

## REPORTS

### **Annual Report of the Indian Council of the British Empire Leprosy Relief Association, 1939.**

This report shows steady progress with the campaign against leprosy in our densely populated Indian Empire. The Madras branch has been re-organized as a separate entity from the Provincial Public Health Department, which had previously held charge of its administration. Under the present arrangements the routine propaganda, survey and treatment work is carried out by the Government, while our provincial branch concentrates on the special work of epidemiological and other research under the general supervision of Dr. R. G. Cochrane of the Lady Willingdon Leper Settlement, Chingleput. One result has been increased demand for special training in the subject of leprosy.

Research has been continued under Dr. Lowe in the Leprosy Department of the Calcutta School of Tropical Medicine, where 1,347 new cases of the disease were examined, 1,054 of which were neural cases and 293 lepromatous ones. About 300 cases attend for treatment every week and the rest are referred to other centres. The previously reported rise in the clinical and bacillary infection between April and September has been confirmed during 1939. During epidemiological studies in a rural area of Western Bengal and in a Santhal colony the very high proportion of 20 neural to one lepromatous case has been observed. Methylene blue was found to have no action on the staining properties or on the pathogenicity of the rat leprosy bacillus in vitro, contrary to some previously published findings of French authorities. In hamsters splenectomy was not found to influence their susceptibility to infection with human leprosy bacilli. These experiments made it very doubtful if the organisms actually multiply in the tissues of the inoculated hamsters, although they do persist for a long time and in large numbers in the implanted nodules.

The usual training of leprosy workers has been carried on. The major part of the report is taken up with the activities and accounts of the provincial branches which are mainly of local interest.