

To Your Good Health

8-Year-Old Too Young For Cigars

By JOSEPH G. MOLNER, M.D.

"Dear Dr. Molner: My daughter will be eight years old in a few months and I am having a smoking problem with her. At the tender age of two she wanted to smoke so I finally let her take a deep drag and she choked."

"Then she let me alone about cigarettes until a year ago when she started pestering again. A week ago I got some cheap cigars and told her to smoke, thinking she would get sick and not want them any more."

"Well, sir, she smoked a whole cigar and then a cigarette. While smoking she drank a quart and a half of water. She didn't get sick and she was inhaling."

"Then I had her gargle mouth wash, thinking she might swallow some and it would burn her tummy. Nothing I tried worked."

"Next morning I hurried her to the bathroom, telling her the doctor told me her throat would close up and would have to make a long cut in her neck so she could breathe if she ever smoked any more, and to stop it, I would have to swab it. Over her protests I painted her throat with antiseptic three times that day and the next. I think I have frightened her. She says she doesn't want to smoke any more."

"She does have what the doctor calls chronic tonsillitis. She knows what a sore throat feels like. Have you ever heard of anything like this and how would you solve the problem?"

"MRS."

No, and I hope I never do hear of anything like it.

I'm sorry for both of you, but mostly for the little girl.

All children want to do everything they see grownups do. This includes smoking. The answer is just, "No. Not until you are old enough." And that's that. No arguments. No fancy tricks.

That's what your monkey-business with the cigar was—a fancy trick, and it certainly backfired.

When none of your other tricks aimed at making her sick succeeded, you tried to scare the daylight out of her with that story about the doctor. Shame on you!

And I wonder what her "tonsillitis" really is. Could it be the result of her imagination, based on your scare story? Such physical reactions to mental suggestion are far from unknown. That, plus the brutal swabbing of the child's throat.

None of this, of course, could have happened if you had observed a basic rule: never lie to a child. You can refuse to answer some things, you can evade them with such remarks as, "I'll explain when you're older."

"You can, and usually must, oversimplify things at times. But never lie to a child."

Brazil an Untamed Land Offering Riches to Pioneers

WASHINGTON—One of every two South Americans lives in Brazil, whose territory covers almost half the continent.

Most of Brazil's 74 million people prefer to live on the crowded seaboard. But their nation is a land of the frontier, Peter T. White reports in the September issue of National Geographic. An untamed wilderness of rain forest, swamp, and high savanna beckons pioneers with the promise of land to be taken and wealth to be gained.

During a 10,000-mile journey through Brazil, the Geographic staff writer found industrial surge, economic struggle, and rugged pride.

There was the lady whose tax form said: "Do not write in this space; for official use only." She wrote across that space: "I am a Brazilian, I am vaccinated, and I write where I please."

Brasilis Growing

The national government is run from two centers—the carnival city of Rio de Janeiro and construction-noisy Brasilia. The new federal capital on the Goias plateau is now occupied by more than 200,000, including 20,000 government workers and

their families and 60,000 construction workers.

As apartments become available, more civil servants are moving in, reluctantly. White comments, in the spirit of a Caribbea: "Prices were high in Brasilia. And who would leave Rio unless he had to?"

On the other hand, where else would a hotel build a luxury swimming pool for a charity fashion show in 48 hours? Construction in Brasilia goes on night and day.

Sounds of concrete mixers and hammers echo in many parts of Brazil. Skyscrapers soar above old cities. Wide highways ribbon populated areas. Traffic is heavy on the new roads, for Brazil is South America's prime automobile manufacturer. A total of 145,632 vehicles, largely made with native materials and manpower, rolled off the assembly lines last year.

Brazil produces an array of other commodities—37 per cent of all coffee consumed in the world, rubber, sugar, hides, nuts, and rosewood oil, to name a few. And, of course, jute for coffee bags.

There is still a lot of coffee in Brazil—too much, perhaps. Surplus beans sometimes go up

in columns of smoke. All coffee offered for sale is bought by the government if no one else bids.

