Did you know that the Creator of this planet promises a time when mankind will expend effort on converting it into a paradise? No more will man spread deadly pollution and contamination anywhere. Isaiah 11:9 adds this promise: "They [mankind] will not do any harm or cause any ruin in all my holy mountain; because the earth will certainly be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters are covering the very sea." No doubt that "knowledge of Jehovah" will include an understanding of how to use this planet's vast resources in a way that does no harm to children or to adults—to anyone at all.

Chagas' Disease—A Kiss of Death



A BRAZILIAN doctor, Carlos Chagas, gave his name to the disease known medically as South American trypanosomiasis. He discovered it in 1909 when he isolated a microscopic parasitic organism called a trypanosome. The disease is difficult to diagnose because after these one-celled parasites get into the human bloodstream, most of them leave the blood and hide in the body cells and cannot easily be detected.

Once inside its host, the trypanosome multiplies rapidly, but symptoms of the disease vary. Some victims have no indication at all that they carry the disease, but in others irreversible harm is soon done to the spleen, the liver, the lymph nodes, and even the brain. In South America it is also the main cause of death from heart failure in persons under 40 years of age. No drug is yet available to treat the disease, but London's Imperial College is actively engaged in molecular research to produce one.

The World Health Organization reports that 90 million people are at risk from Chagas' disease in Central and South America, with up to 18 million already infected. How is the disease carried? It can be transmitted to humans by dogs and cats but more usually by the vinchuca, an insect

known also as the assassin, or kissing bug, because during the night it drops onto its victim to feed on the soft flesh of the face, usually around the neck or eyes.

The insect bite is painless. After becoming bloated with blood, the bug deposits its infected feces on the victim. When rubbed into the open wound, either by the insect itself or by the victim, who may scratch without realizing he has been bitten, the feces contaminate the bloodstream. Incredibly, some Mexicans reportedly still eat kissing bugs as an aphrodisiac and become infected with the trypanosome as a direct result.

Called the disease of poverty, Chagas' disease is normally restricted to poor areas where the bugs breed freely in the cracks of mud-hut walls. But in recent years it has become more prevalent in prosperous cities, such as Rio de Janeiro. Why? Because people from rural areas who are infected with the disease come to donate blood. Thousands of new cases of Chagas' disease are reported each year in Brazil, traceable directly to transfusion of infected blood. Migrant workers from South America are now causing concern in the United States, where some blood banks have already been contaminated.

Cleanness, good housing, and proper sanitation are prime requisites in stemming the spread of the kissing-bug population. And for Christians the command "abstain . . . from blood" means what it says. Obedience to it is lifesaving.—Acts 15:20.

In Our Next Issue

What Future for the Children?

Those Beautiful Orchids!

**How Can I Deal With
My Parents' Criticisms?**

Preserving the PEACEFUL PACHYDERM

JUST look at those cute babies! How adorable! You mean that fellow coming toward us, named Lanka, is only seven months old? And that shy lass over there, Kanchana, is eight months old? And all these hurrying out of the woods with their stiff baby hair sticking out all over them, what are they up to? Oh, no wonder, it's feeding time! You feed them five times a day and give them seven bottles of milk each time, every bottle containing one full liter? Why, that's 35 liters, nearly 10 gallons where I come from! No wonder each one weighs about 200 pounds, despite being only a few months old!"

We are at the Pinnawela Elephant Orphanage some 53 miles from Colombo, Sri Lanka's principal city. When baby elephants that have been abandoned or injured are found in the wild, they are brought to this orphanage and raised to maturity. Some 15 were there when we visited. Ordinarily they are mixed in with adults and are scattered over a large area of open woodland, but at feeding time the babies are called for their milk rations. These orphans waste no time getting there and locating one of the three or four attendants waiting with bottles filled with milk.

They curl their trunks overhead, open their mouths wide, and swallow as fast as they can while the attendant tips the bottle up and pours. No time for nipples on these bottles! The milk gushes out and sometimes spills over the sides of their mouths. One, bigger than the others, was chained to a post to give

the smaller ones a chance. Very upset by this "discrimination," he rocked from side to side, raised his trunk high, and filled the air with his shrieks of protest. Once these babies have their fill, they crowd around you, lean on you, even wrap their trunk around your leg to claim your attention.

The Elephants' Bathtub

Toward the end of the day, it's bath time. All the elephants, big and little, are herded a half mile down the road to the bank of the Maha Oya River. It is shallow and very wide with big flat rocks sticking out of the water. Three or four women are there washing their clothes, beating them on the rocks to shake the dirt loose, then spreading them out to dry. From a distance it looks like beautifully colored quilts stretched out over the rocks. Thick lush jungle lines the far bank of the Maha Oya. It makes a picturesque and huge bathtub for the elephants.

