

sensitivities seldom develop toward irritants that are rarely encountered.

In England, it is said that hay fever patients are more likely to be sensitive to the pollen of grasses than to that of ragweed. In the United States, ragweed is the chief offender. Ragweed is rare in England, an extremely common plant in the United States.

So, presumably, it is with the psychoallergens. It is the poor fellow who lives with the wife's mother who is most likely to develop "mother-in-law fever."

#### Abnormal Susceptibility

Allergy is simply a condition of abnormal susceptibility to something which is perfectly harmless to another person. The old adage that "What is one man's meat is another man's poison" applies admirably here. The allergic person is that other man. How does he "get that way?" Well, that is a long story and is tied up with a related question concerning the development of immunity.

If a living cell is injured, the result is either repair of the damage or death of the cell. But that is not the whole story, Dr. Marshall points out. If the repair process once starts properly, Nature does not lie down on the job. She not only repairs the damage, but produces much more of the repair material than is needed. The surplus repair parts are discharged into the blood stream. These are called antibodies. They give the body protection against later infection by the same injurious substance.

Thus the final step in this process is protection or immunity. But a preliminary stage, before the antibodies are produced, is one in which the body has an increased susceptibility to the virus.

Decreased resistance to infections or allergens also has been noted following excessive strain and chilling. Likewise, emotional upsets have a tendency to weaken the resistance of the body, Dr. Marshall points out.

#### Linked With Emotions

The connection between the emotions and the allergies is interesting in connection with Dr. Marshall's theory of psycho-allergies.

In the first place, the allergies affect generally the breathing apparatus as in hay fever or asthma, the digestive apparatus as in nausea or sick headache, or the skin as in hives. These are matters controlled by the involuntary nervous system. And in turn, they are controlled by the endocrine glands and the emotions.

The involuntary nervous system in-

cludes what is known as the vagus system of nerves which control the contraction of the involuntary muscles. The person with asthma suffers because the smooth muscle surrounding the bronchial tubes contracts and interferes with breathing. The person with hives has an outpouring of serum from the minute blood vessels of the skin. The person with sick headache has "hives of the brain" or a spasm in the blood vessels there.

Emotion can bring on an attack of asthma in an asthmatic person. Even in others it can produce that "heart in the throat" feeling which interferes with correct breathing. That emotion can produce headache is well known to most persons. It is by upsetting the working of the glands and involuntary nervous system that it can produce these and other allergic symptoms.

#### In the Psycho-Allergic

And, just as the emotions play their part in the physical upsets of the allergic person, so the body's mechanisms are disturbed by the emotional upsets of the psycho-allergic person. Ulcers in the stomach, contractions of the intestinal apparatus, high blood pressure—these are a few of the physical disturbances believed to have their origin, or at least their aggravation, in emotional upsets.

Emotion changes the blood pressure,

interferes with digestion, disturbs the heart action and causes marked changes in the action of the endocrine glands.

Psycho-allergy really seems like just another face of the familiar coin of physical allergy.

#### Modus Operandi

"How does an individual become hypersensitive?" asks Dr. Marshall, and then proceeds to answer.

"It seems that the modus operandi is the same in psycho-allergy as it is in the field of allergy. A person may be immune congenitally to certain psychoallergens; furthermore, he may be able to desensitize himself to them, which is another way of stating that he effects a sublimation or compensation according to the concepts of Freud.

"Thus, an individual may become hypersensitive to a particular subject which acts specifically as a psychoallergen upon that individual; likewise, he may undergo desensitization by himself by means of the above mentioned processes, or he may be desensitized through the method of psychoanalysis."

The newborn baby whose emotions have never been excited is not psychoallergic, Dr. Marshall continues. But if he is subjected to some sort of emotion arousing situation, then he may grow into a state of hypersensitivity. This is like that period of hypersus-



#### PREHISTORIC CORN CRIB

Part of the huge hoard of Indian corn unearthed under the floor of an Indian dwelling at Wickliffe, Kentucky (SNL June 12, page 377). Robert McCormick Adams, archaeologist who is exploring the site, has found a flint hoe left by the Indian farmers outside the house.