

# WEEKLY SOLDIER LETTER

The following is a letter received from Private Elbert Charman, to his father, T. L. Charman of this city: Blols, Lior et Cher, Jan. 5, 1819.

"My dear father: "Back in Blols again! In fact, I have been back since midnight of January 2, when I arrived in the sleeping city with my Ford radiator, smoking and my person pretty well covered with grease and mud. It was a great trip back from Nantes, although not to be compared for enjoyable roads or weather with any of my traveling by auto during the late summer. (However at that time it was impossible for me to tell of my travels and as the months have passed the details have grown rather hazy in my mind, so I will tell you the little story of my trip from Nantes to Blols, after wishing you and all the folks a Happy New Year with many blessings.)

"The letter I wrote you from Nantes on New Year's Day, told of my meeting with Ben Harding, I believe. But I was destined to meet other friends, although they were not from Oregon City. As luck would have it, and then as luck would not have it, my good friend Ferdinand Herve, Pollux of the French Army, recently attached to the American Army as interpreter (he speaks English perfectly), was at his home, 86, Rue de Coulmiers, Nantes, on a 20-day furlough, such as many of the French soldiers are now receiving. But unfortunately it was New Year's Day, or the "Jour de l'An", which is one of the biggest French holidays, much overshadowing Christmas with them. The house was empty, and my friend and his family were out promenading. I waited a good while and they did not return so I could only leave a note telling him I had called and would return in the evening at 7 o'clock. I had promised him up at Bar sur Aube last summer that I would call on him at Nantes, and at least I fulfilled the promise. After leaving his house I went to the Musee and had only a few minutes there before closing time, but had time to see several original Rembrandts which were as fine as anything I have seen in art (although I am no judge, of course). Then I entered the ancient Gothic cathedral, which is no finer than many others of its kind in France, but which is associated with several historic events, chief among them being the Edict of Nantes. In the year 1598 the prelates of the Roman church gathered there, with others, civil dignitaries and representatives of other sects, and formulated the Edict of Nantes, which proclaimed religious toleration throughout France. This Edict was revoked in 1685 and the Huguenots were scattered all over Europe and America. As the capital of Brittany Nantes was a famous city, and has now a population of about 300,000. It is a clean city, the streets paved with white cobblestones and mostly wide, contrasting with the narrow "rues" of most French cities. It has a massive old chateau, or rather defensible fortified castle, which dates back about 1000 years. All sorts of American products are now on sale there, and things generally cheaper than they are in the interior, as Nantes is a great port, being the head of navigation on the river Loire. The "Lake George" and a bunch of other American boats were in harbor, and the town was full of "jackies" as well as A. E. F. veterans who have prospects of an early return home. The Loire was in flood from the heavy rains of the last month and many villages near Nantes were partially submerged, being either deserted or inhabited only in second stories. In the latter case the inhabitants call on each other by rowboats.

To make a long story short, I drew my automobile, a brand new Ford with full equipment, just off the ship from America, and had to leave Nantes that very night—New Year's—in order to get back to Blols before Friday morning, which was very necessary. This made it impossible for me to call on the French folks that evening. However, this disappointment was more than counterbalanced when I met Corporal Bliss—now Sergeant Bliss—my old Stars and Stripes pal of last summer. I believe I sent you one of his letters to me. He is a first-rate news writer and has contributed some A-1 articles to the Stars and Stripes. He is a Harvard man, and got his reportorial training on the Springfield "Republican" and the Boston papers. He was drawing a car too, as was Sergeant Hagerty, who holds forth at Nevers. Another Stars and Stripes man, named Hollenwever, was also there, and the four of us started merrily forth with our brand new Fords—three Fords and four men. It was 7:30 P. M. and we hadn't gone two blocks when I had to stop mine (stalled) on a car track on top of a hill (I pulled up the emergency brake and, being new, it stuck fast, so fast that three of us could not "unstick" it. In the meantime two street cars filled with French commuters came along, with lady conductors and motorwomen. They got out and handed us some delightful French because the car was on the track). We got away all right, however, and bumped over the chuck-hole roads, made so by heavy truck traffic, until we reached the town of Oudan, some miles out of Nantes. It was getting late so we put up there in a regular country hotel. It was after ten o'clock but the landlady cooked us a supper, as we hadn't had any, and talked good French to us. All the common people of the Loire valley talk good French, and it is not so hard to "comprendre" as the patois of many parts of the country. Bliss and I slept together in a regular palatial bed, which had a cupola and colored curtains over it. The bedroom floor was of hardwood and the landlady made us take a pair of "elders" or large flatboat slippers, and sneak over the floor with them so our hobnails would not inoculate the polished surface. Bliss, in true news-