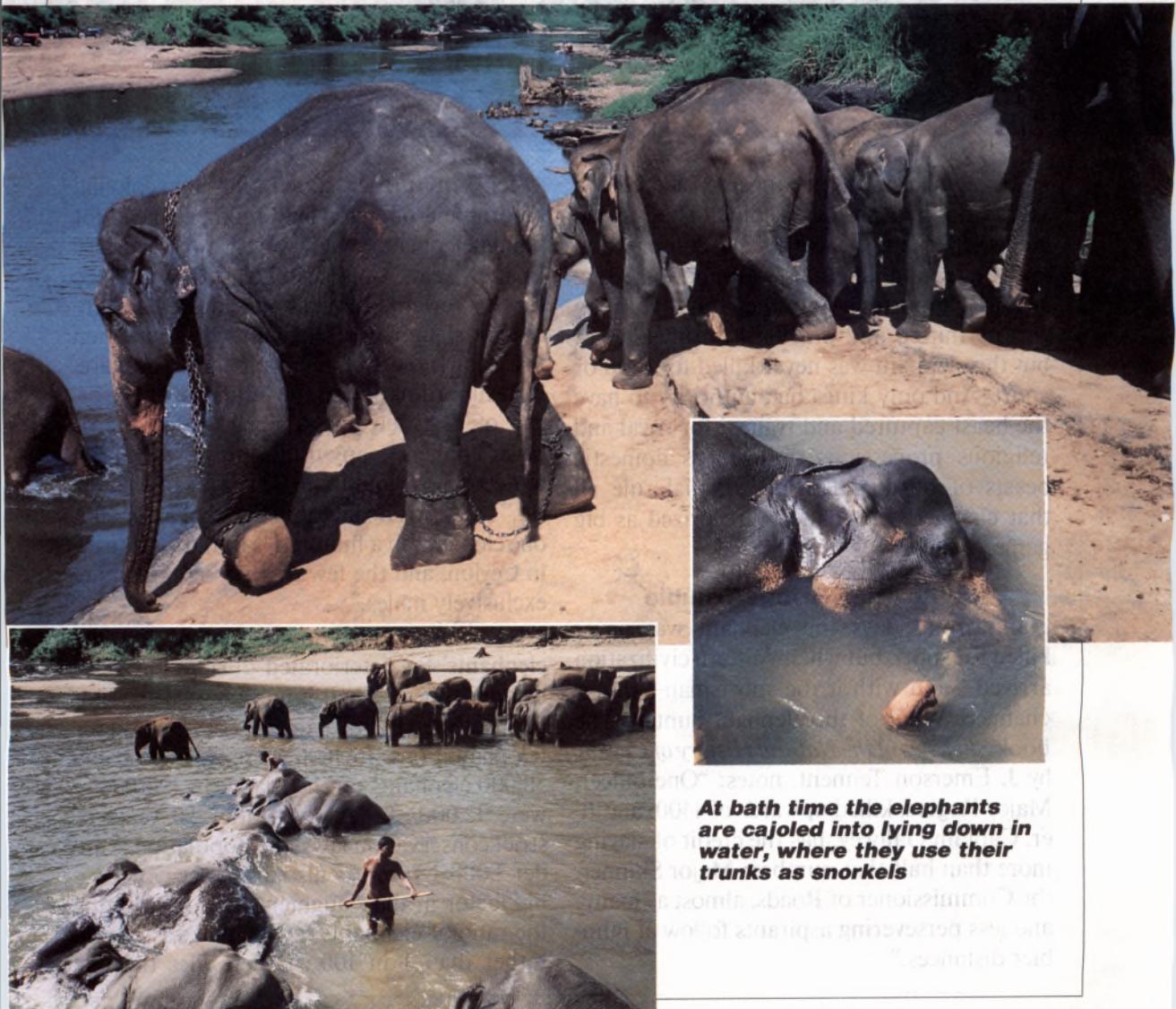
They waste no time, wade right in, the babies leading the way. All are hesitant, however, about lying down. So the attendants splash water on them and poke them with long poles. Thus encouraged, the elephants lower themselves into the water for a cool soaking. Some of the big ones lie down with heads submerged but have the tip of their trunks sticking up to serve as snorkels for breathing. The sun has been hot, and the water must feel soothing on their thick skins—their name pachyderm means "thick-skinned."

Mr. Bradley Fernando, director of the national zoo, has oversight of the orphanage. He points out to *Awake!* the purpose of the zoo: "Initially, we simply want to keep these baby elephants alive. Then for the long term, we intend to build a breeding herd."

Yet what possible enemy could the peaceful Asian pachyderm have? Although considerably smaller than his African cousin, the adult Sri Lankan elephant still weighs in at four

tons or more and stands ten feet high at the shoulder. Such huge size alone is enough to discourage most predators. The leopard in Sri Lanka, much like lions and tigers in other lands, gives a grown elephant a very wide berth indeed.

So who is the possible enemy? Man. The elephant needs land; man wants land; man gets land. And the Sri Lankan elephant faces extinction. At least, that is the way *Asiaweek* sees it:



At bath time the elephants are cajoled into lying down in water, where they use their trunks as snorkels



"Sri Lanka's ancient kings considered it a sacred duty to protect wildlife. They issued edicts—perhaps the world's first conservation laws—creating sanctuaries around the extensive irrigation reservoirs they built. Hunting was permitted and practised in other areas, but the elephant was never killed for food or sport. And only kings had authority to have the beast captured and trained for royal and religious processions or used as domestic beasts of burden. During colonial rule all that changed. Elephants were prized as big game."

Civilization Brings Trouble

In former days the elephant was never killed for sport, but when Western civilization arrived—and with it the sportsman—things changed. What of the elephant hunter? The book *Sketches of the Natural History of Ceylon*, by J. Emerson Tennent, notes: "One officer, Major Rogers, killed upwards of 1400; another, Captain Gallwey, has the credit of slaying more than half that number; Major Skinner, the Commissioner of Roads, almost as many; and less persevering aspirants follow at humbler distances."

Tennent further stated that the colonial government offered a few shillings a head for killing elephants—they were viewed as pests. In a few years' time, 5,500 claims were made for this reward. Tennent concludes: "The incessant slaughter of elephants by sportsmen in Ceylon [now Sri Lanka] appears to be merely in subordination to the influence of the organ of destructiveness, since the carcase is never applied to any useful purpose, but left to decompose and to defile the air of the forest." Ivory was no factor in Sri Lanka, for "not one elephant in a hundred is found with tusks in Ceylon, and the few that possess them are exclusively males."

Asiaweek resumes its account of how the elephants' lot deteriorated during and since colonial times: "Their jungle preserve, no longer protected by royal decree, was cleared for tea plantations. In 1800 there were probably 50,000 elephants on the island. In 1900 there were 12,000. Today, even after 50 years of strict conservation laws, the population is under 3,000." *Asiaweek* also dismisses ivory as a big factor in the slaughter, although putting the ratio of elephants having tusks as 1 in 20 rather than 1 in 100. It then cites the real



**Baby elephants orphaned in the wild are
nurtured to maturity at Pinnawela**

reason for the Sri Lankan elephants' peril: "The real threat is man's relentless quest for land. As more marginal cultivation encroaches on their natural habitat, Sri Lanka's elephants face extinction."

Yala National Park

Dr. Ranjen Fernando, president of the Wildlife and Nature Protection Society of Sri Lanka, commented to *Awake!*: "Largely because of the efforts of our society, the first wildlife conservation area was established as a game preserve in Yala in 1898. In 1938 Yala became our first national park, and others continue to be added. We consider these parks to be a national treasure and want them to continue as a protection for all our precious wildlife."

We had scheduled a trip to Yala National Park, and Fernando's reference to it only increased our interest. We thanked the attendants at the Pinnawela Elephant Orphanage for the kindnesses and courtesies shown us, waved our good-byes to the orphans and adults still enjoying their bath in the Maha

Oya (I'm not sure they noticed), and headed for Yala National Park.

