

FOREWORD

to

*Blood, The Journal of Hematology*



**M**EDICINE is not a single science but depends on the integration of a number of sciences for the specific purpose of understanding the nature of disease as a natural phenomenon and the application of these to the prevention and treatment of ill health. As stated by Gabriel Andral of Paris a hundred years ago, hematology is a branch of the natural sciences for the study of the blood. Thomas Schwenicke in 1743 used this term and published a treatise on the subject. Andral is especially to be remembered as the first man to urge chemical examination of the blood, which led him in 1843 to the conclusion that there are primary blood diseases. Hematology is indeed to be considered as one of the branches of internal medicine.

Much knowledge and progressive interest has developed concerning the blood and its disorders in the past quarter century, so that now one may feel that a medical journal in English devoted to this subject is appropriate.

Medical journals should further knowledge and aid in disseminating it through the civilized world and in sifting the important pieces of work from the less significant on the basis of the presumably sound judgment of the editors. This journal should tell the reader of recent advances in the field of the blood and clarify those issues about which there is confusion. One hopes that papers will concern not only the blood cells but the development of knowledge concerning plasma fractions, the study of blood coagulation, and the like. The geneticist will wish for information relating to heredity in blood disease. Problems will concern infections with their varying leukocytic changes, the hematologic reactions to drugs as well as the different types of anemias, the leukemias, polycythemias, purpuras, and allied disorders. Questions concerning the use of heparin and dicumarol for reducing the coagulability of the blood, splenectomy, the proper use of transfusions of blood, the strange story of the Rh factor, the knowledge regarding vitamin K and prothrombin, and the consideration of hemolytic anemias are among the subjects which need further clarification. The bone marrow cells, the lymphatic tissues, as well as therapeutic developments will presumably command attention. The prevention of disease by study of the blood is important. Various industrial poisonings may be prevented by careful studies of the blood, and topics of this sort may be looked for.

The correct diagnosis is a prerequisite to efficacious treatment. Occasionally leukemia may be suspected by clinical manifestations although the blood cells may show relatively little alteration. On the other hand there may not be objective symptoms but the blood may yield full evidence of the disease. This sort of problem may receive elucidation in this journal.

Illustrations, especially in color, are important for the study of hematology. Often, however, language must serve to appeal to the senses when the objects themselves cannot be presented. The lability of children's blood is noteworthy,

and the hematopoietic equilibrium in infants is even less well established than in the child. One must appreciate the instability of the blood in younger individuals. Here leukocytosis may be more striking. Lymphocytosis develops with great ease in children, and such changes must be appreciated. Nucleated red cells may appear following a brisk hemorrhage where only polychromatophils would appear in an adult.

Medicine has to deal with human personality and human hopes and fears, and the physician will not succeed who does not appreciate the patient as a whole, including his mental anxieties. In medicine things spiritual and things material must both be appreciated in considering any one person. At present science has outrun philosophy; narrow specialization is the order of the day, and those interested in disorders of the blood should recall the importance of medicine as a whole. Science may deal with those aspects of human experience which are amenable to treatment by the scientific method, but in medicine one must deal with the human life; and one needs to adopt a practical attitude to the unknown.

It must not be forgotten that hematology is but one branch of general medicine and that physiology and the like bring much of significance to it. One must recall that the happiness of patients takes precedence, at least after diagnosis has been established. Real sympathy and concern for the patient are essential but must not interfere with one's determination to gain all possible information about the underlying disease. Clinical investigation takes a variety of forms: the aim should be to undertake fundamental problems. The best clinical investigator must be an able clinician, have wide interests, and understand human beings. He must possess an active, creative imagination and scientific curiosity, but the center of his activity must be the patient.

*December 1945*

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