

EDITORIAL

ARE NEW BOTTLES FIT FOR OLD WINES?

<http://www.lebanesemedicaljournal.org/articles/67-1/editorial1.pdf>

The Lebanese Medical Journal (LMJ) has a new editorial board. Some members are from the old guard while others are new. The newly assigned team has a hard task of continuing the outstanding job done by its predecessor and fulfilling the vision drawn years ago of making this journal the hub for scientific publications in the region. The Lebanese Medical Journal (since 1948 as *la Revue Médicale Libanaise*) is more than 70 years old. That makes it an old journal indexed in PubMed and Medline since 1951. It is practically one of the rare journals in the Middle East with such a history.

The Lebanese Medical Journal benefited throughout the years of Lebanon's prosperity in the sixties and the beginning of the seventies when our country was the Middle East Switzerland of the East in many domains, especially in medicine and culture. The number of papers published in LMJ journal increased and peaked in 1974 up to 93. It was the highest rate of publication ever recorded in LMJ. While looking at PubMed for the themes of papers published in LMJ at that time, I was pleasantly surprised that critical articles and outstanding authors were included in the "1974 class". One of the authors was Harold Nixon, who was one of the most innovative pediatric surgeons [1]. His main contributions were in anorectal diseases in children, especially Hirschsprung's disease; he published in particular two papers in 1974 on "the present status of Hirschsprung's disease" and "anorectal anomalies." LMJ included not only case reports but many interesting series and original articles, at a time when publishing was not a trend [2,3].

The civil war that ravaged Lebanon between 1975 and 1990, killed not only innocents but also culture and science. Thirty-one papers were published in 1975, none between 1976 and 1979, interrupted by a honeymoon of 22 papers in 1980 to go back to none between 1981 and 1985. Between 1986 and 1991 thirty-two papers were discontinuously published, i.e. roughly six papers per year.

The pace of publication was no more interrupted afterwards and that, thanks to the endeavor and significant efforts of the successive editorial boards that worked "pro bono publico," giving their time and expertise to provide visibility to the LMJ.

LMJ website was created on March 1, 2007, and a direct web submission was meant to be effective. This procedure is going to be reactivated to facilitate the process.

This year, the first issue is a special one on cardiology edited by a colleague from the American University of Beirut, Marwan Refaat, and drafted jointly by many authorities in rhythmology. By the end of this issue, a guideline for practice is published on *Brucella*, by international authorities in this field. In every issue, whenever applicable, we will try to include guidelines and recommendations in each specialty backed by authorities and scientific societies.

The new editorial board is committed to reduce the delay of answering to 5-6 weeks and to publish within the same calendar year papers accepted before July or maximum the following year within the first two issues.

My gratitude goes to Michèle Valligny and Elie Ammar, the production backbone of the journal for years. I sincerely appreciate their effort and their commitment towards the LMJ always done at a very minimal cost with maximal results.

Bottom line: our journal is still alive and doing well.

We are trying to look to the future and to be ambitious. We hope to focus on building a brand-new journal with international exposure and higher visibility. This will require a lot of effort from the whole medical community to fulfill our goal.

Like a vintage, LMJ is a heritage that the whole Lebanese medical community entrusted us. We must thrive on finding a new bottle likely to withstand the test of time and eventually change it, when needed, to preserve the old wine.

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Editor in chief

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1. Spitz L. The history of paediatric surgery in the United Kingdom and the influence of the national health service on its development. *Journal of Pediatric Surgery* 2012; 47 (1): 29-35.
 2. Nixon H. The present status in Hirschsprung's disease. *J Med Liban* 1974; 27 (4): 401-5.
 3. Nixon H. Anorectal anomalies. *J Med Liban* 1974; 27 (4): 407-11.
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