paper fashion, is totting a pet dog named "Rags" around France with him. "Rags" woke us up sufficiently early in the morning by sneezing in my face and putting one foot in Bliss' mouth (which he affirms, and I am sure he had it open wide enough), and we went down to a breakfast of hot buttered toast, eggs, and coffee with sugar and real cream. Will you believe me when I say that this is the first real cream I have had since I left the United States? It was also the best breakfast I have had in France.

Leaving Oudan, we went on to Angers, which is probably the largest slate, or "ardoise" mine in the world. The whole city and environs is a vast pile of slate formation. It is used all over France, especially in roofing houses. The 118th Engineers are in Angers and I think John Dambach of Oregon City is there, but I had no time to look him up. It also has a wonderful old chateau. After Angers we struck Saumur, a beautiful city with a mediaeval chateau standing high on the heights over the Loire—a most imposing spectacle. We went a mile beyond the town and ate dinner at a hotel which in America would be called a "roadhouse". I suppose, a bunch of French girls were dancing their queer square dances to the tune of a discordant piano, and Bliss made editorial notes on the surroundings. I think next we followed the Loire through Langeais (another chateau city) and in to Tours, which we reached late in the evening. After drawing gas and saying goodbye to my friends I went to Blols, which is 65 kilometers above Tours. Thus it was that I reached Blols at midnight, and got up before five to use my new Ford on the latest edition of the Stars and Stripes.

(The 41st Division, Northwest National Guard, is said to be going home very soon, and you will probably see Lorraine Ostrom, Ed Miller, Roy Matton, and others within a short time. They have been unfortunate in being stuck for long periods in small towns, due to their being made a depot division for replacing the army at the front. They were a fine division though and the Northwest can well be proud of them.)

I hope to start on my furlough within a short time, although one can never tell on this job what will happen next.

Immediately upon my return I opened the Xmas package and it was a dandy. The toothbrush and dental cream were very acceptable as my brush was getting to be pretty much of a veteran. Many thanks, I will write to the other folks who were so thoughtful in sending things, for I appreciated it all very much. "Your loving son, "ELBERT" Corp. E. B. Charman, Rep. Stars and Stripes, A. P. O. 726, American E. F.

"Dear Mother: "I am just dropping you a few lines to let you know that I am well, and getting along fine. "It looks as though the war is over, and I am glad of that. I was in the big drive, northwest of Verdun, which started November 1, and lasted ten days. I got through the whole 'show' without a scratch. We were in the front lines when we received news that the armistice was signed. We were glad that the fighting was to stop, but we did not celebrate any, because we were pretty tired after being up all night. After we had a few days' rest we started on this march to the Rhine river in Germany. We marched through a part of Belgium and Luxemburg, coming through the cities the people would greet us with cheers and were happy to see us coming driving the Hun away from them and back into his own country. The arches over the street had signs bearing the wording 'Honor Our Allies and Liberators.' The streets were decorated with all the flags of the Allies. We were dirty and covered with mud, but when we stopped for a rest, nothing was too good for us.

"We reached the Rhine about a week ago. We are living in a factory building office. We have electric lights and steam heat, which is great after living in the woods for a month. "The German people do not seem to think much about us being here, and they go on about their business as usual, and we do not interfere with them.

"I have not heard from brother Mike (Stanley), since I came over here. I do not worry about him, for I am pretty sure he is safe back behind the lines, besides I am pretty sure his division was not in any of the fights.

"I have not been writing to any one for quite awhile, because we were short of paper, and there was not much chance getting any in the woods. In the future I will write oftener. I have not received a letter since I came over.

"I will close for this time, with love. "Your son, "ANTHONY." Mrs. A. Gozesky and son, Joseph, received the following letter from their son, Sergeant Stanley Gozesky, who is a well-known Oregon City young man, who is in France: Is-sur-tille, France, Jan. 12, 1919.

