

# MISTER---

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## Oh, Doctor! Doctor!

By P. O'D., in "Saturday Night," Toronto.

The extraordinary popularity of doctors is one of the astonishing symptoms of this sadly disoriented time. Doctors who never before did enough business to pay for their black leather bags—you know, the bags they bring the babies in—are now electric couples up on approbation and are called bank-managers by their first name. It is a case of in incoming clients keep to the right, and outgoing to the left. And the fee in each case is two dollars—only that and nothing more. Sometimes one wonders where all the two dollar bills come from. It must keep the bank-note companies working nights.

Nor does this popularity seem to be limited to any particular class of doctors. Specialists and general practitioners, homeopaths and allopaths, doctors that treat the ear and throat, doctors that devote their attention to the heart and lungs or the liver and lights, orthopedists and dentists, doctors that cure you with a knife and a saw, doctors that bring you into the world, and doctors that make you out of it—they are all so busy writing prescriptions that most of them are developing writers' cramps. In fact, one friend of ours confessed to us that he was getting his prescriptions from a well-known pharmacologist.

"But what in the dickens is he treating you for?" we asked in our amazement. "That man is a specialist in female troubles."

"Well I've had a good deal of trouble

with females," said our friend, "and that's one reason why I require a quart a week. I have a lot to forget."

Of course, it is possible for a doctor to become too popular and have too many patients. A few medics have even had to appear in the police court and explain why they were causing such a run on the sadly depleted stocks of the most palatable and precious medicine in the world. Naturally, the magistrates took a very severe view of this extravagance in prescriptions—dash it all, if the thing keeps up, even the Bench may have to go dry—and so they mulcted the reckless physicians several bales of the two-dollar bills they had taken in.

Far be it from us to question the decisions of the court—we may meet their clemency ourselves some day—but it does seem a darn shame that the doctor who pours nauseous messes down your gullet or goes at you with a rip-saw should be respected and highly rewarded, while the good scout who prescribes a quart of somebody's fine old Scotch should be soaked five hundred or a month in jail. Hang it, the thing is un-British!

balm in these medical Gileads. Still do the soft-eyed gazelles leap prettily about. Still do the bulbuls sing. It is expensive, but it's worth it.

We met a Montreal acquaintance on the street the other day. He had in his eye the haggard and desperate look of a man who has lost all his fortune, or had his wife run away from him, or had her come back, or some similar calamity. Naturally we asked him what had happened.

"Nothing yet," he answered, "but something will happen if I have to spend another day in Toronto without a drink."

Terrible fellows, these Montreals, when deprived of their liquor! Almost would they rather do without

their bilingualism, or their B.Y.D.'s, or whatever is nearest their hearts. Personally, we were very much impressed by the desperate nature of our friend's case. Perhaps we should have remonstrated with him gently for giving himself up in this way to the allurements of the Demon Rum, but we are not a good enough Christian.

Besides, we didn't like the look in his eye. Neither were we a good enough Christian to take him up to our humble quarters and pull down the Greek dictionary and share with him the flask that reposes behind it. That is for emergencies. Instead, we thought of a doctor's address, a nice kind doctor who doesn't demand a certificate from your rector before he'll consent to treat you—and when we say, "treat!" So we gave him the name and number.

"Thanks!" he said, and started on the run. That was the last we saw of him for two days. Then he dropped into the office for a few minutes to tell us how he had fared. The treatment had evidently been a success. He was looking and feeling much better—"like a new woman," he said himself. And then he told us the story.

It seems that when he went up to the doctor's house and rang the bell, the door was opened by a brisk, young man who said that the doctor was out. Our friend groaned in an agony of defeated hope and thought of the dismal hours till he could get back "to town"—meaning Montreal.

"But perhaps I can fix you up," said the young man. "You want a prescription, don't you?" Our friend admitted frankly that this was all he really wanted. He had no desire to be sent to a hospital or have anything amputated. All he wanted was a prescription, and though he had definite ideas on the special

brand of medicine he preferred, he was willing to take any good make so long as it wasn't too much "below proof."

"Come right in," said the brisk young man, leading him into the doctor's sanctum—or is it only editors who have sanctums, or sancta, or whatever they are in the plural? Anyway he led our friend in, and there on a desk was a great big book made up of nothing but booze-prescription blanks. And a couple of pages of them were already signed! Thoughtful chap, that doctor!

"Name?" asked the young man, filling in a blank with the air of one not unused to the task. "The address? And now what complaint?" Our friend gasped and stammered. He hadn't thought of that. Was it really necessary to be sick?

"Well, I have to put down some reason for giving you a quart of whiskey," said the young man. "How about insomnia?"

"Do they order booze for insomnia?"

"SPEAKING FROM EXPERIENCE"



THE DOCTOR: "My rest and health. Give him a Steedman's Powder and he'll soon be all right."

STEEDMAN'S SLEEPING POWDERS Contain no Poison

asked our friend, feeling that somehow the thing didn't sound strong enough. He would have preferred a really impressive ailment—galloping consumption, for instance, or yellow fever, or inflammatory rheumatism.

"There's a lot of it used for insomnia now," said the young man, deftly tearing the prescription out of the book and extending the other hand for the two dollars. As our friend leaned over to make the exchange, he glanced at the stubs in the volume and saw that they were nearly all made out for insomnia.

Well, our friend hastened to the address of the licensed vendor—it was printed on the prescription—and waited in line with a horde of other insomniacs for about an hour. But he finally got his medicine all right, and he was very grateful to us for our suggestion. Incidentally, you don't know how much it pleased us to think that a few simple words of ours had been able to fill with sunshine a brother's life. We should all help one another—that is the only real happiness in this world, dear friends. We should all go about doing little acts of kindness and of love; and if one of us happens to know of a good, reliable blind-pig or a nice obliging doctor—well, put the boys wise, for the love o' Mike, put them wise. Stern moral reformers may frown, but personally we have a comforting conviction that the Recording Angel is a good fellow himself.

Of course, it must be admitted that a visit to the doctor is not always so pleasant or so productive of happiness as in the case of the gentleman from Montreal. Occasionally the doctor peremptorily refuses to consider the matter of a booze-prescription at all. We tried one the other day, a friend of ours, while we were having a cigar

together at the Club. We hinted at our alcoholic destitution and suggested that a word from him on the usual printed form would be of great assistance. He said he was sorry, but that he considered it unprofessional. We said we were sorry, too, but it is our private conviction that what he considered unprofessional was doing it for nothing. It is bad for business. However, we have other friends in the profession. (Continued on 10th Page.)



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