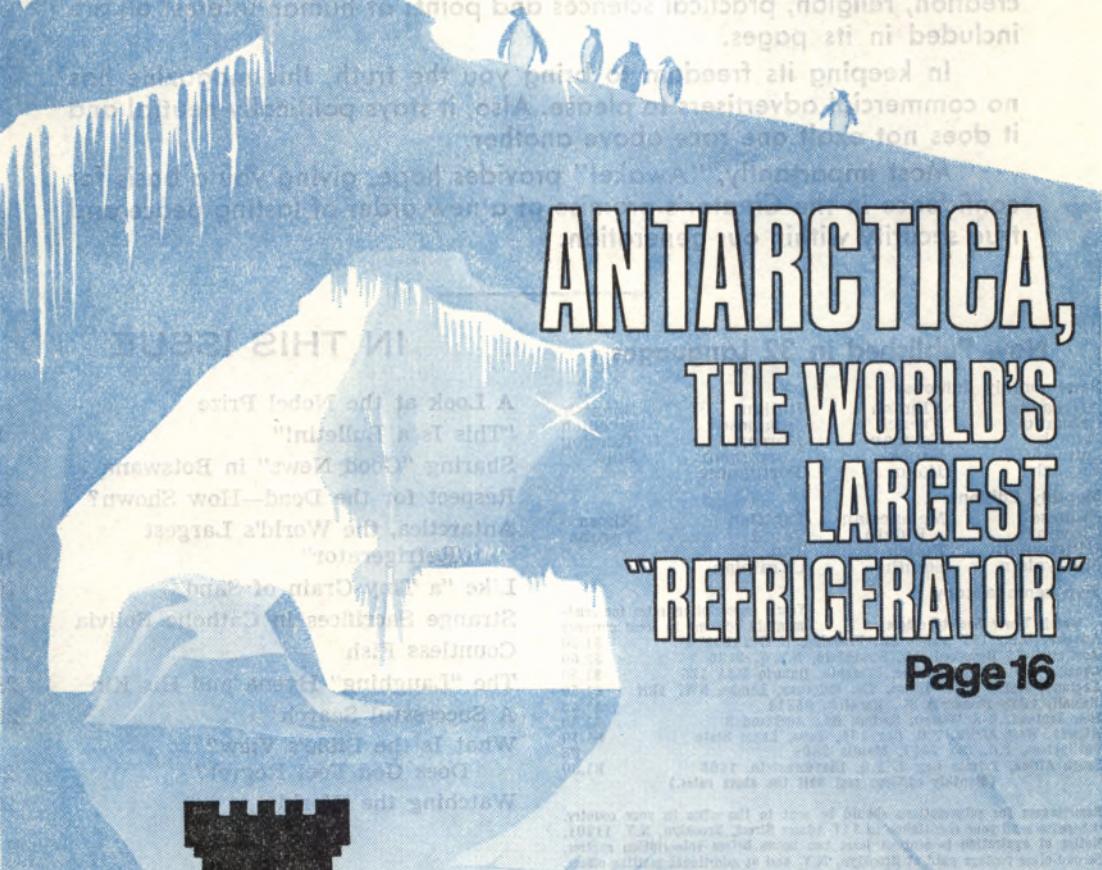


Awake!



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MANY persons throughout the world regard a Nobel prize as the greatest and most honorable recognition a person can receive. The history of this world-renowned prize goes back to Alfred Bernhard Nobel, who was born in Sweden in 1833.

Alfred Nobel amassed a huge fortune due to epoch-making inventions in the field of explosives. He studied especially the temperamental high explosive nitroglycerine, finding it safer to handle this when it was combined with another substance. In 1867 Nobel patented such a mixture called dynamite.

Many other inventions in the field of explosives technique, as well as chemical contributions in other fields, made Nobel immensely wealthy. He became owner of 355 patents and built up a worldwide industry involving 80 companies in 20 countries on five continents. Few knew him personally during his lifetime. But as far as his name is concerned, Nobel is possibly the best-known Swede who ever lived. He died at San Remo, Italy, on December 10, 1896.

What, though, is the origin of Nobel prizes? The famous Swedish inventor provided for these in his will, where he stated: "The whole of my remaining realizable estate shall be dealt with in the following way: the capital, invested in safe securities by my executors, shall constitute a fund, the interest on which shall be annually distributed in the form of prizes to those who, during the preceding year, shall have conferred the greatest benefit on mankind."

Nobel stipulated that there would be five prizes of equal amount, one for each of five fields: physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine, literature, and fraternity among nations. The latter became the well-known Nobel peace prize.

Interesting is the comment of Swedish biographer Åke Ohlmark as to why Nobel provided in his will for these prizes: "He knew that many of his most epoch-making inventions would become tools of violence and war. . . . The Nobel Prizes are an expression of the pangs of con-

A look at THE NOBEL PRIZE



*By Awake! Correspondent
in Sweden*

science of a great researcher and organizer. He intended that the prizes and the institutions which would be created by them would to some degree heal the damage which he knew that his inventions would cause."—*Nobelpristagarna* ("Nobel Prize Winners").

The awarding of Nobel prizes began in 1901. During the past 76 years 330 prizes have been awarded. The others were not given out, mostly due to lack of eligible candidates, especially for the peace prize. Each prize consists of a diploma, a gold medal and a check, which in 1976 totaled \$163,300 in American currency.

Selecting the Candidates

How does one qualify for a Nobel prize? Nomination of Nobel

"laureates," that is, persons considered worthy of special honors in the five designated fields, is handled by four institutions, three of them Swedish. In the wording of Nobel's will: "The prizes for physics and chemistry shall be awarded by the Swedish Academy of Sciences; that for physiological or medical works by the Caroline Institute in Stockholm; that for literature by the Academy in Stockholm, and that for champions of peace by a committee of five persons to be elected by the Norwegian Storting [Parliament]."

Each of these institutions has a special five-member committee to do the preparatory work for selecting prize candidates. Every year these committees send invitations to hundreds of scientists, members of academies, and university scholars throughout the world. The invitations request nominations of persons viewed as qualifying for the prizes to be awarded the next year. Nominations must be in by February 1 of the year in which the prize will be awarded.

By early autumn, these investigations result in secret reports by the committees to the prize-awarding institutions. Then a vote is taken for the final choice, which is kept secret until October or November. The decisions are final and cannot be appealed.

Some Problems in Awarding Prizes

The awarding of Nobel prizes over the years has presented some problems. Nobel stated in his will: "It is my express wish that in awarding the prizes no consideration whatever shall be given to the nationality of the candidates, but that the most worthy shall receive the prize, whether he be a Scandinavian or not." However, locating those "most worthy" is made difficult by the worldwide scope of Nobel-prize distribution.

Recent choices for the peace prize have

come under criticism and produced much strife, mostly for political reasons. In 1973, for instance, the two chief negotiators at the Vietnam Conference in Paris were selected to share the peace prize. Protests were voiced throughout the world. Two members of the Peace Committee in Oslo gave notice of resignation and one of the two selected for the prize declined it. When the other accepted, a protest movement in Norway collected 1.5 million Norwegian kroner (\$270,750) as a "People's Peace Prize," which they awarded to a person of their own choice. Sadly, no winner of any Nobel peace prize has really moved mankind in the direction of world peace.

Similarly, stormy circumstances have attended the prize for literature. Scholars have protested the selection at times of relatively unknown authors with few readers, whereas world-famous authors have been neglected. When Leo Tolstoy was not selected in 1901, forty-two Swedish authors protested by sending a letter of apology to Tolstoy.

As for awarding prizes in scientific fields, the tendency today for teams of scientists, rather than individuals, to carry out research makes it difficult to select who gets the prize. And since scientific development has been so rapid in recent years, prize awarders must work extra hard to keep up with the very latest achievements.

Clearly, Alfred Nobel was interested in the betterment of mankind. The hundreds of winners of Nobel prizes since 1901 indicate that many others have shared that as a common interest. It is clear, though, that even the best of human efforts have failed to bring about truly beneficial conditions for all mankind. That will occur only after God takes action "to bring to ruin those ruining the earth." (Rev. 11: 18) According to Bible prophecy, we can look forward to that in the near future.

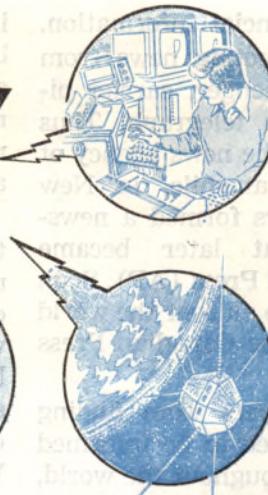
"this is a BULLETIN!"

NO MATTER what we are doing, the words "This is a bulletin" grip our attention. Everyone's routine suddenly halts at those urgent words. Motorists turn up their car radios. Housewives stop their work. Conversations abruptly cease. The announcer's next words could be anything—a disaster in your own community, the assassination of a world leader.

Such scenes are repeated somewhere in the world almost every day. But what we do not see is what happens behind the scenes in the few moments before "This is a bulletin" shatters the normal routine of broadcasting. We can find out by stepping inside the nerve center of a national news agency, the newsroom.

One of our first impressions is the quiet. Newsrooms have an almost traditional reputation for noisy, but organized, "confusion"—dozens of teletypes loudly banging out news and sports stories from all over the world, the clickety-clack of many typewriters as reporters and editors work on stories, and the copyboys rushing completed stories to and from the editors. And, indeed, for many decades this description was accurate.

But in this computer age the news agency has also kept up with the advance of science. Noisy teletypes are gone. In their place are modern machines with special electronic heads that slide noiselessly back



and forth across the teletype paper. Some high-speed machines produce material at the rate of twelve hundred words per minute—entire paragraphs of six lines in only three seconds!

Gone, too, are the typewriters. Instead, newsmen sit at computer terminals resembling television sets with a keyboard. As a writer strikes the keys, letters appear on the screen and the story takes shape. With such equipment, the newsmen can make changes on the spot. He can rephrase statements, take out sentences or entire paragraphs and reinsert them somewhere else in the story, or simply delete them entirely.

