

### **THE MALAYSIAN JOURNAL OF PATHOLOGY: 1978-1982**

This issue marks the fifth year of publication of the Malaysian Journal of Pathology.

At the Second Annual General Meeting of the Malaysian Society of Pathologists in September 1977, the members decided that the Society should publish a scientific journal in order to further the objectives of the Society. The first issue of the Journal was published in August 1978 with subsequent issues appearing annually. Since 1979 the Journal has adopted the Vancouver style (Uniform requirements for manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals). The Journal has now been accepted for inclusion in *Index Medicus* and the Medline online data base, having been assessed as being of value to their users. A five-year index is included in the present issue.

The Malaysian Journal of Pathology is the official journal of the Malaysian Society of Pathologists. All members receive personal copies and the contents must cater for their interests. Although some submitted articles are rejected, it is the policy of the Journal to encourage younger workers to contribute and to help them meet an acceptable standard. In addition, efforts are made to attract work from established authors. Members of the editorial board have reviewed the majority of the papers, but there are several others who have freely given of their time, expertise and support to ensure the production of each issue.

Medical journals currently published from South East Asia are mainly of a general nature. The Malaysian Journal of Pathology has no counterpart within the region. The Journal, therefore, has an important role to play and aims to bring under one cover publications of regional interest embracing the various sub-specialities of Pathology.

K. Prathap  
Editor

### **THE MEDICAL PATHOLOGY LABORATORY SERVICES IN MALAYSIA**

The value of a reliable and functional laboratory service in medical practice should not be underestimated. It is well recognised that the quality of the laboratory service often influences and reflects the quality of patient care and the standard of public health. Thus, over the past century, the medical pathology laboratory has emerged and established itself as an essential part of modern-day Medicine. As the practice of medicine becomes more precise and sophisticated, its dependence on the backup services of the medical diagnostic and research laboratories will necessarily be more heavy. The past two decades have seen a worldwide upsurge in consciousness and demand for more discriminating tests and investigations and more specialised laboratories. In Malaysia, as in other countries, the recognition of the need and importance of laboratory medicine has led to the development of a comprehensive network of hospital pathology laboratories throughout the country, the establishment of specialised medical laboratories in various branches of pathology, such as Medical Microbiology, Histopathology, Chemical Pathology, Haematology, Blood Banking, Virology, Immunology, Cytology and others, and in the recent years, to the birth of several private pathology laboratories. Concurrently, the need for medical pathologists has also become more acute and has brought with it the problems incumbent with the training of pathologists.

With increasing recognition of the clinical relevance of laboratory medicine, the role of pathologists has also changed. Pathologists are no longer bound to the bench but are often consulted on the choice, significance and interpretation of investigations for the diagnosis, as well as the monitoring and therapy of patients. This clinical role of the pathologist is also upheld by the Royal Colleges of Pathologists and is well emphasised in the qualifying examinations conducted by these colleges.

Thus, it was timely that in August 1981, the Malaysian Society of Pathologists organised an symposium on "The Clinician and the Laboratory" in conjunction with the 6th Annual General Meeting and Scientific Meeting of the Society. The active discussion and interest generated have prompted, among other things, the decision to highlight the Pathology laboratory services in Malaysia as a symposium in the Journal. It is hoped that this symposium will provide a useful view, not only for pathologists but also for clinicians, of the functional status, problems and aspirations of the medical pathology laboratories in Malaysia. This symposium consists of 9 papers on the various specialised laboratory

services, 5 of which are included in the present issue while the rest will be published in the forthcoming issue of the Journal. Also included in the present issue is an article on the historical development of the laboratory services in Malaysia.

L.M. Looi