We spent three nights there in a bungalow on the shore of the ocean. A guide drove us around to see the animals—you're not allowed out of the car. We saw deer, wild pigs, several big iguanas, many beautiful birds. One peacock spread his gorgeous tail and did a mating dance, weaverbird nests were hanging from the trees, and painted storks were very impressive in their stately beauty. We were disappointed by not seeing any leopards, though they are there. However, we did see several herds of our old friends the Asian elephants. They seemed peaceful and contented in their protected parkland.

The elephant does need plenty of room. And with the human population explosion, arable land commands an ever-increasing premium. Conservationists express growing concern at just how long governmental commitment to the elephant's survival will remain firm. Only time will tell.—*By an "Awake!" staff writer.*

"THE NAZIS COULDN'T STOP US!"

IT WAS the home of a complete stranger. I knocked at the door and stood there shaking in my shoes, hoping that nobody was at home. I was young—just 21 years old—and this was my first time out in the door-to-door preaching work of Jehovah's Witnesses. It was November 1934, and here in Germany, Hitler had strictly banned all such preaching. When the minister who led our little meetings had brought up plans to go out evangelizing, I thought, "He couldn't mean me!" After all, I was not even baptized yet, and I knew only one scripture. But I was wrong—he did mean me, and here I was.

Nobody home! I felt relieved. At the next door, again nobody answered, but I could hear noise inside, so I opened the door. A woman was washing some pots, and she looked startled to see me. Nervously I began to explain my one scripture, Matthew 24: 14. She simply stared at me. (I learned later that she was deaf.) Suddenly a man appeared at my side. Assuming it was her husband, I continued to witness, only to find a gun pressed

against my ribs. He was a Nazi leader! My companion, who was preaching across the street, had called at this man's door and had been kicked down the stairs for it. Thinking he had put an end to that brother's witnessing for the day, the Nazi then spotted me and came to arrest me. While my companion simply dusted himself off and went on preaching, I ended up in prison for four months. So began my preaching career!

To the Concentration Camp!

After my release, the brothers trusted me to help out with the underground witnessing. The Nazis followed my every move, though, and it was not long before I was arrested again. The local police took me to the Gestapo, and my heart froze when I heard the verdict, "To the concentration camp!" I was to go to Esterwegen. About 120 of us Witnesses (*Bibel-forscher*) were there, and the SS guards were determined to break our integrity.

There was one sergeant, whom we nicknamed "Iron Gustav," who was determined to make us compro-

Erwin Klose



mise. One day he forced us all to do strenuous physical exercises under the hot August sun—without interruption, all day long. By the end of the day, half of the brothers had collapsed or were very ill in the infirmary. Sadly, the overseer of one congregation weakened and signed the "compromise paper," and 12 others from his congregation joined him in signing.

Elated that his torture seemed to be working, "Iron Gustav" now promised: "Tomorrow every one of you will be happy to sign this letter, and no Jehovah will help you." Well, you can imagine that we prayed earnestly that night. The next morning we waited for "Iron Gustav" to show up. And we waited. Finally we were told to return to our barracks. Still no Gustav! Eventually we found out what had happened. On his way into the camp that morning, "Iron Gustav" learned the hard way that he was made of something less than iron. He had driven his motorcycle smack into one of the brick pillars flanking the camp entrance—an entrance well over 30 feet wide! He had been rushed to the hospital with a split forehead and a broken arm. When we finally saw him again after two months, he shouted at us: "Your Jehovah did this to me!" None of us doubted him for a moment.

On to Holland

In December 1935, I was released and was told to join the German army. Instead, I decided to make my way to Spain via Holland and continue my witnessing there. Once I managed to get into Holland, I sought out the Witnesses, and they urged me to stay in Holland. What a pleasure to preach freely again and be with my brothers and sisters at Christian meetings! We bicycled through the Dutch countryside, preaching in the daytime and sleeping in tents at night. On an average, we preached from 200 to 220 hours a month.

Money to buy food and pay for other ex-

penses was in short supply. I vividly remember one farmer who, when he saw how we prepared our meager meals at night, invited us to dinner. A table laden with the most delicious food awaited us! From then on, this loving family took care of our basic needs for butter, eggs, cheese, and bread, and they even helped with our laundry. The whole family became Witnesses. They were a vital contact during the work that lay ahead.

A convention was held in Bern, Switzerland, in 1936. Joseph F. Rutherford, the president of the Watch Tower Society at that time, spoke there. It was then, after all the time I had spent as a full-time evangelizer, that I finally got baptized!

The Hague

I was assigned to the region of The Hague. Many families embraced the truth of God's Word there. I still keep in touch with some to this day. In 1939 the Dutch police arrested me—as a Nazi spy, of all things! I continued my witnessing as best I could by letters from prison, well aware that the judge read all my outgoing mail. After five months, the last two of these in solitary confinement, I was released. Only a few days after I returned to my home in The Hague, the German *Luftwaffe* began bombing the region! I knew that the Gestapo would not be far behind the invading soldiers. It was time for me to go back underground.

But how would I get around without being spotted? A brother who ran a bicycle shop fixed up a special bicycle for me. It was just like the ones that the secret police used—the same special color, with high handlebars and clips that could hold a saber. The secret police would even greet me, thinking I was one of them! One day, though, as I was pedaling along a bicycle path shielded from the roadway by a hedge, two policemen pedaling along the opposite side of the road spotted me through a break in the hedge, and they recognized me as a fugitive. I pedaled faster

than I ever had in my life! They had to get to an overpass before they could turn around and follow me, and though they put up a hard pursuit, I finally lost them.

Many Narrow Escapes

Now the police knew of my presence in The Hague. I began to sleep in different homes for safety's sake. On one occasion I slept in the home of a family with three children. As usual, I laid out my clothes so that I could dress fast in case of a raid. I also had two of the children sleep together so that I could move one child to my empty bed when I left. That way, the Nazis would not find a warm, empty bed.

At five o'clock that morning, these measures came in handy. There was a heavy, persistent pounding at the door. I barely had time to put the nine-year-old boy in my bed, stuff my clothes into my briefcase, put on my hat and overcoat, and jump barefoot out the back window into the snow. Happily, they had not thought of stationing a guard in the backyard. I ran to the house of a family with whom I studied the Bible. Even though it was 5:30 a.m. and the dark of winter, this man let me in without a word and hid me. All three in his family later became Witnesses.

When the Gestapo questioned the family I had just left, they focused on the young boy. They even offered him money if he would tell them if an "uncle" had been visiting recently. He told them: "Yes, that was a long time ago." How long? He didn't know. They left, frustrated. Later, the boy's mother asked him why he had answered that way, since he knew that "Uncle Tom" (my underground name) had just spent the night. He answered: "Twenty-four hours is a long time, with very many minutes." And so it is!

