

Editorial Transition Completed

With this issue of the JOURNAL, the transition is completed in the editorship from the able and experienced hands of Dr. Skinsnes in Honolulu to the inexperienced (and frequently, of late, trembling) hands of the present Editor at Carville. We have been extremely fortunate in recruiting a most able Assistant Editor, Gary Gordon, with an impressive (almost intimidating) background as a Phi Beta Kappa with degrees in English and philosophy from Columbia University and more recently as a professor of English and technical writing at the university level. Fortunately a man of understanding and patience as well as expertise, we are confident that his gentle exactness will improve the clarity and precision of scientific writing for all of us.

We have also been fortunate in obtaining the services of Allen Press, Inc., Lawrence, Kansas, as the new printer for the JOURNAL. They have a large staff of technically and scientifically expert individuals with extensive experience in scientific publications. Despite being responsible for almost 100 other technical journals, their management team have, to date, shown a remarkable sense of humor in dealing with editorial blunders.

The editorial offices have been installed at the USPHS Hospital, in space rented from the hospital by the JOURNAL, adjacent to the hospital's medical library. We enjoy ready access to the Leprosy Archives, the steady flow of current medical and scientific periodicals, the cooperating library facilities of regional universities, and the services of the National Library of Medicine, all of which are available through the hospital library. These splendid library research facilities make it difficult, but in no way impossible, to fail to keep abreast of current literature. To avoid embarrassing oversights, the Editor would deeply appreciate authors sending reprints or notices of publications which would be appropriate

for inclusion in the Current Literature section of the JOURNAL.

On the advice of more experienced colleagues and in keeping with the spirit of a substantial portion of the membership as expressed in last year's Mexico City Congress, we have undertaken to have every manuscript submitted for publication to the JOURNAL reviewed by at least two independent referees. This process, although at times cumbersome, seems a means of obtaining critical peer review of our work by our scientific colleagues. This process almost certainly will maintain and possibly substantially improve the scientific quality of the JOURNAL. The price we pay in becoming a strictly refereed journal is that more contributions may not be found suitable for publication, resulting in disappointments but hopefully never hurt feelings, and hopefully causing all of us to more critically communicate our findings. We believe that these benefits will outweigh the frustrations of authors' revisions and the expenditure of valuable time and expertise by those whose expert opinions are sought. In order to minimize the delays imposed by the referee system, we are requesting that authors submit additional sets of illustrations (3) so that two can be sent to the reviewers and one set retained at the editorial offices.

In order to meet U.S. postal regulations requiring the JOURNAL to appear promptly each quarter, we were unable to meet printing deadlines for several items because of late receipt of materials from authors. Dr. Convit's opening message to the Congress as President of the International Leprosy Association is included in the editorial section of the present issue. Drs. Monzon and Rassi's abstract, which should have appeared in the Congress issue, is included in the Current Literature section of the present issue. Inadvertently, the Congress issue did not acknowledge the fact that the ex-

cellent photographs of the Congress were provided courtesy of Dr. Fernando Latapí.

With much credit to Dr. Skinsnes and his resourceful assistants, we point with pride to the appearance of 468 pages of the JOURNAL through the June (No. 2) issue during the transition period. Frighteningly, for a new editor, but encouragingly for potential authors, there is currently no backlog of manuscripts for the JOURNAL. Under the new referee system, we pledge at least

prompt editorial action and, hopefully, speedy publication of all original contributions submitted to the JOURNAL. We are hopeful that you, the readers and members of the Association, will make it possible for us to achieve the goal of maintaining the traditional excellence of the JOURNAL by freely and frequently submitting manuscripts, letters, items of news, and editorial suggestions to us.—RCH