

person. By way of "cure" for a "cold," cold, fresh air stands easily first, for easily understandable reasons, since the only real cure is the destruction of the abnormal bacterial growth. When this is stopped and the body is cleared both of the dead bacteria, their poisons and the body waste which has been imperfectly eliminated because of the disturbance set up by the "cold," the attack is cured. Quinine, so much used for colds, has only the tonic effects of cold fresh air, and not all of these. Certain other drugs also much used produce their effect, such as it is, by checking the secretions of the respiratory and mouth membranes; and this scantiness of moisture may hinder the growth of the microbes until the body resistance is capable of defeating them. Inoculation with a vaccine made from organisms such as may be supposed to cause colds is another but uncertain remedy. Other new ideas do not really cure; but may relieve the system from some of the clogging due to the disturbance and make the body more efficient in working the real cure, which is the destruction of the invading organisms by the body cells and by the defensive and bactericidal substances which the body cells may furnish to the blood and other fluids of the body.

This doctrine, that cold never causes "colds," is a favorite with those sometimes referred to as "fresh air fiends." It is rightly rejected by every one with wisdom enough to learn from his own experience. If by cold we mean chilling of the body or exposure, then cold certainly may cause

"colds," just as chilling of the body may cause pneumonia. The explanation is too rational to be dodged. There are most of the time present in the mouth and nose organisms ready to extend their growth. Whatever lowers the vitality of the body tends to lessen the body's resistance to these organisms, which resistance ordinarily keeps them in check. By removing, or, rather by lessening, the usual body resistance, a chilling of the body may give these organisms a chance for the extended growth which causes the symptoms known as "cold." The mechanism of this lowering or resistance is a good deal more obscure than the fact itself. It is conceivable that some part of the weakened defence lies in a diminished activity of the leucocytes which are the scavengers and microbe devourers of the body. Such an assumption is entirely in harmony with what is known of body processes.

Since chilling of the body may, and does, cause colds, we should perhaps somewhat temper our indignation against persons who are afraid of "drafts." Meanwhile, the apostles of fresh air should charge themselves with the duty of explaining to unbelievers that fresh air ought not to mean exposure or chilling of the body. Proper clothing, even without the heat producing effects of muscular exercises, will keep the body safe in the coldest of fresh air, else the north pole would have stayed where most folks always thought it belonged.

B. B.

