them. Whenever I see a new chemical or drug announced I buy it, no matter what it costs.” He then described “a bottle containing a clear, straw-colored liquid” as “composed of morphine, chloral-hydrate, chloroform, nitrate of amyle, cassia and cloves. Those things have no chemical action on each other, and they’ll stop any kind of pain immediately.”

By the time a group of reporters visited from Boston on 22 May, Edison had labeled the preparation in the bottle “Polyform” (clipping from the Boston Evening Transcript of 23 May 1878 enclosed with George Chapman to TAE, 10 June 1878, DF [TAEM 19:365]). Edison and his assistants tried other words—polyanodyne, polypharmakon, and polymorph—as part of a general effort to find Greek-based names for several of his inventions (see Doc. 1303).

4. Edison freely provided recipes for the mixture; see other letters in 78-033, DF (TAEM 19:345). He did not file a patent application for it until 1879 and no U.S. patent issued (Serial No. 2,206, 8 Sept. 1879, “Medicinal Preparation” in “Abstract of Edison’s Abandoned Applications,” p. 12, PS [TAEM 8:539]). In 1880 a British patent (No. 599) was issued to William Lake, as Edison’s agent. For a discussion of nineteenth-century patent medicines see Young 1961.

5. Unidentified.

6. Edison stated in his British patent that the preparation was a combination of “all of the most powerful chemical compounds which act anaesthetically,” dissolved in “menstruums which are also anaesthetics” (alcohol, ether, and chloroform), all subject to the limitation that they “have no chemical action upon each other.” Edison’s list of ingredients and proportions here omits the amyl nitrate mentioned in the news account (see note 3) and differs from those in the British patent and elsewhere. The formulas in the U.S. and British patent applications are in agreement except for 3 pennyweights of opium included in the former, which was mentioned in the preliminary version of the latter but dropped from the final specification. The ingredients from the British patent are: “One ounce of hydrate of chloral, four ounces of alcohol, two ounces of chloroform, two ounces of camphor, two minims of oil of peppermint, two minims of oil of cloves, three pennyweights of salicylic acid, three pennyweights of nitrate amyl, two pennyweights of morphia sulphate, two ounces of ether.” Brit. Pat. 599 (1880); W. H. Hayward to TAE, 9 July 1878, DF (TAEM 19:375); Serial No. 2,206, 8 Sept. 1879, “Medicinal Preparation” in “Abstract of Edison’s Abandoned Applications,” p. 12, PS (TAEM 8:539).

7. A fluid ounce equals 29.76 ml.

8. A grain is 1/480 troy ounce, i.e., 0.06479 g.

9. A drachm (or dram) equals 60 minims (drops) or 1/8 fluid ounce, i.e., 3.72 ml.

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From George Bliss

Dear Sir:

I send you a dozen copies of the Tribune as requested.¹ The Mania has broken out this way— School-girls write

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compositions on Edison: The funny papers publish squibs on Edison: The religious papers write editorials on Edison.\(^2\) The daily papers write up his life: The Rev. Woodbury\(^b\) is writing a magazine article on Edison\(^b\) &c &c

When shall we get a visit? Resply Geo. H. Bliss G.M.

Why dont the Graphic fill up exclusively with Edison and done with?

ALS, NjWOE, DF \(*TAEM* 17:76). Letterhead of the Electric Pen and Duplicating Press, George Bliss, General Manager; letterhead and dateline are electric pen copy. "Chicago" and "1878" preprinted. \(^b\)Obscured overwritten letter.

1. Bliss's biographical essay on Edison had appeared in the 8 April Chicago Tribune. See App. 3.
3. Neither the clergyman nor the magazine has been identified.

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Technical Note: Electric Lighting

**Electric Light\(^2\)**

\(^{1}\) [Menlo Park,] April 14 1878

\(^{3}\) (Regulating by Tasimeter principle.)