rapidly absorbed in two cases, from the effects of electricity alone, without a recurrence as yet of the disease. Stiff and painful joints in chronic and cold rheumatisms are improved very surprisingly, as to rapidity, completeness, and permanency, considering the nature of that disease. But cases of neuralgic or muscular rheumatisms, afflicting the back, shoulders, neck, and upper arms, are by far the most numerous here in Boston, so far as our records show. One such case, Master S——, sent to us by Dr. Townsend, we will mention as presenting the frequent complication of paralysis of the sterno-cleido mastoideus muscle and fascia of the right side, while there was a permanent *rigid contraction* of the *serratus*, also of the anterior and upper portion of the *trapezius* of the left side, which drew the head over to the left shoulder, deforming the boy's thorax, besides a wry neck. This case is perfectly restored.

UNCHANGEABLE SOLUTION OF PROTOXIDE OF IRON.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

MESSRS EDITORS,—In introducing to the notice of the medical profession, about one year since, a preparation with the name as given above, we were careful to publish, in connection, its composition and method of preparation, that physicians might see and judge of its value as a therapeutic agent. As it has proved to be one of the most valuable of the iron salts, and the form in which it is presented is pleasant and generally acceptable to patients, we give more specific directions as regards its preparation and preservation.

In its preparation, we take any given quantity of chemically pure protosulphate of iron, and from its solution in water precipitate the protosalt, by the equivalent quantity of carbonate of soda, also in solution. The precipitate is successively washed in cold water, to which syrup has been added, to prevent oxydation during washing, until all traces of sulphate of soda disappear.

The moist protoxide of iron is then dissolved in pure dilute acetic acid, to the point of complete neutralization, and to the clear solution thus formed, sugar is added so as to form a syrup of sufficient density to protect from change.

Care should be observed in selecting pure materials, and in thoroughly washing the precipitate. If the manipulation is skillfully performed, but little change will occur in it, before the protecting influence of the sugar is secured. If too little sugar is added to the solution, it will slightly oxydize upon exposure to air, therefore the syrup should be rather dense to protect perfectly.

Desirous of reducing the sugar to the lowest amount compatible with the protection of the protoxide salt, we find to our

regret that in one or two parcels too little was used, and consequently a pellicle of magnetic oxide formed upon the solution, but not enough to essentially change its character.

Physicians will have no difficulty in preparing this solution with proper apparatus, and the exercise of care.

I have never seen the proto-acetate of iron proposed as a remedy in any medical treatise, and I have not known of its being used, except empirically in a preparation known as "Peruvian Syrup." It is certainly exceeding prompt and efficacious in its effects, and must be regarded as preferable to the tartrates or citrates, or other salts of the metal.

During the past year, it has been used by nearly one hundred physicians, in various parts of the country, and the testimony is unanimous in its favor.

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REMARKS ON THE EPIDEMIC OF DIPHtherITE (OR HOG-SKIN ANGINA).

[Translated from the *Gazette Hebdomadaire de Médecine et de Chirurgie* of July 15th, 1859, for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

BY O. D. PALMER, M.D., ZELIENOPLE, PA.

NOTWITHSTANDING the positive opinions of some authors to the contrary, diphtherite is an affection still but little known. Whilst maintaining this position, it seems to me proper that those who have been called upon to observe it, should make known, not only what they have been able to see particular in the new epidemic, but also the comparative appreciation of the general facts, as they have been observed by themselves, or as they have been learned from others.

In the commencement of this epidemic, with my memory surcharged with the writings most recent and esteemed, and more especially with the original works of M. Bretonneau, I considered myself armed against it; all seeming to me simple and clear. The mode of propagation, contagion, progressive extension; the disease extending from the throat or nasal fossæ into the rest of the organism, at first wholly local, drawn to the exterior, and only affecting the whole system from the external to the internal parts; the therapeutic success, dependent on the energetic application of the wholly surgical means, that is, dependent on the hands of the physician—all was simple, and my only expectation was to have to follow the best models.

My hopes have been betrayed; the perfect image that I awaited, has discovered itself in a very different shape, as will appear from the picture that I am about to trace.

I have seen an affection raging among different populations, attacking at the same time individuals having no communication with each other, without regard to other diseases, with but few rare