

diphtheritic membrane and destroy or prevent formation of the ptomaines which cause auto-infection. But before treatment has been commenced there may have been a greater amount of diphtheritic poison in the system than nature unaided is able to destroy. The remedy, must, therefore, be a constitutional as well as a local one, so that entering the system it may assist nature in her efforts to destroy or neutralize the poison already there. Such a remedy would be an ideal one and should, in my opinion, meet the requirements necessary for the successful treatment of diphtheria."

Although different remedies and methods of treatment were used and wonderful cures reported by enthusiasts, who for a time believed that they had found a specific for the much-dreaded disease, local applications and internal medication all failed when brought to the crucial test, virulent diphtheria too often ended in death. Antitoxin, by some considered a specific for the disease and by others as not only comparatively useless, but dangerous, is the latest addition to the list of remedies used for the cure of diphtheria. While the records of cases treated with antitoxin by different parties vary very much as to the percentage of recoveries, yet on the whole it appears to have materially lessened the death rate in diphtheria. In order to obtain good results, it must be used the first or second day of attack, and all agree that after the third or fourth day it is of little value. In cases of mixed infection, so common in very malignant cases, it is never of much value.

Among the remedies which have been successfully used in treating diphtheria, chlorin in solution and by inhalation proved to be one of the most useful. Solutions of chlorin could not be made powerful enough to obtain the full effect of the remedy, and the vapor (the most effectual way of using it) could not be inhaled except in minute doses, as it excited cough and a sense of suffocation, and, if persisted in, produced spitting of blood and violent pain. Diluted so that it could be safely used, many physicians found it more effectual in some epidemics of the disease than any other remedy and most of them hold that if it was possible to use chlorin, so as to obtain the full therapeutic effect, it might prove to be a specific for diphtheria.

As solutions of chlorin could not contain a large enough percentage of the active agent to be very effective and were merely local in their action, I became convinced that in the vapor must be found the remedy for diphtheria. After numerous experiments with different substances intended to correct or destroy the irritat-