The only noise now is conversation, an occasional telephone ringing, and, of course—the bells. Bells signal the editor that an urgent story is coming in. They are not heard often, and a visitor may not even notice the quick series of quiet rings. But the machine that sounds the alarm gets prompt attention from at least one of the newsmen on duty.

How It All Began

In Paris, in 1835, a man named Charles Havas decided to go into a new business for himself. He subscribed to a number of foreign newspapers, and as they arrived, he had the financial information translated and printed. He sold this to businessmen in the city. Newspapers also became interested. So Havas expanded his operation, translating and selling news

stories, as well as financial information.

Soon Havas was collecting news from across France—by messenger, carrier pigeon, and later by the telegraph. Thus Agence France-Presse, the news agency of France, was born. Meanwhile, in New York city, six publishers formed a news-gathering agency that later became known as the Associated Press (AP). Soon others were springing up all over the world—Reuters in London, the Canadian Press in Toronto.

Hundreds of newspapers were finding that their readers wanted to be informed of events happening throughout the world, not just in their own communities. It was out of the question for newspapers to provide such broad coverage on their own. But by pooling resources to operate a news agency, this kind of coverage became possible.

Yet, how do these agencies get all their news?

Agencies in Operation

There are two kinds of news agencies—national and international. A *national* agency disseminates information within a particular country. It sets up a series of bureaus, usually one in each state or province. The agency may sell its service to hundreds, even thousands of newspapers, radio and television stations across the nation. The cost generally depends on the size of a particular station or paper.

Each newspaper and radio or television station has its own news staff to handle local news in that area. But when a story breaks that may be of interest to people outside their own community, they send it to the national news-agency bureau for that region. The bureau, in turn, transmits news of regional interest to all clients in the area it covers.

Meanwhile, at the agency's head office monitors all the regional news items from

its bureaus nation wide. When items of broad interest appear, they are picked up and sent out nationally. In addition, the national news agency has its own staff of reporters and editors who gather news and cover major stories.

To get information on world events, national news agencies subscribe to one or more *international* news agencies. These cover several countries, selling their service to national agencies and sometimes larger newspapers and radio and television stations. In turn, international agencies monitor each of the national services. When a story with an international flavor appears, the international service picks it up and the incident becomes an international story.

Agencies monitoring one another have their computers interconnected. That is, once a story moves on the wire of one agency, it automatically goes also into the computer of each agency that has bought that service. Consider what happens when a major story breaks:

Assume it happens in San Francisco. The Associated Press could be the first to have the story and a reporter there may prepare a bulletin of four or five lines in just a few seconds on his computer terminal. His editor checks it for accuracy and moves it immediately. Seconds later the item has been picked up and relayed nationally by editors at the head office in New York, to appear on teletypes in newspaper, radio and television newsrooms across the United States.

Meanwhile, an editor at the Canadian Press in Toronto, alerted by the bulletin bells, calls the story up on his computer terminal, checks it and moves it across Canada. By now AP has also moved the story on its international wire, and its affiliated national news services are transmitting the story within their own countries. Within four or five minutes of the

time that the San Francisco reporter completed his bulletin, the story—never retyped or rewritten by anyone—could be appearing on the teletype of a radio station in Newfoundland, or of a newspaper in Rome.

While all of this is going on, different news agencies—Reuters, United Press International and others—also are picking up the story.

Television and Satellites

Television news has similar information sources. Local stations get much of their programming from a television network that provides both news and entertainment. Though usually joining the network at least once a day for a national newscast, local stations often subscribe to one or more news agencies and provide news programs of their own.

Networks and some larger television stations are equipped with mobile studios that can drive to the scene of a breaking story and broadcast developments live. The story can either be carried on the one station or broadcast over an entire network of stations. Thus, in 1970, several million Canadians watched as kidnappers of British diplomat James Cross drove their bomb-laden car through Montreal streets after negotiating an agreement that allowed them to fly out of the country.

Affiliated networks in other countries may also pick up major stories and carry them live or broadcast them later. This is often done by means of a complicated system of space satellites and microwave relay stations.

For example, if a Canadian television network wanted film of a serious air crash in Australia, the local television station would transmit it through a series of microwave systems to the nearest earth station of a satellite system. From there it would be broadcast to an Intelsat sat-

ellite somewhere over the Pacific. This satellite would rebroadcast it to an earth station in British Columbia. From there it would be sent to a Telesat (Canadian communications satellite system) earth station and relayed to another satellite over western Canada. The signal then would be broadcast to an earth station at Rivière-Rouge, Quebec, and sent by microwave to Montreal or Toronto.

All of this takes place in just a fraction of a second. Of course, it is quite expensive—costing several thousand dollars for just a few minutes. Since satellite time is sold for a minimum of ten minutes, networks often bring in material “piggy-back.” Two or three together may rent a certain period of time to transmit films that they want for later use on a newscast.

News Affects You

With all this technology, do we get all the news? No. News agencies receive far, far more information than they can possibly use. Many use only about 5 to 7 percent of their total material. In turn, the subscribers to the wire services use only a part of the information they receive. So no matter where we live or what we read, likely there is far more going on in the world than we realize.

What people living in smaller cities and communities learn about world events may depend on the decisions of just half a dozen men and women a thousand miles away. But even in major cities where the media have access to several agencies, the number of people who ultimately decide what to use is relatively small. And since any newsman is going to use the most important stories of the hour, much of the news appearing on wire services is the same, shaping your view of the world according to those particular stories.

When a government changes hands, whether by election, revolution or war, it

is front-page news. But, ironically, news agencies are completely unaware of the impending greatest news story of all time. For today we are at the threshold of a worldwide change in government, the end of this entire global system.—Dan. 2:44. And it is only unknowingly that, by

means of their fast and often thorough coverage of certain world events, news agencies make Christians ever more aware of the evidence that we are deep into the "last days" of this world's system. (2 Tim. 3:1-5; Matt. 24:3-44)—Contributed.

SHARING “GOOD NEWS”

In Botswana

By “Awake!” correspondent in South Africa

THE roar of a lion jarred us from our sleep. Four heads lifted from pillows to stare into the dark bush surrounding us. One of our group of four climbed out of his sleeping bag and piled wood on the dying embers of the fire. Soon we were all back to sleep.

But as dawn broke, the lion's roar came again, this time from much nearer to our location. We decided it was time to get up and make noise as we prepared breakfast. Failure to do this might mean that we would become the lion's breakfast; and we had not come all this way for that.

Why had we come out into the bush of Botswana, in southwestern Africa? It all began some months before, when my wife and I and another of Jehovah's Witnesses discussed making a journey across Botswana's Kalahari Desert northwest to the Okavango Delta in order to talk to the many isolated African people there about

the "good news" contained in the Bible.—Matt. 24:14.

Such a trip required careful preparation. The first week of our journey would be across desert country and we would need sufficient water for drinking. During this part of our travels, washing would have to be restricted to a twice-daily rinse of hands and face with only a cupful of water each.

But after this dry week we would pick up the Botletle River at the end of its course in Lake Xau. From here water would be plentiful, as we would be following the river back to its source in the Okavango Delta, which is a great spread of rivers, swamps and bushland covering a triangular area of some 7,200 square miles (18,648 square kilometers). Our planned route would amount to a round trip of about 1,250 miles (2,012 kilometers).

Since we expected to be gone four weeks, the journey called for skillful planning of foodstuffs. Onions, potatoes, rice and mealie meal (ground maize) were packed in quantity. We also took along some eggs, burying them in the mealie meal to prevent breakage during a bumpy trip, and some food packed in tins, including dehydrated vegetables. As for bread, we decided that the heavy type of rye bread available in German delicatessens would remain fresh for the duration of our journey; and indeed it did.

Have you ever experienced desert travel? Our trip was not an endless vista of sand dunes. True, the ground was sandy, soft and yellow white in color; but it was covered with coarse grass and scattered bush. At times the ground was very soft and for several hours we would drive in a low gear with generous use of four-wheel drive. Frequently, wild animals would dart away at our approach. These included the ostrich, the koodoo, a graceful antelope with spiral horns, and the hartebeest, one of the swiftest antelopes, with hunched shoulders and a sloping back.

Overcoming the Communication Barrier

An important problem was how to speak to people whose language was Tswana, a tongue that we did not know. This was solved by having our Scriptural message recorded on cassette tapes by Tswana-speaking Witnesses.

Then there was the problem of how

to present to these isolated people the Bible's message regarding today's fearsome world conditions and the bright hope that God's kingdom will shortly bring about peace and contentment earth wide. It was our thought that people of these outlying areas would not be familiar with the terrible conditions that are so common in more populated places.

But this proved to be incorrect. Throughout the entire journey a scripture that was always received with nods of agreement was 2 Timothy 3:1-5, which speaks of the "critical times" that would mark the "last days" of the present system of things. We quickly learned that such conditions prevail even in isolated communities of southwest Africa.

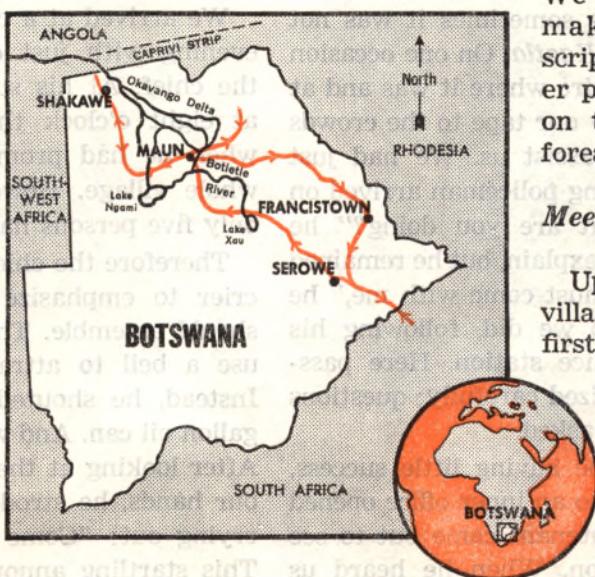
Inhabitants of the villages and cattle camps at which we called received us gladly. Though many of these had heard about the Bible, few had ever seen one or heard it read. Christendom had not established churches in these places.

