

BOOK REVIEW

Yawalker, S. J. *Leprosy for Medical Practitioners and Paramedical Workers*. 5th edition. Basle: Ciba-Geigy Limited, 1992. Softbound, 132 pp., color and black and white illustrations. Order from Ciba-Geigy Limited, CH-4002 Basle, Switzerland.

This is the fifth edition of a book first published in 1986 (previous editions were co-authored by the late Dr. R. H. Thangaraj). It has been enlarged from 116 to 132 pages with 176 figures. A notable feature is the large number of very good color photographs. Of the 176 figures, a major proportion are very well done color plates of patients and histopathology. There are also a number of charts and diagrams, such as a chart of the commonly affected nerves and the characteristic deformities.

This is a well written book covering all the basic aspects of leprosy from epidemiology and bacteriology to diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation. The discussions are precise and accurate. The author has had extensive experience in the chemotherapy of leprosy, which is reflected in the rather

detailed discussions of the various drugs. There are even diagrams of the structural formulas of the common antileprosy drugs. The section on differential diagnosis is outstanding, and includes not only dermatologic disorders but also neurologic problems which may be confused with leprosy. There are also good chapters on the eyes, hand and foot care, and rehabilitation.

A number of minor points covered in the book might be debatable, such as the suggestion that clothes and bedding may be a source of infection. This would seem difficult to prove. The lepromatous rates in some parts of Africa are certainly higher than the 2%–5% figure given in this book. It is suggested that dapsone may precipitate reactions or neuritis. I would note that there have also been reports that dapsone may actually do the opposite and suppress reactions in some cases.

Overall this is an attractive, very readable small book which can be recommended for students, practitioners, and others who may need a current and concise handbook on leprosy.—Leo J. Yoder, M.D.