

The number of remedies introduced every year into the market are so numerous that for this reason alone it would be impossible to employ all of them, even if only experimentally, or to make a careful choice. Pepto-Mangan appealed to me strongly in the first instance for reasons that I shall explain. Although inclined to think well of this preparation from the first, I would remark that my observations were instituted without bias, and that my investigations were carried out in a strictly scientific manner.

I was lead to make a thorough study of this preparation by the subjective statements of the patients that it never caused the least disturbance, the objective evidences of improvement, and, besides these, by the following considerations :

According to the views of many authors, iron preparations, to be efficient, must exert not only a local but distant, that is, general effect. In chlorosis and in many severe cases of anemia, chalybeates are said to remove the hydrogen sulphide, formed frequently in large amount in the alimentary tract, by the combination of the iron with the sulphur. This removal is necessary, because hydrogen sulphide, if present in too large quantity, renders impossible the absorption of the iron in the food by precipitating it in the form of sulphide of iron. It is known, however, that not only iron but also manganese is adapted in a high degree for taking up hydrogen sulphide. Manganese therefore acts as an auxiliary to iron in this respect.

Another circumstance was decisive for me. A large number, almost all, of the officinal ferruginous preparations are absorbed only to a slight extent when administered internally. This can be maintained on the ground of the fact, that in animals and human beings positive evidence of the entrance of these preparations into the blood cannot be obtained if the persons experimented with have not intestinal catarrh or have not received excessive doses of iron. The more the preparation approximates to the form in which iron is contained in the food, the more likely it is to be absorbed. The peptonizing of an iron preparation is therefore of decided advantage, and its absorbability and assimilability is thereby enhanced to a considerable degree. Aside from this, the peptone combination is adapted for exerting the systemic effect. This general action of iron preparations only takes place if after absorption they undergo conversion into hemoglobin. Hence this conversion is only possible in the case of preparations which contain iron in form of an organic combination. They will then act even when containing a much smaller percentage of absolute iron.

It was therefore the chemical constitution of the preparation