

own name: "leprosy" is a word "... to be used with caution, since it tends to have a socio-historical, in addition to a medical connotation" (XI International Leprosy Congress, Workshop on Human Aspects in the Treatment of Leprosy Patients, Mexico City, 1978).

The fact is that when it comes to the point, that is, "leprosy," not "roses," Shakespeare knew very well what that meant: "Will knit and break religions, bless the accurs'd; make the hoar leprosy ador'd; place thieves and give them title, knee and approbation" (*Timon of Athens*, Act IV, Sc. III, line 34). "Be general leprosy! Breath infect breath, that their society, as their friendship, may be merely poison!" (*Timon of Athens*, Act IV, Sc. I, line 30).

McGeoch⁽⁴⁾ clarifies: "It is well to point out here that Shakespeare frequently used the words leprosy, serpigo, tetter, itch, blain and pox in a non-specific sense in the form of a curse or deprecatory figure of speech": "And in the porches of mine ears did pour the leperous distilment; whose effect holds such an enmity with blood of man" (*Hamlet*, Act I, Sc. V, line 61).

It is clear, therefore, that Shakespeare would have objected to the repeated misuse of his name to justify the continued "cursing and deprecating" of hanseniasis patients with the "hoar leprosy" of the 16th century.

I am hopeful that the new terminological policy of the U.S. Public Health Service becomes adopted by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and by all other countries whose educational and preventive programs continue to be hindered by the horrifying label "leprosy," "the most negative of all medical terms" ⁽⁶⁾.

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The "Ex Libris" of Dr. N. A. Torshujev

TO THE EDITOR:

In Leviticus 13, verse 45, the Old Testament gives clear instructions that a "leper" must make himself recognized and must warn the healthy of his approach. The unfounded fear and prejudice has remained with us and will probably persist long after the disease is eradicated from our planet. It was, however, officially practiced in the Middle Ages when leprosy sufferers were obliged by law or long practice to carry a horn, clapper, or bell to signal their presence and to solicit alms; a Belgian dictionary of the 15th century gives the definition "in-

strumentum leprosum cum tribus Lobulis cuius sonitu excitantur homines ad beneficiendum eis"! ⁽³⁾.

Leprosy had a great impact on medieval Christian art and literature and, indeed, the clapper was the quasi-official attribute of the "lepers" in medieval paintings, engravings, statues, stained glass windows, and in beautiful miniatures of cherished prayer books. In the *Codex Practicus* of Theoderich, Bishop of Burgundy, on a miniature by Vincent de Beauvais, in the famous *Evangelarium* of Geilers (Strassburg 1515), we see the different forms of clappers. Not a single orig-



FIG. 1. "Leper" with clapper, 16th century; Costume Library, Berlin, Germany.

inal clapper remained for posterity since they were buried with the "lepers," hidden, or destroyed⁽³⁾.

Lipperheide's Costume Library in Berlin kept a collection of drawings of the clothes, hats, outfits, horns, clappers, and bells stigmatizing the leprosy sufferers (Fig. 1). The iconography of leprosy is a wealth of knowledge on this fascinating subject, the history of medicine, and leprosy in particular. The German Leprosy Relief Association organized a prized exhibition in Munich in 1982, presenting a voluminous collection of the iconography of leprosy⁽³⁾.

The "leper with clapper" even appeared on a colorful stamp issued in 1961 by Monaco, honoring the role played by the "Ordre Souverain de Malte" in the fight against leprosy (Fig. 2). The stamp shows a "leper" in typical clothing with a clapper in his hand on the street of a medieval town. The illustration was certainly taken, if not copied,



FIG. 2. "Leper" with clapper, 1961 postage stamp, Monaco.

from a 17th century print exhibited in the Berlin Costume Library (Fig. 1).

The "Ex Libris" labels are destined to mark the name of the books' owner. Interestingly, they usually show the profession of the proprietor of the book. Great artists of the 16th century, Albrecht Dürer, Lucas Cranach and Hans Holbein, were among the many masters of the "Ex Libris" art. To my knowledge, there is only one "Ex Libris" ever printed which shows a "leper" with a clapper. It was the opus of the Russian artist L. A. Litosenko, and it was commissioned by Dr. N. A. Torshujev (Fig. 3). The "Ex Libris" clearly shows the profession of the owner. Dr. Torshujev was a professor of dermatology of the medical school in Rostov on the Don River in the U.S.S.R. He was a recognized expert on leprosy and syphilis, a prolific writer (see the *Int. J. Lepr.* 1965-1973), and a most efficient scientist, responsible for leprosy control and the fight against venereal diseases in his country. His "Ex Libris" shows, in front of Gothic medieval buildings, a "leper" with a clapper and a prostitute, both in their "uniforms" as known from the iconography and history of leprosy, syphilis, and prostitution. Those



FIG. 3. "Ex Libris" of Dr. Torshujev.

who know Dr. Torshujev can recognize with certainty that both were inspired by the illustration from the Berlin Costume Library.

The literature of "Ex Libris" illustrations is richly documented and catalogued by collectors. The medical profession is leading in this graphic art (2,4). "In arte voluptas"

(pleasure in arts), wrote G. Semmell, a doctor in the village of Zagorsk, on his "Ex Libris." The largest collection of "Ex Libris" labels was that of Dr. E. Alexandrovic, an army doctor in Leningrad. He left his collection of 26,800 "Ex Libris" labels to the Academy of Science in 1958. The Academy of Fine Arts in Leningrad kept 2500 "Ex Libris" labels, a collection of Dr. E. Sokolovsky (1). Studying the "Ex Libris" of hundreds of physicians, each of them reflects the special interest of the owner in the field of medical sciences. The "Ex Libris" of Dr. Torshujev merits our special attention.

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Osler on Leprosy

TO THE EDITOR:

Much of Sir William Osler's medical practice (1) and many long sections of his famous textbook (5,6) dealt with illnesses such as typhoid, tuberculosis, malaria and parasitic diseases, which have now largely been banished to the care of physicians in tropical developing countries. In spite of this, it is surprising to find that Osler wrote on leprosy (7-10) since he states that "One of the most striking differences between diseases of this continent and those of Asia or Africa is the absence of leprosy" (9).

There were only a few hundred patients with leprosy in North America in Osler's time. He gives their distribution as follows:

"In the northern part of New Brunswick leprosy has existed in a couple of counties since the early part of the century. The cases as recognized are segregated in the lazarette at Tracadie . . . Leprosy in Cape Breton has almost died out . . . In British Columbia the disease has been introduced by the Chinese, but . . . there are only eight cases at present in the settlement on Darcy Island . . . Among the Icelandic immigrants in Manitoba there are a few cases . . . to "New Scandinavia," as parts of Minnesota and Wisconsin have been called, the disease was introduced by the immigrant Swedes and Norwegians . . . The disease has not spread . . . In California leprosy has been intro-