

"My own experience speaks loudly in favour of the hemp. I can now record three fortunate cases under its use—all traumatic tetanus—and a case which proved fatal but where great alleviation of suffering was produced.

"The first of these was a girl, aged seven, admitted to the Royal Infirmary, October 18, 1844. She had received an extensive injury of the middle finger of the right hand a fortnight previously. Inflammatory swelling and pain became intense, and there was a tendency to spasmodic flexion of the fingers and wrist. On the 23rd she was observed by the nurse to take 'a kind of fit,' becoming rigid, having difficulty in opening the mouth and in swallowing, and complaining of pain in the jaws. At visit, she seemed perfectly well. A brisk purge was ordered, and, lest the case should prove tetanus, ten drops of tincture of hemp were prescribed to be taken every four hours. Next day the symptoms were well marked without any influence from the hemp. The finger was then removed, and the simplest dressing applied to the wound. The dose of hemp was increased to twenty drops, and after five doses, she slept; but the following day the symptoms were aggravated. Turpentine enema was ordered, and ice to the spine—thirty drops of cannabis to be given hourly. In the evening there was rigidity, but no spasm; the hemp to be given every half hour; after which she became drowsy, and at twelve next day she was much improved. Aconite was now substituted; but as the spasmodic attacks became more severe, hemp was again given, with the effect of producing sleep. She continued to improve till the 25th November, the dose of hemp being gradually reduced; producing, when given, drowsiness, or calm sleep; it was soon discontinued, as it then seemed to excite the circulation. Throughout the whole period of its use, its effect on the appetite was most obvious, the craving for food being at times absolutely voracious. After this no more medicine was given, and recovery was complete.

"The second case occurring in private practice, was that of a boy, about the same age who had simple fracture of the thigh, with compound and comminuted fracture of the great toe. The treatment and result were the same.

"The third was a boy, rather older, who had compound fracture of the bones of the arm. Treatment again resulted in cure.

"In these cases a few doses generally induced sleep, with marked mitigation of the spasms. The period of narcotism did not exceed two or three hours, the sleep was deep and unbroken, and seemed to be refreshing. It was followed by no headache, or other apparent inconvenience. The most remarkable effect observed, was the tolerance of the remedy, whereby a girl, aged seven, took every half-hour, and sometimes many hours in succession, doses of hemp sufficient to narcotise an adult."

In these cases, Mr. Miller is inclined to give the hemp credit for a chief share in the cure.

In 1846 the virtues of hemp were tested in a case of tetanus in the Royal Infirmary, in the wards of Dr. Duncan. In 1847 another case presented itself, where hemp was administered. At that time sulphuric ether was much used as an anæsthetic, and it was thought probable that it would be of service in this case. The patient inhaled it at frequent intervals during a whole afternoon, with decided, but only temporary relief. After this cannabis was given, without its physiological action being attained by nearly an ounce and a-half of the tincture; it was not persevered with. Ether was again tried and also opiates with some benefit. The patient died on the thirteenth day.

The first of these cases was very accurately observed, and the following report of the case, from the journal, will be found to have considerable interest:—

James Mackay, a railway laborer, was admitted under the care of Dr. Duncan, October 20, 1846. He had received a slight lacerated wound of the hand a week before, and tetanus had commenced on his admission. The wound appeared to be healing. He complained of great uneasiness, particularly about the neck and spine, of some rigidity of the jaws, which could only be separated three-quarters of an inch, of inability to protrude the tongue, and of commencing spasm of the neck and upper part of the back.