Jean Lenègre 1904-1972

Professor Jean Lenègre died suddenly on 9 February 1972, while walking in the Latin Quarter where attempts to resuscitate him proved unavailing. The Cardiac Society will be saddened by the death of one of its pre-eminent honorary members and many of us, like myself, are grieved to lose an old friend.

Born in Paris, in 1904, he received his medical training there and coming under the influence of Clerc and Laubry he chose cardiology as his main interest. He became Médecin des Hôpitaux in 1937 and Professeur Agrégé in 1939. From 1936 to the outbreak of war, he was in charge of pathological anatomy at the cardiological centre of the Broussais Hospital where I had worked under Laubry in 1926. He performed all the necropsies there and correlated his anatomical findings with the clinical electrocardiographic and haemodynamic data, and this work formed the basis of his well known textbook, *Électrocardiographie Clinique* (1954) which was undoubtedly the most authoritative work on the subject at that date.

After military service in 1939-40, he worked at the Lariboisière Hospital until 1949, when he moved to the Boucicaud where he remained as professor of clinical cardiology. I well recall my first meeting with him in Paris after the war when Gallavardin introduced us and we all three dined together. During the German occupation, ignorant of Cournand's work in America, he embarked on right heart catheterization in 1943, using a ureteric catheter and an improvised radiological control. After the war, he was quick to grasp the importance of the American and Mexican work on electrocardiography which became his main interest for a time.

In spite of his pioneer work in haemodynamics, he avoided becoming much involved in congenital heart disease as he felt it would be wrong that he and Soulié should both concentrate on the same field of research and teaching, so he devoted himself to an investigation of the cardiac conducting system, and in time he became the leading authority on diseases of the bundle of His and its branches on which he had published many papers. His pathological experience at the Broussais stood him in good stead and I have watched him

dissect a heart and cut up the septum for histological examination with great skill. More recently he became concerned with measures for the prevention of coronary disease.

Lenègre was a most versatile all round cardiologist whose numerous papers and books covered the whole field of cardiovascular disease, and he could hold his own in discussion with experts in almost every branch of cardiology. His capacity for work was prodigious and even when his health began to deteriorate he never spared himself and undertook many important and burdensome duties, including presidency of the French and European Societies of Cardiology and editorship of the *Archives des Maladies du Cœur*. His devotion to his old chief, Laubry, never wavered and he became an inseparable companion of *le patron* on his travels in his later years.

The deaths of both Lenègre and Soulié within a matter of months have deprived European cardiology of two of its most distinguished leaders. We wish to express our sympathy to our French colleagues and to Madame Lenègre and their family.

Evan Bedford

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