

BRIEF REPORTS

This department has been established to encourage the reporting of interesting cases and observations which otherwise might not be recorded.

LEPROUS NODULES OF THE MALE GENITALIA

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As the genitalia are not often affected by cutaneous lesions of leprosy it was somewhat surprising to find such lesions in four male patients at the Leper Asylum in St. Croix in January, 1932.¹ At that time there were 83 inmates in this institution, of which 34 were males. The four patients with cutaneous nodules on the genitalia were adult Negroes, and all were advanced cases of leprosy. Three were classed as C3 and one as C2. Except in the case here described, the lesions were small and few in number. In one case the nodules were present on the scrotum alone, in a second case on the scrotum and prepuce, and in a third case on the glans and prepuce. The involvement in the following case was extensive enough to warrant its publication.

CASE REPORT

S. J., a male Negro, seen January, 1932, had been an inmate of the asylum for the past ten years. The first sign of the disease appeared three years previous to admission, during which time he suffered from a nodular eruption of the face and forearms and a persistent ulceration of the heel. The diagnosis was then apparently in doubt. The Wassermann test of the blood was strongly positive, becoming negative after a course of treatment with neoarsphenamin. The diagnosis of leprosy on admission was confirmed by positive nasal smears.

¹ A survey of leprosy in the Virgin Islands made by one of us (H.F.) at the request of Mr. Perry Burgess of the Leonard Wood Memorial, assisted by the other of us (J. K.), municipal physician of St. Croix.

The disease had steadily progressed for the past ten years, and when examined the patient presented an advanced case of cutaneous leprosy, C3. There was a generalized nodular eruption of the face, trunk, extremities and genitalia. Many of the lesions were ulcerated and there was much scarring. The nose was sunken, the left eye was sightless from corneal opacities, and the eyebrows had fallen completely. The ulnar nerves were greatly enlarged and there was anesthesia of the hands and feet. The fingers were partly ankylosed, but there was no bony absorption. Involvement of the mucous membranes included an ulcer of the lower lip, nodules of the tongue and palate, and evidence of nasal obstruction and laryngeal stenosis. The patient was undernourished and his general condition was pitiful.

The genital lesions involved the glans, penis and scrotum, those on the former having been present for ten years, the others about eight years. The glans, which was normal in size, showed numerous small yellowish red nodules, especially at the corona where they tended to coalesce. Scattered among the nodules were scars of previous ulcers, notably at the meatus. Smears made after removing the epidermis of one of these nodules were positive for leprosy bacilli.

On the lower part of the much-enlarged scrotum there was an area about 15 by 15 cm. which was covered by coalescing nodules whose appearance was similar to that of nodules on other parts of the body. There were also scars of previous ulceration. Bacilli were found in one of the lesions on the scrotum.

The patient also showed evidence of filarial infestation. There was a right-sided hydrocele, the femoral and inguinal glands were markedly enlarged and microfilariae had been previously demonstrated in the peripheral blood. It might be added that filariasis is very common in St. Croix. Of special interest was an egg-sized pedunculated mass attached to the frenum and to the scrotum. It was firm in consistency, ulcerated at its lower portion, the ulcer being surrounded by warty skin suggestive of filarial elephantiasis. The mass, excised by one of us (J.K.), seemed on cross section to be typical of filarial elephantiasis tissue. Histologic examination by Dr. T. J. Riordan showed simple inflammatory changes but no evidence of leprosy. It was highly probable that the patient suffered from both leprosy and filarial lesions of the cutaneous surface of the genitalia.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLATE

Leprous nodules of the glans and scrotum.

Filarial tumor attached to the frenum.



PLATE 1.