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## INOCULATION OF SMALLPOX AS A PROPHYLACTIC MEASURE DJEN, NIGERIA

Foy (1915) gave a description of the method which has been used for ages in the large pagan settlement of Djen, which had then a total population of 4,700.

*Details of the method.* The site of inoculation is the extensor surface of the forearm, about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  in. above the wrist in adults. Males are inoculated on the left forearm and females on the right. Even babies aged 1 to 6 months were frequently inoculated. The material used for inoculation is lymph drawn from pustules of a young person suffering from discrete smallpox on the ninth day of the disease. The operator sits with the person to be inoculated in front of him, the donor of the lymph on one side, and on the other two bowls, one containing maize grains and the other honey. An incision ( $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. in length) is made with a razor at the site of inoculation; a pustule of the donor is opened and lymph is applied to the wound with the end of a straw. The operator then places a grain of maize in the mouth of the person to be inoculated, a drop of honey on his tongue and another drop to the site of inoculation.

The maize grain is supposed to ensure that when smallpox subsequently develops, the vesicles will be large and discrete; the honey is believed to hasten the appearance of the eruption and to result in vesicles, the contents of which are clear like honey in the comb.

*Results of inoculation.* Foy describes the results obtained by the natives during an extensive outbreak of smallpox which does not appear to have been excessively fatal. Of a mixed population of persons inoculated about 80 per cent. developed local reactions and about 43 per cent. developed smallpox. There were no fatal cases in an observed group of 60 inoculated persons. Of 26 inoculated persons who developed smallpox, 6 showed serious marking and the remainder had only slight marking. The inoculation appeared to Foy to reduce the incubation period from 11 days (as in the natural infection encountered in Djen) to 7 days.

[H. Andrew Foy, *Journ. Tropical Med.*, 1915, XVIII, (pp. 255 to 257)]