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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,
Authority on Meteorology

CYCLONOPATHS

No, a "cyclonopath" is not the path of a cyclone. Persons who are pathologically affected to an abnormal degree by weather - especially those who exhibit pronounced "weather neuroses" - are called "meteoropaths," and those whose symptoms vary with the passage of cyclonic disturbances are known specifically as "cyclonopaths." In the temperate zone a cyclone, or low, brings with it more or less rapid changes of barometric pressure, temperature, humidity, wind, cloudiness, etc. The relative importance of these elements in affecting susceptible human beings is a matter of much uncertainty.

The gross change of barometric pressure is probably not a factor, since it never exceeds that experienced in the ascent of a good-sized hill or small mountain. Indeed many cyclones do not expose us to greater pressure-changes in the course of 24 hours than we experience in a couple of minutes in riding in an elevator to the top of an average skyscraper. On the other hand there are rapid, ripple-like fluctuations of pressure, revealed by special types of barometer and perhaps dependent on minute details of wind structure, to which some people seem to be quite sensitive. The pathological effects of the Swiss foehn have been plausibly attributed to these fluctuations.

Variations in atmospheric humidity as well as in atmospheric temperature have marked effects in some cases through interfering with the operation of the heat-regulating mechanism of the body. Many people are depressed by cloudy skies, as was shown in the remarkable studies of the effects of clouds on school children made many years ago by G. Stanley Hall and J. E. W. Wallin.

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