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MEDICINE

**Whooping Cough May
Have Dual Personality**

WHOOPING COUGH may have a dual personality. One-half of it may be the head cold infection with which it starts, and which may be caused by a germ of the filtrable virus type, so far unrecognized. The other part of its dual personality may be the cough stage, with whoop and other characteristic symptoms, which is probably caused by the whooping cough bacillus itself, known to scientists under several names.

The suggestion that the cold stage and the cough stage are separate and each caused by a different germ has been reached, in the course of investigations with chimpanzees, by Drs. Arnold R. Rich, Perrin H. Long, J. Howard Brown, L. Emmett Holt, Jr., and Eleanor A. Bliss of the Johns Hopkins Medical School. In their report to *Science*, the investigators state that further studies are being made in the hope of clearing up the situation.

Some of the chimpanzees had their throats sprayed with filtrates of sputum from early human cases of the diseases. These apes developed infections like common colds, but no coughs. Other chimpanzees got the whole sputum. One of these developed the cold-like infection first, and thirty days later, a second "cold" followed in two days by typical whooping cough. Other apes showed similar reaction when inoculated with whooping cough bacillus.

One other interpretation suggested by the investigators is that the cold infections were not part of the whooping cough at all, but were really common colds, acquired because the human cases of whooping cough from which the material was taken also were carriers of the common cold.

Science News Letter, October 15, 1932

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ENTOMOLOGY

**NATURE
RAMBLINGS**
by Frank Thone



Woolly Bears

ON WARM autumn days you will find them, humpity-crawling across the sidewalks, as though they were in a great hurry to get somewhere—very bristly caterpillars, black fore and aft with a broad band of red about their middles. Most other caterpillars have long since spun themselves into cocoons against the coming of winter, but these hustling little fellows seem to be indifferent to that threat and linger on without building their silken cabins.

The woolly bear caterpillar is an exception to the usual caterpillar rule of housing snugly through the winter and coming out in the spring as a butterfly or moth. Like his giant namesake among the warm-blooded animals, the woolly bear hibernates; seeks out a sheltered crack or corner somewhere and waits out the winter in a comatose condition. On warm days he is apt to rouse out of his sleep, and sometimes a prolonged thaw in January or February will bring him out in force. After the winter is over he continues his migration and feeding for some weeks before spinning in with a thin and careless cocoon.

Why the "woolly" part of his cognomen it is hard to guess. There is nothing curly about his covering; it is all straight, stiff bristles. And aside from his hibernating habit there is little to suggest a bear. Perhaps rather a porcupine, for if you touch him he instantly curls himself up head-to-tail, with his formidable armature bristling out in all directions. And those bristles do not depend merely on their strength and sharpness; they are often poisonous, even to the relatively tough human skin. They must be manifoldly formidable to enemies more nearly his own size.

Science News Letter, October 15, 1932