

SOME SPECIAL THERAPEUTIC USES OF CANNABIS INDICA.—*Cannabis indica*, according to the author's opinion, is less frequently employed than it deserves. His experience has proved this medicament to be particularly efficient as an analgesic in combating pain associated with spasmodic phenomena; it seems to exert a favorable influence in all the forms of cephalalgia, the author alluding, in particular, to violent cephalalgia occasioned by cerebral tumors. He recommends its use also especially in chronic uremia, where the employment of morphine is believed by many to be contra-indicated.

But where he has found the remedy to be well nigh a specific is in the more or less continuous form of cephalalgia. The type in question commences at the patients awakening, and lasts the whole day; it may disappear toward evening, but if the patient happens to get up during the night, he will feel the trouble again. The pain is generally diffuse, extending over the whole head; this dull pain will at times grow intense for moments, and it may persist for weeks, months, and even years. Without being violent enough to interfere with occupations not requiring considerable intellectual effort, it constitutes a constant source of discomfort and seriously annoys the patient. It is observed in both sexes, and oftenest in youth and middle age.

This form of cephalalgia is almost always curable, it is stated, by the use of *cannabis indica*, alone or associated with other medicaments destined to combat concomitant disturbances. The author generally uses it in the form of extract, administering this at first in the dose of $\frac{1}{2}$ –3 centigrammes $\frac{1}{2}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ gr. in pills, evening and morning. If these doses prove insufficient, he prescribes 6 centigrammes (1 gr.) in the evening, and 3 centigrammes ($\frac{1}{2}$ gr.) in the morning. In particularly obstinate cases, he increases the dose (always giving the stronger dose in the evening) until a marked relief is obtained, or symptoms of intoxication appear.

In one of the two successive cases which are described at length, the author associated the extract of *cannabis indica* with gentian and cinchona, in the other with caffeine hydrobromate.

Cannabis indica is, furthermore, considered one of the best remedies in neuralgia, acting well also in the pain of tabes; and in gastralgia and enteralgia, it is said to be more or less successful.

In skin diseases accompanied with intense pruritus, where local sedatives are inefficient, the author resorts to *cannabis*, which, he says, is particularly useful in cases of senile pruritus. Only after the *cannabis* fails does he give chloral. It should be given, preferably at bed time, pruritus being more intense and painful, as a rule, during the night; in severe cases, however, the remedy may be given during the day. In cutaneous

diseases, the author prefers its application in the form of tincture, 20 drops of which correspond to 6 centigrammes (1 grn.) of the extract; 5–6 drops may be taken on a piece of sugar, and repeated as often as necessary.

The author has rarely observed untoward effects from this medicament; symptoms of intoxication were only very exceptional.

Nevertheless, to avoid any possible disagreeable effects, it is advised always to commence with small doses, and to increase them slowly, whereby toleration will be established.—Dr. S. Mackenzie in *Sem. Med.*

LOCOMOTOR ATAXY.—According to Prof. Fournier, the first symptoms of ataxy may be classed as follows:

1. Sign of Westphal.
2. Sign of Romberg.
3. The "stairs" sign.
4. Crossing of the legs.
5. Walking at the word of command.
6. Standing on one leg.

1. Westphal's sign is well known; it consists in the abolition of the patella tendon reflex, and is present in two-thirds of the cases.

2. Romberg's sign can be thus appreciated: The eye is an indirect regulator of motion; it helps to correct deviations in walking and maintains the equilibrium. When a patient is suspected of incipient ataxy, it will often suffice to make him close his eyes when in the erect position to verify the diagnosis. In a few instances his body will oscillate, and if the malady is somewhat advanced he will be in danger of falling.

3. The "stairs" symptom. One of the first and most constant symptoms of incipient locomotor ataxy is the difficulty with which the patient will descend stairs. If questioned closely on the subject, he will say that at the very outset of his malady he was always afraid of falling when coming down stairs.

4. The manner in which a patient crosses his legs is often significant. In the normal state a man when performing that act lifts one leg simply to the height necessary to pass it over the other, whereas in the affection under consideration he lifts it much higher than necessary, describing a large segment of a circle.

5. Walking at the word of command. The patient seated is told to get up and walk instantly. After rising he will hesitate, as if he wanted to find his equilibrium before starting off. If, while in motion, he is told to stop short, his body, obeying the impulsion, inclines forward as if about to salute, or, on the contrary, jerks himself backward in order to resist the impulsion forward.

6. The patient is asked to stand on one leg, at first with his eyes open, afterwards closed.