

Dr. H. M. Lazarus

C.B.E., B.A., F.R.C.S. (Ed), F.R.C.O.G., F.A.C.S., F.I.A.S.D.

Date of Birth : 23-01-1890

Date of Demise : 23-01-1978



Dr H. M. Lazarus

Dr. Lazarus was born in Waltair on the 23rd January 1890, passed the Matriculation in 1906, B.A. in 1911 and M.B.B.S. in 1916, all from the Madras University, L.M. (Rotunda) and Conjoint London in 1917. She was the first Indian to be appointed from London into the Women's Medical Service of India. Her first posting was at the Lady Hardinge Medical College as an assistant to the Obstetrician and Gynaecologist for about two months when she was transferred to the Dufferin Hospital Calcutta as R.M.O. After thirteen months she was transferred to Surat. After three and a half years there, she was transferred to the Dufferin Hospital, Visakhapatnam where she started a Training School for Nurses and Midwives in English and training in Telugu for Midwives alone, as apart from the Mission Hospital there were no other Government Training Schools for Midwives in the regional languages except in the Maternity Hospital, Egmore, Madras. At her suggestion, hospitals which had a number of maternity beds in the regional areas were made into training schools for midwives.

She worked for about five years in Visakhapatnam, twelve years in Madras, three and a half years as Principal of the Lady Hardinge Medical College and Superintendent of the Hospital, three and half years as Chief Medical Officer of the Women's Medical Service and assistant Director-General of the Women's branch of the Indian Medical Service during the Second World War. During

this period she was a member of the Health Survey and Development Committee (Bhor Committee) and later of the Mudaliar Committee. She retired a year before she was due to retire, after putting thirty years of service in the Women's Medical Service. She then went to Vellore as the first Principal of the College when men were admitted. It so happened that all her education in school, colleges and postgraduate institutions in India or abroad was with boys and men so she had no problems with the men students, many of whom are holding very responsible positions in Vellore and other places. After seven years in Vellore as Principal cum Medical Superintendent of the Hospital and Director she returned to Waltair to look after her sister but the Director of Medical Services, Andhra Pradesh, appointed her as Hon. Director of the Institute of Obstetrics and Gynaecology and as Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the Andhra University to recognise the Andhra Medical College for the M.D. She resigned after seven years as she wanted the patients to have as much trust in her young staff whom she trained and who she knew would do as well or even better than her in due course of time.

For several years she continued to serve on the Advisory committee of the five hospitals in Andhra Pradesh as well as the Red Cross, Tuberculosis, Leprosy, Town Planning and Improvement and Educational Committees. She was nominated as an M.L.C. Andhra state and she was a member of the Zilla Parishad and Chairman of the Mission High School Managing Committee where she was educated and where there were 1,500 boys and girls.

She presided over the 7th All India Conference of Obstetrics and Gynaecology held at Calcutta in 1952. She expired on 23-1-1978.