

LEPROSY NEWS

Information concerning institutions, organizations and individuals connected with leprosy work, scientific or other meetings, acts of legislatures, and other matters of interest to leprosy workers. Readers are invited to cooperate by sending in materials of such nature.

INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON LEPROSY AT RIO DE JANEIRO

[It has been known for some time that plans were under way to develop in Brazil an international leprosy center under the aegis of the League of Nations. The JOURNAL has received certain official League documents concerning this plan which contain matter of much interest to leprosy workers. One contains a general statement, the other two are administrative and financial regulations. From these documents the following is obtained, partly by quotation in full and partly by abstract.—EDITOR.]

In the course of a visit paid by the President of the Health Committee of the League of Nations to Latin America, the Director of the Brazilian Federal Public Health Service and Professor Carlos Chagas suggested that international research on leprosy should be undertaken by means of the establishment in Brazil, under the auspices of the League, of an international research center.

On April 15, 1931, the Brazilian Government sent a letter to the President of the Council of the League of Nations, in which an offer was made to set up the Center in question, to define its functions, and to undertake to place it at the League's disposal. This letter was accompanied by a draft organic statute of the center.

In accordance with the above-mentioned documents the object of the center will be: (1) To undertake any work which may contribute towards the prevention of leprosy by means of epidemiological, clinical, and biological research, with special reference to treatment; and (2) By means of a specialized course of instruction open to scientists, doctors, and hygienists of the countries which may desire

to take advantage of this course, to promote universal coöperation in the campaign against leprosy.

A Brazilian philanthropist, M. Guilherme Guinle, promised to pay an annual contribution of 50,000 Swiss francs towards the current expenses of the center. The Brazilian Government likewise undertook to pay the same amount. The duration of the undertaking was five years. Should specialists be engaged to coöperate in the work of the center, with the approval of the Health Committee, the Legaue might in its turn contribute up to a maximum annual sum of 50,000 Swiss francs towards their travelling expenses and allowances.

The constitutional organs of the center are as follows:

(a) *A Governing Body*, consisting of the members of the Health Committee, acting in their personal capacity, and the member of the Committee of Management appointed by the Brazilian Government.

(b) *A Committee of Management*, consisting of seven members, namely:

The Chairman, appointed by the Brazilian Government;

The Director of the Federal Public Health Service of Brazil;

The Director of the Oswaldo Cruz Institute;

A member appointed by the Secretary-General of the League of Nations;

Three members, nationals of South American countries, appointed by the Governing Body, after consulting the Director of the Federal Public Health Service of Brazil and the Director of the Oswaldo Cruz Institute.

(c) *The Director of the Center*, to be of Brazilian nationality.

The Council at its sixty-fourth session, on September 1, 1931, accepted the Brazilian Government's offer. In a telegram dated September 18, 1933, the Brazilian Government stated that the International Center for Research on Leprosy would be established by the beginning of 1934, and that the Federal Government undertook to pay its contribution towards the budget of the center. In the meantime, on June 15, 1932, the Committee of Management was set up, as follows:

M. G. GUINLE, chairman;

THE DIRECTOR of the Federal Public Health Service of Brazil;

M. C. CHAGAS, director of the Oswaldo Cruz Institute;

M. ET. BURNET, secretary of the Leprosy Commission of the League of Nations' Health Organization (appointed by the Secretary-General of the League);

M. P. BALINA, professor in the University of Buenos Aires;

M. E. RABELLO, professor in the University of Rio de Janeiro;

M. A. HERRERA RESTREPO, director of the National Leprosy Service of Colombia.

The Committee of Management met at Rio de Janeiro on October 13, 1933, the representatives of the Argentine and Colombia being absent. Proposals relating to the program of work of the center and the budget for the first year's activities were adopted, as well as the draft administrative regulations drawn up by the Legal Section and the Health Section of the League secretariat. Among the provisions of the regulations are the following:

The Governing Body is, among other things, to determine the program of work of the center, to determine the questions in respect of which Committees of Experts would be set up, and to adopt budgets, approve accounts and render annual reports.

