

PASS THE crème DE CASSIS, I FEEL A COUGH COMING ON 04/24/01

Rawleigh Products were household words when I was growing up. They were popular home remedies for everything from the common cold to sore muscles, chapped skin and abrasions. They served both man and beast ably and well.

Every community had its Rawleigh agent who sold wares door to door. Many a pensioner, young person or others needing to augment a modest means dispensed them. They were quality goods and it was not unusual for customers to contact the agent if they ran out of a favorite item.

Since I had not heard of them for years, I assumed Rawleigh, like many other once-familiar institutions of my youth, had faded into obscurity. The notion was dispelled when I received a gift in the mail recently of a bottle of Rawleigh's Camphor Balm.

An enclosed note stated, or in words to that effect, that it was good for trappers, timber cruisers, surveyors or others of similar ilk. The label on the bottle read: "Relieves stiff, tired, aching muscles and cold symptoms." It proved to be powerful stuff and lived up to my assertions of quality products.

It was a gift retaliatory measure from the sender to an earlier gift of mine to him of a bottle of crème de Cassis, a black current liqueur. I learned from another friend that it is the best home remedy for the common cough I have ever come across.

Home remedies are not as common as they once were and many of them have been lost in antiquity. Some are preserved in the annals of what recently have become popular health publications. Today's generation is more apt to learn of them in that manner rather than as my generation did by practice and common knowledge.

Cod liver oil was once a staple in every household and the bane of all young sprouts. I well remember all four of us as children lining up on the way to bed and choking down our daily dose. I would not even want to be in the same county if you tried to get any of my pampered, spoiled, darling grandchildren to swallow the smallest dollop.

White pine pitch was an effective home remedy for taking the soreness and inflammation from small wounds or things like in-grown toenails. The price was right as most people gathered it from a cup chopped in the trunk of a live tree. I note with interest

turpentine and oil of cedar-leaf are ingredients in my gift bottle of Rawleigh Balm.

Cloverine was another line of home remedies and if I am not mistaken, one in which I had a brief but failed business experience. No doubt my parents and close relatives were responsible for keeping me from going in the hole and at least breaking even.

Two long-time vendors I knew in my youth were the Hathaway Bakery and Jewel Tea Company. I believe the Jewel Company may still be active in at least one part of the country. I received one of their fruit cakes as a gift some 20 odd years ago. I might add it was well received as all fruit cake gifts are that come my way.

The popularity of Vick's Vapor Rub, Lee's Save the Baby and Sloan's Liniment do not seem to hold the place of eminence in the medicine cabinet that they once did. Nonetheless, it is hard for me to forget the relief I once derived from all three, lo these many years.

I leave you with a final observation and a word of advice. I was really serious about the remarkable curative powers of crème de Cassis in stifling the common cough. I guarantee the results; it will make you feel better, but you may find as I have a quart does not last long.