

## Book Reviews

### ***Manual for field treatment of leprosy reactions. Second revised version***

As nerve damage is the most important cause of deformity and disability in leprosy, early and adequate treatment of nerve reactions is essential, and ALERT produced in April 1987 a standardized scheme for diagnosis and treatment in field clinics (where reactions are usually first seen), which was found 'feasible and fairly successful'. The Director of Leprosy Control states in the Preface that this manual, although applicable in Ethiopia, is not intended to be an authoritative document for general use, and he would welcome comments from leprosy workers in other countries.

The pages in this manual cover all the problems associated with leprosy reactions as observed in field clinics, and basing treatment on the use of prednisolone alone in reversal reaction (RR) and on prednisolone combined with clofazimine in ENL reaction. Every possible eventuality has been covered, and detailed advice is given to clinic supervisors and to health assistants on routine steps to take on recording their findings, on when to admit to hospital, on initiating and supervising treatment in field clinics, and on follow-up care. It is emphasized that all these aspects included in the manual are routinely taught in seminars.

Appendices include advice on the treatment of some common conditions not related to leprosy, on the diagnosis of tuberculosis, and on ophthalmic complications of leprosy.

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Published by ALERT, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 1989. 40 pp.

### ***A history of leprosy in Tanzania. Knud Balslev***

The author, a leprologist who worked in Tanzania from 1970 to 1986, has performed a valuable service in producing this account of the history of leprosy in that country. He covers four periods: pre-colonial times dating from 1888 when the first attempt at leprosy work was made by the French Holy Ghost Mission; the period when the country was German East Africa, 1891–1914; when it was Tanganyika Territory under British administration 1914–1961; and the post-independence period from 1961, when the name was finally changed to Tanzania.

The number of leprosy cases remained stable up to 1950, but there was an explosive increase in the 1950's from 4,468 in 1950 to 28,727 in 1958, and a further rapid increase from 28,289 in 1962 to 64,170 in 1968, after which the numbers dropped to 31,659 by 1977. The author clearly illustrates the co-operation between Government and missions in leprosy treatment and control, and highlights the important work of Dr James Ross Innes between 1947 and 1953, and of Dr Harold W. Wheate between 1956 and 1972. He describes the founding of the National Leprosy Advisory and Co-ordinating Committee (NLACC) in 1967, the East African Leprosy Association in 1970, and the National Tuberculosis and Leprosy Programme in 1977 which instituted treatment of both diseases at every medical unit in the country, notably the rural dispensaries.

An Appendix contains the names and locations of leprosy institutions and out-patient control schemes, together with a useful map.

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