

BOOK REVIEWS

Chaudhury, D. S., ed. *Teaching Guide for Paramedical Workers in Leprosy. Vol. II.* Calcutta, India: Greater Calcutta Leprosy Treatment & Health Education Scheme, 1982, 94 pp. U.S.\$3.00.

In a recent address, Dr. H. T. Mahler, Director General of the World Health Organization, emphasized that "Health workers of various kinds have to be trained so that they are socially attuned to the needs of the people they are to serve, and technically equipped to help these people understand what health is all about, and to provide them the care they need, when they need it, and where they need it." In an accompanying presentation, Professor Michel Lechat, President, International Leprosy Association, reiterated the same concept by pointing out that "Hansen's disease (leprosy) should therefore be recognized as one priority among others. We must try to integrate our control effort with the development of primary health care, insofar as it is possible, practicable, and does not jeopardize prospects of success. In countries where control is well organized while general health care is rudimentary, specialized services for Hansen's disease should serve as a model and be used as a spearhead to develop basic health services for the whole population."

These sentiments provide an excellent rationale for the recent publication, *Teaching Guide for Paramedical Workers in Leprosy, Volume II*. Published in May, 1982, by the Greater Calcutta Leprosy Treatment and Health Education Scheme under a grant by the German Leprosy Relief Association, and edited by Dr. D. S. Chaudhury. This 94 page volume provides basic information about common communicable and degenerative disease, principles of public health, first aid, nutrition, and basic anatomy and physiology. The final chapter is an adaptation of the well-known publication by P. J. Neville, *A Guide to Health Education in Leprosy*. Planning of the book was done in accordance with a recommended syllabus of the Government of India, and includes an Introduction by Dr. B. R. Sengupta, Pro-

fessor of Medicine, Medical College, Calcutta.

This volume, as is also true of its predecessor, provides a good tool for the leprosy teacher. Although general in scope, each volume constitutes an overall framework to plan more specific lesson content. With this in mind, it would then seem desirable to extend its basic effectiveness by producing complementary teaching materials such as 35mm color transparencies for each section and making them available, perhaps even on short term loan from one or more regional leprosy teaching centers. In addition, translations into other languages could be made and exchanged throughout the international leprosy community. This type of intramural sharing among leprosy workers would do much to further increase the teaching effectiveness of this excellent two-volume work by Dr. Chaudhury and his colleagues.—Richard J. O'Connor

Leiker, D. L. *Leprosy in the Light-Skinned.* Copenhagen: Regional Office for Europe of the World Health Organization in cooperation with Food for the Hungry International and The Danish Order of Saint John, 1982.

As was done in a previous work entitled "Leprosy in the Dark Skin" [IJL 49 (1981) p. 116], Dr. Leiker has again prepared a masterful presentation of the bacteriology, epidemiology, diagnosis, classification, reactions, chemotherapy, and complications of leprosy. The clinical illustrations, as is evident from the title, are taken from light-skinned individuals.

The examples used to illustrate the classification of the disease are again excellent and should be of considerable value to leprosy workers accustomed to dealing with dark-skinned patients. The 21-page explanatory booklet is succinct and highly informative.

Once again Dr. Leiker and his colleagues are to be congratulated on this effort. The present series complements the previous slide set of leprosy in the dark skin and both should prove extremely valuable wherever leprosy is being taught.—RCH

Ratledge, C. and Stanford, J., eds. *The Biology of Mycobacteria. Vol. 1: Physiology, Identification and Classification.* London: Academic Press, 1982, 544 pp. £41.20.

Volume 1 of *The Biology of the Mycobacteria* is an excellent treatise on this neglected group of microorganisms. As mentioned in the preface "There have been few books to bring together the most salient information about mycobacteria themselves. It was with this concept in mind, that we began to consider how best this deficiency could be remedied, and we quickly appreciated that such a task could only be undertaken by a team of authors." The contributors, who are experts in various fields of mycobacteria, have indeed very concisely covered a wide range of topics. The subjects range from the anatomy to the molecular biology of mycobacteria.

The first three chapters dealing with envelopes of mycobacteria, its ultrastructure, biosynthesis of lipids and the proposed models concerning the arrangement of lipids in cellular matrix, provide an important information on the unique ability of mycobacteria to survive in a hostile environment, which is an important factor in epidemiological surveillance studies.

The sections on nutrition and metabolism are of particular importance to a student of mycobacteriology in understanding their slow growth rates, which distinguish this group of microorganisms from all other known bacteria. The description of the design and development of specialized techniques required for isolation and cultivation of mycobacteria is one of the most interesting sections of the book.

The authors have very rightly pointed out the limitations in the depth of information available in the chapters dealing with genetics and antimycobacterial agents. Various reasons are cited for this shortcoming, for instance, the difficulties associated with the techniques used to study these organisms which have a low level of metabolic activity. Perhaps the most important reason stems from the fact that there are only a small number of scientists involved in basic research—namely molecular biology of mycobacteria. This will, I am sure, inspire many readers to galvanize a global effort in eliminating "Some of the persistent, dangerous and frightening diseases of man"; namely

leprosy and tuberculosis. To quote the editors' concern, "With diseases of this magnitude, and there are no other bacterial diseases which account for so many deaths and for so much misery and suffering, there must be international concern."

We are eagerly looking forward to the second volume which will deal with immunological and environmental aspects of mycobacteria.—H. K. Prasad

van de Meeberg, M. *Leprosy Relief; New Opportunities. The NSL and its contribution.* Amsterdam; Netherlands Leprosy Relief Association, 1982, 32 pp. Price for the Netherlands is U.S.\$1.25; free of charge abroad (contributions for postage appreciated).

The Netherlands Leprosy Relief Association (NSL) continues to exert a major leadership role within the international leprosy community, with its work extending to more than 50 projects in Asia, Africa, and South America. An excellent description of this remarkable organization is now available as a 32-page brochure written by M. van de Meeberg, a professional journalist and well-known international press correspondent.

This publication is particularly of merit because of the broad framework used to describe the work of NSL, that is, this brochure actually describes leprosy relief as it is organized and implemented throughout the world. As such, it will serve as an excellent mass media distribution mechanism for a variety of organizations and institutions. A variety of color photographs and line illustrations are used and an especially interesting four-page fold-out reproduction of an etching is included mid-way through the brochure, depicting a medieval procession of leprosy patients through the streets of Amsterdam. A detailed breakdown of ILEP expenditures during 1980 is also included.

It is indeed gratifying to see modern-day leprosy work described in such an exemplary manner. As we continue our efforts to integrate leprosy control activities more closely with other primary health care programs, the level of professionalism exemplified by this NSL publication will be increasingly important. Accordingly, NSL deserves a voice of thanks from all of us for its leadership in this regard.—Richard J. O'Connor