

some hours a hazelnut-sized bleb filled with a clear serous fluid, and in the course of the same and the next day a moderate number of blebs appeared on various parts of the body, which disappeared entirely in the next three days. A repetition of this experiment five days later was followed by a similar result. Bruck finds from this study that bacterial toxins may be demonstrated in the fluid of the bullæ present in pemphigus patients. He suggests the probable usefulness of anti-streptococcic serum in the treatment of such cases as are accompanied by streptococcic infection, and thinks it might be worth while to attempt to influence the thermolabile toxins deposited in the skin through hot-air treatment.

Crude Coal Tar in the Treatment of Eczema.—BROCC (Bull. de la soc. Française de dermat. et de syphil., 1908, No. 9) reports a number of patients with eczema who had been successfully treated with crude coal tar, which he regards as superior as a siccative and antipruritic to all other topical applications. He employs this agent in the following manner: The surface to be treated is first thoroughly freed from crusts and scales and then carefully washed with boiled water, and if not too sensitive it is afterward soaped and wiped off with ether. The tar is then applied in a thick layer and allowed to dry for a considerable time, the longer the better, the drying being an important part of the technique. When it has dried as long as possible, not less than twenty minutes, several hours if possible, it is powdered with talc and enveloped in a soft cloth. If the skin is not too much inflamed nor the oozing too abundant, it is well not to touch the dressing for two days. If the inflammation and oozing are marked it is useful to dress the parts with a simple zinc paste the next day. After five to six days the application of the tar may be repeated. Usually three to five applications are sufficient for a cure. Exceptionally it may excite inflammation, but Brocc finds that it is better tolerated than almost any other local remedy.

The Diagnostic and Specific Significance of the von Pirquet Skin Reaction.—MEIROWSKY (Archiv f. Derm. u. Syphilis, 1909, xciv, Heft 2 und 3) finds that a large percentage of those who present none of the clinical signs of tuberculosis give a positive cutaneous reaction with undiluted A. T. A positive result is also obtained when the subject has had a tuberculosis and any dermatosis; in such cases the cutaneous reaction is to be referred to the preceding tuberculous infection and not to the skin affection. Of 105 cases of tuberculosis of the skin, 102 gave a positive cutaneous reaction with undiluted A. T. Of the three which showed no reaction, two had been given simultaneously a subcutaneous injection of tuberculin; and after the resultant reaction had subsided both of these gave a positive cutaneous reaction. In only one case of lupus was the cutaneous reaction permanently negative. Meirowsky concludes that almost all cases of tuberculosis of the skin give a positive cutaneous reaction; and he believes that in a patient with a doubtful dermatosis a negative result makes it highly probable that the affection is non-tuberculous. He also thinks that the fact that the cutaneous reaction runs parallel with the reaction of the organism after injection of old tuberculin, proves the specificity of this reaction.