

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 material of such nature.

PHILIPPINE ISLANDS MEDICAL ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE ON LEPROSY

At the annual meeting of the Philippine Islands Medical Association held in December, 1933, its Committee on Leprosy brought in a report which is of considerable interest in view of the publicity recently given certain views not in keeping with the consensus of opinion concerning the etiology of leprosy. This report was signed by Dr. Sulpicio Chiyuto, chairman, and Drs. Casimiro B. Lara, Jose O. Nolaseo, Jose N. Rodriguez, and Felix I. Velasco.

"Although stimulating work has been done in the Philippines and increased interest shown in the subjects of transmission and pathogenesis of leprosy that may in the future influence our conception of the disease, the consensus among leprosy workers is that the knowledge at present available does not justify recommending modification of the present system of leprosy control in the Philippine Islands.

"There is a phase of leprosy control work, however, about which opinion among all who are interested in stamping out the disease is unanimous; namely, the segregation of children of lepers at birth. It is in this connection that the society should support the Bureau of Health in its efforts to secure from the Philippine Legislature the appropriation necessary to carry out this important work."

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF LEPROLOGY

Dr. Araujo supplies further information concerning this institution, which was inaugurated in Rio de Janeiro on April 20, 1934. The inauguration ceremony was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, under the Presidency of the Minister of Education and Public Health.

The program of the Center, which has been organized by a consortium of the League of Nations with the Brazilian Government and Dr. Guilherme Guinle, under a five-year contract, is primordially scientific. It will not interfere in the control of the disease, which is a function of the National Department of Public Health of Brazil. The center is divided into three sections: Epidemiology, Clinic and Therapeutics, under Dr. H. C. de Souza-Araujo; Bacteriology and Immunology, under Dr. José de Costa Cruz; and Physics, Chemistry and Pharmacology, under Prof. José Carneiro Felipe. Each section will have one or more medical assistants. The epidemiological researches will be carried on by an ambulant medical commission. The headquarters of the Center is in connection with the Instituto Oswaldo Cruz. There will be two sub-centers, one in the Federal leper colony of Curupaity, under the supervision of its director, Dr. Theophilo de Almeida, and the other in the Santa Isabel colony of Bello Horizonte (Minas Geraes), under the supervision of Dr. Orestes Diniz. The Center will give special courses on leprosy every year and, as soon as possible, will publish a leprosy review as a specialized South-American journal.

The Center has a Council of Administration (the Health Committee of the League of Nations), and a Committee of Direction, as follows: Dr. Guilherme Guinle, president; Dr. Carlos Chagas, director of the Instituto Oswaldo Cruz; Dr. Raul de Almeida Magalhaes, general director of the National Department of Public Health; Dr. Eduardo Rabello, of the University of Rio de Janeiro; Dr. Etienne Burnet, delegate of the League of Nations; Dr. Pedro L. Baliña, of the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina; and Dr. A. Herrera Restrepo, chief of the Service of Control of Leprosy of Colombia. The League of Nations Health Committee appointed Prof. Chagas as director of the Center, and the Committee of Direction appointed Dr. H. C. de Souza-Araujo as its secretary. Both of these are honorary positions.

AGITATION IN THE ARGENTINE *

The Medical Society of Tucuman, in northern Argentina, following a discussion between two of its members who apparently differed widely in some of their views, adopted on February 8, 1934, the following resolutions, according to *La Tarde* of that same city: 1. That

* Abstracts from the Spanish, upon which this summary is based, made by Mr. S. Peña.

leprosy is a problem of paramount importance in the province of Tucuman and that the authorities, provincial as well as municipal, should face it with utmost seriousness. 2. That its contagiousness in this locality as well as in other places is relative, since it depends on the clinical type of the disease and the state of the patient. 3. That there exist other medico-social problems, such as tuberculosis, trachoma, ankylostomiasis, etc., which because of their increasing prevalence demand urgent prophylactic measures.

Following this, several newspapers in different parts of the country took up the matter editorially, and in several instances under the heading "leprosy and tuberculosis" urged that the governmental agencies take action against the increasing social problems arising from these diseases. Some of them cited an isolated instance in which a "leprosy family" has lived for more than twenty years near a certain town, in spite of representations to the National Council of Hygiene. The effect of their presence has been such, according to *La Mañana*, of Bell Ville, that anyone from that particular region is suspected of having leprosy and before being admitted to society or to the commercial world he must produce a certificate from a physician that he does not have it.

