

Sine Labore Nihil

For *Pediatric Research*, the appearance of Volume 2 punctuates the end of the first faltering formative year of life. The Journal has demonstrated viability. It has moved to a regular publication schedule, established a position in the biomedical communication network, and attracted and published scholarly scientific contributions. Like all enterprise, this one has progressed only through human agency; the weathering of this decisive period makes appropriate identification of some of those who were instrumental in establishing the Journal.

For almost 10 years a recurrent agenda item at the annual meeting of the Society for Pediatric Research was the need for a research periodical sponsored by the Society. But deliberation led to disillusionment and discussion to frustration when the problems of costs, logistics, and manpower seemed insurmountable. Two developments made reexamination of the issue appropriate: the European community organized a pediatric research society, the European Club for Pediatric Research; and the Congress of the United States established the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, an action which promised to polarize research planning and programming in all the disciplines relating to human developmental biology.

At the meeting of the European Club at Helsinki in 1963, Dr. LYTT GARDNER, Dr. NORMAN KRETCHMER, and the writer recognized a unique opportunity to create a research journal sponsored jointly by the European Club and the American pediatric academic societies. This periodical would fill an important need for trans-Atlantic communication among scientists in the field of pediatrics. After determining that the European Club was generally sympathetic to the proposal, it was agreed to solicit by mail informal opinion of the need for a journal from almost 50 members of the American societies. Dr. GARDNER, who was then President-elect of the Society for Pediatric Research, played a vital role in organizing and facilitating this poll. The results from correspondence were sufficiently encouraging to warrant the next move.

Dr. ROBERT ALDRICH, at that time Director of the NICHD, recognized the special values of a journal not only for pediatric research but also for the newly established Institute and offered his enthusiastic support. At Bethesda in January, 1964, he convened a meeting

attended by representatives of three societies considered potential sponsors of the journal, the American Pediatric Society, the European Club for Pediatric Research and the Society for Pediatric Research. In addition to society officers, he invited past and present editors of the current American pediatric journals, experts in communication, and staff from the National Library of Medicine and the NICHD. A cordial climate conducive to further exploration was established; Dr. ALDRICH gave his personal endorsement to the venture and committed Institute resources to planning.

At first, an informally constituted group met. Ultimately, representatives of the sponsoring societies became an Editorial Planning Committee. In all, over 30 physicians participated in 15 meetings, held alternately in the United States and Europe. Although the primary purposes of the meetings were to establish the need for and study feasibility of a journal, peripheral issues stubbornly recurred. These demanded resolution. Examination of national differences, real and imagined, became as critical as discussions on the review process for manuscripts and the languages to be used in the journal. When national prestige or attitudes were in question, logic did not always prevail; upon more than one occasion many feared that the infant publication would smother under a blanket of nationalism.

To finance planning meetings the NICHD provided initial funds. When these resources were no longer available, Dr. JOSEPH STOKES, Jr. approached Mr. A.N. SPANEL to commit funds from the Playtex Foundation to support the international aspects of journal planning. He gladly acceded to this request. Dr. DANIEL BERGSMAN, Medical Director of the National Foundation, made a short-term grant to facilitate several meetings. At certain critical periods, the resources of the two American societies were mobilized through their respective officers.

Even more important than financial support, however, was the personal encouragement given by key members of the European and American pediatric communities. Professor Ettore Rossi, an enthusiastic internationalist, pleaded the cause of the journal in Europe. His large following in academic medicine and his sensitivity to special national issues qualified him to smooth the road on many occasions. Two other

members of the European Club were energetic protagonists. Both Dr. FABIO SERENI and Professor EMILE GAUTIER had a broad understanding of the European community, knowledge of and interest in research, and familiarity with the American scene. These credentials fitted them for special roles as arbitrators.

Dr. LYTT GARDNER, Dr. ROBERT COOKE and Dr. WALLACE McCRORY, during their tenures as president of the Society for Pediatric Research, worked with imagination and persistence to generate support for the journal within the Society and the American scientific community. Dr. WILLIAM B. WEIL, Jr., Secretary-Treasurer of the Society, an office he held throughout the planning period, worked with commitment, resourcefulness, and energy. His contributions were unique.

The American Pediatric Society, through its officers, participated in all planning meetings. Real endorsement by the Society however, awaited the election of Dr. HATTIE ALEXANDER as president. A perceptive, critical, and analytical mind led her initially to regard the journal with scepticism, but after participation in planning and after reviewing the issues with the Planning Committee, she supported the program with almost missionary zeal. Her year of office came at a critical time and her subtle, gentle diplomacy played no small part in recruiting the cooperation of the American Pediatric Society.

Many others worked quietly and unobtrusively, made key moves when necessary, commanded cooperation, or deftly blunted opposition. The magnitude of this skilfully tendered support will never be generally known.

In addition to those mentioned above, the members of the Editorial Planning Committee, a group that eventually became the first Editorial Board, gave patiently, devotedly, and generously of their time during the prolonged and complex negotiations. Each brought special wisdom to meetings, helped design solutions to problems, and formulated effective compromises to permit the molding of a viable administrative structure. The Planning Committee was fortunate in having the advice of a number of experts in communication. Two professionals with great experience and wisdom made special contributions: Mr. JOSEPH H. KUNEY, Director of Business Operations, American Chemical Society Publications; and Dr. RICHARD H. ORR, Director, Institute for Advancement of Medical Communication.

With the completion of the deliberative phase of planning, a final challenge remained: the financing of

the editorial operation of the journal. The Board was fortunate to enlist the help of a distinguished medical statesman, Dr. E.H. CHRISTOPHERSON, until recently Executive Director of the American Academy of Pediatrics. He convened a committee of American pediatricians to develop funds to subsidize the editorial costs of the journal. The committee was successful in a remarkably short period of time and was able to guarantee 50 % of the operating costs of the editorial office for the first five years. In Europe, Professor J.H.P. JONXIS became the focal point for soliciting and collecting funds. Contributions were received from Austria, Belgium, France, Greece, Italy, The Netherlands, and Switzerland.

At this late stage, a new obstacle arose. Publishers were reluctant to underwrite yet another journal, particularly one in which the subject matter was specialized, the format innovative, the editorial considerations expensive, and the text polylingual. Experience suggested that biomedical periodicals had an average life expectancy of five years, and publishers reported that it took almost that long for a journal to become self-supporting. Despite the uninviting financial risks, Mr. THOMAS KARGER of S. Karger AG, one of the oldest and most successful publishing houses in Europe, finally signed a publishing contract with the Editorial Board. He undertook the venture with imagination, enthusiasm, and courage, fully recognizing the financial risks involved, yet aware also of the unique role that the journal could play in fostering scientific excellence and encouraging international communication and comity. With the signing of a publishing contract, solicitations for manuscripts began, and in March, 1967, after almost 4 years of preparation, the first issue appeared.

Because recall of the past has value in documenting events and acknowledging human effort, this brief historical review seems appropriate. Past efforts, however, are no assurance of future success. Success for *Pediatric Research* will come only through the selfless commitment of its editors to produce a unique medium for communication. They must remain clear in goal, wise in decision, flexible in operation, and broad in vision. The unfolding challenges of research in human developmental biology and the need for communicating results to the scientific community are sufficiently compelling to command dedication and participation by all. *Operibus noscitur.*

CHARLES U. LOWE