

EDITORIAL

The VIIth International Congress of Leprology was held in Tokyo, Japan, from 12th to 19th November, 1958. Such congresses are held under the auspices of the International Leprosy Association in conjunction with a host country, at intervals of five years. The previous congresses were Berlin, 1897, Bergen, 1900, Strasbourg, 1923, Cairo, 1938, Havana, 1948, and Madrid, 1953.

This particular Congress was to have been held in India, but insuperable difficulties arose there at the last moment and the International Leprosy Association was very glad to receive a warm invitation from the Japanese Leprosy Foundation (Tofu Kyokai) to hold the Congress in Tokyo at about the same time it was to have been held in India. This gallant offer was accepted and in the event everything went very well and the unanimous opinion was that the VIIth Congress in Tokyo stood out as the most effective and enjoyable Congress that could be imagined.

Dr. E. Muir, the secretary of the International Leprosy Association, and Dr. J. R. Innes, the medical secretary of BELRA, who was acting as assistant secretary to Dr. Muir, arrived in Tokyo on 28th October, and Dr. H. W. Wade, the president of the International Leprosy Association, arrived a little later. Prof. K. Kitamura and Dr. K. Hamano of the Tofu Kyokai and their staff and members of the Japanese Leprosy Association showed an organising talent and capacity for hard work that made it certain that the Congress would be properly arranged. Also, Mr. A. Saita, the liaison officer of the Ministry of Health, was a tower of strength.

The Japanese Leprosy Foundation, or Tofu Kyokai, was founded under the inspiration of the late Empress Teimei, mother of the present Emperor. She it was who composed the beautiful Japanese ode which one finds inscribed on her memorials in every leprosarium in Japan.

“Tsurezure no

Tomo to narite mo

nagusameyo

Yuku koto kataki

Wari ni kawarite”,

which can be rendered as follows in English:

“Comfort them as our true friends,
On my behalf, I beseech you,
In their day to day living,
As my presence with them
May not always be possible”.

It was natural, therefore, that, at the opening plenary session of the Congress on the 12th November, Their Imperial Highnesses, Prince and Princess Takamatsu, should be present and that the beautiful ode of the Empress Teimei should be sung.

Dr. K. Kitamura was the president of the Congress with Dr. H. W. Wade as vice-president. The secretary of the Congress was Dr. E. Muir and the vice-secretary, Dr. K. Hamano. In this Congress, what proved to be a very effective system of panels and technical committees had been introduced. This meant that each subject had been considered for about a year by a small panel and at the time of the Congress extra names were added and the panel was converted into a technical committee, so that the subject was presented to the Congress and then thrown open to submitted papers and discussion on them.

Full opportunity was given to members to see something of the beautiful Japanese country and various aspects of Japanese life and to visit research institutes and leprosaria. The hospitality of our Japanese hosts will always leave a warm and gracious memory. There were 43 countries represented at the Congress, and the number of members approached 300. It was notable that scientific sessions of the Congress were fully attended.

Early in the Congress, the presentation of the Damien-Dutton award was made to Dr. H. W. Wade by the Bishop of Yokohama. This is the second award, the first being to Sister Hilary Ross, of Carville, and the ceremony was watched with the greatest of pleasure by all. The veteran leprologist and secretary-treasurer of the International Leprosy Association, Dr. E. Muir, laid down his office at the close of the Congress, and in his place Dr. J. R. Innes was appointed. Dr. Wade continues as president of the International Leprosy Association, and the three vice-presidents are, Dr. J. M. M. Fernández, for the Americas; Dr. K. Kitamura, for the Eastern section; Dr. R. G. Cochrane, for the Western section.

The International Leprosy Association received with great pleasure an invitation from the Government of Brazil for the holding of the next congress, due in 1963, and accepted it with great appreciation.

This issue contains a personal record of the Proceedings of the Congress made by the Editor, and though the record made by one man is bound to be imperfect, it will be useful to give it here in anticipation of the publishing of the full transactions of the Congress by the Tofu Kyokai.

Dr. Davey's Latest Report on ETIP, or 'Etisul'

In the therapy section of the proceedings of the Seventh Congress it will be noted that Dr. Davey gave a report, among other drugs, on ETIP. His first progress report for publication has just arrived at the time of printing. Because it will be convenient to all workers to have this information provided in the same issue which records the Congress, it will be found on page 61.