

EDITOR'S REPORT - 1979

Mr. Chairman, members of the executive committee and colleagues,

It is my pleasant task again to share with you the activities pertaining to the work of the journal for yet another year through this annual report for the period 1979-80. As I sat at my desk trying to recollect any highlights of the year, I was struck by the routine nature of it all. All the same, since we have been entrusted with this work by you, I am duty-bound to present this report and you in turn just as duty-bound to give it a patient hearing. I shall be brief.

The routines have all gone on and the last of the 6 issues must have reached you at least over a week ago. Although go-slow movements and pen-down strikes were rampant in the country, these did not affect our work in any way. Therefore we have been able to despatch all the issues at reasonably regular intervals.

You may have noticed some changes in the journal. Unquestionably the journal has gained in weight. Perhaps a sign of good health. In fact the journal size had been steadily increasing for the past 3 years. Almost every year there had been some new introduction to the contents beginning with the editorials which have featured from 1976. This has been followed by further new introductions — The self-assessment programme, the current dermatological therapy and such others. In the year 1979, we increased the scientific content of the journal by increasing the number of articles published. Against an average of 72 articles per year in the past, we published 89 during 1979. This has been necessary to clear our big backlog. We continue to lag behind. This backlog is a cause of concern to us and particularly the contributors. Several suggestions have been made to improve this situation. One of these is that we grade the quality of articles as A and B and give preference to those graded A with regard to earlier publication. I am sure this suggestion is acceptable and we hope to give this a trial in 1980.

A few months ago we agreed on a forum to follow with regard to the style of publication known as the Vancouver requirement. This is an internationally used forum which is only marginally different from what is currently followed. These changes have been incorporated into the "instructions to contributors" column of the journal. Kindly make note of this and follow the instructions carefully while preparing your manuscripts.

To the extent that has been possible, we have tried to maintain a certain standard for the journal both in the general get up as well as in the quality of its scientific content. We shall continue to aim better performance with of course your full-hearted cooperation; for the accomplishment of the task will not be mine alone but a total accomplishment of the association which is yourself.

Finance

The financial statement in front of you has not been audited. The accounts for the past year cannot be closed so early since many payments for 1979 are still to come and some bills have not reached us. All the same a glance at the statements as presented reveals that our coffers are empty. We are overtly on the debit side and for the first time in 5 years. The rising cost of paper and the increase in printing and block making charges alone have gone up by Rs. 10,000/- from that of last year. The postal charges have gone up too from 0.35 p to 0.55 p per journal. We have done badly on the credit side as well. Although the proposal to increase the journal contribution by Rs. 5.00 was accepted at the time of the Srinagar conference, this could not be implemented as the decision came too late in the year when more than half the members had already paid in their membership fees. This decision will be put into effect from this year. I hope the members and state branch secretaries have noted the change of membership fee with a journal contribution of Rs. 15/- per year.

This raise in journal contribution, however, as all of you can see, is going to be a drop in the bucket even before the end of this year. From our past experience, money coming in by way of additional advertisement charges is not going to change substantially. The deficit has to be covered by money made available somehow from somewhere. As I have said before I strongly believe that the journal represents one of the very important activities of the association and a good journal should be a matter of prestige to all its members. If we are going to be calculating and stingy, I foresee for the journal the future of an ill-nourished child which will eventually wither and perish; a reflection then of our reticence to spend money where it needs to be spent. I would hate to be associated with that supreme tragedy.

And now I turn to one of my very pleasant duties. I have once again drawn heavily on the time and talents of every member of my committee. It has been a privilege to have them as my guides and work with them at my side. It is with great pleasure that I record my grateful thanks to each one of them. More am I grateful to those of you who did not belong to the committee but of whom I demanded a great deal of help. Help of all sorts—reviewing, editing, contributing, advising and numberless other things. To you also I place on record my appreciation and thanks.

To you, members of the association who have borne with us through another year with your good will and trust, we owe thanks. For failures and shortcomings from our end, our apologies.

I add a very special note of thanks to my office staff at Christian Medical College and Hospital, Vellore, to my printer and his press staff and many others who have toiled in even a small way to get this year's work also to a satisfactory end.

Thank you,

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