## First Session of International Food Council in Paris



Delegates to the International Food Council are seen here at their first official meeting in the Ministry of Commerce in Paris. From left to right at the table are Norman K. Davis, Herbert C. Hoover and Mr. Sheldon, representing the United States; Professor Attilio of Italy, General Payot, French representative in charge of construction work west of the Rhine; M. Vilgrain and M. Clementel, also representing France, and Lord Reading and Sir John Beale of Great Britain.

"The work here is to be finished soon, and if we do not go to Germany I think we will come home, but it will be a month or two any way. "We have a Y. M. C. A. close now, and it makes it nice for us to write letters and spend some of our spare time. They have shows here too—moving pictures, and some real American girls sing sometimes.

"We are living in barracks, and it is much better than those cold tents. We moved in about two weeks ago. "I hope that all at home are feeling fine and that no one has the influenza. So far I have been lucky, and have not been sick, only having a slight attack of la grippe, which sent me to the hospital for six days, but feel fine now.

"Your son and brother, "STANLEY." E. A. Hughes of Pendleton, a former Oregon City young man, is in receipt of two letters from his brother, Clark Hughes, who is in the navy and stationed, when writing at the Rock of Gibraltar. One of the letters is dated December 1, and the other December 15. They are in part as follows: Rock of Gibraltar, December 1, 1918.

"Dear Ed: "Well, the censorship has been lifted.

"Your loving son, "ELBERT" Corp. E. B. Charman, Rep. Stars and Stripes, A. P. O. 726, American E. F.

"Mrs. A. Gozesky, who has not heard from her son, Sergeant A. J. Gozesky of the 96th Company, Sixth Regiment, United States Marines, for some time, and had feared her son was among those having lost his life in the big drive previous to the signing of the armistice, was delighted when she received the following letter a few days ago from the young man: Rheinbrohl, Germany, Dec. 8, 1918.

"Dear Mother: "I am just dropping you a few lines to let you know that I am well, and getting along fine.

"It looks as though the war is over, and I am glad of that. I was in the big drive, northwest of Verdun, which started November 1, and lasted ten days. I got through the whole 'show' without a scratch. We were in the front lines when we received news that the armistice was signed. We were glad that the fighting was to stop, but we did not celebrate any, because we were pretty tired after being up all night. After we had a few days' rest we started on this march to the Rhine river in Germany. We marched through a part of Belgium and Luxemburg, coming through the cities the people would greet us with cheers and were happy to see us coming driving the Hun away from them and back into his own country. The arches over the street had signs bearing the wording 'Honor Our Allies and Liberators.' The streets were decorated with all the flags of the Allies. We were dirty and covered with mud, but when we stopped for a rest, nothing was too good for us.

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"I have not been writing to any one for quite awhile, because we were short of paper, and there was not much chance getting any in the woods. In the future I will write oftener. I have not received a letter since I came over.

"Just a few lines before we get under way. We have our daily orders and will move off on the 18th or 17th of this month for Azores. From there we will have a 30-day trip without seeing land until we hit some island of Cuba, or it may be Cuba for all we know, but it is some island in that vicinity. Then we will go up the coast as far as Norfolk, Va., or perhaps Philadelphia.

"This will be a tough trip, these 20 days, but we will feel good to think we are going to God's country. I am telling you that you are in God's country right now. No other country is half as good as the U. S. A. "Over here they use a couple of oxen and an old crooked stick to plow with, while in the United States you are plowing with a real caterpillar up-to-date.

"Last week a party of about 15 men went up to the top of the Rock. We saw many interesting things. We crawled through some tunnels and went from one end of the rock to the other. Saw an old tower built by King Phillip about 500 years ago. "Have not received any mail for two weeks, and would sure like to get a letter before sailing. "Will close now.

"Your brother, "CLARK." U. S. S. E. P. 12, care Postmaster, New York City, N. Y.

"Miss Vena Barnes is in receipt of a letter from Ernest Owing, a well-known young man of Willamette, and member of Battery B, 51st F. A., who recently arrived from overseas. The following is a portion of the letter: Camp Mills, L. I., Jan. 20, 1919.

