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Editorial

The *Ceylon Medical Journal*, affectionately called the *CMJ* by those who value it, is the leading scientific journal in Sri Lanka, and the oldest surviving medical journal in Australasia. It is the only medical journal in Sri Lanka that is listed in the *Index Medicus*.

The *CMJ* started life way back in 1887 as the organ of the Ceylon Branch of the British Medical Association. The *Indian Medical Gazette*, the only medical journal in India at that time, made the following editorial comment [1], at once fraternal and benedictory, about its fledgling peer.

‘We have received the first two copies of the *Ceylon Medical Journal* which has recently been started under the editorship of Dr. Henry Keegal. It appears that several attempts have been made to establish a medical periodical in Ceylon; but they have ended in failure. This is by no means a rare experience in the East. We have ourselves witnessed the demise of several medical papers, and watched the short and fitful career of others. At the present moment we believe that the *Indian Medical Gazette* is the only medical periodical extant in India. The *Ceylon Medical Journal* is published quarterly. The two numbers which have been sent to us contain much interesting material, both original and selected. We wish our contemporary a long and successful career.’

The editorial wish of the *Indian Medical Gazette* has proved to be incredibly prophetic, and the *CMJ* has fulfilled its wish in abundant measure. Except for a brief period between 1893 and 1904 when it ceased publication, the *CMJ* or its forbear, the *Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the British Medical Association*, has been published without interruption up to the issue that you are now reading. In 1904 it was revived by Albert Chalmers and published under that long title. The journal’s name changed to the *CMJ* in 1954 [2].

Today, we are delighted to inform our readers and friends, that from this issue the journal will be published by the famous medical publisher, Elsevier. We considered it an honour when, from among the hundreds of journals published in our region, we were first approached by Elsevier, prompted apparently by the *CMJ*’s longevity and editorial quality. We have agreed with some pride to become part of their family of journals. The scope of the journal will continue to be broad. We will publish, as before, original research, brief reports, case reports, personal views, perspectives, research letters, book reviews, obituaries and correspondence. Leading articles are usually invited. The journal currently receives fairly regular submissions from non-Sri Lankan authors, and we expect that our partnership with Elsevier will result in these increasing. We are aware that this will increase competition for acceptance. But competition is an important stimulus to enhancing quality.

Our vision is to transform the *CMJ* into the most prestigious and widely subscribed medical journal in the south Asian region. But that will only be the first step towards other developments to come. Elsevier will promote

Editorial

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and market our journal, but the Sri Lanka Medical Association will retain its ownership. Selection of articles for publication, and technical and medical editing will continue to be done by the *CMJ*'s editorial board. The peer review process of the editorial board will be open, as unbiased as we can make it, and fairly stringent [3]. The board is particularly conscious of the need for authors to conform to accepted ethical criteria and criteria for authorship.

As part of their promotional activities Elsevier will make reasonable efforts to gain and maintain coverage of the *CMJ* in appropriate abstracting and indexing services, including the *Science Citation Index*. Achieving *Science Citation Index* recognition would be a major step forward for the *CMJ*, and intending authors will appreciate the need to enhance the quality of their research work and writing.

The partnership between the *CMJ* and Elsevier has the right mix of history, striving to attain high standards and friendly co-operation. All auguries seem propitious, so we have good reasons to back our optimism.

References

1. *Indian Medical Gazette*. 1888; **2**: 49. (Editorial)
2. Uragoda CG. A history of medicine in Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka Medical Association; 1987. Middleway Limited, Colombo 2.
3. *Ceylon Medical Journal* 2003; **3**: 103–5.

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