

THE PRESIDENCY, THE ANNUAL MEETING, MEDICAL EDITOR

Problems of Organized Medicine. Founding of Nebraska State Medical Journal. An Editor is "Born." Problems of Medical Journalism. Physicians' Ladies Home Journal.

PROBLEMS OF ORGANIZED MEDICINE

As president of the Nebraska State Medical Association I applied myself to the problems of organized medicine with no thought of provoking a revolution, but with the hope that in some small manner I might be helpful in fostering the better things in medicine.

One of my first official acts was to circularize county society officers, asking for lists of names of such physicians in their respective counties who should, but did not, belong to the organization. In turn I then approached those whose names had been furnished me, presenting in a reproduced typewritten circular letter as best I could the objectives of organized medicine. For some reason the membership at the next annual meeting had increased by 144 over the previous year.

In my annual address I touched principally on the following major subjects: A State Medical Journal; Medical Organization; The Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry; Fee Splitting; Changing Location.

FOUNDING OF NEBRASKA STATE MEDICAL JOURNAL

I made a study of state medical journalism and at the annual meeting (1907) in my address gave the result of my survey of the 16 state medical journals then existing, stressed the need of a state journal and urged that the association look forward to the establishment in the near future of an association-

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owned and conducted State Medical journal. This pronouncement was destined to bear fruit.

At a subsequent annual meeting a proposed By-Law establishing the **Nebraska State Medical Journal** was offered and adopted.



President State Association at 48.

Thus, **The Nebraska State Medical Journal** was established by the House of Delegates with much enthusiasm at the annual meeting in Omaha in the spring of 1916. The first number appeared the following July, with Dr. Irving S. Cutter, then dean of

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the Nebraska University College of Medicine, now dean of Northwestern University College of Medicine, Chicago, as the first editor. The publication board elected by the society, consisted of the three men who had served on the committees that brought



Dr. Irving S. Cutter, Dean of Northwestern University
Medical School.

about the establishment of the *Journal*, Dr. W. O. Bridges, Dr. B. F. Bailey and Dr. F. A. Long. The last named has been chairman of the committee from its inception to date.

I had never even dreamed of becoming editor. It is true I took a deep interest in the *Journal* and cooperated with the editor by making occasional contributions.

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AN EDITOR IS BORN

In November 1920, Dr. J. M. Aikin, then editor, died rather suddenly, following an operation. As chairman of the publication board, I stepped into the breach thus created, intending to carry on until



In the Serene 60's.

the next annual meeting, but never thinking of myself as editor. After doing the work on a few issues, I began to get interested in it, concluded I liked it and offered to carry it on if agreeable to the others on the board. Thus by the merest chance a medical editor was born. I have been editor since December 1920.

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PROBLEMS OF MEDICAL JOURNALISM

I began to delve into the work seriously, doing the best I could while carrying on a laborious practice. After a few years I suffered a cardio-renal break, as a result of which I had to retire from the greater activities of a general practice and I determined to devote myself to the **Journal** as my contribution, if any, to organized medicine. The result, if any, is history.

Good editorial work on a state medical monthly journal requires the greater part of the time and energy of one person for about half of the time each month, somewhat depending upon the size of the magazine. The editor must take pride in his work. The work of a journal requires individual, personal attention. It cannot be well done by proxy. The better the editor knows the profession as individuals, the better he will get along with his work as editor.

Editorial service should be paid a compensatory sum to get the best results. With the best intentions any physician of average ability cannot give one-half of his time, year after year, for the good of the cause and without compensation.

The editor should be a man who has earned his laurels by service in medical organization work, if he is to have a keen realization of the fundamentals of medical organization.

A state journal must reflect the expressed wishes of the organized profession of the state and of the American Medical Association and on matters on which there is some question of policy the journal must not go far afield. The state journal must discuss, editorially, the every-day problems of the profession from the various angles and much stress should be placed on these discussions. The editorial

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pages should reflect the highest ideals of the profession and should so impress the reader as to be accepted as authoritative.

The state medical journal is perhaps the most cohesive thing in medical organization and its influence may be widened by catering to the human side of the physicians of the state. The physician is first of all a scientific personage; but he is also a human being with tastes for the lighter things pertaining to his professional life. The *esprit de corps* of the profession must be jealously guarded. This implies sympathy, devotion, enthusiasm and a jealous regard for the honor of the body as a whole.

I may be permitted to develop this topic by saying that county and district medical society meetings, from those of the highest excellence to those of relatively minor importance, should be featured in the journal as representing a cross-section of the work of the profession of that community. Unusual incidents connected with meetings, such as picnic meetings, banquets by the local chambers of commerce, or by the local profession, dinners served by the physicians' wives, groups of physicians chartering auto busses to attend meetings at a distance in a body, are worth mentioning. They interest the physician reader.

I believe the editorial pages of a state medical journal should be an open forum for the frank discussion of the problems of the profession from all angles.

"Editorial Paragraphs," short comments on phases of medical economics and of various things related to medicine are of interest to the physician, and may find place in a state medical journal; they will be

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read with interest and profit by the local physician—and perchance by his wife.

PHYSICIANS' LADIES HOME JOURNAL

Many physicians' wives take an interest in the state medical journal. This is particularly true since the organization of the Women's Auxiliary. The State journal therefore becomes the physicians' ladies' home journal. This may seem a pleasantry, but it is a significant thing that the wives of physicians take enough interest in their husbands' profession to want to read the state medical journal. Physicians with such helpmates will succeed if feminine interest can compel success.

I have a theory that fillers, whether in the advertising pages or among the original reading matters should be abstracts of scientific or economic worth, or innocent pleasantries touching on the everyday routine or foibles of the physician.

The physical appearance of the medical journal counts for much. The mechanical execution and the general appearance should be dignified and should appeal to the aesthetic sense, but a journal should not be an artistic monstrosity.

Few would believe at first thought that it takes the greater part of the time and energy of a person for about half of each month to get into presentable form material that fills the **Journal**; but such is the case.

One of my valued critics stated that the foregoing constituted too much editorializing: that not conclusions, but what I did as editor, should be told. My reply is that I attempted to carry out the ideas about which I philosophized and which I advocated.