The functions of the Committee of Management include the study, and approval to the Governing Body, of plans of work and other technical matters, and budgets, accounts and reports; the appointment of officials and technical experts of the center; and contact with work done by the center. It may propose to the Governing Body the setting up of Committees of Experts for the study of special questions. In principle it is to meet every four months.

The Director of the center—to which position the Committee proposed the appointment of Professor Chagas, head of the Oswaldo Cruz Institute—is required to preserve strictly the international character of the center; to see that the work of the center is guided by uniform principles and to coördinate its activities; and to insure the execution of the program drawn up by the Governing Body.

The working of the center is to be insured by the employment of a paid staff to consist of officials, technical experts, and subordinate and domestic staffs. The staff of the center "must be definitely international in character," the only basis for appointment being the qualifications of the candidates. Numerous details with respect to contracts, leave, etc., are laid down. An unusual provision of the regulations is that fees may be paid authors of special studies. Officials are required to maintain strict secrecy regarding

the activities of the center and are not permitted to make publications or announcements concerning those activities without the authorization of the Director.

From the proposals for the initial organization and operation the following abbreviated excerpts are translated:

The initial activities of the International Center should consist of experimental researches in the laboratories set up at the Oswaldo Cruz Institute and also of therapeutic tests, chemical studies and anatomo-pathological investigations to be carried out at the leper colony of the National Department of Public Health (Curupaiti Leprosarium). The technicians attached to the center might also be sent to other leper colonies further inland and particularly to the States of Sao Paulo and Minas Geraes; they might likewise be sent to leprosy foci in process of development to carry out epidemiological studies.

The coöperation of other study centres and centres of preventive action, such as those existing in the States of Sao Paulo and Minas Geraes, might be enlisted at the outset in the work of the International Center.

The Committee suggests that four or five technicians might be engaged to start the technical work of the center. The Committee points out the advisability of sending out specialists in leprology, who should include an immunologist and a chemist with experience of leprology; in connection with the latter field the name of Dr. Howard Irving Cole, who has worked for five years in the Philippines, is suggested.

The Committee also suggests the enlistment, through the good offices of the League's Health Organization, of the fullest possible technical and financial co-operation of other South American countries which are greatly interested in the problem of leprosy.

In view of the advisability, at all events at first, of close technical contact being maintained between the International Leprosy Centre and the Oswaldo Cruz Institute, the Committee pointed out that it would be greatly to the advantage of the Center to have as its director the Director of the Institute, Professor Carlos Chagas.

SALE OF ANTILEPROSY DRUGS BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

According to a statement by the Director of Health, the Government of the Philippine Islands, as a measure of coöperation, sells antileprosy drugs to foreign countries, with the limitation that the law which authorizes the sale provides that only such amounts can be sold as are available in excess of local needs. Orders are accepted from foreign governments subject to payment upon receipt of the drugs. Orders from private parties can be filled only when accom-

panied by payment. Payments may be made by postal money order or by drafts drawn upon any bank in the Philippine Islands. The cost of the drugs is as follows:

	<i>Pesos</i> <i>per liter</i>
H. wightiana oil, purified	5.00
H. wightiana ethyl esters, plain	12.00
H. wightiana ethyl esters, with $\frac{1}{2}\%$ iodine or creosoted	16.00

The purchaser also pays the shipping charges and other expenses. Those who send cash with their orders should make an allowance sufficient to cover freight and other expenses. In case the remittance exceeds the cost of the drugs plus other expenses, the balance will be refunded to the sender or credited to his account. (The peso is equivalent to \$0.50 United States currency.)

Since only drugs in excess of local needs can be sold, no assurance can be given that drugs can be shipped promptly upon receipt of the orders. Orders should, therefore, be placed sufficiently ahead of the time that the drugs are to be used. Orders should be sent to the Director of Health, Manila, Philippine Islands.