Keen indeed was their appreciation as they listened to Bible truths in their own language, coming from our tape recorder.

We noticed several making note of a scripture or some other point by writing it on the skin of their forearm.

Meeting at the "Kgotla"

Upon arriving at a village we would go first to the *Kgotla*. This is the meeting place of the village council of elders. After introducing ourselves to the



headman and any of his councillors that were there, we would play a taped message that concluded with an offer of literature in the Tswana language. Since those we met at the *Kgotla* could generally speak English, we had opportunity to answer Bible questions and demonstrate how our literature could aid people to get their own answers to Bible questions and also furnish a basis for family and group Bible discussions.

Then, with the chief's permission, we would pass through the village, playing the recorded message to groups of ten or twenty persons. We made a special effort to contact schoolteachers, and these were quite pleased at the opportunity to obtain Bible literature. Botswana's government is anxious to provide education for its people everywhere, and so at each village we would find a school with young men and women working hard to educate the children there. How thrilling to be surrounded by as many as fifty eager upturned faces, while voices clamored to know what it was that the Bible contained and how soon they could expect their teacher to read it to them!

In large villages sometimes it was not easy to locate the *Kgotla*. On one occasion we decided to inquire where it was and at the same time play our tape to the crowds that gathered to assist us. We had just begun when a young policeman arrived on his bicycle. "What are you doing?" he asked. We tried to explain, but he remained suspicious. "You must come with me," he demanded; and so we did, following his bicycle to the police station. Here passports were scrutinized carefully; questions were asked and reasked.

We seemed to be having little success, but then the door to an inner office opened and the police lieutenant came out to see what was going on. When he heard us

say that we were preaching the "good news," a broad smile came over his face and he said that he too would like to hear this "good news."

The lieutenant suggested that his men might also benefit from what we had to say and invited us into his office where the entire force gathered while the tape was played. The police official listened with care and obvious interest, gladly accepting a copy of the book *True Peace and Security —From What Source?* At his suggestion each of the constables and the sergeant also took copies. When he asked if we had other literature, a tape was played presenting *Listening to the Great Teacher*, the fine Bible aid for parents to use in teaching their children. He took a copy of this book too, explaining that his wife was the local teacher and would find these books very helpful.

Have you ever seen a town crier? I was sure that such a profession had long ago passed away. But one morning we saw a town crier performing in the best of form. And the circumstances were of benefit to us.

We arrived at a certain village late one evening with just enough time to meet the chief. At his suggestion we returned at eight o'clock the following morning, when he had promised to assemble the whole village. However, by nine o'clock only five persons had shown up.

Therefore the chief summoned the town crier to emphasize his request that all should assemble. This town crier did not use a bell to attract people's attention. Instead, he shouted into an empty one-gallon oil can. And what was his message? After looking at the titles of literature in our hands, he strode through the village, crying out: "Come and hear the truth." This startling announcement had the de-

sired effect, and soon there was a good crowd with which to share Bible truths.
He Danced with Joy

We had an unusual and delightful experience at Shakawe, in the extreme north of Botswana. At one time there was a group in that location interested in studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. But this group had disintegrated and was lost sight of after January 1969. We had the names of two persons who had once been associated with the group, however, and it was thought that through them other interested persons might be located. But our search for these two individuals proved to be more difficult than anticipated.

We began by inquiring at the police station. The first name was unknown to them. But they recognized the second one. A man by this name, they told us, had left Shakawe and had gone to a village in the south, where he became a clergyman. Upon hearing this, we felt that our only hope would be to locate the first man on our list. We asked at the trading store and finally at the tax office, where our hopes were lowered still further. It turned out that this man had left Shakawe some seven years earlier.

However, while looking at the paper on which the name was written, our informant noticed the name of the second person, the one reputed to be a clergyman. "This man you will find near the school; he is the carpenter," we were told. Surprised at this turn of events, we followed up the lead. Our calling at his home and asking for him by name aroused his suspicions, and communication was difficult at first. So we resorted to our taped message, which introduced us as "*Basupi Ba Ga Jehofo*" (Jehovah's Witnesses).

Upon hearing this, a marked change took place in our host. His face beamed; then tears started from his eyes and he danced with joy. We knew we had found the man for whom we had been looking. But what was his story?

It happened that while this man was away on a visit to Angola on one occasion, the other person who had been instrumental in organizing the Bible study group in Shakawe moved away. The group disbanded and the man we had now located did not know how to contact anyone who could aid him further to bring his life into harmony with Scriptural requirements. He had prayed constantly for help. As we listened to this man we felt moved by his deep faith in Jehovah, the God who answers prayer. (Ps. 65:2) The difficulties of our journey, our tiredness from constant traveling, simply melted away as we considered what a privilege it was to locate such an individual.

For ourselves the entire expedition was rewarding. There is great joy in sharing good things with others, especially when it is received with appreciation. I can still visualize clearly an elderly man reaching out to shake hands and saying: "You came all this way to talk to us about these things? That is kind, very kind."

Amidst our joy, however, was a feeling of concern. Our passing through this region permitted us to contact but a few people. The need to provide regular Bible instruction for these people is a great one indeed. We wondered, therefore, if it would be possible for some of Jehovah's Witnesses to obtain employment somewhere in the area, perhaps at the diamond mines that we had passed. This would afford them opportunity to care for the spiritual needs of these humble residents of Botswana. Would such a move be possible for you?



BY THEIR mid-twenties, Marc and Paulina had attended a number of funerals in France, their homeland. So they knew of the sadness associated with funerals and of some of the funeral customs that people followed.

Then, while students in New York in 1975, they went to the funeral of an acquaintance from one of the Caribbean islands. They expected that some of the customs might be different. But they were totally unprepared for what they saw. During the funeral some of the deceased's relatives suddenly burst out in piercing wails. And a few of these island people tried to throw themselves on the casket; they even wanted to take its cover off to

kiss the corpse, as was the custom where they were from.

Yes, while that was rather shocking to the French couple, it was common at funerals in that other part of the world. This just illustrates that there are different funeral customs in various lands. Some customs seem to have resulted from local conditions, such as the need for immediate burial in the tropics or for cremation where land is scarce. Other customs grew out of religious or superstitious beliefs. And yet other customs may just be quaint traditions of unknown origin or past meaning.

All Funeral Customs Bad?

When first learning the Bible's laws and principles, some persons may be inclined to avoid all funeral customs. Why so?

They may be aware that God specifically forbade the Israelites to share in certain funeral or mourning practices of the surrounding nations. God said: "They should not produce baldness upon their heads, and the extremity of their beard they should not shave, and on their flesh they should not make an incision." (Lev. 21:5; 19:27, 28) God's people were to be religiously distinct. They were not to copy extreme mourning customs of surrounding pagans. When the Jews in later times did take up these pagan religious customs, it was not with God's approval. Does this mean, however, that a Christian today must categorically reject all local funeral customs? Not necessarily. The Scriptures indicate that some funeral customs may not be objectionable. For instance, the Bible says that after Christ's disciples removed his body from the stake, "they took the body of Jesus and bound it up with bandages with the

spices, just the way the Jews have the custom of preparing for burial."—John 19:40.

The Jews may have developed this custom partially so as to retard decomposition. But as the spices were applied only externally, the body still would soon begin to decay. (John 11:39) Hence, respect for the deceased loved one may also have been behind this Jewish funeral custom. But once the Christian congregation was established, what would be done? Interestingly, it seems that the early Christians continued many of the Jewish burial customs, such as speedy burial rather than delayed burial or cremation.

Further indicating that some local funeral customs may be unobjectionable is what we read about Jacob. When he died in Egypt, his son Joseph had local physicians embalm the body. The account says: "They took fully forty days for [Jacob], for this many days they customarily take for the embalming." (Gen. 50:1-3) By following this local funeral procedure Joseph was able to take Jacob's remains out of Egypt, to bury him in Canaan with his forefathers.—Gen. 49:29-32; 50:12-14.

Factors to Consider

With the variety of funeral customs throughout the world, what guidelines could a person use in determining whether to follow some local funeral custom?

A person who has respect for the dead, but, above all, respect for God, should consider whether a custom conflicts with the Bible's teachings.

For example, among some Koreans it was the custom to scatter rice on the roof or outside the door of the deceased's home. And a male relative climbed up on the roof, there to wave a garment of the dead person and shout his name. This was known as the *Cho-Hon*, or "Invitation to the Soul," ceremony. It was supposed to

invite the soul to leave the house. People in some other lands believe that the dead person passes on to another life, and so they follow the custom of putting money in his mouth or in the coffin. This is so that he will have money to use in the next life, such as to "pay the ferryman for passage into eternity."

Such customs spring from, or are followed because of, belief that each person has an immortal soul that survives the death of the body. The Bible, though, teaches that each human *is* a soul, that when he dies he is completely dead and unconscious and that his hope for the future rests in God's ability to resurrect him. (Gen. 2:7; Eccl. 9:5, 10; John 5:28, 29; 11:24-26) Consequently, how could a person knowing the Bible truth about the condition of the dead share in funeral customs that involve the unscriptural immortal-soul teaching? Surely it would not be an evidence of respect for the dead to connect the deceased with a falsehood.

Another factor to consider is how a particular custom is carried out or understood locally.

Take, for instance, what is called a "wake." In many areas it is known by that name because it was customary for the family and friends to remain awake near the body for one night or more. But the reasons for this varied. Some peoples followed this custom because they believed that a demon would try to seize the body. Others believed that the soul of the deceased remains in the house for the first night and can make sick anyone who falls asleep. Also, *The Encyclopedia Americana* reports: "Wakes are sometimes attended by scenes of disorder and intoxication" that show little "sincere respect for the dead."

