

OBITUARIES

Jose Esteban Cardama, M.D., Ph.D.

13 May 1921–29 April 1993



Jose Esteban Cardama was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on 13 May 1921. His parents were Spanish immigrants. He studied in primary and secondary schools with the Lassalle Brothers.

His medical education was received at the Medicine Faculty of Buenos Aires University. He obtained his dermatoleprological education from a great master: Guillermo Basombrio. He started his teaching career early, and he was the first of the group to hold the title of Profesor Adjunto.

The master Basombrio often recognized the intelligence of "the gallego Cardama," as he called friendly Jose Esteban. The master suggested to him and Juan Carlos Gatti to write a textbook of dermatology because there was not an up-to-date book at that time—a period in which the French school at the Saint Louis Hospital of Paris was being replaced by the North American school. The success of the book was so great that it had 11 editions.

The work with leprosy patients at the University of Buenos Aires Centro de Leprologia was located successively in five hospitals because of the prejudice of contagiousness which ended at the time Jose Esteban arrived to be the head of the dermatoleprological department of the Infectious Disease Hospital Muñiz. The hospital had 20 beds where leprosy patients could be studied and hospitalized only for com-

plications or intercurrent illnesses side by side with a pemphigus or a scleroderma patient. There he could demonstrate his aptitude for organization and the necessary severity for leading several dozens of young dermatoleprologists who are now most of the leaders of dermatology and leprology in our city.

He was the Contributing Editor from Argentina for the INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LEPROSY for many years. He assisted regularly at the International Leprosy Congresses, usually with Silvia, his wife, presenting serious papers such as the one about the association of several drugs in 1965, many years before multidrug therapy (MDT). He was the one and only dermatologist in our country to be President of both of the two Argentine dermatological societies. His intelligence and firm character made it possible even when there was frequent rivalry between the two societies.

He and Silvia were rugby fans. The group of the Belgrano Athletic Club were his friends. His friendship with Juan Carlos Gatti was so solid that a few weeks after the death of his friend, Jose Esteban had a cerebrovascular accident which kept him in intensive care for several months. He passed away on 29 April 1993.

Jose Esteban, we pray for you and we ask our Lord that you rest in peace. To his wife Silvia the leprological family wants to express our deep sympathy. She was a devoted wife in health and in the long and arduous disease that ended his life.

—Luis M. Balaña