

Book Reviews

Précis de Léprologie. Clinique et Therapeutique de la Lèpre en Afrique Noire, by J. LANGUILLON and A. CARAYON. Masson & Cie, 120 Boulevard Saint-Germain, Paris VIe, France, 1969. xv+392 pages. Price: F70.

We extend a sincere welcome to this book, and have no hesitation in recommending it to our French-speaking readers. Those whose French is rusty could with profit study the photographs and try to follow the lucid language of the clinical descriptions.

The first part of the book bears the impress of General Languillon's extensive and accurate clinical observations and his vast experience not only in the conduct of chemotherapeutic trials but also in the day-to-day management of a wide variety of types of leprosy. The section on the long-acting sulphonamides is particularly good, and the "before-and-after" photographs confirm this author's excellent opinion of some of these promising drugs. While thalidomide comes in for mention, we miss all reference to the considerable amount of investigation of the riminophenazine derivative, Lampren (B 663).

The surgical sections show the wide range and experience of the surgical partner in this production, General Carayon. With clarity of exposition and detailed practical instructions, he adorns the theme and makes difficult surgical procedures appear straightforward, if not simple.

While most of the categorical statements on classifications are unexceptional, it is perhaps not out of place to indicate that low-resistant tuberculoid leprosy is not the same as "*lésions tuberculoïdes réactionelles*", and there is some confusion over the "immune areas" of borderline leprosy and the regions of skin that are but rarely invaded by leprosy lesions. Indeterminate leprosy, according to Languillon, could include a greater variety and range of lesions than many practising leprologists would admit. Painstaking and prolonged examination of serial sections of early tuberculoid lesions and indeterminate lesions will always disclose some acid-fast organisms, or some

pathognomonic histological feature. Some of the abbreviations are subject to misprints, e.g. TBI should be TB 1. Some proper names are misspelt, and the quotations in English contain several errors.

However, these are small points when the excellent layout and the first-class photographic reproductions are considered in the light of an admirable text. We wish it a ready sale among our French-speaking colleagues, and dare to express the hope that our English friends might find it a salutary exercise to read what has been done elsewhere before venturing to publish their "new" findings.

Précis de Léprologie, by PIERRE HARTE. Oeuvres Hospitalières Françaises de l'Ordre de Malte, 52bis, rue de Monceau, Paris VIII, 1969. 252 pages+73 black and white photographs. Special price for doctors: F45.

This well-produced and superbly illustrated handbook testifies to the dermatological background of its author, one-time consultant leprologist to the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and well known to successive generations of students at the Paris Faculty of Medicine. The clinical sections are particularly well done, as is to be expected, and the detailed—even graphic—descriptions of the wide range of cutaneous lesions encountered, particularly in the Far East, have never been bettered.

The volume would have been greatly improved by removing typographical inconsistencies (e.g. B.H., mycobacterium leprae, *mycobacterium leprae*, M. Leprae, MYCOBACTERIUM LEPRAE, etc., etc.), by critical revision, and by careful proof-reading. The supplements, consisting of lists of periodicals, Associations, and principal leprosaria, unfortunately contain more than a few entries that are inaccurate or out-of-date, indicating the difficulties inherent in this kind of comprehensive compilation.

These blemishes, however, do not detract greatly from the value of the clinical observations and the practical advice that stand out on every page.