

EDITORIAL

REMOTE TIMES IN THE REVISTA MEDICA DEL URUGUAY

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The overwhelming progress of medicine in the latter years forces today's physicians to carry out their daily efforts with the purpose of keeping updated. Some areas of specialization have even seen their diagnostic, therapeutic or preventive procedures renewed in five year's time.

In order to respond to this need, periodical publications have regularly brought to the doctor's office recent information on scientific research. The very same progress in the field of medicine and its areas of specialization have resulted in a large increase of medical journals and in their prices, making it impossible for any doctor to pay for subscriptions to publications which appear in two or three languages.

However, it is also hard for the medical-scientific research done in our country to be accepted by foreign journals which are frequently flooded with articles, many of which are rejected for publication.

It is highly convenient for Uruguay to have journals which regularly publish in an attractive layout and carry well-screened, good studies.

Undoubtedly, the days when medicine in our country evidenced levels of excellence, when compared to that of any other country in Latin America, coincided with the days when periodical medical publications were frequent and of a better quality.

Certain political events that need not to be mentioned, led a notable group of national, and foreign doctors to get together during the Guerra Grande, contributing to the creation of an intense cultural site. These combined efforts resulted in the foundation of "Sociedad de Medicina Montevideana" in 1852, which published the "Annals of the Medical Association of Montevideo", whose first book appeared in 1853. A total of 10 issues were published, constituting a praiseworthy publication which covered all fields of medicine. Apart from the minutes corresponding to the association's meetings, the journal included European publications, the regulations of the School of Medicine of Buenos Aires, as well as a variety of other information. A publication of such quality was definitely surprising. It was not the first medical journal to be published in America (1790), but it was one of the best one.

Upon the disappearance of "Annals", a great many years passed without a medical publication.

In 1876, courses started in the recently founded School of Medicine, and this implied a strong stimuli to studies and publications.

Later on, in September 1877, the first issue of **La Gaceta Médica** was published under the lead of Alejandro Fiol de Pereda, M.D., Professor of Obstetrics and directed by an

editorial board formed by professors of the School of Medicine. The same as previous experiences, it did not last forever.

In December 1895, the first issue of **La Facultad de Medicina** appeared. It was a journal which mainly published teaching material for medical students.

In 1881, the first issue of **Gaceta de Medicina y Farmacia** came out, which only survived for three years.

In 1888, the *Revista Científica* came to life, a journal which in spite of not having lasted for long, is remembered for publishing the 27 speeches given by Pedro Visca, M.D. on cholera, a mortal epidemic.

We will only mention two more journals which, due to their importance, their long years and for publishing the best of Uruguayan scientific studies, deserve special attention. The first one is **Revista Médica del Uruguay**, which was founded in 1898 and was published for several decades, compiling the best of the national, medical-scientific studies. Browsing its wide collection denotes a pleasing revision of all important findings in the medical field published in our country, in the first quarter of the current century. The journal where this editorial is appearing belongs to the third period (or the fourth one?) of **Revista Médica del Uruguay**, although there is no editorial connection between them.

Toward the beginning of the century, the different areas of specialization started to develop and, as a natural consequence, they required their own specialized publications, which increased in number, while general journals decreased.

With a new approach, an impeccable layout, *Revista Médica del Uruguay* starts a new period in the important and unavoidable task of presenting the best of Uruguayan medical studies and keeping medical professionals updated.

I hereby thank Professor Fernando Mañé Garzón for providing me with important information from his extremely rich files of the history of medicine.