

News and Notes

PERSONAL

Award of the C.M.G. to Dr R. J. W. Rees

It is with the greatest of pleasure that we record our congratulations to Dr R. J. W. Rees on the award of the C.M.G. in the recent Honours List. Known perhaps best to readers of *Leprosy Review* as Vice-Chairman of the Editorial Board and Chairman of the Medical Advisory Board of LEPROA, Dr Rees' main professional contributions to medical and scientific research on leprosy have been based on his laboratory work at the National Institute for Medical Research, Mill Hill, London. Much of this work is now closely linked to the WHO Special Programme of research in immunology (IMMLEP) and the therapy of leprosy (THELEP). The value of his own published work is equalled only by the widely-spread and outstandingly effective influence he has in supporting and encouraging leprosy research in this country and abroad. In congratulating him, we wish Dr Rees every possible success — and for many years to come — in an increasingly interesting field of research, to which he has already contributed so much.

A. C. McDOUGALL

LEPROA-SYMPOSIUM, AMSTERDAM, 25 NOVEMBER 1978; THE GASTMANN WICHERS FOUNDATION

Following the XI International Leprosy Congress in Mexico, Professor A. H. Klokke of the Dermatologische Kliniek, Academisch Ziekenhuis, Groningen, The Netherlands, organized a Seminar in Amsterdam, at which invited delegates from the Mexico Congress spoke on various aspects of leprosy. Following introductory speeches by Professors Klokke and Zuidema, the programme was as follows:

- (1) *Microbiology*; P. Draper, the National Institute for Medical Research, Mill Hill, London.
- (2) *The significance of nasal mucosal changes*; C. J. G. Chacko, Schieffelin Leprosy Research and Training Centre, Karigiri, India.
- (3) *Clinical aspects*; the intermediate zone of the spectrum; A. C. McDougall, the Slade Hospital, Headington, Oxford.
- (4) *Immunology*; W. R. Faber, Universiteit van Amsterdam, Afdeling Dermatologie, Amsterdam.
- (5) *Therapy*; M. F. R. Waters, the National Institute for Medical Research, Mill Hill, London.
- (6) *Surgery and rehabilitation*; J. van Droogenbroek, All Africa Leprosy and Rehabilitation Training Centre, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The one-day Seminar was attended by about 200 people, approximately 50 of whom were senior-year medical students. The topics stimulated a number of interesting questions and comments from the floor. Amongst these, Dr D. L. Leiker (The Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam) suggested “that in the matter of drug treatment of leprosy patients, the time had come to consider much shorter, well-supervised courses of drug combinations, followed by stopping treatment altogether, as in tuberculosis. This would significantly lighten the burden on the patient and the health services. Such a course would necessarily mean accepting a percentage of relapses, but the relapse rate might not be much worse than it is at present due to the high rate of defaulting patients. Moreover, in case of relapse, treatment could be resumed with the same drugs, since drug resistance is unlikely to develop after treatment with drug combinations for limited periods of time”.

[This comment from a very experienced observer is clearly one of potentially great importance to the future of leprosy control. It is hoped that it will be examined and discussed at length in a future number of *Leprosy Review*. Editor.]