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THERAPEUTIC EXCURSIONS

Western medicine having few effective sedatives and analgesics before the latter part of the 1800s relied heavily on opiates and cannabis products. These drugs were used mostly for purposes of sedation and analgesia.

The introduction of parenteral techniques of administration made the water-soluble opiates vastly more popular than the alcohol- or fat-soluble cannabis preparations. Although the opiates were stronger and more reliable, they were, unfortunately, physically addicting and tolerance-producing.

The advent of synthetic sedative and analgesic drugs, while having more specific actions, unfortunately increased the liabilities of toxic reactions or abuse. The allure of the new, but toxic, pre-empted the safe but occasionally erratic marijuana products.

Cannabis products, while possibly habituating, are comparatively innocuous, non-toxic, and minimally tolerance-producing. Further clinical therapeutic study of cannabis products is needed to evaluate their efficacy in the treatment and palliation of various ailments,

The progression of papers demonstrates the slow progress and growth of sophistication of uses and observations. Walton climactically summarizes the therapeutic applications before medicine and science dropped into a generation of ignorance as a result of the 1937 tax act.

The comprehensiveness and knowledge then declines through a study of synthetic homologs with five institutionalized epileptic children, and ends in a dialogue between a psychiatrist and his patient who clandestinely obtains crude, illicit marijuana to substitute it for her alcoholic habit.