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DERMATITIS PROVOKED BY SATURNIDAE MOTHS: YELLOWTAIL MOTH DERMATITIS OR CARIPITO ITCH. GUIDO D'AVANZO, Med. lavoro 43:439 (Dec.) 1952.

The author, a ship's medical officer of the Italian Mercantile Marine, sets forth a rare exotic infection, often of professional character, consisting of a very troublesome erythematous-vesicular dermatitis caused by direct or indirect contact with the abdominal hairs of special Saturnidae moths characteristic of South and Central America, the same belonging to the genus Hylesia.

After reporting some cases on vessels infested with these moths while in Caripito Bay, Venezuela, the author gives a complete outline of the infection and dwells upon the particular pathogenic mechanism, making recommendations for prophylaxis and therapy.

AUTHOR'S SUMMARY.

TWO CASES OF CANE DISEASE. LORIO REALE, Med. lavoro 43:453 (Dec.) 1952.

A description is given of two cases of cane disease observed in laborers working in a cane-gathering center in Sardinia. Symptoms were acute eczema on face and limbs, irritation of conjunctiva and nasal mucous membranes, and a slight rise of temperature. The two patients recovered in a week.

The author believes that cane disease is occupational and is caused by an allergy for a fungus of the Sporotrichum type, a parasite growing on canes exposed to humidity for long periods.

ENGLISH SUMMARY.

THE CLINICAL PICTURE AND PATHOLOGY OF ASBESTOSIS. W. BEHRENS JR., Ztschr. Unfallmed. u. Berufskrankh. 45:129-140 (May 15); 179-189 (Sept. 15) 1952.

This is a general account of asbestosis, introduced by mention of the uses of asbestos centuries ago for woven garments for the dead during cremation and as wicks for the lamps of the vestal virgins. The chief chemical and physical characters of different kinds of asbestos belonging to the two main groups of this mineral—amphibolite and chrysolite asbestos—are recorded. The world distribution of asbestos and its mining, treatment, and use are shortly described, as well as the industries in which dust inhalation hazards may be met. Reference is made to the published work of a considerable number of authors who have studied asbestosis since the first records of the disease about 1906; their observations on the effect of length of exposure to asbestos dust in different concentrations are given.

The symptomatology and diagnosis and the x-ray findings in different stages of the disease are also published.

Special mention is made of the association of asbestosis with carcinoma, which is contrary to experience in cases of silicosis. Postmortem reports from the literature indicate that in 309 cases of asbestosis there were 44 lung carcinomas (14.2%), whereas in 2,204 cases of silicosis only 32 carcinomas were found (1.4%).

The experience of the association of tuberculosis and asbestosis varies greatly in different countries. English workers have recorded a high rate of tuberculous infection among workers in asbestosis, and the Home Office reports for 1933 to 1939 include 90 deaths from asbestosis, with an association of tuberculosis in 32 deaths. This is, however, to be compared with the silicosis deaths; for during 1932 to 1939 there were 797 tuberculous infections in a total of 1,397 fatal cases of silicosis. In America, tuberculosis is a rare complication of asbestosis. Some figures from the German experience record that among 500 definite and 200 doubtful cases of asbestosis there were found only 11 instances of active and 51 of inactive tuberculosis, whereas among cases of silicosis the incidence of tuberculosis was 35% in the slight and 63% in the severe degrees of silicosis.

The rest of the paper consists of a description of the macroscopic and microscopic appearances of the lungs in asbestosis, as well as a discussion, with an excellent reference list, of the nature and significance of the "asbestosis bodies" about which there have been so many differences of opinion.

M. E. DELAFIELD [Bull. Hyg.].