My next assignment was in Groningen. Fear had overcome some of the Witnesses in that city, and the preaching work had virtual-

ly ceased. But soon the brothers became quite fearless again, defying the brutal Dutch Gestapo. One night in 1942, we even took part in a "raid," distributing thousands of Bible tracts throughout the city during a predetermined ten-minute period. The newspapers all reported that the British Royal Air Force had distributed millions of pamphlets for Jehovah's Witnesses! We had let the Gestapo know that we were alive and well. The Nazis couldn't stop us—ever!

The war dragged on, and it became more and more dangerous to walk the streets. One night as a brother and I were leaving a secret meeting in Hilversum, someone bumped into me from the rear, and an object clattered to the ground at my feet. I picked it up and saw with horror that it was a German soldier's helmet! Its owner was standing by his bicycle and now beamed his flashlight on me. I walked over to him; he snatched the helmet from my hands, pulled his revolver, and shouted: "You're under arrest!"

I was trembling. If he arrested me, it would probably be the end of me. I prayed to God for help. Hearing the commotion, a crowd formed. When I noticed that the soldier was swaying slightly, it dawned on me that he was drunk. Then I remembered that German military rules allowed officers to walk about in civilian clothes. So I stepped up to the soldier and shouted with all the authority I could muster: "Don't you know who I am?" The soldier was stunned. He clapped on his helmet and saluted me! Convinced that he had insulted an officer, he sheepishly slunk off into the night. The bystanders scattered. I could only thank Jehovah for another narrow escape!

Life Underground in Belgium

My next assignment was in another country: Belgium. I became the presiding minister in Antwerp. Because of the ban, I conducted

many small meetings in different homes each week. I was also a courier, another link in the wonderful chain that kept the spiritual food coming during those hard years.

Our rendezvous for smuggling literature across the border from Holland was a restaurant. The building itself was in Belgium, but the garden was in Holland, so it was an ideal place to meet my contact and trade briefcases with him. The owner assumed we were British Intelligence agents and cooperated with us. He even told the police officer in charge to leave us alone. But one day a new patrolman was on duty, a Nazi-minded Belgian who knew nothing about me. When he saw me with a big leather case, he insisted that I open it up for him. I refused; after all, it was filled with three or four hundred *Watchtower* magazines. So he arrested me and escorted me to the police station. The officer in charge there told the patrolman to leave while he took care of me. Then he quietly told me: "I don't want to see the contents of the case. Just please come with smaller cases the next time." Again I could only thank Jehovah!

After D day (June 6, 1944) arrived and Allied forces began their invasion of Belgium, the war swept right into Antwerp. Witnessing and attending meetings became a real challenge as gunfire and shells from both sides tore through the city. When the war was nearly over, the branch servant mistakenly thought it was no longer necessary for me to remain underground. I obeyed, against the advice of a friendly police captain who thought it was still too soon to declare myself. Eleven months later I emerged from the most gruesome experience of my life. The authorities wouldn't believe my story. Convinced I was a Gestapo agent, they imprisoned me in the most inhuman conditions I had yet seen. Many men younger than I became ill and died in those months. After I was

finally released, I suffered a complete physical breakdown.

Faithful Service Continues

After more heartbreaking delays, interrogations, and imprisonments, I was at last able to return to Germany—ten years to the day since I had left! I was reunited with my mother, a faithful Witness, and we had many experiences to share. As I slowly regained my health, I began to witness full-time again, now in Schweinfurt. And what a pleasure it was to help prepare for our first postwar convention, which we held in Nuremberg right where Hitler had proudly paraded his troops! I was later thrilled to be accepted to the Watchtower School of Gilead in the United States, where I would be trained as a missionary.

At a gathering shortly before I left for Gilead, I met Lillian Gobitas, who had played a key part in the struggle for religious freedom on the flag-salute issue in the United States. She told me that she enjoyed the solos I sang at the gathering, and I simply smiled because I couldn't understand her. I kept smiling, and she kept talking. We ended up getting married! That was after both of us had graduated from Gilead, of course, and were working as missionaries in Austria.

In time, my health problems forced us to return to the United States. Since then we have had two lovely children, a son and a daughter. We have been delighted to see them both embrace the truth. As my health improved, I helped out in congregations in the United States and Canada. The work never stops, and we try to keep up with it. I still look back on those years of underground work with fondness. The Nazis couldn't stop us, because Jehovah was with us. Clearly, he still blesses the work, and nothing will stop it until it is done to his satisfaction!—As told by Erwin Klose.

The Massacre at Luby's Cafeteria

WEDNESDAY, October 16, 1991, started out like any other day for my wife, Paula, and me. Now we look back on it as unlike any day we have ever known.

That afternoon we were in Luby's Cafeteria in Killeen, Texas, when a crazed man crashed his truck through the plate-glass window and began shooting. He killed 22 and wounded over 20 others, finally shooting himself in the head. It was the deadliest shooting spree in U.S. history.

Paula and I are full-time ministers of Jehovah's Witnesses, and we had stopped at Luby's after a morning in the ministry. Earlier about 50 of us had met at our place of worship, the Kingdom Hall, and discussed our morning's activity before starting out. Several suggested that we get together at Luby's for lunch, but all except Maria, Paula, and me changed their plans.

We arrived at Luby's at 12:25 p.m. and got into the serving line. Since it was moving slowly, Maria, who had a Bible study to conduct at one o'clock decided to leave. Paula went to the rest room. Thankfully, she returned quickly—for a few seconds later, the truck crashed through the window she had just passed.

The sound was like tons of dishes being dropped. Glass, tables, and chairs were flying everywhere. Then there was a popping

sound. I thought the truck was backfiring. Some believed the driver was having problems with his vehicle and went to help him. But he shot them. Someone shouted in disbelief: "He's shooting people!" He began firing even before he got out of the truck.

The serving line was in a U shape. We were right where the U curves. The truck stopped at the beginning of the U where the cashier's stand was located. Paula grabbed my hand, saying: "Let's get out of here." But I pulled her to the floor. The gunman was on his way down the serving line, firing as he came. During the whole time, he was shouting things such as, "Was it worth it Bell County? Was it worth it Belton?" This was interspersed with obscenities.

