

RECENT OBSERVATIONS ON THE THERAPEUTIC USE OF RADIUM.

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From the results recently published by Drs. Louis Wickham and Degrais, of Paris, and by Dr. Robert Abbe, of New York, it has been abundantly proven that radium has a distinct place in therapeutics, and moreover, a place which it seems probable will be gradually extended so as to include many conditions which formerly seemed beyond its scope.

It has been the experience of all workers with this agent that on superficial epitheliomata of the skin its action is specific. The histological changes in the cancer cells following the application of the radium rays are peculiar to themselves and quite unlike those following the use of X-rays, leucodescent light and other agents. It is true that some cases can be treated with good results by excision, the use of arsenical pastes or X-ray, but we have had cases which, after all these methods have proved inefficient, have healed readily after short applications of radium.

In the treatment of erectile angiomas and naevi excellent results have also been obtained. Dr. Wickham has reported several hundred cases of all forms of birthmarks, from port wine stains to vascular and pulsating angiomas, which have been reduced so that the skin is almost a normal color, and this without destructive cicatrix. In these cases, however, the treatment is often prolonged, as it is necessary to avoid anything approaching a destruction of the skin. The beneficial effect is due to its irritating action, producing obliterative endarteritis and fibroid change.