It also appears from *La Gaceta*, of Tucuman, that stress was laid on prophylaxis of tuberculosis and leprosy in a health conference held recently in Buenos Aires, with the collaboration of the Federal Government, and that the government has planned the establishment of a leprosarium for the isolation and treatment of leprosy. Of peculiar interest in this connection is an article in *El Mundo* (of Buenos Aires?) telling of opposition registered by the inhabitants of the town of General Rodriguez, near Buenos Aires, to the plan to build the proposed leprosarium near that place. The Ministry of the Interior had recently acquired an area of some 300 hectares (750 acres) for that purpose. The opposition to the plan advanced as arguments: (1) that the site selected is unfit for agricultural purposes, having only scattered areas of level land, which is chalky and subject to floods; (2) that near it, on the other hand, is good land which is settled by small owners who may be forced to abandon their holdings because of fear of the disease, wherefore it is held that the establishment of the proposed leprosarium will be prejudicial to Argentina and particularly to General Rodriguez; (3) that the site is too close to the capital and a thick population, it being pointed out that in Hawaii, the United States and elsewhere

such institutions are located in isolated places; (4) that there is no advantage in selecting a location with a view to facilitating visiting of the inmates by relatives since (a) experience elsewhere shows that comparatively few visitors take advantage of such opportunities (quoting Dr. F. Hayashi with respect to the Zensei institution, in Japan, that on the average only ten visitors go to that place daily in spite of its proximity to Tokyo), and (b) seventy per cent of the persons in Argentina who would be isolated are from very poor families living far away and so unable to visit the place; and (5) finally, that the proposed leprosarium would constitute a barrier for the future expansion of Buenos Aires, which it is estimated should have a population of five millions twenty years hence but which could not expand with this leprosarium in its immediate vicinity.

DR. MARCEL LEGER

“La mort du Dr. Marcel Leger laisse un vide parmi les médecins français du cadre colonial. Il était universellement estimé pour sa valeur et son caractère: toujours prêt à prendre une grande part au travail en commun, collaborateur aussi exact que compétent. Il a déployé son activité en Indochine, à la Guyane, en Afrique occidentale. S’il s’est surtout occupé du paludisme et des protozoaires, son séjour à la Guyane l’avait attaché aussi à la question de la lèpre. Il était né à la Guadeloupe, qui est un pays à lèpre. Il a écrit pour le ‘Nouveau Traité de Médecine et de Thérapeutique’ (de Gilbert et Carnot) l’article sur la lèpre (127 pages), travail très au courant, où il a soutenu les nouvelles doctrines et pratiques de prophylaxie, comme il l’a fait aussi à la Commission de la lèpre du Ministère français des Colonies.”

NEWS ITEMS

Paulistan Society of Leprology.—In August, 1933, there was organized in Sao Paulo, Brazil, the “Sociedade Paulista de Leprologia,” functioning in the “Sanatorio Padre Bento,” the leprosy hospital at Gopoúva, near Sao Paulo, founded by our correspondent, Dr. H. C. de Souza-Araujo, when he was chief of the service of control of leprosy there and inaugurated on June 5, 1931. The members of the Society meet monthly. The first president elected is Dr. Lauro de Souza Lima; vice-president, Dr. J. Aleantara Madeira; the treasurer, Dr. Hugo A. Guida; and the secretary, Dr. J. Mendoga Barros.

In September, 1933, the Society started the publication of a leprosy journal called “Revista de Leprologia de Sao Paulo.” The first two numbers contain, besides reprinted matter and summaries of current literature: an editorial by Prof. J. Aguiar Pupo; an article on the present situation of the control of leprosy in Sao Paulo, by Dr. Nelson Souza Campos; one on endovenous alcohol

against leprosy pains, by Dr. Argemiro R. de Souza; one on antileprotic treatment in the "Padre Bento" hospital, by Dr. Lauro de Souza Lima; and one on the sedimentation test, by Dr. Flavio Maurano. There is also statistical and other information on the work of the leprosy department of Sao Paulo and the five leprosaria of the State.

