

**LECTURES ON ACNE,  
ACNE ROSACEA,  
LICHEN AND PRURIGO**

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Lectures on Acne, Acne Rosacea, Lichen and Prurigo by Tom Robinson

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**TOM ROBINSON**

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# LECTURES

ON

ACNE. ACNE ROSACEA, LICHEN AND  
PRURIGO.

BY

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## PREFACE.

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AFTER delivering the Lectures which form the pages of this book, I was requested by some of those who honoured me with their presence to publish them in book form. This request I now comply with,—hoping they may be received with due consideration for the manner in which they were delivered, and an apology for the almost conversational style in which they are composed.

9, PRINCES STREET,  
CAVENDISH SQUARE, W.



## A C N E .

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A GREAT deal of discussion has taken place respecting the word Acne; some have asserted that the word is a corruption of the Greek noun Acme, or highest point of manhood and womanhood; according to my own opinion and that of many others the word is from the Greek Acne, that is bloom or efflorescence. Be this as it may, we mean now by acne, a disease which is most usually found on the face, shoulders, and chest, which, histologically, is an abnormal condition of the sebaceous glands, their secretion, and the surrounding cellular tissue. We apply the noun with an adjective when we speak of Acne rosacea; and for the purposes of description it is best to retain these names, which convey a definite significance, and have been used for so many years.



I should join issue with many of the varieties of acne, which are described by all dermatologists, because many are simply the result of a fancy of the author. I allude to such compound phrases as *Acne indurata*, *Acne punctata*, *Acne conformis*. These varieties are commonly found on the same subject, and the retention of their use in our vocabulary is only confusing and unscientific.

In the two lectures which I have the pleasure of delivering, I shall divide the disease into three varieties.

*Firstly*, PHYSIOLOGICAL ACNE.

*Secondly*, CLIMACTERIC ACNE.

*Thirdly*, ROSE ACNE.

But before proceeding to these varieties, let us glance at the histology and physiology of the sebaceous follicles, which will be found to be intimately associated with the hair sacs, and it will be necessary for me to allude to this relationship many times in these lectures. I consider, by bearing in mind this relationship, we are enabled to comprehend many of the phenomena which we meet with in these very common and troublesome maladies.

The sebaceous glands are found in every situation of the cutaneous surface, with the exception of the palms of the hands, the soles of the feet, the last phalanges of the toes and fingers, and they are absent on the glans penis. They are the only secreting glands which are found on the cutaneous surface, excepting the sweat ducts, and they have their analogue in the mucous glands in the interior of the body. The sebaceous glands are sometimes composed of two or three gland lobules, which have an excretory duct, which duct rarely opens immediately upon the surface, but as a rule into the hair follicle. There is an exception in the case of the long hairs, such as we see on the head, pubis, or axillæ; in these situations the reverse is the case, whilst in the pubescent hairs the small hair follicles open into the wide excretory duct of the gland.

The gland sac is always situated in the corium, and never reaches into the subcutaneous connective tissue. This is why a molluscum contagiosum tubercle rises so distinctly from the plane of the skin.

The interior of the gland lobules is occupied by an amorphous mass of fatty matter, and the debris of numerous cells.

The development of the sebaceous glands commence at the third month in man. By remembering this fact we are enabled to grasp the reason that some children are born with a hard inelastic skin, which constitutes the disease known as Ichthyosis, which is always congenital, and always incurable; because this gland formation is abolished by an inflammation of the skin, which attacks the fœtus in utero.

The function of the sebaceous secretion is to give to the hairs an oleaginous food, and to make the skin supple, and also for the purpose of protecting it from external irritation. We see this well exemplified in coal porters and others; the constant contact of dust irritates the sebaceous follicles, and their secretion is increased in quantity to such an extent that the faces of these men are quite greasy.

The hair sac and the sebaceous gland form together a most ingenious contrivance; but like so many other ingenious contrivances