

Editor's Report

Mr. President, Office-bearers of the I.A.D.V.L. of the year 1982, members and associate members,

Having served one more year on your behalf as editor of the IJDVL, permit me to present to you the annual editorial report for the year 1982-83.

THE JOURNAL

The day-to-day affairs of the journal has gone on in much the same fashion as in the previous years. The struggle with a raw hand which started towards the end of 1981 continued well into 1982. This struggle showed up in the form of belated publication of all issues in the past year. The 6th and last issue is still to come out. My office has not been entirely at fault on this score. State-wide power cuts and personnel shortage had both affected adversely the efficiency of the press which was not able to render satisfactory service. I apologise for the late publications. I feel extremely guilty knowing how so many of you look forward to receiving the journal in time.

We received 95 articles in the year 1982 as against 113 in 1981. The back-log has been mostly cleared. With the publication of the November-December issue the back-log would amount to about 2 months' delay in publication.

We have continued to have the journal prepared in the Vancouver style, otherwise and officially titled, the 'Uniform requirement for manuscript submitted to bio-medical journal'. Perhaps some of you have noticed this aspect of change in the journal. Although the complete change-over took place with the 1st publication of 1982 only, most of our even earlier stipulated requirements for manuscript presentation had been on lines very similar to what has been adopted now. Some of our contributors have taken time to get accustomed to even this minor change. The Vancouver style being logical, acceptable and workable, many prestigious journals have adopted this. It is claimed that 6 years ago there were 2632 possible reference styles. At the meeting in Vancouver, with a single stroke of the pen, the reference style has been reduced to one.

There is nothing new about bad writing. An article under this title recently caught my attention. The lamentable performance of certain high school graduates of an English speaking population during an English proficiency test was mentioned.

Undoubtedly there is a very poor writing ability amongst many of us. The proficiency in a language foreign to us should perhaps be condoned to a certain degree. But I do believe that each contributor must comprehend the instructions to contributors. Less than 5% of manuscripts received are prepared in the required format. From the time of receipt of an

article till it is finally modified to an acceptable form for publication ; on an average the manuscript goes back and forth for a minimum of 2 or 3 times. This is tedious and frustrating to the author. Time, energy and money is wasted in our office. More discipline on the part of all those who wish to contribute is requested for.

During the past year we have also required 3 manuscript copies from all contributors. This has been to enable us to have 2 independent reviewers for each article. This arrangement has worked out more satisfactory than before for work.

Finance

We were not able to get the audited statement of accounts of 1981 ready at the time of the last G. B. meeting in January 1982, since it was held early in the year. The 1981 accounts have been sent to all the members a week ago along with the journal. The final audited statement of account for 1982 is not ready because of delays in bank reconciliation, payment of bills, etc. We hope to have this reach you during the course of the year. In a nut shell, we are able to pull along.

It is over 10 years ago that we in Vellore took over the responsibility of editorial work. We have striven hard to serve the interests of the association through the journal. Our failures and achievements have been your failures and achievements. Looking back over the decade I am grateful for the opportunity of a rich experience we have gained through the shouldering of this responsibility. At the same time the work had been time - consuming. I have not been of late able to give the journal its due share of my time and effort. There is no place for low standard in this competitive world, and I begin to feel that the moment has come for me to relegate this responsibility to more efficient hands. I therefore request the members of the central council to consider relieving me of the duties of the editor as soon as possible.

What can I say about a group of my colleagues in the editorial committee who worked harder than I did? The services of my committee members were readily available for the asking. I am greatly indebted to every one of the members of this advisory board; to those who gave little time and who gave more time. The effort, expertise and knowledge of some of you have pulled me out of impossible situations. I have drawn heavily on your good will. I have nothing better to say to you than a most sincerely felt 'Thank you'.

Dr. Mary Jacob has planned and worked with me at every stage of work related to the journal. To her, my secretary Miss Linda Michael and all my staff in the department at Vellore I owe a great deal. It is with pleasure that I place on record my grateful thanks to them.