

NEWS and NOTES

This department furnishes information concerning institutions, organizations, and individuals engaged in work on leprosy and other mycobacterial diseases, and makes note of scientific meetings and other matters of interest.

India. *Dr. Vomstein gets national award.* The President of India Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma presented the National Award for the welfare of the handicapped to Dr. Elisabeth Vomstein, Secretary and Medical Superintendent of Leprosy Relief Rural Center, Salem, in public recognition of the outstanding performance as employer of handicapped persons. The National Award was bestowed on Dr. Vomstein at the Rashtrapati Bhavan on the occasion of World Disabled Day on 21 March 1993.

Leprosy Relief Rural Center, Chettipatty, Salem, also received two awards from the Government of Tamil Nadu on the occasion of World Disabled Day. These awards were for outstanding employer for having employed a greater number of physically handicapped persons and a greater number of mentally retarded persons. This award for the Leprosy Relief Rural Center, Salem, was received by Dr. Elisabeth Vomstein.

The Leprosy Relief Rural Center was founded in 1956 by the Bishop of Salem and after a very difficult start, the Center was recognized by the Government of Tamil Nadu and the Government of India. The Center takes care of a population of 5 lakhs. Until today 35,000 leprosy patients have been attended to. The Center is comprised of a fully equipped 90-bed hospital. Two years ago a tuberculosis project as well as a children's program for the physically handicapped were started.

Dr. Vomstein, born in 1916 in Germany, studied medicine in Freiburg and decided already in her childhood to dedicate her life to leprosy work. She came to India with that perspective in 1960 and since January 1961 she has been in charge as Medical Director of the Leprosy Relief Rural Center. Dr. Vomstein had been decorated by the German Federal President with the Commander's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany.—Indian J. Lepr. 65 (1993) 529–530

Nepal. *1992–1993 Annual Report of the Leprosy Control Project.* This is a very well done account of the work underway in leprosy control in the Western and Mid-Western Regions of Nepal. Of particular interest is the experience in implementing multi-drug therapy (MDT).

MDT was introduced in the International Nepal Fellowship Leprosy Control Project in 1982. Since that time there has been a steady decline in the registered prevalence rates (from 2.2/1000 population in 1982 to 0.73/1000 in 1993). Despite a cumulative MDT coverage of approximately 93% and a relapse rate after MDT of 0.05/100 person-years of observation in 1993, new case detection rates have remained the same (2.8/10,000 population in 1982 to 2.5/10,000 population in 1993). While the true incidence rate may differ from the new case detection rate for many reasons, there is no evidence that MDT has impacted on the transmission of leprosy in these areas of Nepal.—RCH

The Netherlands. *New publications on ocular leprosy.* Over the last months several materials on ocular leprosy have been newly developed or reprinted (see listing below):

TALMILEP produced two training booklets written by Paul Courtright and Susan Lewallen entitled: "Guide to Ocular Leprosy for Health Workers: A Training Manual for Eye Care in Leprosy." Singapore etc., World Scientific, 1993, 46 pages. ISBN 981-02-1328-X, free of charge. (Available from TLMI, for address see below).

Written in simple English with illustrations, this booklet provides a step-by-step approach to eye care for middle level health workers. Contents include a list of tasks such as vision screening, how to recognize and treat or refer ocular complications, and some useful questions and answers.

"Training Health Workers to Recognise, Treat, Refer and Educate Patients about Oc-

ular Leprosy." Singapore etc., World Scientific, 1993, 52 pages. ISBN 981-02-1329-8, £1.00. (Available from TLMI, for address see below).

Accompanying training manual to above-named booklet. This manual contains material for a 5-day course on ocular leprosy and a list of tasks for health workers, course teaching objectives, pre- and post-tests, teaching methods and a suggested course schedule.

TALMILEP also produced a third revised version of "Care of the Eye in Hansen's Disease" by Margaret Brand. Brentford, The Leprosy Mission International, 1993, 40 pages. ISBN 0-902731-36-X, free of charge.

This 40-page booklet deals with the management of eye complications in leprosy, paying special attention to corneal sensation.

You can order these publications from: Teaching & Learning Materials, The Leprosy Mission International, 80 Windmill Road, Brentford, Middlesex TW8 0QH, U.K.

NSL/INFOLEP has produced two slide series and a video film on ocular leprosy developed by Margreet Hogeweg:

"Ocular Complications in Leprosy. Africa." Series of 24 slides, accompanied by a booklet of 18 pages. Amsterdam, NSL-INFOLEP, 1993, free of charge.

