

BOOK REVIEW

JEANSELME, E. *La Lèpre*. 679 pp., with 259 figures in the text and 14 colored plates. G. Goin & Cie, Paris, 1934.

Professor Jeanselme, an eminent member of that group of European dermatologists to which is due credit for a great deal of our present knowledge of leprosy, has completed a task upon which he has been engaged for several years. The product has appeared as a monumental volume published with aid of the French government. It is stated frankly that the intention was not to make the book a complete compilation, for such a work was already in existence, but that it should be more personal and critical. Nevertheless, the presentation is by no means dogmatic; in fact, it goes in the other direction so far that it is sometimes difficult to ascertain precisely what the author's views are. Most questions are fully covered, with much attention to the literature, so that the book is replete with citations and has many footnote references.

The subject is covered under fifteen headings. The definition of leprosy is the shortest of these, covering but a half page, while the second, a list of words signifying leprosy and related terms, consists of a four-page table which is doubtless the most complete yet compiled, covering forty seven languages. The same assiduity of compilation is seen in the fourth section, on geographic distribution. That section follows one on history which, beginning with the Bible and earlier documents and coming up to the Manila and Bangkok conferences of 1930-1931, reflects the author's recognized historical bent.

First of the technical subjects, naturally, is bacteriology, which is dealt with in a comprehensive chapter—in which, incidentally, the reviewer is credited with an opinion which in fact he has opposed, a sort of error which is very easily made in a work of this sort, though very few have been noticed in this one. The attempts at cultivation, which the author holds have been unsuccessful as regards transplants in series, are summarized by periods. The first of these, before 1900, is properly dismissed very briefly; of the most recent reports those of Wherry (1930) and of Soule and McKinley (1932; see this JOURNAL 1, 53) were overlooked, though one published later (1933) is noted. A few pages on rat leprosy, based largely on the numerous reports of Marchoux and his colleagues, follow a discussion of the attempts to transfer the human infection to animals. Serology is dealt with adequately in view of the unsatisfactory status of the matter, but the section on immunity and allergy reflects the small amount of attention that has been given this aspect of the problem.

"General pathology" is a short chapter, but that entitled "anatomical-clinical study," which covers both the clinical and pathological features, fills more than two hundred pages. In connection with these sections are presented a number of colored plates, most of them representing microscopic specimens, that are exceptionally fine. The last-mentioned chapter is preceded by a long one on etiology, and followed by short ones on the evolution of the disease and prognosis. Diagnosis is given more space, prophylaxis much more, and treatment, the last

chapter is another important one. The author holds that there is no specific remedy but that amelioration, and perhaps cure, is possible by means of a course in which parts are taken by personal hygiene, care of complicating conditions, and special medication, the last referring particularly to chaulmoogra medication.

It is impossible here to indicate more than these few of the author's opinions all of which are entitled to consideration. Unfortunate features of the book are its size and weight—it measures about 33 x 26 cm. over all and weighs 4.2 kilograms—, and the lack of an index—in its place one finds a detailed topical summary which would have been more appropriate for the front of the book. It would be a pity if these features, or its cost, should serve as deterrents to its general use, for it is a really valuable work and should be in all medical libraries and in the hands of all who are doing serious work in leprosy.

—H. W. WADE.