

still in progress, or which were not followed through adequately to allow publication in a refereed journal. Less serious, but something to which the editor should attend, is the elimination of reviews which rehash other reviews by the same authors. These censures do not, however, damn this venture and the new journal has some quite excellent and stimulating reviews which are comprehensive but not encyclopaedic, critical yet constructive. The idea behind the journal is excellent and could prove most useful. Having launched the first volume let us hope that the energetic and stimulating editor will settle down to edit (and reject) and not just to collect. I rather doubt whether there are sufficient scientists capable and willing to write 350 pages of 'real' reviews a year on metastasis and Dr Fidler might do better to turn this venture into a once yearly volume.

The last of the quartet of new journals *Natural Immunity and Cell Growth Regulation*, initially called *Stem Cells*, is different from the others as interest in the topic extends beyond that of cancer research of which however, it forms an important part. Indeed, the great

majority of the contributors come from cancer research laboratories. The editor of the journal seems to accept that the existence of stem cells established for haematopoiesis can be extended to cancers and the journal could perform a real service by focusing on the concept of a stem cell in these two situations. Even if for many cancers it turns out not to be useful to evoke the existence of malignant stem cells, interest in haematopoiesis pervades much of the research in cancer therapy. It is too early to evaluate this journal as the first issue only appeared in June, 1981 and there have only been three others since so the target of six issues per volume does not seem to have been reached in two years. In this fast moving field it may be that researchers will not hazard their more interesting studies to a journal where delays could be so long. There seems a real danger that this publication could become a 'journal of last resort'; none the less, the papers in the four issues that have appeared to date are in general of reasonable quality. □

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Malignancy in view

Robert Wittes

Cancer Surveys: Advances and Prospects in Clinical, Epidemiological and Laboratory Oncology.

Editor L. M. Franks.

Oxford University Press. 4/yr.
£40, \$95.

THE purpose of *Cancer Surveys* is to provide a "comprehensive review of areas in oncology and related fields in which there is current scientific or clinical interest. A major objective is to bridge the gap between the clinic, the laboratory and the epidemiologist in the field". Each issue is devoted to a single topic explored in depth.

However, bridging gaps is much easier to talk about than do. If each issue is really to provide the "definitive account of the present state of knowledge" in a particular area of cancer research and at the same time to bridge gaps, the contributors must deal with the subjects in full technical detail and at the same time, comment comprehensively to non-specialists. The effort certainly seems worthwhile.

The first few strike me, on the whole, as a qualified success. The inaugural, 'Inheritance of Susceptibility to Cancer in Man' edited by Bodmer, deals, from various points of view, with genetic aspects of human tumours. Twin studies, the epidemiology of defined populations, disorders of DNA repair, chromosomal rearrangements and the major histocompatibility complex are among the specific subjects considered.

'Experimental Approaches to Drug Targeting' edited by Davies and Crumpton contains a series of relentlessly technical contributions. Of the ten principal papers, most focus on the potential of antibodies as the targeting instruments for such 'warheads' as conventional cytotoxic agents and various plant or microbial derived toxins.

'Embryonic and Germ Cell Tumours in Man and Animals', edited by Gardner, is less successful; it deals comprehensively with the murine teratocarcinoma system, but in very cursory fashion with human disease. The single clinical paper, is mostly concerned with inessential details of patient management and inexplicably glosses over the fascinating tendency of these tumours to differentiate under the influence of therapy — probably the most important aspect of the behaviour of these tumours in the context of a volume of this kind. Experimentalists will not learn much about human germ cell tumours from this; clinicians will find the laboratory studies hard going but rewarding.

'Cancers Induced by Therapy' edited by Penn, contains a wealth of information on the role of immunosuppression, cytotoxic drugs, hormones, radiation and even surgery, to the subsequent development of cancers. There is a nice balance between experimental results and clinical observations.

I think that *Cancer Surveys* will find a loyal readership among a dedicated group of investigators, but specific numbers will be consulted by a much wider readership. □

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Selected new journals from Karger

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Offering brief reviews that summarize and synthesize new knowledge on normal and abnormal functions of the digestive tract.

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