

OBITUARIES

Ernani Agricola, M.D.
1887-1978

Dr. Ernani Agricola was born in Palma, Minas Gerais, Brazil on August 9, 1887. He graduated from the Odontology School of Belo Horizonte in 1912 and from the medical school of Belo Horizonte (now the Federal University of Minas Gerais) in 1919. He obtained his medical degree in 1920 with the thesis "Da punção Ganglionar no Mal de Hansen."

Following his graduation, he occupied a long series of increasingly responsible positions in the health departments of Minas Gerais and the nation, culminating in his becoming General Director of Public Health in Minas Gerais in 1931, Director of the Brazilian Ministry of Education and Public Health in 1934, and Director of the Public Health Division of the National Health Department in 1938. In 1941 he was promoted to Director of the National Leprosy Service of Brazil, a post he was to hold for 13 years, until 1954. For 22 years, from 1945-1967, he was a member of the WHO Panel of Experts on Leprosy, and for 24 years, 1954-1978, a member of the National Council of the Ministry of Health, and for the last 5 years, its vice-president. He occupied the chair of epidemiology in Rio de Janeiro from 1941 to 1959.

Dr. Agricola was head of the Brazilian delegation to the International Congresses of Leprosy in Cairo (1938), Havana (1948), and Madrid (1953), and a member of the del-

egation to the congresses in Tokyo (1958) and Rio (1963). He was president of the Second Pan-American Conference on Leprosy in Rio de Janeiro in 1946, and was head of the Brazilian delegation to the third conference in Buenos Aires, in 1951.

From 1935 to 1953, Dr. Agricola directed the struggle against Hansen's disease all over Brazil and encouraged wide participation of individuals in the work of social assistance to patients and their families.

He was honored by membership in many associations throughout the world. He was a founder, and twice president, of the Brazilian Leprosy Association; vice-president, 1963-1968, of the International Leprosy Association; and honorary vice-president of it since that time. He was a corresponding member of the Argentine Association, as well as the Spanish Academy of Dermatology and Syphilology, and of many other national dermatological and leprosy organizations, as well as an honorary member of the Academy of Medicine of the State of Minas Gerais and of the National Academy of Medicine of Brazil, tributes paid him in 1973 and 1974 respectively.

He had published scores of articles on public health and leprosy in both English and Portuguese.

Dr. Agricola enjoyed the affection and esteem of his colleagues in full measure. He was a quiet, friendly, unostentatious gentleman, who led through ability, industry, and effectiveness, not through bombast or the exercise of authority. All who knew him liked and respected him. We are all diminished and saddened by his loss. *Requiescat in pace!*

—HARRY L. ARNOLD, JR., M.D.