He came within a few feet of us, shooting constantly as he walked. We never saw his face, but he was so close that we felt the floor vibrate as the bullets hit. Both Paula and I were silently praying to Jehovah. We lay motionless; those who moved were shot. I was holding my wife's ankles with my hands, not knowing whether she was alive or dead.

Then he backtracked, firing all the way. He came down the other side of the U serving line, stopping near my feet. He fired a shot at the woman behind me. "Here's one for you," he said as he pumped the bullet into her. Just before he fired, she had said:



Police inspect the interior of Luby's Cafeteria where a gunman crashed a truck through the front window

"He's coming toward us." Possibly she had raised her head.

The shot was so loud that I thought I had been hit. Then I heard the gunman turn and go into the dining area, 50 or 60 feet away. I knew that in that area, there was a wall partially separating us from his sight. So I finally raised myself up to see if Paula was all right, and she did the same, saying, "Let's go!"

We hurried out through the front door, and about eight or ten others did the same. An elderly lady who wasn't able to walk fast moved in front of us. We forced ourselves to be patient in spite of our anxiety. We ran through an open lot about the size of a football field and took refuge in an apartment house nearby. We called a friend and asked her to meet us down the street.

As we were leaving the building, we saw police approaching from the other direction. Already helicopters were arriving to carry the wounded away. We were still nervous, not knowing where the gunman was. When our friend arrived, she was crying. She had heard the news on the radio.

Coping With the Aftereffects

We returned home, and friends kept coming by to see us. How comforting their presence was! The following morning, as is our custom, we started out in our public ministry. En route, I picked up a newspaper, and the reports brought the whole episode vividly back to mind. We realized we weren't ready emotionally to face the public, so we returned home.

For weeks afterward, walking into public places made us nervous. Once we went into a hamburger place and someone popped a



Courtesy of Killeen Daily Herald

balloon. That really jangled our nerves! Trauma specialists say the best therapy for those who experience the kind of tragedy we did is to talk freely about it. How grateful we were for the visits of friends during the days that followed, which permitted us to do this!

One of our friends told Paula: "The ministry will heal you." She was right. Although Paula hesitated to join in our public ministry that first week, she quickly resumed the door-to-door ministry and conducted Bible studies after that.

The Bible is surely correct when it warns that isolating oneself incurs problems. (Proverbs 18:1) We learned that some, including persons who weren't even at the restaurant that day, isolated themselves. As a result, even months after the massacre, they were still afraid to go out in public.

What has particularly helped us cope with this experience is an understanding of Bible prophecies. Our days are identified in God's Word as "the last days [when] critical times hard to deal with

Unidentified women outside the restaurant where a gunman killed 23 people including himself

will be here." (2 Timothy 3:1) So such tragedies as the massacre at Luby's Cafeteria are, sad to say, to be expected. Indeed, a widely recognized expert, Dr. James A. Fox, noted that of the ten largest mass murders in American history, eight have occurred since 1980.

Jack Levin, a professor of sociology and coauthor of the book *Mass Murder*, said that these mass killings reflect a breakdown in society and the economy. "A lot more middle-aged males feel life has passed them by," he said. "They have lost their jobs or been divorced. The support systems that used to be there are disintegrating, like the family and the church." Apparently that was the case with the murderer, 35-year-old George J. Hennard, who had come from a broken family and who had recently lost his seaman's papers because of suspected drug abuse.

With my wife, Paula



Yes, people need the Bible-based hope of the righteous new world that God promises. (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:3, 4) Our confidence that all of today's tragedies will soon be but a faint memory has sustained Paula and me through this trialsome time. God has truly comforted us, as his Word promises he would. (2 Corinthians 1:3, 4)
—As told by Sully Powers.

**Young
People
Ask . . .**



Why Is Nothing I Do Ever Good Enough?

"I found it very difficult to please my father when I began working for him. I was only 15, and the work was very complicated; when I made a mistake, he became critical."

—Randy.

"My mother seemed like a police detective—always looking for areas where I failed. Before I had time to finish my chores, she would inspect my work, looking for mistakes."

—Craig.

"My parents were always lecturing me about something. They said I just couldn't seem to get my act together. School, home, congregation —they just wouldn't give me a break."—James.

DOES it sometimes seem as if nothing you do is ever good enough to please your parents? Do you ever feel like your every move is under a microscope, that you are always being watched, constantly critiqued, but *never* passing inspection? If so, you may feel that you are living under a cloud of parental disapproval.

Your situation is hardly unique. Dr. Joyce L. Vedral observes: "According to most teenagers, parents nag. . . . They harp on everything from keeping your room neat to taking out the garbage, from using the bathroom to the way you dress, from your choice of friends to your marks and homework." While this may understandably get on your nerves sometimes, it is not necessarily a bad thing. It is only natural for parents to give their children discipline and correction; it's one way they show their love for them. As the Bible puts it, a father will reprove "a son in whom he finds pleasure."—Proverbs 3:12.

Now if you never received a word of correction from your parents, wouldn't you wonder if they cared about you? (Proverbs 13:24; compare Hebrews 12:8.) You can be grateful, then, that you have parents who care enough about you to set you straight! After all, you are young and relatively inexperienced; correction may sometimes be in order. Without guidance, you could easily be overpowered by "the desires incidental to youth."—2 Timothy 2:22.

Consider some of the problems those desires can cause for youths. Says writer Clayton Barbeau: "It's a dangerous world for teenagers: every hour, a young person is killed in an auto crash related to drinking; an

estimated twelve thousand teenagers commit suicide each year; a million girls a year get pregnant; three million kids today are alcoholics; sexually transmitted diseases are widespread." (*How to Raise Parents*) No wonder your parents may be bent on giving you a steady stream of correction! As the Bible says, "a wise person will listen and take in more instruction . . . Wisdom and discipline are what mere fools have despised."—Proverbs 1:5, 7; compare Proverbs 10:17.

Why It Hurts

Still, "no discipline seems for the present to be joyous, but grievous." (Hebrews 12:11) This is particularly so when you are young. After all, your personality is not fully developed; you are still growing up and discovering who you are. So criticism—even when carefully thought out and delivered in a kindly way—may trigger resentment. The book *How to Survive Your Adolescent's Adolescence* concludes that teens have an "extreme sensitivity to criticism." As one youth says, "criticism hurts me."

But when it is coming from your parents, the hurt can be especially deep. In her book *Helping Your Teenager Deal With Stress*, Dr. Bettie Youngs reminds us that it is through "the approval or disapproval of others" that a youth "develops an opinion about his self-worth and value as a human being." Parents, though, are the greatest factor in helping a youth form this self-concept. So when a parent corrects you or complains about the way you do something, it can be devastating, painful.

