

Book Review

Handbook of Leprosy, W. H. Jopling, 2nd Edn, William Heinemann Medical Books Ltd., London, 1978, pp. 116 Price £ 3.75.

It was a pleasure to go through the second edition of the "Hand Book on Leprosy" by Dr. W. H. Jopling. This pleasant task was given to me by Dr. Rachael Mathai, to review this book for Indian Journal of Dermatology and Venereology and Leprology.

This small hand book comprising of 116 pages apart from appendices is a beautifully written work which gives latest and complete information about leprosy as is known today. The text is brief and yet complete. Useful both to those medical men who want to know more about leprosy and to those who are involved in teaching or training about this disease. The precise descriptions in each chapter are so well written that one could hardly think that anything further could be added for a short book of this nature. Starting from definitions epidemiology and world distribution given in chapter I, the text gives information in each chapter on salient points which should be known by all who are involved in any manner to deal with this malady. The details about diagnosis are very explicit and easy to follow. The chapter on Immunological Concept have been so simplified and yet so complete to contain all main points pertaining to their application to the disease. The attempt to further persue this has been given by drawing the attention of the reader to appropriate literature. Similarly in the chapters on Management and Prevention of the disease, important points have been highlighted with fullest technical detail and practical approach of every problem that is likely to arise during the course of the disease.

The book in general conforms to easy reading and assisted by figures, tables, photographic plates which if they were more than their present size could have given still better depiction of the manifestations in various forms, yet perhaps this was not possible considering the size and purpose of the book to serve as a hand book. The plates and figures are representatives of almost all manifestations met with in this disease. The references are very complete and the chapters on glossary further adds to acquaint even non-medical or para medical workers to understand the technical problems most relevant to the disease.

The author Dr. Jopling is renowned for his work in the field of leprosy and this book from his pen, I am sure, will be very popular and well received by scientists, teachers, and workers engaged in leprosy, as a standard and well documented contribution to literature. The author has been very thoughtful not only to give the information on all aspects of the disease supplemented by his own experience, but also to point out to the reader the addresses of the manufacturers and the firms from where things could be obtained to help them in their pursuits. The price of the book is slightly high for some sections and students of developing countries yet perhaps the treasure of information, the paper and the coloured photographic plates could not make it cheaper than that. The book is bound to be well received.

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