

*The Fight Against Leprosy*, by PATRICK FEENY. This is published at 25s net by Elek Books, All Saints Street, London. It is a book of 191 pages with bibliography and 12 fascinating illustrations. It is a work of outstanding virtuosity on ancient and modern leprosy, giving as it does a

balanced picture of the development of this human disease and its arrival at a point where by human action and will, it could be abolished. The author beyond doubt qualifies to become straightway adopted as a leprologist, because his studies have been thorough, and his insight and sympathy are such as to be welcomed by the leprologist on the field. JOUBERT the French philosopher said 'make truth lovely and do not try to arm her: mankind will be less inclined to contend with her.' PATRICK FEENY has made truth lovely, and his book should be in the hands of everybody.

Besides making truth lovely, the author has a sardonic and humorous touch which is very refreshing and makes the book most readable. Every working leprologist will agree with him that superstitions and misconceptions about leprosy have been the chief obstacles to progress towards its human treatment and eventual eradication, and when he hints that the supreme exemplar in dealing with leprosy is our Lord, who without wasting time on disquisitions on its supposed dependence on sin, or on its supposed hyperinfectivity, acted in the most thoroughly practical (and at the same time spiritual) manner by healing the leprosy patient, and *that without delay*. This is the truth of leprosy at its loveliest, and every leprologist strives to follow it.

The author traces the history of leprosy in Africa, Egypt, Syria, Israel, Phoenicia, Persia, Greece and Rome, and its invasion of Europe and Britain, and the survival of the disease in Norway and a few other European countries. He describes the inspiring work of the 'father of leprology' (DANIELSSEN) and of the great ARMAUER HANSEN who first discovered the bacillus. The inspiration derived from them in Norway led on to enlightened measures for the control and eradication of the disease in recent times in Norway, which were successful.

The specific ideas in Chinese thought about leprosy included that of causal 'little insects', which may be said to foreshadow the discovery by HANSEN of the bacilli in 1874.

The author reports on the unfortunate controversy between HANSEN (for bacillary agency) and DANIELSSEN (for heredity). He well describes the heroic witness of Father Damien in Molokai from 1873 to his death as a leprosy patient in 1931, and the carrying on of his work by DUTTON and the Franciscan Sisters. The absorbing story is told of WELLESLEY BAILEY in India, which led to the foundation of the Mission to Lepers, and of Sir Leonard Rogers who founded the British Leprosy Relief Association. Both these organizations have many years of faithful service behind them. The International Leprosy Association arose in 1934 from the Leonard Wood Memorial. The first international leprosy congress was held in Berlin in 1897, and the eighth was recently held in Rio de Janeiro in September 1963.

The author traces the great modern improvement in therapy from the sulphone drug first used in Carville, USA, in 1943 by JOHANSEN and FAGET and describes the great part played in development of DDS (the

now standard form of the sulphone drug) by COCHRANE, LOWE, MUIR, RYRIE, DAVEY, MOLESWORTH, and others. He recounts the magnificent journalistic achievement by a patient at Carville, STANLEY STEIN, in editing the *Star* for many years, and describes his advocacy of abolition of the words 'leper' and 'leprosy'. The author describes the beneficial revolution brought about by PROFESSOR BRAND of Vellore and his co-workers, by his introduction of systematic surgical thinking and practice plus physiotherapy and rehabilitation, into the regular care of the leprosy patient.

In conclusion the author advocates the humanizing of public attitudes towards the leprosy patient, and the re-integration of the disease into the main stream of medicine by the doctors.