

A Note on Fur Dermatitis

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The range of trade dermatitis is yearly extending as new chemical processes are brought into industrial practice. Capitalist and worker are by no means the only classes in the community whose interests may be affected. The relationship between irritant and lesion is not necessarily obvious, and requires a detailed investigation of each and every case. The present vogue of fur has been responsible for a recent outbreak of dermatitis in London of such an extent as to call for the consideration of the London Fur Trade Association and of the Home Office.* The furs responsible are reported to have been of the dyed rabbit variety. The use of dyed rabbit is not confined to London, and a case that has lately come under my notice in New Zealand may therefore be of interest. One Sunday in Wellington I was asked to see a lady who presented a widespread erysipelas-like condition of neck, chest and back. The skin was reddened and swollen,

but not brawny, with indefinite margin, and there was an absence of constitutional disturbance. This condition extended from the scalp down to the inferior angles of the scapulæ, encircled the neck, and in front reached well below the clavicles. The fur neck-band, presumably dyed rabbit, of an imported frock, purchased eleven weeks ago, and worn intermittently since, was, I consider, the undoubted cause. When its use was discontinued, the skin condition cleared up in a few days, leaving a branny desquamation. The question of sensitisation in these cases has been put forward. In the present instance there was a premonitory irritation a fortnight previously, and for a few days thereafter the frock was not worn. The patient has now decided to burn the fur.

References: 1, *Semon, British Medical Journal*, 17th March, 1923. 2, *Roxburgh, ibid*, 24th March, 1923. 3, *Castle, ibid*, 24th March, 1923.