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Preface

The discovery of haematopoietic chimaerism, resulting from the intravenous administration of bone marrow cells into a lethally irradiated animal, has opened new ways to investigate numerous problems in the fields of immunology, haematology and tissue transplantation. In fact, radiation chimaeras have become such accepted tools for studies in these areas that there is now a tendency to neglect the original object of bone marrow transplantation as a cure for lethal exposure to ionising radiation. In addition, the outcome of clinical trials involving bone marrow transplantation in the treatment of disorders of the haematopoietic system, mainly leukaemia, has been disappointing; also insurmountable difficulties have been encountered in attempts to facilitate organ transplantations by inducing haematopoietic chimaerism in human patients. These factors have caused many investigators to abandon the idea that bone marrow transplantation can ever become a valuable asset to clinical medicine. It is our opinion that these failures have occurred mainly because the clinical applications were undertaken too soon, most of them before even the minimum of basic knowledge required to bridge the gap between mouse and patient had been obtained.

A particularly unexpected complication has arisen because of the immunological reaction of the lymphoid cells present in the transplanted marrow against the new host. This has confronted investigators with the formidable problem of identifying a completely new syndrome (generally called secondary disease) as well as with the task of unravelling its patho-

genesis and devising methods for its prevention and treatment.

Many errors in extrapolation from the laboratory experiment to the patient have been made and much time was lost before it became evident that the graft versus host reaction in primates, including man, is incomparably more violent than in rodents. One of the main objects of this monograph is to present an exhaustive review of the comparative pathology of the immunological complications which occur after transplantation of foreign bone marrow, and to analyse the causes of the clinical failures in the light of the available experimental data.

This work has been greatly facilitated by our long-standing co-operation with the group led by George Mathé in Paris. Apart from being one of the pioneers in bone marrow transplantation, he has been the only clinician to conduct careful clinical trials whenever new experimental results seemed to require them. Because his clinical approach has always taken into full account the data obtained from experiments by his own group and by others, his accumulated clinical material represents by far the most

important source of information on this aspect.

It as yet impossible to predict what therapeutic advantages will eventually be gained from the vast amount of research that has been

invested in radiation chimaeras. Quantitative evaluation of the current methods for storage of bone marrow, and the development of more appropriate freezing techniques, certainly warrant new clinical trials of autologous bone marrow transplantation. Recent advances in the control of secondary disease by treatment with cytotoxic and antimetabolic drugs, the new prospects offered by the introduction of anti-lymphocyte serum and the steady progress that is being made towards the identification of transplantation antigens in leucocytes as a method for the selection of compatible donors, all seem to provide grounds for a more optimistic outlook concerning the future of homologous bone marrow transplantation. Whatever the chances are, the stakes are so high that a continuation of the investigation of homologous bone marrow transplantation, both experimental and clinical, appears to be more than justified.

This monograph has been written for specialists and workers in related fields. We have made no special attempt to prepare a complete review of the literature on radiation chimaeras, but have preferred to discuss trends and ideas emerging from various lines of research, from our personal

point of view.

Throughout the book we have employed the original terminology of transplantation, mainly because we did not consider it practical to change these terms so soon after their derivatives became established in the scientific language of the various European countries, including our own, where transplantation immunology is a relatively new addition to medical research. For those readers who have already forgotten the "old" terminology, we should say that isologous, homologous and heterologous are used here in place of syngeneic, allogeneic and xenogeneic respectively.

Acknowledgments are given on page 265.

The critical readers for whom this monograph is obviously intended are referred to four recent monographs which deal in different ways with the same subject: Transplantatsionnyi immunitet i radiatsionnye khimery (Transplantation Immunity and Radiation Chimaeras) by R. Petrov and Yu. Zaretskaya, Atomizdat, Moscow (1965); L'Aplasie myelo-lymphoide de l'irradiation totale by G. Mathé, J. L. Amiel and L. Schwarzenberg, Gauthier-Villars, Paris (1965); Tissue Grafting and Radiation by H. S. Micklem and J. F. Loutit, Academic Press, New York and London (1966); Bone Marrow Transplantation by D. E. Pegg, Lloyd-Luke, London (1966).

We feel confident that these volumes contain all the information that

we have omitted or neglected in the present one.

Rijswijk October 1966 D. W. VAN BEKKUM

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