SCHEME FOR USING NON-MEDICAL MEN IN LEPROSY WORK

At the beginning of 1933 the Rev. Mr. Clayton, founder padre of an organization known as Toe H, paid a visit to Nigeria and in the course of his stay in that country was shocked to encounter a number of persons with advanced leprosy living under very sad conditions. He became extremely interested in the matter, and after his return to England he got into touch with the British Empire Leprosy Relief Association, putting forward the suggestion that members of Toe H might wish to offer their services for a period of time to work at leprosy colonies. As a result of this there was held on July 24, 1933, a meeting of representatives of the two organizations named and of certain missionary societies, to ascertain whether and how the services of non-medical workers could be suitably used.

It was agreed that they could be used: (1) in supervising and administering leper home colonies, in making them self-supporting through growing their own crops, in encouraging local industries among the inhabitants, etc.; (2) in supervising indigenous inocu-

lators and dressers; (3) in establishing out-patient clinics and visiting villages; (4) in visiting homes of out-patients in order to get into touch with other infected cases in the early stages of the disease, and to teach prophylactic measures. It was agreed that such men could not receive salaries less than missionaries, and that the total cost per man, including salary, allowances and travelling expenses would probably be between £250 and £300 per annum. It was also agreed that the services of nurses could be used. Further, it was decided that accepted candidates should undergo a six months' course of training at Livingstone College, or some other suitable place.

Departure of guest workers from the Philippines.—In the middle of November Professors Gay, of Columbia University, New York; Doull, of Western Reserve University, Cleveland; and Soule, of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; who had been engaged in special work in the Philippines in coöperation with the Government leprosy staff under the auspices of the Leonard Wood Memorial for two, five and four months, respectively, departed to return to the United States, via Europe. Dr. Gay, who is chairman of the Memorial's research committee and whose visit was primarily one of inspection, had carried on certain inoculation experiments and other work at Culion. Dr. Doull, with the collaboration of Dr. Jose Rodriguez, had carried on at Cordova, Cebu, a municipality of over 600 people, the most intensive survey of the population of a town in a leprosy region that has ever been made. Dr. Soule, at Culion, had among other things successfully repeated the cultivation of the bacillus that he had previously accomplished in Puerto Rico with Dr. E. B. McKinley, this being the first time that any one man has had an opportunity to duplicate leprosy culture work in widely separated regions. In due course the JOURNAL will present reports of these activities, which are all considered preliminary to the establishment of the permanent plans for research work by the Memorial.

Activity in Canton.—A Reuter's press service dispatch from Canton, dated August 15, 1933, is reproduced in the September issue of the *Leper Quarterly* of the Chinese Mission to Lepers:

"The leprosy situation in Canton has reached very serious proportions, according to press reports today. The fact that during the first day of the campaign to rid the city of lepers no less than 57 victims of the disease were discovered is causing great anxiety to the authorities. The unfortunates were rounded up and conveyed to the Leper Village at Sheklung. It is believed that many lepers are still at large in the city and in the suburbs of Canton, and the police authorities are continuing their hunt."

The *Leper Quarterly* is editorially critical of the method that was evidently being applied in Canton.

Essay contest in China.—The Chinese Mission to Lepers recently has conducted a leprosy essay contest with a view to creating among the students and the educated classes interest in the leprosy problem. Prizes were offered for the best essays submitted, the contestants having their choice of the following

subjects: 1. "Leprosy as a Public Health Problem"; 2. "Civilization and Leprosy"; 3. "A Comparison of the Anti-Leprosy Work in China and in Foreign Countries"; 4. "The Leprosy Situation in My Own District and the Means to Control It."

