cultural context which led to clear plans for its prevention. But it was immensely expensive—costing the Indonesian government some US $350 000 apart from the professional salaries and expenses contributed by an international agency; and it was made possible only by the limited age range of the children at risk and the availability of sure and cheap preventive measures. It may also be significant that the interests of more than one discipline were served by the study—nutritionists as well as health workers.

Both these studies were done on far-flung populations out of reach of medical services or any sort of regular assessment but even in the urban setting, where access should be easier, a formal epidemiological commitment is necessary before any assessment of the size of a disabled population can be made. Said and his colleagues demonstrated this in a study of blindness in Alexandria where estimates based on random household studies, with a true denominator base, revealed a prevalence rate double that suggested by the use of a free access clinic. The selective factors they discuss, which are echoed in the Nigerian study of deafness, seem to be similar throughout the world.

It seems a shame, though perhaps inescapable, that such important studies as these still seem to need outside help—not necessarily only to cover the costs but also to develop the techniques. There is no reason why the methods well practiced by the epidemiologists of developing countries in the control of infectious diseases should not equally well be used to study disability, especially as it is so often an expression of such disease. And there is no reason at all why large and expensive national prevalence studies should necessarily be preferred to more precise and far cheaper studies at village level conducted perhaps as an extension of existing services. In this way survey methods, as well as prevention and rehabilitation, will be developed to suit local conditions, and experiences recorded in such a way that they can be applied elsewhere, as Sommer has done for xerophthalmia. Increasingly, it will be Nigeria, and the few developing countries with similar resources, who will be looked to for a lead in these things.

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Tenth Birthday, Third Editor

The Association started as a correspondence club to keep interested epidemiologists informed of each others’ research and activities. As the club grew and the haphazard communication system failed to serve its purpose, the idea of a quarterly journal was born. Official sanction for a journal was given at the Sixth International Scientific Meeting of the Association held in Primosten in 1971. The first issue appeared in March (or Spring as it was then known), 1972.

Initially there was concern that there would be insufficient papers to maintain quarterly issues and there might be no support from subscriptions outside the Association membership. However, under the editorship of Walter Holland from 1972 to 1977, the Journal developed and prospered so that, although not breaking even financially, it had an expanding readership and had gained respectability.

A E Bennett became the second editor after the International Meeting in Puerto Rico. Unfortunately, he has now resigned the position after only four years, because of his appointment as director of the Health and Safety Directorate, Commission of the European Communities. In those years the Journal continued among the front runners in the subject and has seen a number of improvements in format. The popularity of the Journal both among readers and writers owes much to Ted’s meticulous editorial skills. It is a great misfortune that his resignation has come so soon.

We also regret the resignation of Kay Dorelli, tireless editorial assistant during the last four years. She is remaining in the editorial office until a replacement is found so this current issue owes much to her labours. As the new editorial office takes shape we hope to keep the traditions of the Journal alive. We have been warned not to make any promises for the future—a moment’s glance at the expectations voiced in the first issue’s editorial and today’s facts shows how they may not be fulfilled. But we will do our best.

CHARLES FLOREY.