

practice rests upon scientific principles. To be sure, antiquity presents a few glorious names in medical science; the men who bore them sought to interpret facts in the light of reason, and thus they arrived at a number of general truths; but they stood isolated from the mass, and it was only by a few enlightened princes that their abilities were recognized. Unfortunately, the character of a period takes its color from the general mass of mankind rather than from the small number of choice spirits that shine as stars of the first magnitude. If we are to seek for those beginnings from which modern pharmacy traces its lineal descent, we must go to the period of the first Renaissance, the thirteenth century, the time of the greatest of all the Hohenstaufens, the emperor Frederick the Second. This was the era that prepared for the greater intellectual awakening of the fifteenth century, when science became a social factor, and medicine and pharmacy assumed the positions they have maintained ever since. What better motto could the pharmacist of to-day adopt than the words which an ancient writer put into the mouth of Apollo:

Opiferque per orbem dicor (6).

TRANSLATIONS OF QUOTATIONS IN THE TEXT.

- (1) "Who knew all the poisons that the wide earth nourishes."
- (2) "You, a workshop of Colchian poisons, are always working against me until I, burned to ashes, shall become the sport of the saucy winds."
- (3) "What sorceress, what enchantress with Thessalian drugs, what god can release you?"
- (4) "Thessalian witches follow the camp and with their native poisons pollute the light of the moon."
- (5) "Thieves and vultures disturb me less than those knaves who, by means of incantations and poisonous potions, lead astray the human mind."
- (6) "Throughout the world I am spoken of as a helper."

O. HENRY.

The origin of the pen name "O. Henry" is not definitely known, at least not generally; it has been said that he adopted this name from a text reference relating to Hydrocyanic Acid in the U. S. Dispensatory; others state that he picked the name from New Orleans papers. The late H. L. Carleton, for many years manager of Morley Brothers, Austin, Texas, said he did not know until years after that William S. Porter and O. Henry were the same individual. It is desired to bring in a few lines from a letter of the latter to his mother-in-law, Mrs. Roach, because they confirm this writer's belief in the innocence of the former of that charge.



O. HENRY.

"I feel very deeply the forbearance and long suffering kindness shown by your note, and thank you much for sending the things. Right here I want to state solemnly to you that in spite of the jury's verdict I am absolutely innocent of wrong doing in that bank matter, except so far as foolishly keeping a position that I could not successfully fill."

Dr. George W. Willard, of the penitentiary in which O. Henry served blame-

lessly, became a friend and admirer of the short story writer. He said much of him and always conveyed his high regard and esteem; a paragraph from "O. Henry Biography" will have to suffice:

"He was the last man in the world you would pick for a crook. Toward everyone he was quiet, reserved, almost taciturn. He seldom spoke unless in answer. He never told me of his hopes, his aims, his family, his crime, his views of life, his writing; in fact, he spoke of little save the details of his pharmaceutical work in which he was exceptionally careful and efficient. The chief means by which I judged his character was by the way he acted and by one or two little incidents which brought out the man's courage and faithfulness."

The last recorded words of O. Henry were "Turn up the lights; I don't want to go home in the dark."

Edmunds Travis of Houston, Texas, who has written and added to the fund of authentic information about O. Henry, has granted permission to the editor to publish the following in the JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION, or in any way that he would like. As he believes the matter is of interest to the readers, it is printed here, and thanks are conveyed to Mr. Travis for the permission given.

