

gomery showed this action by dropping some of the pure acid on shavings of horny epithelium. The shavings swelled up into a clear jelly, and on examination with a microscope an immense number of fat droplets was found along the intercellular junctions. It gave an appearance as though the intercellular substance was principally attacked and the fat was being squeezed out of the tissue. Such being its action it can readily be seen why it has such a special use in the treatment of keratosis. The thickened cornified epithelium is softened and falls off as an eschar, leaving smooth almost normal appearing skin beneath.

*Technique.*—The method of application is comparatively simple. When the tissue is much thickened a quicker result may be obtained if the dermal curette is first used to remove a large portion of the excrescence.

The acid may be applied either as the pure crystals or in concentrated solution. A dressing probe or match point or glass rod makes an excellent applicator. The lesion to be treated must first be wiped thoroughly dry, alcohol or ether being used. The normal skin around may be protected by vaseline. The acid is then applied and rubbed in with some pressure. The tissues quickly become a dead white, and the patient complains of a stinging pain. When this occurs mop off the treated area with water until all burning sensation has ceased.

In many respects the action of trichloroacetic acid is similar to that of carbon dioxide snow, but it is much less painful, as practically all pain is removed by the mopping with water. It can also be used in the form of pastes.

The dermatological conditions in which trichloroacetic acid may be of service are many and varied. As has been mentioned, it is a most useful agent in the treatment of keratosis, and the proper treatment of keratosis is important on account of the frequency with which epithelioma develops from keratotic lesions. Occurring most often in the elderly, particularly those who during their life time have been exposed to the wind and sun a great deal, still it is not uncommon to see keratosis develop in those of middle life. Depending on the type of skin upon which they develop keratoses are hard, thick masses, which can be scraped off with difficulty, being as it were torn from the underlying tissues, or they are soft, greasy, friable and readily removed by