

# OBITUARY

## Saul Adler 1895-1966

Professor Saul Adler was born in 1895 in Russia and came as a child of five to England, where he studied medicine at the University of Leeds. He served as Regimental Medical Officer in Mesopotamia during World War I, and there became interested in tropical diseases. After the war he studied at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, and then worked in Sierra Leone.

His belief in the future of the Jewish National Home brought him to Palestine in 1924, where he functioned as Professor of Parasitology at the Hebrew University and its Medical School until his death on 25 January 1966.

Adler's work was important in several fields. Together with Theodor he worked on the identification of the *Phlebotomus* species, which proved to be a major contribution to the epidemiology of leishmaniasis. His study of the dog as a reservoir of *L. infantum* helped in the eradication of infantile visceral leishmaniasis. Of special importance was his work with *Leishmania tropica*, the causative organism of Oriental sore. His interest in this disease was awakened by the pioneer work of the head of the Dermatology Department, Professor A. Dostrovsky. He was able to show that human volunteers could be infected with *L. tropica* by inoculating leptomnads from the upper alimentary tract of laboratory-bred and artificially infected *Phlebotomus*.

With the assistance of Mr. Haim Ben-Menahem he succeeded in breeding in captivity the wild Syrian hamster, *Mesocricetus auratus*, thus introducing this valuable animal for research purposes, which is used today in many research centers all over the world. He worked for many years in the field of leprosy and was very near to succeeding in the transmission of this disease to these hamsters.

Saul Adler was loved by his students, highly esteemed by his co-workers, and an important figure in the scientific life of Israel. He was invited to many universities and medical schools in Europe, Asia, and Central and South America. He was one of the two foreign scientists invited to present a paper at the Pasteur centenary celebrations in Paris. He taught parasitology to the medical personnel of the Allied Forces stationed in the Middle East during World War II, helping to keep the Allied troops healthy, and adding in this way to the victory of the Allies in the North African desert.

Adler translated Darwin's *Origin of Species* into Hebrew at the hundredth anniversary of Darwin's famous publication.

Adler was awarded the Order of the British Empire, the Chalmers Gold Medal of the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, and the Laveran medal of the Société de Pathologie Exotique. He received an Honorary Doctorate from his

alma mater, Leeds University. He was a trustee of the Weizman Institute of Science, and received many other prizes from Israeli institutions of higher learning. He was honored also by the governments of Brazil and Greece.

Fortunately Professor Adler educated a number of excellent parasitologists in his Department, who will continue and enlarge his work.

—FELIX SAGHER