

## Manuscripts and This JOURNAL

Reading past editorial pages of this JOURNAL as well as such records as are available indicates that prior editorial experience with the flow of manuscripts to this JOURNAL has essentially followed our experience of the past nine years. This is that the flow tends to rise and fall in unpredictable waves.

During some of the past nine years we inadvertently achieved an excess backlog. This arose primarily from two factors. One was the desire to accommodate as many authors as possible, particularly ILA members. The second reason was inadvertent and beyond our control as best exemplified by the year 1973. That year the Centennial Festschrift, approved by the Board of Directors, was planned as a supplement to one of the regular issues. When this material was well in hand the financial straits of the JOURNAL were such that it was not possible to issue a supplement. Indeed, it became necessary to utilize two regular issues (Nos. 2 & 3) for that effort. That same year the ILA Xth In-

ternational Leprosy Congress also mandated that we publish its proceedings but made no financial arrangements for the cost of the effort. It became necessary to utilize issue No. 4, also of 1973, for this purpose. Thus in 1973, three of our regular issues became unavailable for the regular flow of manuscripts, to the understandable disgruntlement of some authors whose work was delayed in printing.

When the printing of the JOURNAL was moved to Hawaii in 1974, considerable work was undertaken in collaboration with the printers to attempt to improve the printed quality and arrangement of the JOURNAL. Without changing its general style, it became possible to accommodate approximately ten manuscripts per issue instead of the previous eight to nine and still remain within our general quota of about 500 pages per volume. Thus the manuscript backlog has recently been markedly reduced at a time coincident with a periodic manuscript accession

slow down.

In the past 15 years there have been many expert investigators attracted to the study of leprosy and many of them tend to submit their papers to their specialty journals. This has been a healthy trend in bringing understanding and interest in leprosy before a broader scientific audience. The trend, however, presents two difficulties. First, it makes it more difficult for many leprosy workers to gain access to much published material except as it is brought to them through editorial comment or the abstract sections of leprosy journals. Second, it reduces the flow of manuscripts to leprosy journals, including this JOURNAL.

The ILA membership is reminded that their yearly dues are ILA dues and not JOURNAL subscriptions. The subscription rate is higher than the dues. In return for their dues they get the JOURNAL, though in effect the JOURNAL becomes part of the collection agency for the dues.

It can be strongly argued that without the JOURNAL there is no ILA since, meeting only

once in five years, the ILA basically has two functions. These are the production of this JOURNAL which is its organ and the holding of the quinquennial International Leprosy Congresses. Without the JOURNAL it is doubtful that many members would continue membership dues, and thus membership, for the purpose of attending a congress every five years.

ILA members are therefore reminded that both the continuing quality and the future of the JOURNAL is in considerable measure dependent on their manuscript contribution. It is in no way suggested that the JOURNAL has a claim on a major share of their work, but this notice is intended to call attention to those "facts of life" particularly evident to the editorial office, to remind them that this is their JOURNAL and that the JOURNAL is pleased to receive representative works from time to time.

This JOURNAL is now well enough abstracted and referenced (*IJL* 45 [1977] 292) to assure contributors of wide attention.

—EDITOR