

## EDITORIAL

### Advances in the lepromin test

In this issue J. A. Kinnear Brown reports on his studies in Uganda in practical modifications of the method of testing. He has shown that the multipuncture method of application, borrowed from the method of Heaf for tuberculin, is as informative in its results as the customary method of intradermal injection, and allows of diluted lepromin being used at 1/100 in isotonic saline. The method is simple and quick and economical and therefore is suitable for use in wide-spread campaigns, such as in controlled field trials of BCG as a prophylactic against leprosy, wherein it will be necessary to distinguish large numbers of lepromin-negative individuals. T. F. Davey of Uzuakoli reports in this issue on another aspect of lepromin, that of the antigenic activity of normal skin tissue, thus confirming the work of Kooij and Gerritsen. Davey studied the effect on 50 leprosy patients of the intradermal injection of a preparation of normal skin, i.e., skin obtained surgically at a general hospital and processed as it if were the usual material for lepromin, and checks were made to show that acidfast bacilli were absent. Davey found that it had not much effect in inducing the early Fernandez reaction of the lepromin test, but it did induce the later Mitsuda reactions in tuberculoid leprosy, and these reactions, though smaller in extent, followed the same pattern of reactions as induced by the standard lepromin and refined lepromin, which were used in comparison. By suitable adjustment of the standards for the various grades of positivity, the preparation of normal skin used in this experiment could have been used instead of lepromin to distinguish positive from negative Mitsuda reactors.

In our issue of July 1958 (p. 135) we referred to this subject brought forward by the work of Kooij and Gerritsen as *vital*, and it is apparent that Davey thinks so too. It is essential to find out what principle is involved, and further study is likely to be rewarding. The testing of normal skin preparations in non-leprosy subjects, and the histological study of all reactions, are important next steps.

### The Seventh International Congress of Leprology

This will be held at Tokyo this year from 12th to 19th November, by kind invitation of the Japanese Leprosy Foundation, who with the Japanese Leprosy Association will be hosts. The Organizing Secretary of the Congress is Dr. K. Hamano, 2-5 Uchisaiwaicho, Chiyodaku, Tokyo, Japan. From 20th to 24th November the WHO Inter-Regional Conference on leprosy will be held in Tokyo.