

plaques of a low degree of radio-activity, the intolerable itching, which is such a troublesome symptom in this disease, being usually relieved within a short time after the commencement of the applications. If there is not manifest and definite improvement within three weeks it is advisable to give another course of treatment, increasing the duration of the exposures. Wickham and Degrais, in their latest publication, state that they have treated about two hundred cases of chronic eczema, associated with lichenification, in this manner, and that the results have almost invariably been favorable. Bayet also reports 42 cases, 41 of which were successful. The decongestive and analgesic properties of radium are of special service in relieving the symptoms in this condition. Repeated applications of an unscreened plaque for five minutes at a time, are sometimes very useful in cases of acute eczema, with a tendency to recurrence. In chronic weeping eczema irradiation cannot be performed with equal facility, but in spite of this many successful cases have been reported, in some of which the eruption has not reappeared for a year or more after the cessation of the treatment. The prognosis is most favorable in the localized forms. Toiles of a low degree of radio-activity may give as good results as the stronger apparatus, but they cannot be applied with equal facility in the irritable and weeping form of eczema as in the dry variety. In all cases of eczema in which radium treatment is employed it is advisable to combine with it the ordinary local and constitutional treatment of the condition.

Radium has also been utilized in a few cases of eczema in the form of a pomade, which is applied with the object of relieving the inflammation and pruritus.

As an example of the favorable action of radium in this condition we may cite the following case which we have had under observation:

A gentleman, age 51, had suffered for years from eczema of the exposed parts of the body, and the skin on the face and hands was quite thickened and caused him constant irritation. He had employed all manner of local and internal medications. Twenty minute exposures of a radium plaque were given over the affected area. He was seen again in three weeks. The irritation was much less, but the thickening of the skin was still present. The same exposure was repeated. About two weeks later he had an acute exacerbation, and the skin was very red, irritable and formed vesicles at several points. During this acute attack he received three minute exposures to a plaque. When the acute inflammatory process had subsided the skin gradually lost its chronic thickness and in a short