When a parent complains about the way you do something, it can be devastating

Even so, should you conclude that *nothing* you do is ever good enough? Or that you are a complete failure simply because your parents have pointed out a few of your flaws? Really, all humans fall woefully short of perfection. (Romans 3:23) And making mistakes is part of the learning process. (Compare Job 6:24.) The problem is, your parents may have little to say when you do something right—and may be quite vocal when you err! This hurts, but it hardly means you are a total failure. Learn to take reasonable criticism in stride, neither belittling it nor being overwhelmed by it.—Compare Hebrews 12:5.

Unfair Criticism

What if the criticism is unfair? Some parents do set unreasonably high standards for their children. They may irritate their children by constantly nagging them about trifles. And parents who have legitimate causes for complaint may mete out criticism in a harsh, demeaning way. Dr. Bettie Youngs also says that parental "name calling, lecturing, sarcasm, shaming, blaming, and threatening" are "destructive patterns of communication, . . . which undermine the child's self-confidence and sense of worth."



When the righteous man Job was attacked with a barrage of unfair criticism, he cried out: "How long will you men keep irritating my soul and keep crushing me with words?" (Job 19:2) In a similar way, being constantly put down by a parent or being measured by unrealistically high standards can exasperate a youth, causing him to "become downhearted." (Colossians 3:21) The book *Coping With Teenage Depression*, by Kathleen McCoy, even claims that "the inability to live up to high parental expectations can cause significant loss of self-esteem and trigger reactive depression in adolescents."

Indeed, such unhealthy criticism often triggers a vicious circle: Your parents find fault with you. You react by feeling bad about yourself. Because you feel bad about yourself, you tend to perform poorly when your folks ask you to do something. The result? More criticism!

Behind the Criticism

How can you stop this destructive cycle? First, try to understand why your parents feel the way they do. Is their nagging or constant criticism really malicious? Not likely. Asks Dr. Joyce L. Vedral: "Why do they nag? They nag because no one is listening, or at least no one is letting on that they are. The more they feel ignored, the more they nag." Do you really give your parents evidence, then, that you are *responding* to their complaints? Or do their words fall on deaf ears? If so, don't be surprised if the faultfinding becomes more and more frequent—and intense! Might it stop, though, if you simply applied the words of Proverbs 19:20? That verse reads: "Listen to counsel and accept discipline, in order that you may become wise in your future."

Sometimes a parent becomes overly critical, not because of any particular failing on your part, but simply because he or she happens to be in a bad mood. Has your mom had

a tough day at work? Then she might be more prone than usual to pick on you because your room seems sloppy. Is your dad angry and frustrated over failing family finances? Then, he might unwittingly speak thoughtlessly "as with the stabs of a sword." (Proverbs 12:18) Granted, this is unfair. But "we all stumble many times. If anyone does not stumble in word, this one is a perfect man." (James 3:2) So if Mom or Dad seems tense or upset, the smart thing to do is to try to tread lightly and avoid arousing any criticism.

As imperfect humans, parents can also be afflicted with feelings of inadequacy. Failure on your part can make them feel as if *they* have failed! Explains Dr. Vedral: "You may bring home a bad report card, and your father may say, 'What, are you stupid? I have an idiot for a son.' Your father of course doesn't really think you *are* an idiot. What he's really saying is, 'I'm afraid I am not doing my job in motivating you to study.'"

Such fears can also move parents to set unrealistically high standards. One youth named Jason lamented: "Nothing I've ever done has ever been enough. If I rake the leaves, Dad wants to know why I didn't clean the garage while I was at it. If I make an 'A minus' in school, my folks want to know why it wasn't an 'A' and tell me I'm a failure." But a school counselor spoke with Jason's parents and made this discovery: "Their excessively high expectations for their son reflected their own feelings of inadequacy and their disappointment with their own career choices and financial status."—*Coping With Teenage Depression*.

Whatever your situation at home is, perhaps you can better appreciate why your own parents may tend to be critical at times. But what are some ways to cope with parental faultfinding? Are there ways to benefit from their criticism? These questions will be discussed in a future article.

Watching the World

A "Great Dying"

Millions of species of plants and animals exist today. Scientists once estimated that throughout the history of life on earth, species have become extinct (because of disease, lack of food, and failure to adapt) at a rate of less than ten per year. Now, according to the UN Department of Public Information, scientists believe the rate is hundreds, perhaps thousands of times higher. In 1970 it was estimated that one species became extinct each day. By 1990 the rate had risen to one per hour. By 1992 a species was vanishing every 12 minutes. The primary cause for extinction is the disappearance of natural habitats through deforestation, urban expansion, rural development, and pollution of air and water. Many environmentalists are saying that the planet is in the midst of a "great dying." Says Dr. Mostafa Tolba, executive director of the UN Environment Program: "If Charles Darwin were alive today, his work would most likely focus not on the origins but rather on the obituaries of species."

Foreign Aid —Who Gets What?

Does foreign aid do much to benefit the poor? According to the UN *Human Development Report 1992*, only 27 percent of foreign aid goes to the ten countries that have 72 percent of the world's poorest people. The richest 40 percent of the population of the developing world gets more than twice the aid given to the poorest 40 percent. South Asian nations, home to almost half of the world's poorest people, receive \$5 per person in aid. Middle Eastern countries, with three times South Asia's per capita income, receive \$55 per person.

The report adds that nations that spend heavily on arms receive twice as much aid per capita as do countries that spend more moderately. The lowest share of the funds (about 7 percent of bilateral aid and 10 percent of multilateral aid) is all that goes for basic human needs—education, health care, safe drinking water, sanitation, family planning, and nutrition programs.

Potential Nuclear Nightmare

"The West's attempt to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons has failed," states *U.S. News & World Report*, "and a new and much more dangerous era of nuclear proliferation has begun." Now the choice they face is either to use force to prevent new nations from going nuclear or to "learn to live in a world in which nearly every nation



that wants nuclear weapons has them." What has led to this state of affairs? "Things that were very difficult for the smartest people in 1943 are easy for ordinary people now," says physicist and former nuclear-weapons designer Richard Garwin. Mathematical problems that challenged the best minds then can now be solved on a personal computer. In addition it has become increasingly easy for a determined nation to gain access to the critical technologies needed for producing a bomb. In an effort to stem the tide, 27 nations signed an

accord in April that limits the sale of material or machinery that can be used for making atom bombs. However, significant gaps exist, as a number of nations with nuclear capability or seeking to get it were not included.