What if in your locality part of the funeral is called a "wake"? It would be wise to think about what it is understood

to accomplish and how it is carried out. It may now be just the term applied to the practice of visiting the bereaved family during the day at home or in the funeral parlor so as to comfort them and express condolences. The simple fact that this may be called a "wake" certainly does not make it wrong for you to 'comfort the mourners.' (Job 29:25; Matt. 2:18; 2 Cor. 1:3, 4) But would it be Scripturally fitting to share in a "wake" if *in your area* it is presently linked with a false teaching or some unfounded superstition? Likewise, would it manifest respect for the dead to be part of "scenes of disorder and intoxication."—Rom. 13:12-14; Eph. 5:18.

If you encounter other practices that people expect you to share in out of 'respect for the dead,' consider what they mean in the area where you live.

For example, it may be customary for flowers to be sent or brought to the funeral. What is this now understood to mean? In some places, especially so in the past, such flowers were viewed as part of a sacrifice to the gods. Similarly, at Buddhist funerals in Japan today attenders are expected to burn a pinch of incense to the gods. Clearly, you could not follow such customs if you believe that "it is Jehovah your God you must worship, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service." (Matt. 4:10) However, in other localities flowers are not at the present time provided as an act of worship or understood as signifying that. They may be given simply as an expression of sympathy or to add peaceful beauty to the funeral.

Local feelings can be considered, too, with regard to the custom of dress at funerals. And this varies from place to place. In parts of the Middle and Far East men and women are expected to dress in garments of coarse white calico and sandals of white straw. But in Japan and in many

Catholic countries it is customary to wear all black clothing or to have a black armband for the funeral. Must this be strictly followed in order to show respect for the dead?

Of course, the dead person is not going to notice what the living wear. But other living persons will. So what will your following the custom suggest to them? Well, is the custom widely viewed as an ingrained practice associated with believers in immortality of the soul and hellfire, or with members of a certain church? If so, then your rigidly following the custom might suggest that you share the local belief about the soul or that you are part of that church. On the other hand, there is the matter of good taste, since you would not needlessly want to offend. You may conclude that clothing that is subdued in color, not ostentatious, is in keeping with the sobriety of "the house of mourning" rather than brightly colored clothing normally associated with "the banquet house."—Eccl. 7:1-4.

It is not as if it would be wrong for others to be able to notice that a Christian was saddened or was mourning. Though not going to extremes such as cutting themselves, the ancient Jews did mourn at the death of a loved one. And the fact that such ones were mourning under various circumstances might be noticeable in their grooming or appearance.—2 Sam. 13:18, 19; 19:4; compare Job 1:20; 2:11, 12.

There is a balancing consideration. Jesus was familiar with the mourning associated with death. (Mark 5:38, 39) However, though he wept and groaned in the spirit regarding his dead friend Lazarus, there is no evidence that Jesus' mourning went beyond that. (John 11:33, 35) Similarly, among Jesus' followers the sorrow associated with bereavement, including its extent and how it is manifested, is tempered by the strength-giving joy and hope

of the resurrection. The apostle Paul wrote: "Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant concerning those who are sleeping in death; that you may not sorrow just as the rest also do who have no hope."—1 Thess. 4:13.

Understandably, this balanced Christian viewpoint would manifest itself also in connection with funeral customs.

Personal Feelings

Regarding funeral customs, a factor that can be very important is the personal or conscientious feelings of the individual.

For example, in some lands it is customary for family members, or even visitors, to kneel and pray before the coffin. There certainly is no Scriptural objection to praying to Jehovah God, whether at a funeral or not. Jesus prayed at the tomb of Lazarus. (John 11:41, 42) But true Christians do not pray to deceased relatives, nor do they want to suggest that they believe that their prayers are to help someone out of purgatory or to speed someone to heaven. Also, at funerals many Christians personally have preferred to refrain from showy prayers that might seem to be mere formalism.—Matt. 6:1, 5, 6.

Another personal feeling affecting reactions to funeral customs is the desire to keep a funeral simple, free from ritual.

This could involve, for instance, some customs followed at the grave site. In certain areas the pallbearers or family members are expected to put a flower on the casket or to toss a flower into the grave before it is filled. To many persons this is considered a final token of respect or a last tribute to the dead person. But, of course, the true Christian knows that the deceased is not aware of the flower. And, if the deceased had been a true Christian, he too would have agreed with the counsel at Romans 1:25 against giving undue or

worshipful honor to a creature. Hence, the personal feelings of some individuals have led them to omit this custom.

Another practice at the graveside is that of throwing a small amount of dirt into the grave. The clergyman or person conducting the funeral may customarily do this while quoting Genesis 3:19, where Adam was said to have come from the dust and would be returning to the dust. That Biblical comment, though, was a statement of fact—God there foretold what happened to Adam hundreds of years later. It is not a ritualistic formula that must be repeated at every funeral.

Again, at a funeral there is nothing wrong with using some words from the Bible, even the words at Genesis 3:19. However, particularly comforting at such a time are words from the Bible about the resurrection hope. These have lasting beneficial value, more so than token actions that some have felt detract from the occasion.

With so varied an array of funeral customs practiced throughout the earth, who can know them all or be aware of how and why they developed? But when deciding whether to comply with a certain custom in his own area, the Christian is helped if he thinks it through. Is its origin or present meaning widely known to conflict with the teachings of God's Word? Is the way in which a custom is carried out at variance with the real hope the Christian has from the Scriptures? Will sharing in some custom or refraining from doing so cause offense or needless stumbling? What has he observed at the simple funerals of other true Christians in his area? And what do his own personal feelings and conscience recommend?

Considering such factors can help the Christian to act in a way that harmonizes with his beliefs, his sense of propriety and his proper respect for the dead.

ANTARCTICA



THE WORLD'S LARGEST "REFRIGERATOR"

IMAGINE opening the door of a refrigerator that had been closed for thousands of years and, upon opening the door, discovering something new on each shelf, something that had never before been seen by human eyes! Such a sight became a reality to man

about 160 years ago when Antarctica, the world's largest "refrigerator," was actually sighted and then opened up to the view of modern civilization.

Astronauts viewing the earth from space tell us that one of the most distinctive features of our planet is the ice sheet of Antarctica. It covers 5,500,000 square miles (14,244,934 square kilometers), an area greater than the United States and Central America combined. Scientists have found that it averages about 6,500 feet (1,981 meters) in thickness and contains more than 90 percent of the world's ice. Only about 5 percent of the land area of Antarctica is visible. If our newly explored "refrigerator" were to be defrosted, it would raise the level of the oceans by 150 to 200 feet (46 to 61 meters), flooding every seaport and low coastline in the world. With the ice covering gone, areas of Antarctica would be found to be under water, making the continent smaller.

Discovery and Exploration

In the mid-eighteenth century, man started to turn his exploratory interests southward. Only a few years previously much of the southern hemisphere was a vast unknown area. Because of the tremendous distances involved, no one could answer such fundamental questions

as whether it consisted principally of land or water.

In 1772 the British explorer Captain James Cook set out on a three-year voyage to latitudes far to the south. Ice blocked him from a close approach and, although he circled the continent, he never saw the land of Antarctica itself. Between 1800 and 1821, seal hunters and explorers sighted islands and parts of the peninsula, and perhaps part of the main body of the continent. Later, the American Navy officer Charles Wilkes and the British explorer James Ross contributed much to the interest and knowledge of Antarctica, thus paving the way for land exploration. Robert F. Scott, a British explorer, pushed to within 575 miles (925 kilometers) of the South Pole in 1903. It was actually reached by Norwegian Roald Amundsen on December 14, 1911. About a month later Scott and his party of four others arrived at the Pole, but perished on the Ross



Ice Shelf on the return trip. The difficulties encountered in reaching the Pole are borne out by the fact that no other ground party did so until 1957-1958. Then, at last, the giant door of the world's largest "refrigerator" began to open. What did it contain?

Weather Studies

The opening of Antarctica delighted the eyes of scientists, as it was excitingly different. Whereas the Arctic zone is mostly ocean, Antarctica is land. This partly accounts for its colder climate. The coldest temperature ever recorded on earth was a frigid -126.9 degrees Fahrenheit (-88.3 degrees Celsius) at the Russian Base Vostok in August 1960. Even to this day it is the only continent where man cannot live permanently independent of outside resources.

The Antarctic weather helps to control the climate of all the globe. Scientists find that the giant "refrigerator" produces more cold air than any other place in the world. The ice-crisp air rolls down the polar slopes toward the coast, building up to gusts of 140 to 145 miles (225 to 233 kilometers) per hour along the coastline. In fact, wind chill has proved to be the most debilitating factor in Antarctic exploration. Eventually, this wind sweeps across Chile and Argentina and parts of Australia and New Zealand, thus contributing greatly to the "air conditioning" of our home, the Earth.

The Antarctic Ocean actually is part of the earth's *one* great ocean. It converges with the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans. But it has characteristics peculiar to itself. It is colder and less salty than are the oceans to the north. Cold ocean waters move northward, then sink below the warmer waters at the "convergence" where the Antarctic Ocean meets the northern oceans and spreads far north beyond the equator. When the waters flow-

ing southward in the western parts of the other oceans meet the cold Antarctic waters, they turn eastward to form the Circumpolar Current, which travels in an irregular path completely around the earth in the vicinity of 47° to 61° south latitude. Oceanographers measure the currents, test their mineral content, take temperature readings at various levels and bounce sound waves off the seabed to ascertain depths. This information, coupled with wind streams and glacier activity, is proving valuable in meteorology and other sciences.

Plant and Animal Life

In the refrigerator-like cold, little plant life survives. Because of the long Antarctic night, the 800 varieties of plants—lichens, mosses, freshwater algae, bacteria, molds, yeasts and fungi living on the land area are dormant for long periods. But they become almost instantly photosynthetic during short summer bursts of only a few days, weeks or a month or two.

On the other hand, though plant life is sparse, animals abound; but both the number and the size of the *land* species are few. Nearly all the animals are seen near the edge of the ice sheet or in the water, either living in the ocean or getting their sustenance from it. The animals relying on the land for food and shelter are some microscopic species along with tiny insects and spiders. The largest of these is a fly, a relative of the common housefly, about one tenth of an inch (c. 3 millimeters) long. Besides the nonflying penguins, there are the South Polar skua and the Antarctic petrel. In the Antarctic and in the sub-Antarctic island regions there are terns, albatrosses, cormorants, gulls and other birds. Some birds at times penetrate toward the continent's interior.

