

An extensive employment of *small spikenard* in dropsy during a period of five years, has enabled me to speak of its medicinal virtues with confidence. A short description of the plant may not be out of place.

Aralia Nudicaulis, a perennial plant growing in shady woods, &c., in a rich soil from Canada to Georgia; root sometimes many feet long, yellowish brown, cylindrical, of the size of a finger, fragrant, possessing a warm aromatic and sweetish taste.

The range of dose of *small spikenard* is $\frac{7}{8}$ Ss. to $\frac{3}{4}$ i., of the tincture made with $1\frac{1}{2}$ oz., of the root to $\frac{3}{4}$ xvi., of spirits, or an equally efficacious infusion may be procured by digesting, for about twelve hours, a similar quantity of the root in the same proportion of boiling water.

I will give one or two cases from my note book: Mrs. M'C., aged fifty; had been ill for two months with anasarca and ascites. She was first ordered a strong infusion of *pyrola umbellata* to be taken daily without any marked benefit.

Pyrola to be discontinued; was ordered 2 oz., of the infusion of *aralia nudicaulis* three or four times a day; on the second day after the administration of the medicine, "much better, swellings abated, evacuated a *pailful* in *one night*;" continued the medicine about a week when perfectly recovered.

William D., aged thirty-seven consulted me in May last; had anasarca and ascites to a very considerable degree; he was emaciated and weak with a yellow suffusion over the whole skin; his face and back of hands were very much swelled. He had been under the care of a regular physician for some time, who gave him cream of tartar, calomel, digitalis and squills, *pyrola umbellata* and taraxacum, without effect. I ordered him 2 oz. of the tincture of *aralia nudicaulis*, three times a day, with an occasional mercurial purgative; he recovered in a short time. I could give several other cases if necessary, showing the beneficial effects of this medicine in dropsy, but I trust my professional brethren in Canada will give it a fair trial as it is easy to be procured; and should this medicine be found on further trial to act with certainty, it will be a great acquisition, as the dose is small and taste by no means disagreeable, two most important requisites in medicaments of every description; besides its diuretic properties, it also is a useful tonic in a debilitated state of the stomach with loss of appetite.

[The following information derived from a note by Dr. Carson, the American Editor of Pereira's *Materia Medica*, may be read with interest in connection with the foregoing remarks of Dr. Evans. After the description given in the text of his author of the several varieties of *Panax*, better known to eastern nations as the *Ginseng* (*radix ninsi*), and a variety of which is also common in most drug markets as *American Ginseng*, Dr. C. thus describes the "*ARALIA NUDICAULIS*." *False Sarsaparilla*, is an indigenous plant of the United States, where, in addition to the name given, it is called *small spikenard*. The flower, stem,