Volunteer Toc H workers for the B.E.L.R.A.—In a recent issue of the JOURNAL an account was given of a plan for cooperation of the Toc H, an English religious organization, with the British Empire Leprosy Relief Association. Newspaper accounts received more recently tell of progress made in enlisting volunteer workers to go into leprosy fields, under the auspices of the Association, without salaries. Two whole-time doctors from the Toc H brotherhood had already enlisted for the work, it was said.

Results of treatment at Dichpali.—At least 184 patients were released in 1932 from the Dichpali Leprosy Hospital, a 400-inmate institution in Hyderabad, southern India, which is in the minority among such institutions in that it is run more as a hospital for the care of treatable cases than as an asylum for hopeless ones. In a total of more than 300 discharges, according to a note in the Mission to Lepers' *Without the Camp* (January, 1933), the average length of stay had been just over two years, but the releases had recently increased because of intensification of the treatment. All patients released went on six months' parole. Of those returning after their paroles (37.5 per cent) 13 per cent showed relapse, but in few of them was this serious and in all the condition yielded to further treatment.

Drought in Basutoland.—A letter from Basutoland states that by June of last year that territory had been made a desert by a severe drought which lasted until November and which caused almost a famine, necessitating the feeding of thousands of natives by the government. It is believed that these conditions brought out clinical leprosy in many who might have remained in the so-called incubation stage for years or have thrown off the disease altogether. The number of new cases found in 1933 was not less than 1932, though from 1929 to 1932 there had been a steady diminution.

Japanese Leprosy Association meeting.—The seventh Nippon Leprosy Association conference will be held in Okayama on November 11, 1934, the anniversary of a donation by the Empress Dowager to the leper fund. Plans have been made for a leprosy exhibition, to include examples of lepers' handicrafts, photographs of colonies, and statistics and other printed matters concerning leprosy in various parts of the world. Invitations to contribute to this exhibition have been sent to the authorities in other countries, and the exhibit may be sent abroad, if desired.

Shanghai plans materializing.—Early in the present year, as has been noted in these pages, an affiliated group of organizations and institutions in Shanghai undertook a campaign to raise funds for what is termed a national leprosarium, to be located near Shanghai. The amount sought, it is understood, was 100,000 dollars, Shanghai currency. Mr. T. C. Wu, general secretary of the Chinese Mission to Lepers, sends word that the campaign has been successfully concluded. Building operations were soon to be started at the time of writing, it being expected that the institution will be ready for occupancy next spring.

A leprosy area in Tibet.—In a recent letter Dr. James L. Maxwell, of Shanghai, says that information has been received of an ill-defined area in Tibet where leprosy is common. This is in the south-east corner of that country, where the frontiers of Yunnan (China), Burma and India approximate. Nothing is really known about leprosy in Tibet, Dr. Maxwell writes, and this is the first time that he has been able to get anything even as definite as this.

Personals.—DR. MARCEL LEGER, of the Institut Prophylactique in Paris, Contributing Editor of the JOURNAL for France and her colonies, died of heart disease, in Paris, in July, at the age of 55 years.

DR. ETIENNE BURNET, secretary of the Leprosy Commission of the League of Nations and one of the organizing members of the International Leprosy Association, will in consequence of the death of Dr. Leger serve as Contributing Editor of the JOURNAL for France and her colonies as well as for the League organization.

MR. GEORGE EMERSON, for some time the Lilly Research Fellow in Pharmacology at the University of California, and a collaborator in certain contributions appearing in the JOURNAL, has been granted the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. He majored in pharmacology and the chemotherapeutics, especially in connection with leprosy.

DR. R. GERMOND, who has been acting as medical officer of the Botsabelo Leper Asylum, in Basutoland, since shortly after the death of Dr. R. Slack last year, has been appointed permanently to that position.

DR. O. F. H. ATKEY retired from the position of Director of the Sudan Medical Service, effective August, 1933. DR. PRIDIE has been appointed to the position.

MR. T. C. WU, Secretary of the Chinese Mission to Lepers, Shanghai, is making a brief visit to the United States at the invitation of the American Mission to Lepers, expecting to return to China before the end of the year.

DR. J. T. MACDONALD, who was for many years in leprosy work in Hawaii and whose name is especially connected with treatment, died recently in San Francisco.

DR. P. H. J. LAMPE, until recently director of the health service of Surinam (Dutch Guiana, South America), has transferred to Batavia, Netherlands East Indies, where he is connected with the general medical laboratory, and is working especially on rat leprosy.