The Arctic tern is the world's greatest

navigator. It spends six months of the year in the Antarctic and six months in the Arctic, flying 11,000 miles (17,700 kilometers) from the north to enjoy the Antarctic summer. Thus it manages to live in almost perpetual daylight.

Five of the world's seventeen varieties of penguin are to be found here. The Adélie penguin and the Emperor penguin are the only two that breed on the continent. The Adélie penguin, averaging about fifteen inches (38 centimeters) in height and weighing ten to fifteen pounds (4.5 to 6.8 kilograms), appears to get its direction from a sun-related orientation and a biological clock mechanism.

Testing the "refrigerator's" temperature to the limit is the Emperor penguin, the Adélie's big brother. These dignified-looking birds weigh from about 55 to 100 pounds (25 to 45 kilograms) and stand to nearly four feet (1.2 meters) in height. The mother penguin lays her single egg in the dead of winter. When ready to do so she heads south into the frigid blackness of the long winter night. Almost as soon as the single egg is laid, the mother places it carefully on the father's webbed feet and leaves him with the responsibility of incubating the egg, which he does by carrying it for two months on top of his broad feet beneath a warm fold of abdominal skin. While the patient father-to-be fasts as he takes care of this duty, the mother goes north to the sea, collecting food. When she returns, she is ready to feed the young one, which she does by regurgitating food that she has eaten. The Emperor penguin is the only bird that



does not follow the winter's expanding ice pack as it stretches northward, but stays behind through the severe, driving blizzards of the nearly six-month night, under which conditions it would be impossible to maintain nests, as do other birds.

In the icy water around Antarctica we find millions of seals of several varieties. These animals are perfectly happy in their environment, being insulated by a layer of fat that also provides a food reserve and contributes to the seal's buoyancy in the water. They have rich "pastures" in the waters teeming with fish. There are several types of whale that also find plenty of food in the vast, dense schools of crustacean, shrimplike krill. The fish living toward the ocean bottom are peculiar to the Antarctic, 90 percent of these being found nowhere else on earth.

Divers wearing wet suits lined with a half inch (13 millimeters) of insulation, working in water at 28 degrees Fahrenheit (-2 degrees Celsius) for one hour at a time, have gathered specimens of 130 known varieties of Antarctic fish and other marine life. Many, like the octopus, have no red blood and some are semi-transparent. Other fish have red blood that does not freeze at extremely low temperatures. Recently a diver discovered eel larvae four to five feet (1.2 to 1.5 meters) long—twenty times the size of any other newborn eel known to man.

From October to February the weather moderates, but, except on the Antarctic Peninsula, which stretches up to within 600 miles (966 kilometers) of South America, the temperature never goes above freezing. During this period several species of tiny insects are warmed into life for just a few days and then chilled into dormancy again. There are snow fleas and eight-legged mites. Scientists have discovered that their bodies produce a substance called glycerol. This is a chemical

sometimes used as an antifreeze. In these small insects it preserves their lives through the Antarctic winter.

Fleas and insects raise the question of disease. The old story that there are no germs in Antarctica is a fallacy. The continent may be as white as the inside of an operating room, but there are plenty of bacteria to be found. Ninety feet (27 meters) beneath the surface of the South Pole, microbiologists uncovered some germs that appear to have been trapped there for a hundred years. Using face masks and sterilized instruments, they were careful to avoid mixing modern bacteria with those nineteenth-century ones. They found staphylococcus, a kind of bacteria that can cause serious infection. Unless faulty technique or equipment had leaked some of the scientists' own germs through, these bacteria had existed in Antarctica in 1860. Furthermore, the microbes in the ice were not dead, but revived in the laboratory when warmed.

The extreme cold and the dryness of the Antarctic atmosphere, however, has a very preservative effect. The *Encyclopædia Britannica* reports: "A number of mummified seal carcasses, chiefly crab-eaters [a species of seal], have been found at distances up to nearly 30 miles [48 kilometers] from the sea and elevations up to about 3,000 feet [914 meters] in the McMurdo dry valleys. Finding no

IN COMING ISSUES

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- How Long Would You Like to Live?

food in such inland wanderings, the crab-eaters eventually died, and their leathery carcasses were preserved by the coldness and aridity of the climate."

A Scientific Laboratory

Antarctica today could be described as a laboratory for scientists. Geologists are working to discover what lies beneath the enormously thick crust of ice. Seismic recordings and radiometer photographs have recently revealed that the rock base of the greater part of Antarctica is continental in structure rather than oceanic. Antarctica is also found to be, at least at present, the quietest and most aseismic of all continents. Nearly all of Antarctica has been seen and most of the mountain regions have been aerially photographed and mapped. Geologists, biophysicists, glaciologists and geophysicists continue to visit and study these areas with the hope of finding out more about the structure and environmental system of the entire earth.

Antarctic stations have been established by several nations. Ten of the twelve nations that signed the Antarctic treaty maintain stations throughout the winter.

Russia has Billingham Station on the Peninsula. The United States' main base of operations is McMurdo Station, on the Pacific side of the continent. It is nuclear powered, having an average population of 900 in the summer and 200 in the winter. It also maintains small year-round stations at the South Pole and in the Peninsula. And, forbidding as the continent may seem to some, it actually is being viewed as a future tourist resort. Even now, tourists visit its scientific stations and penguin rookeries and, of course, it could be a skiers' paradise.

Who knows what further 'treasure stores' will come out of this continental "refrigerator"? There is much exploration and experimentation to be done. Techniques may be developed to exploit its rich stores of minerals. And a study of its atmospheric conditions and its surrounding ocean may help scientists to understand more about weather in all parts of the earth. Of one thing we can be certain—that as we appreciate a refrigerator in a home, our Antarctic "refrigerator," now open to our use, will be more and more appreciated as time goes by.

Like "a Tiny Grain of Sand"

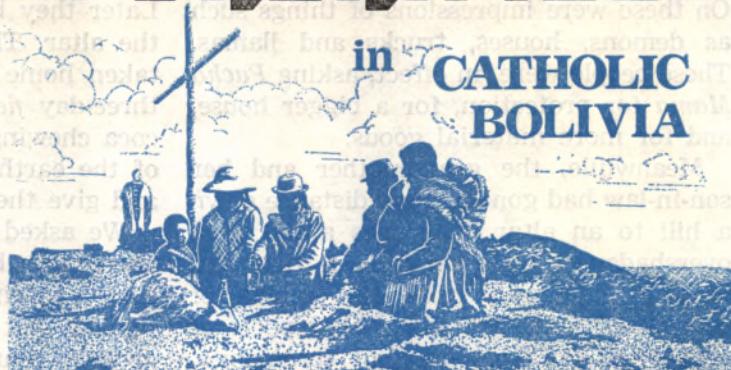
● Although the atom is infinitesimally small, it consists mostly of empty space.

Dr. Heinz Haber wrote: "All things around us—the solid chair you are sitting in, your house, the entire earth—everything is virtually empty space, with its widely scattered, forlorn nuclei and electrons. If all the empty space could be removed from a human body—if all its nuclei and electrons could be crowded together into a solid mass—the body would shrink to the size of a tiny grain of sand that can barely be felt between the tips of our fingers."—*The Walt Disney Story of Our Friend the Atom*.

While such a shrinkage is not within human power, it impresses a person with his littleness in comparison with the Creator. And a Bible reader may be reminded of the fact that to Jehovah God "the nations are as a drop from a bucket; and as the film of dust on the scales they have been accounted." (Isa. 40:15) Indeed, the nations are of relative insignificance from God's standpoint. Yet, "as a father shows mercy to his sons, Jehovah has shown mercy to those fearing him. For he himself well knows the formation of us, remembering that we are dust."—Ps. 103:13, 14; Gen. 2:7.

STRANGE SACRIFICES

in CATHOLIC
BOLIVIA



By "Awake!" correspondent in Bolivia

ON A recent sightseeing trip, a group of friends and I visited the city of Oruro. While most of the inhabitants of Bolivia are Roman Catholic, Oruro is known internationally for its folklore celebration during carnival time, a part of which is the *Diablada*, or dance of the devils.

"Does the Catholic Church permit a dance of the devils?" you may ask. Actually, Bolivia is a place of many strange religious customs. This is especially true, we learned, at Oruro.

At a certain mining camp, for example, workers offer prayers to the Virgin of Socavón at ground level. Underground, however, they offer cigarettes and coca leaves to *el tío*, the god of the underworld, that is, the Devil.

It was our goal to view the city of Oruro from the highest point overlooking it. So we went up the mountain of San Felipe. Upon reaching the summit of this mountain, we saw a unique example of the strange religious sacrifices made by Catholics in certain parts of Bolivia.

At that point of our journey, we noticed a family group consisting of a grandmother, her daughter and her husband, and two children, a five-year-old boy and a babe in arms. They had with them a full-grown sheep. We began talking to them and learned that they were Catholics. But why had they come to the top of the mountain, bringing along the sheep? The mother explained that they were about to offer

the animal to San Felipe. But this did not turn out to be true.

We noticed that the grandmother appeared to be mumbling to herself. However, it became clear that she was reciting something. Was it the rosary? No, for the language was not Spanish but Quechua. These were Quechua Indians. We watched as the grandmother stopped her recitation, lifted a bottle and took a swig of pure alcohol mixed with soda. She also stuffed coca leaves into her mouth. The husband likewise drank and put coca into his mouth. This combination has a powerfully intoxicating effect.

By now the daughter too had begun praying fervently in Quechua. We noted repeated mention of the name *Pacha Mama* (Mother Earth), which refers to a goddess of the earth worshiped by these Indians. In reality the sacrifice was not for San Felipe, but for this goddess. They were invoking *Pacha Mama* to cause an increase of potatoes, sheep, llamas and other things of nature. We were told that the goddess needed a live heart and blood before she would answer prayers.

