

## ST. GEORGE

To the EDITOR:

The following facts are related in reply to the inquiry of a colleague, which you referred to me, concerning the significance of St. George, represented in the medallion adopted as the official insignium of the International Leprosy Association.

Saint George was considered the patron saint of lepers in the Middle Ages, and the Knights of St. George were those who did most for the care of them in that period. The shield in question I prepared from an old German painting which is in the Bergen Museum, to serve as the badge of the Second International Leprosy Conference, held in Bergen in 1909. As I was the general secretary of that conference and had to arrange all such matters, I was responsible for that badge and take it that I had certain rights in it. Those rights I waived in favor of the International Leprosy Association at the meeting of the General Council held in London early in 1932.

The drawing is, of course, symbolic. The winged dragon represents leprosy which St. George, representing medical science, is trying to slay with his lance. The result of the combat is not yet finally settled; the dragon is not dead but is still offering resistance. It must not be forgotten, however, that the greater part of Europe, in which leprosy had been prevalent for a long time, had conquered the disease by the end of the Middle Ages. And even though the rest of the world may not be rid of the affliction quickly or easily, we have hope that science will some day succeed in doing that. That

is, and should be, our aim and expectation; any combat which is started without hope of victory is doomed from the outset to failure.

*Bergen*  
*Norway.*

H. P. LIE