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PSOROSPERMOSE FOLLICULAIRE
VÉGÉTANTE (DARIER).*

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Under the name of psorospermo folliculaire végétante, M. M. Darier and Thibault, in 1889, described a peculiar condition of the skin which had probably been previously confounded by dermatological writers with other cutaneous affections, and which was already separately described by Dr. J. C. White, of Boston, under the name of keratosis follicularis. According to Darier, there exists in man a group of cutaneous diseases which merit the name of psorospermoses, being due to the presence in the epidermis of parasites of the order spozaires, of the group psorosperms or coccidia. In one of these diseases the coccidia of a particular species invade the follicular orifices of a greater portion of the cutaneous surface, where they appear in the form of round bodies, generally encysted and contained in the epithelial cells, or as refracting granules, the accumulation of which forms a plug which projects from the orifice of the follicle. "The presence of these bodies enables one to make a diagnosis of the disease, as they are not met with in any analogous clinical affection. The neck of the follicles invaded become second-

arily the seat of papillomatous vegetations, which can develop to a great degree and form real tumors. The affection, from an etiological point of view, should be placed with Paget's disease of the nipple, and probably with molluscum contagiosum."

The disease called molluscum contagiosum, according to Neisser of Breslau, is caused by psorosperms, but this view has not yet secured anything like general acceptance, many pathologists, including myself, regarding the molluscum bodies as chemically changed epithelial cells and not organisms, although believing the disease to be a communicable one and parasitic in nature. In epithelioma, especially that clinical form known as Paget's disease of the nipple, which was generally considered to commence as an eczematous process, Wickham has endeavored to show that psorosperms are very abundant, and argues with much force and plausibility that they are the essential factors of the disease, and the cause of the anatomical changes which occur.

Returning to the subject of my paper, Darier showed a case of psorospermosis follicularis at a meeting of the International Congress of Dermatology and Syphilis held in Paris in 1889, occurring in a man forty-two years of age, in whom the disease had lasted seven or eight years, commencing insidiously and later assuming an aggravated form, especially during the last two years. The following is an account of the eruption as taken from the transactions of the Congress :

*An address delivered before the Pathological Society of Toronto, December 18th, 1890.