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## NEWS

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### WHAT DOES AN AUTHOR'S EDITOR DO?

... "In the medical field most editors are employed by publishers of journals and books, but some work for and with the author, helping to prepare the manuscript for submission to a publisher. These author's editors are members of an emerging profession whose qualifications and work patterns have not yet been clearly defined. . . . A competent author's editor offers an important service to the researcher who must publish. First, he or she can ease the labour of writing readable text. Some authors, I fear, still write longhand, and others (even worse) dictate their thoughts. They often have little time or inclination to make needed revisions once the paper is typed. These doomed efforts can be transmuted by the author's editor into readable scientific prose. Second, the author's editor may in some cases contribute substan-

tially to the clarity and effectiveness of the presentation, the inclusion or exclusion of certain details or supporting materials and the appropriate use of the medical literature. Third, the author's editor can fit the paper into the form required by the target journal so that, irrespective of its scientific merit. It is likely to be reviewed rapidly and fairly. If the paper must be rejected the editor's regret will be genuine. Fourth, if revision is requested, an experienced author's editor is valuable in revising the paper and in writing rebuttals, helping to ensure that the author and the journal editor understand each other at this crucial point." (Reproduced with permission from *Press Digest, Current Contents*®, No. 41, October 4, 1984, p. 17; Copyright by the Institute for Scientific Information® Philadelphia, PA, USA).

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### LEPROSY: BEGINNING OF THE END

... "Neither treatment nor prevention will ever be as effective as the remedy that wiped leprosy out of Europe: prosperity. While no one has yet demonstrated a clear relationship between malnutrition and leprosy, one study at U. Bergen relates increased living standards to the dramatic decline of Norwegian

leprosy from a peak around 1850 to none in 1920. The key feature seems to have been reduced crowding. (Reproduced with permission from: *Press Digest, Current Contents*®, No. 41, October 8, 1984, p. 16; Copyright by the Institute for Scientific Information® Philadelphia, PA, USA).