Progress may be the new way of life in Brazil, but it does not come overnight. Inflation is the chief topic of conversation: slumps in the coffee market and Brasilia's cost are largely blamed. To make ends meet, some Brazilians must rely on friends or second and third jobs.

Gangsters in Goias

The interior's wild-west atmosphere is most evident in Goias. Here, grileiros, or gangsters, take advantage of farmers' illiteracy to steal choice lands. The farmers sometimes retaliate with bullets, and peasant leagues organize to combat land-grabbing.

Many Brazilian Indians still live as Stone Ageers in the dimly known back country. Tribes are wracked by disease brought in from the outside world.

In Amazonian jungles, White found evidence of cannibalism. The head of a Pataca Novos family explained why he had eaten some relatives: "We don't like them to go into the ground. We put them on the fire. They are good. Only the men eat. The women cry."

Ask Andy

Sidereal Time Complex

Andy sends a complete, 20-volume set of the World Book Encyclopedia to David Allison, age 11, of Charlotte, N.C., for his question:

What is sidereal time?

Sidereal time is the hour angle of the vernal equinox—but beware of making that statement. Somebody may ask you to explain it. To an astronomer, sidereal time is as simple as ABC, for he uses it in his work. We amateur star gazers may not grasp all the complex details, but we can cope with a general idea of sidereal time.

The clock and the calendar are based on the sun as it moves or seems to move against a background of fixed stars. The earth's orbit is not perfect and our everyday solar time is not perfect. Sidereal means stary and sidereal time is based on the fixed stars. They give a more exact timepiece and a truer picture of the earth's oval and wobbly orbit.

The stars, of course, are scattered far and near across the heavens—but they seem to be painted on the inside of a huge hollow ball. We call this the celestial sphere and our globe is inside it. Once a day the earth rotates, giving us a circular view of the celestial sphere. The wheeling celestial sphere is a sky map and a clock.

A map must have directions and guide lines. The celestial poles are above the earth's two poles and the celestial equator is halfway between its two

poles. The celestial meridian passes through the poles and cuts the celestial equator in halves. The celestial sphere is sliced into quarters. Its equator and meridian are divided into 24 slices called hours.

The fixed stars on the celestial sphere seem to swing around as the earth rotates. In a sidereal day, a fixed star moves around and back into position—and the sidereal day is four minutes shorter than the solar day. During a year, the sun seems to pass through twelve constellations of fixed stars.

On March 21, it crosses a point on the celestial equator. This point, called the vernal equinox, is used to figure the sidereal year—which is about 20 minutes longer than the solar or calendar year.

But each day, the celestial equator swings around our globe and at one moment the vernal equinox point crosses the celestial meridian. This moment is sidereal noon. Because of the earth's imperfect orbit, sidereal noon may happen at any time of day or night.

The fixed stars of the celestial sphere are the clock face for figuring sidereal time. The clock hands are the celestial equator and meridian which slice the sphere in quarters. The pivot point is the vernal equinox on the equator and sidereal time is the hour angle between this point and the celestial meridian.

Andy sends a Hammond's Nature Atlas of America to Timmy David, age 9, of Tulsa, Okla., for his question:

What makes a boomerang come back?

A boomerang looks like a bent stick, smoothly carved. The corner bend is an angle. The angle and the smooth sides of the boomerang cut a curved path through the air and the right person can toss a boomerang and make it come back to land at his feet. But if you tried it, chances are, the curved stick would just fly off and flop down far away like a stone.

The Australian natives, who invented the boomerang, mastered two tricks. They learned to cut and polish a stick of the right shape—one with the right size, weight and the proper angle to cut a curved path through the air. Then they practiced with endless patience and learned how to throw the boomerang to make it curve and come back.

Andy awards each day a full set of the World Book Encyclopedia to the first questioner who selects to answer. When a second questioner is answered a large world globe or atlas is awarded. Questions are accepted from teen age or less-than-teen-age readers. They should be addressed to the Register-Guard, 975 High St., Eugene, Ore. Andy prefers that questions be written on postcards rather than in letter form.