Then we saw another peculiar aspect of the ceremony. A small fire was lit

with alcohol such as they had been drinking. The young woman threw pink and white molded blocks of sugar on the fire. On these were impressions of things such as demons, houses, trucks and llamas. These people were, in effect, asking *Pacha Mama* for protection, for a bigger house, and for more material goods.

Meanwhile, the grandmother and her son-in-law had gone a short distance down a hill to an altar. This was a flat area overshadowed by a large rock that had become blackened from the smoke of many sacrifices. We also noted pools of cold sheep fat from previous ceremonies. The grandmother and son-in-law then agitated a bottle of beer and sprayed it over the whole altar area to "sanctify" it. This reminded us of the use of holy water in other religious rites. Then confetti was strewn about and the boy was sent atop the altar with paper streamers. Now everything was ready.

The sheep, legs bound, was placed on a nearby rock. At a signal from the grandmother, the man slit its throat. Then he passed the knife to the grandmother who opened the sheep's belly. As we stood by astonished, she plunged her hands into the opening to tear out the heart. It was necessary, they explained, to offer the heart to *Pacha Mama* while it was still beating and while blood was yet running from the jugular vein. Thereafter, the heart was buried in the ground. Also, a cup of blood mixed with sugar was given to the boy, who ran back up the hill to pour it at the base of a cross that dominated the hill.

The grandmother now placed coca leaves in her cupped blood-drenched hands and,

with outstretched arms, offered them at the altar, along with further prayers in the Quechua language to *Pacha Mama*. Later they burned parts of the sheep on the altar. The remainder of it would be taken home and eaten during a two- or three-day *fiesta* of dancing, drinking and coca chewing, in hopes that this goddess of the earth would accept their sacrifice and give them good luck.

We asked these people how they could harmonize being Catholic with making such a sacrifice to a pagan goddess. They replied that if they failed to do so the goddess would become angry with them. Also, they said that it was to appease *el tío*, who, as noted earlier, is the god of the underworld, or the Devil. These people saw no conflict in being Catholic and offering such a sacrifice.

After leaving the area, we thought seriously about what had taken place. This ceremony had been performed by persons who professed to be Christians. Yet, according to the Bible, Jesus' sacrificial death rendered unnecessary all animal sacrifices. (Dan. 9:27; Heb. 10:1-10) As for doing an act of worship to the Devil, or to any other god or goddess, Jesus declared: "It is written, 'It is Jehovah your God you must worship, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service.'" —Matt. 4:10.

We pondered over how serious has been the failure of the Catholic Church to instruct humble people of many areas in basic Christian teaching. Weighty too, we reflected, is our responsibility as Jehovah's Witnesses to seize every opportunity to share Bible truth with our neighbors here in Bolivia.

COUNTLESS FISH

• "There are more fishes on earth—in number of species as well as individuals—than all the mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians taken together."

—*The Marvels of Animal Behavior*, pages 309, 310.

THE "Laughing" Hyena AND HIS KIN

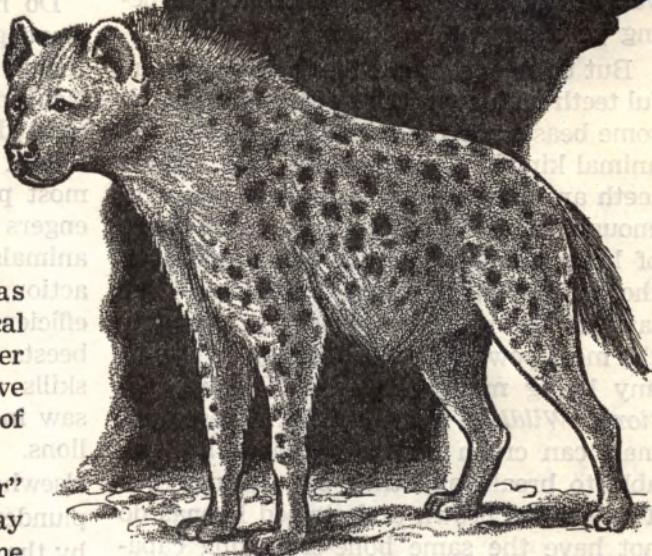
IT IS night. Overhead is a silvery moon. In its soft light, the rocks, the trees—the countryside in general—appear quite tranquil. But suddenly you hear an eerie sound! It seems like wild, hysterical human laughter! Surely, that jangles your nerves!

But it is not some man or woman out there in the wilderness. Nobody you know has just gone insane. That 'hysterical laughter' has come from another source. Like it or not, you have heard the weird, unnerving howl of the "laughing" hyena.

This may be your first "encounter" with this strange animal. You may be wondering, How and why do some hyenas "laugh"? Probably you have heard stories about hyenas. But where does myth leave off and fact begin? For instance, some say that certain hyenas can change their sex at will. Is that true? Many persons say that these animals are mere scavengers, but others call them predatory hunters. Who is right? It has been said that hyenas will attack and kill humans. Is that a fact? What are hyenas really like?

First, a Description

Hyenas look like large dogs. But they are not related to dogs. Hyenas belong to the scientific family Hyaenidae. Three species have been identified: The *spotted*, or *laughing*, hyena (in Africa, south of the Sahara desert); the *striped* hyena (found from northern Africa through Asia



Minor and into India); and the *brown* hyena (of southern Africa).

The spotted, or laughing, hyena has yellowish-gray fur with black or brown spots. A grayish coat with black or brown stripes is "worn" by the striped hyena. And the brown hyena is dark brown, with grayish fur on the neck and the lower part of the legs. Both the striped and brown hyenas have long-haired manes.

While there are variations according to species, in general the hyena has fairly large ears and a massive head. Its shoulders are higher than its hindquarters. The animal has long front legs, short hind legs and a sloping back. Each foot has four toes, and the claws are nonretractile. This creature paces like a camel, its fore and hind legs on each side moving ahead to-

gether. The male spotted, or laughing, hyena may be 3 feet (1 meter) high at the shoulders. His body may be 5 feet (1.5 meters) long, not counting a 13-inch (33-centimeter) tail. And he may weigh as much as 180 pounds (82 kilograms). Interestingly, a spotted hyena kept in the Berlin Zoo lived for forty years. And, can you imagine? Tame hyenas delight in being petted.

But do not overlook the hyena's powerful teeth and jaws. "These sturdy, unhandsome beasts are the bone-crunchers of the animal kingdom," it has been said. "Their teeth are massive and their jaws powerful enough to crack and crush the thigh bones of large animals like the zebra and even the buffalo." (*The Animal Kingdom*) The jaws of the spotted hyena "are probably the most powerful in proportion to size of any living mammal," says *The International Wildlife Encyclopedia*. These animals can crush bones that lions are unable to break, and they eat the marrow. The smaller brown and striped hyenas do not have the same bone-crunching capability.

Hunters or Mere Scavengers?

Obviously, then, the spotted, or laughing, hyena is a strong creature. Normally, it spends the daylight hours slumbering, perhaps either in its lair amidst dense vegetation, inside a dark cave, or in some hole above ground. In the lair, one may find this nocturnal animal's booty—likely the bones of some animal, or maybe even part of a human skull stolen from a cemetery.

Since the hyena possesses a very keen sense of smell, it can detect the carcass of a dead animal at a great distance. Possibly, it is the body of a creature that has been killed by lions or wild dogs. Drawn by the scent, a solitary hyena, or a large pack, may search out the carcass.

(Eighty to one hundred spotted hyenas may make up a pack living in a well-defined territory and sharing a den having a maze of underground holes and passageways.) If the pack smells a carcass, or if vultures are circling above it, the hyenas are ready to gorge themselves on the dead animal.

Do not think of the hyena as a mere scavenger, however. Dutch scientist Hans Kruuk and his wife, working in Tanzania's Ngorongoro Crater, have proved that spotted hyenas do prey on other animals. Kruuk writes: "At first Jane and I, like most people, thought of hyenas as scavengers dependent on kills made by braver animals. But after watching the packs in action, we realized they are also highly efficient predators, living mostly on wildebeests and zebras. And their hunting skills serve not only themselves, as we saw in dozens of encounters, but also the lions. Ngorongoro's lions, unlike those elsewhere, seldom hunt. Instead, they plunder hyena kills, guided to the feast by the eerie 'laughter' of the feeding pack. Hyenas will abandon a kill to several marauders, but often defend it against a solitary intruder. Once we watched a whooping mob drive a lioness off their kill, snapping at her rump until she fled, growling, into the bush."—*The Marvels of Animal Behavior*.

So, hyenas are both scavengers and predators. A pack of spotted hyenas may harass a group of zebras, for instance. Often, but not always, they will concentrate on lame, sick or young animals. The hyenas are persistent and usually get their quarry. (If human settlement has driven wild animals from an area, great hunger may cause spotted hyenas to prey upon domestic sheep or cattle.) Sometimes they hunt alone, but they are more successful as a group. Spotted hyenas are so strong

that they have been known to drag away the body of an ass.

It is not beyond hyenas to take advantage of an unusual situation in order to get food. As 'garbage collectors,' striped hyenas do quite well. The walls of certain African villages have holes through which these hyenas enter at night to consume refuse that the villagers cast from their huts. By morning, it is said, only some slivers of bone remain.

Concerning the spotted, or laughing, hyena, Dr. Bernhard Grzimek reports: "Hordes of hyenas lived off the refuse from the Mbagathy slaughterhouse (near Nairobi) during World War I. At the time only the meat of cattle was processed by slaughterhouses; the viscera, bones, and heads were thrown away. After that war ended, slaughtering operations ceased, and the hyenas had to find new sources of food. They bit the brushes off brooms, dragged pots away, chewed and swallowed leather goods including shoes, bicycle seats, and sweaty hat bands, rummaged through garbage cans, and even killed several women working in fields."

A Killer of Humans?