It may be stated, according to Mr. Travis, that O. Henry's letters of recommendation from Greensboro were reproduced in an edition of his works, with the erroneous statement that he brought the letters with him when he came to Texas. The dates on the letters refute that statement. Both letters are dated May 26, 1884, two years after O. Henry came to Texas and two months after his arrival in Austin. What happened was that O. Henry sent back for the letters when he sought a job in Austin. The following is from the communication of Mr. Travis:

"Late in the Spring of 1884, a young man named William S. Porter applied for a position in Morley Brothers' wholesale and retail drug store in Austin, Texas. He had arrived in Austin about two months earlier from a range in La Salle county, Texas, but his home town was Greensboro, North Carolina, and he presented two letters of recommendation from that place. One of these, signed by four physicians of Greensboro, including Dr. J. H. Hall, an ex-president of the North Carolina Medical Association, commended Porter both as a druggist and a citizen. The other, signed by J. N. Nelson, clerk of the court of the county in which Greensboro is located, declared the bearer an A No. 1 druggist and a very popular young man among his friends.

"Porter had learned what he knew about pharmacy in a drug store in Greensboro conducted by his uncle, W. C. Porter. It was while clerking there that he made some of the earliest of those sketches and cartoons which caused his friends to predict a brilliant future for him as an artist. That he was, in fact, a fairly good druggist is proved not only by his letters of recommendation but by his familiar handling of pharmaceutical terms in some of the stories for which he is now remembered.

"His pleasing personality, as well as his letters and his connections in Austin, helped him to get the place he sought with Morley Brothers. It was the first position he held in Austin and he retained it only a few months. So far as available information shows, he gave satisfaction and left the Morleys only because he had another position in view. His next employment was as a clerk and bookkeeper in a

real estate office and from that he went to the General Land Office of Texas when his friend, R. M. Hall, became Land Commissioner.

"At the period of his employment by Morley Brothers, Will Porter—afterward known throughout his own and many other countries as O. Henry—was between 21 and 22 years of age. He was of short stature—about 5 feet, six inches—slender, sandy-haired and had hazel eyes. A fairly good singer and performer on the guitar, he was fond of harmonizing with a few of his friends at their homes or joining them in serenades. He liked people and was accounted a good mixer, despite a habit of reticence which made him appear somewhat shy. His outstanding talent, in the judgment of those who then knew him, was his ability as a cartoonist. No one suspected that he was to become world famous as a writer of short stories—not even O. Henry himself.

"It was his knowledge of drugs which enabled Porter to acquire a special status in prison when, after his years in the land office and other years as a bank clerk and teller, he was given a federal sentence on a charge, involving National bank funds, of which he always declared himself innocent. Asked at the Ohio State prison, where his sentence was served, what he could do, he proclaimed himself a trained druggist and was placed in the hospital as night drug clerk. In this capacity, he attended the prison physicians on their calls and made calls alone at certain hours of the night.

"Among the stories told of his prison life is one that credits him with bringing about the speedy recovery of a warden who had been given too much of a medicine containing a solution of arsenic. The dose, it is said, had been measured out by another "trusty," who became alarmed when the warden showed signs of violent illness, and sought Porter's aid.

"The prison period of O. Henry's activities as a drug clerk, lasted above two years. It ended in October 1900, when he became a bookkeeper in the steward's office. By the time he left prison, he was earning a fair income as a writer and writing was his profession throughout the remaining years of his life.

"It is an odd fact that the only reference made by O. Henry to his life in Austin, in the only interview he ever granted anyone seeking facts about him for publication, was a brief statement that he had worked in a drug store there. He lived in Austin from 1884 to 1896 and again from 1897 to 1898. But, in this interview, all he had to say about the capital city of Texas was that he had been employed in a drug store there and had given up because he had to draw soda water.

"That whole curious interview, accepted as a basis for biographic sketches at the time, was a bit of mystification. O. Henry was known to but a handful of people as Will Porter. He did not wish to have his sad history revealed; did not wish to talk about himself at all. Therefore, he gave the interviewer such an account as might satisfy the latter's demands without throwing overmuch light on O. Henry's past. His mention of the fact that he had been a drug clerk in Austin may be taken as indicating that the period of his employment by Morley Brothers was one to which he could look back with only pleasant recollections."

William Sydney Porter was born in Greensboro, N. C., September 11, 1862; died in New York City, June 5, 1910.
