

A record of the passing of one of the world's eminent chemists, if not the greatest, should be made in this JOURNAL, but more than a passing notice of some of his discoveries is impossible. It may, perhaps, be said that the great scientist did not accomplish much which was of direct and immediate commercial value, but future history will more than likely tell another story. He set his brilliant mind on purely scientific results, and an unusually gifted imagination contributed largely to his achievements. His work with John William Strutt (Lord Rayleigh), professor of natural philosophy, Royal Institution, on the solution of the problem concerning the differences in the density between atmospheric nitrogen and that obtained from compounds led to the discovery of argon. His most recent achievement, that of transmutation of radium into helium, upset all former theories, may prove the interrelationship of all the elements, and has opened up a new world of research into the very atoms of elements. Deserved titles and honors were freely bestowed upon him. He was an honorary member of the British Pharmaceutical Conference.

#### TEAR-PRODUCING GASES USED IN THE WAR SAID TO BE MANUFACTURED FROM SABADILLA.

Press reports state that some of the asphyxiating gases, and more particularly the

tear-producing, are made from *sabadilla*, a plant of Venezuela and Mexico. The source is *Veratrum sabadilla* Retztus; the Spanish of *sabadilla* is *cebada*, meaning barley.

The highly poisonous seeds have long been used in medicine, and contain *cavadine*, or *veratric acid* and *sabadalline*; the effect is accelerating the heart beat. *Sabadilla* dust is a powerful, harmful irritant and laborers working with it are obliged to wear protecting masks. In Venezuela it is used by cattle raisers as an insecticide and in the manufacture of disinfectants. Its importation into Europe has been in the past for tanning fine leathers and as a mordant for dyes.

#### PRODUCTION OF ATROPINE POSSIBLE IN THE PHILIPPINES.

It has been ascertained that the plant *Datura alba*, which grows wild in abundance in every part of the Philippine Islands, contains a large amount of atropine. In some localities the plant reaches a height of 6 feet; it is not cultivated, and no use is made of it commercially. J. F. Boomer says in *Commercial Reports* that an American manufacturer, to whom samples were sent, ordered a large supply, and that in order to take care of any demand which may result will require that arrangements be made for collection of the plant or those parts of it that contain most of the alkaloid.

### OBITUARY

#### DR. WILLIAM SIMON.

"There is a remembrance of the dead to which we turn, even from the charms of the living."

Almost any tribute that might be paid Dr. William Simon, "Professor Simon," would fail to satisfy those who knew him, who were invariably those who loved him. The same tribute would undoubtedly be considered fulsome by those who had not had the good fortune to be closely associated with this unusual man. It will be safe to state, however, that there are very few who have made and left the same helpful impression upon American pharmacy and American pharmacists during the last forty years. The opportunity for this was offered during his long service as a teacher of chemistry, as ap-

plied to pharmacy, and by the extensive use of his text-book on chemistry by students of pharmacy.

Dr. William Simon, the son of the Rev. William and Agnes Briegleb Simon, was born at Eberstadt, in the Grand Duchy of Hesse, Germany, on February 20, 1844. He attended the schools of Giessen from 1852 to 1860. In the latter year, he entered a drug store and clerked in different stores until 1866. The following year, he entered the University of Giessen to study chemistry, and took his degree of Doctor of Philosophy in 1869. He was assistant to Prof. H. Will at the university, 1869-1870, served in the Sanitary Corps during the Franco-Prussian war and came to Baltimore at the close of 1870, as chemist for the Baltimore Chrome Works, which position he retained for nearly thirty-

seven years. The first laboratory for instruction of analytical chemistry in a college of pharmacy was established by him at Baltimore in 1871. The next year, he became professor of chemistry in the Maryland College of Pharmacy and continued as such until 1902. He was also professor of chemistry in the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Baltimore from 1880 to the time of his death, and professor of chemistry in the Baltimore College of Dental Surgery from 1888 to 1916.

In 1885, he was elected a member of the American Pharmaceutical Association and, at the Old Point Comfort meeting, in 1890, he was elected chairman of the Section on Education and Legislation, presiding over that section the next year at New Orleans. He contributed several important papers on educational topics during the next few years.



DR. WILLIAM SIMON.

One of the features of the Baltimore meeting, in 1898, was his interesting and instructive lecture on liquid air.

The history of the Maryland Pharmaceutical Association shows that he took part in its organization and contributed largely to its proceedings. He was one of its incorporators and its fifth president, serving as such in 1887. Until his death, he continued his membership in the American Chemical Association and the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Dr. Simon was married on May 13, 1873, to Paula Driver, of Baltimore, and lived at Catonsville, Maryland, for about forty-two years. They had one child, a promising boy, who died at the age of ten years of diphtheria, before the introduction of antidiphtheritic serum. Dr. Simon died at his sum-

mer home at Eagles Mere Park, Pennsylvania, on July 19, 1916. His body was cremated at Baltimore on July 21 and the ashes buried in Loudon Park Cemetery. He was the author of Simon's Manual of Chemistry, a well-known text-book used in many schools of pharmacy, medicine, and dentistry, which has passed through ten editions. Several honorary degrees had been conferred upon him, among them that of "Doctor of Medicine," by the College of Physicians and Surgeons, that of "Doctor of Science," by the University of Pennsylvania, and that of "Doctor of Laws," by the University of Maryland.

