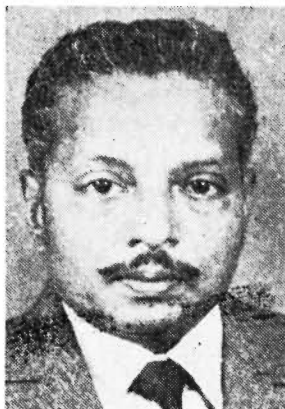


OBITUARIES

Melville Christian, M.B.B.S., D.T.M.&H.

1932–1988



Dr. Melville Christian, Director, Schieffelin Leprosy Research and Training Centre, Karigiri, India, died unexpectedly on 12 June 1988 at the age of 56. He is survived by his wife, Thangam, and two teen-age sons.

Dr. Christian was born 13 May 1932 in New Delhi. He was educated at the Presentation Convent in New Delhi and Doveton Corrie High School in Madras. His college education was at Madras Christian College in Tambaram, and he studied medicine at the Stanley Medical College in Madras, receiving his M.B.B.S. degree in 1958. He decided at that time to work in leprosy and proceeded to earn a Diploma in Tropical Medicine and Hygiene from the University of Calcutta, where he was awarded the Rus-somay Medal for proficiency in Tropical Medicine in 1960.

In 1962, Dr. Christian joined the Central Leprosy Teaching and Research Institute at Chingleput. From 1963–1967 he served as Emergency Commissioned Officer in the Army Medical Corps. He returned to Chingleput as a Medical Officer and later served as Medical Superintendent. He specialized further, earning a Diploma in Epidemiology from the Postgraduate Institute in Prague, Czechoslovakia, in 1973. In 1977, he retired

from government service following a myocardial infarction from which he fully recovered. After about one year's service in the South East Asia Regional Office of the World Health Organization, Dr. Christian joined the Schieffelin Research and Training Centre at Karigiri in 1979 as Head of the Division of Epidemiology and Leprosy Control and Deputy Director and Head of the Training Division. He guided the Division of Epidemiology to international recognition. In 1987 he was named Director at Karigiri.

Throughout his brilliant career, Dr. Christian freely gave his services to other organizations: the Indian Council of Medical Research; various commissions of the government of India; the World Health Organization's evaluations of leprosy control programs in Burma, Thailand, and Indonesia; the Steering Committee of THELEP; various study groups and expert committees of the World Health Organization on leprosy, epidemiology, control, and chemotherapy; medical consultant to The Leprosy Mission International, etc.

Beneath Melville's quick smile, hearty laugh, and keen sense of humor was an immensely hard-working, highly organized and thoroughly dedicated physician, constantly striving for the betterment of leprosy patients. This tragic loss to his family is also a major loss to leprosy work and leprosy workers all over the world. To those who were privileged to know him, he has bequeathed a priceless treasure—his memory brings a warmth to our hearts—and a smile.—RCH