Australia's "Pill-Popping" Society

An Australian National Health Survey has come up with some alarming results. The study revealed that 1 in every 50 Australians uses tranquilizers every day. Another three quarter million admitted to having taken drugs such as Valium and Serepax some time in the two weeks preceding the survey. According to *The Sun-Herald* newspaper of Sydney, the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre claims that close to ten million prescriptions for benzodiazepines are written every year and that they are the most widely prescribed medicines in Western countries. A researcher at the center said that many people taking this type of drug regularly may not even realize they are actually drug dependent.

New African Plague

"The narcotics business has become one of the most serious threats to the stability and economic development of the [African] continent." So states Dr. Simon Baynham of the Africa Institute of South Africa, writing in *The Star* of Johannesburg. The drug trade has increased dramatically in Africa over the last decade, as it is geographically well situated for shipments from Colombia and Asia. "By 1990, one third of the heroin intercepted in Europe had been transited by way of Africa," says Baynham. He notes that there is also growing cooperation be-

tween the international drug trade and terrorist organizations. Dr. Baynham refers to the drug trade in Africa as a potential "new epidemic of momentous proportions" that "will be added to Africa's woes of war, famine and AIDS."

Surplus Milk Dumped

In spite of severe food shortages, millions of quarts of milk have been dumped by South African dairies over the last five years. The dairies are charged a levy by the Dairy Board, which should have made provision to distribute the surplus milk. But since it had not done so, an executive of the National Milk Distributors Association said: "What can we do? We have to dump it. It makes no economic sense to undermine our own markets by giving it away or paying to have it taken away." On the other hand, other institutions have deplored the waste. The Council for the Aged states that milk is dumped "at a time when millions of elderly South Africans are struggling to buy the bare means to survive."

Long-Lived Japanese

The Japanese have a greater life expectancy than any other nation on earth, according to the latest statistics of the World Health Organization. The average life expectancy for women in Japan is 82.5 years, while that for men is 76.2 years. The second highest life expectancy for women, 81.5 years, is in France, followed closely by Switzerland at 81.0 years. Second place for men is in Iceland, at 75.4 years, followed by Greece at 74.3 years. The 350-page statistical yearbook also supplied other interesting facts. The world's highest fertility rate is that of Rwanda, where each woman has an average of 8.3 children. The suicide rate is lowest in the Bahamas, with 1.3 for every 100,000 people, while

Hungary has the highest suicide rate, at 38.2 per 100,000. And the highest rate of automobile-accident deaths is in the small South American nation of Suriname, at 33.5 per 100,000. The lowest? Malta, with only 1.6 fatal auto accidents for every 100,000 people.

Painful Music

"Turn that music down!" has long been the cry of irritated parents. Many teenagers feel they cannot enjoy their music unless they *feel* its beat. While loud music has frequently been linked to hearing loss, a recent report in *The Globe and Mail* of Toronto, Canada, explained that tinnitus is also a common result. Tinnitus is "a ringing, rushing, buzzing, popping or hissing inside the head, usually affecting both ears. But that [description]



doesn't do the sound justice," the paper states. Once you get it, "you never have perfect peace and quiet [again]," says Elizabeth Eayrs, coordinator of the Tinnitus Association of Canada. Especially affected are headphone wearers who crank the volume up so loud that others can hear it. Their ability to enjoy music or any other sound in their later years is often seriously impaired.

Pope Apologizes

Pope John Paul II has apologized twice to the African continent for the slave trade. The first time was in February, during the pope's trip to Senegal. At that time

the Italian daily *Corriere della Sera* reported that the pope implored "the forgiveness of heaven and the forgiveness of Africa for the historic crime of slavery with which even Christians . . . were spotted." The second apology, about three months later, was given during his visit to São Tomé. At the Vatican, the pope explained that "since the church is a community made up of sinners too, over the centuries there have been transgressions of the precept of love. . . . They were failings on the part of individuals and groups that adorned themselves with the name of Christians." Commenting on the "papal apologies," the daily newspaper *La Repubblica* said that the pope "spoke of sin on the part of Christians in general, but he could also have spoken of popes, of Roman congregations, and of bishops and clergymen. This history of slavery, in fact, is mixed with responsibility on the part of the Catholic hierarchy too."

No Need for Arachnophobia

Arachnophobia (fear of spiders) "is often the result of ignorance," says the magazine *South African Panorama*. Reporting on the work of Dr. Ansie Dippenaar, a leading authority on African spiders, it points out that less than 0.2 percent of the world's known species of spiders are dangerous to man. In their proper place, these little creatures should be treated as friends, not foes. They are invaluable in controlling crop pests. A single spider of some species can kill up to 200 pest larvae a day. If spiders are allowed to remain in a strawberry field, for example, there could be a yield of up to 2.4 tons more per acre than in fields where the spiders have been killed. "Farmers should conserve spider populations," the article adds, "thereby also limiting the use of costly pesticides which contribute to the pollution of the environment."

From Our Readers

Gambling While your article series "Gambling—Does It Pay?" (June 8, 1992) was certainly informative and timely, nothing was mentioned about sports betting. Unlike playing cards, lotteries, slot machines, and so forth, sports betting can be done anytime, day or night. You don't even have to leave your job. I believe this type of gambling is more epidemic than the type discussed in your articles. Sports betting wastes not only money but also precious time that could be spent with one's family. Such time is used to keep track of scores and the outcome of games.

Sports gambling is thus another sad commentary on this system of things.

C. Y., United States

Thank you for giving us insight into the compulsive gambler. I have had to live with the pain of being raised by a compulsive gambler. Mother was a single parent with five children. She played bingo six nights a week, every week, and does so to this day. Gambling always came first. We would beg her to spend time with us, to fix a meal for us, but it was to no avail. She sacrificed her children for bingo. Thank you for helping me understand better why she did this.

R. E., United States

Curfews I wish to thank you for the article "Young People Ask . . . Why Is My Curfew So Strict?" (May 22, 1992) I will soon turn 17, and I thought it was absurd that my mother still imposed an 11:00 p.m. curfew. A few nights I got home late because of carelessness, and my mother was extremely upset! I appreciate how you brought out that parents become uneasy and anxious, fearing for our well-being when we are not home on time. It was truly selfish of me to be responsible for such needless anxiety.

