

A NOTE ON LEPROSY IN SWAZILAND *

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As far as Swaziland is concerned, the incidence of leprosy in this region of South Africa is low. The estimated population of this Territory is about 125,000, and it is certain that there are not more than 120 lepers—about one per thousand—and fewer than that of active cases.

There is no local institution for the isolation of cases, and no treatment is given here. For some time our cases were sent to the Pretoria asylum, in the Union of South Africa, but the arrangement was costly and otherwise not wholly satisfactory and the practice has now ceased.

Every active case when seen is advised to adopt local isolation—that is, to have a separate hut and separate utensils of all kinds. However, the attempt is rendered abortive in most cases by the fact that the Swazis have no fear of the disease and do not believe that it is infectious or contagious in any way.

Practically all our cases are of the nerve type, and I have seen only two nodular cases during many years of work in this country. This is in interesting contrast to the conditions in Basutoland where, one understands (Dr. Strachan), the disease is of a fulminating type, and an early case may become highly infective a few months after the first appearance of the first signs.

* This note was supplied by Dr. P. D. Strachan, Contributing Editor for the region, in the form of a letter to him. It is published in the present form by arrangement.—EDITOR.