"I hardly know where to start, inasmuch as I have so much I would like to write you, but here goes: "We left Camp Mills, L. I. November 2, on the big passenger ship Aquitania. It is an English ship, and we landed at Brest, France, November 9, just two days before the armistice was signed. From there we went to Ploemel, France. We were on our way to the front, but were stopped there, where we remained for three weeks, and as the whole division was not entirely across, we received orders to return to Brest. Here we awaited transportation back to the United States. While we were at Brest President Wilson arrived. Our regiment was the guard of honor for

### Bought War Planes to Put Them Into Business



By the lucky toss of a nickel Roy A. Conger acquired the right to buy for a New York syndicate the greater part of the equipment provided for Great Britain for training Canadian air fighters. The value of the planes and engines was placed at \$10,000,000. This makes him the biggest individual owner of airplanes in the country. It is understood that the planes are to be put to commercial uses and that the syndicate intends to arrange for express and passenger services.

him, which we sure thought was some honor to our regiment.

"We were at Brest the last time for about a month. We left there on the President Grant, and arrived here—Camp Mills, on the 18th of this month. We expect to leave here very soon, but do not know just where we will go. It doesn't look as though I will get out very soon, but hope so, as the war is over, and I do not prefer army life in time of peace.

"You cannot imagine how glad I was to see the good old United States again, where you could talk and not have to use your hands and feet more than you do your mouth. "While on our return trip I met a Red Cross nurse on our ship. She had been in a German prison camp, and both of her hands were cut off, and she was also disfigured in other ways. It sure made a person feel as if the war wasn't over yet, or at least should not have been.

"I was promoted while in France, and was made a first-class private. "I think that we are one of the luckiest regiments there is, as the artillery brigade, which left Camp Mills when we reached there was all killed, except 1400 men who never reached the front.

"If I am mustered out I will be sent back to Portland, where I enlisted, and of course I will come to Willamette before going home. "P. S.—Word has just come from headquarters that we are to leave for Camp Knox, Ky., but do not know whether we will be stationed there or be demobilized.

"Mr. and Mrs. G. E. Taber of this city, are in receipt of the following letter from their son, Asel J. Taber, army field clerk: General Headquarters, A. E. F. Chamant, France, Dec. 26, 1918.

"Dear Folks at Home: "This is the day after Christmas and as I am still alive and able to kick will write you a few lines here at my office. I suppose you had a dandy dinner and I imagined myself there eating it with you. We had a good dinner alright but no spread like Thanksgiving.

"I thought sure I was going to have to wait until after Christmas for my box as it had not arrived Christmas Eve, but who could have set a better time for it to come than Christmas Day? It came in about ten o'clock while I was in the office—I worked ten hours yesterday. But was off in the afternoon though and saw the President and Mrs. Wilson drive up and around the Headquarters buildings.

"We sure have been having a lot of rain the last month or more. I know old Oregon would have to go some to beat our record, but Christmas Day it turned colder and snowed, so you see we had a real Christmas. It is still cold today and has been snowing again.

"I have been getting my mail quite regularly until the last two weeks, in which time I haven't received a letter. I get the Enterprises regularly and read them from beginning to end and enjoy them very much.

"I suppose some of the boys have begun to arrive from the camps by now, in fact, I suppose most of them will soon be home. I haven't any idea when any of us will be sent home but have a feeling that it will be some time soon. "I met my first acquaintance of the West here a few days ago. A young fellow who went to school in Portland the same time I did. We had an old-time "Oregon" chat. I also met a nurse out at the hospital, while I was there, who was from Portland and had been in Oregon City many times.

"We have quite a variety of entertainments here at the "Y" hut. Something on almost every night. They also have quite a number of classes started now in their class rooms.

"Well I guess I had better ring off for this time; will write again soon. I hope you continue to get my letters regularly.

"Love to all. "Au revoir, "ASEL J. TABER, "Army Field Clerk."

Bert Harvey is one of the popular young men of Oregon City, and at the time of enlisting as a paymaster in the naval service, was bookkeeper for the Oregon City Manufacturing company. Mr. Harvey, who is the son of Mr. and Mrs. A. H. Harvey, has kept a diary from the time he left Oregon City. He is on the U. S. S. Wilamette, and has been through the Isthmus of Panama, and visited other interesting points. From the diary we

are taking the account of traveling through the great canal:

Monday, December 30, 1918. "Well, we have been through the Panama Canal, and it surely was a wonderful trip, with so many things to see that I needed at least one other pair of eyes. Would not have missed it for anything, and can but reiterate what has been said before, that no one can appreciate the magnitude of the work our Uncle Sam has done down here, until they have actually seen it themselves. Have so much to say about it, hardly know how or where to begin. Guess the best plan will be to start in beginning early this morning, when I got up, and try and follow events through in their order.

