

Obituary



Dr Miguel Angel González Prendes, illustrious Leprologist of Cuba, died on the 19th of April, 1965, of a cardiac attack.

Dr César Rodríguez Expósito, the Honorary Historian of Public Health, has kindly sent information about Dr Prendes and the news of his death has been received with great sorrow by all his friends abroad as he is known to many of us ever since the V International Congress of Leprology in Havana. We personally know him and admire his work and character, knowing how he laboured all his life intensely in the campaign against leprosy in Cuba. Dr César Rodríguez Expósito has kindly sent us a photograph which we publish in this issue.

Dr Miguel Ángel González Prendes was born on 29th July, 1910, in San Luis in the Province of Pinar del Río, Cuba, and had his first and secondary education in Belén College. He began his career in medicine in the University of Havana in the year 1931, and had to extend his studies in the National University of Mexico. Later, when political changes took place in Mexico he returned to Havana and graduated

Doctor of Medicine in November 1934. He studied in the General Hospital of Mexico and in the School of Health which function in the Finlay Institute of Havana. In 1944 when Professor Dr Vicente Pardo Castelló was Director of the Patronate for the Prophylaxis of Leprosy, Syphilis, and Skin Diseases, he obtained the post of Technical and Administrative Director of the National Sanatorium 'San Luis de Jagua' which was dedicated to the treatment of leprosy patients. In the year 1946, the President of the Republic, Dr Ramón Grau San Martín, nominated him as Assistant Secretary of Health and Social Assistance, and later in 1949 he was nominated Government Patron of the 'San Lazaro' Hospital of Havana which he had to abandon on 10th March, 1952, when he was accused of conspiratory activities and later detained and imprisoned, after which he occupied his post as Director of the 'San Luis de Jagua' until his death.

During 1953 he worked in the Department of Research in the University of Havana under Professors R. Márquez, and A. Curbelo.

Actually, Dr Prendes died on the 19th April of a cardiac attack in the office of the hospital 'San Luis de Jagua'.

There are 67 scientific works chiefly on leprosy published by Dr Prendes. Recently, *The History of Leprosy in Cuba* was published in 1963 by 'Carlos J. Finlay', and a wonderful account of Hansen and his work was given in the *Revista Finlay*, and by permission it was translated into English and published in *Leprosy Review*, **35**, 4, 1964.

Dr Prendes was a member of the International Leprosy Association, and as a Leprologist of world renown he was very well known and respected. The International Society of Leprosy wishes to thank Cuba for such a man and for his contributions to leprology. His character was such that many leprologists will have personal soreness of the heart at the passing of Dr Prendes and feel gratitude for having known him. Above all, his patients will echo this personal gratitude.