

INTERNATIONAL LEPROSY ASSOCIATION

A Message from the President

To all members of the International Leprosy Association the death of our much respected late President, Dr. José M. M. Fernández, came as a great shock, and was received with a sense of tremendous loss. Tributes to Dr. Fernández have been made elsewhere.

I wish now to express my deep sense of appreciation at the confidence that the International Leprosy Association has shown in me in electing me to become President. I need only to look back to the illustrious past presidents of the Association to realize how important is this office, and how unworthy I am to fulfil its obligations. I do, however, pledge my loyalty and utmost support in all the activities of the Association, and I assure my colleagues that I will give my closest attention to its affairs.

I am very fortunate in having to assist me, as Secretary-Treasurer, Dr. Stanley G. Browne, who has a wealth of clinical and teaching experience, and whose work and example are highly appreciated not only in the leprosy world, but by those working in tropical medicine in general and in missionary medicine in particular. I have passed the official age of retirement, and I take this opportunity of announcing the appointment of Dr. Stanley G. Browne, O.B.E., M.D., F.R.C.P., F.R.C.S., as my successor as Director of The Leprosy Study Centre, London as from 17 January 1966.

It will be well understood by my colleagues that I would find it very difficult to retire from active leprosy work, and I have, therefore, to tell you that I am returning to the country of my adoption, where I have been asked to become Medical Superintendent of The Leprosy Mission Hospital in Vadathorasalur, South India, some 100 miles south of Vellore. My wife and I look forward with great anticipation to being, once again, with leprosy patients, and I to resuming active clinical practice in this specialty of medicine in which it has been my privilege to work for over 41 years. Distances, these days, present no obstacle, and with rapid air travel close

contact can be kept with both Britain and the United States.

I would take this opportunity of expressing the Association's deep feeling of gratitude and appreciation for all that the Leonard Wood Memorial (American Leprosy Foundation) has done for leprosy. Without the active support and cooperation of the presidents and medical directors of that organization the International Leprosy Association would never have seen the light of day; and I would express especial appreciation of the wise guidance of Dr. Chapman H. Binford, Medical Director of the Leonard Wood Memorial, and that of Mr. C. I. Crowther, its President, for they have been a tower of strength at times when difficulties have arisen in regard to the aims and objects and financial security of The International Leprosy Association. In paying tribute to my colleagues in leprosy work I would convey to Dr. H. W. Wade not only my earnest appreciation of his half a century of pioneer research work, but also the warm thanks of the Council and all the members of the International Leprosy Association for his great contribution to the world study of leprosy, for his leadership, and for his upholding of the highest standards of leprosy work.

While I retire officially from my London work, and my widespread travel in the interests of international leprosy, I will endeavor, nevertheless, to perform my duties faithfully as President of the International Leprosy Association. I trust and pray that I shall be worthy of the confidence which has been placed in me, and that I shall be able, in some small way, to continue the work of my predecessors, who have guided the affairs of the Association so competently.

In closing this message I would say that, if I can do anything to help individual members of the International Leprosy Association, I am at their service.

—ROBERT G. COCHRANE

December 15, 1965