"Orders were last night that the crew was to be turned to at 5 o'clock this morning, so I rolled out this morning about 6:30 to be in time and not miss anything, but going back just a bit further, one of the quartermasters called me this morning at 4 o'clock to see the much talked of southern cross. I 'spotted' it quite distinctly. This was made of four very bright, and one very dim star. This was in the exact shape of the Catholic cross, sort of tipped over from a straight up and down position. Each of the four bright stars form one end of the four ends of the cross, the dim one, the center of the crossing of the short and the long pieces that go to make up the cross.

"Up then this morning, as I said, and found that we were lying outside of Panama bay, amongst the Pearl Islands. The islands around us are all rocky formation, rising almost straight up from the water's edge, with no beaches. The slopes are covered with vegetation of one sort or another, like-wise unknown.

"When I got up we were flying our symbol flags, likewise two international code flags 'P. T.' which in turn means we are calling for a pilot to take us through the Canal. About 7 o'clock here comes a little gas launch. The first I saw of her she was headed for a Japanese tramp, put a pilot aboard her, then come over to us with another pilot. He wore a white uniform like a naval uniform, except no shoulder straps, and the device on his white cap different, having the letters 'P. C.' (Panama Canal).

"In addition to the former pilot, we get another pilot who handles the ship through each lock.

"I have noticed a new variety of birds. The gulls look like our northern gulls, except they are only about one-half as large; another bird, sort of a pelican, no apparent tail, but a decidedly apparent bill, with a wide wing spread; another one, all black, excepting having a little white on the breast, with a long spika like looking tail, rather a long bill and an exceptionally wide wing spread.

"About half way to the mouth of the canal, here comes another little motor boat, and an army doctor climbs up the ship's ladder. The crew is all mustered on port side of the ship, and the doctor walks down the line, giving us the 'once over', and walks back and tells the captain we were all right, climbs off again and leaves us.

"The channel is very clearly laid out with the buoys; not overly wide, but plenty wide enough for two ships to pass. We saw where the submarine nets were strung across the mouth of the canal, and were attached to buoys, and were painted white. The buoys consisted of 50 gallons iron oil or acid drums. I could also see the fortifications on the islands out in the bay. You could see where the excavations were evidently located for the gun pits. Each one of these islands is provided with a little wireless set, no doubt for communication between themselves and the shore. At Balboa the buildings are of one style of architecture, along general lines of old Spanish missions, with their cool, cream-colored walls and red tile roofs and trim lawns, trees and shrubbery.

"On actually getting into the canal another motor boat came alongside, and we took on eight or ten natives, who handled the lines to the ship through the various locks. When they were not busy they were peddling books and post cards of the canal to the crew. One fellow had some Panama hats, but was afraid of his so-called bargain, for reason that he and his crew of 'blackbirds' were selling books to the crew for \$1.50 that could be bought ashore for 25 cents. Their money is worth about 50 cents on the dollar.

"It is wonderful to look at the huge proportions of the locks and to think they were conceived and executed by man. As everyone understands the Lake Gatun, between the two series of locks is 75 feet above sea level, and so a ship has to be lifted to that level, then lowered. We first move into the first lock at Miraflores under our own power. After the bow is just about in, a couple of natives in a row boat come out from the lock line, by which means lines are put aboard ship, with a little assistance from the crew in way of operating winches, etc. Steel cable is then taken on both sides of the ship at the bow, amidship and at the stern, these lines in turn being attached to electric motors or 'mules', as they are called. All power used on the canal is electric, all generated at a big spill-way from Gatun Lake, which water is used again in raising and lowering ships through the locks.

"The locks are about 100 feet wide and 1000 feet in length, then when the gate astern is closed, the water from the lock ahead is turned into the lock you are in, by means of a number of big valves in the bottom of your lock and as the water rushes in, you begin to rise, and you can see where each one of the valves is located by the water boiling up as they are opened. "The locks during war time have all been enclosed with high barred wire fences. They were taking down the wire at Miraflores Lock today and winding it up. "At each of the locks they have a sort of an administration or office building located between the two tiers of locks, and they are all on the same plan as the houses of Balboa, with cream walls and red tile roofs.

