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A CASE OF MULTIPLE ULCERATING BASAL-CELL EPI- THELIOMA WITH ZONIFORM DISTRIBUTION AND POSSIBLY OF SWEAT-GLAND ORIGIN.

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THE case described below is in many respects unique. Clinically the growths resembled *ulcus rodens*; histologically they were undoubtedly basal-cell epitheliomata; but their zoniform distribution on the side of the abdomen is unusual, and a noteworthy feature is that the growths appeared to take origin from sweat-ducts and glands.

A. K—, aged 72 years, came to the hospital in March, 1916, for treatment of a "sore" on the abdomen. The sore was an irregularly shaped disc-like patch of about three-quarters of an inch in diameter and raised about one-eighth of an inch. It had an ulcerated crusted centre with a narrow rounded nodular margin. It was situated three inches above and to the left of the umbilicus. There were two or three small contingent nodules. The "sore" had been forming during the past four years.

It was diagnosed as a rodent ulcer and a massive dose of X-rays was given, after which it healed with a smooth flat scar.

In August, 1916, the patient returned and fresh nodules were seen at the margin of the scar and also extending upwards and backwards for several inches from the site of the original nodules.

The nodules now occupied an area six inches long by two inches wide which extended upwards and backwards across the left side of the

abdomen towards the costal margin (Fig. 1). In this area there were some thirty-six nodules, which varied in size from a few lines to an inch across. Some of the nodules were isolated, others were grouped or coalescent. All nodules were raised not more than one-sixteenth to one-eighth of an inch, smooth, firm, and of the colour of the skin. The larger nodules were ulcerated and thinly crusted at their central parts, with a narrow nodular margin suggestive of the "rolled-edge" of rodent ulcer.

Histopathology.—A small nodule was excised. Microscopical sections show appearances which suggest those of rodent ulcer. The growth is a basal-cell epithelioma, although the cell-masses have not the filiform lobulated aspect of a typical rodent ulcer, but form irregularly oval elongated patches arranged in strata with their long axes parallel with the skin surface. Groups of these cell masses are bisected at right angles by a sweat-duct, so that they have the appearance of being threaded on a sweat-duct. In one group (Fig. 2, M.S.D.), the uppermost collection of cells is seen distinctly to arise from the epidermis in the neighbourhood of the mouth of a sweat-duct. It at first proliferates as prickle-cells, but lower in the cell-mass the constituent cells become of basal cell type. All other cell-masses are made up entirely of cells of basal-cell type, bluntly oval, with large nucleus and scanty body and without evident prickles. In another part of the section a sweat-duct can be seen emerging from the deeper part of a cell-mass (Fig. 2); and under a high power it appears as though the cells of growth originated directly from the wall of the duct, though this is difficult to determine definitely (Fig. 3). In the same section, immediately beneath the mass which appears to arise from a sweat-duct there is a sweat-gland which is infiltrated with the cell-growth and here again the growth appears to originate from the epithelium of the sweat-coils (Fig. 2, S.C. 2). For the most part the cell masses show no tendency to duct or coil formation; but in some of the smaller masses the cells are arranged like ill-defined tubules (Fig. 2 B.B.).

This arrangement of the cell-masses (*a*) around the mouth of a sweat-duct; (*b*) around sweat-ducts; (*c*) around a sweat-gland points perhaps to an epithelioma of sudoriparous origin. The grouping of the tumours or nodules recalls that of a linear nævus, and suggests that we have to do with a dormant linear nævus of sweat-gland type

