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## Original Articles

### RADIUM AND TRICHLORACETIC ACID IN DERMATOLOGY\*

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In this paper I desire to discuss two agents which have proved invaluable to me in the treatment of certain diseases of the skin. It may seem strange that these two materials have been linked together in this title, instead of dealing with each agent separately, but when it is considered that in many cases radium and trichloroacetic acid are complementary one to the other, it will be more readily understood why such a title was chosen.

The use of radium and its great value in the treatment of certain affections has of course been recognized for years. Ever since Wickham founded the first Radium Institute in Paris and put radium therapy on a sound scientific basis, evidence continues to accumulate as to the great value of this therapeutic agent when properly used.

My attention was first drawn to the use of trichloroacetic acid as a valuable adjunct in treating skin lesions by my friend Dr. Douglass Montgomery, of San Francisco, who found it valuable in the treatment of seborrhœic and senile keratosis. Trichloroacetic acid occurs as white deliquescent crystals, having a melting point of 55° C. and readily soluble in water. It is a substance which has been in use for some time among dentists and laryngologists, but very little reference to it is found in medical literature. In many cases it has been supplementary to treatment by radium. Like the latter the scar left after its use is negligible, an excellent cosmetic result being obtained.

The most important effect of the acid on the skin is due to its keratolytic action. It dissolves horny epithelium. Mont-

\*Read at the meeting of the Ontario Medical Association, Peterborough, Ont., May, 1915.

