

A Greeting from the Editor

Ernest Beutler

Blood Cells was founded 20 years ago by Professor Marcel Bessis, a giant in the field of hematology. Marcel died just last year after a career characterized by numerous independent contributions to the study of the blood and by fruitful collaborations with colleagues from all over the world. After having served as its first editor he entrusted this journal, so close to his heart, to a distinguished colleague and former student, Professor Brian Bull. However, his interest in the journal continued, and over the past few years we discussed the possibility that I might take on the responsibility of editorship. About two years ago I agreed to do so with the idea, strongly endorsed by both of the previous editors, that some major changes be made in the journal so as to provide a unique resource to those interested in the study of hematology.

In its new embodiment the journal will be published with rapidity unparalleled in the field of medical and scientific publications. The time from receipt of contributions in the editorial office will no longer be measured in months or even weeks, but in days. This will be accomplished by taking advantage of the advanced electronic techniques that are rapidly becoming generally available to the scientific community. It will be facilitated by bypassing as much of the review process as each of the distinguished group of scientist who have agreed to serve as corresponding editors deem advisable. Once a manuscript is transmitted to the editorial office the time to publication will vary from 1 to 14 days: the complete paper with figures will be transmitted over the internet in issues that will be distributed twice monthly and will bear the publication date of the transmitted issues. The titles will appear in the current awareness services, such as *Reference Update* and authors will be able to distribute reprints immediately after the publication date. I believe that this ultra-rapid publication will

benefit both the author and the readership. A printed version will follow within less than four months, and thus all papers published in our journal will be available for posterity.

The thrust of the journal has been broadened to include not only blood cells, but also the molecular basis of hematologic disease and studies of the diseases themselves. Accordingly, the title of the journal has been expanded to *Blood Cells, Molecules, and Diseases*. This title is most easily abbreviated as *BCMD*. One of the salient features of *Blood Cells* was the commentary which followed papers. Marcel Bessis was a strong believer in an open and frank scientific interchange and we plan to continue this tradition. Now, however, the commentary will appear on the internet and may be contributed by any subscriber or editor. As much of the discussion as is practical will be included in the "hard copy" version of the article. To a large extent what we are doing is experimental and in any experiment, scientific or journalistic, failure is a possibility and glitches are a certainty. In order to allow us as much flexibility as possible and to remain unencumbered by commercial considerations, a nonprofit foundation, The Blood Cells Foundation has been established and has purchased the copyright from Springer, the publisher of *Blood Cells*.

This greeting is sent using the method of transmission and of imaging journal pages that we plan to use for *BCMD*. In sending it to our readership I feel somewhat like the man who wrote a letter to his cousin and, being unsure of the address, concluded his letter by writing: "If you don't receive this letter please phone me right away".