

## Editorial

The considerable periodical literature in English on the various specialized fields covered by present-day genetics includes two journals devoted exclusively to heredity in man. Both these—the *Annals of Human Genetics* and the *American Journal of Human Heredity*—aiming, as they do, to cover all aspects of heredity in man, carry contributions on medical genetics, but most genetical papers of medical interest—and these are becoming increasingly numerous—are widely scattered throughout an ever-increasing number of specialized medical journals. Things are rather better on the continent, but the *Journal of Medical Genetics* is the first to be exclusively medical and to be broadly based. As such, it is a timely venture.

The Editors trust the journal will attract contributions, not only from the many teaching departments and research units on medical genetics that have been established during the past 20 years, but also from unattached workers throughout the profession and from hospitals. The general practitioner has unique opportunities for undertaking family studies, and it is particularly hoped that the existence of this journal will stimulate general practitioners to explore the immense wealth of genetic material that comes their way.

Medical genetics draws on many disciplines. This first issue carries not only clinical studies, but also contributions on the biochemical, statistical, pathological, and cytological aspects. By definition this journal will deal almost exclusively with human material, but the considerable contribution that pathological states in animals can make to medical genetics is exemplified by a study in this issue on chylous ascites in mice; observations on the evolution of affections recalling human disturbances are comparatively easy in animal colonies readily maintained and freely available at all stages of the evolution of a disorder.

In an attempt to overcome the disadvantages arising from the wide scattering of publications on medical genetics, the journal will publish review articles regularly.

It is hoped that this journal will carry forward the considerable tradition of medical genetics in Great Britain. In the last century, pioneers like William Sedgwick contributed substantially even before Mendel, and the insight of Galton is still a living tradition today. In the present century, workers like Drinkwater, Garrod, Pearson, Nettleship, and, more recently, Usher have greatly enriched our knowledge. Such a tradition is also an inspiration.

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