

Obituary Notice

DR. H. JOCELYN SMYLY, 1882-1970

With the passing of Dr. Smyly at the age of 87, one of the few remaining medical links with "old" China has been severed, and the cause of leprosy has lost an enthusiastic advocate.

Henry Jocelyn Smyly was born on 7 October, 1882, in Dublin, the eldest son of Sir William Josiah Smyly, one-time Master of the famous Rotunda (Maternity Hospital) in Dublin. His paternal grandmother was the founder of the Smyly Homes, which (it was thought) inspired Dr. Barnardo to begin a similar work in England.

Although his schooldays were interrupted by 4 years of illness, necessitating prolonged immobilization for tuberculosis of the spine, Jocelyn Smyly on entering Trinity College, Dublin, soon gave promise of outstanding intellectual ability, becoming senior moderator and winning the "big gold medal" as the best student in 5 years. He obtained the degree of M.A., and graduated in medicine (M.B., CH.B., B.A.O.) in 1911. The following year, he gained both the M.D. and the Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland.

Within a year, he was off to China as a missionary under the London Missionary Society, assuming an appointment as Associate in Medicine at the Peking Union Medical College. After the First World War, he came back to England, but after furlough returned to Peking under the auspices of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. Here he worked until 1928, in which year he was appointed to the Chair of Clinical Medicine at the Shantung Christian University at Cheloo. Successive generations of students and nurses whom he taught there had cause to be grateful to the Professor who lectured so competently and taught them basic medicine so thoroughly.

He was repatriated to England in 1941, and spent the next 6 years in enforced absence from his beloved China. However, undaunted, he took up geriatric research at Guy's and Tooting Bec Hospitals, and did "locums" for general practitioners in war-time England. After the war,

back in Cheloo and faced with the disruption of the hospital work caused by the Japanese occupation, Dr. Smyly threw himself into the task of rebuilding, only to be met by another threat—this time from the Communists. He stayed at his post as long as he could, but finally retired from Cheloo in 1951.

It was at Cheloo that he became interested in leprosy, having taken clinical charge of a small hospital for leprosy patients just outside the campus and city. He resolved to restrict his general medical interests and reading and to concentrate on the study of leprosy. This he did with such good effect that he became extremely knowledgeable about many aspects of this disease. On his way back to England, he visited several leprosy centres in India, not (as he put it) as a distinguished Professor of Medicine, but rather as an eager student, sitting at the feet of younger men who were experienced in the various aspects of leprosy.

In 1954, he was asked temporarily to relieve Dr. Neil Fraser, who was building up the work of The Leprosy Mission at the Island of Happy Healing (Hay Ling Chau) near Hong Kong. This furlough relief was extended into the following year. Dr. Smyly entered enthusiastically into every side of the work, revelling especially in the pathological investigations and the teaching of medical students. He was in his element again. It was at this time that he made the acquaintance of Dr. Robert Cochrane, son of the Dr. Thomas Cochrane who was Founder of the Peking Union Medical College, with whom he had first worked in China.

Back in England again, he could not remain idle. He visited his doctor son in Northern Rhodesia in 1958, found out that the post of Government Leprologist was falling vacant, and was appointed to it at the age of 76. He was there for 2 years, before finally "retiring" to England. He soon joined Dr. Robert Cochrane in London at the Leprosy Study Centre, examining and reporting on histological sections of leprosy lesions and helping in the work of the

Centre. It was then that he wrote his contribution to the second edition of *Leprosy in Theory and Practice* (1964), edited by Cochrane and Davey.

Full of helpfulness and good works, Dr. Smyly retained a lively interest in all aspects of leprosy. He wrote to *The Daily Telegraph* in May, 1970, protesting at the use of the word "leper" in its columns. Within a few days of his death, he was discussing some of the latest work in leprosy and recently published papers on cell-mediated immunity. On the morning of the day he died, he was cycling in Kingston, Surrey, near his home.

Dr. "Jock" Smyly will be missed in China,

Africa, and Britain. He was a good man, a real Christian who lived out his faith, and was genuinely helpful to all in need. He had a well-furnished mind, and professionally was extremely competent. Physically very agile, and mentally very alert right up to the end, he has left his mark for good in many places. A small and sprightly man, always neatly turned out and rather precise of utterance, Dr. Smyly leaves a wide circle of those who are proud to have been his friends.

Our sympathy goes out to the gracious lady who was his helpmeet for 49 years to the day, and to his two sons.

S.G.B.