In the Belgian Congo.—Leprosy is not a great plague in the Belgian Congo, it is stated in a letter from Dr. René Mouchet, Médecin en Chef of that country. Owing to the far greater urgency of the fight against sleeping sickness, yaws, syphilis and the dysenteries, no special effort has been directed against leprosy by the Government except to treat at hospitals and dispensaries all patients who present themselves. The rule is to give financial aid to the philanthropic efforts of private doctors and organizations.

The largest of these local activities has been carried on by the Croix Rouge du Congo, which is working in the Nepoko district, where the disease is more prevalent than anywhere else in the Congo. Their principal center in Wamba, Nepoko, Province Orientale. Certain individual physicians who have an interest in the matter are mentioned, these being Drs. Seidelin (deceased), Mount, Tilsley and Kellersberger. The last-mentioned works about Bibanga, where he maintains a small village for the segregation of lepers for which he is given a subsidy by the Government.

The medical staff of the government attended a total of 2,542 cases of leprosy in 1931. The Croix Rouge discovered 472 cases in the same year and 340 are isolated in a special agricultural village. (A very small asylum, with less than a score of inmates, is maintained by the Government in the neighborhood of Elizabethville, Katanga Province.)

Appropriation for A. O. F.—The appropriation made for the current year for the administration of French West Africa included an item for new personnel for a service of prophylaxis of leprosy, according to report in *La Journée Industrielle*, of Paris.

Care of patients in Cuba.—In the year 1631, Mr. Pedro Alegre, of Cuba, set aside part of his estate to help those suffering from leprosy, and up to the present time the income of this estate still serves to subsist these people. Since 1917 they have been isolated in the Rincon Hospital, where more than 350 patients of both sexes receive care and treatment. This hospital is under the directorship of Dr. Carlos Maria Pernia. It is estimated that in Cuba there are more than 1,000 lepers, and according to statistics the death rate among those at large is ten times as high as among those under treatment at the Rincon Hospital.¹

According to a news article in the *New York Times*, the Department of Health of Cuba has declared that actually there are 385 lepers in the Rincon Hospital—253 men and 82 women, of whom 202 are white, 31 Negroes, 52 brown, and 40 Asiatics. The Government spends in the neighborhood of \$20,000 annually for the maintenance of the hospital. There are in this colony some small houses to enable the inmates to live with their families; the patients are permitted to marry. In view of the limited accommodations of the Rincon Hospital,

¹ Translation by Mr. S. Peña of material submitted in Spanish by W. H. Hoffmann.

the Director of Health allows new patients seeking admission to enter other hospitals in the interior. Benevolent and charitable institutions are under obligation to accept them in their clinics and hospitals, provided that the patients seeking admission are stockholders thereof. They are also permitted to stay in their own homes on permission from the Department of Health, provided that they comply with the regulations prescribed by the Department.

The Orofara colony at Tahiti.—Considerable newspaper space has been given, in the United States as in Europe, to the recent visit of Dr. Jaques Le Mée and party to Tahiti, which according to the *New York Times* was on an official mission of the French Government. Special notice has been taken of the fact, mentioned in the last number of the JOURNAL, that he had become convinced that leprosy is not contagious. "As yet," he is quoted in a German report, "no single case of transmission from man to man is known"; he believes that it "is contracted from some impurity of the soil, this being more prevalent in warm climates, where the natives seldom use footwear." From these accounts and a statement which *La France de l'Est*, of Mulhouse, ascribed to Mlle Olivier, one of the missionary nurses who work at Orofara, certain features of that institution appear.

The colony, in the eastern part of the island of Tahiti, is set in a clearing at the water's edge and "is a remarkable combination of beauty and simplicity". Except for the two nurses sent out by the Société des Missions de Paris, all the people there are inmates, there being some 200 of them. The present organization of the place, it is said, followed the arrival of these nursing sisters.

