

FRANK OLDRIEVE

Mr. Frank Oldrieve, who for years was associated with the work of The Mission to Lepers and of the British Empire Leprosy Relief Association, died suddenly in April, in South Africa.

Mr. Oldrieve was educated at the Manchester Grammar School and then trained for the ministry, serving first under the Baptist Missionary Society in the Congo and later in the Punjab Province of North-West India, where for a time he was in charge of the Subathu Leper Home in the Himalayas. Following a temporary breakdown in his health he went to New Zealand, and from 1913 to 1918 served as Honorary Secretary of the Mission to Lepers for the Southern Island, which is free from leprosy. Early in 1918 he became full-time Secretary for India of the Mission to Lepers, a post which he held until 1923 when, for reasons of health, he relinquished it and returned to England. During those years he obtained an intimate acquaintance with the great leprosy problem in India.

When in 1923 Sir Leonard Rogers, with financial help from Sir Frank Carter, a Calcutta businessman and philanthropist, founded the British Empire Leprosy Relief Association, Mr. Oldrieve fortunately was available for the essential post of secretary. With characteristic energy he toured England and Scotland, arranging meetings for the raising of funds for the new association. That organization had an uphill task during the first decade of its existence, and its eventual establishment on a sound basis was largely due to Mr. Oldrieve's organizing ability. In 1925 he revisited India and rendered a great service by inducing the Viceroy, the late Lord Reading, to issue an appeal for B.E.L.R.A. This brought in approximately £150,000, which has ever since yielded about £9,000 a year for the support of leprosy work in India, including the financing of the research unit at the Calcutta School of Tropical Medicine. This noteworthy success enabled the home committee to concentrate on work in British territories, especially in the immense field presented by tropical Africa. For this purpose, in 1926, Mr. Oldrieve visited West Africa, with the result that two whole-time leprosy medical workers were appointed by the Nigerian and Gold Coast Governments. The West Indies was next visited, with little result on account of financial stringency in that field. In 1927 the African survey was completed by a 16,000-mile tour through East Africa, from Egypt to Cape Colony. Here as elsewhere he organized local branches of B.E.L.R.A., with the

cooperation of the Colonial Office and the authorities in the colonies. It was in such work that he showed his best qualities of persuasive and tactful influence in overcoming difficulties. About a year after completing these tours he decided, for family reasons, to resign his appointment and move permanently to Southern Rhodesia, where for a time he engaged himself in tobacco planting but later returned to the ministry in Natal. So well, however, had he accomplished his organising task with B.E.L.R.A. that it became possible to appoint a medical expert as secretary. Last year he rejoined the Mission to Lepers as secretary for South Africa and the Rhodesias. His good work in the cause of those suffering from leprosy will long survive him.

—LEONARD ROGERS.