"Ocular Complications in Leprosy. Asia." Series of 24 slides, accompanied by a booklet of 18 pages. Amsterdam, NSL-INFOLEP, 1993, free of charge.

Both series illustrate the common eye complications in leprosy. The booklet emphasizes systematic, step-by-step diagnosis and gives guidelines for treatment. The slides feature African and Asian patients, respectively. They are meant to help teachers in their lessons on ocular leprosy and for self-teaching for leprosy field staff, eye nurses, medical students and ophthalmologists in training.

"Lagophthalmos and Simple Lid Surgery in Leprosy." Video film, 14 minutes, VHS/PAL, English. Amsterdam, NSL, 1993. Target group: leprosy field staff, US\$20.00. This video features several patients with lagophthalmos. It focuses on the commonest cause of lagophthalmos: reversal reaction in patients with facial patches. It then shows the

dangers of lagophthalmos for the eye: exposure keratitis and corneal ulcer. It covers the treatment of recent lagophthalmos by systemic steroids and blinking exercises, and the importance of sunglasses for protection in longstanding lagophthalmos. Finally it shows the simplest type of lid surgery in lagophthalmos, temporal tarsorrhaphy, and the results of surgery after 3 months.

The slide series and video film are available from The Netherlands Leprosy Relief Association (NSL), INFOLEP Leprosy Information Services, Wibautstr. 135, 1097 DN Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

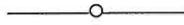
The Study Aid Foundation Saint-Lazare (SLSL) reprinted its poster titled "Dangers to the Eye in Leprosy." Format A1, in color, available free of charge from SLSL, % NSL, Wibautstr. 135, 1097 DN Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

U.K. Robert Cochrane Fund for Leprosy. The Fund, in memory of the great leprologist Robert Cochrane, is administered by the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene. It is used to finance up to three travel fellowships each year, to a maximum value of £1000 each. The Fund will support travel for: a) leprosy workers who need to obtain practical training in field work or in research and b) experienced leprologists to provide practical training in a developing country. There is no restriction on the country of origin or destination providing the above requirements are fulfilled.

Application forms are available directly from the Society and completed forms must be received at least 6 months ahead of the proposed visit. All applications must be sponsored by a suitable representative of the applicant's employer or study center, and agreed by the host organization. A two-page report on the travel/study should be submitted to the Society within 1 month of the recipient's return. For details contact: Royal Society of Tropical Medicine, Manson House, 26 Portland Place, London W1N 4EY, U.K.—ilep flash 1 (1994) 3

U.S.A. 34th Interscience Conference to be held. The 34th Interscience Conference on Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy will be held 2–5 October 1994 in Orlando, Florida. For details contact: Meetings Department, American Society for Microbi-

ology, 1325 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20005-4171, U.S.A.



Damien-Dutton Society celebrates 50 years. The Damien-Dutton Society for Leprosy Aid, Inc., celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. Begun in 1944 by then S/Sgt. Howard Crouch, the membership extends across most of the U.S.A. and includes Canada and Mexico.

The big event, locally, will be in September, on the 24th, with a Mass of Thanksgiving, 10 A.M., at St. Peter's, New Brunswick, N.J., where the Society began in 1944. His Excellency, the Most Rev. John Reiss, D.D., Bishop of Trenton, will be the main celebrant of the Mass, with a large number of concelebrants. The homilist will be His Excellency, the Most Rev. John G. Nolan, D.D., Aux. Bishop of the Military Ordinate of the U.S.A.

Sister Elizabeth Parente, M.P.F., composer and well-known Music Director, will be in charge of the musical program, both

for the mass and for the luncheon that follows. The choir, Our Lady of the Mountains, Schooley's Mt., N.J., is led by Judith Consentino with Elizabeth Angillette at the organ.

The luncheon, to be held in the Nelson Dining Hall, Cook College Campus, Rutgers University, will be highlighted by artists from the opera and concert stage, including Carmela Altamura and daughter, Christina. Also performing will be Bettyann Papcun Bowlby who has appeared many times at musicals and events sponsored by the Society.—From Damien-Dutton Special edition of the Call

Vietnam. *International Symposium to be held in Hanoi.* The Year of Louis Pasteur International Symposium on Epidemiology and Public Health will be held in Hanoi from 28 February until 2 March 1995. The Symposium is organized by the Institut Pasteur, the National Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology of Hanoi, and UNESCO. For details, contact Prof. J. L. Durosoir, Institut Pasteur, 28 Rue du Dr. Roux, 75724 Paris 15, France. Tel = 33-1-45-68-81-50; Fax = 33-1-45-68-89-52.