

## THE LEONARD WOOD MEMORIAL; ITS ORIGIN, PURPOSES AND ACTIVITIES

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It is with no little hesitation that a layman attempts to respond to an invitation to prepare an article for a medical journal, and particularly one dealing with such a specialized field as leprosy. However, this feeling is somewhat mitigated in the present instance by the fact that the subject—the Leonard Wood Memorial, its origin, purposes and activities to date—is one of which the writer has had intimate knowledge from its inception.

For laymen at least—and the writer has come to believe that it is true for medical men as well—the centuries-old story of leprosy holds peculiar interest. For most of us the first acquaintance with it came through the Biblical pictures of miserable outcasts huddled in rocky caves on Palestinian hills, feared and shunned by their fellows, hopeless in the grip of a disease that knew no remedy. We are told that there still exist in Europe old churches with tiny windows through which stared the pallid faces of those who, because of the horror of them, were no longer permitted to share communion with their fellows.

Very soon after the Philippine Islands came under American sovereignty plans were made to face the leprosy problem there. In 1901 first steps were taken to prepare a colony on Culion, a fairly large and decidedly out-of-the-way island, one of the advantages of which was that the inhabitants and their possessions were so few that it cost but little to buy them out and move them away. Progress in the preparations was not without interruption, for the plan did not meet with unanimous approval of all interests, but early in 1906 the first patients were taken to Culion.

In the next fifteen years the colony developed into the largest one in the world for the segregation of lepers, but it was not until 1921, when improved treatment methods had become available, that much emphasis was laid on treatment there. General Leonard Wood, Governor-General of the Philippines from 1921 to 1927, entered upon

his office shortly after this new work had been started on a small scale. Under his interest and inspiration it was rapidly expanded, on a basis that made provision for treating all patients at Culion and for carrying on a limited amount of research along lines not previously undertaken in the Philippines.

The budgetary requirements of the entire leprosy program reached a grand total of approximately one-third the Insular Government's total appropriation for health work. With such a forward looking program on the part of the government, the population of the colony continued to grow in numbers until some 6,500 are now in segregation there, this not including the 1,000 and more in other and smaller leprosaria throughout the Islands. The single item of subsistence for such large numbers of patients was a large one, and the total requirements, including housing, clothing and treatment, constituted so great a burden that it was impossible to devote any considerable amount to the intensive study of the nature and treatment of the disease that the status of the problem demanded and for which the existing institutions and organization offered exceptional opportunities.

The idea of appealing to the American public for the funds with which to intensify the research work originated with a layman, or rather a laywoman, Dorothy Paul Wade, wife of Dr. H. W. Wade. The latter had been sent to Culion by Governor-General Wood in 1922 as chief pathologist and, for the reorganization period, acting chief physician. Mrs. Wade, who is a writer and a member of the Authors' League of America, conceived the idea of making an appeal to the editors of American magazines to carry stories and articles about the colony at Culion, and of asking her friends among the artists and writers to prepare the material. Early in 1925 she went from Culion to Manila to lay her plans before Governor Wood. From his viewpoint as a physician and his special concern for the lepers of the Philippines, he was deeply interested in the proposal and insisted that Mrs. Wade should go to America on the first steamer to make the appeal in his name.

The amount asked for was one million dollars. This sum was chosen, not because it represented the total that was needed or that could be used, but because it was thought to be the most that could be obtained for a cause so remotely removed from the concerns of the American public as research in leprosy, much of it to be carried on ten thousand miles away. On the basis of having possibly a fund of

that size a budget was prepared by the Philippine leprosy workers and approved by the Governor-General, stipulating how it might be expended. Nearly a half million dollars was to be spent in buildings and other forms of construction in the Philippines. The projects were to include a complete new leprosarium or "regional treatment station" at Cebu, comprising fifty-five concrete buildings, and a new skin clinic in that town. For Culion there were to be a new laboratory building, research wards, a nurses' home, a number of cottages for new personnel, the building of roads to open up the farm lands on Culion (previously inaccessible except by mountain paths), a boat to improve communications, and other items. The first requirement of the original appeal was for this construction, and any balance raised was to be used for research.

It soon became evident to Mrs. Wade that only a limited sum of money could be expected to flow in voluntarily from the publicity which she secured, excellent as it was. After consulting with business and professional men in America it was determined that an organized campaign for funds should be launched with an objective of two million dollars.

