liquid and had to be blown out. I then repeated the treatment and went to bed. After half an hour I felt queasy. Matters improved during the night and in the morning I repeated the treatment twice; by lunchtime I felt fine with little trace of the cold.

Perhaps this observation, if confirmed under more scientific conditions, might put an end to the 20-year-old argument about ascorbic acid and the common cold.

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1. Braendon OJ. *Int J Res Cammun* 1973.

PERNASAL VITAMIN C AND THE COMMON COLD

SIR,—In 1973 Olav J. Braendon, then at the UN Narcotics Laboratory in Geneva, published a ten-year study on Norwegian lumberjacks who did not have colds during periods spent in the mountains but were as susceptible as everyone else when they returned to the valleys.[1] The preventive factor was found to lie in reducing substances emanating from the pinewood burnt in the primitive stoves in the cabins, and further research showed isotdnic sodium ascorbate to be the most effective antj-toxidant when applied locally to the mucous membrane of the nose.

After discussion with a physiologist who suggested that the way to take vitamin C when you have a cold is to stuff it up your nose—I decided to put it to the test. At the beginning of what showed signs of becoming an especially nasty cold, I put some ascorbic acid powder up each nostril and sniffed in hard, to get it to the back of the nose and palate. Within 5 minutes the accumulated mucus turned