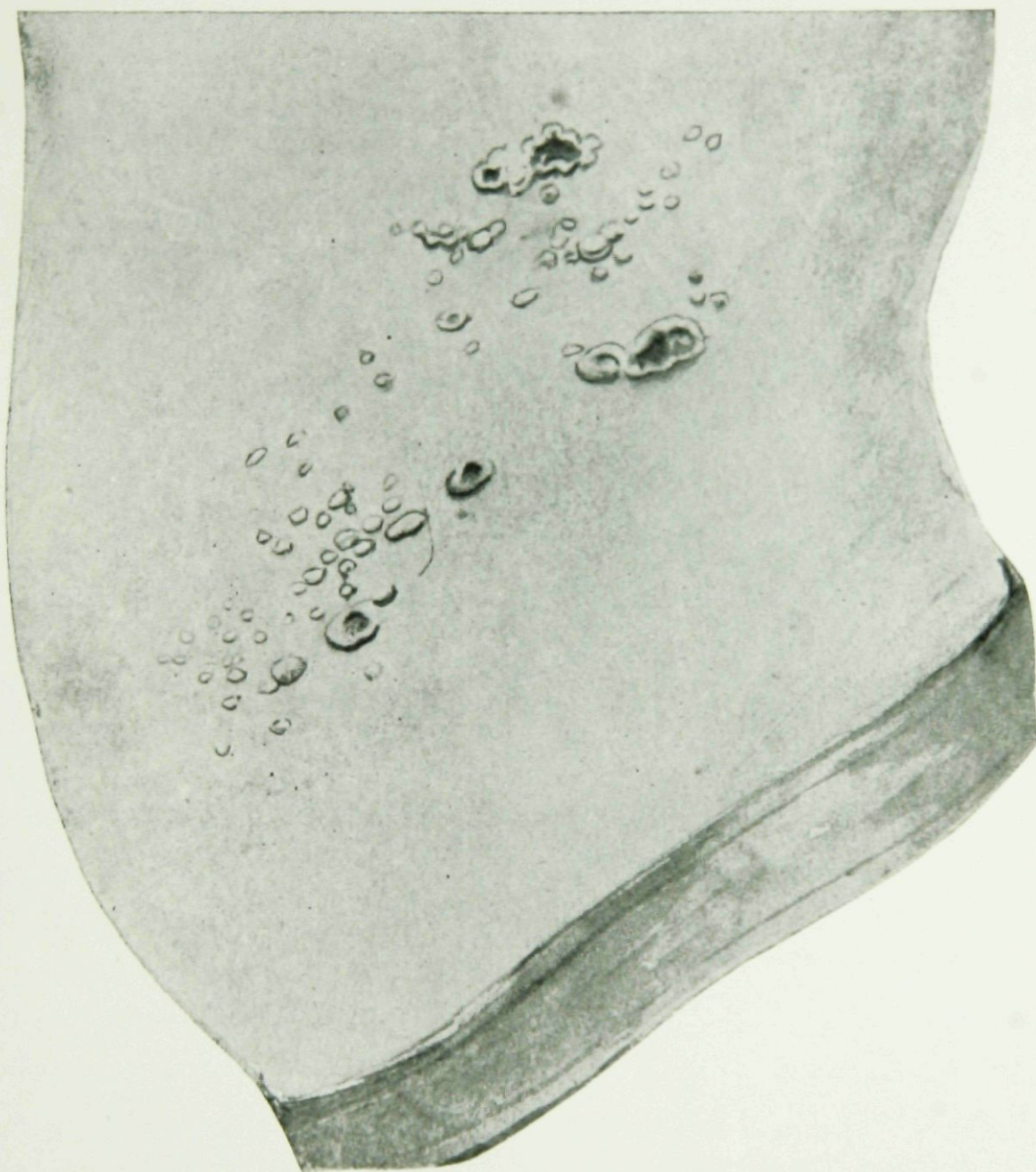


FIG. 1.—Drawing showing the zoniform distribution of the rodent ulcer-like nodules.

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FIG. 2.—Section (under low power) of a small unulcerated nodule. At M.S.D. is the mouth of a sweat-duct, and at this spot there is proliferation of the epidermal cells, first of prickle-cell type, but lower down passing into the basal-cell type. At S.D., S.D., S.D., are seen sweat-ducts, and the masses of new-growth seem as though threaded along these sweat-ducts. At B. B. the cell-masses show some arrangement as tubules; but the larger masses are made up of closely set oval cells of basal-cell type without any suggestion of tubular arrangement. At S.G.₁ is an apparently normal sweat-gland. At S.G.₂ a cell-mass which appears to take origin from the cells of a sweat-gland.

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FIG. 3.—Represents a portion of the section under a high power and shows the apparent origin of the cells of the new-growth from the cells of a sweat-duct.

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aroused late in the patient's life to active growth and giving rise to a basal-cell epithelioma of rodent ulcer type.

The case may be compared with that of Dr. Norman Paul (Syringoma), recently published in the Journal* and which forms perhaps a link between the case now exhibited and the linear nævi of syringoma type recorded by Peterson and Elliott.

Subsequent history.—The larger nodules were scraped and cauterised with chloride of zinc under a local anæsthetic, and the area occupied by the scattered smaller nodules was exposed to X-rays filtered through 3 mm. aluminium. After $2\frac{1}{2}$ pastille dose, measured on the distal side of the aluminium screen, the smaller nodules became dried up and converted into crusts and it appeared as though they would disappear entirely. But they have since begun to grow again and fresh nodules have appeared, and it is now proposed to scrape and cauterise all of the nodules under a general anæsthetic.

SOME RECENT EXPERIENCES WITH PURE COAL TAR (PIX CARBONIS PREPARATA, B.P.) AT A BASE HOSPITAL IN FRANCE.

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THE great value of coal tar in the treatment of diseases of the skin has long been known, and its application as a skin paint in the pure state has received special commendation by French dermatologists, and by Dr. A. Whitfield in England, under whose guidance I first had an opportunity of studying its effects.

For the past three months (December, 1916—March, 1917) a mixture containing pix carbonis B.P., acetone and collodion flexile, equal parts,† has been in constant use, and where applied in the class of case which experience has proved suitable, has been found so successful that I am encouraged to record my results. I venture to hope that they may be found useful by other dermatologists at a time when

* *Brit. Journ. Derm.*, 1916, xxviii, p. 106.

† The combination of coal tar with collodion suggested itself to me as being likely to increase the adhesive character of the former—an anticipation which the facts certainly support.

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