A large national committee of leading American citizens was formed to sponsor the appeal, and a small executive committee to direct it. The latter comprised such men as General James G. Harbord, chairman of the Radio Corporation of America, recognized as an outstanding friend of the Philippines since his own years of service in the Islands; the Honorable Henry L. Stimson, recently Secretary of State, who at the time had but recently returned from the Philippines after a visit with his close friend, Governor Wood, and who was later to return there as Governor General; the Honorable Charles Evans Hughes, now Chief Justice of the United States; Owen D. Young, chairman of the board of the General Electric Company and of international note in connection with German financing, and several others each outstanding in his own field.

Upon the death of Governor Wood in 1927 the organization was made a memorial to him and incorporated as THE LEONARD WOOD MEMORIAL FOR THE ERADICATION OF LEPROSY. As its purposes and activities have become more widely known the name has gradually been shortened to THE LEONARD WOOD MEMORIAL, as it is generally known. The names of those who formed the first executive committee of the fund-campaign board appeared on the roster of the first board

of directors of the incorporated organization, and the personnel has changed but slightly since.

The first activities of the Memorial were to initiate and complete the buildings and other construction in the Philippines called for in the original budget on which the public appeal was based. This was done through the Philippine Health Service personnel, and it is greatly to the credit of Dr. Wade, at the time chief pathologist at the Culion colony, that the Memorial succeeded in constructing more than half a hundred buildings of unusual attractiveness, of great durability, and at what has been credited by competent judges as being extraordinarily low cost. Dr. Wade not only drew the plans for this construction but he superintended the actual work.

How the balance of the funds raised and the new contributions which continue to come into the Memorial are to be used is perhaps best expressed by the statement of the general purposes of the Memorial appearing in most of its printed material:

"The purposes and plans of the Leonard Wood Memorial are, to the extent of its financial ability, to leave no scientific step untaken than holds any promise of finding the ultimate solution of this age-old curse of the human race."

One of the first steps the board of directors, comprised entirely of laymen, took in the interest of guidance in its medical program was to invite Dr. Wade to join the staff of the Memorial. This necessitated his resigning from the Philippine Health Service which he did, becoming the medical director of the Memorial on January 1, 1931. Shortly thereafter, at the instigation of the board of directors, he undertook a study tour to visit most of the leading leprosy fields of the world in order to acquaint himself with the personnel, conditions, and work under way.

In the early stages of the Memorial's undertakings chief emphasis was placed on contemplated activities in the Philippines, although its charter defined its activities as having to do with the study of the nature and treatment of leprosy, not only in the Philippines but throughout the world. As those charged with the responsibility of administering its funds approached nearer to the problem and began actually to formulate a medical program it became more and more evident that it was absurd to think of research geographically. The purposes of the organization as stated necessitates approaching our problem with minds entirely open, without bias and without

prejudice; we must be prepared to assist wherever it seems that such assistance holds the best promise of advancing the knowledge of this disease and therefore of bringing us toward our ultimate objective.

As president of the Leonard Wood Memorial, having been identified with the organization from its very inception and having had a great deal to do with formulating its policies and the organization of its board of directors and its medical boards, I am in a position to speak advisedly of our purposes. As a board of directors we have one single interest—to eradicate leprosy. An occasional scientist has spoken to me facetiously of our use of the word "eradication." Even a layman may appreciate what a long and doubtful course that is. However, the scientist of all persons—since he presumably holds only to those opinions that can be proved—must be the last man to say that there is no hope of eradicating leprosy or any other disease. This, therefore, being the viewpoint of the board of directors of the Memorial, it soon became evident that there was much that we could and should do outside the Philippine Islands.

The first notable undertaking of this character, if we may be permitted to speak of it in such terms, was a "round-table" conference of leprosy workers held in January, 1931, at Manila and on shipboard bound to the various leprosaria in the Philippines. The sole function that the Memorial exercised in this meeting was that of host, making the gathering possible by defraying the traveling expenses of those members who would otherwise have found it impossible to attend. The Memorial expressed no policies with respect to the meeting and imposed no will of its own on its deliberations other than to state through its president its wish that the members themselves should conduct the sessions of the conference in such a manner as they deemed most wise. We were naturally gratified that the members of this conference voluntarily and officially designated it as "The Leonard Wood Memorial Conference on Leprosy." After the conference the Memorial distributed its report in the form of a reprint from the *Philippine Journal of Science*, in which it had been published. Several thousand copies were distributed very widely throughout the leprosy world, and to other medical workers on request.

