

NEWS and NOTES

This department furnishes information concerning institutions, organizations, and individuals engaged in work on leprosy and other mycobacterial diseases, and makes note of scientific meetings and other matters of interest.

Council of International Organizations of Medical Sciences (CIOMS)

The Council unites specialist bodies—such as the International Leprosy Association—in a nongovernmental and representative agency that can concern itself with broader matters of medical policy and direction, research and training, ethics and responsibility. Loosely-knit but strong, informal yet influential, working in close association with the World Health Organization and UNESCO yet remaining vigorously independent of these bodies, the Council provides a forum for serious discussion and debate. It encourages the holding of international meetings where these may serve some useful medical purpose. It addresses itself from time to time to the larger areas where medicine and ethics meet, and has organized useful Round Table discussions on such themes as "Biomedical science and the dilemma of human experimentation," "Heart transplantation," "Evaluation of drugs—whose responsibility?," which have resulted in publications that should be taken seriously by governments and medical research councils. The International Leprosy Association is a member of the Council of International Organizations of Medical Sciences, and has profited practically from its adherence, having received a grant from that body towards expenses of translation and publication incurred at the London

(1968) Congress. The Council is at present conducting a comprehensive study on the nomenclature of diseases: it is to be hoped that the classification of leprosy and the meanings to be attached to the terms used in this speciality will be clarified and delimited—to the benefit of those who read (in English, French, Russian or Spanish) as well as those who write. Another matter of common concern to both the CIOMS and leprosy is the rapid and accurate dissemination of advances in the biomedical sciences. It is not enough to discover and to record: despite the enormous and inescapable difficulties consequent on the accumulation of knowledge and the fragmentation of science, the really important advances must be made available—in understandable language—to wider audiences. The CIOMS encourages member organizations to forge links with similar bodies and stimulates the developing awareness of mutual dependence and collective concern. In the whole matter of medical education (of auxiliaries as well as doctors), now as never before subject to change and flux and experimentation, the CIOMS could undertake an invaluable role in correlating and coordinating the various national and international groups currently studying some aspects of this important topic.

Council of International Organizations of Medical Sciences (CIOMS)

Eighth General Assembly, 9 September 1970

At the eighth General Assembly of the Council for International Organizations of Medical Sciences held in Geneva on 9 September 1970, The International Leprosy

Association was represented by its Secretary-Treasurer, Dr. S.G. Browne, who also acted as Chairman of an *ad hoc* Finance Committee. In his report to the assembly,

Dr. Browne emphasized that leprosy the disease, and its victims, and those who worked in this field, could no longer be segregated or separated from general medicine. Thanks to the efforts of many categories of workers and the important scientific advances announced at such gatherings as the London (1968) Congress and the pages of our JOURNAL and elsewhere, leprosy must now be considered not only as a

subject in its own right, but also as a germinal center for research in related branches of biomedical science. A further indication of our broadening interests is to be found in the addition to the title of the INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LEPROSY of the phrase "And Other Mycobacterial Diseases." Perhaps contributions on sarcoidosis and Crohn's disease will be appearing shortly in its pages.

NEWS ITEMS

United Kingdom. *British Council for Rehabilitation of the Disabled 4th International Seminar*, 27 June-3 July 1971. The British Council for Rehabilitation of the Disabled is organizing its 4th International Seminar and Exhibition in Edinburgh from 27 June to 3 July 1971, on the theme "Rehabilitation—a Unified Concept" (international, governmental, and local government hospital services). Official participants will include: Her Majesty's Government, the United Nations Organization, the International Labour Office, and the World Health Organization. While no papers on leprosy are to be invited, it is not unlikely that reference will be made to leprosy in the reports of the official participants at the plenary Sessions. A most fruitful session on leprosy, including papers and discussion, was included in the programme of the Eleventh World Congress of the International Society for Rehabilitation of the Disabled, which was held in Dublin from 14-19 September 1969. Enquiries are invited from the Secretary General of the British Council for Rehabilitation of the Disabled, Commander Ian R. Henderson (Tavistock House (South), Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9LB).

Puerto Rico. *American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine*. The 49th Annual meeting of the American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine will take place in San Juan, Puerto Rico, from 7-12 November 1971. Preceding the meeting, there will be a Prosthetics Course arranged by the San Juan Veterans Administration Hospital from 1-5 November, the subject being "Re-

cent advances of prosthetics and orthotics". After the meeting, members will be free to take a post-Congress tour to Caracas, Venezuela (13-16 November) to join the Second Caribbean Congress on Rehabilitation Medicine. Those interested are invited to get in touch with Mr. Creston C. Herold, Executive Director, American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine, 30 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60602, or Dr. Herman J. Flax, President, American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine, 310 De Diego Street, Suite 301, Santurce, P.R., U.S.A. 00909

Spain. *Plans for Expansion, Fontilles*. The dynamic Medical Superintendent of the Fontilles Leprosy Sanatorium, Alicante, Spain, has prepared plans to augment the facilities already available and to increase both the teaching and research aspects of the programme. At present, about 300 leprosy patients are under treatment at Fontilles as inpatients, and there are beds for another 200. A total of 3,000 patients has been treated since the institution began admitting patients. The medical team comprises (in addition to the Medical Superintendent), 3 resident doctors, 5 qualified (male) nurses, as well as 24 nursing sisters of the Order of the "Terciarias de la Inmaculada," and 25 volunteers of both sexes. Visiting specialists in the main branches of medicine make their services available to the patients. The well-known journal *Fontilles* publishes original scientific articles in leprosy—some 281 so far as well as news and abstracts of interest to Spanish medical readers. The teaching activities of the staff

have had a wide influence on the standards of leprosy care beyond Spain itself. Nineteen courses of instruction have been given, 10 of them for qualified doctors, and the rest for paramedical staff. About 500 students have profited from these courses. The Order of Malta has generously borne the main financial burden. The plans for the future are largely based on the stimulation and encouragement afforded by ELEP (the Co-ordinating Committee of the European Leprosy Organizations), and include two courses annually for doctors with a maximum of 25 doctors for each course. It is intended that the courses should last for 15 to 20 days. The media of instruction

would be English, French, German and Spanish. The lecturers would be drawn not only from the staff of Fontilles, but also from Spanish Medical Colleges and abroad. It may be possible later to inaugurate bursaries for students wishing to devote longer periods of, say, three to six months, in leprosy studies. The clinical and laboratory facilities at present available would, in the opinion of Dr. J. Terencio de las Agueis, make Fontilles an ideal European Research Center for leprosy. If this suggestion meets with acceptance, some new buildings will be required and additions will have to be made to the medical and technical staff.