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EDITORIALS

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DR. ROBERT G. COCHRANE

PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL LEPROSY ASSOCIATION

Dr. Robert G. Cochrane, newly elected President of the International Leprosy Association, chosen by the Council after the death of the previous incumbent of the office, Dr. J. M. M. Fernández,¹ has been actively engaged in the world campaign against leprosy all his professional life. After graduation from the University of Glasgow he completed his undergraduate medical studies at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London, where his interest was soon attracted to the fight against leprosy. For five years, 1924 to 1929, he was Secretary for the medical work of the Mission to Lepers in India. From then on his interest in leprosy broadened, soon becoming world-wide in its scope. In 1929 he became General Medical Secretary of the British Empire Leprosy Relief Association (then BELRA, and later the British Leprosy Relief Association, with a new short designation, LEPRA). Then began extensive travel in the interest of leprosy control, with London as his headquarters.

India remained a focal point in his emphasis, however, and in 1935 he returned there as Superintendent of the Lady Willingdon Leprosy Sanatorium at Chingleput, and, at the same time, Director of the Leprosy Campaign in Madras State.² He retained that directorship for many years, while holding a succession of responsible medical and administrative posts in the Christian Medical College at Vellore, of which he became Principal in 1944, with abundant opportunity for clinical investigation and practice in the Chingleput region.

From 1951 on his activities were again centered in London, where he served as Medical Secretary of BELRA and created and headed the

¹ See Editorial. *International Journal of Leprosy* **33** (1965) 349.

² For a condensed history of the famous leprosy institutions in that region see Dharmendra, *Internat. J. Leprosy* **33** (1965) 752-758, Part 2.

Leprosy Research Unit, which has now become the Leprosy Research Centre, an institution for teaching and research that has had great influence in all leprosy work, and been a source of inspiration for leaders as well as beginners, in that field. Dr. Cochrane has always promoted intensive teaching in leprosy, with emphasis on early diagnosis, and has campaigned constantly for a larger part for leprosy in the curricula of university medical schools. His own activity in the field is evidenced by numerous publications, including his widely used *Leprosy in Theory and Practice*, first published, with the aid of numerous well-known collaborators in 1959, and republished as a second edition with Dr. T. F. Davey as co-editor in 1964.

It would be impossible in any reasonable length to note his numerous contributions to the advance of knowledge and practice in the leprosy field, and the many honors he has received, from the King George VI Coronation Medical in 1937 to the Damien-Dutton Award at Carville, Louisiana in 1964. The ILA, of which THE JOURNAL is the official organ, has profited by a life long dedication. In its earliest years, 1932-1936, he served as its Secretary-Treasurer. In the succeeding years he has been repeatedly councillor and vice-president, until his election as president in 1965.

The Editor would close by noting briefly but with pleasure his intimate association with Dr. Cochrane at the Leonard Wood Memorial—Armed Forces Institute of Pathology Conference on Research Problems in Leprosy in Washington in May 1965,³ and the profit he derived from it. Dr. Cochrane's part in that conference was impressive. Out of his broad experience and innate understanding has come a capacity to see as a whole the central purposes in the far flung enterprises in the study and control of leprosy. It is to be hoped that his wisdom and devotion will long be available to the Association.—E.R.L.

³ See Part 2 of No. 3 of the current volume of THE JOURNAL.