The colony is under a self-government scheme. By popular vote a mayor and his assistant are elected annually. Every new arrival is allotted a plot of land on which he may build his bungalow. There are both a Catholic and a Protestant church. All who can do so work at something—they cultivate garden plots about their houses, grow sweet potatoes and manioc on the mountain side, raise poultry and hogs, and spend much time in fishing. Every morning there is a distribution of rations, and each patient is free to cook it himself or take it to the common kitchen. Life is evidently cheerful and with their freedom of activity fairly normal. Many are married and (as was noted in the last issue), children are removed at birth. As for the medical side, the two nurses give injections, make dressings and otherwise care for the patients.

Taiwan Anti-Leprosy Association.—A meeting of the promoters of the Taiwan (i. e., Formosa) Anti-Leprosy Association (Taiwan Rai-Yobo-Khokai), held in Taihoku on May 11, 1933, was attended by the governors of various provinces and prefectures of Formosa who had met for a conference of governors. The promoters of the Association consist of 47 influential private persons throughout Formosa. The principal object of the Association is the protection of lepers' families, the treatment of patients being an undertaking of the Government General, and Yen 200,000 are to be raised by solicitation for its endowment. Mr. Hiratsuka, secretary-general of the Taiwan Government General, was appointed President of the Association.

Exchange student of leprosy.—An invitation having been received by the Japanese Government from the Health Section of the League of Nations to

send an exchange student abroad to study leprosy prophylaxis, the Home Department decided to send abroad Dr. Fumio Hayashi, the chief physician of Nagashima Aieseyen, the National leprosarium. He left Japan for the Philippine Islands, India, Europe, and South America on February 26, 1933, to be gone about a year.

Personals.—To participate in the beginning of the new antileprosy work in the Népoko (mentioned recently in the *JOURNAL*), Dr. A. DUBOIS, of Bruxelles, may spend a year at that center, according to information that has been received.

According to information from Brazil, Dr. H. I. COLE, who for several years was chief chemist at the Culion Leper Colony—until the reduction of personnel early in 1933 occasioned by reduction of budget—has been nominated to participate in the work of the international leprosy study center that is being established at Rio de Janeiro. [An account of this center appears in this issue of the *JOURNAL*.]

Dr. C. P. BROWN, until recently assigned to the Quarantine Station at Williamhead, British Columbia, and therefore in charge of the lazaretto on Bentinck Island, has been transferred to the headquarters of the Department of Pensions and National Health, as chief of the Division of Quarantine and Medical Inspection. This division has supervision over the two Canadian hospitals for cases of leprosy.

Dr. TAJI NOJIMA, until recently assistant director of the Oshima leprosarium, has been promoted to the directorship following the death of Dr. Kobayashi. Dr. Nojima, a promising scholar of 38 years of age, graduated from the Osaka Medical College in 1921 and received the degree of Doctor of Medicine in December, 1932. He entered the Sotojima Leprosarium at Osaka in 1923, and was transferred to Oshima in 1927. For the past six years he has devoted himself to research, while energetically assisting in the treatment and administrative work of the institution.

Belated information has been received of the death in March, 1933, of Dr. WASABURO KOBAYASHI, director of the Fourth District leprosarium at Oshima. Dr. Kobayashi had made several contributions to the literature of leprosy, the principal one being a monographic pathological study entitled "Ueber die viscerale Lepra."

Word of the death of Prof. Dr. FRIEDRICH FÜLLEBORN, late director of the Institut für Schiffs- und Tropenkrankheiten, Hamburg, Germany, has been received from the London office of the International Leprosy Association, of which he was an early member.

With the deepest regret, and after an unfortunate delay, word has been received of the death after a long illness of Dr. J. ALEXANDER MITCHELL, late chief health officer for the Union of South Africa and secretary for public health. Dr. Mitchell's interest in the leprosy problem was deep, and the part which he played in developing the extensive leprosy control efforts in South Africa was most important. He served as a member of the League of Nations leprosy commission which met at Bangkok in December, 1930, and would have been a member of the Leonard Wood Memorial Conference in Manila during January, 1931, had it not been for the onset of his last illness. It is hoped that an adequate obituary record may be provided for this periodical.