

# N E R V A L ' s      D I A R Y

## *Le voyageur enthousiaste observe ...*

*Overhead Greenland aboard KL 681 en route to Vancouver and Dermatology 2000. May 28, 1996*

### *An Interview with Our Editor-in-Chief*

It is more than 10 years that J.-H.S. has been at the helm of the *Journal*. There have been profound changes during these years. At the same time the more than one-century-old tradition has been continued [1]. We have the same publisher as one-hundred-odd years ago. There is a real Mr. (Dr.) Karger, who regularly meets with our Editor-in-Chief and discusses matters of his oldest periodical, a cherished brainchild of his ancestor.

A few questions over a glass of champagne may be permitted on this occasion:

**Q:** How do you cope with the double obligations of editor and chairman of a sizable university department? Do you feel compromised in either function?

**A:** No! Sure, private life suffers considerably but being also an editor made me read innumerable manuscripts I would never have cared to look at without this obligation thereby gaining valuable knowledge and experience.

**Q:** Originally the *Journal* was printed in German, then it became trilingual, now it is English. You are the first editor who is not a native speaker of the language of the publication. How do you feel about this?

**A:** No problem. We are not an English journal but one printed in the English language. My own experience and the backing of the publisher guarantees the necessary quality.

**Q:** What about circulation and the origin of readership and authors', respectively?

**A:** We are truly international. Input of authors and readership is from all corners of the world even if the main focus lies in Europe. Circulation has increased markedly. Being the only English-language journal in the field edited in only one small contry – the *Acta derm-venereol.* are edited for a group of countries – we may take pride in having passed the coveted 1.0 mark with our impact factor. A good reflexion of success.

**Q:** Do you intend to step down after 10 years or change the editorial board en bloc, as the *Blue Journal* did for instance some time ago?

**A:** No. Continuity is a favourable feature in my eyes. Moreover, the editorial board is continuously supplemented to bring in new faces.

**Q:** Electronic publishing via Internet as discussed these days, do you think this will be a competition to established print media?

**A:** No. Quality printing as executed so perfectly by Karger, will always have its place and peer review will ensure quality. Both points cannot be met by electronics so far. By the way, the table of contents of every issue of *Dermatology* is available on the World Wide Web about a month before the printed issue is released.

**Q:** Conrad Hauser, a trainee of your department, has been chosen as editor-elect of the *Journal of Investigative Dermatology*, the leading journal in the field. You, your department and 'la dermatologie genevoise' may be congratulated on this fact. Do you expect some in-house competition?

**A:** No. The *JID* is a research journal whereas *Dermatology* is a clinical one. There will be no overlap.

Thank you for these comments. Good luck for the years to come.

### *The Dermatology 2000 Meeting*

It was a good meeting. About 3,000 attendees flocked into Vancouver, from Ecuador to Korea, from Russia to South Africa, from Saudia Arabia to Croatia; everybody seemed to be around. To have *one* plenary session in the mornings but *several* parallel ones during the afternoons seems to catch on. Future meetings are planned in Singapore in 1998, and in Vienna again in the year 2000.

A 30-minute round trip over Vancouver in a small Cessna floating plane together with Georg Stingl displayed the beauties of this natural harbour and concluded my visit to the Canadian West.

1 Karger Centennial Festschrift: Schmeck HM, Jr: 1890–1990 Karger – Turning Medical Progress into Print. Basel, Karger, 1990.