OBITUARY

SIR HENRY TRISTRAM HOLLAND
(1875–1965)

One of the best known of world ophthalmologists and certainly the one who did most good in his life was Sir Henry Holland, who died in hospital at Farnham, Surrey, on September 19, 1965, in his ninetieth year. He was one of the most remarkable medical missionaries who ever lived and has been credited with saving the sight of more than 100,000 Indians and Pakistanis.

The son of a clergyman, he was educated in Edinburgh where he graduated in 1899 and obtained his Fellowship in 1907. He was a distinguished student but, always intensely religious, from his undergraduate days he decided to become a medical missionary; he joined the Punjab Mission of the Church Missionary Society in 1900, working for it for 48 years in India, gaining an immense reputation in ophthalmology. He spent some time in Kashmir and in 1907 was put in charge of the mission hospital at Quetta with which his name will always be associated. In 1935 that city was devastated by an earthquake in which 20,000 people were killed in 30 seconds, and Holland was buried in the ruins of his hospital, being rescued by his sons; but this disaster was only an excuse for him to be largely responsible for building a new and better hospital, amalgamating it with a Church of England missionary hospital. Apart from his immense labours at Quetta he will always be remembered for establishing temporary “eye-camps” in regions where blindness was rife and no surgical help was available; in these, together with a team of surgeons which usually included his two sons, he would operate on an incredible number of cases before he passed on to the next place. This was started in 1911 when a Hindu philanthropist built for him a special hospital in Shikapur on the understanding that he would work there with his team for 6 weeks each year. The travels of his camps took him far afield, throughout India and Pakistan, Afghanistan and Baluchistan. At the age of 85 he and his team performed 2,500 ocular operations in 6 weeks at Shikapur and, as always, without fee.

No one who does not know the Indian sub-continent can appreciate the value of this work, but many realized the importance of the social and political influence of this delightful, non-prudish, evangelical surgeon who in his fearless and outspoken way excited a strange influence for good, not only among Indians and Pakistanis of all walks of life, by whom he was worshipped, but also upon the British community. He took a prominent part in planning the medical policy of the Church and of the Government of India, and was later one of the founders of the British Empire (now the Royal Commonwealth) Society for the Blind. He received the Kaisar-i-Hind Silver Medal (1910), and the Gold Medal (1925) with a bar (1931); he was appointed a Companion of the Order of the Indian Empire in 1929 and a Knight Bachelor in 1936; finally, in 1960 he (with his son, Dr. Ronald Holland) was awarded the Ramon Magsaysay Award in Manila, presented to those who have served their fellow men with distinction. Never was an award more merited.

PAUL ANTON CIBIS

It is with great regret that we record the death of Dr. Paul A. Cibis, who died suddenly on April 30, 1965, shortly after his visit to England to participate in the Annual Meeting of the Ophthalmological Society of the United Kingdom. Paul Cibis, a native of Poland, completed his residency in ophthalmology at the Eye Clinic of the University of Heidelberg in 1940 where he remained as chief assistant in ophthalmology until 1949 when he was granted the von Graefe