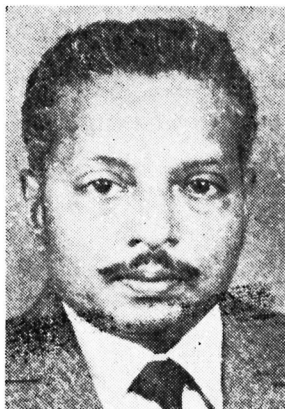


OBITUARIES

Melville Christian, M.B.B.S., D.T.M.&H.

1932–1988



Dr. Melville Christian, Director, Schieffelin Leprosy Research and Training Centre, Karigiri, India, died unexpectedly on 12 June 1988 at the age of 56. He is survived by his wife, Thangam, and two teen-age sons.

Dr. Christian was born 13 May 1932 in New Delhi. He was educated at the Presentation Convent in New Delhi and Doveton Corrie High School in Madras. His college education was at Madras Christian College in Tambaram, and he studied medicine at the Stanley Medical College in Madras, receiving his M.B.B.S. degree in 1958. He decided at that time to work in leprosy and proceeded to earn a Diploma in Tropical Medicine and Hygiene from the University of Calcutta, where he was awarded the Rus-somay Medal for proficiency in Tropical Medicine in 1960.

In 1962, Dr. Christian joined the Central Leprosy Teaching and Research Institute at Chingleput. From 1963–1967 he served as Emergency Commissioned Officer in the Army Medical Corps. He returned to Chingleput as a Medical Officer and later served as Medical Superintendent. He specialized further, earning a Diploma in Epidemiology from the Postgraduate Institute in Prague, Czechoslovakia, in 1973. In 1977, he retired

from government service following a myocardial infarction from which he fully recovered. After about one year's service in the South East Asia Regional Office of the World Health Organization, Dr. Christian joined the Schieffelin Research and Training Centre at Karigiri in 1979 as Head of the Division of Epidemiology and Leprosy Control and Deputy Director and Head of the Training Division. He guided the Division of Epidemiology to international recognition. In 1987 he was named Director at Karigiri.

Throughout his brilliant career, Dr. Christian freely gave his services to other organizations: the Indian Council of Medical Research; various commissions of the government of India; the World Health Organization's evaluations of leprosy control programs in Burma, Thailand, and Indonesia; the Steering Committee of THELEP; various study groups and expert committees of the World Health Organization on leprosy, epidemiology, control, and chemotherapy; medical consultant to The Leprosy Mission International, etc.

Beneath Melville's quick smile, hearty laugh, and keen sense of humor was an immensely hard-working, highly organized and thoroughly dedicated physician, constantly striving for the betterment of leprosy patients. This tragic loss to his family is also a major loss to leprosy work and leprosy workers all over the world. To those who were privileged to know him, he has bequeathed a priceless treasure—his memory brings a warmth to our hearts—and a smile.—RCH

Juan C. Gatti, M.D., Ph.D.



The death of Professor Juan C. Gatti was unexpected when it happened at the beginning of this year. Iberolatin-american leprology loses one of the most outstanding personalities of the last decades. His professional profile covered the dermatologic and leprologic fields, being prominent in them and reaching the highest nominations.

Professor Gatti graduated in 1947 from the School of Medicine at Buenos Aires University. Three years later he obtained his Ph.D.; his thesis was entitled "Hypersensitivity to Lepromin in Reactional States of Tubercloid Leprosy." He was Joint and Associate Professor of Dermatology. His hospital career was developed at the Infectious Diseases Hospital F. J. Muñiz of Buenos Aires, where he was Director of the Leprosy Center for 25 years.

He was author and collaborator in several dermatologic and leprologic books, his *Handbook of Dermatology* being one of the traditional academic tools at the School of Medicine in Argentina. His academic scope of interest was large, nevertheless leprology held a preferential place. He was a fundamental core of the Argentine Society of Leprosy from its foundation, becoming President and Honorary President. He obtained identical nominations in the Argentine Society of Dermatology. He was the author of nearly 300 scientific papers and received awards on 14 occasions from the Argentine Societies of Leprosy and Dermatology.

He was a national and international leader in leprosy. Most of his activity was devoted to therapeutic and clinical aspects, demonstrated by attending several courses, conferences and congresses. His international activity in leprosy congresses included his participations at: Therapeutic Com-

mission of VIII International Leprosy Congress in Rio de Janeiro; IX International Leprosy Congress in London; Joint-President of Session "Therapeutic Advances" at the X International Leprosy Congress in Bergen; Member of 2nd International Leprosy Colloquy with "Therapeutic Association" in Borstel; Member of Workshop in "Epidemiology, Control and Field Therapy" at the XI International Leprosy Congress in Mexico. Recently, he was Chairman of the Workshop "Diagnosis and Clinical Aspects" of the XIII International Congress in The Hague.

His other permanent wish was evident since the beginning of his professional life: to attain a link among Iberolatinamerican dermatologists and leprologists. In 1970, he was General Secretary of the First Leprosy Meeting of South America. His attendance at these events as president, director of courses, or rapporteur was continuous until his recent death. Also of importance were his participations in several Iberolatinamerican and World Congresses of Dermatology. During the last ones in 1987, he was Chairman of the Leprosy Symposium in Madrid and Co-Chairman and Rapporteur of the Symposium in West Berlin.

Since his youth, he was strongly associated with the scientific activities of the Brazilian Societies of Dermatology and Leprosy. He developed conferences and courses at the Mexican Academy of Dermatology, at the Fontilles Sanatorium in Alicante, at Complutense University of Madrid, at the School of Medicine in Barcelona, and at the Ecuadorian Society of Dermatology as well.

Since 1949 he was a member of the International Leprosy Association and Founding Member of the Leprosy College of Endemic Countries, the Latinamerican Association of Medicine, and the Organization of Latin Speaking Dermatologists. He was also a Member of the International Society of Tropical Dermatology; and Honorary Member of the Mexican, Bolivian, Spanish and Ecuadorian Academies of Dermatology; and Corresponding Member of the Dermatology Societies of Uruguay, Nicaragua, Peru, Brazil, and Paraguay.

It is a hard task trying to sum up Dr. Gatti's excellent and fruitful profile, without omitting important aspects of his dermatologic and leprologic life. However, as one of his disciples, I would like to point out his personality, his intelligence and his considerable educational skills. We received from him innumerable teachings through his en-

trepreneurship and his team-leader profile, always a searcher for excellence for himself and for everyone who surrounded him. His last years were even more profitable for us. His image and his advice have left us with an indelible trace in our lives.

—Dra. Liliana M. Olivares