HEN Arthur Grant Evans, president of the University of Oklahoma from 1908 to 1911, died several weeks ago, November 30, at his home in Santa Barbara, California, the youthful university for the first time mourned a president. Although most of the students who knew him long since left the halls of their Alma Mater, it wasn’t hard to learn from men who worked with him during that second decade of the university, that the man was affable and kind, genial and beloved. He had reached the fiftieth year when he came to our campus architecture and President Evans’ knowledge of Englishman, who it is said, retained his English accent and manners, should have admired Dickens. We had hoped from the start that this was true, and in talking with Dr. Charles N. Gould, director of the Oklahoma Geological Survey we learned that the old gentleman did indeed have a Dickensian trend. Doctor Gould said, “He liked Dickens, and was particularly fond of ‘Little Dorritt’ and ‘Pickwick Papers.’” He liked to recite passages from these novels. He was a good entertainer and a good president.

There is a printing foreman at the university who has become as much an institution as Uncle Bennie and the Sooner “howdy.” Sam Crawford, superintendent of the University Press, is his full name and official title. He is another admirer of the second president. “He was as nice an old man as you’d ever see. He used to come back to the shop and hit me on the back and say, ‘How are you today, Sam?’ He was a fine fellow, agreeable to work with.”

It was inevitable that this good man did indeed have a Dickensian trend. Doctor Gould said, “He liked Dickens, and was particularly fond of ‘Little Dorritt’ and ‘Pickwick Papers.’” He liked to recite passages from these novels. He was a good entertainer and a good president.

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JOSEPH F. PAXTON, professor of Greek and classical archaeology, recalls the morning that Arthur Grant Evans arrived in Norman to assume the presidency of the adolescent university. It happened that Mr. Paxton was conducting the daily chapel service that morning, in the top story of what present students know as the education building. As he recognized the new university head enter the chapel gathering, the Greek professor brought him to the front of the auditorium, and invited students to make personal contact with the president of their university; to come to the front, and introduce themselves. It must have been less dull for a president to meet his
charges in that way than merely by the means of a formal address.

"Doctor Evans was a very attractive and loveable sort of man," Mr. Paxton said. "He had a special talent in quoting many poets. His tendency was toward the semi-humorous along this line. He admired the witty side of poetry—humorous verse, but verse containing real poetry. Among the great poets he liked to quote, foremost perhaps, were Shakespeare and Byron."

In further reminiscences of Doctor Evans' literary tastes Mr. Paxton also recalled that he was wont to recite passages from Dickens—"Cricket on the Hearth," he recalled in particular.

On one occasion after Doctor Evans had moved to California, Mr. and Mrs. Paxton on a western trip, made a visit to the Evans family. Doctor Evans was then very much engrossed in his work as a pastor.

Through Mr. Paxton's visit to the former president we see him at home as he was in the world of his profession, kindly, loveable, a man at peace with life and the world. The professor on a visit to the former president noted and remembered a close affection between the man and his wife, and his children—a tenderness that was apparent to friendly visitors.

After learning other traits of the man, we found with interest and no surprise that he was wont to talk to the plants and the flowers.

After his retirement from the presidency of the University of Oklahoma he became pastor of El Montecito Presbyterian church at Santa Barbara, California, and held that position until he died as the result of a stroke of apoplexy in November of the year just past. He was also a professor of philosophy at the State Teachers' college at Santa Barbara for a number of years.

Doctor Evans received his appointment to the presidency of the university through Governor Charles N. Haskell. He was a democrat and a prohibitionist, and fought hard for the dry cause in this state.

President Evans was one of the three persons ever to have received an honorary degree from the University of Oklahoma. He was awarded the LL. D. degree in 1909. He had also received a D. D. degree from Henry Kendall college in Muskogee.

Doctor Evans was survived by five children, one of whom, Ted Evans, was formerly editor of the Oklahoma News, and now a member of the general editorial board of the Scripps-Howard newspapers.