



ḤEFZ AL-ŞEHĤĤA

ḤEFZ AL-ŞEHĤĤA, the first Iranian medical journal. This monthly journal was published between Şafar 1324/March 1906 and Şawwāl/November of the same year. Contrary to what E. G. Browne has written (Browne, no. 143), the journal had no links to the “Majles-e ḥefz al-şehḥa” (The Society for Maintaining Good Health), and there is no mention of this society in the journal.

The physician ‘Ali-Aşğar Nafisi, Mo’addeb-al-Dawla (d. 4 Tir 1328 Š./ 25 June 1949) held the franchise of the journal, while its editor was another physician known as Jalil-al-Aṭebbā’. Mo’addeb-al-Dawla came from a family with a long tradition of practising medicine which stretched back for several generations. He had studied medicine in Belgium and France, and later practiced and taught medicine in Tehran. He was elected as a member of the second parliament (Majles; 1909-11) and founded the ministry of health and welfare (Wezārat-e şehḥiya wa omur-e kayriya). He should therefore be regarded as the first ever health minister in Iran. Mo’addeb-al-Dawla also served as the guardian of Moḥammad-Reza Pahlavi, while the then Crown Prince was studying at high school in Rolle, Switzerland.

Ḥefz al-şehḥa was published in 28 single-column pages and did not include any pictures. It was published on 15.5 by 21.5 cm paper in the lithograph printing house of Āqā Mirzā ‘Ali-Aşğar, and was written in attractive *nasta’liq* script by Mortazā Najmābādi, who also served as the calligrapher for several other newspapers and journals. *Ḥefz al-şehḥa* was written in a non-technical language so that it could appeal to a wider audience as well as serve as a journal for specialists. However it seems to have failed in the former objective,



since it was soon forced to cease publication (Ṭabāṭabā'i, p. 243).

The subscription rate for *Ḥefẓ al-şehĥa* was 15 *qerāns* for readers in Tehran, while it was 16 *qerāns* for subscribers in other cities. Subscribers in Russia paid 4 rubles, while in other parts of Europe it cost 10 francs; in India it was sold for 3 rupees. Individual copies of this journal, which did not include any advertisements, were sold for 30 *şāhis*.

The complete series of *Ḥefẓ al-şehĥa* is available at the Central Library of the University of Tehran, and an incomplete series is held at the Fars Central Library.

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