The next international activity of the Memorial, one which grew out of the conference, was to make possible the publishing of the INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LEPROSY. This quarterly is the official



organ of the International Leprosy Association, an organization that was created at the Manila Conference. It is only fair that those who receive this publication should know that its actual cost is several times the sum derived from membership dues and individual subscriptions, and that that difference is made up by a grant from the Leonard Wood Memorial. In spite of this, and of the fact that the Association chose as its editor the Memorial's medical director, the Memorial scrupulously avoids any interference whatever with editorial policy.

Recently the Memorial has been responsible for another activity that has been spoken of as notable. It has financed a world-wide survey of tropical diseases undertaken by the National Research Council (United States), and following it a conference held in Washington of representatives from twenty-five American universities and foundations that carry on activities in tropical medicine. The meeting resulted in the organization of the "American Academy of Tropical Medicine."

An early step in the organizational development of the Memorial for active work was the creation of a Medical Board. It was felt by the board of directors that the counsel of a group of scientists, most of whom at least would not be directly involved in leprosy work but would be recognized medical authorities dealing with general problems of disease prevention, was necessary if our medical work was to be carried on along wise and economical lines. This board had as its chairman Dr. William H. Welch of Johns Hopkins (recently deceased); and the other members included Dr. H. S. Cumming, Surgeon General of the U. S. Health Service; Dr. Victor G. Heiser of the Rockefeller Foundation; Professor W. G. MacCallum of Johns Hopkins; Dr. Earl B. McKinley of George Washington University; and Dr. Theobald Smith of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research. At its first meeting this board determined that the initial fields of activity for the Memorial should be three—bacteriology, pathology and epidemiology—and that other fields should be entered as conditions and circumstances justified.

Our department of pathology was already organized under Dr. Wade, himself a pathologist with many years of experience in the leprosy field. A program in bacteriology and epidemiology was still to be set up. The efforts to formulate a program for these two fields and enlist personnel developed the need for counsel of

specialists in these fields, and as a result there was created a second medical group known as the advisory committee on research, under the chairmanship of Dr. Frederick P. Gay, of the Department of Bacteriology of Columbia University. Very recently these two medical boards have been combined under the name of the medical advisory board, with Dr. Gay as chairman. The members of this body give of their time and interest without stint. Projects that are suggested as Memorial activities receive careful and painstaking consideration. Matters that hold special interest are, as a rule, referred by the board to sub-committees for further study before finally being acted upon by the entire board. The recommendations of this medical advisory board go to the board of directors, who are responsible for final action as to whether appropriations shall be made or not. The board of directors undertakes no scientific project or medical activity that is not thus approved by the scientific body that is responsible for formulating our research program.

Recently three members of this medical advisory board have visited the Philippines and carried on research there. Drs. Gay and Soule went to the Leonard Wood Memorial Laboratory at Culion to carry on bacteriological investigations, and Dr. J. A. Doull went to the Eversley Childs Treatment Station at Cebu—an institution built by the Memorial—to carry on an epidemiological survey in cooperation with Dr. José Rodriguez, the director of the Cebu leprosarium and a recent recipient of a fellowship from the Memorial at Johns Hopkins University.

The purpose of the Memorial in inviting these scientists to go to the Philippines was two-fold. First, that they might have the opportunity in such a large field as Cebu and Culion to carry on the investigations in which they were interested, but more particularly that the medical advisory board and the board of trustees may have the advantage of the counsel of men who are familiar with the conditions and problems that exist in this great leprosy field.

The foregoing is written with the wish to give the medical profession an understanding of the real purposes of the Leonard Wood Memorial and, too, that it may excite confidence that so far as human knowledge and experience go the best possible counsel is being employed in the formulating of its activities. A final word, perhaps, should be said for fear that it is not entirely apparent.

The Memorial does not purpose to feed, clothe, house or treat lepers, nor is any of its money available for such purposes except possibly as part of some research activity that may, at a later time, be determined upon. Aware as we are of the great human needs that are to be found in probably every leprosy field of the world, our sympathies irresistibly go out to those thousands who lack the barest comforts of life. Nevertheless, we have committed ourselves to that phase of the problem which, if we may so much as dare to hope that the time may come when leprosy shall be conquered, we consider to be fundamental, namely, the field of scientific investigation and study. To that end we propose to give of our time and energies and of our present and future resources to the limit.