While the subject of this sketch devoted his life to the practice and teaching of chemistry, he had many avocations; one was painting, at which he did some very creditable work. Another was color photography, upon which he delivered frequent lectures; he, undoubtedly, excelled in this and his collection of color photographs is one of the finest in America. It was his delight to become familiar with the development of the sciences, and was never so happy as when giving popular lectures on liquid air, Röntgen ray, *et cetera*. The strong point in these lectures was the pains he took to make interesting demonstrations.

Dr. Simon, in personality, was unique. To students, he was much more than a teacher—he was often an inspiration—a leader into the better and higher things of life. His was a great, sympathetic heart that made those who needed his help know that he was their friend and willing helper. There are scores of his students, pharmacal, dental and medical, who are proud to acknowledge their deep obligations to their dearly beloved "Professor Simon."

"Nature has a royal line and makes no mistakes in the kings she crowns."

H. and C.

NICHOLAS HENRY MARTIN.

When the picture "Signing the Indenture of a Four Years' Apprenticeship to Pharmacy," was presented in the July number, p. 768, we did not anticipate the sad duty of recording the departure of our fellow-member, Mr. N. H. Martin, in the succeeding issue of the JOURNAL. With the reproduction of the above mentioned interesting item came a note framed in Mr. Martin's usual appreciative style telling of the happy memories:

he enjoyed of meeting with the members of the American Pharmaceutical Association, and which organization he joined in 1891.

The report on the event in last month's number, reproduced from the *Pharmaceutical Journal and Pharmacist* of June 3, 1916, may be considered in connection with this brief sketch of Mr. Martin's life and activity.

Nicholas Henry Martin, Ph.C., F.C.S., F.R.S.E., died July 5, at Ravenswood, Low Fell, Gateshead, England. He was born at Trebarveth, Cornwall, May 2, 1847. In 1863 he was apprenticed to John Solomon, of Penryn, Cornwall, for a term of four years. Mr. Martin passed his Minor and Major examinations December, 1868, while assistant to Henry Deane at Clapham. In 1873 he took over the pharmacy of William Ransom of Hitchin, and within less than two years became associated with Dr. H. B. Brady at Newcastle-on-Tyne; after the retirement of the latter, Mr. Martin became proprietor of the business which was subsequently converted into a private limited company as Brady & Martin, Ltd.

Mr. Martin held many important positions in British pharmaceutical organizations, among them, President of the British Pharmaceutical Conference, and when the International Congress of Applied Chemistry met

in London, he presided over the Pharmaceutical Section of that body.

Mr. W. A. H. Naylor in speaking of the deceased said: "Mr. Martin did nothing by halves, and he brought to bear all the qualifications he possessed for sound and finished workmanship. He sedulously cultivated his natural gifts and used them freely for the benefit of his fellow-pharmacists." A nephew, Dr. William Martin, in a letter to Professor Remington, concludes by saying of his uncle, "He valued greatly his connection with the American Pharmaceutical Association and felt the greatest pleasure in recalling his visits to America; he spoke in the most appreciative terms of the hospitality he had enjoyed among the members and had derived great benefit from attendance of the scientific meetings. The grip of practical essentials and the hold on scientific truth reached pleasurably on a kindred soul."

Mr. Martin did excellent work for Newcastle pharmacy by resuscitating, in 1885, the educational course instituted by Brady, Proctor, and others; this was one of the events of his pharmaceutical career of which he was proud; pharmaceutical education was his outstanding characteristic and always held his interest, to it he gave much of his time and energy.

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## SOCIETIES AND COLLEGES

### AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY TO HOLD ANNUAL MEETING IN NEW YORK.

The annual meeting of the American Chemical Society will be held in New York in conjunction with the second National Exposition of the Chemical Industries at the New Grand Central Palace. It is planned to hold a public meeting at the College of the City of New York, on either Tuesday or Wednesday of the week of meeting—September 25-30, 1916—at which topics pertaining to chemistry and national welfare will be made the subject of lectures by men of prominence in public affairs.

The various divisions of the American Chemical Society will present and discuss papers and reports in the halls of Columbia University in the forenoons, while the afternoons will be taken up with conferences.

### NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RETAIL DRUGGISTS.

The annual convention of the National Association of Retail Druggists will be held in Indianapolis, September 18-22. It is needless to remark on the coöperative work of this association with that of the American Pharmaceutical Association, in fact, there are many who hold membership in both organizations, and what is more and better, usually the enthusiasts of one are also deeply interested in the work of the other. While the N. A. R. D. Journal and the officials give publicity to the event, we make the announcement for record in these pages. The convention city is making preparations for the coming meeting, and the experience of the American Pharmaceutical Association is that a spirit of cordiality abounds in Indianapolis.