"Off to the south side are located the government hotels and dwellings for employes. The better dwellings for officers, I suppose, have the cream colored walls and red tile roofs, and from a distance they do look cool and attractive.

"After leaving Miraflores locks, where we were raised twice, it is but a short distance, possibly a mile or two, to Pedro Miguel lock, where you get one lift only. Between these two locks two Panama railroad trains passed us, one an engine with a string of freight cars, the second a passenger train of about seven cars. The railroad is on the south side of the canal.

"The locks are lighted by electricity. "At Pedro Miguel lock, I noticed an honor flag for the Fourth Liberty Loan flying from the settlement off to the south, so the loan campaign have extended down this far of course. "If you think there are no 'John Henry's' down here, you are wrong, as after leaving Pedro Miguel, one of the little 'devils' fitted up as a light delivery car, passed us, sitting along to beat the 'Dutch.' But you will find them in the other world, (both places).

"In Culebra Cut we passed a number of ships, who were following immediately astern, one after the other. There were four subs, one the K-17, others with no numbers. They are wicked looking things. Tin fish certainly describes them better than anything I can say. Must be a horrible life aboard them, especially at sea.

## ONE BILL IS KILLED BY COMMITTEE AFTER FIGHT BY MULKEY

SALEM, Or., Feb. 6.—J. F. Mulkey, a Portland attorney appearing for the chiropractic school of practitioners, and Mr. Ohmart, representing the Christian Scientists, assailed house bill 218 before the joint consolidation committee yesterday, with the result that following their attack the committee decided to report the bill adversely, and Representative Weeks, who introduced the measure withdrew it this morning.

House bill 218 is one of the four proposed consolidation measures and provides for a department of health, proposing the consolidation of all boards affecting the several schools of physicians, the barbers, dentists and optometry examining boards.

## SPECIAL SESSION OF LEGISLATURE WILL BE CALLED BY GOVERNOR

SALEM, Feb. 7.—Following a conference last evening between Governor Withycombe, the chairmen of the legislative reconstruction committees, Mayor Baker, and other Portland officials, a decision was reached that after the adjournment of the present session the legislature shall call a special session of the legislature for reference of a comprehensive reconstruction program to the electorate at a special election.

The reconstruction program is to be prepared and presented to the special session by a commission of 15 to be created by Representative Sheldon's bill, now pending in the house, and, whether it will be called at the tail-end of present session or later, will depend upon how soon the commission can prepare its program.

## LEAGUE PLANS HALF FINISHED BY COMMISSION

PARIS, Feb. 7.—Substantially one-half of the draft of the constitution for the society of nations has been covered by the chief conference commission dealing with this question, it was officially announced today. In approving a number of additional articles of the draft the commission reached an accord, it is stated, on certain questions of the greater importance concerning the positive functions of the league.

Captain Andre Tardieu, one of the French representatives on the commission on the society of nations, announced that the program for the society will be ready some time next week.

## REFUSE TO WITHDRAW

BERLIN, Feb. 9.—The Polish volk-rat has refused the German demand for withdrawal of its troops from the province of Posen and has called all Poles of military age to the colors to the defense of that territory. It was earned today.

## EARL TO RETURN

LONDON, Feb. 10.—The Earl of Reading, who recently resigned his post as special counsellor to the British peace delegation at Paris, will soon return to the United States, accompanied by Sir Grimwood Mears.

**Catarrah Cannot Be Cured** with LOCAL APPLICATIONS, as they cannot reach the seat of the disease. Catarrah is a local disease, greatly influenced by constitutional conditions, and in order to cure it you must take an internal remedy. Hall's Catarrah Medicine is taken internally and acts thru the blood on the mucous surfaces of the system. Hall's Catarrah Medicine was prescribed by one of the best physicians in this country for years. It is composed of some of the best blood purifiers combined with some of the best blood purifiers. The perfect combination of the ingredients in Hall's Catarrah Medicine is what produces such wonderful results in catarrah conditions. Send for testimonials free. F. J. CHENEY & CO., Props., Toledo, O. All Druggists, etc. Hall's Family Pills for constipation.