Yes, hyenas have been known to kill humans! This is so where land has been cleared or wild animals no longer are in the area. Seldom will spotted hyenas attack people during the daylight hours. At night, however, when natives may sleep outdoors because of the heat, often they have been attacked by hyenas. Since the assailants generally go for the victim's face, some persons have horrible scars to show for these encounters. "Also," states *The Animal Kingdom*, "it is a common practice in many parts of Asia and Africa for natives to move aged people, about to die, out of their huts and villages. Being superstitious about death, the natives never let it happen in their dwellings. The

old people are left to meet their end out in the open, and we cannot be surprised if the hyena does not turn up its nose at such golden opportunities. Many times the beast has been reported as a grave-rober."

Taking sensible precautions against molestation by this bone-crusher is not unwise. On the other hand, if the striped hyena is cornered by dogs, it chooses flight instead of a fight. But if unable to get away, this hyena may foil the dogs by playing dead. Then, with its enemies off guard, the hyena is likely to jump to its feet and bound away to safety. And what a burst of speed! As much as 40 miles (64 kilometers) per hour!

Is the Hyena Bisexual?

Legend has it that spotted hyenas are able to assume, at will, either the role of the male or that of the female. True, the external reproductive organs of both sexes have a similar appearance. But is this animal bisexual?

One medical doctor shot a spotted hyena and, upon dissection, found that this male had rudimentary female sexual organs. Another hyena that he shot was a female, but it had rudimentary male organs. Reportedly, rudimentary sex organs of both male and female were noted in yet another full-grown spotted hyena. Another man reported that he had a hyena that had both fathered and mothered at least a litter. However, it has been suggested that possibly the three animals examined by the doctor were not adults. Also, *The Animal Kingdom* states:

"A report, based on observations on mating spotted hyenas in zoological gardens, by Karl M. Schreeder, published in 1952, seems to prove conclusively that this animal is not bisexual.

"In embryo, a mammal is potentially both male and female; as it develops, one sex becomes dominant. Nature has its im-

perfect products, and there may be signs of maleness and femaleness together in one animal. Such a creature is never capable of the functions of both sexes, and is usually incapable of the functions of either."

So, the female hyena is the one that bears the offspring. In the case of the spotted, or laughing, hyena, one or two (occasionally three) young ones are born after a gestation period of 99 to 110 days. Incidentally, the little ones are born completely furred. Also, their eyes are open and they are able to run immediately after their birth.

What About That Eerie "Laugh"?

By now you may have gathered that not all these animals are called "laughing" hyenas. That distinction is reserved for the spotted hyena of Africa. Therefore,

to hear its eerie howl most persons will have to do some traveling.

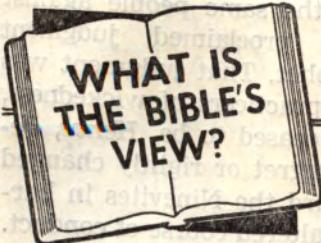
The brown hyena does not laugh, but emits a melancholy cry, "wah-wah-wah." For that matter, the laughing hyena produces many sounds. Generally, its howl rises from a low, sad tone to a high, shrill sound. Though wolves bay with their heads raised toward the moon, the spotted hyena keeps its head close to the earth and lets out a long, rather soft sound. But upon approaching a carcass, this hyena's howl becomes eerie, indeed. Since the animal is a ventriloquist of sorts, it is hard to know just where that weird sound is originating. It may fool you for a while because of resemblance to wild, hysterical human laughter. But, sooner or later, you probably will realize that you have heard the chilling cry of a champion bone-crusher—the "laughing" hyena.

A Successful Search

MY MATE and I felt that there was something missing in our lives. She wanted to learn more about the Bible and said that we needed to go to church. But my experience with churches was that they just wanted money. Nevertheless, my mate picked out a Pentecostal church and went. When she came home she was frightened; people were running around screaming. All I could say was, "I told you so."

Then she learned of another religious organization's offer of a Bible study, but for a fee. Later, one of Jehovah's Witnesses offered her a free home Bible study, which she accepted. Eventually she went to the Kingdom Hall, and when she came back she was really excited about what she had learned. I couldn't believe it. People just don't come back from church happy. "And you know," she exclaimed, "they didn't even take up a collection!"

I said all churches pass the plate; you just missed it. So I decided to go the following Sunday just to prove that they did take up a collection. The title of the talk was "The Authenticity of the Bible." It was so good that I forgot to check for the collection plate. So I had to go back the next week to see. The second week the talk was more interesting than the first, and again I forgot to look for the collection plate. By the end of the meeting the third week I knew that we had found what had been missing in our lives. I, too, accepted a regular home Bible study, and now we rejoice to have learned the truth of God's Word.—Contributed.



WHAT IS
THE BIBLE'S
VIEW?

Does God Feel Regret?

"**G**OD is not a man that he should tell lies, neither a son of mankind that he should feel regret. Has he himself said it and will he not do it, and has he spoken and will he not carry it out?"—Num. 23:19.

These divinely inspired words spoken by Balaam show that Jehovah God does not regret in the manner that humans do. We may misjudge matters or err in other ways and, therefore, have feelings of regret. The Most High, however, never makes a mistake. The Scriptures tell us: "Perfect is his activity, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness, with whom there is no injustice; righteous and upright is he." (Deut. 32:4) Accordingly, Jehovah's purpose remains unchanged.

He will, for example, never regret having constituted his Son as high priest according to the manner of Melchizedek. The psalmist declared: "Jehovah has sworn (and he will feel no regret): 'You are a priest to time indefinite according to the manner of Melchize-

dek!'" (Ps. 110:4; Heb. 7:21) Because the Son will always remain faithful, Jehovah will never have any reason to change His attitude toward him. His purpose respecting the Son is no mistake.

Similarly, the Almighty will never regret having chosen the Israelites for the sake of their devoted forefathers. True, time and again they proved unfaithful and, in the first century C.E., the majority rejected the promised Messiah. Nevertheless, a remnant responded favorably. The fact that their fellow countrymen proved to be enemies of the "good news" did not prejudice God's view of the believing remnant. Also, this did not change the fact that the forefathers had served Jehovah loyally. Hence, the apostle Paul could write: "With reference to God's choosing they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. For the gifts and the calling of God are not things he will regret." (Rom. 11:28, 29) Yes, the faithful Jewish remnant was beloved of God despite the unbelief of the majority.

There is a particular sense, though, in which Jehovah God may feel regret. In the Scriptures we read: "He would feel regret according to the abundance of his grand loving-kindness." (Ps. 106:45) How is this to be understood?

Since Jehovah God does not make mistakes, his regretting manifestly refers to a change in attitude toward humans. Just what prompts such a change on his part?

Take the situation in the days of Noah. At that time the earth was filled with violence. The Bible reports: "Jehovah saw that the badness of man was abundant in the earth and every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only bad all the time. And Jehovah felt regrets that he had made men in the earth, and he felt hurt at his heart."—Gen. 6:5, 6.

We are not to conclude from this that God felt that he had made a mistake in creating man. This could not be, for he pronounced all his creative works "very good," measuring up to his standard of perfection. (Gen. 1:31) Rather, Jehovah regretted that humans had chosen to follow a course of disobedience. He regretted that they, with the exception of Noah and his immediate family,

had become so corrupt that he was forced to take rightful action against them.

The same conclusion can be drawn regarding Jehovah's selection of Saul as Israel's first king. First Samuel 15:10, 11 states: "The word of Jehovah now came to Samuel, saying: 'I do regret that I have caused Saul to reign as king.'" Why? "Because he has turned back from following me, and my words he has not carried out." Note that God's regret was not prompted by any feeling that the choice of Saul was wrong but resulted from that one's failure to use his privilege in harmony with the divine will. It was Saul who, as a free moral agent, had changed, and this called for a change on God's part.

Because Saul had opted for a course of disobedience, adverse judgment was rendered against him. That rightful judgment was not something that the Most High would later regret. The word of Jehovah through Samuel was: "Jehovah has ripped away the royal rule of Israel from off you today, and he will certainly give it to a fellowman of yours who is better than you. And, besides, the Excellency of Israel will not prove false, and He will not feel regrets."—1 Sam. 15:28, 29.

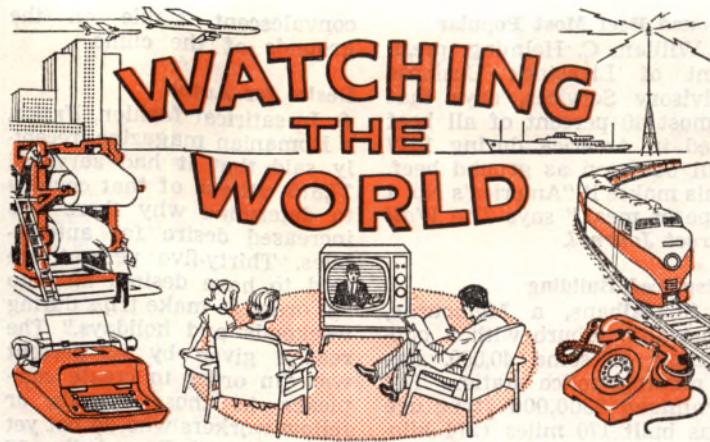
However, there have been times when Jehovah God expressed a condemnatory judgment and then felt regret over it. Again, a change was made by the people involved. This is illustrated in the case of the Ninevites in the time of Jonah. The prophet Jonah was sent to proclaim to them: "Only forty days more, and Nineveh will be overthrown." (Jonah 3:4) Taking the warning to heart, the people, including the king, repented. "And the true God got to see their works, that they had turned back from their bad way; and so the true God felt regret over the calamity that he had spoken of causing to them; and he did not cause it."—Jonah 3:10.

In a sense, by repenting, the Ninevites

no longer were the same people against whom Jehovah proclaimed judgment through his prophet. That judgment was directed against practicers of wickedness, which they had ceased to be. Hence, Jehovah God felt regret or rightly changed his attitude toward the Ninevites in harmony with their altered course of conduct. Thus, whenever the Most High makes known a coming judgment, that prior announcement presents people with an opportunity to change. His pronouncements of future blessings are likewise conditional.

