Prurigo Nodularis.

Preliminary Report.

By

Susumu Iijima.

(飯島進)

(From the Department of Dermatology, Faculty of Medicine,
Tohoku University, Sendai. Director: Prof. M. Ito.)

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Prurigo nodularis has been identified by most dermatologists with urticaria perstans verrucosa of Kriebich. Another variety of the latter disease, papulous type of urticaria perstans, however, is quite rare and can hardly be distinguished from a certain type of disseminated neurodermatitis and some prurigo-varieties.

I observed several cases of prurigo nodularis recently and could obtain some interesting results concerning its etiology. The brief summary is following.

In almost every case the onset of the disease ensued from bites by an insect *Ensimulium equinum* Ihnnaeus, and in one instance even general flare-up phenomena were observed after another bite next year. The watery extract of the insect gave various grade of strong positive reactions on patients' skin by intracutaneous method, and with prolonged subcutaneous injections of the diluted extract beginning with a small amount, relief from itching and hyposensitivity to insect bites were secured. Cutaneous eruptions began to diminish after several injections. The same extract was tested on 17 patients suffering from other skin diseases. Only two reacted with positive reactions, while other 15 showed only very feint reaction or did not at all.

From 3 cases cutaneous nodules were excised for histological examination. In all specimens neuroma-like hypertrophy of nerve bundles was noted in the upper dermal layer by Masson's staining in accord with the observation of Rasch and Pautrier. Control sections from patients with other pruritic dermatoses involving prurigo of Hebra and neurodermatitis failed to reveal increase of nerve bundles, except one case of systemic nevi of lichenoid type with intensive pruritus, although amputation-neuroma-like picture was lacking.

From these findings the author conclude that prurigo nodularis has some causative relationship with insect bites especially bites by *Ensimulium*, and the hypertrophy of cutaneous nerves resulted from the effect of intensive scratching, while, on the other hand, the nervousness of the patients with abnormal scratch impulse cannot be overlooked when viewed on the fact that abortive form or several isolated nodules occasionally appear in patients with other dermatoses.

The details will be reported in a later issue of this Journal.