

Leprosy and the Community

LEPRA REPORT 1977

The 53rd Annual Report of Lepra, The British Leprosy Relief Association, covers the year 1976 and continues the story of dedicated service to the cause of the eradication of leprosy which has characterized Lepra from the beginning. The Report gives the main guidelines of policy pursued by Lepra and for which support is encouraged as:

Leprosy research and the dissemination of information.

Prevention and cure of leprosy, particularly in children.

The training, provision and support of indigenous medical staff workers.

Assistance to Governments, WHO and other organizations in support of effective leprosy work.

Integrated control schemes providing domiciliary treatment.

In March 1976 Lepra became a full member of The International Federation of Anti-Leprosy Associations (ILEP), and is participating in the policy making and programme of this most important Organization.

The control work undertaken by Lepra tends to be concentrated in certain areas, notably, Malawi, where Lepra is the co-ordinator for all leprosy work; Sierra Leone, with grants in aid to control projects in Zambia, India and Uganda.

The involvement of Lepra in leprosy research is important, with grants for individual projects at several centres, in addition to that undertaken at Oxford by Lepra's Clinical Consultant, Dr A. C. McDougall.

The encouragement of work among children has always been important to Lepra. In 1976 The Children's Fund brought help to 30,470 children with leprosy, 26,149 of them in India. The encouragement of training for leprosy workers at all levels is also basic Lepra policy, and this has actively been pursued.

Support for Lepra from within the United Kingdom has greatly increased in recent years, and in 1976, for the first time total income exceeded £500,000. Substantial aid was given to anti-leprosy work in 18 countries; £208,000 was spent on leprosy control projects, £58,000 on treating children, nearly £22,000 on research, and £5300 on training personnel.

Leprosy Review is not the least of Lepra's responsibilities, and it is fitting on behalf of the Editorial Board to express our gratitude to the Director, Executive Committee and Medical Advisory Board for so much support and encouragement.

T. F. DAVEY

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE LEPROSY MISSION FOR 1976

The Annual Report of The Leprosy Mission for 1976, entitled, "To Seek and to Save", is presented very attractively and breaks new ground. To quote from the Introduction, "The Singapore Conference in 1976 emphasised that the only hope for overcoming the scourge of leprosy is conscientious, thorough, and wide ranging outreach. We must go deeper into the community; we must go more often; we must go more intensively; and we must keep on going back. Only in this way can those who are in danger—particularly the children—be saved from misery and deformity." In accordance with this the first half of the Report concentrates on the least spectacular aspects of leprosy work, the seeking for, and caring of leprosy sufferers in their home environment, and under the general heading "Partners in the Search", has sections on the paramedical worker, the mobile team, the rural clinic, the educator, the hospital back-up, and the imponderables, all very well illustrated.

The second section of the Report consists of brief Regional Reports, devoted to Africa, Southern Asia, Asia East and South-East, illustrated by maps and showing the depth and wide range of the Mission's concerns. The Leprosy Mission is now very much an international organisation, and a section on the International General Council includes references to the Singapore Conference and to ILEP, of which The Leprosy Mission was a foundation member. The concluding section on Finance is presented clearly and in an interesting way. 1976 was an outstandingly successful year, the income of The Leprosy Mission rising by 43% to a total of £1,725,798. "The international nature of the Mission is demonstrated by the fact that 20 different countries are now making significant regular contributions, and this year no one country gave more than 20% of the total income". This is a remarkable fact, especially when it is recalled that American Leprosy Missions Inc. is an independent organisation. The Leprosy Mission stands for sacrificial work and sacrificial giving, especially directed to those in greatest need. As the Introduction to the Report puts it, "Christian mission in all its forms must therefore always be a search, a reaching out to where neglected suffering humanity is to be found."

T. F. DAVEY

GANDHI MEMORIAL LEPROSY FOUNDATION

The Gandhi Memorial Leprosy Foundation has completed 25 years of work, and the occasion of its silver jubilee cannot be allowed to pass without an expression of appreciation for the outstanding contribution of the Foundation to leprosy control in India. In the depth of its concern for patients and the dedication of its staff the Foundation has continued to express the spirit of Gandhiji in an exemplary manner. None of the hundreds who were present at the All India Silver Jubilee Congress at Sevagram in 1973 will forget the courtesy and spirit of fellowship which pervaded the gathering. The Foundation has taken a leading role in leprosy education, and its training courses and rural control units have been a great help to many. We offer our congratulations and best wishes for the years ahead.