

Reviews and Notices of Books.

China Medical Journal. September, 1931. Leprosy Number.

This is the second special Leprosy Number of this well-known journal which has been issued. It is full of interesting reading, and it is very difficult to pick out any one article among a series of good ones. In an article by Sir Leonard Rogers, it is pointed out that the cost of running an institution in Australia is £200 per head per annum. This is in marked contrast to the statement made by Dr. Wilson in his article, in which he gives an account of his institution and mentions that the cost per head per annum is only \$44.00 gold, or approximately £8 per annum. This comparison supports the plea of Sir Leonard Rogers for self-supporting leprosy colonies, and the one run by Dr. Wilson, in Korea, is an excellent example of such.

A note by Dr. Reiss on the application of Gouin's reaction to leprosy is of interest, but his conclusions seem to apply chiefly to the more advanced stages of leprosy. Dr. Muir's article, which appeared in *LEPROSY REVIEW*, Vol. 1, No. 4, p. 4, emphasises the fact that the clinical diagnosis of the disease is much more reliable than any present laboratory method, and the results that Dr. Reiss shows seem to bear this out. There are several articles of value dealing with leprosy in the various provinces in China. Dr. Heimburger and Dr. Fraser describe the routine treatment, the former that used in Tsinan and the latter in the out-patient department at Swatow.

This whole volume of the *China Medical Journal* is a valuable symposium on leprosy and its treatment. There are one or two criticisms which we feel we have to make. The first is, that while extracts from the Leonard Wood Memorial Conference Report are reprinted, there is no indication of how, or from where, to secure the full report. A more serious criticism is that the most important step of the year is not even mentioned, that of the formation of the International Leprosy Association. We feel that the significance of this is not underestimated by those interested in leprosy in China, and, therefore, it is the more regrettable that there should be such an omission from so important a publication as the *China Medical Journal*. Lastly, it was suggested by the Manila Conference that as far as possible, the word "leper" should be omitted from medical writings, for it was felt that if we could get away from the frequent use of this term, which carries with it a sense of opprobrium, we should be able to educate the general public more readily. This was the case in tuberculosis, when the word consumptive ceased to be used. We see little attempt to adopt this suggestion in the special leprosy number of the *China Medical Journal*. This number should be in the hands of all those who are interested in leprosy, and we congratulate the Editor of the *China Medical Journal* on this, the second successful, leprosy issue.

The Prescriber. Vol. XXV, No. 11, November, 1931. Price 2s.

A feature of this well-known publication is the reviews which are published under the head of Therapeutic Progress. The subject dealt with in the November issue is that of leprosy. The whole year is brought under review, and the first prominence is rightly given to the important work of the Leonard Wood Memorial Conference. A resumé of the report appeared in Vol. XXV, No. 6, p. 231, of this journal. The whole field of leprosy is reviewed in an admirable and concise manner, and the most important articles and events of the year are noted and summarised. To those who have no time to peruse larger journals, this resumé will be of great value, as it will be to the general practitioner who cannot, in the nature of things, keep in

touch with all branches of medicine. He will find in this review of the chief leprosy articles written during the year, enough to remind him of what is being done, which will enable him to keep his knowledge fairly well up-to-date.

In this number of *The Prescriber*, there appears also an article on Brazilian drugs used in leprosy. This contribution should be of interest not only to the botanist, but also to the physician and pharmacologist, who are constantly on the look-out for fresh remedies which can be applied to leprosy. As effective drugs are not infrequently found to be contained in indigenous plants, such study should not only be encouraged but should be followed up and pursued. We commend this number of *The Prescriber* to all who are interested in the progress of leprosy during the past year.

R. G. C.

Report of the Indian Council of the British Empire Leprosy Relief Association for 1930.

A considerable section of this report deals with the work of the Survey Party which carried out surveys and initiated propaganda and treatment work in Delhi, the United Provinces and the Punjab. As before, the results of their labour reveal the unreliability of the census figures regarding leprosy, a special diagram being given to indicate the discrepancies revealed in eleven areas. With regard to the survey investigation, it would be interesting to study the question of the relative seriousness of cases discovered among healthy adults who show only slight signs of neural leprosy (A_1 or N_1). Many of these individuals may be naturally arrested cases, and, therefore, may not need to be considered either in treatment or in prevention schemes. The suggestion that such cases exist has never been adequately determined. The tendency on the part of the sufferer to hide his malady, and the ignorance of others in the early stages of the disease, that they are really suffering from leprosy, is ample vindication of the emphasis which is being laid on educational propaganda. The Association has already produced and distributed a variety of material for that purpose, and more is in process of preparation.

Special reference should be made to the report which deals with training, no less than 104 doctors attending the courses arranged, the majority of whom were deputed by the provincial and state authorities throughout India.

As regards research, an item of interest is the opportunity provided by the Lister Institute in England to Dr. Henderson when on leave, for the study of tissue culture methods. In the department of treatment the method of intradermal injections of esters was extensively carried out. Cases with symmetrical lesions showed more improvement on the side receiving the multiple punctures than on the side which was left as a control. The report contains a valuable list of the articles published by Dr. Muir and Dr. Henderson respectively during the year under survey.

It is highly desirable that a work so deserving of public support should be freed from the handicap of inadequate income. This report should be read by all who have anything to do with treatment or prevention schemes, as India is the only country carrying out survey, propaganda and treatment work in a really extensive manner.

F. W. R.

More from the Primeval Jungle. ALBERT SCHWEITZER. A. & E. Black. 6s.

This fascinating volume resumes the story of Dr. Schweitzer's work in French Equatorial Africa, after his return in 1924. The principal task which then awaited him was the restoration of some of the old buildings, the construction of new ones, and finally the removal of the hospital to an entirely new site. The account is modest enough, but it would surely be a very obtuse reader who failed to appreciate the real devotion and the perseverance necessary to overcome the obstacles involved. The book is enlivened throughout by touches of humour. The author's likening of a day's work at the clearing to the movements of a symphony, beginning with a very pronounced *lento* and proceeding through *moderato*, *adagio* and *scherzo* to a vigorous finale is in a delightful vein. The difficulty of working among primitive people is very graphically illustrated. The risks run by patients in procuring water from a dangerous source, in preference to walking a slightly greater distance, during a dysentery epidemic, is characteristic of the mentality dealt with. In other respects, the people of Equatorial Africa show themselves to be deficient.

References to leprosy confirm the belief that the disease is more prevalent than is generally supposed, but the author remarks that, in his judgment, it had increased during the period of his absence.

There is not a dull page and readers will be grateful for such a sincere and revealing picture of a work which can only be described as heroic.

F. W. R.