But this does not mean that Jehovah God will give individuals and nations unlimited time and opportunity to choose a right or a wrong course. When the limit of his patience is reached, he will execute his unchangeable judgment. That was true in connection with unfaithful Jerusalem in the time of Jeremiah. The situation had come to the point where the people were so set in a bad way that they refused to repent. That is why the following was proclaimed through Jeremiah: "Who will show compassion upon you, O Jerusalem, and who will sympathize with you, and who will turn aside to ask about your welfare? You yourself have deserted me," is the utterance of Jehovah. 'Backwards is the way you keep walking. And I shall stretch out my hand against you and bring you to ruin. I have got tired of feeling regret.'"—Jer. 15:5, 6.

Jehovah's dealings with humankind assure us that he will never feel regret about his unchangeable purpose. His word will prove true and he will live up completely to the terms of his promises. However, if individuals choose the wrong course, he will change his attitude toward them. Though he does not desire to act against them, their course of action requires that he do so in agreement with his unchangeable standard of justice. May we, therefore, always strive to be faithful to God.



Achievement Despite Infirmity

◆ Despite a crippling infirmity, thirty-four-year-old British physicist Stephen Hawking of Cambridge University recently advanced his new theory regarding "black holes," a term usually applied to remnants of stars that have collapsed after all their nuclear fuel has burned up. According to Hawking, the universe is virtually filled with "little black holes" no bigger than atomic particles. He holds that these "black holes" were formed of the primeval material of the universe. "Almost as remarkable as his theory," says *Newsweek* magazine, "is the fact that Hawking does all his mathematics in his head, without the aid of calculators." The young physicist has been crippled badly by a neurological disorder known as atypical amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. Hawking's condition continues to get worse. Although he speaks with difficulty, is unable to write and is confined to a wheelchair, his mind remains extremely keen. According to *Newsweek*, "some experts already rate Hawking as one of the dozen most creative theoretical physicists of this century."

And Now Medipet

◆ A Sydney, Australia, insurance company recently introduced Medipet—health insur-

ance for dogs. Under this plan, for \$45 (U.S.), dog owners can cover their pets for veterinarian fees involving illness and accident. Also, there is coverage in the event that some person is bitten by the dog.

Tax Loads

◆ Recently, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development in Paris, France, released a survey on tax burdens in various countries. Denmark, where taxes amounted to 46.7 percent of the gross national product (GNP), was the most heavily taxed nation. Here, by country, is a partial list showing in cents how much of every GNP dollar goes for taxes: Denmark (46.7); Norway (45.3); Netherlands (45.2); Sweden (44.2); Luxembourg (40.8); Austria (38.1); Belgium (38.1); Germany (37.6); France (37.5); Finland (36.3); Britain (35.6); Canada (34.8); New Zealand (32.7); Ireland (32.4); Italy (31.9); United States (28.9); Australia (27.2).

Fighting Highway Fatigue

◆ Dr. Lawrence Morehouse, director of the University of California's Human Performance Laboratory, has offered some suggestions for battling fatigue while driving. His recommendations include such ex-

ercises as looking alternately at the road and then the dashboard, changing driving hands, moving your head from one side to the other, and even wiggling your toes.

Malaria Peril

◆ Malaria is a disease of serious proportions in some sixty nations and involves approximately 600 million people. It is reported that on the continent of Africa alone this mosquito-borne malady claims the life of a million children annually. One method of malaria control involves extensive use of insecticides. However, some carriers have developed a resistance to these. Of the drugs used for treatment, amodiaquin and chloroquine have proved to be most effective. Yet, in this case too a certain strain of parasite has proved to be resistant. "After some two decades of relative dormancy," reports *To the Point International*, "malaria is threatening to assume epidemic proportions again in India. The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that by 1980 the mosquito-carried disease will have touched 12 million people, of whom 400,000 will die; and the possibility is increasing the urgency of the organisation's attempts to find an immunising agent."

"Free Flow System"

◆ Back in 1913 conveyor-belt systems were introduced in U.S. automobile assembly plants. Recently, however, Japan's Honda Motor Company installed new conveyor systems in its factories at Waki and Kumamoto. Called the "free flow system," it allows each worker to halt and release the moving belt at will by using a foot pedal. *Parade* magazine reports: "If he wishes additional time for his task, he stops the belt, separates the engine from its receptacle and works on it." Reportedly, the new system

has raised the quality of production and has increased the morale of the employees.

Bikes versus Autos

◆ "When people use the automobile for necessary transportation, that is one thing," declared Mayor Michel Crépeau of La Rochelle, France, adding: "But when a man uses it as a sign of social status, that is something else. Then there are also those people who become swine when they get in their cars." Some months ago the mayor put 250 yellow bicycles, bought by the municipality, at the public's disposal. The town's residents were encouraged to use them free of charge, as when doing their shopping. "They are a good idea," said one young woman, "but try and find one. People have ruined them." Nonetheless, the bicycle campaign was being pushed in the Atlantic port town to fight the noise and fumes of the automobile.

Blue Cheese Perilous?

◆ Roquefortine, a neurotoxin (nerve poison), has been discovered in blue cheeses made in seven lands. Two Canadian doctors found the substance in Roquefort from France, Stilton from England, and Gorgonzola from Denmark, Finland, Italy, Quebec and West Germany. The American Chemical Society reports that the neurotoxin causes "convulsive seizures" in mice. "But," says *Science Digest*, "don't throw out your blue cheese. According to the doctors, you'd have to eat two tons of the stuff before you'd experience any adverse effect."

Earth's Mechanical Satellites

◆ Now circling the earth are 800 satellites of man-made origin. Of these, about 455 are said to be communications satellites. Reportedly, weather and espionage data are furnished by the other orbiting devices.

Ground Beef Most Popular

◆ William C. Helming, president of Livestock Business Advisory Services, says that almost 40 percent of all beef used in America during 1977 will be eaten as ground beef. This makes it "America's No. 1 type of meat," says *The Wall Street Journal*.

Misplaced Building

◆ St. Albans, a Melbourne, Australia, suburb with a population of some 40,000, has a missing police station. The promised \$300,000 structure was built 170 miles (274 kilometers) northwest of the city at St. Arnoud, a town of 3,000 having only 3 policemen. The reason? A notable mistake by a government clerk.

Surgery for Horses

◆ It has been customary to put to death a horse that has suffered a broken leg. Now, however, a group of veterinarians at a recently opened clinic in Battice, Belgium, is making progress toward regular operations on trotting and show horses. Prior to surgery, the horse is fitted with boots that prevent its hooves from cutting the mattress forming the floor of the anesthetic chamber next to the operating theater. The horse is given an injection and taken into the chamber, where foam padding on the walls and floor enable it to fall without injury. Thereafter the veterinarian opens the doors of that chamber and the mattress is rolled out into the operating theater. Wearing a respiratory mask, the horse is hydraulically raised on this mattress to a position that is comfortable for the surgeon. When the surgery has been completed, both horse and mattress are again rolled into the special chamber, the doors are closed and the animal remains there until it becomes conscious once again and can be taken to a

convalescent stable on the grounds of the clinic.

Desire for Autos

◆ In satirical fashion, *Urzica*, a Romanian magazine, recently said that it had surveyed 17,875 citizens of that country to determine why there was increased desire for automobiles. Thirty-five percent are said to have desired an auto "in order to make trips during weekends and holidays." The reason given by 26 percent was "in order to create complexes in those friends or fellow workers who do not yet have a car." Reportedly, 12 percent indicated that they wanted an automobile "in order to gain a decisive advantage in relations with people of the opposite sex."

"Threatened," but

◆ Not Endangered
For the second time since the Endangered Species Act was approved in 1973, the circumstances of a species have improved sufficiently for it to be removed from the endangered listing. It was announced in January that alligators were being taken off the list of animal species in imminent peril of extinction in the United States. According to Assistant Interior Secretary Nathaniel P. Reed, some 75 percent of the country's alligators have now been placed on the "threatened" listing, described as "less restrictive." Reed held that the struggle to save these animals had been led by the conservation community and officials in the South. He pointed out that two decades ago the alligators "were headed for extinction as hide hunters indiscriminately slaughtered them and their habitat was steadily being destroyed by development." Three species of western trout were removed from the endangered list in 1976.

"The Gigantic Raid"

❖ In an article titled "The Gigantic Raid," columnist Sebastian Leitner of the Vienna, Austria, *Kurier* decried the fact that in 1975 Austrian department-store accounts were 2.5 billion schilling (\$145 million) short. Where did the goods representing this amount go? "Filched, pilfered, nearly 500 Schilling [\$29.00]" per Austrian, Leitner complained. He declared that when "thievery takes over to that extent, then something of utmost importance in this country has become rotten to the core—morals."

Biorhythm Blunders

❖ Do a person's so-called "cycles" of physical, intellectual and emotional energy, or "biorhythms," really affect his performance? Medical psychologist A. James Fix of the University of Nebraska medi-

cal school checked the records of 70 major-league baseball players to find out, comparing their "up" and "down" days. "The average batting average on up days was .206," reports the *New York Times*. "On down days it was .250 [21 percent better], and on 'triple zero days,' when all three cycles are neutral, the average was .276 [34 percent better]."

Smaller Babies

❖ The Medical Department of Tohoku University in Japan reports that expectant mothers who smoke give birth to babies weighing an average of 200 grams (7 ounces) less than babies of nonsmokers. This corresponds with the findings of the World Health Organization, that babies of smoking mothers were from 150 to 240 grams (5 to 8 ounces) lighter. In addition to harmful nicotine, an expectant mother who smokes takes in carbon mon-

oxide. This combines with the blood to reduce the amount of oxygen distributed to various parts of the body, including the embryo.

Endangered Elephants

❖ Alarm has been expressed in recent times regarding the dwindling elephant population in various parts of Africa. For example, in Uganda's Kabalega National Park, official counts indicated 14,000 elephants living there in 1973, but only 2,600 now. In another area, there were 2,700 in 1973, but only 1,200 presently. One of the major reasons for the loss was the illegal ivory trade. But all areas of Africa are not affected the same. In Tanzania's huge 21,000-square-mile (54,400-square-kilometer) Selous Game Reserve a recent survey indicated that there are more than 80,000 elephants, with little or no poaching reported.

