the projection screen. The standard slide projector shows them only in miniature.

5. The desirability of a souvenir group photograph, omitted at Madrid evidently because of confusion on the last day. The personal, nonscientific side of these Congresses is not without its value and importance, and a memento of this sort contributes something to that side of the picture.

In all of these negative comments, I trust it will not seem implied that I am actually unhappy about the delightful experiences so thoughtfully prepared for us at Madrid by our generous hosts. Nothing could be further from the case. But as experience teaches, I think it is incumbent on us all to learn from it.

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Preventive Villages in Burma and Thailand

To the Editor:

In the news section of a recent issue of THE JOURNAL [21 (1955) 378-380] there appears, under the title "Preventive Villages in Burma and Thailand," a contribution from Dr. Richard S. Buker. During recent years I have had the opportunity of making a study of leprosy and antileprosy activities in these two countries, and from what I have seen I do not think that these villages can play any preventive role. In Burma, where I was about three years ago, I found that the state authorities responsible for antileprosy work looked upon these villages with great displeasure, since they considered them responsible for spreading the disease in the surrounding parts. I do not know how this work has been progressing in Burma since then.

My visit to Thailand has been more recent, and I would like to summarize briefly what I found there regarding these so-called "preventive villages." There are about 25 such places, usually known as "leprosy villages," mostly in the north of the country. I visited several of them, and found most of them situated only a little away from the village proper, which is known as the "well village"; in practice, the leprosy village and the well village form part of the same village and bear the same name. In these "leprosy villages" are found concentrations of leprosy patients from several places, perhaps even from several provinces, living with healthy members of their families including children, and in some cases the proportion of children is very high. There is free mixing of the populations of the well and the leprosy sections of the villages. In several places the inhabitants of the well village believe that the incidence of leprosy in their village has increased since the coming into existence of the leprosy village, and in some cases efforts were made to remove these places, but the right of occupation of the patients made it impossible.
These leprosy villages no doubt provide an easy method of bringing treatment to groups of patients. However, from what has been said above it will be apparent that they do not provide any isolation of patients, and cannot play any important preventive role. As a matter of fact, when one finds a large number of healthy children being exposed to constant and heavy infection from a large number of infectious patients, a question that comes to one's mind is whether some of these places are not really breeding places for leprosy.

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THE NAME "LEPROSY"

To the Editor:

The issue of The Journal for April-June 1953 contains a letter from Dr. Reidar Melsom in which it is said, at least by inference, that Dr. Armauer Hansen strove to change the name of the ailment in Norway from "Spedalskhet" to "lepra." The statement is literally true, but it is a truth which is apt to be seriously misinterpreted!

The Bible, as translated into Norwegian, has the word "Spedalskhet" where we have the word "leprosy." Hansen wished to avoid confusion between the ailment which he had so precisely defined and the condition described in the Bible. The confusion with the Bible is, therefore, the reason why he wished to have the official name in Norway changed to "lepra," exactly as confusion with the Bible causes us to wish the name of the modern ailment changed to some other name than "leprosy." To one who does not know Norwegian the communication referred to, although correct, might give a very misleading impression.