

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Agents thérapeutiques et remèdes traditionnels contre la lèpre.** By CLAUDE JARDIN, Docteur en Pharmacie, Pharmacien-Commandant des Troupes de Marine. Preface du Docteur P.-A. Laviron. Marseille, Imprimerie Robert, 1961, 422 pp., paper.

As stated by Laviron in the preface, this work is a review of all the reports of treatment to the time of publication; the bibliography is said to contain about 3,500 references. The first 24 pages are devoted to preliminaries, including "Some generalities about leprosy" (illustrated, as is so often the case, by two pictures of particularly advanced cases), and an Introduction, at the head of which is a quotation from Sir Leonard Rogers which seems strangely appropriate for this massive compilation: "Everyone spends his time writing things which others do not have time to read."

The body of the book is divided into three parts: I, Experimental therapy (21 pages); II, Medicaments for leprosy (264 pages); and III, Problems of therapy (42

pages). Part I is divided into three parts (experimental laboratory studies, studies in patients and recent biochemical findings) followed by a 3-page bibliography. Part II is divided into 7 chapters, each with several parts and each with its own bibliography; the first chapter is devoted to chaulmoogra and its derivatives, the second to the sulfones, and the others to a host of other therapeutic substances that have been used. Part III has 4 chapters. The whole is followed by 11 annexes (46 pages), which deal with technics.

Finally, there are two pages of conclusions, and three pages devoted to a resumé and general conclusions.

It can well be understood that this massive compilation took ten years to prepare. It contains so much information—and pertinent information, since there has been so little essential change in the past three years—that it would be most unfortunate if it were to pass unnoticed.—H. W. Wade.

**Alone no Longer.** By STANLEY STEIN, with Lawrence G. Blochman. Foreword by Perry Burgess. New York, Funk & Wagnalls Company, Inc., 1963, 354 pp., \$5.00.

This book, subtitled "The Story of a Man Who Refused to be One of the Living Dead!" is the autobiography of the person who, under his Carville name, has in the past thirty years or so done more than anybody else has ever done to break down in the public mind the superstitions surrounding leprosy and to win for its institutionalized victims recognition as human beings. In the course of his "private war" against the use of the terms "leper" and "leprosy" he has, from the no-longer-so-limited confines of the USPHS Federal Leprosarium at Carville, Louisiana, attained world-wide recognition, and has influenced leprosy legislation of not a few countries.

This has been largely done, directly or indirectly, through the medium of what is now a bimonthly magazine, the *Star*, produced entirely by patients, and through influential friends whose interest was aroused by that publication and its editor. Started in 1931 by Stein and a few others as a small mimeographed product for internal consumption, it died in 1934 because of loss of much of the staff as a consequence of an editorial disagreement with the Catholic chaplain about an article on The Leper Mass. It was started again in 1941, still mimeographed, but by 1944 friends had provided a printing press and accessories, ultimately including a linotype. The remarkable thing is that in the long interval Stein had become completely blind after months of agony, followed by a period of deep depression, but finally he was persuaded to resume editorial work as a therapeutic measure. The *Star* now has a circulation of some 14,000 and goes to 68 foreign countries. The pejorative and harmful word "leper" has now been generally abandoned; "leprosy" has been more difficult.

The success of the *Star* may be attributed at least in part to Stein's remarkable memory; he seems to have total recall. The reviewer was impressed one day when Stein asked his secretary for a certain document. She turned to a filing cabinet on his right. "No, over on this side, the second file," he said, and there she found it. He probably can

remember the name of every person, periodical or publisher to whom he ever, at one time or another, wrote a letter of complaint about the perpetuation of old superstitions, and of the use of "leper."

Born Sydney Levysen in 1899, into the only Jewish family in a small town north of San Antonio, Texas, he was inclined to follow either journalism or the stage as a profession. His father, however, influenced him to enter the School of Pharmacy of the University of Texas—from which he graduated too young to be granted a license—in order to carry on the family business.

In 1919 the first signs of leprosy appeared, and in 1920 it was diagnosed, but in the hands of friendly physicians who gave him chaulmoogra oil he stayed on until 1930. When his condition could no longer be concealed he quietly left with his mother for New York, where regulations were liberal. There, however, he met up with a hostile doctor and finally gave up to the Board of Health.

The only touch of sensationalism in this book is at the outset, presumably for the purpose of fixing the reader's attention. The description of his trip to a Brooklyn hospital with police escort and of the conditions there, and of his train trip with a medical attendant to New Orleans in early 1931, is probably strictly factual. However, if the conditions of the corridors at Carville and of the room to which he was assigned are also factual, the place had changed greatly in the decade since it was taken over by the Federal Government. The reviewer can attest that things were not like that when the Sisters of Charity (St. Vincent de Paul) were fully responsible for running the place—although their regime may have been oppressively "monastic," marked by "exaggerated puritanical authority."

The history of Carville is told from the time of the newspaper agitation that led to its acquisition as the Louisiana Leper Home in 1894, when 7 patients were ensconced in the slave cabins of an abandoned plantation 90 miles upriver from New Orleans. When Stein got there the population of nearly 400—described as a microcosm that horizontally was a cross section of the world's races and nationalities and vertically cut through all social and economic strata—was in general listless and apathetic. Nobody used his correct name, and the admitting Sister expected the author to follow suit—hence Stanley Stein.

Soon he decided to do something about the situation, the principal thing ultimately being the establishment of the *Star*. The body of the book covers the 30-odd years since then, some of them right exciting. Whether or not the *Star* and its editor were responsible for quite as many of the changes and improvements they seem to have been, they certainly were very influential. There are features of this book, telling of instances of delayed or missed diagnoses in government institutions, that should make it required reading for the medical officers of the Armed Forces and of the Veterans Administration; and it should be well worth while for the practicing physicians generally.—H. W. Wade