

to get the child to the surgeon quickly enough.

Toys with poor paint, sharp edges, fragile materials, rough surfaces and sharp corners also belong on the don't list.

Psychologists agree that children's toys should be simple. The elaborate ones that tempt Santa's grown-up aides might as well be put on the don't give list because the children will not enjoy them anyway.

When Santa stops at a sick child's bedside, he needs to have a supply of lightweight toys and small books with plenty of pictures and large type. If the sick child is in a hospital or has some contagious sickness, his toys should be cleanable. Woolly dogs and stuffed animals and dolls are examples of the non-cleanable type that are not too welcome in a hospital and may have to be heartlessly discarded when the small patient gets well.

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ZOOLOGY

Whales' Brains Are Adapted To the Whale Way of Life

BRAINS of whales and their cranial nerves show structures remarkably adapted to the conditions and necessities of their aquatic lives, report Drs. Ferd A. Ries and Orthello R. Langworthy of the Johns Hopkins University, who have had opportunity to study the cranial anatomy of these sea giants. (*Journal of Comparative Neurology.*)

Whales appear to have little or no sense of smell, and the olfactory center in the brain is correspondingly undeveloped. In the sperm whale it persists in merely rudimentary form.

Whales' ears, on the contrary, are highly developed, and the brain and nervous structures having to do with hearing and the sense of balance (another ear function, especially important to swimming animals) are conspicuous and highly specialized. The acoustic nerve is the largest of the cranial nerves. The organs of hearing are modified to perceive stimuli moving through water instead of air.

The facial and trigeminal nerves, which humans notice only when they "act up" in neuralgia, are of great importance to whales. They control the blowhole lining and musculature of the blowtube, without which of course no whale can operate.

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A lion's mane protects its throat when it meets another lion in combat.



TO LEAVE HOME

Within sight of snow in the Andes Mountains of South America grow these 200-foot-tall wax palms. Found as high as 13,000 feet above the sea level, these hardy trees may some day grace parks of Pacific Coast cities.

ECOLOGY

Cold No Terror to Wax Palms Growing In Sight of Snow

WAX palms, that now wave their 200-foot tops above the 10,000-foot Quindio Pass in the equatorial Andes, may presently grace the parks of Pacific Coast cities from San Diego to Grays Harbor, Wash.

Similarity in climate between the South American highland and the North American coastal strip offers this possibility, says Dr. Miriam L. Bomhard, botanist of the U. S. Forest Service, in the Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution.

These palms, as Dr. Bomhard describes them, are among the most remarkable trees in the world. They are easily the tallest of all palms, their slender stately trunks lifting their feathery tops 200 feet or more into the air. When first discovered they were the tallest trees known.

They grow in the high Andes of northwestern South America, from Venezuela to southern Peru. The altitude of

their habitat is never less than 4,000 feet and rises to 10,000 feet at Quindio Pass in Colombia, and to 13,000 feet on the Colombia-Ecuador border. It is cold country, within sight of perpetual snows on the lofty Andean peaks; not at all the kind of habitat commonly envisioned for palms. Some of the species regularly endure temperatures below freezing.

The tree is known as the wax palm because the trunk is covered with a coating of wax, which travelers have described as giving it the appearance of a towering pillar of alabaster. Natives scrape this off and use it for candles and matches. It burns with a clear white flame.

There are several distinct species of wax palms, one of them bearing the name *Beethovenia*, in honor of the great German composer. Each species has its own peculiar range of altitude and climate preferences.

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