



ca 1900^a

Mormon Elders' Wafers:

Images of Mormon Virility in Patent Medicine Ads

LESTER E. BUSH, JR.

Some may be surprised to learn that the stereotypical image of the hyper-virile nineteenth century Mormon male had a special appeal to the “lost manhood” sector of a thriving American patent medicine industry. There was a time when men anxious about the dissipation resulting from an early indiscretion or fearful of a faltering masculinity could turn not just to such products as Glandol, Man Medicine, and Sir John Hampton’s Vital Restorative, but could also experience the rejuvenation of Mormon Elders’ Damiana Wafers, Brigham Young Tablets, and Mormon Bishop Pills.



There is something back of this

The Mormon Elders Damiana Wafers.

GOOD SELLER. FULL PRICE. NO KICKING.

Unique advertising matter on application,

Address,

F. B. CROUCH & CO.,

2653-2655 Broadway, New York.

1904-1905^b



ca 1900^c



THE MORMON ELDER'S Damiana Wafers.

The Most Powerful

INVIGORANT

Ever Produced. Permanently Restores those Weakened by Early Indiscretions, Imparts Youthful Vigor.

Restores Vitality, Strengthens and Invigorates the Brain and Nerves.

A positive cure for Impotency and Nervous Debility.

PROMPT, SAFE and SURE!

\$1.00 per box, Six for \$5.00.

Mailed to any address on receipt of Price. Send for circular.

Sole Agent for United States.

F. B. CROUCH,

202 Grand St., New York.

FOR SALE BY THE JOBBING TRADE.

1884-1888^d

The Mormon Elders' line appears to have enjoyed the greatest success. Marketed by F. B. Crouch & Company of New York City, the Damiana Wafers were available in pink or white, and sold for \$1.00 to \$2.00. Their ads appeared in catalogues for two decades or more around the turn of the century. For those with other problems, there were also Mormon Elders' Attraction and Mormon Elders' Complexion, as well as a Fruit Laxative, and Sandalwood wafer.

The therapeutic claims for Mormon Bishop Pills which were available in red, white and blue, are typical. Little is known about this preparation, except that it attracted the passing attention of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* in a 1906 article on quack medicines.



MORMON BISHOP PILLS

This Remedy has been in use for fifty years by the heads of the Mormon Church and their followers. . . . Many men suffer from the evil effects of self-abuse, over-indulgence, excesses in use of tobacco and liquors, anxiety and worry. These bring on one or more of the following diseases: Lost Manhood, Nervous Prostration, Nervous Debility, Dizziness, Headache, Indigestion, Loss of Will Power or Memory, Nocturnal Emissions, Pain in the Back, Loss of Semen, Impotency, Incapacity for Marriage, Sleeplessness, Spermatorrhea, Loss of Vital Fluids, Prematureness of Discharge, Varicocele, Atrophy, Hydrocele and Constipation. . . . If you suffer from any of these symptoms take Mormon Bishop Pills and be cured before it is too late. . . . Do not become discouraged, no matter if you have tried many of the so-called cures. Take Mormon Bishop Pills and cure is certain.



1906'

Brigham Young Tablets, the most recent of these three, were a product of the West Medicine Company of Denver, Colorado. They appeared in the late Twenties, the creation of one Amos C. West, whose "upstairs" clinic also specialized in a remedy for syphilis called "909." He was put out of business in 1931 by the U.S. Post Office Department for fraudulent use of the mails.

Alas, none of these products are presently available. For those who keenly feel the loss and would like to prepare a home batch, the ingredients of Brigham Young Tablets were mostly sugar, starch and talc, with green vitriol (ferrous sulphate), baking soda, a little zinc phosphide, and a trace of nux vomica.

CREDITS and CITATIONS

- a. Courtesy of the Bella C. Landauer Collection in the New-York Historical Society.
- b. 1904-1905 Catalogue of the Charles N. Crittenton Company
- c. Gerald Carson, *One for a Man, Two for a Horse* (Doubleday: Garden City, N.Y., 1961), p.33.

Brigham Young
Tablets

Greatest nerve and gland tonic on earth, for men only, \$2.00 per box, 3 for \$5.00. Mail orders filled in plain wrapper. Clinic is always open. Western Medical Clinic, 1513 Stout St., Denver.

1928-1931^f