O. C., United States

Crossword Puzzles I want to thank you for publishing crossword puzzles in *Awake!* I just wish there were more of them. I'm studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses, but my husband is not very interested. He does not read much, and it is hard to find an incentive for him to do so. But he likes to do your crossword puzzles! In fact, we do them together, which is very good for us. Thank you.

E. X. E., Brazil

"Awake!" will continue to publish crossword puzzles on an occasional basis.—ED.

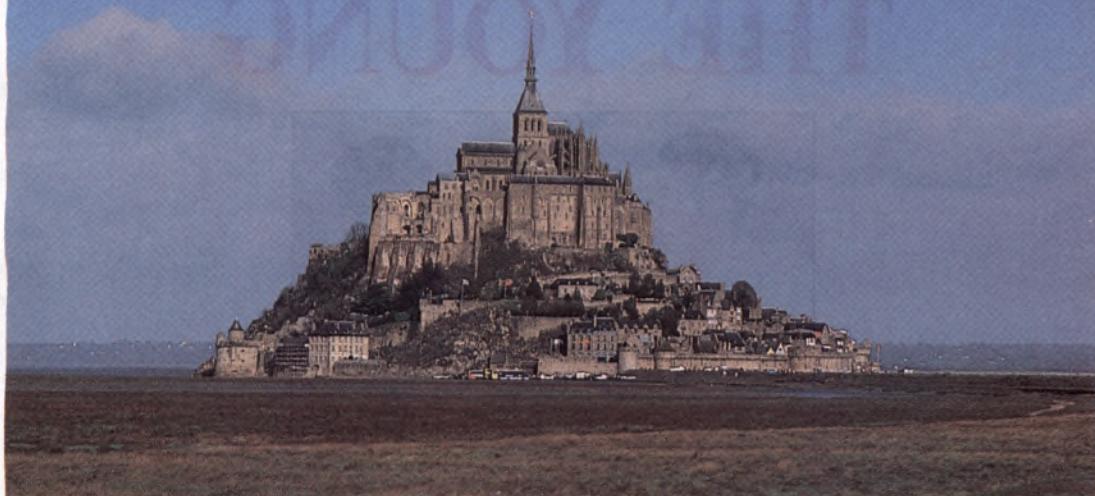
Virginity The article "Young People Ask . . . Why Stay a Virgin?" (April 22, 1992) has been of great help to me. I lost my virginity before I got married. Even though at that time I didn't know Jehovah's laws fully, it disturbed my conscience very much, and I have suffered emotionally. I cried when I read the article. It was comforting to know I have been cleansed in God's eyes. How beneficial it would be if youngsters would read this article and decide to remain virgins! I wish I had done so.

M. S., Puerto Rico

Universe How insignificant we are before God! That is what you showed in the article "Unlocking the Secrets of the Universe." (March 22, 1992) Man's telescopes are unveiling the infinite universe little by little. Their discoveries confirm to us that someone greater and wiser than we are created this mysterious universe and the laws that govern it. We should be humble enough to acknowledge this.

M. R. S., Brazil

When an Island Returns



"NO MAN is an island," wrote 17th-century poet John Donne. True enough; in fact, even islands don't always remain islands. The ancient island city of Tyre is a case in point. Alexander the Great fulfilled a remarkable Bible prophecy by building a causeway out to that island and destroying its proud city. Over the centuries, the causeway silted up; the island became a peninsula.

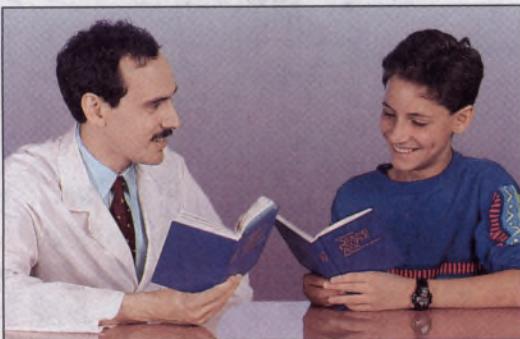
In France the island of Mont-Saint-Michel is also in danger of losing its status as an island. On the border between the two French provinces of Brittany and Normandy, Mont-Saint-Michel is a small rocky mount with a village at its feet and a fortresslike abbey perched on its crown. Looming up like a pyramid from the vast, flat reaches of a tidal bay, it has lured visitors for centuries. Ever since a bishop claimed to have a vision of "Saint" Michael there early in the eighth century C.E., pilgrims have flocked to the church and later to the monastery built on the site. Time was not always kind to the place. Passing centuries saw it ravaged by fires, besieged in wars, closed down during the French

Revolution, used as a prison, and finally restored during the last century, when it acquired its tower and spire.

It was the sea that long seemed the most dangerous enemy. The Mount was sometimes called Saint-Michel-at-the-Mercy-of-the-Sea. For centuries, pilgrims could reach it on foot only by crossing from the mainland at low tide, warily looking out for treacherous quicksands. The fast-rising tide presented another danger—people came to say that it could rush in with the speed of a galloping horse!

The greatest enemy of Mont-Saint-Michel, though, has turned out to be the land, not the sea. In the 1870's a 3,000-foot causeway was built that at last linked the island to the continent. Since then, tides no longer sweep the bay clean as they used to, and sand is building up around the Mount. Today only the highest tides embrace the island's rocky ramparts. Much work is being done to counteract this phenomenon so that the famous Mount will not end up as a peninsula like Tyre—or as a mere granite outcropping on a vast, dry beach.

IT'S HELPING THE YOUNG



LAST year a mother from Dearborn, Michigan, U.S.A., visited a doctor with her son Max, who was being treated for a learning disability. "Since the doctor specializes in the counseling of young people," the mother noted, "I felt it was vital for him to have the book *Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work*. He accepted it with great enthusiasm."

While Max's mother would wait for him to finish his sessions with the doctor, she became acquainted with Tim, a 12-year-old who would be waiting to see the same doctor. She developed a friendship with Tim and also gave him a copy of the *Young People Ask* book. She describes what happened:

"At least one month passed before I saw Tim again. I saw him coming from the doctor's office. When he saw me, he raised up his *Young People Ask* book for me to see, smiling as he did. His grandmother spoke up, saying how wonderful the book was and how it had helped Tim. Afterward, when I sat down with the doctor in his office, he explained that he and Tim study the book together and that he assigns Tim chapters to prepare and discuss."

This doctor, as well as Tim and his grandmother, is among the millions that are recognizing the value of this fine publication prepared by Jehovah's Witnesses to help young ones meet today's challenges and assist them to cope with today's problems.

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